

**PROBLEM OF ETHNICITY, RELIGION AND POLITICS IN AFGHANISTAN: A  
PANORAMA OF PASHTUNISATION POLITICS**  
AFGANİSTAN'DA ETNİSİTE, DİN VE SİYASET SORUNLARI: PEŞTUNLAŞTIRMA  
SİYASETİNİN PANORAMASI

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**ÖZET**

Afganistan kimlik, milliyetçilik ve dini açılarından heterojen bir toplum yapısı teşkil etmektedir. Bu gruplardan başlıcaları Türkler, Tacikler, Peştun ve Hazaralardır. Farklı mezhep ve etnik kimliğe sahip bu topluluklar arasındaki egemenlik mücadelesi ve çatışmalar bu makalenin temel konusunu oluşturmaktadır. Tarih boyunca, birbirinden farklı kimlik ve grupların varlığı Afgan toplumunu etnik çatışmalara, toplumsal kaosa ve hatta iç savaşa sürüklemiştir. Farklı kimlik, kültür, milliyet, din, dil ve mezhepten halkların bir arada yaşama tecrübesi Afgan siyaseti için başarısızlıkla sonuçlanmış ve Afganistan çatışmalarının merkezi konumuna gelmiştir. Bu makalede sosyolojik faktörler, etnik gruplar ve mezhepsel dinamiklerin Afgan siyasetine etkisi incelenmiştir. Ayrıca Afganistan tarihinin kısa bir analizi, Peştun egemenliği, Afgan milli devletinin kuruluşu, Peştunlaştırma siyaseti ekseninde tartışılmış, gerek Mucahitler ve Taliban dönemlerinde gerekse de ABD'nin müdahalesi sonrası kurulan geçici hükümet döneminde Afganistan'ın etnik yapısı, farklı grupların birbirleriyle ilişkileri ve Afgan siyasetine etkileri Afganistan üzerinde çalışan önemli düşünür ve siyaset bilimcilerinin görüşlerinden yararlanılarak açıklanmaya çalışılmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Afganistan, Kimlik Siyaseti, Etnik Çatışmalar, Peştunlaştırma.

**ABSTRACT**

Afghanistan is a heterogenous society in terms of identity, nationality and religious dimensions. Major groups of Afghanistan are Turks, Tajiks, Pashtuns and Hazaras. Sovereignty struggle and conflicts among these groups belonging to the various sect and ethnic identity, constitute main subject of this article. Throughout the history, the presence of various identities in Afghanistan dragged the country into ethnic conflicts, social turmoils and even civil war among different ethnic groups. In this study, the influences of sociological factors, identity groups and sectarian dynamics in Afghanistan on Afghan politics have been examined. The history of Afghanistan, Pashtun's sovereignty, emergence of national Afghan state, politics of Pashtunization, ethnic structure of Afghanistan, fundamental ethnic groups, relations and battle field among them, ethnic groups's influences on Afghan politics before the period of Mujahids, in the period of Mujahids and Taliban and after the collapse of Taliban and interim government are tried to be revealed by using some references from important figures and scholars.

**Key Words:** Afghanistan, Identity Politics, Ethnic Conflicts, Pashtunization.

**GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF AFGHANISTAN**

Afganistan which is referred to "Baktariya" between BC 545-333, is known as a region in which lots of civilizations emerged. Throughout the history, Afghanistan exposed to the attacks led by most of Turks (Northern Invaders). Central state weakened and was divided into small kingdoms due to this invasions. Afganistan which is used as a transition road by tribes which have different cultures and religions, had been shaped by these tribes's cultural influences. Current lands of Afghanistan were taken under the control of the Great Kurosh- emperor of Ahamenish-at the 6th century BC. Macedonian Alexander whose real goal was to conquer India, had to fight four years for conquering Sogd and Afghanistan in 330 B.C. Great Alexander passed behind Ceyhun by the way of Herat, Kandehar, Kabul and Belh. Afganistan lands were shared among three custodians after his death. Damascus's custodian, Silokus, ruled the Afganistan by dividing it into four parts until the Kushan Empire. Islam started to spread over Afganistan in 649. Eventually, as a dinamic power, it is replaced by other religions and many sects in the region. After entering to Islam, lots of dynasties ruled the

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country. Tahiris, Safaris, Samanis, Ghaznevids, Seljuks, Kharzemshahs, Timurs, Baburs, etc all of them contributed to important arts and effects in the cultural and political history of the region (Rahimi, 2010: 57).

The most glorious period of Afghanistan was lived in the Ghaznevid Mahmud's period. Afghanistan was taken under the control of Seljuks due to the defeat of Ghaznevid Mesud in 1040. In 1221, Mongols invaded the country and ruled it about 150 years. Mongol invasions lead Turks which especially lived in Khorasan, to immigrate to the Anatolia. Due to this event, Hazaras settled into Afghanistan. After the Chenghis Khan's period, Afghanistan controlled by Chenghis Khan's family and then Herat and Goris until Timurs. After Timur passed away in 1404, his successors tried to restore the destructions led by Mongols and made the region centre of trade and culture in the Sultan Shahrukh's period (Zain, 2006: 80).

### **Pashtun's Sovereignty**

Turk imperor Babur Shah had succeeded to dominate the lands of Afghanistan by the way of good relationships with various ethnic groups in the region. Pashtuns, especially tribe of Yousafzay, which had family line with Babur Shah, began gradually to rule the region by gaining a power thanks to the imperor who controlled the India. In this period, the leader of Ghilzays, Mahmud who gathered the all tribes of Pashtun against Shiah Safavid dynasty, advanced towards Iran. Safavids were defeated by Mahmud Khan and the last castle Isfahan taken under the control. But later, Avshars defeated the Pashtuns from Iran and anounced their dominance in that region. Sunni Pashtuns which come together against Shiah invasions, expanded their territories in the Ahmad Shah's period. After Ahmad Shah's period, they have struggle for gaining and sustaining political power so far (Çınarlı, 2012: 75).

### **National Afghan State**

Ahmad Shah Durrani established the national Afghan state by taking all Afghan tribes under one flag. Ahmad Shah who expands the dominance areas, became the absolute leader of Afghanistan with the nickname of "Dürr-i Dürran". Ahmad Shah who did not want to make a discrimination against any different region, religion, language and race, gave a lot importance to legal cooperation among tribes; however, Pashtuns began to see themselves as "at the superior position" due to the fact that they belong to the King's family line. While Iran was within a turmoil in the West, Baburs had been defeated by Nadir Shah. Ahmad Shah who benefitted from this defeat, organized an expedition to Iran and India and annexed the Nishapur and Meshed in Iran, Lahot and Multan in South (Bellew, 1980: 120).

Pashtun's sovereignty which starts with Ahmad Shah, continued by 1990s. This domination which is interrupted by Dr. Nacibullah's government, tried to be reestablished by Taliban. After the 9/11 attacks, a new government came to the power and other various ethnic groups also gained the right of representation in the new parliament. According to new amendments in the period of President Hamid Kharzai, new provinces were established for every ethnic groups such as: Pashtuns, Tajiks and Hazaras. The region in which Pashtuns mostly lived became the province of Nuristan, the region in which Hazaras mostly lived became the province of Daykundi. The region in which Tajiks mostly lived became the province of Pancshir. At the end of the Ahmad Shah's reign, tribal chiefs who are gathered by promises of lands, had taken lots of prerogatives. These people who benefits from these prerogatives, generally belonged to the tribes of Pashtuns and Sadozays. As long as state expanded and widened in terms of territories by conquests, the lands of these people were also expanding and widening. The viziers who increase their power over time, commanders, khans and ulemah abstained from giving tax to the state also took the authority of collecting taxes from non-Pashtuns and ruled their lands (Ghubar, 1999: 82).

### **POLITICS OF PASHTUNIZATION IN AFGHANISTAN**

After Mohammad Nadir Khan came to the power in Afghanistan 1929, he tried expeditiously to actualize the politics of Pashtunization against non-Pashtun ethnic communities. So, he appointed Mohammad Gul Momand who graduated from Turkey and knows very well the languages of Afghan Turks, as the minister of foreign affairs for this the politics of Pashtunization. Mohammad Gul Momand who was extrem racist, also was the leader of patriot Pashtuns. Mohammad Gul Momand

had put into practice dangerous political structures and organizations for fuelling micro nationalism among various ethnic groups. Nadir Shah assigned Momand to Kandahar so that Momand implemented assimilation process in that region. Nadir Shah who got desirable results in Kandahar, appointed again Momand to the Turkistan in which Turks and Uzbeks generally lived, for eradicating the languages of Uzbek and Turkmen. Turks (Uzbek, Turkmens), Hazaras, Tajiks and other ethnic groups mostly were using the Uzbek Turkish (as first) and Persian language (as second). Nadir Shah had imposed the Pashtun language which is official language of Afghanistan, to the various ethnic groups (Gritzner, 2007: 185).

State embarked on other enterprises for accelerating this process. Afghan government located thousands of Pashtuns in the North borders of Afghanistan and they were provided lots of opportunities and donations for having good life conditions. These donations had forcibly taken from possessions and opportunities of native population not the state treasury. Actually Afghanistan State had implemented the similar one of Soviet Russian's settlement policy operated in Middle Asia (Ari, 2013: 38).

In the Shah Mahmud 's period, thousand of people who are composed of Uzbek and Turkmens, were forcible brought to the Kabul from Hanabad on foot and exposed to various tortures by Pashtun soldiers. Those who could not bear this tough trip, were killed. Pashtunization politics is seen also the change of the names of places. The Turkish or Persian names of provinces, cities, streets, neighbourhood, villages were changed by Pashtun language. All names of hospitals, schools, neighbourhoods which are established in Kabul, belong to the Pashtun language. Mohammad Gol Momand was saying Turks, Hazaras and Tajiks to write their petitions in Pashtun language. Petitions which are not written in Pashtun language, was not being accepted in the official affairs. Only Pashtuns were appointed to the public institutions even if they did not the know read and write. Momand tried to eradicate native people's traditions, conventions, history, culture and clothes in the North Afghanistan. Momand enacted a law for prohibitions on traditional clothes. Those who had traditional clothes, were punished, beaten and humiliated by Pashtun state officers. These changed names were not accepted by indigenous public and a resistance movement and a hatred against Pashtuns emerged among various ethnic groups (Adelkhah, 2017: 151).

### **ETHNIC STRUCTURE OF AFGHANISTAN**

#### **Social Fabric and Identity in Afghanistan**

Throughout the history, Afghanistan had played host lots of publics. Some people had used Afghanistan as a transition routes. On the other hand, Afghanistan's tough geography divided people from each other and become very influential for creating different cultures. Geographical and historical factors had become effective on the occurrence of current nations and even sub-nations. In this process, some people lost their languages and cultures, mixed with other tribes and some of them was exposed to small ethnic divisions. If we give an example, Qizilbashes and Aymaks had been Tajikized in terms of language and culture. In spite of all these origin complexities, people were in an endeavour for constructing their identities.

Afghanistan is not a homogenous society. There are four important ethnic groups which shape the politics of Afghanistan. These are Pashtuns, Turks (Uzbeks and Turkmens), Hazaras and Tajiks. Hazaras and Tajiks share same language (Persian) but they are different from each other in terms of religious sect. While Hazaras are Shiah, Tajiks are Sunni. Other groups in Afghanistan disassociated from each other in terms of ethnic, linguistic and religion. Afghanistan, as a country, cannot overcome ethnic and tribal culture, cannot have a joint culture which accomodates various cultures. The formation of Afghan nation was not possible due to these ethnic complexities. Ethnic groups could not pass the nationalization process in Afghanistan which lots of ethnic groups lived. Ethnic conflicts, discontent and forced migrations became the main incidences of this country. According to the constitution of Afghanistan, all ethnic groups in Afghanistan had a common national identity at the international level. All individuals who had Afghan citizenship, are 'Afghan' even if they belong to different ethnic identity such as; Pashtun, Tajik, Hazara, Turkmen etc. However, Afghanistan has no any national identity within the country due to the fact that it included different ethnic groups in terms of language, religion or race. Pashtuns's assimilative and assertive policies lead to social turmoil and

ethnic conflicts along with non-Pashtuns groups. Also the lands of Afghanistan had been divided among these ethnic groups. Hazaras live at the centre of the country, Uzbeks and Tajiks live at the North of Afghanistan and lastly Pashtuns live at the South of the region. This situation caused ethnic groups not to easily communicate each other. Different communities could not establish close relationships each other. So, Afghan people had preferred their tribal identity rather than a national identity (Aydın, 1992: 42).

Afghanistan have been ruled by Pashtuns since 1747. In 1992, central government was dismissed and all balances changed. After Dr. Nacibollah's government collapsed, conflicts and struggles among ethnic groups accelerated. Internal conflicts continued until Taliban's occupation of Kabul. By 9/11 attacks and USA's intervention, ethnic conflicts sustained among different ethnic communities (Barfield, 2010: 77).

## **FUNDAMENTAL ETHNIC GROUPS IN AFGHANISTAN**

### **Pashtuns**

Pashtuns are constituted of %42 of Afghan population. Pashtuns are divided into twenty clans. Abdaliles are the most effective tribe of Afghanistan. Also Ahmad Shah was an Abdali. There are some views that Pashtuns were Aryan or Semite. Non-Pashtuns groups claimed that internal war in Afghanistan stemmed from only Pashtuns's violence. On the other hand, Pashtuns suggested that other various ethnic groups had come to the other regions and Afghanistan belonged to the Pashtuns. Pashtuns generally lived in Kandehar, Nengerahar, Paktiya, Ferah, Ghazne, Kabul and Host. Pashtuns have tribal culture and life style. Wars and invasions led by other tribes, shaped Pashtuns's political culture and they always became within a fight. They showed extreme loyalty to their own cultures, race, language, norms and ethnic identity. So, new inventions or developments which are experienced in the outside of the world, had no any importance for Pashtuns. Even if Pashtuns become the biggest ethnic group which ruled the Afghanistan, their tribal relations and cultures prevented them to establish a central political power (Adeney, 2008: 545).

### **Turks**

Turks are constituted of the most crowded ethnic population following Pashtuns. They are separated into few languages and ethnic groups. These are; Uzbeks, Turkmens, Kirgizs, Aymaks, Qizilbashs. Afghanistan had been ruled by Turks until Nadir Afshar's regime in 1747. Turks who have ruled the Afghanistan for long times, had marked to the culture and civilization of the region with the influence of Islam. At the end of the 19th century, various Uzbek Khans's influence on the region had continued. In the period of England's occupation and Pashtuns's domination on the region, Turks were exposed to assimilation policies and genocides. Although political power operated by Pashtuns, Turks even had crucial effect on Afghan's politics. Uzbeks have deprived of political power for long years. They also had tried to sustain their beings against all political and economical pressures (Andishmend, 2013: 33).

### **Tajiks**

Tajiks who are constituted of the biggest ethnic group as social and political power in Afghanistan following Pashtuns, are known as the rootest community of the country. They live generally in the north and north east of the country. Tajiks who are composed of %25 of the population, urbanized by giving up tribal life style unlike other ethnic groups. Although Afghan politics become monarchical structure, Tajiks made contributions to the Afghan politics even if it is very limited. Tajiks use as language the version of Persian (Darrish). Darrish also used by Hazaras, Qizilbashs and Aymaks and other non-Pashtuns groups. After Taliban's regime was collapsed, Tajiks made more contributions to the political affairs rather than other ethnic groups (Daulaty, 2014: 98).

### **Hazaras**

Hazaras are constituted of %15-20 of the Afghan's population. They have different sectarian choice and most of them committed to Shiah (Jafariyyah). Hazaras had become the most oppressed ethnic group in the region due to their sect. Hazaras live generally in the centre of the country which is called as 'Hazaracat'. So, invaders had to pass to this region for arriving other parts of the region. That is why, Hazaracat was exposed to the lots of invasions and ruled by invaders due to its geographical position throughout the history. Invaders who occupied the Hazaracat, carried out genocides. It is said

that Hazaras's origin stemmed from Mongols but Hazaras rejected this claim. Most of Hazaras worked in the low-paying jobs. By 1980s, Hazaras were not permitted to work in state institutions or official positions. Pashtuns had tried to eradicate and abolish Hazaras's cultural existence. By the way of Soviets's occupation, Hazaras firstly established their party and opposed to the existing political system. Hazaras are deprived of the opportunities of education, health, employment and other economical wealths. Cities in which Hazaras generally lived, lacked any health clinic, school, university and transportation system because of their sectarian differences (Hussainy, 2013: 88).

#### **RELATIONS AMONG ETHNIC GROUPS IN AFGHANISTAN**

Due to the presence of the various ethnic groups, sects, language and culture in Afghanistan, majority of people more obeyed the social norms rather than the rules and norms of central administration. As a consequence of this situation, central authority became very weak in Afghanistan. Even, when the army force of state and local military forces were compared, it is seen that local military forces are more powerful and developed than state's central army. But these forces had not united against state authority. In this context, although lots of revolts and rebellions were faced in Afghanistan's political history, these were generally oppressed by state authority unless they were supported by other sides. Moreover, after Taliban's regime collapsed, new government was more authoritarian, effective and dominant unlike past administrations. There are few reasons which fuel the ethnic tensions among various ethnic groups. Firstly, socio-economic resources (water, land, money, jobs and other opportunities) had not been equally shared by ethnic groups. Secondly, all governments which came to the power, supported Pashtuns whether they are just or not due to the fact that Pashtuns are constituted of the most effective segment of Afghanistan. Pashtuns had always been at the superior position because of the fact that they controlled and audited administrative and political power. Governments which desire to sustain Pashtuns's dominance on the country, located Pashtuns groups in the north of the region by bringing them from south parts of the country. As a consequence of this situation, ethnic conflicts between Pashtuns and non-Pashtuns groups emerged. For example; Hazaras's transition from one city to another one is banned. If this rule is broken, Hazaras were being kidnapped by Taliban regardless their social situation. Thirdly, status difference among ethnic groups leads also conflicts. Because ethnic groups in the country were being assessed according to their status. Pashtuns see themselves as the most respectful and superior group of Afghanistan and they see the Hazaras at the lowest status. Pashtuns tyrannized over other ethnic groups because of the fact that they saw themselves superior in terms of both moral and material aspects. Afghan government implemented rigid policies against non-Pashtuns groups for preventing unification of other ethnic groups. That is why, internal wars, external interventions fuelled ethnic tensions (Mesbahzadeh, 2008: 217).

#### **Ethnic Groups's Influence on Afghan Politics**

Along with Afghanistan called as the region in which Pashtuns live, today, Afghanistan has variety of ethnic communities. Except Pashtuns (dominant ethnic society), there are lots of ethnic groups including especially Tajiks, Hazaras and Uzbeks (Andishmend, 2013: 51-52). This distinction among ethnic groups is originated from both ethnic and religious differences (sectarian difference). Hazaras are especially separated from other ethnic groups due to the fact that they belong to the Shia sect. Due to the ethnic heterogeneity of Afghan society, leads to some social and political problems. Because in this country, political power, throughout the history, did not belong to all ethnic groups rather a particular ethnic group or several dynasties. Political power is shaped according to dominant ethnic group or sect instead of justice or meritocracy. For instance; Pashtuns came to the power by force and implemented an oppressive and assimilative politics and practices against non-Pashtuns identities. Constitutions, at the framework of country's own political structure, determines the political structure of government (presidency, monarchy etc.) the structure of parliament (unilateral or bilateral) and the other organ's structure (legislative, executive and judiciary), all citizens's rights and responsibilities, election and appointment system etc. However, until Amanollah Khan's period, due to the absence of any codified constitution in Afghanistan, all rulers of the country came to the power by force and intimidation (Yoffe, 2014:30).

One of the most important issues in the Afghan's political history is the weight and superiority of Pashtuns on political power. Since Afghan state occurred in 1747, political power has been operated by different tribes of Pashtuns. But, Habibullah Kalahani who belongs to the Tajiks ethnic society, came to the power in 1929 for short term. In the Mujahedeen's period, Burhaneddin Rabbani who belongs

again the Tajiks's ethnic group, became the president as the leader of the party of 'Islam Community' for four years (1992-1996). But Pashtuns claimed that Afghanistan is established by them and right of ruling must belong to the tribes of Pashtuns (Yoffe, 2014: 35).

### **Pashtun's Influence on Afghan's Politics**

First Afghan state was established in 1747 by Ahmad Shah Durrani who is the member of Pashtun ethnic group. All rulers of the country claimed that right of ruling belonged to the Pashtuns due to Ahmad Shah 's ethnic identity (as founder of Afghanistan). Since 1747, political power was shared by two strong Pashtun tribes which are called as 'Gilzays and Durranis'. Other ethnic groups were tried to be excluded from political power and state offices (Mesbahzadeh, 2008: 59). In Afghanistan, after Amir Abdurrahman Khan and Nadir Shah came to the power, discrimination and inequality in the country became the determinant of Afghan political system. Amir Abdurrahman Khan ruled the country as the king of Afghanistan between 1880-1901. He gave support for Afghan community which rebelled against British forces and domination and became the heroic leader of revolts in the Afghanistan. After Amir came to the power, made a treaty of friendship with England. So, Amir controlled the entire of Afghanistan by taking England's support and aids. Amir established a powerfull central authority in the country by eradicating small tribal governments. Amir Abdurrahman Khan who captured the power by force, had not recognized the right of life for other non-Pashtuns and killed most of them or banished. Non-Pashtuns were exposed to various taxes (Hussainy, 2013: 181-182). Moreover, non-Pashtuns were emigrated to the disadvantaged geographies and Pashtuns were inhabited to the their lands. Amir promulgated that Hazaras can be killed and their daughters, sons and properties can be easily taken as bounty. When Amanollah Khan came to the power, conducted a different internal politics. He promulgated his target as providing the sovereignty and independence of Afghanistan and also freedom and equality for all Afghan communities. That is why, within the short term, this central government achieved to take support from all segments of Afghan society. Amir banned the slavery system which is exposed to Hazaras and demolished taxes on them also provided them to come back to the homeland. Among the Afghan's kings, Nadir Shah triggered the antagonism between ethnic groups. Nadir Shah who ended Habibullah Kalakani 's authority by means of Hazaras's supports and came to the power and established a Grand National Assembly which is consists of only Pashtuns. Other ethnic communities were excluded from politics and state institutions. In Nadir Shah's period, lots of revolts were introduced by non-Pashtuns for getting political participation. However, Nadir Shah oppressed these revolts by the way of other ethnic groups (Daulaty, 2014: 130-131).

In the Soviets's occupation period, the party of 'Halk ve Perçem' was dominant and were consists of mostly Pashtuns. After these parties were separated, Babrak Kamal who was the leader of the party of Public, came to the power. Kamal recognized other ethnic group's political rights. Furthermore, in this period, Sultan Ali Keshtmand who is the member of Hazara ethnic group, became the prime minister of Afghan's political history. According to Anthony Arnold, only three members of this party were consisting of Pashtuns but other ten members of the party were consisting of non-Pashtuns. After this party was dismissed by Mujaheds, tensions and power struggles among ethnic groups sustained (Sajjadi, 2013: 156-167).

### **Tajiks's Influence on Afghan Politics**

Since the first Afghanistan was established in 1747, Tajiks captured only two times the political power. Firstly, Amir Habibullah Khan who is the member of Tajik ethnic group, controlled the country for a short period. Secondly, Burhaneddin Rabbani (1992-1996) came to the power in the Mujahed's period. From the establishment of Afghan state to Soviets's occupation process, Tajiks, like other non-Pashtuns, were excluded from politics. Habibullah Kalakani from Tajiks, overthrow the Amanullah Khan's government and ruled the country for a short term (Mesbahzadeh, 2008: 99). After Kalakani captured the Kabul in 1929, crown the throne as Messenger of God. Initially Habibullah's government was supported by both Pashtuns and other ethnic groups. But later Tajik's superiority in this period was seen as a disappointment for Pashtuns and some revolts against Kalakani's government were introduced by the leadership of Nadir Shah. Habibullah Kalakani who was accepted firstly as the Messenger of God, then seen as thief and freeboote (Ghubar, 1999: 56).

### **Hazaras's Influence on Afghan Politics**

After Durrani came to the power in 1747, Hazaras's social and political problems began to emerge. Darwish Ali Khan who was appointed to the Herat as governor in the period of Timur Shah and then dismissed from his position, was the member of Hazara ethnic group. From Darwish Ali Khan to communist regime in Afghanistan, Hazaras were excluded from politics and they had no any effect on Afghan politics. Hazaras had no any rights in terms of social and political dimensions. Throughout the history, Hazaras were exposed to several persecutions. Their lands were captured by force and they were banished to the various geographies. Only Habibullah Khan developed a positive politics for Hazaras and other non-Pashtun ethnic groups. In the communist regime (Halk ve Perçem Partisi), Hazaras began to take place in the state offices. Babrak Kamal's period was known as the golden age of Hazaras. Kamal aimed to desire the equality among all various ethnic communities though he was the member of Pashtun society. Also in this period, each ethnic and religious discriminations were banned. Even Sultan Ali Kishmand from Hazaras were appointed as prime minister (Bellew, 1980: 125).

### **Uzbek's Influence on Afghan Politics**

Uzbeks, from the establishment of Afghan state by Ahmad Shah Durrani in 1747 to the communist regime, could not contribute to the political affairs. They were exposed to the persecution by some Afghan kings. It is banned them to use their own language. Along with the communist regime, Uzbeks got some social and political rights like other non-Pashtuns ethnic groups. In the Dr. Nacibullah's period, General Abd-el Rashid Dostum who is famous leaders of Uzbeks, became the one of the most important representative of the party of Homeland (Vatan).

### **ETHNIC GROUP'S INFLUENCES ON AFGHAN POLITICS IN THE PERIOD OF MUJAAHEEDS (1992-1996)**

Mujaheeds who struggled against Soviets's invasion, are divided into two main groups. One of these groups is Afghan Mujaheeds belonging to Sunni sect (seven parties ) in Pakistan and the other group is Iranian Afghan Mujaheeds belonging to the Shiite sect (eight parties) After Soviet invasion, these groups gathered and struggled against Soviet's occupation and communist regime. After the collapse of communist regime in 1988, Mujaheeds established the first Afghan state in the lands of Pakistan by the way of Pakistan's support and aids. Tajik and Pashtuns in Pakistan formed a Grand Council by the purpose of creating a new government. Leadership of this council was made by Afghanistan's president. According to the Grand Council's decision, Afghan government will be established by Mujaheeds. Moreover, %70 of Afghan cabinet will be consist of Tajik and Pashtun who live in Pakistan Mujaheeds, %20 of this will be consist of Afghan migrants who live in Pakistan and Iran, %10 of this will be consist of Afghan Mujaheeds who live in Afghanistan. But in this cabinet, Hazaras and Uzbeks who struggled against Soviets along with other Mujaheeds, had not been given place (Andishmend, 2012b: 152-154).

In this cabinet and then second cabinet established by Mujaheeds, there was no any representative of other ethnic groups such as, Hazaras, Uzbeks and Turks (Sajjadi. 2013: 179). In this period, while Hazaras struggled for getting some rights in terms of political and religious dimensions, Uzbeks were struggling for getting a recognance of the Uzbek language as official language. One the other hand, Hikmetyar promulgated himself as the leader of Pashtuns and introduced a war against Pashtuns. Because according to Pashtuns, right of ruling belonged to the Pashtuns. So, Kabul, capital of Afghanistan, was divided into four battle field among Pashtuns, Tajiks, Uzbeks and Hazaras. This situation dragged the country into the civil war. While Mujaheeds struggled each other, Taliban which emerged as a new political group, captured the power (Sajjadi, 2013: 276-277).

### **ETHNIC GROUP'S INFLUENCES ON AFGHAN POLITICS IN THE PERIOD OF TALIBAN (1996-2001)**

Taliban which emerged for establishing a Pashtun state in Afghanistan, occupied the entire of Afghanistan within the short period and introduced a battle against other Mujaheed groups (Andishmend, 2012b: 209). Taliban excluded non-Pashtun ethnic communities and political parties from political affairs and government by using force, threat and intimidation. Rabbani's government could not take support from Pashtuns, so, this situation exaltered the expansion of Taliban in the

region. Taliban introduced a war against especially Hazaras belonged to the different sect (Shia) and declared them as unbelievers. In this period, most of Hazaras were killed or banished. However, Taliban collapsed in 2001 by the way of NATO's aids after they ruled the country for four years (Gritzner, 2007: 166).

#### **ETHNIC GROUPS'S INFLUENCES ON AFGHAN POLITICS IN THE PERIOD OF INTERIM GOVERNMENT (2001-2004)**

Along with the collapse of Taliban regime, the conference of Bonn initiated by UN and USA became the corner stone for the future of Afghanistan on 2001, 27th November. New political regime in Afghanistan was determined by this conference. By the way of this new regime, all ethnic groups gained equal political rights. Participant groups of this conference are; the North League which introduced a war against Taliban, the representatives of Zahir Shah who was the former King of Afghanistan, Cyprus and Peshaver Peace Boards (Rahimi, 2010: 140). Hamid Kharzai from Pashtuns was elected as president for temporary six months at the end of the Conference of Bonn. Pashtuns's political superiority and effect sustained even at this conference. In this period, Tajiks achieved some political rights and vice of president was elected from Tajiks first time due to Tajiks's support on the election of Hamid Kharzai at the conference of Bonn. Moreover, Hazaras which were excluded from politics and exposed to various butcheries, gained some ministries in this period. Hazaras and their religious sects were recognized by state like other ethnic groups. Uzbeks also taken place within both politics and military. Muslim or non-Muslim societies in Afghanistan gained a recognition in politics according to their population. However in this period, those who were influential figures on Afghan politics, were elected by international Powers especially USA (Adelkhah, 2017: 202).

#### **CONCLUSION**

This article purposed to reveal the sociological and ethnic groups's influences on Afghan politics. Afghan society is a heterogenous structure in terms of religious, ethnic and identity. This situation leads to lots of ethnic problems and social turmoil in Afghanistan between various ethnic and religious groups. This study aimed to focus on only fundamental four ethnic groups and their influences on Afghan politics. Because these four groups had an effect in both social and political spectrum. However, Pashtuns which were dominant in Afghan politics, pursued the rigid, oppressive and assimilative politics which is called as "Pashtunisation" against other ethnic groups such as; Uzbeks, Tajiks and Hazaras. Especially Hazaras who are different from classical religious understanding and belong to the Shia, were exposed to several genocides due to the their religious choice. Social turmoil and polarization among ethnic groups in Afghanistan caused some radical and extremist religious movement like Taliban, Al-Qaade. External interventions led by firstly USSR and then USA made Afghan lands as battle field in which super powers tried to prove their authority and powers. Afghanistan had faced with sectarian conflicts originated from sectarian differences. Political power had been captured by dominant ethnic group and sect. Other sects and ethnic groups were excluded from social, political and economical sphere. Due to the power struggles among different ethnic groups, an upper identity and national unity could not occur in Afghanistan.



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