THE REFUGE OF THE WORLD:

AFGHANISTAN AND THE MUSLIM IMAGINATION

1880-1922

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Abstract

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This dissertation is an attempt to solve a puzzle: how and why did the poor, remote and isolated country of Afghanistan become a site of international Muslim aspiration and imagination in the early 20th century? To answer this question, the dissertation focuses on the creation of 'place' - of Afghanistan in conceptual and material terms - out of the movement through 'space' of Afghan and Muslim travellers, and the inscriptions of such movement in texts. Through such a study, the dissertation argues that Afghanistan's emergence as imperial counter-space and practical base for Muslims was the product of new physical and intellectual interactions amongst Afghan and Muslim travellers, powered by new technologies of steam and print. Such an argument resituates Afghanistan in connection to larger transformations taking place elsewhere. It thus marks an attempt to write late 19th and early 20th century Afghanistan back into global history.

At the same time as drawing Afghanistan into that larger global story, however, the dissertation stresses the distinctiveness of the 'Muslim turn' to Afghanistan: how many of these new physical and intellectual movements relied on older physical or imagined connections with 'the land of the Afghans'; how other movements offered strikingly original visions of what Afghanistan was and could be; how the Afghan court fostered and encouraged such movements through its particularist policies; how Afghanistan's seemingly remote location, on the peripheries of the religious heartlands of the Middle East and the political and economic centres of western imperialism, made it such a prominent and attractive focus of Muslim interest and action.

By plotting the inter-connections of Afghan and Muslim travellers over a forty-year period, the dissertation charts how Afghanistan grew to become one of the great hopes of the Muslim world. At the same time, the dissertation charts the growing gap between the idealized representation of Afghanistan and its reality. Finally, it illustrates how the 'Muslim turn' to Afghanistan ended in disillusionment and disaster, on Afghanistan's plains.

Table of Contents

Abstract **2**

Table of Contents **3**

Introduction **6**

I. Afghanistan and Empire 9

II. The Framework of 'Travel' 11

III. The Afghan and the Coffee Machine: Different Ways of Writing Afghan Travel 14

IV. Afghanistan and the Muslim Imagination 18

V. Methodology of this Dissertation 20

VI. Chapter Outlines 28

Chapter One: 'A House Without a Window'? Afghanistan and the World 1880-1901 ..... **31**

I. Introduction 31

II. Case Study One: The Travels of Nasr Allah Khan in Europe 36

II.1. The Performance of Afghan Royal Power Abroad 36

II.2. Disorienting and Reorienting Afghanistan: A Travelling Transformation 43

II.3. 'Self','Other,' or 'Neither'? Re-Thinking Alteritism in Muslim Travelogues 45

II.4. On Time: The Temporal Re-Orientations of Industrial Travel 51

II.5. Progress and Prejudice 55

II.6. From Aden to Eton: Searching for the Source of Strength Abroad 58

III. Religious Travellers and the Afghan State 64

III.1. State Policies Towards the Hajj 64

III.2. State Policies Towards the Hijrat 68

III.3. Case Study Two: Muhammad Yusuf Riyazi's Religious Travels Abroad 71

III.3.1. The Iron Horses of Kazemain 73

IV. From Outcast to In-Law: Exile and the Afghan State 77

IV.1. Case Study Three: Mahmud Tarzi's Siyāhatnāmah 79

IV.2. Printing Afghan Progressivism: The 'Inayat Press 82

IV.3. Mahmud Khan meet Mahmud Beg 89

IV.4. The Places In Between....91
IV.5. From Perception to Conception: A Steam-Powered Transformation....96
V. Conclusion....102

Chapter Two: The Road to Progress: Journeymen in Afghanistan 1901-1914 .105

I. Introduction....105
II. From Tour to Text: Afghan and Urdu accounts of Habib Allah Khan in India 109
III. Case Study One: Hajji Muhammad Khan's Polyglot Panegyric....113
III.1. Afghanistan as Spiritual and Political Opportunity....116
III.2. Merchants, Map-Makers, Mechanics: Indian Migrant Labour in Afghanistan....121
IV. Case-Study Two: Dr Abdul Ghani's Memoirs of Kabul....125
IV.1. Education or Espionage?....129
V. Case Study Three: Muhammad Fazlı's Illustrated Afghan Travelogue....135
V.1. First Contact: Indians in Cairo, Ottomans in Exile....138
V.2. Pan-Idealism: Asian, Islamic, and Turkish solidarities....144
V.3. Embattled Lands: Russophobia and the Decline of Islam....147
VI. Case Study Four: Mirza Siraj al-Din Hakim's Afghan Adventures....158
VII. Conclusion....165

Chapter Three: Revolutionary Road, Afghanistan 1915-1922....167

I. On Afghanistan's Plains....167
II. Progress and Primitivism: Indians Rewriting Afghanistan....173
III. The Makings of an Imperial Counter-Space: Afghanistan in 1915....177
III.1. An Indian Mujāhid in Afghanistan....184
IV. Social Mobility Amongst Journeymen in Kabul....188
V. The Rise of the Revolutionary Amir: Aman Allah Khan in Power....196
V.1. Anglo-Afghan, Indo-Afghan: Afghanistan's War of Independence....198
V.2. The Rise and Rise of the Indian Revolutionary in Kabul....202
VI. Post-War Afghanistan....204
VII. The Hijrat Movement of 1920....214
VII.1. The Roots of the Hijrat in India....216
VII.2. Landscapes of the Hijrat....223
VII.3. The Rocky Road to Kabul....228

VII.4. De-Sacralizing Afghanistan: Discord and Difference at the Mountain of the Lamp 234
VII.5. A Walk in the Hindu Kush 238
VII.6. Rhetoric and Reality in Rural Afghanistan 240
VII.7. The Real State of 'Progress' 243
VIII: The End of The Affair: Post-Hijrat Afghanistan 248
IX. Conclusion 250

Conclusions 252
I. Departures 254

Note on Transliteration and Dates 258
Transliteration Table 260

Bibliography 263

Introduction

In 1895, an Afghan prince named Nasr Allah Khan (1874-1920) made a visit to Brighton in southern England. Touring the popular seaside resort town, he was particularly struck by the Royal Pavilion, which he noted in his travel-diary was built 'in the Chinese style' with 'pictures and portraits of Chinese emperors' hung on the walls. Travelling up to London, Nasr Allah Khan visited the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, where he found an old Chinese pagoda standing alongside greenhouses in which tropical plants flourished despite the chilly British weather. On his return to Kabul, Nasr Allah Khan set about attempting his own royal-sponsored fusion architecture, ordering palaces built with Italianate flourishes, designing Afghanistan's first glass greenhouses, naming one of his new palaces the 'Koti Londoni' ('the London Palace'), and filling his home with English furniture, mechanical music boxes, and imported coffee machines. Pagodas and Afghan princes in Brighton, Italian classicism and *café au lait* in Kabul: the late 19th century was a strange new world.[1]

It is this strange new world, and Afghanistan's place in it, which is the subject of this dissertation. Our Afghan prince's trip contains a particular constellation of travel, technology, text and transformation that has implications for the way Afghanistan - its representation and location in world history - is understood. It is these implications that the following dissertation attempts to unravel. The dissertation

[1] This story is taken from Faiz Muhammad Kātib Hazārah, *The History of Afghanistan: Fayz Muḥammad Kātib Hazārah's Sirāj al-Tawārīkh*, edited and translated by Robert D. McChesney & M.M. Khorrami, 3 Vols. (Leiden: Brill, 2013). The account of Nasr Allah Khan's time in London can be found at pp. 1064-1134. For an account of the 'Koti Londoni' see May Schinasi, *Kaboul 1773-1948* (Naples: Università degli Studi di Napoli L'Orientale, Dipartimento di Studi Asiatici, 2008), pp. 91-93.

follows the travels and travel writings of a range of Muslim travellers both in and out of Afghanistan, to understand the creation of a Muslim nation-state, called Afghanistan, in the late 19th and early 20th century.

What do I mean by 'the creation' of 'Afghanistan'? I know what I do not mean by the term: this dissertation is little concerned with the drawing of lines in the sand by British and Afghan diplomats to determine the boundaries of the Afghan state.[2] Such political and diplomatic history has been written for Afghanistan; indeed, Afghan political and diplomatic relations have been perhaps the primary lens through which Afghan history has been viewed in popular and academic works in English.[3] By 'the creation of Afghanistan' I mean the creation of a new conception of Afghanistan. For during the period under analysis a surprising thing happened: a poor, remote and isolated country – the seemingly accidental by-product of western imperialism's great power machinations - suddenly became seen as one of the great hopes of the Muslim world. How did this happen? And why?

While Afghanistan has been largely left out of works of global history - its seeming remoteness and limited resources making it appear little worthy of study - this dissertation's argument locates Afghanistan's global importance in its very liminality.[4] For in answering the question of how and why Afghanistan became an important site of Muslim aspiration and imagination in the early 20th century, the

[2] E.g. B.D. Hopkins, 'The Bounds of Identity: The Goldsmid Mission and the Delineation of the Perso-Afghan Border in the 19th Century,' *Journal of Global History* Vol. 2, No. 2 (2007).

[3] Muhammad Hasan Kakar, *A Political and Diplomatic History of Afghanistan, 1863-1901* (Leiden: Brill, 2006); B.D. Hopkins, *The Making of Modern Afghanistan* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008); Sir Kerr Fraser-Tytler, *Afghanistan: A Study of Political Developments in Central Asia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1950); Ludwig W. Adamec, *Afghanistan 1900-1923: A Diplomatic History* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967); *idem, Afghanistan's Foreign Affairs to the Mid-20th Century: Relations with the USSR, Germany, and Britain* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1974); Christopher M. Wyatt, *Afghanistan and the Defence of Empire: Diplomacy and Strategy During the Great* Game (London: I.B. Tauris, 2011); Milan L. Hauner, 'Afghanistan between the Great Powers, 1938-1945,' *International Journal of Middle East Studies* Vol. 14, No. 4 (1982), pp. 481-499.

[4] In a recent volume on globalization in world history, Afghanistan gets a single solitary mention, and only as a place from which marauding Durrani tribesmen attack India: A.G. Hopkins (ed.), *Globalisation in World History* (London: Pimlico, 2002).

dissertation argues that Afghanistan's peripheral status made it seem the perfect location for various projects of Muslim reform and renewal. One reason for this lies in the enduring role of peripheral places in the Muslim imagination. As Faisal Devji has argued in his study of 'landscapes of the jihad', peripheral places have often been central backdrops to the development of 'charismatic, heretical and even mystical' practices in Islam.[5] There has always been a strand of Islamic thought, whose 'location' both geographically and metaphorically lies in a world of 'caves, ruins and wilderness' in contrast to a canonical Islam tied to political authority in urban centres.[6] Such strands of thought have their counterpart in many cultures and thought systems of the world, European Romanticism being perhaps the most famous example. For the period covered in this dissertation, a time in which Islamic political authority in its central heartlands and capital cities seemed to be declining in the face of Western political, military, and economic power, peripheries took on an increasing importance, both in the minds of Muslims and in reality. Afghanistan was one such periphery - equipped by nature with a ready supply of mountains and caves – which could be re-fashioned for the needs and imperatives of the age.

This dissertation charts this refashioning of Afghanistan, and argues that on one level it was an emotive response by Muslims to declining Muslim power and prestige elsewhere in the world. At the same time, however, this image of Afghanistan was not just a yearning and fascination magnified by ignorance and distance. Afghanistan's growing status as an imagined space of Muslim renewal was powered by developments in global communications which made this remote and pure Afghanistan, paradoxically, easier to reach. For this reason, Afghanistan became

[5] Faisal Devji, *Landscapes of the Jihad: Militancy, Morality, Modernity* (London: Hurst & Co., 2005), p. 41.
[6] *Ibid*., p. 44.

not an imagined Islamic ideal but a real-life destination for many Muslims seeking a refuge from western imperialism and a base for practical, even radical, action.

The idea of Afghanistan as an attractive destination for Muslims was encouraged by the actions of the Afghan court. Certain policies, most particularly those towards Muslim asylum-seekers and migrant workers, spurred the influx of Muslim travellers into the country. These policies, and the interactions between Afghans and Muslims that resulted, helped shape the view of Afghanistan as a welcoming independent Muslim country where Muslims could find both refuge and work. Beyond simply altruistic motives of helping co-religionists, the Afghan court saw the value and use to be made of Muslim travellers to Afghanistan for its state-building agenda. Such travellers could, in the eyes of the Afghan court, provide the technical expertise, bureaucratic know-how, mercantile connections, diplomatic clout, or Islamic legitimacy needed to build a strong nation-state. Afghanistan's reinvention as a site of Muslim aspiration was thus an intensely transnational project, made out of a sometimes allied and sometimes discordant range of practical and intellectual interactions between Afghans and Muslims. Such interactions were encouraged by national policies, spurred by imperialism and world conflict, and undergirded by developments in global industrialized communications.

I. Afghanistan and Empire

The argument set out in this dissertation inevitably raises the issue of Afghanistan's relation to empire, be it the British Empire in India or the Russian Empire in Central Asia. While various arguments have been made for Afghanistan being an essentially imperial creation in the 19th century, this study's focus on the early 20th century paints a rather more complicated picture of the connection of

Afghanistan to empire. While it is true that the British subsidy to Amir 'Abd al-Rahman Khan (r.1880-1901) and Amir Habib Allah Khan (r.1901-1919) provided important, even essential, funds for the Afghan rulers' attempts at centralization and consolidation of power, this study illustrates how the Afghanistan of the Muslim imagination was largely an *anti*-imperial creation. Moreover, the actual practical work of building a new nation-state was overwhelmingly carried out by Muslims, from Afghanistan, British India, the Ottoman Empire, Iran, and Central Asia. It is important here to distinguish between the developments driven by western imperialism, and the often very different meanings and purposes assigned to such developments: the British and Russian Empires may have played lead roles in the creation of imperial shipping and railway lines that drew the world closer together, but these empires could not dictate the meanings of the journeys of Afghan and Muslim travellers who made use of those new forms of transport;[7] Indian printers may have learnt their art on technologies invented by the British, but the British could not control the use of such printing expertise by anti-imperialists in Afghanistan and elsewhere. The empires that brooded over the other side of the Afghan border provided opportunities and resources for Afghans and non-Afghans in Afghanistan. Moreover, one should not overstate the information and understanding that imperial powers had of Afghanistan. Imperial intelligence regimes in British India may have attempted to keep a close eye on such goings-on in Afghanistan, but they were only partially successful in this respect: the India Office records are patchy at best for the first two decades of the 20th century, until the founding of the British Embassy in

[7] This is a theme that runs through much of the recent volume by James L. Gelvin and Nile Green (eds.), *Global Muslims in the Age of Steam and Print* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: California University Press, 2014).

Kabul after Afghanistan's independence in 1919.[8] Afghanistan was not purely 'Afghan-made' but nor was it a mere imperial creation. Rather, just as in 19th century Europe, the creation of a new Afghanistan in the late 19th and early 20th century was a thoroughly composite project.[9]

II. The Framework of 'Travel'

The framework of analysis through which this dissertation attempts to answers its central question is that of 'travel', and the primary sources it uses are 'travel writings', by which is meant a broad range of 'writings on travel'. As Robert McChesney has noted in a recent brief article, 'travel' is a 'persistent motif in Afghanistan's history,' whose 'forms, impetuses, and ramifications' have played an important role 'in shaping the Afghan past and present.'[10] As for the value of 'travel writings', as Nile Green has written, 'among all the forms of literature related to Afghanistan, the genre that is most revealing of Afghan interaction with the surrounding world is travel writing.'[11] Building on these two basic insights, this dissertation focuses on 'travel' since it is an analytic framework that offers the best means to make sense of the physical and conceptual interactions between Afghans

[8] R.R. Maconachie, the British Minister in Kabul from 1929 to 1935, and the compiler of a 'Précis on Afghan Affairs' in 1928, was deeply dismissive of the quality of information and analysis gathered by the British Agent in Kabul in the pre-1919 period: 'His diaries are a farrago of rumours and facts, and show little capacity for sifting evidence or drawing conclusions. British intelligence officers, on the other hand, lacked the essential advantage of being on the spot, and had to rely on local agents,' R.R. Maconachie, *A Précis on Afghan Affairs From February 1919 to September 1927* (Simla: Government of Indian Press, 1928), IOR/L/P&S/20/B285, p. 12. Maconachie is right that the diaries are full of rumours; however, where Maconachie betrays a prejudice in blaming 'local agents', the main reason for the lack of verifiable and useful intelligence was the extreme restrictions placed on the British Agent in Kabul by the Afghan rulers.

[9] For a study of such interactions in a European context, see Sebastian Conrad, 'Globalization Effects: Mobility and Nation in Imperial Germany, 1880–1914,' *Journal of Global History* Vol. 3, No. 1 (2008), pp. 43-66.

[10] R.D. McChesney, 'On Mobility in Afghan History' in Nile Green (ed.), 'Roundtable on 'The Future of Afghan History,' *International Journal of Middle East Studies* Vol. 45, No. 1 (2013), p. 135.

[11] Nile Green, 'The Afghan Afterlife of Phileas Fogg: Space and Time in the Literature of Afghan Travel' in Nile Green and Nushin Arbabzadah (eds.), *Afghanistan In Ink: Literature Between Diaspora and Nation* (London: Hurst & Co., 2013), p. 67.

and Muslims throughout the world during the period. Travel also provides the genre – the travelogue - through which such interactions were recorded, narrativized, and circulated.

But what do I mean by 'travel'? Is it not merely the old academic term 'mobility' dressed up by another name? Up to a point, yes: this dissertation is very interested in the physical movements of peoples and the political, social, and cultural meaning of such movements.[12] However, I use the term 'travel' instead of 'mobility' since 'travel' goes one step further: it combines a study of movement with a study of the discourse surrounding that movement. In other words, travel is something one does *and* something one thinks, talks, and writes about doing. 'Travel' thus has a conceptual and often textual life outside of the physical act of moving. Travel's status as act and discourse is essential for my argument. For we cannot answer the question of how and why Afghanistan became the site of Muslim aspiration and imagination without engaging with both the physical and the conceptual, and the relation between the two. The refashioning of Afghanistan was the product of the particular interactions of peoples, ideas, government policies, and texts. Changes in material conditions or technologies had an impact upon people's ideas; people's ideas and textual renderings of those ideas had an impact upon government policies and material conditions. The physical and conceptual should not be separated. Fortunately, studying 'travel' in all its forms allows one to analyse both the physical and the conceptual in the same field of analysis.

[12] For a useful introduction to the varied roles of 'movement', see Benjamin D. Hopkins and Magnus Marsden, 'Introduction' to *idem*, *Fragments of the Afghan Frontier* (London: Hurst & Co., 2011), p. 2. I am also influenced here by James McDougall and Judith Scheele (eds.), *Saharan Frontiers: Space and Mobility in Northwest Africa* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2012) and John Randolph and Eugene M. Avrutin, 'Introduction' to *idem* (eds.), *Russia in Motion: Cultures of Human Mobility since 1850* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2012).

What is more, 'travel' is not just a category of analysis, like 'mobility', that we historians impose upon historical actors. Rather, 'travel' is a powerful indigenous concept that helped Afghans and Muslims make sense of themselves and the world around them. There are many terms in the Islamic and Arabic-Persian lexicon for different forms of travel: from the broad idea of a journey encapsulated in the Arabic terms *rihla, sair*, and *safar*, to the more tightly defined concepts of pilgrimage (*hajj*) and religious flight (*hijrat*), from time-honoured visits to shrines (*ziyārat*) to the more recent development of touristic travel (*siyāhat*).[13] Such different conceptual formulations for movement had their own varied textual expressions – *safarnāmah*, *hajjnāmah, siyāhatnāmah, safāratnāmah* – at the same time as generic boundaries during the period were rarely fixed or followed. Accounts of travel in Afghanistan during the period can be found embedded in historical chronicles, religious compendia, panegyrics, memoirs, illustrating the inseparability of 'travel' and 'travel-writing' from other acts and texts that created a shared sense of a people or a place. As we shall see, all these different forms of 'travel' played important roles in shaping the movement and mindset of travellers in and out of Afghanistan, and in shaping the way Afghanistan was understood inside and outside its borders. As act, discourse, text, even government policy: 'travel' in all its forms was an essential part of the Muslim remaking of Afghanistan.

[13] For a useful introduction to such forms of travel in Islamic culture, see the preface to Ian Richard Netton (ed.), *Golden Roads: Migration, Pilgrimage and Travel in Mediaeval and Modern Islam* (Richmond: Curzon Press, 1993). Also, Dale F. Eickelman and James Piscatori (eds.), *Muslim travellers: pilgrimage, migration, and the religious imagination* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).

III. The Afghan and the Coffee Machine: Different Ways of Writing Afghan Travel

This dissertation started with a story of an Afghan prince abroad, taken from an Afghan court history published a hundred years ago in Dari in Kabul. I started with this story since it offers a neat counterpoint to the way that westerners write about Afghan travel. Let us return to our Afghan prince, and plot some of those differences.

Firstly, we have an Afghan travelling to Europe. Surprisingly for a country with one of the largest and most widely scattered diaspora in the world, Afghanistan in western literature has conventionally been a place that receives incomers - dashing Scottish adventurers, hearty Swiss mountain-climbers, caustic English aesthetes – rather than a place that sends forth its own travellers. This has been partly due to the use of Afghanistan by travel writers as a backdrop for European action and self-exploration, 'a kind of Central Asian Scotland whose wilder highlands provided a primitive literary space in whose emptiness it was possible to explore the limits of the British self.'[14] Another reason has been the division between western observer and Afghan 'native' in such texts. The British tradition of travel-writing in particular, starting in the early 19th century with Mountstuart Elphinstone and Alexander 'Bukhara' Burnes and continuing right up to this day, have contrasted the 'quintessentially mobile' western explorer writing the texts with the immobile Afghan 'native' he (almost always a 'he') finds there.[15] Such accounts of Afghans by British travellers fits into a larger pattern of representations of 'natives' in early European

[14] Green, 'The Afghan Afterlife' (2013), p. 68.
[15] Mountstuart Elphinstone, *An Account of the Kingdom of Caubul, and its dependencies in Persia, Tartary, and India* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown, 1815); Lieutenant Colonel Sir Alexander Burnes, *Cabool: A Personal Narrative of a Journey to, and Residence in that City, in the years 1836, 7, and 8* (London: John Murray, 1842). For some 20th century examples see Robert Byron, *The Road to Oxiana* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1937); Eric Newby, *A Short Walk in the Hindu Kush* (London: Secker, 1958); Freya Stark, *The Minaret of Djam* (London: John Murray, 1970). For a contemporary example see Rory Stewart, *The Places in Between* (London: Picador, 2004).

ethnographies; as Arjun Appadurai has argued, in such works 'natives are not only persons who are from certain places, and belong to those places, but they are also those who are somehow *incarcerated,* or confined, to those places.'[16] As Mary Louise Pratt, Javed Majeed and James Clifford have noted in their studies on imperial travel writing, in the dominant discourses of European travel writing the 'native' cannot be the 'heroic explorer, aesthetic interpreter, or scientific authority.'[17] Instead, the 'native' must remain a 'travelee' i.e. a person who is travelled to rather than a person who travels. For these reasons, accounts of the far-flung and diasporic movements of Afghans remain few in number.[18]

A second reversal in the story of the Afghan prince is that he is an active agent in the contemporary world: travelling, writing, learning, buying, designing, importing. With its roots in the European age of 'discovery' and early colonialism, European travel-writing has maintained a view of Afghanistan's inhabitants as essentially the same rugged tribesmen as those described in the earliest encounters of the late 18th and early 19th centuries.[19] Indeed, the anti-contemporary stance and 'nostalgia' for an

[16] Arjun Appadurai, 'Putting hierarchy in its place,' *Cultural Anthropology* Vol. 3, No. 1 (February 1988), p. 37, quoted in Javed Majeed, *Autobiography, Travel and Postnational Identity: Gandhi, Nehru and Iqbal* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p. 11. The emphasis is Appadurai's.

[17] *Ibid*. See also James Clifford, *Routes, Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), p. 33. For the notion of 'travelee', see Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1992), p. 7. A seemingly obvious counter-example of a 'native' as travelling observer is the work of Alexander Burnes's *munshī,* Mohan Lal, who wrote an English language account of Afghanistan called *Travels in the Panjab, Afghanistan, & Turkistan to Balk, Bukhara, and Herat and a Visit to Great Britain and Germany* (London: William H. Allen & Co., 1846). However, as Javed Majeed notes, Lal was appropriated by the British who used his work, and its success, as proof of the rightness of their colonial educational policies. They thus denied Lal the status of a traveller in his own right. See Majeed, *Autobiography* (2007), pp. 14-15, 66-67.

[18] For notable exceptions, see Zuzanna Olszewska, *Poetry and its Social Contexts among Afghan Refugees in Iran* (D.Phil Dissertation, Oxford University, 2009); Robert Nichols, *A History of Pashtun Migration, 1775-2006* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008); Jos J.L. Gommans, *The Rise of the Indo-Afghan Empire, c.1710-1780* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999); Alessandro Monsutti, *War and Migration: Social Networks and Economic Strategies of the Hazarahs of Afghanistan* (New York: Routledge, 2005); John Baily and Michael Collyer, 'Introduction: Music and Migration,' *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* Vol. 32, No. 2 (March 2006), pp. 167-182.

[19] Marcus Schadl, 'The Man Outside: The Problem with the External Perception of Afghanistan in Historical Sources,' *ASIEN* Vol. 104 (2007), pp. 88-105. For the development of travel-writing and its connection to imperialism, see David Spurr, *The Rhetoric of Empire: Colonial Discourse in*

imagined past have become almost constitutive features of the genre of western travel writing on Afghanistan.[20] When historians have tackled the country, economic, social, and cultural readings of Afghan history have been neglected for accounts that focus on international diplomacy and military engagement. In such works, Afghans do not use coffee-machines.

A third reversal visible in the story of the Afghan prince is that the Afghanistan portrayed in the story is a world populated by contemporary architectural design, technology, international cuisine. This is not the Afghanistan of the popular, western imagination, in which the emphasis is on Afghanistan's essentially unchanging nature, a country permeated with permanence. Sir George MacMunn, whose 1929 history 'Afghanistan From Darius to Amanullah' attempted to pour some cold water on the idea of Afghanistan as a 'country of dreams' and inject a note of realism and factual accuracy into studies of the country, still wrote of Afghanistan that 'not only does it contain sheltered pockets of overwhelmed ancient peoples, but it is the most remarkable storehouse of antiquities,' which 'owing to a persistent endurance of savagery and the uncertain safety for travellers' have 'hardly yet been touched by the hand of modern science.'[21] Such a view was updated post-2001 by popular writers like Christopher Hitchens, who suggested that a western bombing campaign would bring exactly that needed touch from the hand of modern science:

> 'Bombing Afghanistan back into the Stone Age' was quite a favourite headline for some wobbly liberals... But an instant's thought shows

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Journalism, Travel Writing, and Imperial Administration (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993); Tim Fulford and Carol Bolton (eds.), *Travels, Explorations and Empires. Writings from the Era of Imperial Expansion 1770-1835,* 3 Vols. (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2001).

[20] For a study of 'nostalgia' and travel writing, see Patrick Holland and Graham Huggan, 'Varieties of Nostalgia in Contemporary Travel Writing,' in Glenn Hooper & Tim Youngs (eds.), *Perspectives on Travel Writing* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2004).

[21] Sir George Macmunn, *Afghanistan From Darius to Amanullah* (London: G. Bell & Sons, 1929), p. 2.

> that Afghanistan is being, if anything, bombed OUT of the Stone Age[22]

When not cast as neolithic, Afghanistan has more charitably been called a medieval country. At times, as with Hitchens, this is to criticize the country. At others, Afghanistan's supposed pre-modernity is its greatest asset. The seeming lack of contemporary architecture (like greenhouses), or technology (like coffee machines) made Afghanistan a useful counter-space to industrialized cities 'back home'.[23] Indeed, for nostalgists Afghanistan was not just a counter-space to 'home', but might in fact *be* home. The rise of professional archaeology and the founding of the *Délégation archéologique française en Afghanistan* (DAFA) in Kabul in 1922 led to a rush to unearth a lost 'Europe in the East' – of Alexander the Great, and his imperial legacy in the form of the Bactrian Greeks.[24] For lyrical souls like Peter Levi, the one-time Oxford Professor of Poetry who travelled with Bruce and Elizabeth Chatwin through Afghanistan in 1970, the Afghan people were the unbroken link with classical antiquity: a people who had kept alive the flame of classical Greek culture when it had been snuffed out in the west.[25]

The resilience of the European image of Afghanistan as spatially and temporally remote is extraordinary: over a decade of foreign involvement has seen literally hundreds of thousands of westerners - primarily soldiers, but also aid workers, journalists, diplomats, consultants, entrepreneurs – working in the country for often long periods. There are few countries that have been researched in more

[22] Christopher Hitchens, *The Mirror* (15th November 2001).
[23] Green, 'The Afghan Afterlife' (2013), p. 69. Also, Pratt, *Imperial Eyes* (1992).
[24] For studies of DAFA in Afghanistan, see Françoise Olivier-Utard, 'L'oeuvre scientifique française en Afghanistan (1922-1982) (Ph.D Dissertation, Université de la Sorbonne nouvelle, 1992); Annick Fenet, *Documents d'archéologie militante: la mission Foucher en Afghanistan (1922-1925)* (Paris: Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres, 2010). My own dissertation is another outcome of DAFA's presence in Afghanistan, revised as it was in the DAFA library in Shashdarak, Kabul in the spring/summer of 2014.
[25] Peter Levi, *The Light Garden of the Angel King: Journeys in Afghanistan* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1984).

detail over the last decade - mapped in a thousand analyses of tribal structures, village dynamics, kinship groupings, 'atmospherics,' 'political neighbourhood charts,' by hundreds of demographic researchers, political risk consultants, military intelligence officers, 'human terrain' units, security analysts.[26] And yet, Afghanistan in the western imagination remains an enduring symbol of the wild unknown.[27]

IV. Afghanistan and the Muslim Imagination

The overwhelming popularity of European travel writing on Afghanistan and the enduring images of Afghanistan they have perpetuated should not make us think that Europeans somehow had a monopoly over how Afghanistan was imagined and represented however. As the story of our Afghan prince suggested, there are other ways that Afghans and Afghanistan have been represented through the literature of 'travel'. Indeed, I would argue that a different set of travels – of Muslim travellers – have had as equally important an effect on the way Afghanistan has been imagined as the travels of Europeans. The Afghanistan of the Muslim imagination – a land of purity, progress, and potential – has spurred interest, policy, and action amongst Muslims quite as profoundly as the western-language texts of Mountstuart Elphinstone, Alexander Burnes, or Greg Mortenson, have spurred western interest, policy, or action.[28]

At times, the Afghanistan of the Muslim imagination coincides with the Afghanistan of European language sources. Muslim travellers' visions of

[26] James Caron eloquently notes that 'modern military knowledge relies on the surveillance drone that pinpoints everything in absolute coordinates but understands nothing.' See James Caron, 'Elite Pasts and Subaltern Potentialities' in Green (ed.), 'Roundtable' (2013), pp. 138-141.
[27] For a strident critique of contemporary knowledge production about Afghanistan, see Shah Mahmud Hanifi, 'Quandaries of the Afghan Nation' in Shahzad Bashir and Robert D. Crews (eds.), *Under the Drones: Modern Lives in the Afghanistan-Pakistan Borderlands* (Cambridge: Massachusetts, 2012).
[28] Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin, *Three Cups of Tea: One Man's Mission to Promote Peace…One School at a Time* (New York: Viking, 2006).

Afghanistan as a land of religious purity and austerity in the 20th century could be written in a romantic mode which to our eyes seems surprisingly similar to the accounts of 19th century British colonial officers on the North West Frontier.[29] At the same time, the Afghanistan of the early 20th century could also be for Muslim writers a land of optimism, combining the best of enlightened and 'progressive' Muslim rule, contemporary technology, and traditional Islamic morality. Whereas for Europeans Afghanistan was largely a symbol of the unchanging past, for certain reformist Muslims Afghanistan could be 'a space through which to enter not the distant past but the more proximate future.'[30] Such varied responses by Muslims illustrate how Afghanistan as an imagined Muslim space was essentially a deeply contested one, just like the grand project of Muslim renewal (*tajaddud, tajdīd*) itself. For some Muslims, Afghanistan stood for Islamic purity, austerity, and a path back to the true roots of religion; for others, Afghanistan offered a distinctly progressive and yet still distinctively Islamic example of an independent Muslim nation in Asia. Both were idealized visions, and both, in their janus-faced way, were responses to the same question of how to live in the contemporary world. But it is the romanticized vision that has proved the more enduring. Indeed, the idealized visions of Afghanistan's purity and austerity were still being perpetuated in the *mujāhidīn* movement against the Soviets in the 1980s, where idealistic young travellers, Osama Bin Laden a

[29] The primary texts under discussion in this regard are 'Abd al-Akbar Khān Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah: da mulk da āzādī pah silsilah khi* (Peshawar: Akbar būk stāl, 1968); Akbar Shāh Miyān Badrakhī, *Da āzādī pah talāsh* (Kabul: Da qaumūnū au qabā'ilū da chārū wazārat da nasharātū au farhangī chārū riyāsat, 1987). This was translated into Urdu and printed as Miyān Akbar Shāh, *Āzādi kī talāsh,* trans. Sayyid Waqār 'Alī Shāh Kākā Khail (Islamabad: Qaumī idārah barā-ye tahqīq-e tārīkh-o-saqāfat, 1989); 'Ubaid Allāh Sindhī, *Kābul mēn sāt sāl, aktūbar 1915-1922: īk tārīkhī yāddāsht*, ed. Muhammad Sarwar (Lahore: Sindh sāgar akādimī, 1976); Raja Mahendra Pratap, *My Life Story of Fifty Five Years, December 1886 to December 1941* (Dehradun: World Federation, 1947); *idem*, *Reminiscences of a Revolutionary* (New Delhi: Books India International, 1999); Zafar Hasan Aibak, *Khātirāt (āp bītī*), ed. and abridged by Ghulām Husain Zulfiqār (Lahore: Sang-e mīl, 1990); Shaukat Usmani, *Peshawar to Moscow: Leaves from an Indian Muhajireen's Diary* (Benares: Swarajya Publishing House, 1927); *idem*, *Historic Trips of a Revolutionary: Sojourn in the Soviet Union* (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 1977).

[30] Green, 'The Afghan Afterlife' (2013), p. 71.

notable example, found a spiritual, if often uncomfortable, home in the mountainous regions of eastern Afghanistan.[31]

This dissertation argues that such idealistic representations of Afghanistan as a place of Islamic purity, solidarity, or progress, were the products of interactions between Muslims related to the country at differing degrees of connection or separation. Some were Muslim reformists scattered across the world, eager to find answers and models for global Islamic revival; others were radical revolutionaries seeking a practical base for military action against western imperialism; some were local Muslims from the North West Frontier Province seeking nothing more than a better life a short walk across the border; others were Afghan state-backed intellectuals in Kabul pushing a narrowly nationalistic agenda. Despite the efflorescence of these idealistic visions of the country, this dissertation argues that such visions could not survive the lived reality of Afghanistan, where life proved much messier and more divisive. Many Muslims came to Afghanistan hoping to find religious, political, cultural, linguistic solidarity with their Afghan 'brothers'. Many left painfully disabused of that notion.

V. Methodology of this Dissertation

Each chapter of this dissertation has at its heart a number of published travel accounts by Muslims describing journeys and experiences 'on the road'. I read these texts in two complementary ways: as historical source and as literary discourse. As historical source, I analyse 'the what' of the texts: what the texts tell us about material, social, and political developments in Afghanistan during the period. These texts were all, to varying extents, designed to be informative. Like travel writings

[31] For memoirs of the Soviet jihad, see for example Abū Ja'far al-Misrī al-Qandahārī, *Dhikriyāt 'arabī afghānī* (Cairo: Dār al-Shurūq, 2002).

produced about other parts of Central Asia of the period, most texts under discussion are written in an 'informational' mode, which contained a desire to educate and transfer knowledge to its audience.[32] Such works can contain valuable information on Afghanistan during a period of history that has suffered from a paucity of primary sources. If used carefully, such texts can be useful sources for the material conditions and social relations of the time. Of particular value are the views the Pashto and Urdu texts under analysis give of rural Afghan life in the early 20th century.

At the same time, such travel writing aims at an objective truth that is clearly unobtainable; the 'truth' they describe is inevitably shaped by the worldview and needs of the authors and audiences of such works.[33] Such texts are the products of multiple locations, of 'home' and of 'abroad'. Moreover, such texts are also the product of a literary landscape, frequently shaped as much by what the traveller has read as by what he has seen.[34] One thus must contextualize these travel writings in the light of the author's life, the text's proposed audience and purpose, and the literary tradition and broader cultural milieu from whence they came. In this way, I treat these travel writings as rhetorical texts in service of a variety of purposes and as part of a developing discourse. This is the 'how' of the texts: how the texts articulate the experience of travel; how the texts represent Afghanistan.

An important question that often arises in the analyses of travelogues is reception: who read such texts and what impact did the texts have on them? It is a

[32] For the distinct 'informational' mode of travel writings on Central Asia between the 16th and 20th centuries, see Nile Green, 'Introduction: Writing, Travel, and the Global History of Central Asia' in *idem* (ed.), *Writing Travel in Central Asian History* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2014), p. 2.
[33] For 'truth' and travel writing, see Green, *ibid*; also, Carl Thompson, *Travel Writing* (London: Routledge, 2011); Mary B. Campbell, *The Witness and the Other World: Exotic European Travel Writing, 400-1600* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), pp. 2-3.
[34] This point is well-made by Paul Fussell in his account of British travel writing of the early 20th century, see Paul Fussell, *Abroad: British Literary Travelling between the Wars* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980).

difficult question to answer. Sometimes we don't have even basic biographical information about the author, let alone information such as how many copies were printed, how many were sold, or how people judged the text at the time. Fortunately for this dissertation, there is substantial information about most of the authors under discussion, which I include as part of each case-study. Moreover, many of the authors under discussion combined their travels with prominent roles in Afghan political, social, or intellectual life. We are thus able to plot the relations of their travels to their later professional roles, and the ways their travels may have influenced their thinking or the thinking of those around them. This is particularly true for the travels of Afghan royals, for whom personal experience and thought (however whimsical) could be transformed into policy.

On the question of reception, several of the texts were largely unknown at the time of writing and publication, and have remained obscure to this day. Such texts clearly cannot be described as having played any active role in shaping a public discourse. This fact should not, however, be considered a serious issue for this dissertation. For my arguments, the texts are less important as active *agents in* the world than as *products of* the world. The texts are products of interactions, physical and intellectual, which they bear witness to and describe in detail. Travelogues are one of the most valuable and lasting memorials of physical and conceptual interactions and impressions that would otherwise have no record: the serendipitous meeting of Afghan and Ottoman intellectuals in a Cairo coffee shop; the thrilling sensation of speed felt by a twenty-something Afghan traveller standing on the spume-flecked deck of a steamship; the impact on a young Indian intellectual of a night spent camping out with nomads in central Afghanistan. This dissertation argues that the emergence of Afghanistan as a site of Muslim aspiration and imagination was

the product of such physical and conceptual interactions, interactions that can be accessed and analysed by historians through analyzing the travelogues of historical actors involved. The fact that it seems that these travelogues had small readerships should not take away from their value or use in writing such history.

Another question which often arises with the study of travelogues is how 'representative' are such texts – of larger processes, movements, groups, worldviews, 'flows' – rather than mere anomalies? Such travellers were certainly part of a small minority of literate people in Afghanistan at the time. Nevertheless, many of the travellers are still representative of certain small but influential groups in Afghanistan during the period: of the ruling family, the official courtier class in Kabul, foreign technocrats, foreign merchants, foreign revolutionaries. Moreover, regarding this dissertation's central question – of how and why Afghanistan became a site of Muslim aspiration and imagination – these groups often played central formative roles, thus making them highly suitable for study. In the case-studies that follow I set the individual travellers in the context of these larger groups and patterns of exchange of which I regard them as representative. At the same time, there is no doubt that some of the travellers are more striking for their individuality than for their 'representativeness'. This need not be a weakness for the dissertation, however. For their individuality and anomalous status raises a new set of important questions: did they use their unique abilities or backgrounds to gain prominent positions in the country? What role might 'travel' have had in this process?

By focusing on a wide-ranging and motley group of Afghan and Muslim travellers, the dissertation hopes to expand our understanding of historical agency in Afghanistan beyond the official class in Kabul. This is not to ignore the court elites – this dissertation contains plenty of Princes and Ministers and Grand Men of Letters –

but rather to put such men into dialogue with other local and transnational actors whose voices have been less heard. To study such little-known characters in Afghanistan during a period that is now a hundred years away from the present day requires new sources. Finding such sources has been a perennial problem for historians of late 19th and early 20th century Afghanistan: decades of war have meant that many important documents and texts have been destroyed or have become as scattered as the Afghan diaspora itself. This dissertation has attempted to use as broad a set of sources as possible. I have been lucky: over the last seven years, important new documents and texts have come to light, and new initiatives have been set up to help make rare sources available to researchers.[35] Perhaps the most important find has been the acquisition by the Afghan Government, and subsequent publication, of the manuscript of Volume Four of the Afghan court historian Faiz Muhammad Katib's *Sirāj al-tawārīkh*, which provides rich new source material for the period under discussion, as well as embedded travel-accounts of Afghan court officials abroad. Alongside new publications, one of the pleasures of the project has been hunting down new sources. Over seven years of research I have stumbled upon useful documents, largely in private hands, locked in chests in villages on the Shomali plain; stuffed in suitcases in Tucson, Arizona; tucked behind cupboards in the old city district of Murad Khani; beautifully looked after in private libraries in rural Maine and Nice; piled in shipping containers in Ju-ye Shir in Kabul.

By using the accounts of primarily non-European actors, this dissertation aims to make the voices of the often little-known actors involved as loud (if not louder)

[35] Most important of these initiatives is New York University's groundbreaking 'Afghanistan Digital Library', which is making accessible much of Afghanistan's published cultural heritage from 1871 up to 1930.

than that of the analyst.[36] For this reason, too, this dissertation shies away from using the term 'modern' or its cognates 'modernization', 'modernism', or 'modernity', ever-present terms in many historical studies of the period. These were not terms used by the historical actors under analysis in this dissertation. Even as an analytical category, I think these words' usefulness has been rubbed away through over-use. Battles have raged amongst scholars for several decades now about whether modernity was a) a good thing b) a bad thing c) something only for certain peoples and areas of the world or d) not a thing but a plurality of things, i.e. 'multiple modernities' or 'alternative modernities.'[37] As scholars we do not have a good handle on what we mean by 'the modern', 'modernity', and 'modernism', and this analytical fuzziness becomes doubly unhelpful when we try and apply such terms to words in other languages that often have quite different meanings and connotations. 'Modernity', for example, is not a good translation of the phrase common in the period in Persian and Urdu 'the present time' ('*asr-e hāzir*), as is translated in one recent academic article.[38] Not only is it inaccurate, but it is misleading since it brings into the mind of the English speaker a train of intellectual baggage which is quite different from the meanings of the non-English-speaking actor using the term. Rather than force many different words – *tajaddud*, *tajdīd*, *'asr-e jadīd*, *'asr-e nau*, *'asr-e hāzir*, *'asrīyah*, *jadīdiyat*, *taraqqī*, *mutaraqqī* - into the straitjacket of a 'modernity' which few analysts and fewer of their readers will have the same understanding of, it seems to me much wiser to use a selection of different terms in English that translate much more closely to their Persian/Pashto/Ottoman/Urdu/Arabic meaning. It is then our job to analyse the

[36] I am influenced here by Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 30.
[37] The best discussion I know of 'modernity' in scholarship is Frederick Cooper's bracing chapter in Frederick Cooper, *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2005), Ch. 5.
[38] This example of unhelpful translation stems from an otherwise excellent article by Faisal Devji, 'Apologetic Modernity,' *Modern Intellectual History* Vol. 4, No. 1 (2007), pp. 61-76.

resonance of the meanings these varied terms had, ranging from old Islamic terms fashioned for re-use to striking neologisms.

That brief and inadequate discussion of 'modernity' is really to say that I would far rather understand the way Afghan and Muslim thinkers understood Afghanistan and the world around them, using the concepts and language that they had at their disposal. I want to understand the way they made sense of the material fact of unequal distribution of resources, technological and scientific advancement, and power relations between Afghanistan and other parts of the world. I want to know how non-European thinkers understood Western/European/colonial claims to represent 'progress' through such unequal distribution. 'Progress' (*taraqqī*) is the key term to be stressed here, since it is the word that historical actors under discussion most used in understanding inequality across the world during the period – the success of Western imperialism, the material wealth of Europe, and the relative weakness and poorness of Muslim societies - and the word they used in framing their responses. The word '*taraqqī'* is Arabic in origin, and has the connotation of lifting or raising.[39] It was first used in the sense of 'progress' by Turkish intellectuals of the mid-19th century.[40] This concept and word would act as a slogan for various intellectual and political movements, from the Istanbul reformist journal *Tarakki* founded in the 1860s to the political party Ittihad ve Tarakki Cemiyeti founded in 1889. By the 1880s, the term *taraqqī* had been absorbed into Persian and Urdu by Iranian and Indian intellectuals, who read Ottoman periodicals or had spent time in

[39] For the Arabic triliteral verb root *r-q-y* See Hans Wehr, *Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic* ed. J. M. Cowan, 4th Edition (Ithaca: Spoken Language Services, 1994), p. 411.

[40] For a discussion of the term '*taraqqī*' see Nile Green, 'Spacetime and the Muslim Journey West, 1860–1930,' *The American Historical Review* Vol. 118, No. 2 (2013), pp. 412-414. Green makes the point that such loan translations were common amongst the period, with '*madaniyat*' (civilization) another key term that entered the Ottoman lexicon, and later Persian and Urdu, during the period. See also Kevin Reinhart, 'Civilization and Its Discussants: *Medeniyet* and the Turkish Conversion to Modernism' in Dennis C. Washburn and A. Kevin Reinhart (eds.), *Converting Cultures: Religion, Ideology and Transformations of Modernity* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), pp. 267-290.

the Ottoman Empire. As we shall see, it was also a concept that Afghan thinkers were to pick up and use in understanding the world around them in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, primarily in their judgement of technological, scientific and educational advancement. An inherently relational concept, the term *taraqqī* produced a kind of philosophy of relativism, in which one's relative 'progress' was ever-shifting related to the 'progress' of other parts of the world: *taraqqī* as the measure of all things. Alongside *taraqqī*, one also often finds words stemming from the Arabic trilateral verb root *j-d-d*, such as '*asr*-e *jadīd*' ('a new age'), used to describe the age they felt a product of and witness to, and '*tajaddud*' ('renewal'), a word stemming from inside the Islamic historical lexicon, and now used to describe the new political and spiritual project these actors felt necessary as a response. These are thus the words I have used in this dissertation.

Another concept that this dissertation treats with caution is 'the state'. One must remember that 'the Afghan state' during the period under analysis was primarily the royal court. Its policy-making body was made up of one amir, several princes, and a large number of courtiers of differing ranks and proximity to the centre of power. Like any court, the Afghan court was beset by favouritism, jealousy, and mutual distrust. Any view of 'the Afghan state' as some unified force is an illusion, promulgated by the ruling family and key members of court, and often accepted as such by historians that follow in their wake.[41] Part of the methodology of this dissertation is thus to scrutinize the process by which the Afghan court, and its admirers, attempted to project a view of unified, progressive, pious rule through their policies, movements, and proclamations. Rather than merely accepting such

[41] As Philip Abrams noted, 'the state' is really a unified symbol of an actual disunity; it is one of our tasks as historians to unmask it as such and understand the nexus of political practices behind it. See Philip Abrams, 'Notes on the Difficulty of Studying the State,' *Journal of Historical Sociology*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (1988), p. 79.

'progressiveness' at its word, the dissertation is interested in the gap between rhetoric and reality. Indeed, as the dissertation argues, it is this gap between representation and reality that is one of the central reasons for the ultimate failure of the 'Muslim turn' to Afghanistan.

VI. Chapter Outlines

To answer the question of how the poor, remote, and isolated country of Afghanistan became the site of Muslim aspiration and imagination in the early 20th century, this dissertation proceeds through three stages, spread across three chapters. Chapter One starts by interrogating the terms of the question; how isolated really was Afghanistan? The chapter focuses on the reign of Amir 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, from 1880-1901. This is a period in which Afghanistan has been traditionally considered as extremely disconnected from the world due to the 'isolationist' policies of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan and the British Government in India, which combined to keep Afghans in and foreigners out of the country. This chapter returns to the period to reassess Afghanistan's 'inter-connectivity', focusing on the travelogues of three Afghans outside of Afghanistan: an Afghan prince in London, an Afghan Shi'a pilgrim in Iran and Iraq, and an Afghan exile in the Ottoman Empire. Each travelogue illustrates a different facet of Afghanistan's connections to the world around it, often unwittingly spurred by Afghan state and British imperial policies. The chapter argues that 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's centralizing policies in fact often ironically acted as a spur to mobility, propelling Afghans into new spheres of economic, religious and intellectual exchange. Such policies thus played an unwitting role in the creation of new conceptions of 'Afghanistan' in the minds of Afghan and Muslim intellectuals and new interactions between Afghans and outsiders. Afghan state policies, when

combined with the actions of the British in India, also encouraged the physical movement of large numbers of Muslims into Afghanistan. Rather than isolating his country, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan followed a pro-active immigration policy of welcoming Muslim asylum-seekers and migrant workers into his country. The chapter concludes that Afghanistan was in fact surprisingly 'wired-in' to forms of circulation and exchange with Muslims in other parts of the world, and was already in the late 19th century starting to gain a reputation as a refuge for Muslims.

Having challenged the basic assumption of Afghanistan's isolation, the dissertation turns to the moment at which Muslims from outside of Afghanistan started to write accounts of the new nation-state of Afghanistan. Chapter Two focuses on various texts by Indians, Ottomans, and Central Asians who found a home in Afghanistan during the first decade of the 20th century. Such Muslim professional travellers – or 'journeymen' as I call them – are both representative of the plight of much of the Muslim world in the face of western imperialism, and of the attempt by Muslims to respond to such a threat. Their texts are the first examples of the way that Muslims came to see Afghanistan as a site of Muslim optimism; their professional careers are examples of how Afghans and non-Afghans worked together, often uneasily, to realize that vision.

The third stage of my argument focuses on the efflorescence and adaptation of that vision of Afghanistan and its transformation into radical action during the First World War and its aftermath. Chapter Three characterizes this period as Afghanistan's 'revolutionary moment', by which is meant the use of Afghanistan by a wide variety of largely Muslim revolutionaries to further their revolutionary aims. The First World War was to act as an intensifier, heightening idealistic visions of Afghanistan and quickening the flows of increasingly radical travellers who saw

Afghanistan as a practical base for all manner of ambitious plans, from the invasion of India to the creation of a pan-Turkic confederation in Asia. Such intensity was not without its tensions: a study of the travel memoirs of several revolutionary travellers in Urdu, Pashto, and English recasts Kabul as a central location for the development of a discordant range of transnational activities and ideologies, fuelled by global conflict. Such radical travellers had extremely ambiguous relations with the Afghan state, aligning at times with the nationalist agenda and rhetoric of the Afghan ruling family, at others times dangerously undermining it. Nowhere was this clearer than the Hijrat Movement of 1920, in which tens of thousands of British Indian Muslims left the *dār al-harb* ('Land of War') of British India for the *dār al-Islām* ('Land of Islam') of Afghanistan. While the Afghan state had long welcomed such *muhājirīn* from British India, the sudden arrival of this wave of indigent travellers flooding into the country shattered any sense of shared solidarity and purpose between Muslims on both sides of the Durand line; the Afghan state was overwhelmed, the *muhājirīn* deeply disillusioned. The Hijrat Movement was the great culmination – and death knell – of Afghanistan as the great hope of the Muslim world. It would be another sixty years until Afghanistan would regain its place in the Muslim imagination, as its 'caves, ruins, and wilderness' became once more the site of great Muslim aspiration, in the jihad against the Soviet Union and beyond.

Chapter One: 'A House Without a Window'? Afghanistan and the World 1880-1901

I. Introduction

On the same trip to Britain in which he had rambled amongst pagodas in Kew Gardens, Prince Nasr Allah Khan found himself one evening at the Royal Tournament, a military pageant held at that time in Islington, North London. The British had pulled out all the stops for the occasion, a royal carriage picking the Afghan prince up and transporting him to the parade ground, where he was seated for the show next to the Prince of Wales. Due to his late arrival, the early acrobatic displays that had opened the show were repeated for their Afghan guest, followed by a programme of 'wonderful routines' lasting all evening.[1] The grand finale was a mock battle, staged on a vast artificial mountain 'so real no-one could tell if it was real or unreal' between a British troop and a mock-up African tribe. The official Afghan account of the trip, likely written by Nasr Allah Khan himself, noted how realistic the artificial fighting looked 'because the Africans did not have complete and up-to-date weapons and equipment but fought with arrow and spear.'[2] A particularly deadly weapon in the battle proved to be an electric fence running along the bottom of the mountain, which electrocuted the Africans to death as they charged the British lines. At one point, the Prince of Wales turned to Nasr Allah Khan and said, 'It's a good battle'. Nasr Allah Khan replied: 'It's very difficult to face carbines and artillery with arrows and spears.'[3]

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[1] Faiz Muhammad Kātib, *The History of Afghanistan: Fayz Muḥammad Kātib Hazārah's Sirāj al-Tawārīkh*, edited and translated by Robert D. McChesney & M.M. Khorrami, 3 Vols. (Leiden: Brill, 2013), p. 1096.
[2] *Ibid*.
[3] *Ibid*.

Prince Nasr Allah Khan was probably too young to remember the Second Anglo-Afghan War of 1878-1880, a war which, like the First Anglo-Afghan War (1839-1842) forty years previously, had seen one-sided massacres on both sides quite as devastating as the one that destroyed the ersatz Africans at the battle of Islington. Stories of great heroism, cowardliness, resilience, weakness, glory and dishonor had become enshrined in the Afghan and English popular imagination through printed accounts of British survivors in Britain, and the oral Pashto ballads, Persian epic poems, and printed Persian histories of Afghan and British Indian writers in South Asia.[4] Despite celebrating some notable victories for local forces, the Persian ballads also told of the devastating new weapons of the British, the sky raining down with cannon forcing their opponents to flee for the mountains. As the epic poet Muhammad Ghulam Akhundzadah Ghulami put it in 1843, describing the British use of artillery at the battle of Charikar, 'how can one compare a drop of water to a river in spate?'[5]

Nasr Allah Khan may have heard some of these songs of British brutality, duplicity, and destruction, but he had never seen the British Army in action before. Born an exile in Samarqand, he only came to Afghanistan after the British brought his father, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, to power in the aftermath of the second Anglo-Afghan War.[6] It was thus in Islington, not Afghanistan, that Nasr Allah Khan first witnessed the destructive power of the British Army. Avidly writing up his

[4] For a recent popular history that contains a useful bibliography on English, Afghan, and Indian sources on the First Anglo-Afghan War, see William Dalrymple, *Return of a King* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013). For Pashto poetry on the Second Anglo-Afghan War, see James Darmesteter, *Chants Populaires Des Afghans* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, E. Leroux, 1880-90).

[5] Muhammad Ghulām Kūhistānī Ghulāmī, *Jangnāmah* (Kabul: Matba'ah-e daulatī, 1958), p. 195. It must be admitted that there is some doubt as to the authenticity of this text, 'discovered' as it was in the 1950s during a period in which another famous discovery, the *Patah khazānah*, was 'found' by the Afghan scholar 'Abd al-Hai Habibi and later revealed to be a fake.

[6] For an account of this period, see Rob Johnson, *The Afghan Way of War: Culture and Pragmatism: A Critical History* (London: Hurst, 2011), Ch. 3; Stephen Wheeler, *The Ameer 'Abd al-Rahman* (London: Bliss, Sands and Foster, 1895).

experiences of Britain during pauses in his busy schedule, these letters were then sent home by international post, taking a matter of weeks to reach the Afghan border by steamship and train, from where they were carried arduously through the Afghan passes by camel, mule, or horse and on to Kabul. On their arrival, these missives describing the fantastical battles of African tribesmen electrocuted in north London were copied down by the court historian, Faiz Muhammad Katib. They were then pinned up as proclamations in the city market, where they were read out by those who could read - and read out to those who could not.[7]

This story, while not claiming to be typical, is nevertheless illuminating of the uneven participation of Afghans and Afghanistan in the great transformations of the second half of the 'long 19th century.'[8] While increasing numbers of Afghan travellers made use of the new global communications infrastructure of steamship, train, telegram, and post to travel increasingly far increasingly fast, Afghanistan itself remained at one step removed from such technological developments, the train-lines of British India stretching to, but stopping at, the border. Such differences between both sides of the border became the stuff of European legend, creating images that endured well into the 20th century. For Europeans, to pass the 'Afghanistan: Keep Out' sign on the Indo-Afghan border was to enter a harsh land of harsher justice. A cage containing the bleached bones of highway robbers set for all to see on a mountain pass became a well-worn image constantly reproduced in European accounts, the 19th century equivalent of western journalists' accounts of the Taliban

[7] For an account of the composition and sending of such letters, see Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh* (2013), Vol. 3, p. 1107. Town criers were known as *jārchī*, see Muhammad Hasan Kakar, *A Political and Diplomatic History of Afghanistan, 1863-1901* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), p. 161.
[8] The term is from Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution 1789-1848* (London: Weidenfield and Nicholson, 1962).

stadium execution of the 1990s.[9] Such almost exclusively English-language accounts of Afghanistan have helped shape the common western view of late 19th century Afghanistan, and Afghanistan more generally, as extremely isolated, and its ruling ideology as 'isolationist'.[10] In recent years this long-held view has been modified, adapted, and 'globalized' by several scholars who, while relying almost exclusively on colonial archives, have offered new interpretations for the period. For B.D. Hopkins, Afghanistan was marginalized and largely excluded from the global world order by British policy.[11] For Shah Mahmud Hanifi, it was the reverse: through his study of the dynamics of markets, capital, and traders moving between Kabul, Kandahar, and Peshawar, he argues that British Indian policymakers and the Afghan ruling family bound Afghanistan as an appendage to British India through the rerouting of capital flows. [12]

This chapter uses the travel-accounts of Afghan travellers out of Afghanistan, and the policies of the Afghan court towards incoming travellers, to reassess the Afghanistan of the late 19th century: is the puzzle of Afghanistan's emergence as a site of Muslim imagination and energy in the early 20th century really so surprising? Was the country really so isolated or marginalized? Was Afghanistan just a *de facto* princely state under the thumb of imperial Britain? Or can the roots of an alternative view of Afghanistan – as a Muslim refuge and practical home, as a young and proudly independent Muslim nation - already be found in the age of the 'Iron Amir'?

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[9] For example, Walter Saise, 'A Visit to Afghanistan', *Proceedings of the Central Asian Society,* (12th April, 1911), p. 5; also, Frederick Simpich and 'Haji Mirza Hussein' (a.k.a. Oscar Von Niedermayer), 'Every-Day Life in Afghanistan,' *National Geographic* (June 1921), pp. 85-110. For the contemporary period see, for example, the account which opens Dexter Filkins, *The Forever War* (New York: Knopf, 2008).

[10] The classic articulation of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's 'isolationist' policies is Hasan Kawun Kakar, *Government and Society in Afghanistan: The Reign of Amir Abd al-Rahman Khan* (Austin: University of Texas, 1979). For Kakar, during 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's reign, Afghanistan was 'isolated as never before', *ibid*., p. 68.

[11] B.D. Hopkins, *The Making of Modern Afghanistan* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), p. 6.

[12] Shah Mahmoud Hanifi, *Connecting Histories in Afghanistan: Market Relations and State Formation on a Colonial Frontier* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008).

In order to answer these questions I have divided the chapter into three parts, focusing on three types of travel and text: diplomatic, religious, and exilic. The first section uses the travel account of the Afghan Prince Nasr Allah Khan in Europe to explore how the Afghan ruling family used travel and travel writing as a conscious projection of Afghan power and independence at home and abroad. Such travel and travel writing were used by the Afghan ruling family to challenge the idea that they were mere vassals of imperial Britain. The section also explores how such travels and travel writings could go beyond such mere projections of state power to reveal more profound conceptual transformations of thought brought about by such travels: of new conceptions of time and space which would have a formative impact on the way Afghans thought about their own country. The second section uses a travel account of an Afghan Shi'a pilgrim, and the histories of an Afghan Shi'a historian, to explore the role of religious travels in forming or undermining the idea of Afghanistan as a religious refuge. The section argues that while certain forms of religious travel, particularly those of Shi'a Afghan subjects, were suppressed during the period, the Afghan court also led a proactive policy of welcoming many Muslim refugees from abroad, encouraging them to 'set the face of refuge-seeking through hijrat in the direction of the shadow of protection' of Afghanistan.[13] Such policies helped create an image of Afghanistan amongst certain Muslim travellers as a potential refuge and imperial counter-space. The third and final section uses the travelogue of an Afghan exile in the Ottoman Empire to illustrate the role of exile in forming, re-forming, and transforming the idea of Afghanistan amongst Afghans abroad.

[13] The quote is from an account of *muhājirīn* crossing into Afghanistan in October 1896, as described in Faiz Muhammad Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh, jild-e chahārum* (Kabul: Intishārāt-e amīrī, 2012), *tatimmah,* p. 307.

Through such a study of Afghan travel writings, the chapter argues that far from being isolated and disconnected during the period, Afghanistan was already welcoming foreign Muslims into Afghanistan as part of active state policy. At the same time, other policies of the Afghan state were unintentionally pushing Afghans into contact with Muslims in other parts of the world outside Afghanistan, encounters which forced Afghans to reflect on Afghanistan's place in the world, its future direction, and their own identity as Afghans.[14] The intended and unintended consequences of such policies was that Afghanistan by the late 19th century was already viewed by many Muslims as a site of religious, economic, and professional opportunity. And for many Afghans forced abroad, their experiences in exile would create shared intellectual and personal connections with foreign Muslims. Such connections would encourage the physical travels of Muslims to Afghanistan in the early 20th century, as well as foster intellectual and ideological connections that would power Afghan cultural and political life in the following two decades. Out of such connections would emerge a view of Afghanistan as an independent, optimistic young Muslim country, a model to be emulated amongst those involved in the grand global project of Muslim renewal.

II. Case Study One: The Travels of Nasr Allah Khan in Europe

II.1. The Performance of Afghan Royal Power Abroad

This first section focuses on an account of the travels of Prince Nasr Allah Khan from Afghanistan to Europe on a state mission in 1895. The account is

[14] The importance of studying such 'unintentional mobilization' has been stressed by John Randolph and Eugene M. Avrutin, who have argued in the case of Russia that 'the rise of the Russian Empire is best told as a story of intentional and unintentional mobilization', see John Randolph and Eugene M. Avrutin 'Introduction' to *idem* (eds.), *Russia in Motion: Cultures of Human Mobility since 1850* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2012), p. 4.

embedded in the Afghan court chronicle, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh*, by the court historian Faiz Muhammad Katib. The fact that such an account of a journey was written down and disseminated by members of the Afghan court immediately illustrates the value that the Afghan court assigned to acts of travel as a means to highlight its power and prestige both inside and outside the country. Such a fact should not surprise us: kingship in Central and South Asia, as in many other parts of the world, had relied on high levels of mobility in order to project its power into various contested regions of its supposed domains, and rulers in the lands of what is now Afghanistan were no different.[15] The existence of a textual record of such travels also illustrates the increasing importance assigned to 'travel writing' as enshrining such accounts of royal power in lasting objects that could be replicated and distributed.

While such accounts of court-sponsored travels were common across the border in Qajar-era Iran, the account of Nasr Allah Khan is a rare Afghan find.[16] The reason for the scarcity of such accounts produced in Afghanistan is, in part, due to imperial state politics. For one element of the arrangement made by Amir 'Abd al-Rahman Khan with the British in the wake of the Second Anglo-Afghan War was that Afghanistan's foreign policy would remain under the control of the British government in India. This policy acted as a brake on Afghans working in diplomatic missions abroad. Without an independent foreign ministry, Afghanistan lacked the diplomatic missions and embassies, which provided such a fruitful source of cross-cultural exchange in the early modern and modern period. The extremely limited nature of printing in late 19th century Afghanistan, restricted to the state presses in

[15] See, for example, J. Pouchepadass, 'Itinerant Kings and Touring Officials: Circulation and a Modality of Power in India, 1700-1947' in C. Markovits, J. Pouchepadass and S. Subrahmanyam (eds.), *Society and Circulation: Mobile People and Itinerant Cultures in South Asia, 1750-1950* (New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2003).

[16] For an account of 19th century Qajar state travelogues, see Naghmeh Sohrabi, *Taken for Wonder: 19th Century Travel Accounts from Iran to Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

Kabul, also meant that there was not the means for producing printed travelogues, a genre which is such a feature of 19th century Muslim printing elsewhere.[17] The lack of a diplomatic presence abroad is an undeniable pointer to Afghanistan's political isolation during the 1880s and 1890s. In such a situation, the only means by which any Afghan diplomatic travels could take place would be with the permission of the British, and would be under British imperial control. Such was the case in 1893 when the British invited Amir 'Abd al-Rahman Khan to visit Britain.[18] While the British wanted to use the trip to cement the friendship between the two countries, impress the Afghan rulers with their industrial, political, and economic development, and hopefully encourage the Afghans to spend some of their British subsidy on British manufacturing, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan hoped the trip might pave the way for an Afghan diplomatic representative in London.[19] Due to the concerns of the amir and various tribal leaders over the advisability of leaving his country, and his reticence in sending his eldest son Habib Allah Khan who was busy with government work, it was decided that it should be Nasr Allah Khan, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's second son of twenty years of age, who would make the trip to London.[20] On 7th April 1895, Nasr Allah Khan left Kabul on horseback and travelled across the border to Peshawar. Travelling by train via Lahore and Delhi to Bombay, he then caught the

[17] For Muslim travelogues, see Nile Green, 'Spacetime and the Muslim Journey West, 1860–1930,' *The American Historical Review* Vol. 118, No. 2 (2013), pp. 401-429. For accounts of printing in Afghanistan, see 'Abd al-Rasūl Rahīn, 'Talī'ah-e matbū'āt dar Afghānistān,' *Āriyānā-ye bīrūn marzī* Vol. 1, No. 2 (1999); *idem,* 'Āghāz-e kitābnawīsī wa tab'-e kitāb dar Afghānistān,' *Āriyānā-ye bīrūn marzī* Vol. 5, No. 3. Indeed, the only way Afghans could gain such experiences was by changing allegiance and going to work for a rival state, a not uncommon phenomenon in the shifting sands of 19th century Central and South Asian geo-politics. One such man was Sayyid Abu al-Hasan Qandahari who found himself working for the Qajar State in Iran in the late 1860s, rising to become its representative on a journey to Kabul in 1869, and writing a *safarnāmah* of his trip 'home'. See Sayyid Abū al-Hasan Qandahārī, *Guzārish-e safārat-e Kābul* (Tehran: Chāpkhānah-e dānishgāh-e Tehrān, 1990).

[18] The various political motives behind Nasr Allah's trip are sketched in Ludwig Adamec, 'Mission of an Afghan Prince to London: Nasr Allah Khan's Visit to Britain as Reflected in the Press.' *Afghanistan Occasional Paper No.33* (New York, The Afghanistan Forum, 1994), p. 1.

[19] *Ibid*.

[20] For tribal leaders' opposition to 'Abd al-Rahman Khan going to London, see Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh* (2013), Vol. 3, p. 743.

steamship 'Clive' to Plymouth, stopping off at Suez and Port Sa'id on the way. He spent from 23rd May until 3rd September in Great Britain as a guest of the British, before exchanging his diplomatic role for that of a tourist, making a sightseeing trip to France and Italy. After an abortive plan to visit Mecca, Nasr Allah Khan made his way home, arriving back in Kabul on the 17th November.[21] During his trip Nasr Allah Khan was accompanied by British and Afghan officials, taking with him an entourage of eighty-two Afghan dignitaries and clerics, making this first recorded travel by representatives of the Afghan court a sizeable and collaborative effort.[22]

The composition of this first Afghan court travelogue is a complex one. The account of the trip, as mentioned, is embedded in Volume Three of *Sirāj al-tawārikh*, printed almost twenty years after Nasr Allah Khan's original trip and spliced in amongst Faiz Muhammad Katib's chronicle-style chronological account of Afghanistan during the period. Fortunately, Katib provides much information on the travels and transformations of the text itself. Although a period of time stands between the journey and the printing of Katib's account, we know that much of the description of the trip was contemporaraneously written and disseminated; Katib describes how his printed version of Nasr Allah Khan's travels to London was based on hand-written letters written by Nasr Allah Khan and his scribe during the journey, Sardar Muhammad Hasan Khan.[23] While Nasr Allah Khan seems to have focused on his impressions of the journey in his diary, it was Muhammad Hasan Khan's responsibility to take down ethnographic notes on the climate, laws, economy and customs of the people and places he went in his own diary.[24] These accounts of the trip were then posted at various post offices in Europe and the Middle East en route,

[21] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1162.
[22] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1068.
[23] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1081.
[24] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1126. The fact that the two had separate diaries is clear from Katib's comment of Nasr Allah writing in 'his own journal' (*rūznāmah-e khīshtan*), *ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1140.

along with Persian translations of various telegrams they received from England as they travelled.[25] These letters were then drafted as proclamations by Katib and pinned up in the city market in Kabul, 'so that nobles and commoners alike would be apprised and aware of the high regard and honor which had been shown him [i.e. Nasr Allah Khan] by the government of England during his London trip.'[26] Finally, Katib used these written proclamations, often verbatim, as source material for his printed historical text.[27] This text was published almost two decades later during the reign of Amir Habib Allah Khan on newly imported state printing presses in Kabul. The travel-account of Nasr Allah Khan thus not merely stands as a source on, but also as a product of, the uneven impact of the nexus of industrial communications on Afghanistan during the period, weaving together as it does industrial and pre-industrial, novel and time-honoured modes of physical and literary circulation.

Although Nasr Allah's travels were underwritten, timetabled, and chaperoned by the British imperial authorities, the Afghan representations of such travels could not be so easily managed. While the British press portrayed Nasr Allah Khan as a bored and somewhat surly youth, nonplussed by the endless rounds of troop inspections, factory tours, tea parties, and gala dinners, the Afghan account of the trip represents something quite different.[28] Nasr Allah Khan is portrayed as the equal, if not the superior, of the British ruling families, as well as the conscientious and dutiful embodiment of Afghan state power and prestige. Setting out 'with accoutrements worthy of the kings of the world,' the account is itself aimed at being worthy of such monarchs.[29] It records an almost continual stream of British aristocrats, diplomats

[25] See, for example, *ibid*., p. 1080.
[26] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1107. See also, *ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1110 where Katib describes copying such letters verbatim as public bulletins and hanging them in the bazaar.
[27] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1111.
[28] For the British press's view of Nasr Allah, see Adamec, 'Mission of an Afghan Prince' (1994).
[29] Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh* (2013), Vol. 3, p. 1064.

and state officials who welcome Nasr Allah Khan wherever he goes, and 'lower their heads and bow' as they walk past.[30] Nasr Allah Khan is portrayed in the Afghan account not as a disappointingly churlish youth but as the darling of the British press. Katib gives a list of the fifty-four British newspapers which described Nasr Allah Khan's journey, and the reach of such newspapers across the five continents of Asia, Africa, Australia, Europe and America. From his account, it would seem that the British press wrote solely of Nasr Allah Khan's trip for a solid twenty days, 'after which they returned to publishing official news.'[31] While in England, Nasr Allah Khan's equality with British royalty is clear in the descriptions of the young Prince 'dismissing' the Prince of Wales at the end of their meeting.[32] When he visits Queen Victoria, their equivalence of honour is displayed by the two of them sitting together while everyone else around them must stand.[33] At the same time, Nasr Allah Khan's sense of decorum and Islamic propriety is absolute and commented upon. While he may be invited to balls at Buckingham Palace where he stays up until 2 A.M. to enjoy the entertainments of 'fairy-like dancers with silvery bosoms,' the travel-account is careful to record that later that same day he was back home carrying out his noon-time prayers (*namāz*).[34] At a lavish dinner for 4,000 in the City of London, while others gorged on rich dishes and fine wine, Nasr Allah Khan 'preferred to take water and fish and, along with the members of his own party, ate nothing else.' Later on at the same dinner, the travel-account makes sure to note that Nasr Allah Khan raised only a *sātgin* of lemonade while drinking to the health of Queen Victoria.[35]

[30] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1092.
[31] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1089.
[32] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1090.
[33] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1091.
[34] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1093.
[35] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1102.

The fact that Katib's text explicitly records that such descriptions were designed so that the Afghan audience 'would be apprised and aware of the high regard and honor which had been shown him' illustrates the role of these travel-diaries as rhetorical texts, designed to promote Afghan royal power amongst its subjects. The text is also intended to project a particular image of Afghanistan, as a proudly Islamic state that nevertheless is at ease in the contemporary world. On this last point, of stressing the Afghan court's 'contemporaneity' with Europe, the text also acts as the textual marker of the arrival of the Afghan court into the age of both steam and print.[36] Indeed, Nasr Allah Khan's travels can be read as a continual performance of Afghan mastery of steam-powered movement. From Attock to Lahore, Nasr Allah Khan 'ordered the wagon stopped at a station' so that he could eat his dinner;[37] in Bombay, Suez, Port Sa'id, Nasr Allah Khan 'gave orders to set sail';[38] at Suez the ship docks 'at the order of His Highness,'[39] as if without his command the steamboat would drift aimlessly in the Red Sea. Nasr Allah Khan's engagement with technological transport extends to the very latest innovations, yet unheard of in Afghanistan: in Liverpool, he travels in a 'recently-invented' electric-powered train, and is so interested that he travels to the generating station at Collingwood Dock in order 'to inspect more closely and ponder the electric engine which drove the rail car.'[40] With so much time spent on board ship, it is only fitting that Nasr Allah Khan makes a special trip to the view the 'ships, manufactures, and maritime inventions' of

[36] For a study of the transformations engendered by travel and technology amongst Muslims see James L. Gelvin and Nile Green (eds.), *Global Muslims in the Age of Steam and Print* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: California University Press, 2014).
[37] Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh* (2013), Vol. 3, p. 1072.
[38] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1075, 1080, 1081.
[39] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1079.
[40] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1104.

the Peninsular and Oriental Company in London, in order to give his royal blessing to the means of transport that more than any other had sped his journey.[41]

Moreover, the mere fact that the account of such travels was written up and posted in proclamations in public places in Afghanistan is testament to the importance that the Afghan court attached to the value of this new form of international and technological 'travel' and travel writing, both in signaling Afghans' engagement with the contemporary world and in disseminating such a vision to its people. It is telling that Prince Habib Allah Khan, who we shall see in the next chapter as a great state promoter of the practice and poetics of travel on his accession to the throne, was the Afghan royal back home in Kabul who ordered that Nasr Allah Khan's travel-diaries be publicly proclaimed.[42] Such public dissemination of accounts of travel in the largely pre-print public sphere in Afghanistan point to an early 'state-sponsored aestheticization' of industrial travel even in 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's day.[43] Through such a text, the Afghan state is portrayed as a proud Muslim power, independent and on equal footing with the British Empire, at ease in the contemporary world. As we shall see, such a view of Afghanistan was to become a key feature of Muslim accounts of Afghanistan in the following decades, framing Afghanistan as an example to be emulated of how to combine material development and spiritual nourishment, 'progress' and tradition.

II.2. Disorienting and Reorienting Afghanistan: A Travelling Transformation

This court-sponsored account of Nasr Allah Khan's travels is clearly on one level an act of propaganda stressing the authority and prestige of the Afghan ruling

[41] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1102.
[42] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1107.
[43] Nile Green, 'The Trans-Border Traffic of Afghan Modernism: Afghanistan and the Indian 'Urdusphere,' *Comparative Studies in Society and History* Vol. 53, No. 3 (2011), p. 483.

family, its Islamic credentials, and its equal standing with the British. At the same time, however, the account points beyond such state-power posturing to larger transformations in thought brought about by such travels. As Nile Green has argued in a recent essay, the industrialization of communications and the experience and use of such communications by Muslim travellers in the late 19th century brought about fundamental reconfigurations of time and space, what Green calls 'a new "spacetime"'.[44] Such a reconfiguration of time and space, a process of 'dis-orientation' and 're-orientation', in turn led to new conceptions of history and geography. Green describes the process thus:

> The mechanization of global communications…enabled mobile Muslim intellectuals to de-center Christianity from the experience, the depiction, and ultimately the meaning of Europe. As a result of this industrialization of communications, Muslims paradoxically rediscovered Islam in Europe and, from there, recreated it and in turn exported it to older Muslim lands.

Through such 'industrially enabled experiences'

> Muslim travelers produced new models of geography and history to cope with the industrial repositioning of Islam…For these journeys did not merely bring Muslim travelers into contact with European ideals: they also led them to contemplate the very location and genealogy of Islam – to conceptualize a new Muslim spacetime.'[45]

Such an analysis makes the case that this new Muslim timespace was no mere colonial mimicry: no simple copying of the new European conceptions of time and space that would became known, problematically, as 'European modernity'.

[44] Green, 'Spacetime and the Muslim Journey West' (2013), p. 401.
[45] *Ibid*., pp. 404-5.

Rather, both European and Muslim timespaces were the product of 'the globalizing of the same conditions of…the compression of time and space.'[46]

The following section of this chapter uses Nasr Allah Khan's travel-account to write late 19th century Afghanistan back into this global story, tracing the ways and means by which the 'dis-orienting' travels of these Afghan travellers through space and time led to the more constructive process of re-formulating ideas of Afghan and Islamic history and geography, and of Afghanistan's place in the world. Such conceptual reformulations of history and geography were to become central to the reimagining of Afghanistan in the early 20th century, but it is in such travelling texts that the impetus for such reformulations can be seen.

II.3. 'Self','Other,' or 'Neither'? Re-Thinking Alteritism in Muslim Travelogues

While it has become customary to analyze travelogues of the late 19th and early 20th century through the post-colonial lens of 'alteritism' i.e. the study of the encounter between 'Self' and 'Other', a study of these Afghans' travels in Europe suggest that a collapse of such oppositions is a truer reflection of the Afghan experience of the 'journey west'. As for other Iranian and Indian Muslim travellers who wrote accounts of their travels during the period, the travel-account of this Afghan diplomatic delegation charts a disorienting landscape of hybrid and 'in-between' spaces amongst the port cities of the Middle East that collapse easy categories of 'Islamic' and 'non-Islamic.'[47] Nasr Allah Khan's first glimpse of

[46] *Ibid*., p. 429.
[47] Useful comparative texts for this section can be found in Green, 'Spacetime' (2013). Of particular interest are the Iranians Hājjī Muhammad 'Alī Pīrzādah, *Safarnāmah-e Hājjī Pīrzādah*, ed. Hāfez Farmānfarmā'iyān (Tehran: Bābak, 1981), Muhammad Rizā Tabātabā'ī Tabrīzī, *Hidāyat al-hujjāj: Safarnāmah-e Makkah* (Qom: Nashr-e mu'arrikh, 2007), Mahdī Qūlī Hidāyat, *Safarnāmah-e tasharruf bih Makkah-e mu'azzamah* (Tehran: n.p., n.d.), and the Indian Shiblī Nu'mānī, *Safarnāmah-e Rūm-o-Misr-o-Shām* (Delhi: Matba'ah-e qaumī, 1894).

Arabian lands is of Aden through a telescope. But rather than a long-distance view of mosques and minarets, Nasr Allah Khan sees the fortified towers and large gun emplacements of the British.[48] The landscape of the Middle East is not sacralized but has become rather industrialized and militarized. Egypt is now a mass of European merchant houses and warehouses, a result of the rapid development of the Egyptian coastline due to the cotton boom of the 1860s.[49] The Suez Canal is full of European ships plying 'between India, China and the Hijaz,'[50] its banks lined with French workshops, and all patrolled by British warships.[51] Like the thousands of Indian, Indonesian, or Iranian Muslims who first encountered Arabia at Aden or Suez, Nasr Allah Khan's first encounters with the peoples of these transformed spaces are not a local welcoming party but quarantine officers checking for anyone with cholera or smallpox, the very embodiment of the modern European bureaucratic state.[52] Other in-between figures who navigate Nasr Allah Khan's movement from steamship to shore include the *balyūz*, usually a local Copt or Armenian who acted as an agent for the foreign powers, and a European pilot working for the Khedival authorities who steered the ships into harbour.[53] Such a range of nationalities and allegiances is symbolized in the ships that Nasr Allah Khan sees in Port Sa'id: 'Six ships from six

[48] Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh* (2013), Vol. 3, p. 1076.
[49] Roger Owen, *Cotton and the Egyptian Economy, 1820-1914* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969); David Landes, *Bankers and Pashas: International Finance and Economic Imperialism in Egypt* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1980).
[50] Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh* (2013), Vol. 3, p. 1076.
[51] See the description of the Suez Canal, *ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1080.
[52] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, pp. 1079-80. For the issue of maritime quarantine, see Mark Harrison, 'Quarantine, pilgrimage, and colonial trade: India 1866-1900,' *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* Vol. 29, No. 2 (1992), pp. 117-144. For the intertwining of sanitary and security concerns, see Michael Christopher Low, 'Empire and the Hajj: Pilgrims, Plagues, and Pan-Islam under British Surveillance, 1865-1908,' *International Journal of Middle East Studies* Vol. 40 (2008), pp. 269-290; William R. Roff, 'Sanitation and Security: The Imperial Powers and the Nineteenth Century Hajj,' *Arabian Studies* Vol. 6 (1982), pp. 143-160.
[53] For the *balyūz*, see Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh* (2013), Vol. 3, p. 1079; for the French captain, see *ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1148.

different places – France, Italy, Holland, merchants from Iran, England, and the Ottoman Empire.'[54]

In contrast to the de-sacralization of space in the Islamic heartlands, the Imperial and European lands Nasr Allah Khan visits have become disorientingly Islamic. Imperial British India is represented as a network of Islamic spaces connected via modern transport; in Delhi, Nasr Allah Khan visits the Jami' Masjid mosque, where 4,000 of his 'Islamic brothers' have gathered to meet him.[55] British India is not only a space of Indian Muslims but also of Afghan expatriates, the travel-account records several meetings with Afghans coming to visit Nasr Allah Khan, be they Afghan exiles based in Peshawar or Qandahari merchants who live in Karachi.[56] India is thus familiarized as a space with strong connections to Afghanistan, both personal and religious. British India even provides the location for a brief pilgrimage, Nasr Allah Khan catching the train to Sirhind, where he disembarks to visit the shrine of Shaikh Ahmad al-Faruqi al-Sirhindi (1564–1624). Nasr Allah Khan's travel-account refers to al-Sirhindi as '*kābulī'*, stressing the link between the Indian Islamic reformist scholar and Afghanistan's own religious traditions.[57] In Lahore, Nasr Allah Khan visits a madrasa and donates 1,000 rupees in appreciation of the Islamic Society of Lahore (*Anjuman-e islāmiyah-e Lāhūr)* working there.[58] As we shall see, this re-forming of imagined and real connections between Afghanistan and India was to develop over the following decades at the hands of both Afghan and Indian Muslims, as Afghanistan and India became increasingly viewed as part of one shared historic *dār al-Islām*, with the British in India unfortunately forcing the Indian part to become *dār al-harb*. With an increased sense of shared Islamic heritage

[54] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, pp. 1080-81.
[55] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p.1072-3.
[56] *Ibid*., Vol.3, pp.1067-1068.
[57] *Ibid.*
[58] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1072.

between the two countries, fostered by travel and interaction, Indian Muslims turn to Afghanistan for spiritual succor in the coming decades becomes more understandable.

Nasr Allah Khan's experience of Islam-in-European-Empire extends to Islam-in-Europe: his first glimpse of France is of two 'minarets' on the shore.[59] In Rome, the home of the 'Other' great monotheist religion of Christianity, the landscape is dotted with 300 minarets alongside its several churches.[60] In Britain, Nasr Allah Khan keeps running into Muslims and mosques: on arriving into Liverpool, the supposed home of British imperial maritime industry, he is welcomed by the British convert to Islam, William 'Abdullah' Quilliam (1870-1932) and a throng of converts to Islam. Nasr Allah Khan attends evening prayers led by the Imam, one Maulawi Barakat Allah Khan Hindi (1859-1927), and then donates 50,000 rupees for mosque construction.[61] Twenty years later, and two chapters from now, we shall meet Barakat Allah Hindi again, but this time in Kabul, where he has become one of the most famous figures of the Muslim reform movement. But it is Britain that acts as the contact zone, and which paves the way for Maulawi Barakat Allah's journey to Kabul.[62] During Eid al-Azha, Nasr Allah Khan travels to the Shahjahan mosque in Woking, where he worships with 'all the Muslims who were in London.'[63] While there, he takes tea with Dr. Gottlieb Leitner (1840-1899), also known as 'Abd al-Rashid, who previously had served as the principal of Lahore's Government

[59] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1085.
[60] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1142.
[61] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1104. For an account of early Indian settlers in Britain, see Michael H. Fisher, *Counterflows to Colonialism*: *Indian travellers and Settlers in Britain 1600-1857* (New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2004).
[62] For Britain as a contact zone for Asian travellers in the age of empire, see Antoinette Burton, *At the heart of the Empire: Indians and the Colonial Encounter in Late-Victorian Britain* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), p. 1. Also see the introduction to Shompa Lahiri, *Indians in Britain: Anglo-Indian Encounters, Race and Identity, 1880-1930* (London: Frank Cass, 2000).
[63] Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh* (2013), Vol. 3, p. 1097.

College.[64] Nasr Allah Khan gives him 500 English pounds as a gift for the mosque, again illustrating the Afghan court's desire to project its work 'in the service of Islam' wherever it is found.[65]

This disorienting experience of Islam in Europe, what one might call a 're-spacialization' of Islam for these Afghan travellers, extends too to their experience of Asia. For it is not just an Islamic landscape that the Afghan travellers find in Europe, but also an Asian one. We have seen in this dissertation's introduction Nasr Allah Khan's trips to see the Chinese pagoda of Kew Gardens' and the chinoiserie of Brighton's Royal Pavilion.[66] Such disorienting landscapes point the Afghan travellers to new forms of Asian as well as Muslim internationalism. In Brighton, Nasr Allah Khan is met by the Baghdad-born, Bombay-raised, Brighton-based Jewish businessman Sir Albert Abdullah Sassoon.[67] At Sassoon's house Nasr Allah Khan meets not only Brighton dignitaries but also the Iranian Ambassador to London, Mirza Muhammad Khan A'la al-Daulah.[68] Sassoon's house provides a suitably hybrid location for such a gathering, combining as it did English Regency style with an Indo-Gothic mausoleum built as a replica of the Ohel David Synagogue, built by Albert Sassoon's father David Sassoon, in Poona.[69] Just down the road, Sassoon had recently paid for the internal fittings of the Middle Street Synagogue, making it the first electrified synagogue in Britain.[70] Sassoon had also proved popular host to other royal travellers from Asia, taking Nasir al-Din Shah to the Empire Theatre on his trip

[64] J.H. Stocqueler, *A Review of the Life and Labours of Dr. G.W. Leitner* (Brighton: Tower Press, 1875); W. D. Rubinstein, 'Leitner, Gottlieb Wilhelm (1840–1899)' in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (online edition, 2009).
[65] Muslim P. Salamat, *A Miracle at Woking: A History of the Shahjahan Mosque* (Chichester: Phillimore, 2008).
[66] Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh* (2013), Vol. 3, pp. 1118-1119.
[67] *Ibid*.
[68] *Ibid*.
[69] See Cecil Roth, *The Sassoon Dynasty* (London: Robert Hale Ltd, 1941), p. 165.
[70] Timothy Carder, *The Encyclopaedia of Brighton* (Lewes: East Sussex County Libraries, 1990), p. 115.

to London in 1889.[71] Amongst such cosmopolitan groups, kindnesses and solidarities could be regional as much as religious in origin, and the effect is felt in the travel-diaries' ethnographic passages on Britain in which British culture is contrasted not with Islamic or Afghan culture, but with that of 'the people of Asia.'[72]

The travel-diaries describing such encounters and experiences of travel offer a window onto the face-to-face forging of trans-national Islamic and Asian solidarities between Afghans and others. To this end, Nasr Allah Khan's travels foreshadow the journeys west of central figures in various transnational Muslim movements of the early 20th century: men such as Indian Muslims Shibli Nu'mani, Sulaiman Nadwi and Muhammad 'Ali Jauhar, whose ideas, and in the case of Nadwi his physical being, would travel to Afghanistan and encourage various new global ideologies which would inspire Afghans and Muslims in Afghanistan.[73] So too the new solidarities of pan-Asianism, encouraged by such physical travels and encounters, which allowed peoples from various parts of Asia, including Afghanistan, to reconceive of themselves as brothers and allies, in opposition to 'the West'. Such an ideology would prove particularly powerful for Afghan 'progressives', men like Mahmud Tarzi described below, who would take great interest in the rise of Japan as a model for Asian strength in the face of Western imperialism.[74] Such travels help us understand the role of trans-regional travels in shaping and powering a global

[71] Illustrated drawings of this trip to the Empire Theatre can be found in the British illustrated weekly *The Graphic*, 13th July 1889. For Nasir al-Din Shah in Europe, see David Motadel, 'Qajar Shahs in Imperial Germany,' *Past and Present* No. 213 (2011), pp. 191-235.

[72] Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh* (2013), Vol. 3, p. 1126.

[73] For the role of Britain as a space for the forging of such networks, see Humayun Ansari, 'Making Transnational Connections: Muslim Networks in Early 20th Century Britain' in Nathalie Clayer and Eric Germain (eds.), *Islam in Inter-War Europe* (London: Hurst and Co., 2007).

[74] Like many Asian intellectuals of the time, Afghan intellectuals were greatly inspired by the victory of the Japanese against the Russians in the Russo-Japanese War of 1905. Ottoman accounts of the campaign were even translated into Dari by Mahmud Tarzi and printed on the Afghan state presses. Mahmūd Tarzī, *Tārīkh-e muhārabah-e Rūs-o-Zhāpān, 1904-1905* (Kabul: Matba'ah-e 'ināyat, 1916). Muhammad Yusuf Riyazi, whose text is also described below, gave his own account of the history, see Muhammad Yūsuf Riyāzī, *Kulliyāt-e Riyāzī* (Mashhad: n.p., 1906), p. 462. For a history of such pan-Islamic and pan-Asian thought, see Cemil Aydin, *The Politics of Anti-Westernism in Asia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007).

imaginary that found a home, and a focus, in Afghanistan during the early 20th century. As we shall see in the following chapters, such an imaginary in turn spurred further travels, as various Ottoman, British Indian and Central Asian journeymen made their way to Kabul seeking 'money, adventure, or the truth' in the new site of Muslim aspiration, Afghanistan.[75]

II.4. On Time: The Temporal Re-Orientations of Industrial Travel

The spatial disorientation and reorientation brought about by Nasr Allah Khan's experience of industrialized global travel is mirrored on the temporal level, where time itself seems to have been re-fashioned. Perhaps no other place in the world represented these spatial and temporal re-orderings better than the Greenwich Observatory, which Nasr Allah Khan visits one evening while in London.[76] Where in Afghanistan the order of the day was largely constructed around the Islamic timeframe of the five daily prayers, steam-powered travellers now moved through a world whose parameters and rhythms were set by Greenwich. For it was Greenwich that had been chosen at an international conference in Washington D.C. in 1884 as the 'prime meridian', the 0° longitude which marked the division of the world into East and West.[77] Due to the inseparable correspondence of longitude and time, the adoption of the prime meridian also meant the adoption of a single standard time aligned to that meridian, Greenwich Mean Time. The text thus marks an important event: the Afghan state's personal introduction into the world of globalized standard

[75] The evocative phrase is from Andrew Watson, 'The Arab Agricultural Revolution and Its Diffusion, 700-1100,' *The Journal of Economic History* Vol. 34, No. 1, p. 21.
[76] Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh* (2013), Vol. 3, p. 1119.
[77] For a study of the 'reorganization of time' during the period, see Vanessa Ogle, 'Clocks, Calendars, and Conversion Charts: Reorganizing Time During the First Wave of Globalization, 1883-1939,' (Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 2011). Also, Johan Goudsblom, 'The Worm and the Clock: On the Genesis of a Global Time Regime' in Willem van Schendel and Henk Schulte Nordholt (eds.), *Time Matters: Global and Local Time in Asian Societies* (Amsterdam: VU University Press, 2001).

time. Aside from Nasr Allah Khan's evening trip to look through telescopes at the stars (which may have prompted existential reflection we can only guess at), Greenwich's influence on Nasr Allah Khan's journey can be felt in the travel-account's meticulous temporal cataloguing of the prince's spatial movements. While Persian travelogues stretching back to Nasir Khusraw in the the 11th century had been punctilious in noting times and distances travelled, Nasr Allah Khan's travels timings are now set to a timeframe that has been standardized by Greenwich and the local train time-table.[78] The travel-account notes that for Nasr Allah's trip from London to Paris he set out from Dorchester house at 1.40 P.M. on the 31st August, departed Victoria station at 2:12 P.M, got into Dover at 4.45 P.M., and finally arrived at Calais at 6.20 P.M.[79] The account is much preoccupied with speed too, frequently noting the time it takes to cover a number of miles: travelling by boat through the Suez Canal, Nasr Allah Khan 'covered the seventy-six miles in only seventeen hours.'[80] By train, the prince and his entourage could travel 'a distance of 120 miles in three hours' from Portsmouth to Victoria station.[81] Such new forms of spatial and temporal measurement is a common feature of Muslim travelogues of the period, illustrating the impact that such standardization had on Muslims from all over the world.[82]

Such an awareness of time, brought about by physical movement through space, results in more than just an increased punctiliousness on the part of the Afghan prince and his entourage. The swift journeying of their steamship through the Middle East forces the travelling Afghans to reflect on their own past, as well as an imagined

[78] See Nasir-i Khusraw, *Book of Travels*, trans. Wheeler M. Thackston (Costa Mesa: Mazda publishers, 2001).
[79] Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh* (2013), Vol. 3, p. 1135.
[80] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1080.
[81] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1090.
[82] Green, 'Spacetime' (2013), p. 422.

future. In moving through previous Ottoman lands, Nasr Allah Khan sees at first-hand the decline of the Islamic powers in the region, and feels driven to write with the 'pen of sorrow' on the subject.[83] Aden is described as a once great Islamic city, now under English control. So too Algeria which 'in former times…had its own separate government but for the last forty years it has been occupied by France.'[84] The island of Malta was once Ottoman, but has since come into the hands of the fBritish.[85] Such physical manifestations of British imperial gain provoke angry reactions. Perhaps with thoughts of British perfidy in the Anglo-Afghan Wars in the back of his mind, Nasr Allah Khan's diarist Sardar Muhammad Hasan Khan describes how the English 'transformed the words of friendship into a statement of occupation' in Malta.[86] Likewise in Aden, where the British's avowed intent to simply build a trading post was soon 'transformed into a garrison and strong fortifications, bristling with artillery' up on the mountain-tops.[87] Such treachery amongst Europeans extends not only to two-faced diplomacy, but also to sowing discord amongst Muslims: Muhammad Hasan Khan notes that the Europeans 'have brought things to such a pass that Arabs refer to Hanafi Turks as "Christians".'[88] For Nasr Allah's diarist, it is this discord and lack of unity, spurred on by European scheming, which lies at the root of Islam's decline.[89] Such spatial movement spurs temporal reflection as the Afghan travellers come face to face with the power and danger of British imperial might: 'Seeing these shores and regions gave rise to sadness and regret, for one thousand years ago Arabs spared no effort to achieve

[83] Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh* (2013), Vol. 3, p. 1083.
[84] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1082.
[85] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1081.
[86] *Ibid*.
[87] *Ibid*.
[88] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1082.
[89] *Ibid*.

glorious conquests here.'[90] Moving through England, Nasr Allah Khan is forced to reflect on more recent imperial history: while at Buckingham Palace, Nasr Allah Khan admires some chairs and couches 'made of ivory and doused with musk', only to find out that they are in fact the furniture of Tipu Sultan, the ruler of Mysore captured during the Anglo-Mysore wars.[91] In the Tower of London, Nasr Allah Khan sees the Koh-i-Noor, that most famous of diamonds which had once been in the hands of his forebear, the Sadozai monarch Shah Shuja' (1785-1842), before falling into Sikh and finally English hands.[92] Nasr Allah Khan's rounds of military inspections and dinners act as a parade of imperial figures from recent Afghan history. At Aldershot, he meets Earl Roberts of Kandahar (1832-1914), the British general who had entered Kabul in 1879 with his 'avenging army', and had supported the placing of Nasr Allah Khan's father, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, on the Afghan throne.[93] At a dinner in Fishmongers' Hall, Nasr Allah Khan meets General Sam Browne (1824-1901), who had led the Peshawar Field Force in the capture of the fortress of Ali Masjid in the Second Anglo-Afghan War.[94] Several days later he dines with George Nathaniel Curzon (1859-1925), who had visited Kabul in 1894 and described his time with Nasr Allah Khan in his own travel-diary.[95] Moving spatially through Britain is thus to also move temporally through recent Afghan and South Asian history, a landscape that rings with the sound of Asian subjection to

[90] *Ibid*.
[91] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1103.
[92] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1107. For a history of the Koh-i-Noor, see D. C. Kinsey, 'Koh-i-Noor: Empire, Diamonds, and the Performance of British Material Culture,' *Journal of British Studies* Vol. 48, No. 2 (April 2009), pp. 391-419.
[93] Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh* (2013), Vol. 3, p. 1098. On Earl Roberts in Afghanistan, see Bryan Robson, *The Road to Kabul: The Second Afghan War 1878-1886* (London: Arms and Armour Press, 1986); also Field Marshall Lord Roberts *Forty-One Years in India* (London: Richard Bentley and Son, 1897).
[94] Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh* (2013), Vol. 3, p. 1107.
[95] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1109. Curzon ate dinner with Nasr Allah, and others, three times during his trip, on 26th November, 29th November, and 1st December, 1894. See George Nathaniel Curzon, *Short Memo of Visit to Kabul*, British Library, Mss Eur F111/56.

British military power. Through such an imagined landscape of British conquest and domination it takes little to understand Nasr Allah Khan's unswerving hostility to British encroachment in Afghanistan on his return, and his support for the Ottomans in First World War.

Moreover, far from pandering to his British chaperones, these sections illustrate how the Afghan royal family was more than happy to present its hostility to the godless Britons in texts, even at the same time 'Abd al-Rahman Khan was keen to stress his friendship with the British government in India. While it has been argued that Afghanistan was essentially an appendage of British India, such sections illustrate that the Afghan royal family was could represent itself in opposition to the British; indeed, part of the power of Afghanistan in the Muslim imagination was to stem from its status as an Islamic state and imperial counter-space - just across the border from India.

II.5. Progress and Prejudice

As Nile Green has argued in the same essay quoted above, at the heart of these new configurations of geography and history amongst Muslim travellers was a 'new temporal concept of "progress".'[96] This 'progress' (*taraqqī*) was 'an inherently comparative category based on judgments about which peoples or countries had achieved more "progress" than others.'[97] Such a new conception 'predicated on the comparison of the relative present state of different peoples and places' was only possible due to 'the ability to move between and experientially "measure" progress in the different places in question.'[98] Through such movements, Muslim travellers

[96] Green, 'Spacetime' (2013), p. 413.
[97] *Ibid*.
[98] *Ibid*., pp. 413-414.

'began to conceive relative political positions in a schema of spaces measured and compared through a comparative (because globally standardized) model of time.'[99] It was this refashioned notion of 'progress' which gave Afghan intellectuals, and Muslim intellectuals elsewhere, a sense of the backwardness (*aqabmāndagī*) of their own societies and the need for renewal (*tajaddud*). And it was this notion that would be at the heart of Afghan state ideologies in the early 20th century, encouraging Muslims to come to Afghanistan to work towards such reform and promoting Afghanistan as a land of potential progress to the world. Nasr Allah Khan's journeys offer a neat window onto the development of such ideologies through his comparative travels: the ease of steamship and train travel in Europe means that Nasr Allah Khan could move from London to Paris within a single afternoon, and by the following evening can have concluded that 'compared to London…the layout and organization of the markets and gardens, the electric lights, the immaculateness of the buildings and the cleanliness of the streets of Paris' are 'far greater and better than London and other English cities.'[100] In his smooth and swift travelling by train through the industrial heartlands of Britain, the Afghan prince is able to compare and contrast the relative affluence of London, Manchester, Glasgow, noting that Birmingham's inhabitants were deemed inferior and less respectable than Londoners, while Glasgow was the most 'beautiful and splendid' of all cities in Britain.[101]

While the ease of technological travel encourages comparison, European societies themselves seem to institutionalize such comparative acts through their public museums and galleries. From the British Museum to the Louvre, Nasr Allah Khan becomes so used to visiting these comparative institutions that they seem to him a standard part of a European government's institutional portfolio: in Naples he

[99] *Ibid*., p. 414.
[100] Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh* (2013), Vol. 3, p .1136.
[101] For Birmingham, *ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1103; for Glasgow, *ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1105.

notes that there are government buildings in which 'they have placed ancient implements and instruments just like other government buildings of Ferangistan.'[102] Here, Nasr Allah Khan can gaze upon the paintings and statues of leaders both spatially and temporally remote, from Pharoahs and Greek philosophers to Harun al-Rashid to the '*pādshāhs'* of Europe.[103] Such diminishing of spatial and temporal difference has been encouraged by the new science of archaeology too: in Pompei, Nasr Allah Khan witnesses ongoing excavations which make clear that the buildings of classical times 'are similar to buildings today…Likewise, pipes that today are laid to bring water to the streets and markets of Europe have been found in the excavated palace and market.'[104] The new science of archaeology has also collapsed the distance between ancient and contemporary man: in Pompeii the human bodies of thousands of years ago have been simultaneously carbonized and frozen in time to be viewed now as almost-living exhibits.[105] Such public institutions for acts of comparison are carried on in the private collections of wealthy individuals too. In the Prince of Wales's residence at Marlborough House in London, Nasr Allah Khan visits his private 'armoury' (*anmārī*) where weapons collected from across Asia are laid out next to each other as comparanda. While Nasr Allah Khan has visited the munitions factories that helped Britain conquer large parts of the world, the only Asian weapons in the armoury are purely decorative jewel-encrusted swords and impractical shields set with pearls.[106] Is it any wonder that Nasr Allah Khan should remark to the Prince of Wales on the difficulty of facing artillery with spears? As the hiring of Ottoman Muslim military officers in the next chapter illustrates, the Afghan

[102] For Naples, see *ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1141; for the Louvre see *ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1138; for the British Museum, see *ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1122.
[103] *Ibid*. For his visit to see Harun al-Rashid, see *ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1141.
[104] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, pp. 1141-2.
[105] For a comparative account by a Muslim traveller of visiting archaeological sites in Europe, see Green, 'Spacetime' (2013), p. 409.
[106] Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh* (2013), Vol.3, p. 1110.

court's comparative journeys abroad reinforced the need for military development in Afghanistan, a development which the Afghan state would claim to have paid off in the 'victory' of Afghanistan against the British in the Third Anglo-Afghan War of 1919.

II.6. From Aden to Eton: Searching for the Source of Strength Abroad

Such a comparative framework, enshrined in the inherently comparative institutions of museum, gallery, zoo, and botanic garden, inevitably leave the Afghan delegation searching for the 'source of strength' of Europe, be it in the continent's industrial, military, educational, or political systems.[107] In the travel-account, Britain's industrial heartlands emerge as the world's workshop, producing guns and ammunition for the great rising Asian powers of China and Japan as well as Europe.[108] Relying on an older cultural idiom, descriptions of British industry are framed in the language of Persianate 'wonder' literature (*'ajā'ib-o-gharā'ib*), which focused on the outlandish features of foreign lands.[109] However, these wonders are now underpowered by technologies of industry and communications and set in the increasingly nature-tamed environments of industrialized Britain. In London, the Houses of Parliament is described in rapt prose as 'one of the most sublime and marvelous buildings of the age.'[110] In keeping with the tone of wonder, its mechanical features have been quadrupled in scale: 'On its four corners four towers

[107] For a parallel in Iran, see Monica Ringer, 'The Quest for the Secret of Strength in Iranian 19th-Century Travel Literature: Rethinking Tradition in the *Safarnameh*' in Nikki R. Keddie and Rudi Matthee (eds.), *Iran and the Surrounding World: Interactions in Culture and Cultural Politics* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002).
[108] Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh* (2013), Vol. 3, p. 1106.
[109] For a discussion of such 'wonder' literature see Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Indo-Persian Travels In the Age of Discoveries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); also the introduction to Roberta Micallef and Sunil Sharma (eds.), *On the Wonders of Land and Sea: Persianate Travel Writing* (Boston: Ilex Foundation, distributed by Harvard University Press, 2013).
[110] Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh* (2013), Vol. 3, p. 1092.

were erected, and on each tower they have installed a clock with four faces.'[111] Nasr Allah Khan marvels at the animals found not in wild jungles but tamed and placed in London zoo. He is particularly astounded by 'a water-animal, very thick-bodied, with short legs, massive torso, and open-mouthed with crooked teeth.'[112] Such may be the first recorded encounter of an Afghan and a hippopotamus. In Kew Gardens, Nasr Allah Khan is impressed by the giant elephant-sized horses that draw carriages, and in Brighton he visits the strange sea-creatures gathered together in the aquarium.[113]

The 'eye of wonder' with which Nasr Allah Khan gazes at such creatures extends to his descriptions of the wonder-technologies of steam and electricity. Such technologies, through their ability to manufacture the natural world, have collapsed the distinctions between nature and man-made. Steam-power allows fragrant and tropical plants to be grown in greenhouses out of place and season and even manufacture artificial flowers.[114] Nature and industry have become impossible to distinguish in this European 'man-made' jungle, which appear in the European urban landscape.[115] In the Natural History Museum, described as a 'House of Wonders' (*'ajā'ib-khānah*) the animals have been so stuffed that they are now 'imperceptible and indistinguishable from living (ones).'[116] Such technical skill drives Nasr Allah Khan to praise the Creator for bestowing such a degree of power on man. At the same time, however, he cannot help feel 'regret and distress at the state of Islam.'[117] Nasr Allah Khan meets the owners of the factories that produce such new technologies, marveling at the magnificent country-house of the great arms

[111] *Ibid.*
[112] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1097.
[113] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1118.
[114] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1097, 1103.
[115] For the 'man-made jungle', see *ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1141. For the mountain, see *ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1096.
[116] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1109.
[117] *Ibid*.

manufacturer William Armstrong and noting the extent of his wealth and power.[118] Armstrong's house, Cragside, was itself a wonder of technical innovation, the first in the world to be lit by hydro-electricity.[119] After this visit, Nasr Allah Khan climbs a mountain above Armstrong's house to view 'the handiwork of the Real Creator', an attempt perhaps to keep in perspective the handiwork of this new breed of pioneering human creators down below.[120] Conversely, such natural creation is made increasingly, perhaps all too, human at St Thomas's Hospital in London, where Nasr Allah Khan sees the 'dissections of human veins, muscles, diaphragms, and tendons.'[121]

Unsurprising in a land as mountainous as Afghanistan, European mastery of mountains became for these Afghan travellers a key symbol of Britain's imperial might. While traveling by steamboat, the travel account frequently references the British gun placements conquering island mountaintops, and of lighthouses built on top of underwater mountains to prevent ships being scuttled.[122] Such lighthouses are repeatedly dwelt upon in the text, illustrating Afghan awareness of a technology which acted as a tool of empire, not only improving navigating conditions but also helping regulate and dictate maritime movement.[123] As we have seen in the mock-battle on the mock-mountain in Islington that opened this chapter, Britain's conquering of mountains extended to the people who lived on them as well. In a reversal of British accounts of the deadly marksmanship of Afghans and their 'ten-

[118] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, pp. 1105-6. For William George Armstrong, 1st Baron Armstrong, see Peter McKenzie, *W.G. Armstrong: The Life and Times of Sir William George Armstrong, Baron Armstrong of Cragside* (Morpeth: Longhirst Press, 1983).
[119] See Polly Higgins, 'The origins of Hydroelectricity,' *The Ecologist* (6th September 2009).
[120] Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh* (2013), Vol. 3, p. 1106.
[121] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1134. In the 1930s, such medical dissections were to become a bone of contention between non-Afghan medical practitioners and Afghan religious figures in Afghanistan during the development of Afghanistan's first medical schools.
[122] See, for example, *ibid*., Vol. 3, pp. 1079, 1082.
[123] For a discussion of light-houses, beacons, and buoys in the Southeast Asian context, see Eric Tagliacozo, 'The Lit Archipelago: Coast Lighting and the Imperial Optic in Insular Southeast Asia, 1860-1910,' *Technology and Culture* Vol. 46, No. 2 (2005), pp. 306-328.

rupee jezail', the British are praised for their martial abilities and their marksmanship skills: Nasr Allah Khan describes one display in which a rifleman is accurate enough to shoot a cigarette out of another man's mouth.[124]

Beyond Britain's industrial factories, Nasr Allah Khan locates Britain's strength in that other factory of the nation, Eton College (*ā'in*). Nasr Allah Khan visits this renowned '*madrasah*' and notes the education the boys receive, combining training in the sciences and arts with various drills and war-games.[125] British education elsewhere is described as extending to women too, and on a trip to the Williams Street School in Hammersmith Road the travel account stresses the practical nature of women's education in learning household economy and secretarial work.[126] Women are not only active students, but have active public roles as singers, dancers, and respected artists in British society, something which Nasr Allah Khan does not criticize, but even expresses approval of, noting the exquisite skill of the lady painter Marianne North, who is described as 'a second Mani.'[127] Alongside Britain's educational institutions are its research institutions, such as the British Museum, where Nasr Allah Khan sees the 'textuality of empire' and the power of the British state bound up with its books and archives.[128] In such institutions, the temporal and spatial distance of ancient and modern wisdom has collapsed as 'the works of scholars, sages, and intellectuals of ancient times and their successors' are collected in their millions in one place.[129] Such a store of knowledge is tied to the progress of mankind: writers write out what they have learnt in this library, a process

[124] Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh* (2013), Vol. 3, p. 1097. The phrase is Rudyard Kipling's from the poem 'Arithmetic on the Frontier', first published in *Departmental Ditties and Other Verses*, (Lahore: n.p., 1886).
[125] Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh* (2013), Vol. 3, p. 1111.
[126] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1121.
[127] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1135.
[128] The phrase is from Elleke Boehmer, *Colonial and Postcolonial Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 50.
[129] Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh* (2013), Vol. 3, p. 1122.

which 'leads to knowledge in the manufacturing arts and the things that benefit mankind.'[130] Nasr Allah Khan's British translator even presents the prince with his own bust of Plato, a mobile memento of the value of knowledge.[131] At the base of all these powerful institutions of learning and industry lies Britain's political system, the travel-account containing a lengthy description by Muhammad Hasan Khan of British constitutionalism. Such constitutionalism ensure that Britain's ministers 'work hard to develop the country, namely by building schools, opening canals, and erecting bridges and by using their wisdom to protect and safeguard the kingdom from those who threaten it.'[132] As we shall see in the next chapter, constitutionalism was a 'travelling' ideology which animated intellectuals across the Muslim world, and which found a precarious foothold in Afghanistan through the interactions of Afghan and Indian intellectuals.

While Nasr Allah Khan's trip was funded and organized by the British, the account above has illustrated how such journeys could escape their colonial moorings and float free to take on quite different meanings. Rather than simply reinforcing the bond between the British and Afghan ruling dynasty, the analysis has focused on two dimensions of the travel account that undercut such a notion: firstly, the use that the Afghan ruling family could make of such trips to assert its power and prestige as an independent, Muslim dynasty; secondly, the unintended effects of such journeys on the Afghan travellers' conception of history, geography, and Afghanistan's location in the world. It is these two dimensions of the travels that are most important for this chapter's argument concerning Afghanistan's inter-connections with the world around it and the dissertation's argument for the emergence of Afghanistan in the Muslim imagination as a strong and independent Muslim nation. The first point

[130] *Ibid*.
[131] *Ibid*.
[132] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1127.

illustrates that the Afghan court in the late 19th century was very concerned with its self-portrayal as an independent, Muslim power and used both travels and travel writing to illustrate that fact to a domestic and international audience. The account shows that even in a time in which the Afghan court was closely aligned with the British government in India, its self-presentation was often very different from the one it fed to the British. Such a point is important in understanding the emergence of an idealized vision amongst Muslims of Afghanistan as an independent, Islamic imperial counter-space. As for the second point, the travels of Afghan state travellers abroad provided opportunities for both physical interactions with foreign Muslims and the creation of face-to-face and imagined solidarities. Such solidarities would grow and develop in the coming years as the Afghan state promoted a vigorous policy of importing Muslim skilled migrant labour and welcoming Muslim asylum-seekers from abroad.

Such travelling through imperial landscapes also highlighted for Afghan court travellers, as for other Muslim travellers of the period, the overwhelming subjection of Muslim powers to western imperial might and the urgent need for reform in their own countries. When experienced by such key political figures as Nasr Allah Khan, private experience had the potential to become public proclamation or policy. Such was the case with Nasr Allah Khan's leading of the 'War Party' against the British in the First World War. The text has also illustrated how the sense of an urgent need for reform was based on a new ideology of 'progress'. These shared concerns and shared lexicon of 'progress' amongst Afghan nationalists and Muslim internationalists would, in the next two decades, help make Afghanistan an important site of idealism and activism. But its roots can be found here, in the late 19th century.

III. Religious Travellers and the Afghan State

While the previous section has focused on the physical and conceptual inter-connections produced out of new forms of diplomatic travel, this section now turns to another category of travels - religious travels – and Afghan state policies towards such travels during the reign of ‘Abd al-Rahman. In keeping with the thrust of the chapter, this section is interested in understanding just how isolated and disconnected Afghanistan really was during the period, and the role of the Afghan state in fostering or suppressing Muslim interactions and solidarities. Starting with an account of Afghan state policies towards religious travellers, the section then turns to a case-study of one such religious traveller, an Afghan Shi‘a from Herat, and the account of his journey to pilgrimage sites in Iran and Iraq.

III.1. State Policies Towards the Hajj

It is well-known that ‘Abd al-Rahman focused much effort on bringing the religious establishment in Afghanistan under centralized control, and gave strong support to orthodox Sunni Hanafism in Afghanistan.[133] What has been less studied is the impact of such policies on the long-standing practice of religious travels to holy sites inside and outside of Afghanistan by Afghan and Muslim travellers, and what this can tell us about the way Afghanistan was viewed and experienced by Muslims. Our best source for such a study is, once more, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh*, which forms the basis of the following section. Despite the lack of printed accounts from Afghanistan, the Afghan sources still testify to a significant number of pilgrims stemming from, or passing through, Afghanistan on their way to Mecca.[134] *Sirāj al-*

[133] See Ashraf Ghani, ‘Islam and State-Building in a Tribal Society: Afghanistan, 1880-1901,’ *Modern Asian Studies* Vol. 12, No. 2 (1978), pp. 269-284.
[134] For one such hajji, see Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh* (2013), Vol. 3, p. 389.

tawārīkh makes numerous references to hajjis on their way to Mecca, and even mentions a female Afghan hajji who ended up living in Mecca, later moving to Medina.[135] Afghan Shi'a pilgrims often aimed not for Mecca but rather for Baghdad and Karbala, traveling either by boat or, more usually, taking the overland route through Iran.[136] The Afghan state's policies towards such religious travellers were notably more supportive than towards other non-state traveller like merchants, who suffered much intrusive state control during the period, illustrating that the Afghan state understood the value of cultivating relations with Muslims from other countries. Alongside granting permission to travel through Afghanistan, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan also put money towards aiding hajjis, employing a *hājjī-bāshī* in Turkistan to help hajjis travelling south with their passports, and providing food and horses for their journey on.[137] He also punished viciously any bandits who harmed hajjis on their journey.[138] The Afghan state allowed such Central Asian hajjis to follow their long-standing route through Afghanistan,[139] and even rented houses along the way from Kabul to Peshawar for Trans-Oxanian pilgrims before they took the train to Karachi.[140]

One group of religious travellers 'Abd al-Rahman Khan had little time for, however, were religious entrepreneurs who sought a living in Afghanistan. Developments in global communications meant that increasing numbers of such travellers could make their way to Afghanistan. These men, stemming from Baghdad, Jeddah, Madina and other Islamic centres seem largely to have been mobile holy men – whether self-describing as *shaikh*, *pīr*, *qārī, sayyid* – who hoped, relying

[135] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 796.
[136] For example, *ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1088.
[137] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 661.
[138] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1107.
[139] See Kakar, *Government and Society in Afghanistan* (1979), p. 67.
[140] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 845.

on the cultural and spiritual capital of their education or *barakāt* in the Islamic heartlands of the Middle East, to find work and patronage in Afghanistan. 'Abd al-Rahman Khan gave such men short shrift, accusing many of them of being spies or frauds.[141] One *sayyid* from Madina, for example, arrived in Kandahar in 1889 and managed to get a stipend from the Governor there, Sardar Nur Muhammad Khan, until 'Abd al-Rahman Khan found out and swiftly sent an angry reproach to the Governor chastising his gullibility in being fooled by people who the amir saw as essentially con men.[142]

Alongside his general suspicion of wandering holy men and mendicants, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan attempted to isolate his country from travelling religious ideologies like Babism and the Ahmadiya movement which had found a fertile seed-bed elsewhere in late 19th century Central and South Asia.[143] 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's promotion of a state-backed Sunni Hanafi orthodoxy, meant that such non-orthodox creeds were treated with hostility.[144] This did not stop such ideologies taking root. This was especially true of the Ahmadiyah, who found an influential convert in the form of Sahibzadah 'Abd al-Latif of Khost, one of Afghanistan's most senior members of the ulema as well as one of Afghanistan's representatives during the delineation of the Durand Line in 1893. Despite 'Abd al-Latif's role in formalizing Afghanistan's boundaries on behalf of the Afghan state, his religious heterodoxy was seen as so destabilizing that he was sentenced to death by 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's

[141] 'Abd al-Rahman Khan refused to allow a Jeddah scholar who wanted to work in Afghanistan, *ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 797; he also rejected a Baghdadi *qārī, ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 956; a Madinan Sheikh was turned away *ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1043; a Baghdadi *sayyid* came via Bukhara and was refused work *ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1108; a Madinan *sayyid* via Bukhara was accused of being a spy and sent back home *ibid*., Vol. 3, pp. 1119-20.
[142] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 629.
[143] For an overview of Babism, see D.M. MacEoin's article on 'Babism' in the *Encyclopedia Iranica*. For an overview of the Ahmadiya movement, see Spencer Lavan, *The Ahmadiyya Movement: A History and Perspective* (New Delhi: Manohar Book Service, 1974); John H. Hanson, 'Jihad and the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community: Nonviolent Efforts to Promote Islam in the Contemporary World,' *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* Vol. 11, No. 2 (2007), pp. 77-93.
[144] See Ghani, 'Islam and State-Building' (1978).

son Habib Allah Khan.[145] 'Abd al-Rahman Khan was equally harsh, writing of another Ahmadi, a Mangal named Mulla Sawan:

> When news of his folly and apostasy reached the court and it was revealed that the goal and plan of that reprobate was to damage the foundations of the religion of the Prophet of the Hijaz, it became obligatory for our royal person, in accordance with divine command and the shining prescripts of the law of the One in Whom Prophecy Takes Refuge, to remove him and those like him who incline to this ridiculous creed and cleanse the earth of the filthy existence of those apostates, the adherents of Satan, so that they do not infect the beliefs of ignorant Muslims who have not a speck of learning and don't know and can't distinguish the true from the apocryphal.[146]

When he heard of the order to arrest him, Mulla Sawan ran away. He was later caught 'at the shop of a kabab seller in the Kabul market' and the amir's men, in Katib's words, 'deprived him of his pointless life'.[147] While such harsh policies against groups like the Ahmadiyah would suggest that Afghanistan was not, at this stage, an attractive base for such heterodox groups, I would argue that the unintended consequence of such actions was to make Afghanistan all the more associated and connected with such groups; in the case of Sahibzadah 'Abd al-Latif, his 'martyrdom' earned him the title of *sayyid al-shuhadā'* amongst the Ahmadiya community.[148] Such martyrdom ensured that Afghanistan became an important site in Ahmadiyah historical tradition, and the Ahmadiyah would maintain a presence in eastern Afghanistan into the 1920s, its tradition and theology circulated by wandering scholars and leaflets printed in British Indian and circulated across the border.

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[145] The conversion of 'Abd al-Latif can be found at Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh, jild-e chahārum* (2012), Part 1, pp. 457-458. For an account of 'Abd al-Latif's death, see also Frank A. Martin, *Under the Absolute Amir* (London: Harper & Brothers, 1907), p. 204.

[146] Faiz Muhammad Kātib*, The History of Afghanistan: Volume Four: The Reign of Amir Habib Allah Khan*, ed. and trans. by R.D. McChesney and M. M. Khorrami (Leiden: Brill, forthcoming 2016), Part 1, p. 458.

[147] *Ibid*.

[148] Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh* (2013), Vol. 3, p. 1049.

Copies of such leaflets can still be found today, in Afghanistan's national archives in Kabul.[149]

III.2. State Policies Towards the Hijrat

Even more important than 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's support to those on the hajj was his policy towards travellers attempting hijrat i.e. religious flight from the *dār al-harb* to the *dār al-Islām*. The hijrat policy's importance for this dissertation lies in the fact that it fuelled the idea of Afghanistan as a 'world-refuge threshold' (*dargāh-e 'ālam-panāh*) in which Muslims could escape western imperial domination and find a new life.[150] As we shall see in the following chapters, such an image was to grow and develop through the early 20th century, and right up to this day. There were several reasons that the Afghan state supported such a policy. Firstly, there was the practical fact that the Afghan state was struggling to come to terms with the vast numbers of mobile groups, nomadic and semi-nomadic pastoralists, who used Afghanistan as a grazing ground and site for economic activity without paying as much attention to paying taxes or land property rights as the Afghan state and the settled population in Afghanistan would have liked. By coding such nomadic groups as *muhājirīn* i.e. performers of hijrat from non-Islamic lands to an Islamic land, and giving them land to settle, the Afghan state attempted to give an Islamic legitimacy to the sedenterization of mobile peoples. 'Abd al-Rahman Khan welcomed many Pashtun and Baluch families, primarily from British India, who sought a new home in Afghanistan, as long as they articulated this wish as hijrat and identified themselves

[149] One such Ahmadiya printed leaflet, *Maulawī Sanā' Allāh sāhib kē sāth ākhirī faisalah* can be found in the collection of documents from the Amani period held in the Afghan National Archives in Kabul.
[150] The phrase is from Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh, jild-e chahārum* (2012), *tatimmat*, p. 300.

as *muhājirīn*. To this end, the Afghan state provided land and favourable taxation terms to those who would agree to settle.[151]

Aside from the practical motive of trying to govern and manage a large nomadic population, there was also a religio-political motivation to such a hijrat policy. For such a policy was significantly a product of Afghanistan's self-identification as a Muslim polity surrounded by Christian powers to the east and north. The constant foregrounding of Afghanistan as a 'government of Islam' in decrees and correspondences from the period makes clear the importance for the Afghan ruling regime of forging such an Islamic identity. 'Abd al-Rahman even produced an enormous canvas map – five feet by four feet – which was wheeled around the country and which showed a symbol of Afghanistan as a canopied pavilion with minarets on top surrounded by the Christian powers of Russia and British India, symbolized by pavilions crowned with a cross.[152] Afghanistan was a young nation-state, less than twenty years old, and it was clearly important to the Afghan ruling family to vociferously announce its Muslim credentials from the beginning. This policy played out in both a positive response to many tribal groups seeking land and opportunity in Afghanistan, and a certain amount of active encouragement to Muslims to seek refuge 'in the shade of the protection of the government of Islam.'[153]

From the *muhājirīn's* perspective, there were a number of reasons to seek a new life in Afghanistan. The Afghan state was effectively offering economic

[151] See, for example, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's unsuccessful attempt to settle the Nasiris after their initial refusal to stop visiting Afghanistan, Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh* (2013), Vol. 3, p. 673.
[151] *Ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 689.
[152] For an analysis of this map, see David Edwards, *Heroes of the Age: Moral Faultlines on the Afghan Frontier* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), pp. 78-88.
[153] Katib notes that in regards to a group of Kakars seeking hijrat, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan 'sent a farman saying that they should be given seed, interest-free loans, and land, and be provided with peace of mind so as to encourage other muhajirs.' See Kātib, *The History of Afghanistan* (2016), Part 1, p. 51.

opportunities to such travellers through its provision of land, and the Afghan state also often provided seeds for crops and interest-free loans. The Afghan state also provided an open-door policy to many people who for political reasons wished to leave surrounding countries. While ‘Abd al-Rahman Khan persuaded the British that he was utterly trustworthy as an ally and partner, he nevertheless accepted those accused of thieving and other forms of criminality who were wanted in British India.[154] Such granting of asylum was conditional, as ‘Abd al-Rahman declared:

> On three conditions are places given to people in Afghanistan: first, that there will be no raiding of, or assaults on, English officials; secondly, living contentedly, you will not steal or plunder the wealth and property of (other) people; and third, your leaders will go to Kabul and get from His Majesty a set of instructions regarding how you are to live.[155]

Here one sees how ‘Abd al-Rahman Khan skillfully combined two goals in a single policy: firstly, to strengthen the Afghan court’s Islamic legitimacy abroad, by gaining the respect of Muslims from across the border; secondly, to preserve his relations with the British in India. In fact, such a policy could improve diplomatic relations through Afghanistan’s acceptance of potential troublemakers. ‘Abd al-Rahman Khan seems aware of the delicacy of the situation and, in a fascinating decree, attempted to legitimate the policy in the eyes of all by appealing to international norms:

> According to the laws and policies of all world governments, there can be no objection to providing safe haven to the sorts of people who chose to flee and go from country to the protection of another… According to this (general) rule and international principle, at whatever time and however many refugees should come from the other side, of course a place will be given them to reside and no cause for protest and objection will arise. However this does not mean that a government gives weapons and help to the enemy of a government with whom it has a treaty. Indeed, one must heed this principle and never bar anyone from coming.[156]

[154] For some camel-thieves from British India given shelter by ‘Abd al-Rahman, see *ibid*., Part 1, pp. 57-8.
[155] *Ibid*., Part 1, p. 61.
[156] *Ibid*., Part 1, pp. 97-8.

Such a decree is essentially an early articulation of international refugee law. The Afghan state's early adoption of such a policy points to one practical reason for Afghanistan's growing status as a refuge. At the same time, however, 'Abd al-Rahman's statement is as much a neat piece of diplomacy as an articulation of human rights policy *avant la lettre*: the decree meant that the amir could maintain good relations with the British, ensuring the continuation of their lucrative subsidy, while at the same time he could advertise the fact that Afghanistan was an Islamic polity and a refuge for Muslims in need. As we shall see, this policy of state support to *muhājirīn* would continue to develop into the first two decades of the 20th century.

III.3. Case Study Two: Muhammad Yusuf Riyazi's Religious Travels Abroad

Having explored 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's policies towards religious travellers it is now time to turn to the experience of religious travellers in and out of Afghanistan. What can they tell us about Afghanistan's connections and interactions with Muslims outside the country? What light can they shed on the relations of the Afghan state to religious travellers from the perspective of the travellers themselves? Unfortunately for the historian of Afghanistan, accounts of religious journeys are rare for the period, in contrast to other parts of South Asia and the Middle East where *hajjnāmahs* in particular were becoming increasingly widely disseminated from the multiple centres of Muslim printing.[157] Such an increase in *hajjnāmahs* elsewhere in

[157] The only *hajjnāmah* I know of from Afghanistan during the period is that of the religious scholar and calligrapher Qazi Hajji Mirza 'Abd al-Husain, who lived in Murad Khani and travelled on the hajj in the late 19th/early 20th century. He later wrote an account of this trip in manuscript form, which is with the Parvanta family in Shahr-e Nau in Kabul. My thanks to Farid and Homayun Parvanta for showing me this manuscript. For an overview of Hajj travels during the period, see F.E. Peters, *The Hajj*: *The Muslim Pilgrimage to Mecca and the Holy Places* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1994); on *hajjnāmahs*, see Barbara D. Metcalf, 'The pilgrimage remembered: South Asian accounts of the hajj', in Dale F. Eickelman and James Piscatori (eds.), *Muslim travellers: pilgrimage, migration,*

the Muslim world reflect the increased volume of religious journeys and interactions between the Middle East and regions formerly distant and distinct, largely driven by the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 and the expansion of imperial shipping and railway lines.[158]

While no printed *hajjnāmahs* recounting travels during the ‘Abd al-Rahman Khan period exist, one text does survive which gives some sense of the landscape and impact of such religiously inspired journeys in and out of Afghanistan. The source is a 1906 text, *Kulliyāt-e Riyāzī* by Muhammad Yusuf Riyazi (1873-1916), a Shi‘a resident of Herat.[159] Riyazi included an account of a trip to various pilgrimage sites in Iran and Iraq as part of a larger work, over 570 pages long, that combines autobiography, history, religious discussion and devotional writing.[160] Although not as rich in detail and impression as Nasr Allah Khan’s account, this wide-ranging text nevertheless offers a very rare insight into the worldview of an Afghan from the west of the country, as well as of the physical and cultural connections between western Afghanistan and Iran during the period. Indeed, the book is not just witness to such interactions, but is itself a product of them, printed as it was in Mashhad by lithograph in 1906. With very few presses in Afghanistan during the period, and all of them state-controlled and based in Kabul, Herat’s limited print culture was almost completely reliant on the larger print sphere based in the Iranian cities of Mashhad and Tehran. *Sirāj al-tawārīkh* gives some sense of the value and potential danger of having such books: Faiz Muhammad Katib describes how Afghan refugees and traders returning from Iran would bring back books of Shi‘a theology and history for

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and the religious imagination (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1990).

[158] See Nile Green, ‘The Rail Hajjis: The Trans-Siberian Railway and the Long Way to Mecca’ in Venetia Porter (ed.), *Hajj: Collected Essays* (London: British Museum, 2013).

[159] Muhammad Yūsuf Riyāzī, *Kulliyāt-e Riyāzī* (Mashhad: n.p., 1906).

[160] For the most detailed biographical account of Riyazi, see the section on him in R.D. McChesney, ‘Historiography in Afghanistan’ in Charles Melville (ed.), *Persian Historiography* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2012), Ch. 11.

a Shi'a audience in Afghanistan, something which could lead to serious trouble with the state authorities if found.[161] Such exilic printing by Afghans outside the country was not uncommon during the period, with various histories and memoirs printed by Afghans in Iran and India. In Riyazi's case, printing by lithograph also allowed him to include images, including a full-length portrait of himself, in which he is portrayed as a wealthy cosmopolitan figure in brocaded jacket and flowing turban, his hand resting on a western style chair.[162]

III.3.1. The Iron Horses of Kazemain

The fact that Riyazi's places his pilgrimage account at the beginning of his monumental work suggests the importance that Riyazi assigned to his travels. In his introductory statement, in which he calls himself 'Muhammad Yusuf, a Herati refugee, known as "Riyazi"', Riyazi self-identifies as a *muhājir* i.e. a religious traveller. The fact that Riyazi has made religious flight *from* Afghanistan is a striking early reversal of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's rhetoric of Afghanistan as a place of refuge for Muslims. For this Shi'a Afghan, Afghanistan has clearly not been a site of religious solace. We find that Riyazi made his pilgrimage as a twelve-year-old boy in the early 1880s, accompanying his father who had taken time off work in the government to make the trip. As Riyazi's travel account gets under way, we see a more traditional mode of travel than the steam-powered adventures of Prince Nasr Allah Khan. While Nasr Allah Khan took a matter of weeks to cross half the globe, Riyazi spent seven months largely travelling by time-honoured rather than steam-powered means: on foot and horse to Ottoman Iraq and back again. While the

[161] Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh* (2013), Vol. 3, p. 1035.
[162] Riyāzī, *Kulliyāt-e Riyāzī* (1906), p. 461. Another portrait of the author, this time in what looks like a military greatcoat, can be found at *ibid*., p. 568.

particular mode of steamship travel catapulted Nasr Allah Khan starkly into a brave new world of warships, port-cities, international quarantine officers, and artificial flower factories, Riyazi's journey through Iran followed a more familiar landscape of stopping-places (*ribāt*) and caravanserais. Where Nasr Allah Khan's journey is plotted in miles, Riyazi's remains in the more traditional unit of *farsang*.[163] Moreover, while Nasr Allah Khan's travelogue offers a disorienting vision of Islam in Europe and Europe in the Islamic heartlands, Riyazi's travelogue limns a landscape more expectedly and reassuringly sacralized as he makes his way to the tombs of eight of the Imams, in Mashhad, Qom and Najaf.[164] Such descriptions thus illustrate the enduring mobility of such pilgrims, basing their journeys largely on time-honoured modes of transport and the pathways of generations before them.

There are, however, glimpses of a changing world west of Afghanistan, such as the 'iron horse way' (*rāh-e āhan-e asbī*) which Riyazi rides from Kazemein to Baghdad, as well as a new built environment of telegraph offices (*tīlīgrāf-khānah*) which have sprung up alongside the mosques of Tehran. Although professedly a religiously inspired journey, the desire for sightseeing proves an important impetus too, the trip being described as a tour (*siyāhat*), as well as an act of devotion. In Tehran, he spends ten days sight seeing, which provides the kind of comparisons which are less stark than those of Nasr Allah in Britain, but still useful to the patriotic Afghan interested in the project of reform: alongside the telegraph office there are trips to see the exercising of the Iranian troops as well as a trip to state-funded schools for local children.[165] Like the description of Nasr Allah Khan being

[163] For Nasr Allah's use of miles, see *ibid*., Vol. 3, p. 1090; for Riyazi's use, see Riyāzī, *Kulliyāt-e Riyāzī* (1906), p. 2.
[164] *Ibid*., p. 3.
[165] *Ibid*., p. 3. While Riyazi did not work for the state, he still seems supportive of various policies of the Afghan state, most particularly a stress on modern education, for which he uses the buzzword of the time '*taraqqī*', *ibid.*, p. 5.

honoured wherever he goes in Britain, Riyazi, too, notes how his Afghan clothes and manner garner him much respect while abroad.[166]

Printed as it was in Iran, Riyazi's text stands outside the almost exclusively state-backed texts written by Afghans during the period. In offering a rare non-state 'view from the provinces' during the period, it helps us understand the interactions of Afghans and Muslims across Afghanistan's western border. The primary revelation of such a text is to see a world-view that, despite its professed patriotism towards Afghanistan, is much more focused on Mashhad in Iran than Kabul. This is perhaps unsurprising considering the limited communications infrastructure and difficult terrain east of Herat, which meant that a journey across the border from Herat to Mashhad was far easier than the arduous trek from Herat through the central highlands or the long detour via Kandahar to Kabul. Such geographic proximity and long-standing cultural and linguistic ties with Iran inevitably affected religious, cultural, and economic life, and Riyazi's text gives one a sense of the long-standing cross-border interactions through which Afghans in the west of the country structured their lives.[167] Riyazi came from a wealthy business family that traded in grain, opium, guns and other goods. His network of relatives spread across both Herat and Mashhad, no doubt facilitating trade between the two cities.[168] Such cross-border networks suggest an enduring inter-connectedness of Afghans in the west of the country and Iranians, a connectedness which undermines the so-called 'isolation' of the period.

Riyazi's troubled life-story reveals that 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's policies towards religion could be extremely divisive. During the 1890s Riyazi's life was

[166] *Ibid*., p. 3.
[167] For a long-term perspective on identity, political developments, and cultural memory in Herat, see Christine Noelle-Karimi, *The Pearl in its Midst: Herat and the Mapping of Khurasan* (Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2014).
[168] Riyāzī, *Kulliyāt-e Riyāzī* (1906), p. 5.

thrown into flux by various actions of the Afghan state. Riyazi was forced to flee with various members of his family due to accusations that his family were too close to enemies of the amir.[169] While ‘Abd al-Rahman was publicly professing his policy of support to *muhājirīn* from outside Afghanistan, Riyazi was forced, like many other Afghans, to become a *muhājir* himself, fleeing Afghanistan for Iran. Ironically, Riyazi then felt the impact of ‘Abd al-Rahman Khan’s hijrat policy when his land was appropriated by Adam Khel Alikuzais.[170] After a brief return, ‘Abd al-Rahman Khan’s campaign against the Hazarahs, and the concomitant anti-Shi’ite feeling which animated the mid-1890s, forced Riyazi to flee once more to Mashhad, where it seems he largely remained until the publication of his work. The text thus illustrates the kind of unintended forms of movement forced on many Afghans by ‘Abd al-Rahman Khan’s divisive policies. Indeed, as Faiz Muhammad Katib illustrates in great detail in Volume Three of his history, while ‘Abd al-Rahman Khan was professing his country a refuge for Muslims, he was also overseeing one of the largest exoduses of Afghans from the country, as tens of thousands of Afghans – largely but not by any means exclusively Shi‘ah Hazaras – were forced to flee.

While Riyazi professed his support for ‘Abd al-Rahman Khan and his desire to work for the Afghan state,[171] his life-story and his evocation of different geographic, cultural, genealogical, and religious landscapes undermine the state-backed vision of the new territorially-bounded Islamic nation-state of ‘Afghanistan’.[172] Riyazi’s own family was testament to an alternative vision of the geographical and historical landscape of the land now called Afghanistan: his father’s family could be traced back to the Abdali-Durrani clan that ruled Afghanistan and his

[169] *Ibid*., p. 4.
[170] *Ibid*., p. 11.
[171] *Ibid*., p. 5.
[172] For an interpretation of ’Abd al-Rahman Khan’s state-building with regards to Afghan borders and map-making, see Edwards, *Heroes of the Age* (1996), Ch. 3.

mother's side to the Afshar royal clan of the Iranian ruler Nadir Shah Afshar (d.1747).[173] With Herat repeatedly changing hands in the political flux of the 19th century, Riyazi's family found itself scattered between Herat and Mashhad. Culturally, Riyazi looked to Iran. It was to Iran he went for education, due to the dearth of such opportunities in Afghanistan, and interacted with Iranian teachers.[174] It was also to Iran he turned for religious guidance: during a period in which 'Abd al-Rahman was transforming state-ulema relations through increasing state control, Riyazi sought advice from religious figures in Iran rather than Afghanistan. In Kazemain in Iraq, he describes visiting a religious *mujtahid* in order to obtain elucidation on a number of religious questions he has.[175] The travels and travel-accounts of this cross-border Afghan thus illustrate that the land of 'Afghanistan' remained a contested vision for Afghans themselves, and warns us away from an overly schematic or monolithic 'Muslim imagination' of Afghanistan during the period. Afghanistan could be a site of tension and discord for Muslims as much as a sacred refuge. At the same time, a case-study of Riyazi's cross-border living strengthens the argument of this chapter for Afghans enduring inter-connections during the period.

IV. From Outcast to In-Law: Exile and the Afghan State

The previous sections have plotted a range of diplomatic and religious travels, and state policies towards such travels, that have helped us reassess Afghanistan's supposed isolation and disconnectedness during the reign of the 'isolationist' 'Abd al-Rahman Khan. In fact, it has been argued, Afghan state policies encouraged

[173] See the beautiful illustrated family tree, Riyāzī, *Kulliyāt-e Riyāzī* (1906), p. 8.
[174] *Ibid*., p. 9.
[175] *Ibid*., p. 3.

various forms of travel of Afghans and Muslims in and out of Afghanistan. Such policies and travels had an important effect on Afghan travellers, as well as fostering new interactions between Afghans and Muslims and setting the ground for further interactions in the future. The chapter concludes with an analysis of forms of 'exilic' travel. For 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's exiling of many prominent Afghans would unintentionally hasten a rapid increase of new peoples and ideas into Afghanistan in the early 20th century, a phenomenon that would have a transformative effect on the refashioning of Afghanistan.

While we have seen how the Afghan state pursued an asylum policy which accepted many Muslim refugees from outside the country, in the case of Riyazi we have also seen conversely how 'Abd al-Rahman Khan could also create refugees by exiling potential opposition. Riyazi's fate was in fact part of a large-scale policy of exile that saw many prominent Afghan families forced to flee in the early 1880s. This produced a centrifugal movement of many high-status Afghans out of the country where they found new homes in Iran, Central Asia, British India, and beyond.[176] The influence of these exiles upon their return to Afghanistan in the early 20th century has long been noted by scholars, who have viewed such individuals as key transmitters of new ideas that helped forge a new Afghan nation-state nationalism and ideology of 'progress' in the early 20th century. What has been lacking from these discussions, however, is any sense of the texture of these Afghan exiles' lives abroad, and an understanding of the role that exile and travel played in their formulations of 'Afghanistan' and Afghanistan's place in the world. Fortunately for the scholar, there is one source which provides unique access to one

[176] Many examples of such exiles, and their return from Iran, the Ottoman Empire, British India and Transoxania can be found in Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh, jild-e chahārum* (2012), Parts 1 and 2. For an account in English of one such exile, see M.A.K Effendi, *Royals and Royal Mendicant: A Tragedy of the Afghan History, 1791-1949* (Lahore: Lion Press, n.d.).

such Afghan exile abroad: an account by the Afghan intellectual and statesman Mahmud Tarzi of a journey he made through the Ottoman Empire while an exile in 1891.[177] Tarzi's central role in early 20th century Afghan political and cultural life means that the text provides a means for analyzing the role that exile and travel played in forming, re-forming, and transforming ideas of Afghanistan, 'Afghan-ness' (*afghāniyat*), and Afghanistan's relation to the Muslim world.[178]

IV.1. Case Study Three: Mahmud Tarzi's Siyāhatnāmah

While Mahmud Tarzi would go on to become one of Afghanistan's most famous intellectuals and statesmen, his early life gave little indication of its future direction. While still a boy, his family was forced to flee Afghanistan, his father Ghulam Muhammad Tarzi sent on an enforced hajj by 'Abd al-Rahman Khan after accusations that Ghulam Muhammad had colluded with one of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's rivals for the throne, Muhammad Ayub Khan.[179] The Tarzi family left Afghanistan by donkey caravan, and lived for a short while in Karachi before moving to Baghdad.[180] After six months the Tarzi family moved on to Damascus, at that time something of a provincial backwater of the Ottoman Empire, where they remained for fifteen years and where the young Mahmud was educated, becoming a fluent speaker of Ottoman Turkish.[181] Such cultural capital engendered by Tarzi's time abroad was bolstered by his supposed education at the feet of Jamal ad-Din al-

[177] Mahmūd Tarzī, *Siyāhat dar sih qita'ah rū-ye zamīn dar 29 rūz: Āsiyā, Ūrūpā, Afrīqā* (Kabul: Matba'ah-e 'ināyat, 1915).
[178] The following section forms the basis of an article, Thomas Wide, 'Around the World in Twenty-Nine Days: The Travels, Translations, and Temptations of an Afghan Dragoman' published in Micallef and Sharma (eds.), *On the Wonders of Land & Sea* (2013).
[179] The episode is described in Mahmūd Tarzī, *Khātirāt-e Mahmūd Tarzī* ed. Rawān Farhādī (Kabul: Nashārat-e instītūt-e dīplūmāsī-ye wazārat-e umūr-e khārijah, 2011), p. 149.
[180] *Ibid.,* p. 171.
[181] See May Schinasi, *Afghanistan at the Beginning of the 20th Century: Nationalism and Journalism in Afghanistan: A Study of Siraj ul-Akhbar (1911-1918)* (Naples: Istituto Universitario Orientale, 1979), Ch. 2.

Afghani (1838-1897), the anti-colonial activist and Muslim intellectual who was still regarded during the period as an Afghan.[182] Much has been made of Tarzi's 'studying' under al-Afghani, although the exact nature of their relationship seems very unclear. Certainly, Tarzi's father had known al-Afghani, and had even written a poem in praise of al-Afghani written after al-Afghani's two-year sojourn in Afghanistan in the late 1860s.[183] Our only reference by Tarzi to such study is in a 1917 article from the Afghan newspaper he edited, *Sirāj al-akhbār*, in which Tarzi claims that he spent seven months in Istanbul with al-Afghani until al-Afghani's death in March 1897.[184] And yet, al-Afghani does not mention Tarzi in any of his writings, nor are there any other first-hand accounts that corroborate Tarzi's own story. One wonders if Tarzi did not invent, or certainly exaggerate, his contact with al-Afghani in order to gain prestige from association with the great anti-imperialist al-Afghani, and to legitimate his own ideas of Muslim reform in Afghanistan. It would certainly be in keeping with the spirit of al-Afghani, who had himself invented his Afghan origins to display to the Muslim world that he was a Sunni, not a Shi'a. For this pair of globetrotting freelancers, exile and imagination could prove a potent combination in furthering their professional and political aims. For both, too, Afghanistan's historic successes against the British in the 19th century made the country both an historical example to be emulated and a potential future site for Muslim resistance to western imperialism. Al-Afghani had even written a history of Afghanistan, which stressed the Afghans' martial valour and independence. Such a work, written in Cairo in 1879-80 during the Second Anglo-Afghan War, was

[182] On al-Afghani's career, reputation, and his concealing of his true Iranian origins, see Nikki R. Keddie, *Sayyid Jamal ad-Din "Al-Afghani": A Political Biography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972).
[183] See Ghulām Muhammad Tarzī, *Qasā'id* (Karachi: Matba'-e Faiz Muhammadī, 1892), pp. 70-71.
[184] See Tarzi's article in *Sirāj al-akhbār*, Year 6, Vol. 5, p. 4. For an analysis, see Schinasi, *Afghanistan at the Beginning of the 20th Century* (1979), pp. 58-61.

designed to inspire Muslims around the world by the Afghan example.[185] Tarzi would later use such historical examples of Afghan victories to inspire his own people inside Afghanistan.[186]

After an amnesty proclaimed by Amir Habib Allah Khan on his accession to the throne of Afghanistan in 1901, many of the Afghans exiled by ‘Abd al-Rahman Khan returned to their country, and quickly gained prominent positions in the new Afghanistan. None was more successful in this respect than Mahmud Tarzi, who was able to use his widespread learning, well-travelled experiences, and charisma to gain much influence at court. Starting as the head of Habib Allah Khan’s private translation bureau, Tarzi would go on to edit Afghanistan’s first regular newspaper. A charming and erudite conversationalist who quickly gained the confidence of the young amir, Tarzi also forged strong familial links to the royal family through the marriage of one of his daughters to the future Amir Aman Allah Khan, and another to Aman Allah Khan’s brother ‘Inayat Allah Khan.

Despite his prominent public role as statesman in the 1920s, it was as the prime ideologue of what I call Afghan ‘progressivism’ that Mahmud Tarzi had the most lasting influence. Tarzi was Afghanistan’s most vociferous nationalist during the first two decades of the 20th century, encouraging Afghanistan to enter the First World War alongside the Ottomans and Germans against the British, and calling for the kind of spiritual and material uplift which would ensure Afghan independence

[185] See Sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī, *Tatimmat al-bayān fī tārīkh al-Afghān*, ed. ‘Alī Yūsuf al-Kirīdlī (Cairo: n.p., 1901). Recently the whole text of this work, as well as several other articles on Anglo-Afghan relations by al-Afghani, have been published as al-Sayyid Jāmal al-Dīn al-Husainī, *Tārīkh-e ijmālī-ye Īrān wa tatimmat al-bayān fī tārīkh al-Afghān wa al-bayān fī al-Injlīz wa al-Afghān*, ed. Sayyid Hādī Khusrau Shāhī (Qom: Chāpkhānah-e al-Hādī, 2000). While a full analysis of the text remains to be written, some analysis on the text can be found at Keddie, *al-Afghani* (1972), pp. 55-57, 104.

[186] For Tarzi’s view on Afghanistan’s martial valour, independence, and worsting of the British, see Schinasi, *Afghanistan at the Beginning of the 20th Century* (1979), Ch. 9.

and future prosperity.[187] Tarzi was also perhaps the main conduit to Muslim reformists from other parts of the world, inviting Ottomans and Indians to the country and encouraging their practical involvement in building the new institutions of a 'progressive' Afghan state. In Tarzi is thus neatly combined the two-fold dynamic of Afghan nationalist ideologies and larger international currents of pan-Islamic solidarity and reform, a dynamic that would drive Afghanistan's developing status as a site of Muslim optimism and activism.

IV.2. Printing Afghan Progressivism: The 'Inayat Press

Although Tarzi's travelogue has been little studied in Afghan or western scholarship, it remains an extremely important, even revolutionary, text. Not only is it the first complete travelogue ever printed in Afghanistan, but it is also one of the most radical Afghan texts of the early 20th century, in terms of both its formal innovations and its thematic scope.[188] Of particular note are its frank and first person depictions of gender and sexual relations. At the same time, it is valuable for the scholar in providing a window on to the impact of the development of print culture and travel book circulation throughout the Muslim world, even in countries deemed

[187] There are a number of excellent works on Tarzi's literary output and practical work during the reign of Habib Allah Khan, see *ibid.*; Vartan Gregorian, 'Mahmud Tarzi and Saraj-ol-Akhbar: Ideology of Nationalism and Modernization in Afghanistan,' *Middle East Journal* Vol. 21, No. 3 (1967), pp. 345-368; Wali Ahmadi, *Modern Literature of Afghanistan: Anomalous Visions of History and Form*, (New York: Routledge, 2008) Ch. 2.; Nushin Arbabzadah, 'Modernizing, Nationalizing, Internationalizing: How Mahmud Tarzi's Hybrid Identity Transformed Afghan Literature' in Green and Arbabzadah (eds.), *Afghanistan in Ink* (2013); Bashīr Sukhāwarz, *Tarzī wa sirāj al-akhbār* (Tehran: Matba'ah-e irfān, 2008); Muhammad 'Azam Sīstānī, *'Allāmah Mahmūd Tarzī, Shāh Amān Allāh wa rūhāniyat-e mutanaffiz* (Peshawar: Kitābkhānah-e dānish, 2004). For Tarzi in his own words, see Mahmūd Tarzī, *Maqālāt-e Mahmūd Tarzī,* ed. Rawān Farhādī (Kabul: Intishārāt-e baihaqī, 1977).

[188] Despite it being the first printed travelogue, a fragment of another travel-account by Mahmud Tarzi of an earlier trip to Istanbul was printed in a collection of writings by Tarzi, printed in 1913. See Mahmūd Tarzī, *Az har dahān sukhānī wa az har chaman samanī* (Kabul: Matba'ah-e 'ināyat, 1913), pp. 82-104.

'peripheral' such as Afghanistan.[189] For the story of the text is also the story of the development of Afghan printing – and one printing press in particular, the 'Inayat Press. This press was set up in 1912, by Habib Allah Khan's brother 'Inayat Allah Khan, with the support and encouragement of Tarzi.[190] While 'Abd al-Rahman Khan had jealously guarded this potentially subversive technology, 'Inayat Allah Khan's press became a kind of Afghan equivalent to the Hogarth Press, that outlet for the dissemination of literary modernist works in Britain, set up by Virginia Woolf and her husband Leonard in 1917.[191] Like the Hogarth Press, the 'Inayat Press was funded with private money, was resolutely anti-commercial, published a small group of writers from a particular social circle, and printed self-consciously 'new' works of translation and fiction.[192] However, unlike the Hogarth Press, and more in line with the tradition of Afghan printing to that point, the 'Inayat Press was a state-backed project, which viewed the development of new types of literature as key to the 'progress' (*taraqqī*) of the country.[193] Such a press marks the Afghan state's belated engagement with other centres of Muslim printing, be it in Istanbul, Tabriz, Cairo, Lucknow, whose authors and printers were also printing self-consciously 'progressive' texts for a growing Muslim audience in a variety of languages.

While we have seen the public proclamations of Nasr Allah Khan's travels during 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's time as an early example of a court-backed aestheticization of 'travel', it is during Habib Allah Khan's time that this valorization

[189] For an account of Muslim travellers and printing during the period, see Nile Green, 'Journeymen, Middlemen: Travel, Trans-Culture and Technology in the Origins of Muslim Printing,' *International Journal of Middle East Studies* Vol. 41, No. 2 (2009), pp. 203-24.
[190] For the start date of the 'Inayat Press, see Diary of the British Agent at Kabul, week ending 18th Feb 1912, IOR/L/P&S/10/52.
[191] For a history of this press, see J.H.Willis, *Leonard and Virginia Woolf as Publishers: The Hogarth Press 1917-1941* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1992).
[192] For a programmatic statement of 'Inayat Allah Khan's aims for the press, and its un-commercial nature, see introduction to Mahmūd Tarzī, *Az har dahān sukhānī* (1913), p. 3.
[193] For a history of printing in Afghanistan, see 'Abd al-Rasūl Rahīn, *Tārīkh-e matbū'āt-e Afghānistān* (Stockholm: Shūrā-ye farhangī-ye Afghānistān, 2007).

of 'travel' was thus able to blossom and flourish due to the founding of the 'Inayat Press. The first books translated and published on the press were translations by Tarzi of four novels of fantastical technological travels by the French author Jules Verne.[194] These translations were not directly from the French, but rather mediated through Ottoman Turkish translations made by the Ottoman publisher and writer Ahmad Ihsan Tokgöz (1868-1942). For Tarzi, as for other Asian intellectuals of the period, the value of science fiction such as Jules Verne's lay in its practical role in showing its Afghan audience a sight of the 'age of progress' (*zamān-e taraqqī*) taking place all around Afghanistan, and in educating its readers in science and geography at the same time as it entertained them.[195] Such travels thus worked as the fictional counterpart to the new geographic and scientific textbooks which Tarzi and his colleagues wrote or translated, and which were printed on the Afghan government presses during the time.[196] Technological travel, and the accounts of such travel in novels and travelogues, was thus to be praised and encouraged as a means for educating and transforming the country.[197]

These European inter-texts in Turkish translation all point to the mediating function which Ottoman print culture played in shaping Tarzi's literary worldview

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[194] Jules Verne, *Siyāhat bar daur daur-e kurrah-e zamīn bih hashtād rūz*, trans. Mahmūd Tarzī (Kabul: Matbaʻah-e 'ināyat, 1913); *idem*, *Siyāhat dar jau-e hawā* (Kabul: Matbaʻah-e 'ināyat, 1913); *idem*, *Jazīrah-e pinhān* (Kabul: Matbaʻah-e 'ināyat, 1914); *idem*, *Bīst hazār farsākh siyāhat dar zīr-e bahr* (Kabul: Matbaʻah-e 'ināyat, 1914). For the central position of travel to literary modernism in the West, see Dennis Porter, 'Modernism and the Dream of Travel' in Michael Hanne (ed.), *Literature and Travel* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1993).

[195] See Nile Green, 'The Afghan Afterlife' (2013). Science fiction was avidly translated and read in China during the same period, see Helena Heroldova, 'Glass Submarines and Electric Balloons: Creating Scientific and Technical Vocabulary in Chinese Science Fiction' in Michael Lackner & Natascha Vittinghoff (eds.), *Mapping Meanings: The Field of New Learning in Late Qing China* (Leiden: Brill, 2004).

[196] For example, Mahmūd Tarzī, *Mukhtasar-e jughrāfīyā-ye 'umūmī* (Kabul: Matbaʻah-e tīpūgrāfī, 1915). Such works were also written by foreigners in Kabul, for example the Ottoman military educator Mahmūd Sāmī, *Jughrāfīyā-ye 'umūmī-ye ibtidā'ī barā-ye shāgirdān-e makātib-e rashdīyah-e 'askarīyah-e Afghānistān* (Kabul: Matbaʻah-e maktab-e funūn-e harbiyah, 1919).

[197] For Tarzi's thoughts on the value of travel, see Tarzī, *Siyāhat* (1915), pp. 9-10. For a useful study of Verne, see William Butcher, *Verne's Journey to the Centre of the Self: Space and Time in the Voyages Extraordinaires* (London: Macmillan, 1990).

and - due to his overwhelming influence - on Afghan print culture more generally. Tarzi's travelogue explicitly comments on this print culture, with descriptions of his visits to his favourite bookshops and bazaars in Istanbul.[198] It was not just European works in Turkish translation that Tarzi found in those bookshops, however, but also Turkish-language works composed by Ottoman travellers and thinkers. Tarzi's text clearly bears the mark of Turkish-language travelogues of the time, particularly the work of Ahmad Midhat (1844-1912), the energetic Ottoman litterateur and intellectual who wrote travelogues that blended a personal narrative coloured by novelistic passages, dialogue, and character development with historical and geographical information.[199] Tarzi saw Midhat as something of a role model, translating articles he had written and writing a long eulogy following his death in the pages of *Sirāj al-akhbār.*[200] The two men shared similar literary and political interests, and both wrote quickly and prolifically on a wide variety of subjects including the educative role that 'travel' could play in promoting 'progress'.[201] Moreover, Tarzi's eulogy in print makes clear that he had read many of Midhat's work, including a Turkish-language account about a trip he made to Europe.[202] Published just two years prior to Tarzi's journey, it is not impossible that Tarzi bought a copy during his stop off in Istanbul, and even took it back with him to Afghanistan.

In such multilingual and inter-connected places as the port-cities of the Ottoman Empire, this translation (in its Latin sense of '*trans*' + '*latus*' i.e. 'carrying

[198] Tarzī, *Siyāhat* (1915), p. 310.
[199] Carter Vaughn Findley, 'An Ottoman Occidentalist in Europe: Ahmed Midhat Meets Madame Gulnar, 1889,' *The American Historical Review* Vol. 103, No. 1 (1998), p. 23.
[200] *Sirāj al-akhbār,* Year 2, Vol. 19, pp. 13-14; see also Schinasi, *Afghanistan at the Beginning of the 20th Century* (1979), p. 184.
[201] For a programmatic statement by Midhat (translated into English) of his views on travel and travel-writing see Christoph Herzog and Raoul Motika, 'Orientalism "*alla turca*": Late 19th / Early 20th Century Ottoman Voyages into the Muslim 'Outback,' *Die Welt des Islams* New Series Vol. 40, Issue 2 (2000), pp. 141-151.
[202] Ahmad Midhat, *Avrūpā-da bīr jaulan* (Istanbul: Tarjumān-e hakīkat matba'ası, 1889-90).

across') of objects, ideas, and people, was common. This three-fold exchange between the Ottoman Empire and Afghanistan, is neatly illustrated in the use of photographs, drawings, and maps throughout Tarzi's travelogue. This type of illustrated travelogue had become increasingly popular in the Ottoman Empire, as pioneered by the Ottoman translator and printer Ahmad Ihsan Tokgöz, who we have met earlier in this section as the translator of Jules Verne into Ottoman Turkish.[203] On the practical side of things, however, it was the physical travels of exiled Ottoman and Indo-Muslim printers that would spur the development of lithographic printing in Afghanistan in the early 20th century, which in turn allowed for the printing of images in books. One of these men, Muhammad Fazlı, would work closely with Mahmud Tarzi and even contribute articles to *Sirāj al-akhbār.*[204] He would also write the first illustrated Ottoman travelogue about Afghanistan, which was published by Ahmad Ihsan Tokgöz, and which is described in the following chapter.[205] It was the work of such transnational journeymen that allowed for Tarzi's travelogue to be printed with images in Afghanistan in 1915, images which themselves had travelled considerable distances, either being copied from various books that Tarzi had imported from Turkey to Kabul or bought by him in the photo shops which dotted the waterfronts of the port-cities he passed through.[206] As we shall see with the discussion of Ottoman travellers to Afghanistan in the early 20th century, from such transnational artistic and practical collaborations of a small network of multilingual journeymen were new representations of 'Afghanistan' created and circulated.

While the Ottoman dimension of Afghan progressivism has been commonly referenced, if little explored, Tarzi's travelogue moves beyond such dualistic Afghan-

[203] For the role of photography in Ottoman travelogues, see Herzog and Motika, 'Orientalism "*alla turca*"' (2000), p. 177-8.
[204] See Schinasi, *Afghanistan at the Beginning of the 20th Century* (1979), p. 67.
[205] Muhammad Fazlı, *Rasimlī afgān siyāhatī* (Istanbul: Matba'ah-e ahmad ihsān, 1909).
[206] For a description of Tarzi buying such photos in Port Sa'id, see Tarzī, *Siyāhat* (1915), p. 648.

Ottoman collations. For the text is even more thoroughly composite, illustrating the multi-directional range of influences driving Afghan 'progressives' in the early 20th century, and the intellectual inter-connections of Afghan writers and Muslims across Afghanistan's borders. Stylistically, Tarzi oscillated between two modes, a literary mode in which he framed the narrative of his travels and an informational mode in which he described the various places he visited. In informational mode, Tarzi was clearly following the Ottoman Turkish model of Ahmad Midhat, who would pepper his travelogues with facts and figures cribbed from encyclopedias.[207] These informational, 'guide-book'-style sections may also reflect the influence of Urdu literature of the late 19th/early 20th century; it is an often-neglected element of Tarzi's cultural background that he was an Urdu speaker who had spent a significant period of his exiled youth in Karachi.[208] With the proximity and scale of Urdu printing just across the border in British India, Tarzi may well have been aware of, and had some affinity with, the type of practical travelogue increasingly common in Urdu literature of the period.[209] When he was out of informational mode and writing in literary mode, however, Tarzi drew frequently not on Turkish or Urdu sources but on earlier pre-colonial Persianate models (often themselves stemming from the Arabic tradition), which stressed the delights and wonders (*'ajā'ib-o-gharā'ib*) of travel abroad for an audience unlikely to ever make the journey themselves. Like the composite travel account of Nasr Allah Khan analysed above, Tarzi was clearly drawing on and refashioning his own literary and intellectual heritage. And, like the account of Nasr Allah's travels, such Persianate 'wonder and delight' literature was

[207] Findley, 'An Ottoman Occidentalist' (1998), p. 20.
[208] For Tarzi's command of Urdu, see Sohrab Katrak, *Through Amanullah's Afghanistan* (Lahore: 'Sind Observer' & Mercantile Steam Press Limited, 1929), p. 4; for Afghan literature's connection to Urdu, see Nile Green, 'Trans-Border Traffic' (2011).
[209] For an account of such Urdu travelogues, see *idem*, 'Africa in Indian Ink: Urdu Articulations of Indian Settlement in East Africa,' *Journal of African History* Vol. 53, No. 2 (2012), pp. 131-150.

now set by Tarzi to the rhythms of a contemporary world in rapid transformation. Tarzi's text contains long purple patches of descriptive prose on the beauty of cities, people, and natural landscapes,[210] although these now incorporate descriptions of the infrastructure of contemporary travel, a world of paved roads and tramway tracks.[211] The pre-colonial 'weird and wonderful' trope of Persianate travel writing has now been adapted to late 19th century industrial port-cities, where such wonders are now underwritten and powered by contemporary technologies. In place of descriptions of the strange tribal customs or burial practices of foreign peoples, the *ajā'ib* to be marveled at are now how fast people can now get their hair washed and cut in Beiruti barber shops, or the waxwork models which look identical to real people in the waxwork museum in Istanbul;[212] the *gharā'ib* are now '*gharā'ib madaniyah'*[213] ('civilized wonders') and include the current vogue amongst European and American gentlemen for taking mistresses in foreign cities.[214] New forms of enchantment emerge from Tarzi's experiences of such technologies and contemporary mores: in place of fantastical creatures or bizarre natural landscapes is an equally fantastical world of electricity and steam-power, as yet almost unheard of in Afghanistan. Repeatedly the lights in steamboats, streets, and restaurants are described as making the night 'like day',[215] and public gardens are lit up by gas and electric lamps so that people imagine they are 'in another world.'[216] In Istanbul, Tarzi fuses such Persianate travel-writing motifs of wonder with Jules Verne-esque futuristic travels: he goes into raptures of delight while on the *Tünel* funicular train which travels

[210] See for example his account of the Greek coast, Tarzī, *Siyāhat* (1915), pp. 175-6.
[211] *Ibid*., p. 45.
[212] *Ibid*., p. 51.
[213] *Ibid*., p. 334.
[214] *Ibid*., p. 95.
[215] *Ibid*., p. 53, 216.
[216] *Ibid*., p. 34.

hundreds of metres underground between Kadiköy and Beyoğlu - his very own journey to the centre of the earth.[217]

IV.3. Mahmud Khan meet Mahmud Beg

The profoundly composite formal, generic, and stylistic elements of the text are mirrored in the representation of the author himself. Tarzi's travelogue suggests that 'hybridity' is the most useful concept and lens for understanding the emergence of a new type of transcultural traveller during the period.[218] Despite his later proudly expressed Afghan identity, Tarzi spent twenty-five years of his life in a world removed from his Afghan and Indo-Persian heritage, where he took on the clothing and cultural mores of a young Ottoman *efendī*. Fluent in Turkish, well versed in Arabic, able in French, Tarzi thus betrayed little trace of his Afghan heritage. Indeed, the most visible link to his Afghan roots was his father Ghulam Muhammad, who was a constant figure in the young Tarzi's life and with whom Tarzi conversed in Persian and Pashto. The differences between the acculturation of the two men are clear from their photographs printed at the start of Tarzi's travelogue. On the left hand side of the page, Mahmud appears as something of an Ottoman dandy, in suit, bowtie, fez, and neatly turned moustache. On the right hand side, Ghulam Muhammad is dressed in the traditional clothes of an Afghan *khān* – long robes, a flowing white beard, large turban, prayer beads in his hand.[219] The two men are just one generation removed and yet appear as if from different worlds. This sartorial differentiation had an immediate impact on how the men were perceived as they travelled; while Mahmud was addressed with the Turkish appellation '*beg efendī*' by

[217] *Ibid*., p. 272.
[218] For an excellent account of Tarzi's hybridity, see Nushin Arbabzadah, 'Modernizing, Nationalizing, Internationalizing' in Green and Arbabzadah (eds.), *Afghanistan in Ink* (2013).
[219] Tarzī, *Siyāhat* (1915), pp. 14-15.

the people they met, his father was mostly given the Persian honorific '*hazrat sāhib*'.[220] With his father not speaking any Turkish and only a smattering of Arabic, Mahmud acted as his father's interpreter and guide on their travels, a kind of personal *dragoman* who claimed a salary of thirty pounds a month for his work.[221] Mahmud Tarzi's clothes, appellation as *beg* not *khān*, and his professional role allowed him to modify his identity as it suited him; at times in the travelogue he disguised his relation to his father in order to take advantage of the greater freedom and access he could gain by being viewed as an Istanbuli or Damascene. In particular, it ensured that his actions would not in any way negatively affect his father's reputation while they travelled. Thus during his first dinner at the captain's table on his way from Beirut to Istanbul, Tarzi hid his Afghan roots, describing himself as from 'the environs of Istanbul' (*atrāf-e Istānbūl*), which for an Afghan born in Ghazni seems a little economical with the truth.[222] At other times Tarzi emphasized his '*afghānīyat'* ('Afghan-ness'), such as in his meetings with fellow-Afghans abroad discussed later on in this chapter. Such travels outside of his homeland encouraged Tarzi to reflect and play with his identity, changing his clothes, language, appellation, even nationality as he moved. Such creative self-representation could not be more different from the schematized accounts of Afghans in British colonial sources of the 19th century, in which Afghans are represented as defined by their genealogy, location, language, costume. Tarzi's text is thus on one level a repudiation of such colonial representations, and points to the way that Afghans could use travel and

[220] *Ibid*., p. 212.
[221] *Ibid*., p. 176.
[222] *Ibid*., p. 73. For Tarzi's birth in Ghazni, see Wahid Tarzi, *Reminiscences: A Short History of an Era (1869-1881)* (New York: Afghanistan Forum, 1998), p. 23. It should be noted that this passage is not present in the Dari version edited by Farhadi; see Tarzī, *Khātirāt* (2011), p. 137 for a comparison of the two passages. There is a neat parallel here with Tarzi's supposed teacher Sayyid Jamal al-Din 'al-Afghani' who, as an Iranian Shi'a, nevertheless labeled himself as 'Istanbuli' at various times and at others as 'al-Afghani'. See Keddie, *Sayyid Jamal Ad-Din "Al-Afghani"* (1972), p. 429.

travel writing to 're-present' themselves as active, independent agents in the contemporary world.

IV.4. The Places In Between

Such shape-shifting and hybrid identity-formation seems quite in keeping with the nature of the spaces through which Tarzi moves and illustrates the impact of foreign travel on this Afghan exile. For while the work ostensibly describes a journey that Tarzi makes in accompanying his father on the hajj from Damascus up to Port Sa'id, what is so striking about the text is how little interest Tarzi has in the religious dimension of the journey. Rather than a landscape growing increasingly religious as he approaches Mecca, Tarzi, like Nasr Allah Khan before him, instead finds an ambiguous and disorienting world in which simple distinctions between Islamic and non-Islamic space have collapsed. While Damascus may have existed in his imagination as an essentially Muslim city, in reality Tarzi finds a land of European-style houses jostling side by side with mosques.[223] This collapsing of polarities is then inscribed in the photographs chosen to illustrate the city, where a shot of the roofline of Marjah in Damascus shows both the Sultan Selim Mosque and a western-style hospital next door.[224] Moreover, the detailed informational description of Damascus's institutions presents a contemporary city of big military hospitals, telegraph offices, and girls' schools.[225] The streets of Beyoğlu in Istanbul look like nothing as much as a 'Paris boulevard.'[226] In such hybrid spaces, the Tarzis

[223] Tarzī, *Siyāhat* (1915), p. 21.
[224] *Ibid*., p. 28.
[225] *Ibid*., p. 32.
[226] *Ibid*., p. 320. Tarzi's description chimes with that of another Persophone traveller, Muhammad Riza Tabatabai Tabrizi, whose account of Alexandria is very similar to that of Tarzi's, see Tabrīzī, *Hidāyat al-hujjāj* (2007), pp. 128-30, quoted in Green, 'Spacetime' (2013), p. 407. For this reshaping of Istanbul urban space see Stéphane Yerasimos, 'Occidentalisation de l'éspace urbain: Istanbul, 1839-1871' in *idem*, *Hommes et idées dans l'éspace ottoman* (Istanbul: Isis Press, 1997).

combine activities that would have been both alien and familiar to an Afghan audience: in Lebanese Tripoli, they visit a coffee-house (*qahwahkhānah*, an institution unknown in Afghanistan at that time, with the exception perhaps of Nasr Allah Khan's private home) for an afternoon coffee, walk over to the local mosque to pray, and then get on a tram back to the steamship: traditional religious worship powered by foreign caffeine and contemporary technology.[227] This collapsing of the distinction between sacred and non-sacred space reflects the nature of the port-cities and train-stations that the steam-powered hajji was compelled to pass through: Beirut, Athens, Salonika, Istanbul, Port Sa'id, Jaffa. These were standardized routes, on lines that were based on commercial and imperial interests rather than religious precepts. Tarzi notes the shift, stating that no longer was Damascus the 'gateway to Mecca' (*darwāzah-e haramain al-sharafain)* for the caravans of pilgrims that would pass through; the Hijaz railway had put an end to that.[228] Like Nasr Allah Khan's account, but in far greater detail, the port-cities themselves are described as very much 'places in between', characterized by a polyglot cast of guides, officials, boatmen, hawkers, travel agents. Rather than the great Islamic monuments of the past, the first view of these port harbours is a disorienting blend of brightly lit electric lights, multilingual poly-ethnic boatmen,[229] and, as for Nasr Allah Khan, those symbols of the bureaucratic state - policemen, passport officials, health officers.[230]

The travelogue describes in detail not just new geographic landscapes but also a set of social spaces yet unheard of in Afghanistan. The port-cities abound in new internationalized entertainment venues such as the theatre, the music hall, the casino. After his father retired to bed, Tarzi often headed out into the night to take advantage

[227] Tarzī, *Siyāhat* (1915), p. 76.
[228] *Ibid*., p. 23.
[229] See for example Tarzi's arrival at Pera, *ibid*., p. 123.
[230] For encounters with the police, see *ibid*., pp. 74, 101-2; for passport officials see *ibid*., p. 64; for health inspectors see *ibid*., p. 592.

of the temptations and delights on offer. These new entertainment spaces provided new social encounters, most strikingly of all being the opportunity for relations with foreign women. In his accounts of such places, Tarzi's mode of writing is very much that of the 'Persian *voy(ag)eurs'* of the early 19th century discussed by Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi, for whom European women were a constant source of fascination.[231] There are page-length descriptions of almost every European woman that Tarzi meets, and such wondrous accounts extend to troupes of European music-hall girls he sees in Beirut and Istanbul, all dressed identically, whom the spectator can invite to join at his table - as long as he is prepared to pay.[232] In this hybrid world, Muslim women, too, provide temptations of their own, and Tarzi repeatedly describes the attractive and inflaming manner in which Istanbuli women wear their veils (*chādarī*), even reprinting several photos of such women to confirm his point.[233] Moreover, the travelogue contains numerous episodes in which Tarzi not only observes women, but interacts and even has relationships with them. Such encounters mirror other Persian and Urdu travelogues of the period in which travel provided the possibility for sexual liaisons.[234] Throughout the work Tarzi presents himself as an inveterate romantic, falling in love with alarming speed and just as quick to profess it.[235] Such temptations and delights produce frenzied dreams in the young man; his flirting with a fellow-traveller, an Istanbuli called 'Mary', leads him to intense reveries he can only describe as '*'ajīb-o-gharīb.*'[236] These encounters with head-strong independent women are illuminating in understanding Tarzi's later advocation of women's rights in Afghanistan, in which he used his own monogamous

[231] Muhamad Tavakoli-Targhi, *Refashioning Iran* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 54-5.
[232] Tarzī, *Siyāhat* (1915), p. 57.
[233] *Ibid*., pp. 307-309.
[234] See Javed Majeed, *Autobiography, Travel and Postnational Identity: Gandhi, Nehru and Iqbal* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p. 93.
[235] *Ibid*., p. 631.
[236] *Ibid*., p. 231.

marriage to Asma Rasmiya, the daughter of a Damascene businessmen and later editor of Afghanistan's first women's newspaper, as an example to Afghans of 'progressive' gender relations.[237]

These travels in new places provided not just new opportunities for hetero-sociability, but also opportunities for Muslims from different parts of the world to meet and converse. The steamship provides the key location for such encounters, what Javed Majeed calls 'sites for self-differentiation' while travelling.[238] Tarzi finds himself sharing communal space on board ship with Turks working in the Damascus treasury, a *sayyid* from Kashgar in northwest China travelling on the hajj, an Arab Muslim family on their way to Tripoli to try and free a family member from prison.[239] During the trip there are times when Tarzi explicitly professes a certain Muslim solidarity in opposition to non-Muslim peoples and practices. Tarzi is critical, for example, of some Italian missionaries he meets on board, whom he represents as bigoted in their attitudes towards Muslims.[240] Again, however, the 'encounter' of Muslim and non-Muslim in the text leads to a collapse of oppositions as often as it leads to a strengthening of 'Self' and 'Other' polarities. Tarzi notes how respectfully the Europeans treat his father while they travel, particularly the European women.[241] At times, these European women even show a concern that the Tarzis are following the precepts of their religion; seeing the Tarzis taking tea on the deck, the women wonder if the two Muslims are drinking brandy, until Tarzi's father

[237] On Asma Rasmiya, see Thomas Wide, 'Astrakhan, Borqa', Chadari, Dreshi: The Economy of Dress in Early 20th Century Afghanistan' in Stephanie Cronin (ed.), *Anti-Veiling Campaigns in the Muslim World: Gender, modernism and the politics of dress* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014), p. 167. Also, May Schinasi, 'Femmes afghans: instruction et activités publiques pendant le règne amâniya (1919-1929),' *Annali dell'Istituto Universitario Orientale di Napoli* Vol. 55, No. 4 (1995), pp. 446-62.
[238] Steamships were common sites for such encounters in 19th century Muslim travelogues, see for example Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan's account in his work *Musāfirān London* analysed in Majeed, *Autobiography* (2007), p. 139.
[239] Tarzī, *Siyāhat* (1915), p. 83; for the Turkish official and Kashgar *sayyid*, *ibid*., pp. 83, 90; for the Arab family, *ibid*., p. 547.
[240] *Ibid*., p. 92.
[241] *Ibid*., p. 84.

sends them over some cups (and a selection of Damascene biscuits) to allay their suspicions.[242] Moreover, the line between Muslim and non-Muslim is portrayed as easily crossed; the Tarzis become good friends with a French monk on board ship who is so well-versed in Islamic thought and sympathetic to Islam that, by the end of the journey, he decides to convert, changing his name from 'Charles' to 'Muhammad Din'.[243] Whether or not this actually happened – the episode certainly sounds highly improbable – it is instructive of the way Tarzi considered the permeability of identities and allegiances in these places in between.

Beyond new social opportunities and perceptions of solidarity and difference between peoples he meets onboard, the steamship forced upon Tarzi, as for Nasr Allah Khan, new conceptions of time. The standardized time of global industrial communications and the necessity of adhering to its dictates to ensure a smooth journey is reflected in Tarzi's precise, relentless detailing of the passage of time and space as he makes his way from Damascus to Port Sa'id. Tarzi is told by an acquaintance in Istanbul that 'time is money' (*waqt naqd ast*) in the contemporary age - and Tarzi seems to agree.[244] Like the obsessively time conscious Phileas Fogg, Tarzi marks each new day with a description of the exact time he got up, as well as a description of his morning washing routine – a suitably hybrid combination of the Islamic ablution *wuzu'* with the French *toilette.*[245] The steamships Tarzi travels on enforce these universal temporal and spatial frameworks: the regular mealtimes are announced by a dinner gong standardizing the passengers' eating times; the ships all travel at set speeds on set timetables so that the exact time of arrival and departure can be recorded and predicted. Tarzi's travelogue, however, like other accounts of

[242] *Ibid*., p. 86.
[243] *Ibid*., p. 544.
[244] *Ibid*., p. 329.
[245] See e.g. *ibid*., p. 150.

travellers of the period, illustrates a man still learning to come to terms with such new patterns of measurement, Tarzi sometimes measuring distances and speeds in 'kilometers', at other times in 'miles'.[246] Through such new measurements, Tarzi is able to measure the progress of the ship, which now travels at set speeds 'per hour' and are no longer subject to the natural timeframe of seasons and winds.[247] Indeed, the rhythms of the ship are such that they influence Tarzi's narrative, the dinner gong repeatedly acting as Tarzi's alarm clock, or the marking of the end of one episode and the beginning of another.[248] At the same time, however, Tarzi illustrates how older timeframes manage to co-exist with these new orders, particularly through the character of his father. For Ghulam Muhammad Tarzi, the day is still structured around an Islamic timeframe based on the five daily prayers. Ghulam Muhammad also refuses to eat according to the ship's timetable, shunning the ship's international cuisine for a proper Afghan *pilau*, prepared by his travelling Afghan servant, at his own leisure.[249]

IV.5. From Perception to Conception: A Steam-Powered Transformation

We have already seen in the travels of Nasr Allah Khan how the new structures of time and space, created by and experienced through a new industrialized global communications network, created a comparative framework through which these steam-powered travellers made sense of what they saw and related it back to their own world in Afghanistan. Tarzi's text bears the same stamp, in which the cities he visits are described relatively on the measure of *taraqqī* - a standardized measure which reflects the quantity and quality of such institutions and features as

[246] Such is the case with another Persian traveller of the period, see Tabrīzī, *Hidāyat al-hujjāj* (2007).
[247] Tarzi comments on the steamship's ability to travel despite storms, Tarzī, *Siyāhat* (1915), p. 69.
[248] *Ibid*., p. 70.
[249] *Ibid*., p. 120.

hospitals, schools, post-services, transport links. It is this theme of *taraqqī* and the ushering in of a 'new age' ('*asr-e jadīd*), which Tarzi was to push home relentlessly in many articles and publications he wrote in Afghanistan during the first three decades of the 20th century, and which would essentially become the defining ideology of the Afghan state in the early 20th century.[250] And it is here, in Tarzi's travels through a world made increasingly comparable through the collapse of distance and time, that the development of that ideology of progressivism is most clearly visible.

Tarzi's growing awareness of a standardized historical timeframe is apparent from various experiences he has on his travels and which are recorded in his travel-account. Of particular note are the encounters he has with French archaeologists and his visits to ancient sites such as the Parthenon, a parallel to the visit of Nasr Allah to Pompeii described earlier in this chapter.[251] Such experiences lead to an awareness of a different timeframe not based on the Islamic *hijrī* calendar but the Christian framework of AD and BC (*mīlādī*) stretching back far beyond the birth of the Prophet.[252] Tarzi's travel-account gives a glimpse of the impact such new temporal frameworks were having on other Muslim intellectuals; in Istanbul he meets an Ottoman minister and historian, Jaudat Pasha, who describes the new disciplines of archaeology and geography transforming their understanding of history.[253] This extended temporal framework had a concomitant impact on Tarzi's understanding of geography, collapsing the distinction between *dār al-Islām* and *dār al-harb* as Tarzi

[250] For a detailed analysis of this ideology, see Schinasi, *Afghanistan at the Beginning of the 20th Century* (1979).
[251] For French professional and amateur archaeologists, see *ibid*., pp. 113, 561; for his trip to the Parthenon, see *ibid*., p. 130.
[252] *Ibid*.
[253] *Ibid*., pp. 223-4. For this prominent Ottoman intellectual and figure in the Tanzimat reforms of the mid-19th century, see Richard L. Chambers, 'The Education of a 19th-Century Ottoman Alim, Ahmed Cevdet Pasa,' *International Journal of Middle East Studies* Vol. 4, No. 4. (1973), pp. 440-64.

experientially discovered a pre-Islamic or non-Islamic past in seemingly 'Islamic' spaces: even the Umayyad mosque, one of the holiest of Islamic sites, is described by Tarzi as formerly a Greek temple.[254] This temporal framework is then reinforced by the perception of a collapsing of distance brought about by the experience of travel in new modes of transport: in Istanbul the experience of navigating the great physical and conceptual divide of Europe and Asia is reduced to a brief boat-ride.[255] Such historical reflection was not confined to visits to ancient sites either; Tarzi, like Nasr Allah Khan and many other Muslim travellers of the period, also visits museums,[256] libraries,[257] and even waxwork museums (*mujassamahkhānah*) where he is able to gaze on hundreds of years of historical past, all housed conveniently under a single roof - historical distance collapsed to a few yards of space.[258]

Such comparative travels lead not only to a reconfiguration of Tarzi's conceptions of time, space, and the idea of 'progress', but also to a deconstruction, refashioning, and recreation of Tarzi's *afghānīyat* i.e. his identity as an Afghan. This is something that we get glimpses of in the flatter, more factual account of Nasr Allah Khan's travels, but which in Tarzi's account is brought to centre-stage as part of the more self-reflective *Bildungsroman* nature of the text. Tarzi's deracination and movement through hybrid spaces, which has been such a feature of this analysis, paradoxically provided him with the means to see more clearly his *afghānīyat* when he came across it.[259] Considering Tarzi was to become the main Afghan formulator and mouthpiece of the new 'Afghanistan' in the early 20th century, it is thus illuminating to see how the hybrid spaces of the port cities and steamships provided a

[254] Tarzī, *Siyāhat* (1915), p. 26.
[255] *Ibid*., pp. 191, 196.
[256] *Ibid*., pp. 277-8.
[257] *Ibid.,* p. 283.
[258] *Ibid*., pp. 289-91. For another Muslim traveller at a waxwork museum, see Green, 'Spacetime' (2013), p. 408.
[259] For his use of the term, see e.g. Tarzī, *Siyāhat* (1915), p. 146.

laboratory for the deconstructing, refashioning and remaking of Tarzi's own Afghan identity, and even the idea of Afghanistan itself. There were two main ways that this *afghānīyat* was brought into relief: firstly, the figure of his father, Ghulam Muhammad, who is represented by Tarzi as the unchanging guardian of Afghan and Islamic values, allowing Tarzi to experiment and lose himself in a world of ambiguous in-between-ness, while remaining always on hand to reassure and reconfirm his son's essential *afghānīyat*. For example, at dinner one night on board a Russian steamer, one of the captains of the ship suggests that Afghanistan is not a truly independent country. Tarzi is angered by this slur, but at the same time racked with doubt: is Afghanistan really not an independent country? What does that mean for his own Afghan identity if Afghanistan is merely a vassal? Tarzi spends a sleepless night in paroxysms of existential doubt.[260] The next morning, however, Tarzi's father reassures him that Afghanistan is indeed an independent nation, unlike those '*nawabs* and *rajahs* of India', and that it is beholden on Mahmud to love his homeland (*watan*).[261] Although shaken, Tarzi is finally left with a renewed sense of national identity and pride.[262] Such an episode clearly has rhetorical force for an Afghan audience, bolstering the Afghan state's promotion of Afghanistan as an independent Muslim nation, in opposition to the subjected India of the Raj, and encouraging a patriotic love for the Afghan homeland amongst its audience.

The second primary means for Tarzi to reflect on his *afghāniyat* are his encounters with fellow Afghan travellers. In Jaffa, Tarzi comes across a small community of Afghan expatriates while he is looking for an old acquaintance of his father's, an Afghan named Mulla Jullundur. The episode is illustrative of the kind of

[260] *Ibid*., p. 143.
[261] *Ibid*., p. 149.
[262] For this whole episode, see *ibid*., pp. 141-150.

simultaneous undermining and bolstering of national identities brought about by encounters between compatriots in expatriate spaces. Tarzi writes:

> I saw an Afghan (*nafar-e afghānī*) in a hut; I approached him and addressed him in the Afghani language (*bih zabān-e afghānī* i.e. Pashto): 'Brother! Do you know where Mulla Jullundur lives?' The Afghan, who from his appearance seemed to be an Achakzai or Kakar, and a recent arrival here, looked at my appearance and glasses with surprise, and called to another friend who was inside the room, saying in Afghani: 'Hey! Come and see what this Turk is saying, I don't understand!' I said: 'I'm a Pashtun and I'm speaking to you in Afghani, how do you not understand?' He said: 'Who knew that such four-eyed (*chārchashmah*) Pashtuns even existed?'[263]

Here, one gets a glimpse of how Tarzi was perceived by other Afghan travellers of the period, as a man whose clothes and manner are so different that he is not even considered an Afghan, a man who even when he speaks their native language remains unintelligible. At the same time, Tarzi, too, is struck by the differences between himself and his fellow Afghans. At one point he meets a Kabuli traveller who speaks Persian with a thick Kabuli accent. Tarzi is so struck by the man's idiolect that he attempts to imitate it on the page, spelling 'Afghanistan' as '*Aughānistān'*, for example, to capture the marked difference in his speech.[264] Such encounters complicate any simple idea Tarzi might have had of the role of language in defining national identity. At the same time, these encounters between far-flung Afghans in such 'places in between' stimulate a self-reflection on Afghanistan's existential status and its relative stage of development: Mulla Jullundur speaks of the plight of the 15,000 Afghans he claims are living abroad, as well as discussing the problems these communities face due to Afghanistan's lack of a diplomatic service or any

[263] *Ibid*., p. 654. When Tarzi translates this Pashto sentence into Persian, it is notable that he translates the word 'Pashtun' as 'Afghan' thus merging the two identities together. There is not the space here to discuss this important linguistic and conceptual issue, but for a discussion of slippage between terms during the period, see Thomas Wide, 'Demarcating Pashto' in Green and Arbabzadah (eds.), *Afghanistan in Ink* (2013).
[264] Tarzī, *Siyāhat* (1915), p. 656.

representation abroad;[265] other Afghans debate with Tarzi the need for education in the homeland.[266] The Afghan expatriate communities Tarzi describes thus provide key encounters and spaces for the negotiation of individual, collective, and national identities. At the same time, they also provide ammunition for the reformist rhetoric of the text, stressing the need for political and educational development in Afghanistan, as well as a need for unity amongst Afghans.

While such encounters are telling illustrations of the impact of physical travel on Tarzi's sense of self and national identity, the fact that Tarzi wished to record such self-reflections in a printed travelogue is also important for the argument of this dissertation. For, as Javed Majeed has argued in a study of the writings of Jawaharlal Nehri, Mahatma Gandhi, and Muhammad Iqbal, autobiographical travel writing could be an important means through which Asian intellectuals defined themselves and their political concepts of nationality.[267] In Majeed's analysis, concepts of travel allowed these Indian nationalists to 'define themselves against European ethnographic representations of the "native", in which Indians were represented as being incapable of individual growth through travel.'[268] Such an analysis seems highly relevant to the Afghan nationalist Mahmud Tarzi. In his exploration through travel of selfhood and national identity, Tarzi was able to challenge the representation of Afghans in European sources as wild tribesmen, incapable of self-reflection or change.[269] Such an 'articulation of subjectivity'[270] through travel provided Tarzi a

[265] *Ibid*., p. 654. Such desire for representation abroad was a common complaint amongst Afghans abroad. For a petition to Amir 'Abd al-Rahman Khan on this issue from an Afghan residing in Istanbul, see Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh, jild-e chahārum* (2012), Part 1, pp. 619-20.
[266] Tarzī, *Siyāhat* (1915), p. 657.
[267] Majeed, *Autobiography* (2007).
[268] *Ibid*., p. 5.
[269] This also chimes with Barbara Metcalf's comments on the inherently political nature of much hajj travel writing, in which new subjectivities run alongside new political conceptions, see Barbara D. Metcalf, 'The Pilgrimage Remembered' (1990); also, see Homayra Ziad, 'The Return of Gog: Politics and Pan-Islamism in the Hajj Travelogue of 'Abd al-Majid Daryabadi' in Gelvin and Green (eds.), *Global Muslims* (2014).

way to carve out a distinctive sense of Afghan self that was was quite different from that projected onto Afghans by the western discourse on Afghanistan of the time. Tarzi was aware of the power of this discourse and he commented upon it, noting in an article in *Sirāj al-akhbār* that 'since there is only one country [i.e. Britain] in the world which has relations with us, it has presented us in the way that suited it best.'[271] Tarzi's travelogue was one way to present a different view. Tarzi's text thus stands as a pair with that of Nasr Allah Khan's text, in that Tarzi's representation of an independent Afghan selfhood complements Nasr Allah Khan's representation of an independent Afghan statehood. Both representations are defined against imperial or European representations of 'Afghanistan' and of 'Afghans'. Afghanistan as an independent and powerful nation-state and Afghans as a people capable of travel, self-reflection, and change: the experience and articulation of travel are the key means by which this alternative vision of Afghanistan and its people, by Afghans and for Afghans, was created and perpetuated.

V. Conclusion

The chapter has argued that if we are to understand how and why Afghanistan became the site of Muslim aspiration and imagination in the 20th century, we need to first understand the Afghanistan of the late 19th century. This chapter has followed the trail of various travellers and travel accounts in order to reassess the common conception of Afghanistan's isolation and dis-connectedness during the reign of Amir 'Abd al-Rahman Khan. Such a focus has led to an interpretation of the period that differs significantly from those that have gone before. The chapter has challenged the idea of a country left remote by its geographical situation, isolated by the policies

[270] *Ibid*., p. 6.
[271] *Sirāj al-Akhbār*, Year 7, No. 13, p. 4.

of its rulers, or bound as a *de facto* princely state to British India. The chapter has instead focused on time-honoured and new forms of travel and exchange between Afghanistan and other parts of the world. The chapter has illustrated the arrival of new forms of travel and traveller - diplomatic, professional, and exilic - that emerged sometimes intentionally, sometimes unintentionally, out of the policies of the Afghan state. In men like Mahmud Tarzi we have seen the Afghan incarnation of an increasingly common figure during the period – the steam-powered intellectual – whose travels and travelogue act as both a product of, and profound reflection on, transformations in the world that were both intensely personal and truly global in scale. At the same time, the account of Tarzi's travels, along with those of Prince Nasr Allah Khan and Mohammad Yusuf Riyazi, stand as testament to wider patterns of interaction and integration between Afghanistan and parts of the world that were formerly distinct during the late 19th century. For Afghanistan this was largely an engagement at one step removed – without a port-city or railway terminus, and before the advent of motorized road-travel in the early 20th century, Afghanistan would always be 'a house without a window' in the words of one Turkish traveller Tarzi meets on his travels.[272] Nevertheless, forced exile, economic entrepreneurship, court-sponsored diplomatic missions, and religious devotion ensured that increasing numbers of Afghans in the late 19th century took part in the great transformations of the age. The chapter has argued for the role of such travels in encouraging new ideas of Afghanistan amongst Afghans and Muslims: as a refuge for beleaguered Muslims, as an independent Muslim nation-state on the edge of western empires, as a young and hopeful nation with the need and potential for reform. The next chapter

[272] *Ibid*., p. 297. The metaphor is a neat (and presumably unconscious) adaptation of one of Amir 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's favourite metaphors for nation-building and boundary-marking: 'It is easy to understand that before furnishing a house one must think of making or finding a house to furnish; and in case of building a house it must be surrounded by walls to keep the goods safe which are put in it,' quoted in Edwards, *Heroes of the Age* (1996), p. 88.

continues with this theme, but moves from journeys that primarily took Afghans out of Afghanistan to journeys that brought non-Afghans in.

Chapter Two: The Road to Progress: Journeymen in Afghanistan 1901-1914

'Travel is the cooker of raw things'

Mirza Siraj ad-Din 'Hakim'[1]

I. Introduction

In 1905, the Bukharan merchant and doctor Mirza Siraj ad-Din 'Hakim' (d.1914), whose quotation opens this chapter, was feeling rather raw himself. Cast into exile from his country and on his way to Herat to realize a debt from an Afghan trader, Hakim had been arrested by Afghan border guards and thrown into jail. Not only was Hakim travelling without a passport, but he was also carrying a suitcase full of travel notes: masses of paper that recorded his recent exilic travels from Bukhara all the way to London and back. For the Afghan officials, such notes suggested not amateur travel writing but the more professional craft of espionage. Hauled before the Afghan amir, Habib Allah Khan, Hakim feared the worst. The amir, however, proved a surprisingly benevolent judge. An avid reader of travel writing himself, as well as a keen promoter of state surveillance at home and abroad, the amir could spot the difference between travelogue and intelligence work when he saw it. Convinced of Hakim's innocence, the amir not only pardoned Hakim but even offered him a job, asking him to act as a trade representative for the Afghan state in Bukhara. Back in Bukhara, Hakim wrote and published an account of his time in Afghanistan, which recounted his exploits there and praised Afghanistan for its enlightened rule and progressive policies. Exile, entrepreneurship, employment, espionage, and

[1] Mīrzā Sirāj al-Dīn Hājjī Mīrzā 'Abd al-Ra'ūf, *Safarnāmah-e Tuhaf-e Bukhārā* (Tehran: Intishārāt-e bū 'alī, 1991), p. 59.

enlightenment – such could be the components of a single journey in early 20th century Afghanistan.

This chapter focuses on a number of Afghan and Muslim travelogues from the turn of the century to the outbreak of the First World War to try and understand the 'Muslim turn' to Afghanistan. For the period after the death of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan in 1901 witnessed an early flowering of writings by Muslims on Afghanistan. Such writings were largely the creative work of Muslim travellers, and the practical product of Afghan immigration policies that attracted more and more Muslim travellers with the promise of work or asylum inside Afghanistan. The polyglot nature of the texts, in Urdu, Ottoman Turkish, Persian, Dari, and English, are testament to the range of Muslim actors across all borders who found in Afghanistan both an amenable home and an inspirational model for reform.

In his work on the development of Muslim printing in the early 19th century, Nile Green has introduced the term 'journeyman' to describe those individuals who combined being both apprentice printers and working travellers as they travelled to European cities to acquire both the skills and machines necessary to set up printing presses 'back home.'[2] Such a term can usefully be broadened and applied to the Muslim travellers to Afghanistan under discussion in this chapter, in the sense that they were men who combined work with travel, and who relied on their technical skills and abilities as transcultural middlemen to work in a variety of contexts in Afghanistan and elsewhere. As the chapter argues, the 'Muslim turn' to Afghanistan was largely the work of such journeymen - both Afghan and Muslim - who combined technical skill, travel, and texts in the years leading up to the First World War.

[2] Nile Green, 'Journeymen, Middlemen: Travel, Trans-Culture and Technology in the Origins of Muslim Printing,' *International Journal of Middle East Studies* Vol. 41 (2009), pp. 203-24.

Building on the previous chapter, this chapter examines how increasing Afghan-Muslim interactions led to the refashioning of Afghanistan's image as as a model of Muslim strength, to be admired and even emulated by other Muslim polities. For Muslims in the beleaguered Ottoman Empire, the despotic amirate of Bukhara, the subjected India of the Raj, Afghanistan seemed to offer one answer to the question of how to combine material progress with tradition, a question that had been preoccupying Muslim thinkers, from the Ottoman Namık Kemal (1840-1888) to the Indian Muslim Sayyid Ahmad Khan (1817-98), since the mid-19th century. Afghanistan was not the only answer; Japan, for example, was regarded with awe and fascination by Muslim and Asian intellectuals of the early 20th century, who saw in the Land of the Rising Sun a strong and independent Asian polity that could defeat Russia at war and stand on equitable diplomatic terms with Britain.[3]

Like Japan, the interest in Afghanistan amongst Muslims was one consequence of the globalization of communications; Muslim travellers were now able to travel increasingly far using the new technologies of steamship and railway to reach new 'alternative sites of comparison and activism.'[4] Afghanistan's position on the edge of, but just outside, imperial communications networks and geographies meant that the country was, like Japan, an increasingly accessible non-imperial counter-space in the early 20th century. However, unlike Japan, Afghanistan was a

[3] Nile Green, 'Forgotten Futures: Indian Muslims in the Trans-Islamic Turn to Japan,' *The Journal of Asiatic Studies* Vol. 72, No. 3 (August 2013), pp. 611-631; Cemil Aydin, *The Politics of Anti-Westernism in Asia: Visions of World Order in Pan-Islamic and Pan-Asian Thought* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007); Selçuk Esenbel, 'Japan's Global Claim to Asia and the World of Islam: Transnational Nationalism and World Power, 1900-1945,' *American Historical* Review Vol. 109, No. 4 (2004), pp. 1140-1170; *idem*., *Japan, Turkey and the World of Islam* (Leiden: Brill, 2011); Roxane Haag-Higuchi, 'A Topos and Its Dissolution: Japan in Some 20th-Century Iranian Texts,' *Iranian Studies* Vol. 29, No. 1-2 (1996), pp. 71-83; Renee Worringer, '"Sick Man of Europe" or "Japan of the Near East"? Constructing Ottoman Modernity in the Hamidian and Young Turk Eras,' *International Journal of Middle East Studies* Vol. 36, No. 2 (2004), pp. 207-230; *idem* (ed.), *The Islamic Middle East and Japan: Perceptions, Aspirations, and the Birth of Intra-Asian Modernity* (Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2007).

[4] Green, 'Forgotten Futures' (2013), p. 613.

Muslim polity, where work might offer spiritual benefits alongside political and professional opportunities. Moreover, unlike Japan, there were many jobs going for well-educated Muslims inside the Afghan state: the Afghan state felt a keen need to employ large numbers of foreign experts inside its new institutions, and naturally turned to Muslim journeymen for help. Out of such practical and intellectual collaborations was a new Afghanistan, in intellectual and institutional terms, forged.

The chapter is divided into three sections, all based on contextualized case-studies of Muslim travellers in and out of Afghanistan. The first section focuses on interactions between Afghanistan and Indian Muslims in the first decade of the 20th century, using a number of travel accounts and memoirs by Afghan and Indian Muslim writers, in Urdu, Dari, and English. The section stresses the part played by Amir Habib Allah Khan's royal tour of India in 1907 in stimulating both practical and intellectual interactions between Muslims across the border. It also explores the role of Afghan state policies that encouraged professional migrant workers from India to travel to Kabul. The second section of the chapter shifts its attention from Afghan-Indian to Afghan-Ottoman interactions, using the 1909 travelogue of the Ottoman zincographer Muhammad Fazlı in Afghanistan as a way to analyse the Ottoman impact on Afghanistan's material development and representation. The third and final section of the chapter looks at under-appreciated connections between Afghanistan and Muslims from across Afghanistan's northern border, using the travel account of the Bukharan merchant and physician Mirza Siraj al-Din Hakim to illustrate the multi-directional nature of the 'Muslim turn' to Afghanistan.

II. From Tour to Text: Afghan and Urdu accounts of Habib Allah Khan in India

The accession to the throne of Habib Allah Khan in 1901 spurred a new era of Afghan-Muslim interactions and travel accounts. Unlike his father 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, Habib Allah Khan was an avid traveller and reader of travel-writing, combining journeys abroad and inside his country with the publication and consumption of various works describing such travels.[5] In 1905, his son 'Inayat Allah Khan travelled to British India, and Habib Allah Khan followed him there on a royal tour in 1907. Such trips are deserving of analysis in terms of evolving diplomatic relations between the Afghan court and the British government in India. For the purposes of this dissertation, however, I am more interested in the role such travels played in promoting Afghanistan's image at home and abroad, and in fostering interactions between Afghans and Muslims in India.

Afghan accounts in Dari of the two Afghan royals' travels can be found in Volume 4 of Faiz Muhammad Katib's *Sirāj al-tawārīkh*, only recently rediscovered in manuscript form in Kabul. As with the accounts of Nasr Allah Khan in British India and Europe, these state-backed texts reveal a landscape of official encounters and lavish ceremony, all captured in minute detail - from the number of cannon fired in salute at each stage of each trip to the precise manner in which the viceroy greeted the Afghan royals.[6] Such texts are clearly a continuation of the Afghan royal family's use of travel for political ends, as projections of power for a domestic and foreign audience, which, crucially, stressed the equality of the Afghan royals with the

[5] It is perhaps fitting that when assassinated in 1919, the Afghan Foreign Minister Mahmud Tarzi would describe Habib Allah Khan (in a letter to the Soviet government) as being killed 'while travelling' (*dar isnā-ye siyāhat*). See the letter of 7th April 1919 sent on behalf of Aman Allah Khan by Mahmud Tarzi to V.I. Lenin, published in Hay'at-hā-ye tahrīrīyah-e afghānī wa shūrawī, *Munāsibāt-e Afghānistān wa Ittihād-e Shūrawī dar sālhā-ye 1919-1969* (Kabul: Arshīf-e wazārat-e khārijah, 1971), p. 3.

[6] For 'Inayat Allah Khan's trip, Faiz Muhammad Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh, jild-e chahārum* (Kabul: Intishārāt-e amīrī, 2012), Part 2, pp. 675-702; for Habib Allah Khan's trip, see *ibid*., Part 3, pp. 227-251.

Government of India. 'Inayat Allah Khan's speech to the viceroy in 1905, quoted in full in Katib's text, notes for example how his father Habib Allah Khan is the 'autonomous ruler of Afghanistan' (*pādshāh-e khudmukhtār-e Afghānistān*), thus distinguishing the Afghan amir from the princely states in India where the rulers were never fully autonomous under British rule.[7] Faiz Muhammad Katib's Dari account of Prince 'Inayat Allah Khan's trip stresses the vast scale and resources of the Afghan court. Katib lists the Afghan staff members who accompanied the prince, as well as their roles:

> One hundred and forty-three…people were assigned as servants: *pishkhidmats*, *farrāshes*, water stewards, tea stewards, tailors, ushers, hookah bearers, doorkeepers, treasurers, perfumers, fruiterers, cooks, palanquin bearers, saddlers, umbrella holders, fullers, and barbers.[8]

Heaven help the ruler, the text seems to suggest, who did not take his own fruiterer (*mīwahdār*) abroad with him. The Afghan accounts of both 'Inayat Allah Khan and Habib Allah Khan's travels also aim to illustrate the Afghan royals' civilized and progressive attitudes through their mastery of international modes of civility and protocol, from where one should stand when greeting the viceroy to how to accept a medal when offered.[9] 'Inayat Allah Khan's trip abroad also offers an insightful window onto how the Afghan court illustrated its control of its subject peoples inside Afghanistan: seemingly influenced by the 'ornamentalism' of British rule in India, in which the expression of hierarchies of power could be displayed through pomp and

[7] *Ibid*., Part 2, p. 677.
[8] Faiz Muhammad Kātib, *The History of Afghanistan: Volume Four: The Reign of Amir Habib Allah Khan*, edited and translated by R.D. McChesney and M. M. Khorrami (Leiden: Brill, forthcoming 2016), Part 2, pp. 676.
[9] For a detailed description of the protocol that 'Inayat Allah Khan had to follow, see Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh, jild-e chahārum* (2012), Part 2, pp. 679-680.

pageantry, the Afghan court sent twenty-four tribal chiefs with 'Inayat Allah Khan.[10] All of these men were ordered to wear their 'traditional' tribal costume (*libās-e marsūm-e qaumī-ye khūdish*) and to be 'armed with the traditional weapons of their people' (*salāh-e musta'milah-ish*).[11] In this way, the Afghan court could illustrate the diverse range of chiefs and leaders who paid fealty to them. The gifts 'Inayat Allah Khan took to India also aimed to emphasise the diverse and rich resources available in Afghanistan:

> As gifts for the viceroy, he sent six bolts of Day Zangi barak wool, six bolts of Aybaki camel's hair, six bolts of Herati goathair wool, six pieces of Turkistani carpet, six pieces of Hazarah shawl cloth, six Ghazni sheepskin coats, six sheepskin vests, six bolts of Kabuli cashmere, six Qataghani horses, six gray squirrel skins, and two pale marten skins. For the viceroy's wife he sent: six bolts of Bajistani wool, twenty-four karakul skins, six Kashmiri shawls with flowers embroidered in gold thread, six finger rings set with Afghanistani spinel 'rubies', six finger rings set with Badakhshani spinel, three pieces of Kabuli, six bolts of spring Kabuli wool, two tables, two candlesticks, two oil-burning lamps, one dagger with a wooden handle, and twenty-four buttons, two plates, and two water tumblers, made of lapis lazuli, two tables of Khwajah Rawash stone, two shagreen hides, one dark-colored marten skin, and six small carpets measuring three (square) *zarfi*. All these things were products of Afghanistan and the gifts came from the Privy Storeroom.[12]

While the display of Afghan pomp, wealth, and power abroad is instructive of how the Afghan ruling family presented itself to the Government of India, the impact of these travels was felt far outside the walls of Government House in Calcutta. For the physical travels of these Afghan royals encouraged a new awareness and interest amongst India's Muslim population in the young nation-state of Afghanistan. Fortunately for the historian, such a burgeoning interest can be felt and analysed in Urdu texts produced by Muslims in India during the period. One such text, titled *al-*

[10] *Ibid*., Part 2, p. 675. For the concept of 'ornamentalism', see David Cannadine, *Ornamentalism: How The British Saw Their Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).
[11] Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh, jild-e chahārum* (2012), Part 2, p. 676.
[12] Kātib, *The History of Afghanistan* (2016), Part 2, p. 676.

Habīb and composed by a British Indian writer named Khaksar Nadir 'Ali, acts as the Indian counterpart to the Afghan state account of Faiz Muhammad Katib.[13] Like Katib's account, *al-Habīb* focuses on the status granted the Afghan king by his British hosts, and places at its centrepiece the meeting between Habib Allah Khan and the viceroy of India, Lord Minto (1845-1914). Both Afghan and Indian texts, in Dari and Urdu respectively, project the same view of Afghanistan and its rulers: as worldly, independent, and quite the equal of their imperial chaperones. At the same time, Khaksar Nadir 'Ali's account goes beyond that of Faiz Muhammad Katib's Afghan version in focusing in great detail on Habib Allah Khan's use of contemporary travel. Habib Allah Khan is portrayed during his sixty-four day trip in all manner of trains, boats, and automobiles as he makes his way across the sub-continent. He is even given two automobiles as gifts by the Government of India, which would later become highly visible sights on the few paved roads in Afghanistan. As one recent scholarly analysis of the text has noted, *al-Habīb* 'marks a crucial moment in both the poetics and practicalities of Afghan travel in which technology served as both the means and the end of the royal journey.'[14] While I would stress that such a focus on technology is also clear in the earlier travels of Habib Allah Khan's brother Nasr Allah Khan in 1895, this Urdu account certainly illustrates the burgeoning interest in technology and travel on the part of the Afghan king. It also illustrates the role of British India in providing a site for the experiencing and purchasing of new technologies which could then be imported into Afghanistan. Beyond this, however, the fact that the text exists in Urdu is also instructive in illustrating the impact that Habib Allah Khan had on India's Muslims;

[13] Khāksār Nādir 'Alī, *al-Habīb, jis-mēn a'lā-hazrat hiz majistī amīr Habīb Allāh Khān kē sair-o-siyāhat-e Hindustān kē wāqi'āt* (Agra: Sādiq Husain, n.d.).
[14] Nile Green, 'The Afghan Afterlife of Phileas Fogg: Space and Time in the Literature of Afghan Travel' in Nile Green and Nushin Arbabzadah (eds.) *Afghanistan In Ink: Literature Between Diaspora and Nation* (London: Hurst & Co., 2013), p. 82.

for liberal Muslim intellectuals in India, Habib Allah Khan's travels through India as an independent Muslim monarch, at ease and even flourishing in a contemporary world of technological development, must have been an exciting prospect. Just how exciting a prospect is clear from the first case study of this chapter, analysed in the following section.

III. Case Study One: Hajji Muhammad Khan's Polyglot Panegyric

One of the most insightful, and yet so far unstudied, products of Indo-Afghan interactions stimulated by Habib Allah Khan's royal tour is a 70-page Urdu and Dari text, *Zikr-e shāh-e Islām,* written by one Hajji Muhammad Khan and printed in Delhi in 1906.[15] The only biographical information we have on Hajji Muhammad Khan is that which can be gleaned from the text; we know, for example, that he was a resident of Khurja, a city in Uttar Pradesh about fifty miles to the south east of Delhi. We know that he was a businessman, who was in the import-export business.[16] We also know that he was the author of several works, ranging from religious works to handbooks on the principles of trade (*'Usūl-e tujārat*). Such a combination of the spiritual and material in the subject matter of Hajji Muhammad Khan's printed works fits well with the tone and content of the text. For *Zikr-e shāh-e Islām* is a combined panegyric to Amir Habib Allah Khan, a treatise on Islam and governance, and what appears to be a disguised attempt by the author to curry favour with the Afghan court so that he might develop business interests with them. Hajji Muhammad Khan's experiences of Afghanistan were limited but not non-existent: he notes that he had made several trips to Kabul to 'kiss the feet' (*qadambūs*) of the Afghan sovereigns

[15] Hājjī Muhammad Khān, *Zikr-e shāh-e Islām* (Delhi: Matba'ah-e nizāmī, 1907). The fact that the work was written in response to Habib Allah Khan's trip is clear from the opening paragraph of the work.
[16] *Ibid*., Urdu section, p. 35.

'Abd al-Rahman Khan and Habib Allah Khan before the publication of the text.[17] More importantly, perhaps, the text illustrates that Hajji Muhammad Khan had also been trying to persuade the Afghan state to buy heavy machinery from him, which he had imported from Japan and America and which he thought might be attractive to the Afghan rulers in this period of state-backed industrialization in Afghanistan. We should perhaps not be surprised at the text's combination of philosophical and utilitarian purposes; after all, one of the greatest works of European literature, Machiavelli's *The Prince*, was both designed as a profound meditation on kingship and as a means to encourage the Medici ruling family in Florence to get Machiavelli back into office. The fact that Hajji Muhammad Khan seemed to see little distinction between his text's purposes of political philosophy, panegyric, and professional PR should thus not unduly worry us. Indeed, such a combination is quite in keeping with the spirit of the age - the age of the 'journeyman' – in early 20th century Afghanistan.

Hajji Muhammad Khan's varied motives are matched by the variety of his audiences. On the one hand it is written for an Indian audience that knows little of the Afghan monarchy; on the other it is written for an Afghan (particularly Afghan royal) audience that knows little of India, or of Hajji Muhammad Khan. This dual audience is confirmed by the fact that the work is written in both Urdu and Dari. The first forty pages are in Urdu, and the last thirty are in Dari. Due to the rush to get the book out in time for Habib Allah Khan's trip to India (Hajji Muhammad Khan claiming he wrote the whole work in two days and prepared it for publication in a week), he was unable to finish the translation of the whole Urdu work and was thus forced to offer an abridged Dari version. The composite linguistic nature of the text is mirrored by its composite structure: the work is a kind of compendium of

[17] *Ibid*., Urdu section, p. 34.

information on the Afghan royal court, all written in a breathlessly laudatory tone, which leaps from subject to subject and combines passages the author himself has written with quotations of poetry, anecdotes he has heard about the Afghan royals from Afghan friends of the author, and copies of documents he has received from the Afghan court. The Urdu part of the work starts with an introduction that expounds on the importance of the Afghan royal's trip to India. There then follows a brief account of the reigns of both 'Abd al-Rahman Khan and Habib Allah Khan. The next section is an eleven-page encomium on various attributes of Habib Allah Khan: his bravery, his talents, his good humour, his intelligence, his progressive intentions, his religious piety. Next is an account of the working of Habib Allah Khan's court and a paean to the palaces and gardens of Kabul. The text then transforms into guidebook mode, as it recounts the conditions of travel between Peshawar and Kabul, a journey that the author himself seems to have made several times. Between the Urdu and Dari parts of the work are verbatim copies of official Afghan royal documents seemingly in the author's possession, including a correspondence between the Amir 'Abd al-Rahman Khan and the author, and one between Habib Allah Khan, Nasr Allah Khan, and the author, on the subject of importing machinery from India and of employing Indian workers in Afghan state workshops. After these documents, the work turns to the Dari language, translating the first several sections of the Urdu part but excluding the account of the Afghan court and the journey between Peshawar and Kabul. With Hajji Muhammad Khan citing the extreme time pressure he was under as an excuse, he explains that he chose not to translate the parts on Afghanistan since an Afghan audience will already be well familiar with its own country.[18]

[18] *Ibid*., Dari section, p. 30.

The text's attempt to advertise the Afghan state to an Indian audience, and the author's attempt to curry favour with the Afghan state through flattery, makes the work feel like a very 'speculative' endeavour. By 'speculative' I mean two things: one, that the text is written from a distance, and its conclusions are based on limited information and little first-hand knowledge of Afghanistan; two, that it is a text that is taking a gamble, hoping to make a profit out of forging business connections with Afghanistan. This speculative text is highly instructive of the combination of spiritual, political, and professional opportunities offered to Indian Muslims by 'Afghanistan' during the first decade of the 20th century.

III.1. Afghanistan as Spiritual and Political Opportunity

The title of the work, *Zikr-e shāh Islām*, is an immediate pointer to the use that Afghanistan could be put to by British Indian Muslims. Calling the amir of Afghanistan the 'King of Islam' suggests that Habib Allah Khan's reign is not territorial but spiritual, and thus could extend to Muslims in India as much as Afghans in Afghanistan. The text reinforces such religious identification with other titles given to Habib Allah Khan: the frontispiece describes Habib Allah Khan as the *Amīr al-mu'minīn*, 'the Commander of the Faithful', an Arabic term used to describe the Caliph and other sovereign Muslim rulers, and in the introduction he is the 'Refuge of Religion' (*dīn-panāh*).[19] Such a description of Afghan rulers chimes with Afghan rulers' own self-presentation during the period - 'Abd al-Rahman Khan was the 'Light of the Nation and Religion' (*Ziyā al-millat wa al-dīn*), Habib Allah Khan was the 'Lamp of the Nation and Religion' (*Sirāj al-millat wa al-dīn*) - illustrating how this representation of Afghan rulers' spiritual authority was the product of a

[19] *Ibid*., frontispiece; Dari section, p. 1.

discourse carried out by both Afghans and foreign Muslims. Moreover, both Nasr Allah Khan and Habib Allah Khan promoted such religious identification through their actions while travelling in India, giving money to Islamic charitable foundations as well as visiting mosques and shrines. With Indians bound as subjects under the political authority of the Government of India, Afghanistan thus could act as an alternative source of authority – of spiritual authority – beyond the British Empire.

At the beginning of the work, Hajji Muhammad Khan notes that while Habib Allah Khan may be a statesman of world standing, little is actually known of his character.[20] Hajji Muhammad Khan thus sets out to describe the amir, basing his analysis largely on the anecdotes of Afghans who know him. In Hajji Muhammad Khan's descriptions, Habib Allah Khan is a model of right action and justice, as well as religious piety. This last point is stressed in great detail: Habib Allah Khan, we are told, never misses his prayers, and even when ill will make sure to raise himself to pray.[21] Hajji Muhammad Khan even tells an anecdote from his own experience of Afghanistan: while in Kabul he heard that Habib Allah Khan had ridden fifty-five miles in a day from his holiday palace in Jabal al-Siraj, just to make Friday prayers in Kabul.[22] Hajji Muhammad Khan's locating of Muslim spiritual authority and right practice in the Afghan monarch is matched by his landscaping of Afghanistan as a beautiful country of Islamic purity. Indeed, the work attempts to elevate the country to competition with the great cities of the Islamic heartlands. For Hajji Muhammad Khan, Kabul is the '*dār al-khilāfat*'[23] i.e. the seat of the Caliph, and is a city described as 'on a level after Mecca…and Medina and Jerusalem.'[24] The text represents Afghanistan as the site of a glorious Islamic past, and stresses the close

[20] *Ibid*.
[21] *Ibid*., Dari section, p. 23.
[22] *Ibid*.
[23] *Ibid*., Urdu section, p. 29.
[24] *Ibid*., Urdu section, p. 28.

connections of this Islamic past to India's own history; Hajji Muhammad Khan describes in detail Babur's Gardens in western Kabul, where the grave of the first Mughal Emperor Zahir al-Din Muhammad Babur (1483-1530) still stands, and stresses the importance of the city to the Mughal rulers of India. Hajji Muhammad Khan even transposes the famous couplet of poetry, attributed to the Mughal Emperor Jahangir (1569-1627) on seeing Kashmir, to the author's feelings on seeing Babur's Gardens: 'if there is paradise on earth/ it is here, it is here, it is here.'[25] This shared Islamic heritage stretching between India and Afghanistan is now being revived by new technologies that are binding the two countries closer together: Hajji Muhammad Khan's description of the journey between Peshawar to Kabul focuses on postal communications between the two countries, the Afghan government post-office in Peshawar led by the 'able and intelligent' post-master Ghulam Haidar Khan.[26] Such Indo-Afghan connectivity is then instantiated in his book in the letters of the Afghan rulers to Hajji Muhammad Khan that were sent by post between the two countries. These are copied and printed in full, fittingly binding the Urdu and Dari sections of the work together. While India and Afghanistan have much common Islamic heritage, it is Afghanistan that has maintained its Islamic purity better than India, since it is truly bound and ruled according to the *sharī'at*.[27]

Afghanistan's ability to maintain its Islamic identity is linked in Hajji Muhammad Khan's analysis to Afghanistan's independence. He is keen to stress that Habib Allah Khan is the equal of other political leaders of the world. Habib Allah Khan is one of the 'crown-wearers of the world' (*ahadī az tājdārān-e 'ālam*); Hajji Muhammad Khan also calls Habib Allah Khan '*hiz majistī'*, using the transcribed

[25] *Ibid.*, Urdu section, p. 30.
[26] *Ibid*., Urdu section, p. 31. Ghulam Haidar Khan's official title was *sarrishtahdār*, *ibid*., Urdu section, p. 29.
[27] *Ibid*., Urdu section, p. 27.

English title granted to Habib Allah Khan by the Government of India.[28] This international standing was something the Afghan court also emphasised in its own official output of the period: in a royal decree from Habib Allah Khan to the governor of the districts of Bulaghin and Durnama in central Afghanistan, Habib Allah Khan stated that new official titles (*alqāb*) should be used for royal members, as was the custom amongst the other 'kings of the world' (*pādshāhān-e 'ālam*).[29] This international standing is reinforced by the account of the Government of India's welcoming of the Afghan amir to India. In Hajji Muhammad Khan's account, the British 'carpeted the earth with money and goods' before the Afghan amir, and made the Muslims of India delighted by his honouring of India with his presence.[30]

The international standing of the Afghan ruler relies, in Hajji Muhammad Khan's eyes, on Afghanistan's enlightened political system. The detailed description of the Afghan court is meant to illustrate the participative nature of Afghan kingship, its cooperation with the Afghan bureaucracy, military figures, and religious establishment, which ensure that the best path for the country is followed. Habib Allah Khan is described as the kind of forward-thinking leader who works all day but nevertheless makes time to eat lunch with his staff.[31] At such meals are 'all the pillars of rule' (*tamām-e arākīn-e sultānat*), again stressing the participative nature of his rule. Such a description chimes with Hajji Muhammad Khan's political views, expounded upon in the conclusion of his work. Here he focuses on the the decline of Muslim polities (*inqirāz-e duwwal-e islāmiya*) and the reasons for this, putting the blame at the door of despotic rulers who single-handedly control the treasury and

[28] *Ibid*., frontispiece.
[29] *Farmān* of Habib Allah Khan to Amir Muhammad Khan, Governor of Bulaghin and Durnama, dated 15th Shawwal, 1321 (3rd January, 1904). My thanks to May Schinasi for sharing this collection of *farāmin* with me.
[30] Khān, *Zikr-e shāh-e Islām* (1907), Dari section, p. 1.
[31] *Ibid*., Urdu section, p. 25.

army of such states and have no feeling for their people.[32] Avoiding any criticism of British rule – indeed, Hajji Muhammad Khan is keen to laud British rule as a boon to India's Muslims – he focuses instead on the division amongst the world's Muslims and the self-serving policies of those in power.[33] While Islam has suffered, Europe has flourished. Hajji Muhammad Khan puts the cause down to Europe's development of republicanism as a political system and Europe's introduction of equal citizenship (*jumlah-e afrād-e qaum dar darajah-e musāwāt būdah*). Such passages illustrate Hajji Muhammad Khan's political views, which align him with the kind of constitutionalist thought (although he does not use the term *mashrūtiyat*) which was developing a strong presence in Muslim intellectual and political life during the period. Despite the rising constitutional movement in Iran, which will result in the constitutional revolution of 1906, Hajji Muhammad Khan states that such ideas have not taken root in Muslim political life. Every so often, he notes, there is found a Muslim ruler 'who recognises the cause of the damage and the weakness of Islam' and can do something about it. Amongst Muslim rulers, Hajji Muhammad Khan describes Amir Habib Allah Khan as 'the first of the rulers (*salātīn*) to have changed self-rule (*shakhsiyat*) to a republic system of rule (*jumhūriyat*).'[34] Due to the amir's supposed republican style of rule, he argues, Habib Allah Khan's accession to the throne had the support of the religious and political authorities of the country and was a peaceful one. The fact that Hajji Muhammad Khan's description of Habib Allah Khan's political system could hardly be further from the reality of the amir's despotic and often-erratic rule does not matter for our argument here. For this Indian Muslim, looking from his home in Uttar Pradesh, Afghanistan represented political opportunity and a model for other nations. As we shall see in the following case

[32] *Ibid*., p. 25.
[33] *Ibid*., Persian section, p. 27.
[34] *Ibid*., Urdu Section, p. 27.

study, however, the gap between the ideal of Afghanistan's political system and its reality could be profound, and could have serious consequences for Muslim journeymen who made their way to Afghanistan.

III.2. Merchants, Map-Makers, Mechanics: Indian Migrant Labour in Afghanistan

At the heart of Hajji Muhammad Khan's composite text lies a guidebook – an account of the journey from Peshawar to Kabul for those Indians thinking of making the trip. For this section of the text, the panegyrical language of his account of Habib Allah Khan, and the analytical language of political treatise, are replaced by an informational and practical tone. Hajji Muhammad Khan helpfully explains the timings of the caravan trains running between the two countries (Mondays and Thursdays), the cost of renting a room nearby (six *paisah*), the tax for crossing the Afghan border (four *anās* per person).[35] Cigarettes are very expensive in Jalalabad, so it is best to bring your own supplies.[36] Thoughtful of the stomachs as well as the wallets of his fellow Indian travellers, Hajji Muhammad Khan advises his audience to go easy on the fruit and meat on their arrival into Kabul.[37] The text even tells an Indian audience who to get in touch with if they face any problems: the best person to seek out is the Indian Muslim educationalist Najaf 'Ali, who is working as an 'Inspector' (*inspektar*) at the newly-founded Habibiya College in Kabul (which Hajji Muhammad Khan calls '*madrasah-e habībīyah*),[38] and who can be relied on to help Indian travellers in Afghanistan.[39]

[35] *Ibid*., Urdu Section, p. 31.
[36] *Ibid*., Urdu Section, p. 33.
[37] *Ibid*.
[38] *Ibid*.
[39] *Ibid*.

The very fact that such a travel guide explaining how to get from India to Afghanistan was written during the period points to the larger phenomenon of the increasing movements of Indians into Afghanistan. It is this dimension of the text that I want to focus on here. For the text is both product of, and witness to, the Afghan state's increasing use and encouragement of Muslim migrant labour, expertise, and goods from British India. As Hajji Muhammad Khan notes, Habib Allah Khan's father 'Abd al-Rahman Khan had over his twenty years of rule pursued an energetic policy of state-backed industrialization.[40] Such new industries required skilled workers. However, as 'Abd al-Rahman Khan is quoted as explaining, he did not wish to send Afghans abroad for such training. For 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, such training abroad would only encourage Afghans to forget their religious duties and be corrupted by foreign influence.[41]

Such a restrictive policy meant that the Afghan state was heavily reliant on skilled migrant labour throughout the late 19th and early 20th century. The most obvious and easiest place to find such skilled labour was British India, where a large pool of expert labour had developed over the second half of the 19th century.[42] This flow of largely Muslim Indian skilled labour into Afghanistan drew on an older cultural pattern of the small but steady flows of court scribes (*mīrzā*) from outside Afghanistan who worked as administrators and bureaucrats in the Persianate empires and kingdoms that competed over the land of what is now Afghanistan in the 18th and

[40] For a scholarly account of these developments, see R.D. McChesney, 'The Economic reforms of Amir Abdul Rahman Khan,' *Afghanistan* Vol. 11, No. 3 (1968), pp. 11-34.
[41] Khān, *Zikr-e shāh-e Islām* (1907), Dari section, p. 11.
[42] On the large-scale transformation in social and intellectual life amongst British Indian Muslims post-1857 mutiny which helped feed this labour pool of scientific and religious expertise, see David Lelyveld, *Aligarh's First Generation: Muslim Solidarity in British India* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978); Peter Hardy, *The Muslims of British India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972).

19th century.[43] These *miīrzās* at court had, since the 18th century, been primarily Qizilbash, Persian-speaking Shi'a descendants of troops who had accompanied Nadir Shah Afshar (1688/98-1747) on his Indian campaigns, but there were also *mīrzās* from Kashmir and other parts of South and Central Asia.[44] However, where once the *miīrzās* had come with reed pen and parchment, Muslim travellers now came to Afghanistan with the mobile knowledges of engineering, cartography, motor maintenance, architecture, printing, which the Afghan state desired. In the late 19th century and early 20th century, hundreds of Indians found work inside the Afghan state bureaucracy and industries, working as translators, photographers, chauffeurs, physicians, technicians, leather-workers, printers, construction engineers, factory-workers, map-makers.[45] Such men were very visible members of Kabul professional life. The American engineer A.C. Jewett, contracted to build Afghanistan's first electricity system, remarked that 'the master mechanics and best workmen are

[43] See Muzaffar Alam, *The languages of political Islam in India*, c.1200-1800 (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2004); *idem*, 'The Culture and Politics of Persian in precolonial Hindustan' in Sheldon Pollock (ed.), *Literary cultures in history: reconstructions from South Asia* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2003), pp. 131-198; *idem*, 'The making of a Munshi,' *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* Vol. 24, No. 2 (2004), pp. 61-72.

[44] While the Qizilbash had been Turkic-language speakers, they had by the late 19th century become Persian speakers in Afghanistan. For 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's approach to recruiting *mīrzā*, see Hasan Kawun Kakar, *Government and Society in Afghanistan: The Reign of Amir Abd al-Rahman Khan* (Austin: University of Texas, 1979), pp. 27-30.

[45] For examples of Indians in the Government printing works, newspaper, minting works see Frank A. Martin, *Under the Absolute Amir* (London: Harper & Brothers, 1907), pp. 234-5; Khwāja Hasan Nizāmī, *Safarnāmah-e Afghānistān* (Lahore: Ātish fishān, 2007 repr.), p. 55; 'Ubaid Allāh Sindhī, *Kābul mēn sāt sāl, aktūbar 1915-1922: īk tārīkhī yāddāsht*, ed. Muhammad Sarwar (Lahore: Sindh sāgar akādimī, 1976), p. 32. For photographers, see for example Raja Mahendra Pratap's account of Prince 'Inayat Allah's Hindu photographer, Raja Mahendra Pratap, *Reminiscences of a Revolutionary* (New Delhi: Books India International, 1999), p. 49. For translators, see A.C. Jewett, *An American Engineer in Afghanistan* ed. Marjorie Jewett Bell, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1948), p. 216. For chauffeurs, the amir employed one T.E. Modi, a chauffeur from Hyderabad in the Deccan, see North-West Frontier Province diary, IOR/L/P&S/10/202 p. 406. Examples of physicians from Peshawar coming to Kabul for work can be found in Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh, jild-e chahārum* (2012), Part 3, p. 7. For examples of Indian engineers who built royal buildings, factory workers, map-makers, see Faiz Muhammad Kātib, *The History of Afghanistan: Fayz Muḥammad Kātib Hazārah's Sirāj al-Tawārīkh*, edited and translated by Robert D. McChesney & M.M. Khorrami, 3 Vols. (Leiden: Brill, 2013), Vol. 3, pp. 489, 929, 1153. New Afghan government schemes also encouraged entrepreneurial British Indian consultants: the touted scheme to extend the railways into Afghanistan from British India led Kumar Shyama Tagore, the son of the great Indian musicologist Raja Sir Surindro Mohun Tagore, and relative of Rabindranath Tagore, to apply rather optimistically from Calcutta for the post of railway engineer in 1913, British Agent at Kabul's diary, week ending 28th June 1913, IOR/L/P&S/10/201.

imported from India.'[46] The official diaries of British officers on the North-West Frontier border are full of references to Lahori and Murree mechanics (*mistrī*) making their way to Afghanistan to work in new road and bridge-building projects in Afghanistan and as mechanics on the royal fleet of cars, as well as woolworking experts from Amritsar and Gandarpur in Kashmir going to work in the wool factory in Kabul.[47] The Afghan state did not seem to have been able to get enough of these Indian workers, with Hajji Muhammad Khan's text a witness to this fact. While Hajji Muhammad Khan was attempting to sell Japanese and American machinery to the Afghan state, the Afghan state was less interested in his machinery than in his access to skilled labour; in a correspondence between 'Abd al-Rahman Khan and Hajji Muhammad Khan, the amir asks Hajji Muhammad Khan to send Indian workers to him, assuring him that such workers will be paid a fair salary according to their skills.[48] The text is, unfortunately, silent on whether Hajji Muhammad Khan ever carried out this request.

Hajji Muhammad Khan's composite text, combining panegyric, political analysis, and practical guide, is, as I have argued, indicative of the developing relations between Afghanistan and Indian Muslims during the period. The highly visible and performative tours of Afghan royals in India, and the welcoming policies of the Afghan state to Indian Muslim skilled migrant workers, meant that Afghanistan provided both an exciting alternative of Muslim spiritual and political authority on India's doorstep, and a practical site where Muslims could make money. It was the age of the skilled migrant worker – the 'journeyman' - in Afghanistan. While Hajji

[46] Jewett, *An American Engineer* (1948), p. 221.
[47] For an example of Lahori *mistrīs* crossing into Afghanistan, see North West Frontier Province Diary, week ending 19th July 1913, IOR/L/P&S/10/52; Srinagar and Murree *mistrīs* in North West Frontier Province Diary, week ending 27th June 1914, IOR/L/P&S/10/52. Wool-workers from Lahore, Amritsar, and Gandarpur in Kashmir work in wool factory North West Frontier Province Diary, October 1914 IOR/L/P&S/10/201.
[48] Khān, *Zikr-e shāh-e Islām* (1907), Urdu section, p. 35.

Muhammad Khan may not have been successful in selling his Japanese textile machinery to the Afghan state, the fact that he was even trying was testament to Afghanistan's growing status as a land of Muslim opportunity. This section on Indo-Afghan interactions now turns to another Indian Muslim journeyman, Dr Abdul Ghani (1864-1943), and his own adventures - and misadventures - in Afghanistan.

IV. Case-Study Two: Dr Abdul Ghani's Memoirs of Kabul

While 'Abd al-Rahman Khan had remained a firm opponent of educational reform in Afghanistan, the accounts of the royal tours of Nasr Allah Khan, Habib Allah Khan, and 'Inayat Allah Khan to British India illustrate a burgeoning interest on the part of the Afghan ruling family with the 'new sciences' (*'ulūm-e jadīd*) of geography and science being taught in new educational institutions across British India and abroad. While Nasr Allah Khan had marveled at the playing fields of Eton, Amir Habib Allah Khan had visited the much closer Islamiya College in Lahore, where he was recorded as laying the foundation stone of the main building.[49] Such a growing interest in education on the part of Afghan royals translated into state policy; Habib Allah Khan would later lift the *de facto* ban on Afghans studying abroad, and India would became a popular training site for Afghans in a variety of technical professions. In 1912, sixty Afghans were sent to Bombay to take a six-month course in motor driving and maintenance;[50] fifteen Afghan workmen were trained in wool manufacture at Cawnpore and returned to Kabul, presumably to take the place of Kashmiri woolworkers who had been there previously; a royal *farmān* which can be found today in the National Archives in Kabul even ordered the sending of gold-

[49] Sayyid Sulaimān Nadwī, *Sair-e Afghānistān* (Lahore: Sang-e mīl, 2008), p. 43. Also, Nile Green, 'The Trans-Border Traffic of Afghan Modernism: Afghanistan and the Indian 'Urdusphere,' *Comparative Studies in Society and History* Vol. 53, No. 3 (2011), p. 504.
[50] British Agent at Kabul's diary, week ending January 14th 1912, IOR/L/P&S/10/52.

workers to India for training, due to the supposed higher standards of Indian jewelers.[51] But while the sending of Afghans abroad for study was an important development for Afghanistan, it was the importing of Indian educationalists to work in Afghanistan's new schools that was to have the most lasting influence on the country. These schools were designed to create a new class of Afghan officials, based on the success of such Indian institutions as the Anglo-Oriental College in Aligarh.[52] In looking for a headmaster for their version of Aligarh, the Afghan state unsurprisingly turned to British India, and gave the job to the seasoned Lahori educationalist Dr Abdul Ghani.

While Nile Green in a recent article has stressed the 'transnationally woven aspirations' of British Indians and Afghans during the 'axial age of modern Afghan history,'[53] a case study such as Dr Ghani's reveals the combination of opportunity and risks associated with working as a Muslim journeyman in Afghanistan. Dr Ghani was perhaps the best known of all the Indian Muslims working in Afghanistan during the early 20th century. Raised in Jalalpar Jattah in the Punjab, and trained in medicine in Britain, where he learnt fluent English, Dr Ghani would, in 1921, write an English language work, 'A Review of the Political Situation in Central Asia,' which combined an account of his experiences in Afghanistan with his views on regional cooperation and politics.[54] Like Hajji Muhammad Khan, Dr Abdul Ghani viewed Afghanistan as a place of great optimism and potential. However, his trying experiences in Afghanistan offer a useful counterbalance to the relentless optimism and idealism of Hajji Muhammad Khan.

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[51] *Farāmin-e Habīb Allāh*, Afghan National Archives, unnumbered.
[52] In Amir Aman Allah Khan's time, the vice-chancellor of Aligarh Muslim University Sir Ross Mas'ud would even be invited to Afghanistan to advise on the setting up of a university there, see Green, 'Trans-border Traffic' (2011), p. 496.
[53] *Ibid.,* pp. 480, 482.
[54] Abdul Ghani, *A Review of the Political Situation in Central Asia* (Lahore: Aziz Publishers, 1921).

The travels of Indian educationalists like Dr Ghani to Afghanistan were largely facilitated by personal networks and interactions. Dr Ghani later claimed that he was personally asked by Habib Allah Khan to open Habibiya College in Kabul.[55] Dr Ghani agreed, and brought two of his brothers with him, one of whom - Najaf 'Ali, Hajji Muhammad Khan's contact in Kabul - became inspector of schools in Afghanistan. Another teacher, Maulawi Murid Ahmad of Jullundur, who taught the new, secular subjects of maths and geography, had served as a teacher to the prominent family of the future Afghan king, Nadir Khan, while they were living in exile in Dehra Dun in India, and had got a job through his connection with them.[56] Dr Ghani seems to have made a trip to Kabul to found the school in 1903, before returning to Lahore where he was made the headmaster of Islamiya College there.[57] Why Dr Ghani did not stay in Afghanistan is not entirely clear. Some scholars have suggested that Dr Ghani was stopped at Jalalabad on his way to India on leave, and accused of smuggling Afghan government documents out to the government in British India.[58] Although nothing was found, Dr Ghani was sufficiently upset by this maltreatment that he determined not to return. It should have been a warning to Dr Ghani that the position of a foreign journeyman in Afghanistan was always uncertain and ambiguous.

In Dr Ghani's absence, Habibiya College seems to have got off to a rocky start. In his account of the period, Dr Ghani complained that 'local [i.e. Afghan]

[55] *Ibid*., p.72. 'Abd al-Hai Habibi has a different account, suggesting that Dr Ghani met Prince Nasr Allah Khan on his trip to England, and that Dr Ghani acted for a while as his translator, later being invited by Nasr Allah to come to Afghanistan, 'Abd al-Hai Habībī, *Junbish-e mashrūtiyat dar Afghānistān* (Kabul: Matba'ah-e daulatī, 1984), p. 63.
[56] Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh, jild-e chahārum* (2012), Part 2, p. 266.
[57] For the founding of Habibiya, see *ibid*., Part 2, p. 545.
[58] Dr Ghani's great-nephew, Abdul Qadeer Najafi, mentions this claim, quoting the Afghan historian Sayyid Mir Qasem Reshtia, in Abdul Qadeer Najafi, 'Dr Abdul Ghani's Contributions Towards Modern Education in Afghanistan,' (Web article from the website of the *Research Journal of Area Study Centre*, University of Peshawar, 2009).

officials' would not allow the staff to do their work.[59] With Dr Ghani away, and the school under the management of another Indian educator, Hafiz Ahmad Din, the initial 300 students had fallen to just fifty.[60] Due to the school's ailing condition, Amir Habib Allah Khan wrote to Dr Ghani 'a special autograph letter' pleading for his return. Dr Ghani accepted, retired from Islamiya College in Lahore, and made his way once more to Kabul.[61] It is surprising that Dr Ghani should have given up so prestigious a job back home to return to a place which had not treated him well; Dr Ghani's great nephew, Abdul Qadeer Najafi, suggests that one reason for Dr Ghani's desire to return to Kabul was fear that his two brothers in Kabul, Najaf 'Ali and Muhammad Chiragh, would be in danger if he did not return.[62] On his arrival back in Kabul, Dr Ghani immediately sent for half a dozen British Indians to come and teach, and soon the school's teaching staff was majority Indian.[63]

In Dr Ghani's history of the period, written in the early 1920s, he provides a more measured, and often critical, view of Afghan society and politics during the period than Hajji Muhammad Khan's panegyrical text. He describes the prejudice of the local Afghan population against 'modern education which they considered to be *kufr* [i.e. un-Islamic].'[64] According to Dr Ghani, before his arrival,

> The education which fitted out young men for clerical and official work in the administration of the country, consisted of a few standard Persian books – not in the modern languge used in Persia, but in the old language of centuries ago; not even of modern literature, but the old classics without

[59] Ghani, *A Review* (1921), pp. 72-3.
[60] *Ibid*.
[61] *Ibid*.
[62] Najafi says that this explanation was told him by his father, the son of Muhammad Chiragh.
[63] Ghani, *A Review* (1921), p. 72. For the fact that the majority of teachers were Indian, see Muhammad Fazlı, *Rasimlī afgān siyāhatī* (Istanbul: Matba'ah-e ahmad ihsān, 1909), p. 72; Jewett (1948), p. 112. For a list of some of these teachers, see North West Frontier Province Diary 20th February 1915, IOR/L/P&S/10/202.
[64] Ghani, *A Review* (1921), p. 63. The use of the term 'modern,' by the English-speaking Dr Ghani, is the only time the word is used in any of my non-Western sources.

> the least tinge of modern scientific and practical thought. This much alone with caligraphy [sic] was required in the clerical line.[65]

In an attempt to 'overcome the resistance of the people' to this new education, Dr Ghani engaged with the mullas of local mosques, who were already paid by the state to teach primary classes. He raised their salaries, paying them half of their current salary again, out of the Education Department's budget. Dr Ghani then arranged for 5,000 boys to be taught in this way, while 400 received a full educational curriculum at Habibiya College in Kabul.[66] Dr Ghani also set up daily school inspections, overseen by his brother, an examination board, a teacher training school on the same site as Habibiya College, and a translation department staffed by Indians and Afghans.[67] This translation department translated textbooks into Persian for use by students. Some of these texts, such as the 1905 geographical work *Mir'āt al-arz*, were published by the *Anjuman-e himāyat-e islāmiyah* in Lahore, an organization with whom Dr Ghani had had strong links since his Islamiya College days.[68] Dr Ghani's work, it seemed, was proving extremely successful.

IV.1. Education or Espionage?

But the life of a journeyman in early 20th century Kabul was not always straightforward, and Dr Ghani's text reveals the difference between the idealized representation of the young nation-state of Afghanistan and the often much trickier reality. For while Dr Ghani's professional work was flourishing, navigating Kabul's

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[65] *Ibid*.
[66] *Ibid*., p. 73.
[67] *Ibid*., p. 74.
[68] *Mir'āt al-arz ya'nī mukhtasar-e jughrāfiyah-e 'ālam* (Lahore: Matba'ah-e islāmiyah, 1905). See also, J. Rahmān Kamgār, *Tārikh-e mu'ārif-e Afghānistān* (Peshawar: Sabā būk stūr, 1998), pp. 21-23. Later, the *Anjuman* would petition Amir Habib Allah Khan to release Dr Ghani from jail, North West Frontier Province Diary week ending 31st August 1912, IOR, L/P&S/10/52. In the 1920s, the secretary of the *Anjuman* would visit Kabul to assess its educational institutions, Hājī Mīr Shams al-Dīn, *Siyāhat-e Afghānistān, mushtamil bar kawā'if-e ta'līmāt* (Lahore: Rafīq-e 'ām prēs, 1929).

political waters proved a murky business. Mistrust seems to have permanently surrounded Dr Ghani since his first arrival, his English education and linguistic ability making him the target of rumours that he was a British spy. Faiz Muhammad Katib, for example, called Dr Ghani a 'platelicker' (*kāsah-līs*) of the British, and claimed that Dr Ghani was in their pay.[69] Katib believes that Dr Ghani made an agreement with the British that 'outwardly he would devote himself to work for this [i.e. Afghanistan] government but inwardly would work for that [i.e. British] government.'[70] Moreover, Dr Ghani himself believed that his work 'surprised the local officialdom, and excited jealousy.'[71] In 1909, Dr Ghani found himself in great trouble over what he describes in his memoirs vaguely as 'another scheme of reform':

> It was represented…to the Amir that I was conspiring to overthrow the despotic regime of government, and aimed at the establishment of Constitutional Government with myself as its president. Several gentlemen, some of very high position, had supported my scheme, and the Amir was told that I had formed a strong party to immediately subvert the Government, and that they would use violence in case of refusal by him. Unfortunately their representations – or rather misrepresentations – were given full credence. I was immediately confined to prison in the Arak [sic] Fort, along with my two brothers, one of whom was the Chief Inspector of the schools, and the other the Headmaster of the Habeebyia [sic] School. Of the Afghans, who had supported me, seven were immediately put to death, and the rest, about sixty, were put in prison.[72]

This quotation is one of the only statements we have by someone who was part of the 'first group of constitutionalists' (*nakhustīn gurūh-e mashrūtah-khwāhān*), as they have become known, in Afghanistan.[73] But what was this 'other scheme of reform'

[69] Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh, jild-e chahārum* (2012), Part 3, p. 364.
[70] *Ibid*., Part 1, p. 245.
[71] Ghani, *A Review* (1921), p. 74.
[72] Ghani, *A Review* (1921), pp. 75-6.
[73] The term is from Habibi, *Junbish* (1984), index page. The only other sources I know of by someone actually involved is the work of Dr Ghani's brother, Muhammad Hussain B.A. who wrote a published memoir in Urdu with the translated title 'Twenty-one Years in Afghanistan.' This book is mentioned by Fazal-ur-Rahim Marwat in his work, *The Evolution and Growth of Communism in Afghanistan, 1917-1979: An Appraisal* (Karachi: The Royal Book Company, 1997), p. 146. I have not, however, been able to find it. Bezhan describes Ghubar as a member of the Constitutional Party, which would

that Dr Ghani alludes to? Dr Ghani talks elsewhere in his work of 'my scheme of peaceful intellectual development,' but offers no details. Certainly Ghani was a believer in the value of 'constitutionalism,' which he describes as 'neither more nor less than the regime which existed in the time of the early Caliphs.'[74] Faiz Muhammad Katib, who himself was imprisoned in the wake of the affair, along with 'seventy-five tribal leaders and nobles of the court,' described Dr Ghani in Volume 4 of his history as 'prematurely planning to introduce a constitution' (*qabl az waqt azm-e ijrā-ye mashrūtah kardah*).[75] He also states that Dr Ghani 'resolved to establish a constitutional government' (*azm-e saltanat-e mashrūtah jazm kard*), that Dr Ghani had a 'group of constitutionalists' (*jamā'ah-e mashrūtah-khwāhān*) around him, and that he secretly founded a 'constitutionalist council' (*mahfal-e shurā-ye mashrūtiyat*) in which he got 'more than 500 city notables and leaders as well as leaders of tribes from the far corners of the country to join by oath.'[76] In one of his fullest statement on the subject, Katib notes that Dr Ghani

> set about stirring up trouble and strife in Afghanistan…to achieve the founding of a constitutional government through secret measures and means of letters and messages. He, who by royal command had full authority in the teaching and learning of the new sciences and new arts, felt the urge to engage in this perfidious business and to bring Afghanistan [down] to join the state of Iran as the whipping-boy of the events of the age and to turn it into ruins and desert…So he sowed the seed of appetite in the soil of the hearts of certain individuals who wished to attach themselves to the court and spent their days of hope in longing for appointments and dirham and dinar salaries. By promising plentiful stipends and abundant salaries he made them obedient [to him] and contented.[77]

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thus make him a potential useful primary source on the period; however, it seems unlikely that he was a member of any such party at that time, since he would have been only around 14 years old in 1909, Faridullah Bezhan, 'Pan-Islamism in Afghanistan in the Early Twentieth Century: From Political Discourse to Government Policy, 1906-22,' *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* Vol. 25, No. 2 (2014), p. 195.

[74] Ghani, *A Review* (1921), p. 82.

[75] Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh, jild-e chahārum* (2012), Part 1, p. 245.

[76] *Ibid*., Part 2, p. 307; i*bid*., Part 1, p. 516; *ibid*., Part 3., p. 376.

[77] *Ibid*., Part 3, p. 364.

In terms of the actual activities of this group, Katib notes:

> From the beginning of Ramazan [in 1908], when the bazaars are open and illuminated at night, and there was no barrier to the coming and going of strangers and nobody asked anyone about their comings and goings by night…he [i.e. Dr Ghani] invited them ostensibly to evening and morning breaking of the fast gatherings, sometimes in one place and sometimes in another place, where they settled down for discussion meetings. He lured anyone else [he could] to the gatherings through lies and deceit. In the royal presence, and on the surface, the above-mentioned doctor spoke about the achievement of progress for the state and nation and the prosperity of the country and got signed royal permission for carrying out his intended plans under another name. And he made that [presumably the royal permission] the main argument for the advancement of his secret schemes, and showed it and delivered the good tidings [presumably of royal support] to anyone among the notables of the peoples and tribes (*aqwām-o-qabā'il*) and brought them into his circle binding them with promises and agreements. And in secrecy he turned a group of both great and little - those who could not tell [external] form and [inner] substance apart…into co-conspirators and oppositionists. Until, by the beginning of the month Safar 1327 AH…he had deceived a large number…and this became the cause of the execution and imprisonment and confiscation of the property and belongings of some of them.[78]

This passage above is perhaps the most insightful of all the primary sources we have on the activities of the 'constitutionalists'. From such an account it seems most likely that what Dr Ghani was involved in was fostering political discussions in private houses, and promoting the ideas of constitutional government.[79] Such ideas of constitutionalism were very much alive across Asia at that time: 1906 to 1911 had seen Iranian, Ottoman, and Chinese revolutions, themselves inspired by the Japanese model of constitutional reform.[80] But whether 'constitutionalism' was merely the subject of discussion in Kabul or a practical goal of a genuine movement to

[78] *Ibid*., Part 3, pp. 364-5. My thanks to Professor Edmund Herzig for help with translation of this section.
[79] This reading of their activities is also reinforced by the British Agent in Kabul at that time, see Diary of the British Agent at Kabul for week ending 19th March 1908, IOR L/P&S/10/22.
[80] See Aydin, *Politics of Anti-Westernism in Afghanistan* (2007), p. 77.

overthrow the Afghan ruler, or drastically limit his powers, is much harder to judge.[81] Certainly, subsequent Afghan historians such as 'Abd al-Hai Habibi and Ghulam Muhammad Ghubar saw the acts of Dr Ghani and others of the time as a 'movement' (*junbish*).[82] However, it remains extremely uncertain. Even reading primary sources from the time, the affair was opaque: was Dr Ghani imprisoned because he was a freemason? Because he had advocated the murder of the amir and his sons? Because of the jealousy of other Indian teachers? Because of the anger of mullas at his introduction of new forms of education?[83] Although Afghan, and subsequent Western historians, have spilled a certain amount of ink on the 'constitutional movement' in Afghanistan, these works suffer from a serious lack of contemporary sources. The most prominent Afghan historian of the movement, 'Abd al-Hai Habibi, quotes Dr Ghani's brother, Muhammad Husain, as stating that Dr Ghani was head of a body called the '*Majlis-e jān-nisārān-e Islām*' ('The Council of the Devoted Ones of Islam'), which was made up primarily of Indians in Kabul and which 'worked together with [*yakjā kār mīkārdand*] Afghan constitutionalists.'[84] Unfortunately, such statements are vague in the extreme: what was this 'council'? What were its aims and activities? How were they 'working together' with 'Afghan constitutionalists'? With very limited written sources from the period, and only a very occasional oral source recorded many years later,[85] it is very hard to draw

[81] Bezhan, and many others, too easily accept later histories of the period that declare that there was such a thing as a 'constitutional party' during the period, something which seems to my mind too formalized a description, Bezhan 'Pan-Islamism' (2014), p. 194.
[82] Habībī, *Junbish* (1984); Ghulām Muhammad Ghubār, *Afghānistān dar masīr-e tārīkh* (Kabul: Matba'ah-e Maiwand, 2009 repr.), pp. 716-723. See also Sayyid Sa'd al-Dīn Hāshimī, *Junbish-e mashrūtah-khwāhī dar Afghānistān* (Kabul: Shūrā-ye farhangī-ye Afghānistān, 2008).
[83] See the account in the Diary of the British Agent at Kabul for week ending 19th March, IOR L/P&S/10/22; also, Telegram of Roos-Keppel to Foreign Secretary 18th April 1909, IOR L/P&S/10/22.
[84] Habībī, *Junbish* (1984), p. 65.
[85] Habibi is better than Ghubar in this respect, mentioning for example that his arguments about the 'first constitutionalists' is largely based on an article by Mir Sayyid Qasim Khan, who was himself quoting his grandfather Mir Qasim Khan, Habībī, *Junbish* (1984), p. 13. Nevertheless, his work still suffers from sections that are poorly footnoted, if at all.

conclusions about the ideas and activities of these 'constitutionalists' and Dr Ghani's role in the whole affair.

Despite the lack of clarity on this matter, Dr Ghani's rise and fall is illustrative for us of the complex relation of Muslim journeymen to the Afghan state during the period. It also gives us context to understand the later extreme tensions between Muslims and Afghans during the First World War that are analysed in the next chapter. For, on the one hand, Dr Ghani played a formative role in the practical setting up of a new education system in the country. On the other, Dr Ghani's engagement with transnational ideas of constitutional rule (whatever that engagement really was in practice), flowing between Iran, Afghanistan, India, and further afield was clearly a threat to certain members of the Afghan court. Such a transnational figure thus clearly held an ambiguous position, in which his work and ideas were simultaneously viewed as potentially beneficial and potentially subversive inside Afghanistan. Dr Ghani is an early and important example of the difference between the ideal of 'Afghanistan' and its reality. Dr Ghani's measured memoir of his difficult times in Kabul stands in counterpoint to the optimistic visions of Afghanistan of Hajji Muhammad Khan's speculative text, and illustrates the often marked difference between Afghanistan in the imagination and as lived experience. Having focused on connections with Muslims to the east of Afghanistan's borders, it is now time to shift our attention west, from India to the Ottoman Empire, and to trace that same relation of imagination and experience in the travels of Ottoman journeymen to Afghanistan.

V. Case Study Three: Muhammad Fazlı's Illustrated Afghan Travelogue

While the preceding sections have illustrated how Muslims from British India had long found professional opportunities in Afghanistan, the arrival of Ottoman journeymen into Afghanistan in the first decade of the 20th century was a strikingly new phenomenon. For the Ottoman Empire was a very long way from Afghanistan, and connections between the Ottoman and Afghan court had been limited in the extreme. The only real link between Afghans and Ottoman lands was through the institution of hajj, but such an institution only encouraged a one-way flow of Afghans to Ottoman lands; there had never been significant numbers of Ottoman visitors to Afghanistan. It is thus somewhat strange that Afghan historiography has tended to treat the appearance of Ottomans in Afghanistan as an unsurprising occurrence, rather than something that needed careful explaining and understanding. There has been a common tendency in the literature, too, to reduce Ottoman relations with Afghanistan to abstractions: of 'Pan-Islamism' interacting with 'Afghan nationalism', of 'modernism' being imported into Afghanistan from abroad.[86] This section aims at a more concrete analysis, which attempts to understand why and how the Ottomans came to Afghanistan, what they did there, and what their role was in the creation of Afghanistan as a site of Muslim aspiration. Through the following micro-study of a text and a small group of journeymen, something more ambiguous and interesting than the conventional narrative emerges: a brief moment of convergence in which various human agents, all with disparate personal motives, but over-archingly linked by a common lexicon of 'progress' and 'renewal', forged a small but geographically diffuse network that facilitated the transfer of technologies and forms of knowledge to Afghanistan from outside. Alongside these new technologies and ideas, a new

[86] Vartan Gregorian's seminal study of 'the emergence of modern Afghanistan' can suffer from such abstractions, see for example pp. 213-215, Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1969).

image of Afghanistan emerged amongst Ottoman Muslims: of Afghanistan as a proud, independent, and strong young Muslim and Asian nation, a template for Muslim and Asian polities in the face of Western imperialism.

The main source for this section is a 1909 travelogue by the Ottoman ex-soldier and zincographer Muhammad Fazlı, recording his trip to Afghanistan in 1907-8, and printed in Ottoman Turkish in Istanbul.[87] Its value lies largely in its formative nature, producing one of the first representations of Afghanistan by Ottoman Muslims.[88] The first lines of the work highlights the combination of fascination and ignorance that coloured Ottoman views of Afghanistan:

> There is much good will and affection in the whole Islamic World for that young and energetic government of Asia, Afghanistan. This is particularly so amongst Ottomans in general, who foster a great feeling of appreciation, affection, and respect for that state and land. And yet, it is strange that no-one has an honest word or any accurate information about that government [i.e. Afghan government] today. There is not a single work printed or collected about the present and past condition of that country; all that exist are certain legends of what has been told or heard, in the manner of old wives' tales (*hurāfāt*).[89]

Despite such burgeoning interest in the country, 'there has been no such opportunity for somone who has entered the place, seen it, and after that written accurately about what he saw.'[90] Such a lack provides Fazlı's purpose: to offer an accurate first-hand information of a little-known but increasingly important Muslim country for an Ottoman audience which is ignorant but interested.

Fazlı's travelogue acts as something of a pair with Mahmud Tarzi's account of his travels to the Ottoman Empire analysed in the previous chapter. Like Tarzi's,

[87] Fazlı, *Rasimlī afgān siyāhatī* (1909).
[88] For an earlier Ottoman account of Afghanistan, by someone who did not visit but got close, can be found in Syed Tanvir Wasti, 'Two Muslim Travelogues: To and from Istanbul,' *Middle Eastern Studies* Vol. 27, No. 3, pp. 457-476.
[89] Fazlı, *Rasimlī afgān siyāhatī* (1909), p. 1.
[90] *Ibid*., p. 1.

it was a travelogue facilitated by new forms of communication: Tarzi was able to travel across three continents inside a single month due to the steamship and the opening of the Suez Canal; Fazlı could make his way from Cairo to Kabul making use of imperial shipping and railway lines. Fazlı's 'illustrated' (*rasimlī*) account was printed by the Ottoman publisher Ahmed Ihsan Tokgöz, who had made a name for himself publishing illustrated travelogues of distant countries.[91] It was exactly Tokgöz's printed travelogues, particularly those of Ahmed Midhat, which had inspired Tarzi's own Afghan take on the genre. Like Tarzi's travelogue, Fazlı's text combines informational sections with more discursive passages.

In structure, the travelogue essentially falls into two halves. The first part is a linear narrative which describes the Ottoman journeymen's arduous passage from Egypt to Afghanistan; the second provides distinct sections on Afghanistan's 'army, education, industries, conditions, and customs.'[92] In terms of style, the work is highly composite: there is the kind of *Baedeker*-style informational mode in which Fazlı provides details on the price of steamer tickets, the length of journeys, the best routes to take.[93] The account of Fazlı's journeying, however, also provides more traditional journal-style passages, based on 'what we saw and what we felt, without embellishing a single thing.'[94] These sections carry the reader stage by stage through the arduous journeying by steamship, train, and on horseback across seas and continents. The final part of the work exchanges this personal and confessional style of writing for a more analytical tone, as Fazlı offers more formal analyses of

[91] For the role of illustrations in such travelogues, see Christoph Herzog and Raoul Motika, 'Orientalism "*alla turca*": Late 19th /Early 20th Century Ottoman Voyages into the Muslim Outback,' *Die Welt Des Islams* Vol. 40, No. 2, pp. 177-8.
[92] Fazlı, *Rasimlī afgān siyāhatī* (1909), p. 2.
[93] See, for example, *ibid*., p. 11.
[94] *Ibid*., p. 2.

Afghanistan's current developmental status, customs, and ethnic groups.[95] Such a section suggests an increasing 'scientificity', in which Afghanistan's cultural and religious practices are objectified and thus made visible for study and comparison.[96] Like Tarzi's transformation of the 'weird and wonderful' ('*ajīb-o-gharīb*) style of the older genre of Arabic, Persian, and Turkish travelogues, Fazlı's text is one of the new style of travelogues which were as much practical as literary texts - handbooks for change. From this brief sketch of the structure and style of Fazlı's work, this chapter now turns to the travels themselves: how did this Ottoman zincographer and his exiled friends scattered across Europe ever end up working in Afghanistan?

V.1. First Contact: Indians in Cairo, Ottomans in Exile

The roots of the Ottoman journey east to Afghanistan lie in a disastrous mission west by Mahmud Tarzi. After the death of Amir 'Abd al-Rahman Khan in 1901, Mahmud Tarzi decided to return home to Afghanistan to offer his condolences and to seek permission from Amir Habib Allah Khan for his family to return home from exile. After nine months in Kabul, Habib Allah Khan sent Tarzi back to Damascus with a double mission: to bring his family back to Kabul but also to look for suitable Ottomans who could serve in the new state institutions being devised in Afghanistan.[97] The trip back to Damascus did not go as planned, however. While Tarzi subsequently always made much of the honour and esteem shown his family by the Ottoman court, Tarzi was in fact treated with extreme suspicion and hostility on

[95] This section can be found at *ibid*., pp. 70-105.
[96] Nile Green, 'Introduction: Writing, Travel, and the Global History of Central Asia' in *idem* (ed.), *Writing Travel in Central Asian History* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2014), pp. 6-7. Also, *idem*, 'Among the Dissenters: Reciprocal Ethnography in 19th Century Inglistan,' *Journal of Global History* Vol. 4, No. 2 (2009), pp. 293-315.
[97] The following reconstruction of Tarzi's journey is pieced together from a file in the India Office records held at the British Library, IOR/L/P&S/10/22.

his return. The Governor of Damascus refused to allow Tarzi to take his family out of Ottoman lands and stopped the monthly stipend that had continued coming to the family after the death of Mahmud Tarzi's father.[98] Tarzi consequently decided to come to Istanbul, setting out in January 1904, in order to try and obtain the stipend money owed his family and secure permission to return to his country. Where once he had been a guest of the Sultan, he now found every door closed to him. Every prominent Ottoman official refused to see him. In a final indignity, the police authorities asked him for his papers (*tazkirah*) and then refused to return them to him. Having to survive on the money that Amir Habib Allah Khan had given him to help find Ottoman experts to work in Afghanistan, Tarzi was now virtually a prisoner in Istanbul, spending eight months trying various means to leave. In the summer of 1904, an increasingly desperate Tarzi came to the British Embassy in Istanbul and petitioned the British government to help, either in persuading the Ottoman Government to provide him with funds, or themselves paying for the Tarzi family's travelling expenses 'so that they may not come to utter ruin in Turkey.'[99]

What had happened to turn the Ottoman authorities against Tarzi? Much mischief seems to have been caused by Mahmud Tarzi's brother-in-law, 'Abd al-Baqi, a spendthrift Barakzai living in Damascus who made a certain living by providing information on Afghan exiles to the British consulate in the city. 'Abd al-Baqi claimed that Tarzi was caught attempting to forge the amir of Afghanistan's seal and had forged papers with him. Tarzi admits that the Ottoman authorities believed his papers were forged, but states that their suspicions were due to 'the

[98] Letter of N.R. O'Conor to Marquess of Lansdowne, July 19th 1904, IOR/L/P&S/10/22.
[99] Summary of letter dated 23rd July 1904 from Mahmud and Habib Allah Tarzi, laid out in a despatch from British Ambassador at Constantinople to Marquess of Lansdowne, dated 1st August 1904, IOR/L/P&S/10/22.

author of this calumny, Abdul Baki [*sic*].'[100] Tarzi also mentions that the Afghan amir had banned 'Abd al-Baqi from returning to Afghanistan, something corroborated by the British sources.[101] The reason for 'Abd al-Baqi's ban from Afghanistan seems to have been none other than Mahmud Tarzi; in return for being accused of forging the amir's seal, Tarzi seems to have written to Amir Habib Allah Khan telling him that 'Abd al-Baqi was in fact a British spy.[102] This did not help Tarzi, and it took him another year before he could get the money together to get to travel to India by steamer, from where the Afghan government paid his travel expenses to Kabul. His aim of recruiting Ottoman experts had, however, failed.

So if it wasn't Tarzi that made first contact with these Ottoman recruits, who was it? In Muhammad Fazlı's travel account he describes the extremely fortuitous happenstance by which he ended up setting out for Afghanistan:

> Three years ago, I was in Cairo. A group of us friends – all companions in the pain of tyranny and exile, particularly Husni Beg who had seen the necessity of taking refuge there with all haste, sacrificing everything in order to save his life and freedom – were sitting in the *Huquq* coffeehouse. There Husni Beg, I know not why, was chatting with someone I didn't know…This chap said, 'if such educated and influential people as yourselves went to the Afghan people, then you would do a great service to the government there; in particular you would receive great warmth of feeling from the amir. The Islamic government of Afghanistan has a great need of the ability and knowledge of Muslim experts like yourselves, and would show much respect and kindness towards you. You know that if you so desired it, a petition can be made to the amir through the agency of Mahmud Beg Tarzi.'[103]

Although the identity of the person who Husni Beg met in the coffee-house is never mentioned in the text, Muhammad Fazlı told the British Ambassador in Istanbul, Gerard Lowther, in a communication of 1910, that the man who spurred them to

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[100] *Ibid*.
[101] See W.S. Richards to N.S. O'Conor, dated 9th January 1904, IOR/L/P&S/10/22.
[102] *Ibid*.
[103] Fazlı, *Rasimlī afgān siyāhatī* (1909), p. 4.

travel to Afghanistan was the British Indian Dr Allah Juwaya.[104] Dr Juwaya was originally from Kashmir, had a medical practice in Lahore, and had been working as Prince Nasr Allah Khan's private physician in Kabul. He would later go on to play an important role in the setting up of state-backed medical facilities in Kabul, including Kabul's *Nizāmī* Hospital.[105] The initial mediating figure between the Ottomans and Afghanistan was thus not Tarzi, but an Indian Muslim journeyman.

Husni Beg sent off a letter to Tarzi expressing his interest in coming to work in Afghanistan, but had to wait a year for a reply. While the Afghan postal service had significantly improved during the time of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, there were still many places for letters to get stuck along the way.[106] When the reply finally came, Tarzi suggested that if Husni Beg knew any other 'Turks of such knowledge and piety' who wanted to go to Afghanistan, they would be received with all hospitality.[107] This group of exiles in Cairo clearly communicated amongst themselves, and even contacted another exiled friend of theirs living in Switzerland, Ali Fahmi Beg.[108] They sent another petition by post to Tarzi, which took twenty-eight days to reach Jalalabad, where Tarzi was staying with the amir, whose court resided there during the winter months. Tarzi's reply to the Ottomans' petition, dated 14th Muharram 1324 (10th March 1906), is printed in full in Fazlı's travelogue. Tarzi starts by apologising that his previous reply had been sent three months earlier, before it mysteriously returned to Tarzi without having found its way to Cairo. Again, such difficulties are symptomatic of the patchy incorporation of

[104] See the letter of Gerard Lowther to Sir E. Grey, 1st March 1919, IOR/L/P&S/10/22.
[105] See Ludwig Adamec, *Historical and Political Who's Who of Afghanistan* (Graz: Akademische Druk-u Verlagsanstalt, 1975), p. 117. Dr Juwaya is also described in the work of the Iranian diplomat Sayyid Mahdi Farrukh, see Sayyid Mahdī Farrukh, *Kursī-nishīnān-e Kābul* (Tehran: Sāzmān-e chāp-o-intishārāt-e wazārat-e farhang-o-irshād-e islāmī, 1992), p. 13.
[106] Fazlı, *Rasimlī afgān siyāhatī* (1909), p. 5.
[107] *Ibid*.
[108] *Ibid*., p. 6.

Afghanistan into global communications systems during the period. Moreover, the Ottomans' petition had arrived during a time in which Amir Habib Allah Khan was on his trip to India and while Nasr Allah Khan was serving as regent. Tarzi asked the Ottomans if they were still interested, and mentioned that the Afghan government would transmit all travelling expenses to them if so.[109] He also stressed that if there were any other 'experts in state or military sciences that have excellent education in Ottoman schools,' who wanted to work in Afghanistan, then they should send an application and a resume along with the first batch of Ottoman travellers.[110] Husni Beg and Fazlı, after some preliminary enquiries at Thomas Cook travel agents, took a rough guess at the travel expenses they would need and sent a note to Kabul. Two months later, a royal *farmān* arrived from Nasr Allah Khan, along with a bill of exchange for 350 Ottoman Lira. As Fazlı notes, 'the fact that they sent money after such an application and written response, without knowing us personally, is a clear sign of their trust and faith in the Turks.'[111] Or, we might add, the naivety of the Afghan court; or perhaps the keenness with which they felt the need for foreign expertise. For it certainly seems surprising that Nasr Allah Khan would send such a sum without ever having met or having had detailed information about any of these men.

Unfortunately, Fazlı's travelogue is rather vague about the exact composition of this pioneering group of Ottoman journeymen, and we have to turn to British archival sources for further information.[112] The fact that we have such details on these men in the British archive is testament to British imperial paranoia at the time over the spectre of 'Pan-Islam'; the archive reveals that this small group of Ottoman

[109] *Ibid*., p. 7.
[110] *Ibid*.
[111] *Ibid*. p. 9.
[112] Muhammad Saray has an analysis of the travellers, but seems to be relying only on Fazlı's text, see Muhammad Saray, *Afganistan va Türkler* (Istanbul: Adabiyat Fakultesi Basimevi, 1987), pp. 116-7.

exiles was the subject of wild rumours both in the Western press and in the colonial bureaucracy, a particularly prevalent notion being that they were part of an Ottoman state-backed mission to Afghanistan.[113] As we have seen, however, this mission was nothing of the sort. Rather than being Ottoman government officials, the first group of seven journeymen who travelled to Afghanistan were almost all exiles who were in some way or other wanted by, or hostile to, the Ottoman state: Ali Fahmi, had been editor of the newspaper '*Mu'āzanah*' which was published in Philippopolis (today's Plovdiv in Bulgaria) and which engaged in violent criticism of the existing regime in Turkey; hence his relocation to Switzerland.[114] Major Husni Beg was described by the Ottoman authorities to the British as a 'deserter from the Yemen.' Hasan Hilmi Efendi, a printer by trade, was 'said to have deserted from the Turkish army.'[115] Muhammad Fazlı, the zincographer and author of our travelogue, was described as being clearly hostile to the old regime, and on its downfall had returned to Istanbul where he attempted to set up a newspaper, called *Laklah,*[116] and a humorous magazine, *Chimdik.*[117] Indeed, all the evidence – of Tarzi's painful treatment in Istanbul and of the Ottomans who went out to Afghanistan – suggests that the Ottoman court had very little, if any, interest in cultivating links with Afghanistan beyond the lip-service of a general Islamic brotherhood. Quite the reverse in fact: Afghan sources from the period note that there was a fear in the Ottoman state that Afghans were used by the British as spies; in one illuminating example, the Ottoman state refused the Afghan amir from setting up a hostel for

[113] Multiple documents and discussions on this issue can be found in file IOR/L/P&S/10/22.
[114] See N.R. O'Conor to Sir E. Grey, 28th January 1908, IOR/L/P&S/10/22.
[115] Hasan Hilmi Efendi had spent time in Syria working at a printing firm, which his son remembers as being called the *Matbū'āt-e Rāshīdah*. Interview with Hasan Hilmi Efendi's son, Timur Shah 'Ragheb', Kabul, 13th May 2014.
[116] All these descriptions are taken from the letter of Gerard Lowther to Sir E. Grey, 1st March 1919, IOR/L/P&S/10/22.
[117] Herzog and Motika, 'Orientalism "*alla turca*"' (2000), p. 174.

Afghan pilgrims in Mecca 'lest the English government introduce its imperialist influence in Mecca through a hostel (*ribāt*) of the government of Afghanistan there.'[118] Far from being an official delegation, the only Ottomans who made their way to Afghanistan were actually themselves opposed to the Ottoman court. Such a point is instructive: Afghanistan's welcoming and incorporation of Muslim journeymen inside the Afghan state was a largely transnational phenomenon, rather than one backed by diplomatic missions or great power diplomacy. The fact that almost all these Ottomans were exiles illustrates the attractiveness of Afghanistan as a refuge and shelter for political dissidents and outcasts. As we shall see, this image of Afghanistan was to grow and flourish during the First World War.

V.2. Pan-Idealism: Asian, Islamic, and Turkish solidarities

It is now time to turn to the motivations behind the Ottoman journey east. What drove these Ottomans to tramp the arduous road to Afghanistan? If we are to trust Fazlı's statement to British diplomats, they travelled 'partly to earn a living and partly through love of adventure.'[119] Fazlı's emphasis on the professional opportunities for work in Afghanistan are reinforced by his statement to the British Ambassador in 1910 that the Afghan amir would pay him higher wages as a zincographer in Kabul than he could earn doing similar work in Constantinople. Fazlı, also, quite sensibly bearing in mind his audience, played down any anti-British motivation for his journey, assuring the British Ambassador in Constantinople that 'they had no feeling of hostility or disloyalty to England.' He extolled the benefits of

[118] Kātib, *Sirāj al-tawārīkh, jild-e chahārum* (2012), Part 2, p. 689.
[119] Letter of Gerard Lowther to the Sir Edward Grey, Constantinople, 1st March 1910, IOR/L/P&S/10/22.

friendship with the British, 'which had never interfered with Moslems in India or Egypt.'[120] But is this view borne out by the text?

Perhaps unsurprisingly the travelogue offers a quite different view of the motivations for the journey to that fed to the British Ambassador in Constantinople. Fazlı does not mention the potential financial benefits of work in Afghanistan, and focuses instead on the sense of religious and regional solidarity and shared ideals betweeen Afghanistan and other Muslim and Asian nations. The opening sentence of the work, already quoted above, makes this quite clear: 'There is much good will and affection in the whole Islamic world for that young and energetic government of Asia, Afghanistan.'[121] In this sentence, the 'Islamic world' and Asia seem to have elided into each other in the space of a single line, as Fazlı stresses a double solidarity of religion and region.

Beyond sentiments of supranational Islamic and Asian solidarity, the travelogue is also testament to another 'pan' ideology – that of pan-Turkism – which fuels Fazlı's imagination and actions. Throughout the text, Fazlı focuses on a shared Turkic history and language in Asia. In passing Turkmen villages he describes them as 'sacred places which were our motherland,' and where they 'shook at the deep national feelings.'[122] To watch 'the proud manners and attitudes of the Turkmen horsemen' gives 'a feeling of respect to our male hearts.'[123] He praises the rustic Turkmens' protection of their 'mother tongue, so that they always speak Turkish and the number of those who speak Russian is very small.'[124] While stopping off in Baku on his way to Afghanistan, he notes that the entire population speaks Turkish. Baku acts as a shining example of a flourishing, proudly Islamic, Turkish-speaking

[120] *Ibid*.
[121] Fazlı, *Rasimlī afgān siyāhatī* (1909), p. 1.
[122] *Ibid*., p. 24.
[123] *Ibid*., p. 25.
[124] *Ibid*.

city: he notes that 'there has been an important expansion of Islamic education in Baku,' the activities of which 'left us amazed.'[125] Fazlı notes a number of Turkish language newspapers being published there, and they end up staying at an Islamic hostel (called the *mehmānkhānah-e islāmiya*), where they are made the guests of distinguished local Turkic-speaking Muslims. Fazlı praises these Muslims as 'our brothers in Islam.'[126] As a memento of these new-found solidarities, the Ottoman travellers and their hosts sign a paper declaration extolling Turkish unity:

> 1325 Arabic date / 1907 European date
> We mark this date as the date of Turkish unity. From this date above begins the movement of Ottoman ideas towards Asia.[127]

Fazlı thus represents his journey as one of discovery in which he finds a shared Turkic heritage scattered across Asia. In return, Fazlı's self-conception is of a man bringing Ottoman ideas to other parts of Asia.

Strikingly, this newly discovered Turkic heritage is not confined to Central Asia, but also extends to Afghanistan: Fazlı describes the Hazarah people as descendants of Genghis Khan, 'exactly like Russian Turks in their manner and appearance.'[128] In his section on the ancient monuments of Afghanistan, Fazlı draws out the Turkic history of Afghanistan, commenting first of all on a huge earth fort which he claims was built by Turkic-speaking Uzbeks.[129] In his discussion of the different ethnic groups of Afghanistan, Fazlı focuses on those peoples of Turkic ethnicity, noting that 'the provinces of Badakshan, Qataghan, Turkistan are completely composed of Uzbek and Turkmen and Tajik, there are up to a million

[125] *Ibid*., p. 21.
[126] *Ibid*.
[127] *Ibid*., p. 23.
[128] *Ibid*., p. 51.
[129] *Ibid*., p. 80.

Turks there.'[130] While Afghanistan had once been synonymous with the 'land of the Afghans' (i.e. Pashtuns), its new nation-state is now refashioned by this Ottoman traveller as part of a larger Turkic homeland in Asia. This stress on a shared ethnic heritage is the Ottoman counterpart to Indian shared religious heritage between South Asia and Afghanistan, and both are part of a similar process of drawing Afghanistan into wider conceptual connections with these Muslim travellers.[131]

V.3. Embattled Lands: Russophobia and the Decline of Islam

Beyond the various 'pan' ideologies on display in the work, the text is also testament to an overarching anti-imperial sentiment and concern for the decline of Islam. While the British feared that these Ottomans' journeying was part of some scheme against British India, the text reveals that Fazlı is far more interested in the dangers of Russian imperialism than its British form. Indeed, the tenor of the whole travelogue is very much one of a journey through embattled Muslim lands, with the forces of Russian imperialism scarring the landscape and making ever more headway into Asian lands. The travelogue frequently comments on the encroaching of Russian imperial power, particularly the extension of Russian borders into Turkmen land, and the railways that extended Russian reach further and further south.[132] Perhaps surprisingly for a professional printer involved in developing the use of passports and visas in Afghanistan, Fazlı is highly critical of Russia's passport controls and regulation of the movement of foreign nationals, lamenting the never-ending passport and police checkpoints, which he describes as a feature of 'all

[130] *Ibid*., p. 85.
[131] For other Ottoman visions of a shared Turkic heritage in Central Asia, see Herzog and Motika, 'Orientalism "*alla turca*"' (2000), pp. 186-7.
[132] Fazlı, *Rasimlī afgān siyāhatī* (1909), p. 31.

authoritarian administrations,'[133] and yet Russia is the worst: 'there is no inspection and monitoring anywhere in the world as in Russia.'[134] Their journey through Russian-controlled territory is portrayed as a dystopian landscape of faceless border-guards, militarized railway depots and repressive police forces. In Odessa, he laments 'the Russian government's brutal and authoritarian force.'[135] Occasional humorous vignettes on the Kafka-esque madnesses of Russian bureaucracy are off-set by Orwellian descriptions of night-raids they witness, in which young students are seen being 'transported with great speed and full of terror in a covered prisoner convoy.'[136]

As the Ottoman journeymen travel further east, the only rays of hope are the small unified communities of 'progressive' Muslims and Turks whose traditions of language and religion have not been broken by Russia. It is thus clear that Fazlı is schematizing the presentation of the countries he travels through for the rhetorical purpose of encouraging Muslim 'progress' and counter-imperialism. In his text, resistance to imperialism seems to galvanise these Muslim communities to action and unity. In Baku, Fazlı is struck by the fraternal kindness with which he is treated by local Muslims, and feels 'overwhelmed by love and gratitude, due to the influence of our distant journeying and exile.'[137] At the other end of the scale is Iran, which is set up by Fazlı as representative of Muslim decline. Stopping in Mashhad, the journeymen are thoroughly depressed by the dirt, poverty, avarice, and lack of religious solidarity amongst its inhabitants: 'it gave us a sense of decay, a sadness and pain in our minds concerning the civilization of holy Mashhad.'[138] Imam Riza's

[133] *Ibid*., p. 16.
[134] *Ibid*., p. 23.
[135] *Ibid*., p. 15.
[136] *Ibid*., p. 19.
[137] *Ibid*., p. 22.
[138] *Ibid*., p. 33.

tomb is filthy and managed by a venal *ākhūnd* who charges a fee for the privilege, 'as if it were the entrance of a theatre.'[139] The Iranian border is even worse, where they sleep on 'an earthen-floored room, half a door, and broken windows.'[140] At the Iranian border they suffer the indignity of being asked to prove that they are even Muslims, by reciting surahs from the Qur'an.[141] Rather than a site of pilgrimage, Mashhad becomes for Fazlı a place to escape as soon as possible. This schematic representation of Iran, set up as we shall see in opposition to Afghanistan, is worthy of note. It may be that such a description satisfies Fazlı's literary needs of providing a neat counter-point to Afghanistan across the border; Iran stands as the example of a Muslim polity which has not attempted to 'progress' in contrast with Afghanistan. On the other hand there may be an anti-Shi'a bias whereby Fazlı does not openly criticize Shi'ism directly, but offers caustic descriptions of Iran's backwardness and uncleanliness as latent criticism of the country and its religious practices.[142] The text does not offer us enough evidence to judge either way.

As soon as Fazlı enters Afghanistan, the difference with Russia – coldly militarized and mechanized – and Iran – dirty and backward – is clear. Such a difference highlights the comparative agenda of the travelogue. It also offers us a strikingly positive image of Afghanistan. Arriving in Herat, its beautiful government hall is described in detail, but more important than the buildings is the way the travellers are treated: the Afghans courteously allowing them some peace to get some rest and providing them with fine food, horses and 'all our travelling necessities.'[143] Like the greatest traveller's tale of them all - Homer's Odyssey - hospitality in

[139] *Ibid*., p. 36.
[140] *Ibid*., p. 30.
[141] *Ibid*., p. 39.
[142] For another Ottoman travelogue that sets up Iran in contrast to other Islamic nations, see Herzog and Motika, 'Orientalism "*alla turca*"' (2000), pp. 184-5.
[143] Fazlı, *Rasimlī afgān siyāhatī* (1909), p. 45.

Fazlı's text is a central unifying value by which the reader can judge the moral standing of the people of each place. For despite being poor, Afghanistan is represented as a land of hospitable and courteous people, who are open and welcoming to foreign visitors. Moreover, it is a country making the best of its resources, and attempting pragmatic reform. Fazlı praises the 'well-ordered' appearance of the soldiers in Herat, illustrating the 'majesty and power' of the 'Islamic government of Afghanistan,' while also noting a 'moving speech' made to the soldiers by a government official about the importance of education.[144] Unlike Iran, the system of government-run guest-houses (*ribāt*) is 'extremely easy and comfortable for travellers,'[145] and there are government decrees (*nizāmnāmah*) outlining the cost of having one's animals to stay in such places, so there is no chance of being fleeced.[146] On arriving into Kabul, Fazlı and his friends are welcomed with great pomp and put up in the garden of the former Amir Shir 'Ali Khan, one of Kabul's most prestigious locations.[147]

When the travelogue turns to an analysis of the institutions and customs of Afghanistan, the country is again represented as a place of great energy and optimism, as well as a place where Ottomans are playing central practical roles. The travelogue has sections on Afghanistan's education system, industries, paved roads, and postal service, all illustrating Fazlı's technical interests in these new institutions and infrastructure projects. In education, while the number of schools is small 'the number...in Kabul is rising day by day, and in all the provinces too are being founded intermediate schools.'[148] Fazlı approvingly notes how 'in the current age, the importance of the military is considered very great' in Afghanistan; a school teaching

[144] *Ibid*., p. 46.
[145] *Ibid*., p. 48
[146] *Ibid*.
[147] *Ibid*., p. 52.
[148] *Ibid*., p. 72.

the military sciences has also been founded. Playing on the stereotype of Afghans as warlike (*jangwārlik*) in nature, he suggests that training such warriors in new military sciences is creating a powerful force in the country; Fazlı puts the numbers of the army at 60,000 to 70,000 troops, and describes it as 'a huge and capable army, famous for its patriotism.'[149] His description of the Afghans worsting of the British in the First and Second Anglo-Afghan Wars illustrates how this small and independent country has remained free from colonial encroachment through its bravery and well-organised army. Here, we see an older stereotype of Afghanistan re-fashioned for a new context and purpose. The Afghans' famed war-like nature is now not a symptom of Afghanistan's backwardness or savagery, but rather an asset in the context of an Asia largely subjected to western military domination. Indeed, Fazlı praises their martial interests: 'the buying of weapons, even bringing weapons into Afghanistan from outside, is not forbidden and arms are exempt from official customs. Since the government sells arms and weapons, Afghanistan is a truly armed nation (*millat*).'[150]

Moreover, Fazlı notes the role of Ottomans in this process of building up Afghanistan's military capabilities: the military school is run by Mahmud Sami Beg, an Ottoman officer, and Fazlı is present at a royal event in which manoeuvres and military exercises are carried out under Sami Beg's watch. Speeches are made explaining the benefits of education (*ta'līm-o-tarbiyah*), through which Sami Beg is 'developing their love for education.'[151] Again, Fazlı stresses that Afghanistan is young but has a very bright future:

> Although the [military] school is today in a very elementary state, there is no doubt that it will reach a stage of perfection in a short time due to the

[149] *Ibid*., p. 89.
[150] *Ibid*., p. 90.
[151] *Ibid*., p. 73.

> love of education of his highness the amir, who decreed that nothing should be lacking when it came to development (*taraqqī*), with the ceaseless and continuous efforts of its hard-working director, Mahmud Sami Beg.[152]

Afghanistan is an example, a model to be admired and emulated by other Asian countries:

> Due to the clever and war-like nature of the Afghans and the emergence of complete understanding of contemporary military developments, it can be hoped that neighbouring places, which are in a different state of silence and rest, will wake up after being shown an armed nation from the centre of Asia.[153]

In a reversal of Nasr Allah Khan and Mahmud Tarzi's raptures on the technological progress to be found outside Afghanistan, the non-Afghan Fazlı focuses on the progress to be found *inside* Afghanistan,' and puts much of the reason for this, like the Indian Muslim Hajji Muhammad Khan, down to the policies of Amir Habib Allah Khan.[154] Fazlı reveals that the Ottomans spent much time with the amir and with Prince Nasr Allah Khan.[155] At the end of the travelogue, Fazlı describes a party at the royal palace: the building is depicted in detail decorated with 'civilized' (*madaniyah*) ornaments, the 'chic' (*shīk*) ceiling, the oil-paintings and watercolours, one of which he describes as by a 'Turkish painter' '*Muhammad Khān Maimānalī*', clearly a reference to the Afghan artist from northern Afghanistan Muhammad Khan Maimanagi.[156] The Ottomans share the same cosmopolitan tastes as the amir, and Fazlı describes in raptures the 'English, French, Italian *illustrations* and

[152] *Ibid*., pp. 73-4.
[153] *Ibid*., p. 74.
[154] *Ibid*., p. 78.
[155] The Ottomans closeness to the royal court is reinforced by the fact that some of the Ottomans actually lived in the royal court complex, interview with Timur Shah 'Ragheb' Kabul, 12th May 2014. Hasan Hilmi Efendi lived there until his marriage, at which time he bought a house in Murad Khani, Kabul. Efendi would spend the rest of his time in Kabul, and have a family who grew up as Afghan citizens, speaking Dari.
[156] *Ibid*., p. 92.

panoramas...and a great, rare and elegant collection of photographs which his Highness the amir took on his travels,' all accompanied by a gramophone playing 'the most popular western songs.'[157] This shared appreciation of industrial machines such as cameras and gramophones illustrates the mutual self-understanding of Ottoman travellers and Afghan royals as thoroughly contemporary beings, consumers and participants in the 'age of progress' taking place around them.[158] One of the Ottoman journeymen and Amir Habib Allah Khan play backgammon together, a game little played in Afghanistan but popular in the Ottoman Empire.[159] Such civilized past-times and delights are matched by the delicate white placecards marking where everyone sat, and the tables laid 'as ordered and complete to the same degree as is possible in the developed world.'[160]

In their conversations with the amir, the sense of solidarity between the Afghans and Ottomans is stressed in elaborate speeches and similes. For the amir, 'Afghanistan is like a little brother to the great Ottoman state, is like a right hand in its Eastern policy.'[161] Echoing Fazlı's comments on the sad decline of Iran and its Islamic sites, the amir laments in Dari that the Islamic peoples 'have fallen into a sleep of carelessness (*ghaflat*) and inaction ('*atālat*) for centuries.'[162] Fazlı repeats the amir's exhortations to avoid such a fate: 'Let us not be like that! Be sure not to lack any efforts and dedication for the progress and uplift of Islam and the Islamic World.'[163] Progress and uplift: the two words cross languages and continents to create a shared trans-Islamic lexicon.

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[157] *Ibid*., p. 102.
[158] For similar arguments for the role of such products in a contemporary African setting, Jeremy Prestholdt, *Domesticating the World: African Consumerism and the Genealogies of Globalization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008).
[159] Fazlı, *Rasimlī afgān siyāhatī* (1909), p. 104.
[160] *Ibid*., p. 103.
[161] *Ibid*., p. 94.
[162] *Ibid*.
[163] *Ibid*.

As for Fazlı's own efforts on behalf of developing Afghanistan's nascent printing industries, Fazlı paints a picture of a well-run and efficient printing works, with a printing-press 'capable of publishing every type of book and other things.'[164] The pressworks are composed of 'a paper-cutter, machines for sewing and binding, a machine for drawing lines in notebooks, hand-foot presses, and a huge typography machine.'[165] Fazlı's work is not just designed to print newspapers either; the printing works played a key roll in developing Afghanistan's documentary regime of passports, visas, identity cards, Fazlı describing 'a lithograph press which...has printed many decrees, tolls, visas, postage stamps and other things.'[166] Fazlı would go on to set up a school of zincography, which another Turk – Muhammad Nuri – would take over after Fazlı left Kabul several years later.[167] When it comes to the development of paper money, again Fazlı stresses the role of Ottoman expertise: the Ottoman 'engraver and calligrapher from Trabazon,' Hasan Hilmi Efendi, having recently been tasked by the amir to design the first paper money in the country.[168] Hasan Hilmi Efendi also taught Afghans these arts in the Afghan government mint; a document still in the possession of Hasan Hilmi Efendi's son in Kabul shows that Hasan Hilmi Efendi would go on to have ten apprentices working under him, who received a salary to study the art of engraving and minting.[169]

This extremely rosy picture of Afghan-Ottoman interactions in Afghanistan's education system and print works is extended to its industries in general, which Fazlı

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[164] *Ibid*., p. 74.
[165] *Ibid*.
[166] *Ibid*., pp. 74-5. For the printing of state decrees and official documents with typographic print, see Ghulām Muhammad Ghubār, *Tārīkh-e adabiyāt-e Afghānistān: daurah-e Muhammadzāi-hā* (Peshawar: Arash, 1999), p. 144.
[167] See May Schinasi, *Afghanistan at the Beginning of the 20th Century: Nationalism and Journalism in Afghanistan: A Study of Siraj ul-Akhbar (1911-1918)* (Naples: Istituto Universitario Orientale, 1979), pp. 67-8.
[168] Fazlı, *Rasimlī afgān siyāhatī* (1909), p. 83. Original examples of the paper money are with Timur Shah 'Ragheb', at his home in Murad Khani, Kabul.
[169] This document is dated 25th Moharram 1336 (10th November 1917).

describes as 'sufficient for almost all its [i.e. Afghanistan's] needs.'[170] The *māshinkhānah*, which we have come across in the previous chapter, is described as having 'reached its stage of completion' under Amir Habib Allah Khan, with 'everything from needles to cannons, all in excellent manner' being produced, and 'four or five thousand people' working there.[171] Fazlı also comments on other non-Muslim journeymen working in Kabul. He mentions the tannery in Kabul which is run by the Englishman Mr Thornton, and describes their products as 'so exceptional that the sheepskins are tanned in a softness and thinness which is not possible to believe.'[172] Such work, even carried out by a non-Muslim, non-Asian, non-Turk, is contributing to keeping 'the necessities of the country...protected from outside attacks.'[173] Perhaps inspired by Nasr Allah Khan's visit to an artificial flower workshop in Britain, the *māshinkhānah* is now also producing its own artificial flowers, as well as other technological innovations like portable beds and folding forks.[174] To see such productivity and creativity makes Fazlı's chest swell with pride.[175] A particular object of praise is the textile production in Afghanistan, both traditionally made by Hazarahs, and Indian textile designs brought back by Habib Allah Khan, and which are now being manufactured in a great textiles factory in Kabul. These developments stretch outside Kabul, too, with Jalalabad's sugar factory and brick factory also worthy of note.[176]

Such advanced industrial production is matched in Fazlı's travelogue by Afghanistan's road-building projects.[177] In Fazlı's opinion, roads are 'of the utmost

[170] Fazlı, *Rasimlī afgān siyāhatī* (1909), p.75.
[171] *Ibid*., p. 76.
[172] *Ibid*., p. 77. For Ernest Thornton's work in Kabul, see Ernest and Anne Thornton, *Leaves from an Afghan scrapbook. The experiences of an English official and his wife in Afghanistan* (London: John Murray, 1910).
[173] Fazlı, *Rasimlī afgān siyāhatī* (1909), p. 77.
[174] *Ibid*., p. 76.
[175] *Ibid*.
[176] *Ibid*., p. 78.
[177] For a study of the development of road transport and its impact on Afghan cultural life see Nile Green, 'The Road to Kabul: Automobiles and Afghan Internationalism, 1900-40' in Benjamin D.

concern' in Afghanistan.[178] Mirroring Prince Nasr Allah Khan's descriptions of the British mastery of mountains, Fazlı notes that the Afghans too are able of overcoming natural obstacles through technological ingenuity: 'although...there are rocky mountains, new and excellent roads have opened up.'[179] While once these were built through the spreading of broken stone-chips, Amir Habib Allah Khan has recently 'ordered the procurement of huge steam-powered pressure cylinders' which will ensure the roads are even better.[180] The country is described as neatly bound together with 'well-ordered paved roads between provinces.'[181] The busiest road is, unsurprisingly, that of Kabul to Peshawar – while the caravan takes twenty days, the postal service can cover it in three.[182] Indeed, the postal service that took a year to deliver the first letter from Tarzi to Fazlı is now represented as being in much better condition under the watchful eye of the Ottoman Hasan Hilmi Efendi: 'the post offices, stamp arrangements, correspondence papers are all in excellent shape...almost the same as those of Ottoman lands.'[183] The relay system, whereby postmen travel two hour journeys from posthouse to posthouse, means that the post travels 'at extraordinary speed.'[184] Following Tarzi and Habib Allah Khan's love of motorized transport, Fazlı claims that if lorries or cars can start to transport produce to Iran and India, Afghanistan's exports 'would increase fifty or sixty times.'[185] Overall, the picture of Afghanistan painted by Fazlı is of a vigorous, self-sufficient, patriotic, industrializing Muslim nation: the polar opposite of Iran, and a bulwark to the menace of Russian imperialism in Asia.

Hopkins and Magnus Marsden (eds.), *Beyond Swat: History, Society and Economy Along the Afghanistan-Pakistan Frontier* (London: Hurst & Co., 2013).

[178] Fazlı, *Rasimlī afgān siyāhatī* (1909), p. 79.
[179] *Ibid*., p. 79.
[180] *Ibid*.
[181] *Ibid*.
[182] *Ibid*., p. 80.
[183] *Ibid*., p. 82.
[184] *Ibid*.
[185] *Ibid*., p. 81.

It is clear that such a representation of Afghanistan is just that – representation. If one triangulates the descriptions of infrastructural and industrial development in Fazlı's account with other primary sources such as Afghan histories of the period and India Office records it is clear that the account is, like the panegyric of Hajji Muhammad Khan, impossibly optimistic. In fact, all these industries and institutions in which the Ottomans were working with their Afghan counterparts were in their infancy, largely confined to Kabul, and were already proving largely unsuccessful or unpopular.[186] Road-building had proved a costly and deeply resented imposition on rural Afghan populations who were forced to work on them through corvée labour; such roads that were built were prone to rapid disintegration and were very poorly maintained; the state workshops were expensive, subsidized, and often forced to shut down due to financial difficulties; the products were often poor and could not compete with cheaper imports from abroad; the state administration was beset by corruption. But this merely makes the representation of Afghanistan in Fazlı's text all the more striking and valuable. For it offers a crucial window into the way Afghanistan was used by Muslim reformists for their own ends and in the context of a desperate need for 'good news' stories from the Muslim World. The fact that few Ottomans would ever visit Afghanistan mattered little; indeed, that allowed Fazlı the licence to offer such optimistic interpretations with little fear of reproach for inaccuracy. Afghanistan's re-casting here as a dynamic young Muslim nation was thus the product of developments

[186] The diaries of the British Agent and Representative at Kabul and Kandahar in the early 1910s, as well as those of officers on the North West Frontier, reveal the almost weekly reaction to such attempts at forced labour, in which local villagers defied state officials in refusing to work on the roads, or fled their villages if there were attempts to compel them. See, for example, British Representative at Kandahar's diary, period ending June 30th 1912, IOR/L/P&S/10/52; North West Frontier Province Diary, week ending 3rd May 1913, IOR/L/P&S/10/201. For a study of the politics of road-building in Iran, see Arash Khazeni, *Tribes & Empire on the Margins of Nineteenth-Century Iran* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2009), Ch. 3.

that had a certain amount to do with changes in Afghanistan - but more to do with the wider global context and consciousness of Muslim decline.

A study of the product of the 'first contact' of Afghan and Ottoman reformists has revealed the skills and imaginaries that Ottomans brought to bear on Afghanistan. In terms of representation, there is no doubt that Afghanistan is written in the ink of reformist aspirations; a practical comparative text which is designed to inspire reform elsewhere. When placed in conversation with other sources such as the India Office records, we have been able to set Fazlı's idealized account of Ottoman-Afghan interactions in context. Through such an approach, we have seen the *ad hoc* and often fortuitous routes by which this eclectic band of Ottoman exiles made their way to Afghanistan. The text has also illustrated the prominent roles they found for themselves in the small but growing new institutions and industries in Kabul. Most importantly of all, however, the text has demonstrated how Afghanistan was reimagined by Ottoman travellers as a site of Muslim collaboration, of progress and potential. It is now time to shift our focus, from the long-distance travels of intrepid Ottomans to the rather shorter journeys of Central Asian Muslims from just across the Oxus river.

VI. Case Study Four: Mirza Siraj al-Din Hakim's Afghan Adventures

If the preceding sections have focused on the Afghan-Indian and Afghan-Ottoman dimensions to the emergence of Afghanistan as a site of Muslim optimism and energy, the final section of this chapter turns to hitherto unexplored connections between Afghanistan and Central Asian Muslims during the period.[187] Like the

[187] The only full-length (and exceptionally detailed) work in English on the subject ends in 1901 see Jonathan Lee, *The Ancient Supremacy: Bukhara, Afghanistan and the Battle for Balkh, 1731-1901* (New York: Brill, 1996).

sections on British Indian and Ottoman journeymen, this section uses a case study to point to larger patterns of interaction and the impact such interactions had on Muslim views of Afghanistan. The man under scrutiny is Mirza Siraj al-Din 'Hakim', whom we have met at the beginning of this chapter being arrested while trying to cross into Afghanistan with a suitcase full of travel notes. The text is a travelogue he wrote of his adventures in and out of Afghanistan, '*Safarnāmah-e Tuhaf-e Bukhārā.*'[188]

Hakim was the youngest son of a long line of merchants from Bukhara. His family was well off enough that he had a Persian education from the age of five and two years of private tuition.[189] Later on, he would take a yearlong course at the Russian-based school in Kagan, the satellite town of Bukhara, while continuing to work. He describes it as essential that he knew how to read and write documents in Russian, since he often found himself dealing with Russians in his business.[190] This school subscribed to Russian and Turkish newspapers and so he learnt Turkish too, and through these newspapers became aware of larger political currents in the Ottoman Empire.[191] During six more months he learnt a little French as well.[192] Later Hakim spent almost a year with a religious teacher (*mudarris*) from Bukhara, studying Arabic grammar and some Islamic law.[193] As a merchant, Hakim was primarily based in the Ferghana valley and had a little shop in a caravanserai with a couple of employees. He dealt mainly in cotton, but also silk. From 1901 he resided mostly in Kokand, but moved around on business.[194] In 1902, Hakim embarked on a

[188] The author and work, referenced at the beginning of this chapter, has also been translated into French, with an introduction and notes, by Stephane A. Dudoignon, as Mirza Siradj ad-Din Hakim, *Souvenirs de voyage pour les gens de Boukhara* (Paris: Sindbad, 1999). The following page numbers refer to the Persian edition, except where stated otherwise.
[189] Hakīm, *Tuhaf* (1991), pp. 34-35.
[190] *Ibid*.
[191] Dudoignon describes these newspapers as stemming from inside the Russian empire, produced by Muslim intellectuals in the Volga-Ural region and the Crimea, Hakim, *Souvenirs* (1999), p. 41, fn. 3
[192] Hakīm, *Tuhaf* (1991), p. 35.
[193] *Ibid*.
[194] *Ibid*., p. 36.

six-month trade visit that took him through Russia to Istanbul and then to all the major capitals of Europe. Almost immediately upon his return, he left again for India, Afghanistan, and Iran. An insatiable appetite for travel, and a seemingly never-ending ability to accumulate debts and creditors, led Hakim to spend almost the whole of the following decade travelling and on the run, during which time he trained in medicine (at Tbilisi and Sabzevar, and later with European doctors in Tehran) and practiced as an occasional doctor in Krasnovodsk. Returning to Bukhara in 1910, Hakim, according to the historian of Central Asian Islam Adeeb Khaled, 'became prominent in local reform circles, editing Bukhara's first Turkic newspaper in 1912, and contributing to periodicals in Turkistan, Iran, and Istanbul until his premature death in 1914.'[195]

Hakim is illustrative of that class of merchants who flourished in Central Asia during the steady progress of the Russian empire southwards in the 1870s; Hakim describes the booming business with foreigners in Kokand and explicitly states the upswing in business as due to the arrival and conquest of the Russians.[196] Moving in an increasingly connected world, using trains and steamships, and where credit was increasingly available (at some risk) from Tsarist institutions such as the Russo-Chinese Bank and Credit Bank, these merchants were able to forge links with Europe – and other parts of Central Asia. Politically, as Dudoignon notes, this was a class of merchants that had borne witness to national liberation movements in Eastern Europe and to rising emancipation movements in the Islamic world.[197] It thus increasingly contained a reformist political bent alongside its purely business projects. This travel often came at a price, however: Hakim's exceptionally wide travels, for a man of his

[195] Adeeb Khalid, *The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform: Jadidism in Central Asia* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998), pp. 138-9.
[196] Hakīm, *Tuhaf* (1991), p. 37.
[197] Dudoignon's introduction to Hakim, *Souvenirs* (1999), p. 11.

class, came at the cost of frequently indebting himself to carry out commercial ventures and adventures, and he spent several periods in prison for debting. The text of his travelogue was drafted during the winter of 1910-11, during a period in which Hakim had been banned from working as a businessman due to his debts. During this time, his entrepreneurial spirit had led him to open a European-style pharmacy in the commercial quarter of Gawkushan, which was soon to become a gathering-place for Bukharan intellectuals with reformist tendencies. We are lucky to have this text; many Bukharans travelled as students and merchants during this period, but few Bukharans wrote accounts down, at least not until development of a printing press capable of printing in Persian and Uzbek in 1910. Hakim laments this lack in his introduction, making it clear that the travelogue was a key medium for Europeans to learn about new places, and that his own people should take this as an example and do the same.[198] The text was published by lithograph in Tashkent in 1912. Books of Bukharan intellectuals at this time had traditionally been circulated through manuscript and recitation, and Hakim's text was one of the first to be printed. The influence of Hakim and his literary output on the reform movement in Central Asia can be felt in a quote by the most important Tajik intellectual of the period, Sadriddin Aini, who described Hakim as, 'a learned man of great eloquence, who knew how to provide spiritual balms to those who suffered from physical maladies. His return to Bukhara also strengthened considerably the movement of Young Bukharans.'[199]

Hakim's work was dedicated to the new amir of Bukhara, but also to his readers 'big and small', as if aware of the fading power of the Manghit dynasty that controlled Bukhara at that time. Whereas Fazlı's espoused aim is to provide information on a part of the world that is little known to his Ottoman audience,

[198] Hakīm, *Tuhaf* (1991), pp. 57-60.
[199] Quoted in Dudoignon's introduction to Hakim, *Souvenirs* (1999), p. 22.

Hakim's is a more overtly didactic work, focused at a domestic audience in Bukhara. Throughout his travels from Bukhara to Europe back through India, Hakim is constantly looking for political models and examples. The work describes a world all around Bukhara in intellectual and political ferment. Hakim witnesses the Constitutional Revolution in Iran, and spends five years there. Interestingly, however, Hakim's view of Iran changes over his time there and – as for Fazlı – ends up viewing Iran as an example of Islamic decline rather than optimism and opportunity. Instead, it is Afghanistan that is represented as the most promising of Muslim nations.

Whereas Hajji Muhammad Khan, Dr Abdul Ghani, and Muhammad Fazlı stressed the role of Indian and Ottoman journeymen in Afghanistan, Hakim offers precious insight into how Central Asians also found a home, refuge, and workplace in Afghanistan. Hakim is keen to stress this connection between Central Asia and Afghanistan; he focuses on the fact that various Afghan political figures, such as Amir Dust Muhammad Khan, Amir 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, and even the current Amir Habib Allah Khan were exiled or grew up in Central Asia.[200] Hakim discusses the legacy of these transnational links, stressing how Afghanistan provided a home and resting place for Muslims from Central Asia: he describes a Kokandi called Sa'id Beg, who Amir Habib Allah Khan had met during his time in Tashkent, and who is staying in Kabul with the amir on his way home from the hajj.[201] The historical links of Amir 'Abd al-Rahman Khan and Amir Habib Allah Khan with Central Asia also ensured that Central Asian exiles were well looked after: the nephew of the old Khan of Kokand, Sayyid Akram Khan Turah had fled to Kabul where he had become a

[200] Hakīm, *Tuhaf* (1991), p. 212. For accounts of the reign of Amir Dust Muhammad Khan, see Christine Noelle-Karimi, *State and Tribe in 19th Century Afghanistan* (Richmond: Curzon Press, 1997). For Amir 'Abd al-Rahman Khan in Central Asia, see Mir Munshi Sultan Mahomed Khan (ed.), *The Life of Abdur Rahman, Amir of Afghanistan,* 2 Vols. (London: John Murray, 1900).
[201] Hakīm, *Tuhaf* (1991), p. 227.

senior figure at Habib Allah Khan's court.[202] Sayyid Akram Khan Turah's son, Sayyid Ahmad Khan, earned a stipend of 10,000 rupees a year from Habib Allah Khan, and was the chief falconer at court.[203] Hakim himself found that he could make some economic gain out of the Afghan court, carrying out some work as a physician, for which he was given a gift of 5,000 rupees by Habib Allah Khan, and subsequently offered the job of Afghan trade representative in Bukhara.

The ever-present comparator throughout Hakim's account of Afghanistan is his home of Bukhara. For Hakim, Afghanistan's value was to have remained 'free' from Western imperialism's maws, unlike Bukhara, which had been placed under a Russian protectorate since September 1873. The fact that this Afghan independence was more imagined than real is clear from Hakim's rosy description of how Afghanistan was self-sufficient and had no need for outside intervention or support: 'The little Afghan state, which has now made much material progress in terms of its military might and now produces everything it needs, and needs nothing else.'[204] Such comments are strikingly similar to those of Muhammad Fazlı. And yet, Hakim conveniently skirts over, or was simply ignorant of, the large subsidy that Amir Habib Allah Khan received from the British as payment for Afghan support, and the fact that the British in India controlled Afghanistan's foreign policy.[205]

More concretely, Kabul offered plenty of public buildings and spaces in which Hakim could see the kind of reforms he advocated for Bukhara made visible. Like Fazlı, Hakim praised the strength and discipline of the army Amir 'Abd al-Rahman Khan had helped create, and the use of European experts in helping to

[202] *Ibid*., pp. 212-3.
[203] *Ibid*.
[204] *Ibid.*, p. 219.
[205] For an account of Anglo-Afghan diplomatic relations during the period, see Ludwig W. Adamec, *Afghanistan 1900-1923: A Diplomatic History* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967).

develop Afghanistan's nascent industries.[206] Despite the fact that Hakim had travelled extensively in Europe, British India, and the Ottoman Empire, it is Afghanistan that stands as the model for what he wished to be achieved in Bukhara. As he states,

> All glory to these half-savages who, in a brief period, have succeeded in accomplishing considerable progress which, through the fame of their nation, has reached the ears of their neighbours! If only these latter souls [i.e. Bukharans] had, like them, informed themselves about the state of the world and sprinkled a little fresh water on their faded kilims.[207]

Here, one sees another element of the 'Muslim turn' to Afghanistan. For small struggling Central Asian states like Bukhara, Kokand, or Khiva, Afghanistan was so attractive because it seemed a realistic model.[208] Hakim is aware that Bukhara will not suddenly be transformed into Istanbul or Bombay or Paris. Instead, he finds in Afghanistan a genuine model for the kind of progressive Muslim state that Bukhara needed to become to ensure its survival. This realism is reflected in his view of Afghanistan's rulers in relation to those of Bukhara. Compared with the amir of Bukhara, who at that time was proving himself a brutal and erratic ruler with seemingly little interest in the improvement of his country's material and social conditions, Amir 'Abd al-Rahman Khan and Amir Habib Allah Khan seem to Hakim to be satisfactory rulers - despite their authoritarian tendencies. Perhaps proving Hakim's point, we shall see in the next chapter how the amir of Bukhara was eventually forced to flee from his own country, and ended up finding a home in what was becoming a natural refuge for Central Asian political exiles: Afghanistan. Through Hakim's travels and travel account of Afghanistan, we see the combination

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[206] Hakīm, *Tuhaf* (1991), p. 218.
[207] *Ibid*., p. 219.
[208] This was a theme that echoed in a letter from a reader in Ferghana to *Sirāj al-Akhbār*, see *Sirāj al-Akhbār* Year 5, No. 17, p. 3, referenced in Schinasi, *Afghanistan at the Beginning of the 20th Century* (1979), p. 219, fn. 10.

of reality and representation that made Afghanistan so attractive to this Central Asian reformer, as both physical refuge and conceptual model to be replicated elsewhere. Propelled by political weakness and stagnation at home and professional and educational opportunity abroad, Hakim's account of Afghanistan offers a rare glimpse of the 'Muslim turn' to Afghanistan as viewed from across its northern border.

VII. Conclusion

This chapter has analyzed a period in which the world knocked increasingly hard at Afghanistan's door. Building on the first chapter, it has argued that the 'Muslim turn' to Afghanistan was the product of developments on a global, national, and transnational level. On the global level, the context of western imperialism and seeming Muslim decline in various parts of the Muslim world set the context for a worldwide search for models of Muslim success. The global transport revolution allowed Muslims to increasingly reach sites capable of comparison and emulation, like Afghanistan, which previously had been largely unreachable. On the national level, Afghan state policies towards skilled migrant labour, refugees, and exiles made Afghanistan an increasingly welcoming and attractive place for Muslims. On the transnational level, the travels and interactions of Muslims, and the recording of such encounters in circulated texts, created a growing image of Afghanistan as a site of promise and possibility. A study of the practical work and experiences of such Muslim journeymen has also drawn out the growing gap between the rhetoric of the progressive 'Afghanistan' and its often very different reality. In plotting the travels and travails of a number of journeymen in Afghanistan, the chapter has also illustrated the contingent, *ad hoc*, and precarious nature of their lives in Afghanistan. As the imprisonment of Abdul Ghani and Mirza Siraj al-Din Hakim suggest, the idea

of harmonious ‘woven aspirations’ of different actors in Afghanistan is too rosy a picture of the often-fraught relations and living conditions of these individuals in Afghanistan. At the same time their shared vocabulary of ‘progress’ and reform, and their shared representations of Afghanistan as a young, dynamic and independent Muslim nation have been illustrated as surprisingly consistent across languages, borders, and texts.

Since its founding in 1880, Afghanistan had increasingly formed itself in the Muslim mind as a progressive independent Muslim country to be emulated, a sanctuary for Muslims seeking refuge from watchful eyes, a land of opportunity for skilled Muslims seeking work, and a practical base for Muslims urging reform and opposition to western imperialism. The result of all this global, national, and transnational interaction was one simple idea: Afghanistan was a Muslim country worth visiting. The following chapter follows the development of this idea, an idea that would finally result in the journeys of tens of thousands of Muslims to Afghanistan in the space of a few weeks and make it, for a time, one of the great hopes of the Muslim world.

Chapter Three: Revolutionary Road, Afghanistan 1915-1922

'Who would be a traveller amongst the hard mountains and unknown places of…Afghanistan?'

Akbar Shah Miyan Badrakhi[1]

I. On Afghanistan's Plains

Perhaps the most famous journey ever made in Afghanistan was a journey out of Afghanistan. The retreat of the Army of the Indus in the First Anglo-Afghan War was the single greatest defeat in the history of the British Empire in South Asia. Immortalized in Lady Sale's best-selling diaries, Lady Butler's iconic painting 'Remnants of an Army', the popular boys' adventures of G.A. Henty, and Sir John Kaye's historical anatomy of disaster, the imperial catastrophe fixed an image of Afghanistan in the British mind as a wild place of wild people, a land of 'rocks, sand, deserts, ice and snow.'[2]

And yet, 'The Retreat from Kabul,' as it became known, was not the largest retreat from Afghanistan in the days of the British Empire. In 1920, tens of thousands of British Indian Muslims flooded across the border into Afghanistan, seeking a new life in the newly independent nation-state of Afghanistan. Within a few months, these

[1] Akbar Shāh Miyān Badrakhī, *Da āzādī pah talāsh* (Kabul: Da qaumūnū au qabā'ilū da chārū wazārat da nasharātū au farhangī chārū riyāsat, 1987), p. 70.

[2] Florentia Sale, *A Journal of the Disasters in Afghanistan, 1841-2* (London: John Murray, 1843); G.A. Henty, *To Herat and Cabul: A Story of the First Afghan War* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1901); John William Kaye, *History of the War in Afghanistan* (London: Richard Bentley, 1851). The painting by Elizabeth Thompson, Lady Butler, 'Remnants of an Army', is owned by the Tate Gallery. The quote is from Marquis Wellesley, in a letter to Lord Ellenborough 4th July 1842, quoted in Charles Low, *Major General Frederick S. Roberts* (London: W.H. Allen, 1883), p. 382. Another traveller of the period, the Kashmiri writer and *munshī* Mohan Lal, described Afghanistan as 'a desert of hard and naked rocks,' see Mohan Lal, *Travels in the Panjab, Afghanistan, & Turkistan to Balk, Bukhara, and Herat and a Visit to Great Britain and Germany* (London: William H. Allen & Co., 1846), p. 67.

travellers were making their own desperate journeys back home, some dying of starvation, cold, or banditry on their way out across the mountain passes. Such journeys created their own stories, Pashto and Urdu equivalents of the epic survival narratives and histories of the British. And despite their profoundly different contexts – one a story of imperial over-reach the other of anti-imperial exodus – the English language and Pashto memoirs both chart a similar movement through Afghanistan: a movement from idealism and optimism to profound disillusionment. It is this movement, played out during the rise and fall of what one might call Afghanistan's 'revolutionary moment', which is analyzed in the following pages.

In the first two chapters, we have followed the often-unexpected twists and turns by which Afghanistan became a site of Muslim aspiration and imagination. We have seen how by the First World War an image of Afghanistan had emerged as a strong, independent and progressive Muslim nation. This final chapter serves as the culmination of our study of the 'Muslim turn' to Afghanistan, focusing on Afghanistan during the First World War and its aftermath. For it is during that time that we see the efflorescence of that 'Muslim turn', and its transformation into concrete action. During the First World War, Kabul became not just an imagined space but increasingly a practical base for a new class of 'revolutionary journeymen' who used Kabul as a key node city in a revolutionary network spreading from San Francisco to Berlin to Tokyo.[3] The two main differences between the journeymen of the preceding chapter and the 'revolutionary journeymen' under discussion here are motivation and intent. Up to the First World War, journeymen travelling to Afghanistan combined professional work with a desire for reform. The journeys were exploratory and comparative, their texts informative and didactic. Afghanistan for

[3] For a study of one such global network, see Maia Ramnath, *Haj to Utopia* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2011).

them was a useful example of what could be achieved elsewhere, providing lessons and inspiration. The 'revolutionary journeymen' under discussion in this chapter, however, were after more fundamental and extreme political action. The First World War had quickened and intensified anti-imperialist aspirations and activities in many parts of Asia. Many reformists had become activists: the end goal was no longer merely reform but the overthrow of a social order. Afghanistan found itself no longer just an object of fascination and a point of comparison for Asian and Muslim travellers, but an attractive physical destination for revolutionaries.

Like the journeymen of the previous chapter, these revolutionary journeymen's backgrounds were extremely varied. The authors of the travel memoirs under discussion in this chapter are testament to their heterogeneity: Zafar Hasan Aibak (1895-1989) was an idealistic young Punjabi student from Lahore; Maulana 'Ubaid Allah Sindhi (1872-1944) was a Sikh convert to Islam from Sialkot, who trained at the religious seminary of the *dār al-'ulūm* at Deoband;[4] 'Abd al-Akbar Khan Akbar (b. c.1900) and Akbar Shah Miyan Badrakhi (1899-1990) were young Pashtun activists-in-the-making from the North-West Frontier Province; Shaukat Usmani (1901-1978) was a young radical from Bikaner who would become a founding member of the Indian communist party; Raja Mahendra Pratap (1886-1979) was a globe-trotting Indian aristocrat-cum-revolutionary from Uttar Pradesh. Despite the geographic and ethnic diversity of these men, they were united by their

[4] For secondary literature on Sindhi's life, see Sarah Ansari, *Sufi Saints and State Power: The Pirs of Sind, 1843-1947* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); 'Abd Allāh Laghārī, *Maulānā 'Ubaid Allāh Sindhī kī sarguzasht-e Kābul*, ed. Ghulām Mustafa Khān (Islamabad: Qaumī idārah barā-ye tahqīq-o-saqāfat, 1980); Muhammad Hajjan Shaikh, *Maulana Ubaid Allah Sindhi: A Revolutionary Scholar* (Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 1986); Sayyid Muhammad Ahmad, *Maulānā 'Ubaid Allāh Sindhī: hayāt, afkār, aur 'amal* (Lahore: Takhlīqāt, 2009); Muhammad Sarwar, *Maulānā 'Ubaid Allāh Sindhī: hālāt-i zindagī, ta'līmāt, aur siyāsi afkār* (Lahore: Sindh sāgar akādimī, 1976); see also the Introduction, esp. pp. 11-18, of Muhammad Qasim Zaman, *Modern Islamic Thought in a Radical Age: Religious Authority and Internal Criticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012). For a history of the *dār al-'ulūm* at Deoband, see Barbara Daly Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860-1900* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982).

revolutionary anti-imperial agendas - and their experience of travel. All were shaped by their travels, and felt the need to record those formative journeys in written documents. For these revolutionary journeymen, the experience of travel and the use of the written word were the two necessary conditions of their work, allowing them to foment action through the making of mental and physical connections. It is thus no surprise that many of this group would write travel memoirs describing their formative travels as young revolutionaries.

The first aim of this chapter is an act of retrieval, using these texts to recover the texture and detail of Afghanistan's 'revolutionary moment'. What I mean by 'revolutionary moment' is not that Afghanistan itself was subject to revolutionary uprising, but rather that the country blossomed into an important site for a range of heterogeneous revolutionary travellers originating from outside Afghanistan's borders. Through a study of the travel memoirs of such revolutionary travellers inside Afghanistan, early 20th century Kabul emerges anew. Far from an isolated outpost 'on the edge of empire', the city reveals itself to be a central locus for a dizzying, and often discordant, range of anti-imperial, nationalist, internationalist, supranational imaginaries: pan-Islamism, pan-Turkism, pan-Asianism, international Communism, Indian, Turkish, and Pashtun nationalism - not to mention Afghan nationalism. While some of this maelstrom of thought existed before, it was the First World War that added urgency and intensity to it.

At the same time, however, this chapter's purpose is to explain not just the rise of Afghanistan's revolutionary moment but also its downfall. These revolutionaries' travel memoirs are particularly valuable as they document the gap between imaginary and reality, between the representation and rhetoric of Afghanistan as a site for radical action, and its actual nature. All the travel memoirs note the extreme difficulties these

British Indians faced in Afghanistan: from the lack of communications infrastructure and home comforts to the fraught and fluctuating relations with the Afghan government, marred by mutual mistrust, misunderstanding, and paranoia. While the previous chapter's study of Indian Muslims in Afghanistan emphasized Indian Muslims' sense of religious, regional and ideological solidarity with their Afghan brothers, the travel memoirs under discussion here offer quite a different view of Indo-Afghan relations. Far from a neat 'weaving' of aspirations, these sources illustrate the frequent tension and outright hostility between Afghans, British Indians, Central Asians, and Turks in Afghanistan during the period. The mention of Central Asians and Turks here is important; for Afghanistan's revolutionary moment was spurred by major events north of the Oxus River as well as east of the Khyber Pass. The Bolshevik Revolution and the subsequent rise of the counter-revolutionary *bāsmāchi* movement in Central Asia led to the arrival of a new cast of radicals of various stripes into Afghanistan who were far more extreme than the zincographers and physicians of the previous chapter: from Bolshevik sympathizers and spies to displaced Central Asian amirs and itinerant Turkish generals. They came, they saw, they argued: Afghans, Indians, Bukharans, and Turks forming and fracturing revolutionary connections in the townhouses and roadside guesthouses of Afghanistan.

The following pages chart how the sudden influx of this cast of extremely heterogeneous revolutionaries created a heady brew of cross-currents, mixed motives, surprising alliances, temporary pacts, and bitter bargains which animated Afghan political life. Such revolutionary journeymen were treated unevenly by Afghan state officials, who all had their own personal political games to play. Powerful blocs of pro-Turk, pro-Indian, pro-British Afghan officials meant that the Afghan state was a

many-headed Hydra for revolutionary journeymen. Relations with senior Afghan officials had to be carefully managed and balanced. Perhaps the neatest physical symbol of the Afghan state's ambivalent treatment of such revolutionary journeymen was the state guesthouse in Babur's Gardens in the west of Kabul, where the Turco-German Mission of 1915 was housed. Despite being called 'royal guests' it was not always clear if the travellers there were, in reality, guests or prisoners.[5] Often accompanied by guards, supposedly for their own protection, the journeymen were well aware that the Afghan state's treatment of them was as much motivated by a desire for control and surveillance as by hospitality.

These travel memoirs finally mark the mutual incompatibility and impossibility of Afghanistan's revolutionary moment. Incompatible because the aspirations was too numerous and at odds with each other, between international communism and Afghan nationalism, Islamic solidarity and Indian independence. Impossible because Afghanistan simply was not able to accommodate – socially, economically, politically – what the revolutionaries were asking for. Nowhere was this clearer than in the Hijrat Movement of 1920, when tens of thousands of British Indian Muslims flooded across the border, seeking to leave the *dār al-harb* of British India for the *dār al-Islām* of Afghanistan. While the Afghan state had a long-standing 'hijrat policy' in place, and contined to promote and encourage such religious flight in theory and in rhetoric, in practice it turned out that Afghanistan simply did not have the money, cultivable land, bureaucratic systems, or political will to accommodate the tens of thousands of poor Muslims who now hoped to cross into the country. The dream swiftly became a nightmare as these thousands found themselves penniless and

[5] Zafar Hasan Aibak, *Khātirāt (āp bītī)* (Lahore: Sang-e mīl, 1990), p. 80.

landless in a strange country in which they were unwanted and frequently abused by the Afghan state and the local population.

II. Progress and Primitivism: Indians Rewriting Afghanistan

In a recent essay, Nile Green has defined two very different views of Afghanistan created by European and Indian travellers to the country during the early 20th century.[6] While European writers focused, he argues, on Afghanistan's remoteness and primitivism, Indians concentrated instead on Afghanistan's proximity and progressivism. While this broad schematization is useful for placing the kind of texts we have analysed in the previous chapter in the years leading up to the First World War, it does not fit the Pashto, Urdu, and English language travel memoirs under discussion in this chapter. Indeed, the accounts of these revolutionary British Indian journeymen's experiences in Afghanistan have more in common with the 19th century 'Great Game' narratives of Alexander Burnes or Lady Sale, than with the 'futuristic promise' of Afghanistan set out in other travelogues of mobile Asian intellectuals in the early 20th century. The travel memoirs under discussion in this chapter recount epic tales of disguise and derring-do – a kind of 'counter-Great Game' in which the enemies are the British and Russians. Like Burnes, many of the Indian travellers end up moving in secret through the region, disguising themselves as traders, shepherds, mullas, or coolies.[7] Like the remnants of the army of the Indus in Lady Sale's diaries, these travellers must make desperate journeys through perilous mountain passes, stumble across dead bodies frozen in the snow, and endure robberies

[6] Nile Green, 'The Afghan Afterlife of Phileas Fogg: Space and Time in the Literature of Afghan Travel' in Nile Green and Nushin Arbabzadah (eds.), *Afghanistan In Ink: Literature Between Diaspora and Nation* (London: Hurst & Co., 2013), pp. 67-90.
[7] For examples of disguise, see Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 68; Badrakhī, *Da āzādī pah talāsh* (1987), p. 46.

at gunpoint by marauding bands.[8] The 'adventurist' mode is particularly true of the Pashto travel-accounts of the Hijrat Movement, which, while anti-colonial in outlook, nevertheless share the combination of danger and romanticism found in the works of their 19th century colonial adversaries. While for the Pashtun travellers Afghanistan is a brutal and lawless landscape populated by duplicitous government officials and divided peoples, they nevertheless combine this view with an admiration of the martial valour and values of the Pashtun peoples they meet.[9]

Part of the tenor of the travel memoirs is due to temporal distance. Unlike the travelogues of the previous chapter, some of the memoirs under discussion here were written decades after the events they describe. Shaukat Usmani's text was written in the 1920s, as was Akbar Mian Shah Badrakhi's, although it was not published until many years later. But 'Abd al-Akbar Khan Akbar and Zafar Hasan Aibak's memoirs were not published until post-Indian Independence. Such a time lag raises alarm-bells for the historian: these later accounts are inevitably to some extent the product of the time in which they were written, their narratives framed in the light of subsequent events and for a contemporary audience. Their journeys through Afghanistan when viewed from such a distance are unsurprisingly tinged with some of the romanticism of youthful adventure. However, what is surprising is how clear-eyed the texts are in articulating their emotions and aspirations for Afghanistan before their arrival there, and their detailed descriptions of Afghanistan's reality on their arrival. It is this subject – the gap between idealism and reality - that this chapter is most interested in

[8] For example, Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 220.
[9] Shaukat Usmani, *Peshawar to Moscow: Leaves from an Indian Muhajireen's Diary* (Benares: Swarajya Publishing House, 1927). I also draw on a later work by Usmani, *idem*, *Historic Trips of a Revolutionary: Sojourn in the Soviet Union* (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 1977). For a study of colonial views of the Pashtuns, see Akbar S. Ahmed, 'Colonial Encounter on the North-West Frontier Province: Myth and Mystification,' *Economic and Political Weekly* Vol. 14, No. 51/52 (1979), pp. 2092-2097.

and which can still be investigated, as long as the sources are treated with care and sensitivity to context.

But there is more afoot here to explain the particular tenor of these counter-Great Game travelogues, and which is crucial for understanding the developing and diverging way that Afghanistan was understood by various Muslim thinkers. The key distinction between the previous chapters' accounts of professional Muslim journeymen and those under discussion here is the fact that these travellers framed their experiences using the conceptual framework of jihad and hijrat, of religious war and religious flight. Such terms cover a set of practices which have less in common with the liberal and reformist Islam of the Muslim writers of the previous chapters than with the charismatic, heterodox, and even heretical actions of 19th century Muslim saintly warriors such as Sayyid Ahmad Barelvi in the North-West Frontier of India, Usman Dan Fodio in Sokoto, the 'Mad Mahdi' Muhammad Ahmad of Sudan. Such movements, as Faisal Devji notes, were largely located 'on the peripheries of the Muslim world geographically, politically and religiously.'[10] To speak of jihad and hijrat is to open up 'a whole new landscape for moral action, a wild and disordered landscape distant from the urban centers of juridical Islam.' Moreover, 'there exists a whole aesthetic of such landscapes in the jihad,' which involves 'inhospitable and mountainous terrain…an identification with wild and disordered places of the Muslim world, which have come to provide the most privileged of arenas for the defence and practice of Islam.'[11] Devji is writing of contemporary jihad today, but the argument can be applied here too. What the texts under discussion in this chapter reveal is an aestheticization of the landscapes of jihad and hijrat in which Afghanistan's seeming remoteness and wildness provides the perfect backdrop. Ironically, of course, this

[10] Faisal Devji, *Landscapes of the Jihad: Militancy, Morality, Modernity* (London: Hurst & Co, 2005), p. 41.
[11] *Ibid*., p. 46.

identification with remoteness and wildness ends up sharing more similarities with the literature on Afghanistan produced by adventurous British imperialists of the 19th century, than with the 'progressive' Muslim writers of the previous chapters. And, like the encounter of the British with Afghanistan in the 19th century, the initial romanticism and attraction felt by such Muslim travellers towards Afghanistan would soon be transformed into disillusionment and disaster.

In describing the often death-defying journeys through mountainous and hostile terrain, these Muslim travel memoirs offer extremely important glimpses of 'the other Afghanistan', away from the schools, printing presses, and 'progressive' intellectuals of Kabul analyzed in previous chapters. In so doing, the travel memoirs plot the encounter between different worlds: between the imaginaries of well-travelled Afghan, Indian and Central Asian Muslims in Kabul, and the local realities of Afghan rural life – and the profound disenchantment produced by that encounter. This disenchantment worked both ways: rather than a promised land of an independent Muslim nation animated by bonds of Islamic brotherhood, these Indian Muslim travellers are forced to confront the facts of everyday Afghan life, where, as George Orwell put it, 'the belly comes before the soul, not in the scale of values but in point of time.'[12] And rather than the kind of well-educated, professional Muslim journeymen that the Afghan state liked to encourage, Afghanistan was now confronted with tens of thousands of Muslims with no money or skills that the Afghan state could make practical use of. The encounter was a harrowing one that left both sides scarred. The Hijrat Movement thus marked the simultaneous culmination and death-knell of Afghanistan as a site of Muslim aspiration and imagination - at least for a time.

[12] George Orwell, *A Collection of Essays* (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1953), p. 213.

III. The Makings of an Imperial Counter-Space: Afghanistan in 1915

The key year marking the arrival of Afghanistan's revolutionary moment was 1915. For this year saw the first substantial influx of revolutionaries into Afghanistan, with the appearance from the west of a Turco-German mission from Berlin, from the east of a mission of 15 apprentice *mujāhidīn* from Lahore, and from the south of a Deobandi scholar from Sialkot, 'Ubaid Allah Sindhi.[13] These multi-directional missions represented the intertwining of a range of national, transnational, and international aspirations. The Turco-German mission was essentially an international mission, in the sense of being sent by one head of state, the German Kaiser, to another, the Afghan amir, with the aim of persuading Afghanistan to side with Germany against Britain.[14] The other two missions are better described as transnational rather than international, since the students and Islamic scholar represented no recognized government. The Turco-German mission, too, had its own transnational dimension in the form of two Indians, Maulawi Barakat Allah Bhopali and Raja Mahendra Pratap. Maulawi Barakat Allah was a veteran of the international Muslim reform scene: he had recently returned from stints in Tokyo, where he had taught Urdu and brought out a pan-Islamic pamphlet titled 'Islamic Fraternity', and San Francisco where he had worked as an activist for the *Ghadar* party, the Indian anti-colonial movement based in the United States.[15] He had also taught for a while

[13] For accounts of these varied trips, see Fazal-ur-Rahim Marwat, *The Evolution and Growth of Communism in Afghanistan, 1917-1979: An Appraisal* (Karachi: The Royal Book Company, 1997), Ch. 3. For a popular account from a firmly British perspective, see Peter Hopkirk, *On Secret Service East of Constantinople* (London: John Murray, 1994).

[14] For the background to this mission, see Sean McMeekin, *The Berlin-Baghdad Express: The Ottoman Empire and Germany's Bid for World Power* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), pp. 209-229; Thomas L. Hughes, 'The German Mission to Afghanistan, 1915-16,' *German Studies Review* Vol. 25, No. 3 (2002), pp. 447-476. Also, Christopher M. Wyatt, *Afghanistan and the Defence of Empire* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2011), Ch. 6.

[15] For Barakat Allah's time in Tokyo, see Nile Green, 'Forgotten Futures: Indian Muslims in the Trans-Islamic Turn to Japan,' *The Journal of Asiatic Studies* Vol. 72, No. 3 (August 2013), pp. 611-631. Also, Cemil Aydin, *The Politics of Anti-Westernism in Asia: Visions of World Order in Pan-Islamic*

at a Liverpool mosque, where he met a certain Afghan prince named Nasr Allah Khan in 1895.[16] Pratap, although educated at that centre of Muslim reform, the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College in Aligarh, was a more secular nationalist who was part of the Berlin India Committee (later Indian Independence Committee), founded in Berlin in 1914 by Indian activists there to promote the cause of Indian independence.[17]

While the Turco-German mission had travelled east from Europe and Turkey to Afghanistan, the fifteen runaway students were heading in the other direction, through the tribal areas of the Indo-Afghan border, on a mission to Ottoman lands. These students were young, with little money, and no experience of travel. Their journey was one of pure idealism, a sentiment of pan-Islamic solidarity between British Indian Muslims and the Ottoman Empire, strengthened by the siding of the Ottoman Empire with Germany against Britain.[18] Zafar Hasan Aibak, one of the students and author of the Urdu memoir *'Khātirāt (āp bītī)*', describes the impact that Muhammad Iqbal's poetry on the Balkan conflict had on the young students, as well as the articles they read in the journal *Comrade* edited by Muhammad 'Ali Jauhar, and the Khilafatist newspapers *Al-hilāl* and *Al-balāgh*.[19] Aibak also described their rationale for action as a belief that to join the ranks of Turks fighting the British was to wage jihad.[20] Aibak's interest in jihad had a familial history; one of Aibak's relatives was Maulawi Muhammad Ja'far Thanesari, a *mujāhid* who had carried out

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and Pan-Asian Thought (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), pp. 85-6. For Barakat Allah's time in the United States, see Ramnath, *Haj to Utopia* (2011), pp. 222-232.

[16] See Chapter One of this dissertation; see also Ramnath, *Haj to Utopia* (2011), p. 222.

[17] For a history of the Berlin India Committee, and the context of German and Indian intellectual relations during the period, see Kris Manjapra, *Age of Entanglement: German and Indian Intellectuals across Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014); also, Benjamin Zachariah, 'Indian Political Activities in Germany, 1914-19145' in Joanne Miyang Cho, Eric Kurlander, Douglas T. McKetchin (eds.), *Transcultural Encounters between Germany and India: Kindred Spirits in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013).

[18] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 32.

[19] *Ibid*., pp. 14-15.

[20] *Ibid*., p. 39.

anti-British activities in the North West Frontier Province and had been arrested and put on trial in the Ambala State Trial of 1864, in which those on trial were accused of 'waging war against the Queen.'[21] Thanesari had also written an Urdu hagiography of Sayyid Ahmad Barelvi (1786-1831), the Muslim activist who travelled to what is now Afghanistan in the 1820s attempting to raise jihad against the Sikhs.[22] For Aibak, the rightness of the decision to leave India and carry out jihad was confirmed by a dream he had, in which he found himself in a lush and mountainous region, suggesting the border regions of Afghanistan and the North West Frontier Province of British India, and which he interpreted as a sign that he should go.[23]

'Ubaid Allah Sindhi's reasons for reaching Afghanistan sprang from the same ideological wellspring as Aibak's, but his mission was more political and tactical than the young students' idealistic wish for jihad. Sindhi was part of a group of Deobandi scholars and activists who had been working to foment resistance against British rule. The group was led by the chancellor of Deoband, Maulana Mahmud al-Hasan (1851-1920), popularly known as the 'Sheikh al-Hind'. Their plan was to destabilize the British in India through the creation of a Muslim army, combining Muslims from the Ottoman Empire, India, and Afghanistan. In combination with the Pashtuns of the tribal areas of the Indo-Afghan border, it was hoped that such an army could open a new military front against British India, and perhaps even carry out a full-scale invasion.[24] For this mission, the support of both the Afghan government and the *mujāhidīn* colonies of Chamarkand and Asmast in the Tribal Areas were essential. To

[21] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 36. For a biographical sketch of Thanesari, as well as translated excerpts from his autobiography, see Muhammad Ja'far Thānēsarī, 'Tavarikh-e Ajib', trans. S. Kamal Abdali, *Annual of Urdu Studies* Vol. 26 (2011), pp. 167-216.
[22] See *idem*, *Tawārīkh-e 'ajībah mausūm bih sawānih-e Ahmadī* (Delhi: Matba'ah farūqī, 1891).
[23] *Ibid*., p. 40.
[24] Such an approach, unlike the non-cooperation movement of Mahatma Gandhi, clearly did not disavow violence. For the movement's belief in the necessity of armed struggle, see Sana Haroon, *Frontier of Faith: Islam in the Indo-Afghan Borderland* (London: Hurst & Co., 2011), p. 93.

this end, the Sheikh al-Hind had asked Sindhi to make his way to Kabul.[25] Kabul's location made it strategically central to the whole plan: it was well located just beyond imperial borders, and, with close geographical and political links to the *mujāhidiīn* colonies, the city would serve as a useful reserve base and command centre for anti-imperial activities in India.[26]

While Aibak was most interested in using Afghanistan as a stepping-stone to the Ottoman Empire, for Sindhi Afghanistan was an end-goal in itself – a perfect partner for anti-colonial Indian revolutionaries. In Sindhi's memoirs, written while he was in Mecca in 1933, this optimistic view of Afghanistan is based on a historical analysis of Afghanistan and India's ancient mutual influences, interactions, and support.[27] Sindhi describes Afghanistan as a historic partner (*sharīk*) of Muslims in India. For Sindhi, Afghanistan and India's connections stretch back millennia and cover every area of public life. Genealogically, Sindhi argues that Afghanistan was one of India's ancient ethnic groups (*hindī qadīm aqwām kā īk hissah*). Linguistically, he suggests that Pashto as a language is closer to Sanskrit and Hindi than to Persian.[28] Economically, Sindhi notes that trade and agriculture in Afghanistan had long been a partnership between Indians and Afghans.[29] In terms of religious education, Afghan students had for generations come to India for training.[30]

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[25] See the account of the Sheikh al-Hind's student, Maulānā Sayyid Husain Ahmad Sāhib Madanī, *Naqsh-e hayāt* 2 Vols. (Karachi: Farzand-e tauhīd, n.d.), Vol. 2, pp. 560-563. Also 'Ubaid Allāh Sindhī, *Kābul mēn sāt sāl, aktūbar 1915-1922: īk tārīkhī yāddāsht*, ed. Muhammad Sarwar (Lahore: Sindh sāgar akādimī, 1976), p. 36 in which Sindhi notes that he went to Kabul to please the Sheikh al-Hind. For the broader history of the Pan-Islam movement, see Azmi Özcan, *Pan-Islamism: Indian Muslims, the Ottomans and Britain (1877-1924)* (Leiden: Brill, 1997).

[26] K.H. Ansari, 'Pan-Islam and the Making of the Early Indian Muslim Socialists,' *Modern Asian Studies* Vol. 20, No. 3 (1986), p. 515. For the two mujahidin colonies, see Abdul Rauf, 'The British Empire and the Mujāhidīn Movement in the N.W.F.P. of India, 1914-1934,' *Islamic Studies* Vol. 44, No. 3 (2005), pp. 409-439. For the link between Deoband and the *mujāhidīn* colonies on the border, see Haroon, *Frontier of Faith* (2011), Ch. 4.

[27] For the dating of the text, see Muhammad Sarwar's introduction to Sindhī, *Kābul mēn sāt sāl* (1976), p. 1.

[28] *Ibid*., p. 28.

[29] *Ibid*., p. 30.

[30] *Ibid*.

As for more recent institutional developments in Afghanistan, it was Indian teachers that made up the majority of staff in the new educational institutions of the early 20th century, largely Indian doctors that worked in the new hospitals, and Indian technicians in the newspapers and industries of Afghanistan.[31] Such a wide-ranging analysis represents Afghanistan as a site of Indo-Afghan interaction and exchange. But Sindhi goes further, stressing that Afghanistan has also been a source of aid to Indians: he uses the example of the plundering of Delhi by Marathas in the 18th century, and the help sought from Kabul and Kandahar by Mughal rulers to expel such invaders.[32] Likewise, Sindhi continues, when the British took Delhi in the early 19th century, it was descendants of the Islamic scholar and reformer Shah Wali Allah (1703-1762), based in the Pashtun belt of Northwest Punjab who tried to maintain the link between Kabul and Delhi. Moreover, Sindhi posits a historic unity and connection between the Punjab, stretching right up to the Afghan border, and Delhi.[33] It was this connection, he claims, which ensured the survival of Mughal rule for so long in the face of British encroachments.[34] Sindhi's mission was thus in one sense an act of revival, restoring once more the long-distance connections and solidarities of Indians and Afghans in the face of foreign occupation.

Such an analysis was not uncontroversial in India. Afghanistan for many Indians, particularly Hindus, was imagined not as a source of support but rather of danger – the home of 'the Afghan bogey'. In this alternative imaginary, Afghanistan conjured up images of Afghan warriors flooding across the Khyber Pass to attack the

[31] *Ibid*., pp. 31-32.
[32] *Ibid*., p. 35.
[33] *Ibid*.
[34] *Ibid*.

plains.[35] While the subject of Hindu views of Afghanistan has received almost no scholarly attention, there is no doubt that this image of Afghanistan amongst Hindus was a potent one during the period. Indeed, so strong would this alternative imaginary prove that several years later, in the summer of 1921, a speech by the Muslim nationalist Maulana Muhammad 'Ali, in which he stated that he would welcome an invasion of India by the Afghans, led to a great rift between Hindu and Muslim nationalists.[36] The situation became so serious that Mahatma Gandhi felt compelled to write an article, titled 'the Afghan Bogey', which attempted to allay the fears of Hindu nationalists that Indian Muslims were planning to encourage a large-scale invasion of India by the Afghans.[37] Another article in the Indian press of the period wrote of the fear of 'the Afghan Menace' and noted the prevalence of a vision of 'ravines and rivulets of human gore that might inundate India' if an Afghan invasion took place amongst certain Hindus.[38] It was against such negative imaginings of Afghanistan that Sindhi produced his far more rosy view of Indo-Afghan connections and collaborations.

Another important element of Sindhi's representation of his journey to Afghanistan is his reference to historic jihads in the region. Sindhi's account of Shah Wali Allah and his military campaigns against the British marks an attempt to create continuity and connection between the jihads of the 19th century and those of his own day. In a later work of the 1940s, Sindhi makes this genealogical connection explicit. Here, he traces the genealogy of jihad in South Asia, moving from Shah Wali Allah in

[35] For the appearance of this fear during the period, see Gail Minault, *The Khilafat Movement: Religious Symbolism and Political Mobilization in India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), p. 72.
[36] 'The real position is that there is a big rift between the Mussalmans and Hindus because the Hindus, including especially Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, are very frightened at the idea of an Afghan invasion', Sir Harcourt Butler to Sir Geoffrey Butler, Nainital, 1st June 1921, Butler Papers, Mss. Eur. F.116/25.
[37] See M.K. Gandhi, 'The Afghan Bogey' in *The Independent* (Allahabad) of 8th May 1921. For the background and repercussions to this affair, see Minault, *The Khilafat Movement* (1982), p. 72.
[38] Sulaiman Ansari, 'The Afghan Menace' in *The Independent* (Allahabad) of 1st June 1921.

the early 19th century, through Shah Wali Ullah's son Shah Muhammad Ishaq and the Sheikh al-Hind, to his own activities in the 1910s and beyond.[39] For Sindhi, all these movements are part of the same project, with his activities the 'third phase' (*tīsrā daur*).[40] This is an important point to note. For while scholars such as Faisal Devji have been understandably wary of 'genealogical modes of apprehending the jihad'[41] amongst analysts today, it is nevertheless important to appreciate the way historical actors themselves made sense of their own actions in terms of a longer genealogy of jihad. For Sindhi, he was carrying on a project that had been started generations before, a century-old project that had found a practical base – like his own – in Afghanistan.

For the three groups described above – the Turco-German Mission, Zafar Hasan Aibak, and 'Ubaid Allah Sindhi - Afghanistan's emergence as a revolutionary destination was thus a product of both location and imagination. On the edge of the British Empire, it was the first destination for those, like Aibak and Sindhi, trying to get out of British India and for those, like the Turco-German mission, trying to get in. But the importance of where it stood was crucially matched by the importance of what it stood for. The Muslim turn to Afghanistan - in which Afghanistan represented Muslim independence and a potential source of support in the face of Western imperialism - was intensified by the outbreak of the First World War. But how did the reality of Afghanistan match up to its imaginings?

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[39] See 'Ubaid Allāh Sindhī, *Shāh Walī Allāh aur unkī siyāsī tahrīk, ya'nī hizb-e Walī Allāh Dehlawī kī ijmālī tārīkh kā muqaddimah*, ed. Muhammad Sarwar (Lahore: al-Mahmūd akīdamī, n.d.). Also, 'Ubaid Allāh Sindhī, *Shāh Walī Allah aur unkā falsafah ya'nī imām Walī Allāh kī hikmat kā ijmālī tu'ārif*, ed. Muhammad Sarwar (Lahore: al-Mahmūd akīdamī, n.d.). Also, Ayesha Jalal, *Partisans of Allah: Jihad in South Asia* (London: Harvard University Press, 2008), pp. 203-5.
[40] Sindhī, *Shāh Wali Allāh aur unki siyāsī tahrīk* (n.d.), p. 12.
[41] Devji, *Landscapes of the Jihad* (2005), p. 41.

III.1. An Indian Mujāhid in Afghanistan

Zafar Hasan Aibak's travel memoirs provide the most finely grained details of a journey to Kabul, and of the encounter between Afghanistan's ideal and its reality during the period. Setting out from Lahore, Aibak makes his way to the *mujāhidīn* colony of Chamarkand close to the Indo-Afghan border. The first encounter of this young aspiring *mujāhid* with real *mujāhidīn* in the wild mountains of Swat is, however, a disappointment. While Chamarkand was famous amongst anti-imperialists and infamous amongst the colonial authorities, Aibak finds a very isolated and poorly run outfit, beset by infighting.[42] It is not an auspicious beginning. On crossing the border into Afghanistan, Aibak is less inspired by his dreamt-of land of wild mountains than struck by a desperately poor country with a very limited infrastructure. The border areas in the east of Afghanistan are little cultivated and backward (*pasmāndah*).[43] More used to the home comforts of Lahore, Aibak now finds himself having to get used to staying in filthy way stations (*ribāt*) or sleeping uncomfortably on the floor of local mosques.[44]

Arriving into Jalalabad, Aibak's first encounter with the Afghan state is also not a happy one: rather than being welcomed by Afghan officials and feted as brothers in arms, his fourteen friends are put under house arrest on suspicion of spying for the British and marched to Kabul.[45] Rather than attracted or inspired by the landscape of Afghanistan, Aibak is struck by the poverty and isolation of rural life. And in Jalalabad – one of Afghanistan's largest towns – he is frustrated at not

[42] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 47. For histories of the colony, see Lal Baha, 'The Activities of the Mujahidin, 1900-1936,' *Islamic Studies* Vol. 18, No. 2 (1979), pp. 97-168; also Benjamin D. Hopkins, 'A History of the "Hindustani Fanatics" on the Frontier' in Benjamin D. Hopkins and Magnus Marsden (eds.), *Beyond Swat: History, Society and Economy Along the Afghanistan-Pakistan Frontier* (London: Hurst & Co., 2013); *idem*, 'Sitana and Swat: Patterns of Revolt Along the Frontier' in Benjamin D. Hopkins and Magnus Marsden, *Fragments of the Afghan Frontier* (London: Hurst & Co., 2011).
[43] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 54. For his use of the term '*pasmāndah*', see *ibid.*, pp. 66, 106.
[44] *Ibid*., p. 66.
[45] *Ibid*., p. 79.

being able to get the simplest of provisions. The much-heralded organ of progressive thought, Mahmud Tarzi's newspaper *Sirāj al-akhbār*, cannot be found anywhere in the bazaars.[46] Kabul, too, in 1915, does not yet seem a great revolutionary centre but a dirty, over-populated town run by an autocratic ruling family which demands its subjects to turn their faces away as their royal carriage drives past.[47] We are a long way away from Hajji Muhammad Khan's panegyrics to the 'republican' Habib Allah Khan. It is not until the arrival of 'Ubaid Allah Sindhi a few months later that things start to look up for the young *mujāhid*. Seemingly at Sindhi's instigation and through the auspices of Prince Nasr Allah Khan, Aibak and his friends are eventually released and allowed to move into a house near Sindhi's in the Shor Bazaar in south Kabul.

It is worth pausing briefly to consider the rise of Kabul's Shor Bazaar during the period as a base for British Indian journeymen. The area, just south of the Kabul river, had long been a home for the large population of Indian merchants and traders in Kabul. With the rise of Indian professional journeymen to Afghanistan in the late 19th and early 20th century, it had developed into a 'Little India' in Kabul, populated by Indian merchants, teachers, doctors, engineers, all finding work in the new institutions of the Afghan state. It was through links with these Indians already in Kabul that many of these new revolutionary journeymen found homes and made connections. Before Sindhi arrived, he had sent his nephew, 'Aziz Ahmad, ahead to Kabul, along with a friend, Shaikh Muhammad Ibrahim, who had been teaching Geography at Habibiya College.[48] Ibrahim had become friends with the Urdu-speaking, Indian-raised Afghan aristocrat Nadir Khan, the future king Nadir Shah. Ibrahim kept Sindhi informed on the goings-on of important Afghan notables in the

[46] *Ibid*., p. 48. For the mention of *Sirāj al-akhbār*, see *ibid*., p. 78.
[47] *Ibid.,* p. 84.
[48] *Ibid*., p. 88.

city, a useful source of information in the febrile atmosphere of the Afghan court.[49] Another Indian, Maulawi Muhammad ‘Ali Qusuri, a graduate of Cambridge University, had also got a job as a maths teacher at Habibiya College and moved to Kabul after being recommended by the headmaster, Hafiz Ahmad Din.[50]

Religious and educational links with India were matched by financial connections; the Pashtun *muhājir* ‘Abd al-Akbar Khan Akbar describes a trip to a Hindu moneylender in Peshawar to get hold of some Kabuli rupees in preparations for his travels, and is given the contact details of a Hindu in Kabul to look up;[51] later on he would frequently be the guest of a Hindu financier in Kabul, and leave his money with another when he went to Tashkent.[52] The tie of local kinship also allowed these Indian revolutionaries to make a home in Kabul; Akbar’s fellow Pashtun *muhājir* Akbar Shah Miyan Badrakhi had a friend in Kabul who came from his village and had arrived a year before. Through this friend, Badrakhi found himself staying in the house of Qazi ‘Abd al-Wali, who had a special house for *muhājirīn*, and who had fled to Kabul after speaking out against the British.[53] Other *muhājirīn*, including ‘Abd al-Ghaffar Khan, known as ‘the Frontier Gandhi’, and a number of later prominent Pashtun intellectuals, would also set themselves up in the Shor Bazaar.[54] Historic ties between Indians in Kabul and British India, built up over several decades of Afghan state support, were thus important elements encouraging further travels of Muslims to Afghanistan.

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[49] Sindhī, *Kābul mēn sāt sāl* (1976), p. 101.
[50] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 88. Abdallah Khan, *Mawlana Ubayd Allah Sindhi’s Mission to Afghanistan and Soviet Russia* (Islamabad: PanGraphics Ltd, 2000), p. 30.
[51] ‘Abd al-Akbar Khān Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah: da mulk da āzādī pah silsilah khi* (Peshawar: Akbar būk stāl, 1968), p. 47.
[52] *Ibid*., pp. 195-6.
[53] Badrakhī, *Da āzādī pah talāsh* (1987), pp. 45-6.
[54] Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah* (1968), p. 78. For Ghaffar Khan’s own account of his time in Afghanistan, see Khan ‘Abd al-Ghaffar Khan and K. B. Narang, *My Life and Struggle* (Delhi: Hind Pocket Books, 1969).

With the influx of increasing numbers of Indians, the Shor Bazaar became the locus of a range of informal networks and organizations for Muslims. Forms of sociability amongst Indians included informal education classes and evening discussion groups, which met to discuss political philosophy and future action. Much of this activity revolved around Sindhi. Aibak records studying the Qur'an with Sindhi in his house in the Shor Bazaar, as does Akbar.[55] Sindhi also worked to set up various transnational organisations that would link Indian Muslims in Afghanistan to Indian Muslims in other parts of the world. One such organization was the '*Jund Allāh*' formed in Kabul, which was overtly based on the model of the Salvation Army with uniforms and military-style drill, and which had the aim of working for the social and educational uplift of the Muslim world through voluntary work. The organization was designed to be a transnational entity with Kabul just one local branch alongside other offices in Madina, Istanbul, Tehran.[56] Another transnational entity, never actualized, was an Islamic manufacturing firm; Sindhi tasked Aibak with going to Arabia to set up a company which would manufacture leather goods and import them to Islamic countries, supported by the founding of an Islamic bank.[57]

Perhaps the most ambitious of all these entities created out of the interactions of revolutionaries in Kabul was the 'Provisional Government of India', set up in 1916 with Mahendra Pratap as its President, Maulawi Barakat Allah its Prime Minister, and Sindhi its Interior Minister.[58] An Indian member of the *Ghadar* Party on the run from the British, Mathara Singh, was made 'Minister Plenipotentiary', and both Zafar

[55] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 105; Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah* (1968), p. 188.
[56] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 111.
[57] *Ibid*.
[58] For an account of the Provisional Government of India in Kabul, see Mīr Muhammad Sharīf Pākarāi, *Hukūmat-e mu'aqat-e Hind dar Kābul* (Kabul: Matba'ah-e daulatī, 1990).

Hasan Aibak and another *Ghadarite*, Harnam Singh Kahuta, were made secretaries.[59] This body acted to formalize in one political entity the inextricably entwined political goals of those Hindus and Muslims involved: the liberation of India and the revival of Islam. On a more practical level, the forming of a government in exile, it was hoped, would gain its members in Kabul greater influence with foreign governments hostile to the British, and make it easier for these anti-British revolutionaries to get war loans from such foreign governments.[60] Although this foreign support never materialized (beyond the odd gift of money to the group from the Turco-German Mission in 1916), the setting up of the Provisional Government of India is an insightful example of the kind of intertwining of national, transnational, and international aspirations of revolutionary journeymen during the period in Afghanistan, combining as it did leftist, Islamist, nationalist thinkers inside a single organization.

IV. Social Mobility Amongst Journeymen in Kabul

The sophistication and worldliness of these Indian revolutionaries meant that many moved with ease amongst high-status Afghan officials. Mahendra Pratap spent much time with Prince 'Inayat Ullah Khan and Prince Nasr Allah Khan, and it was Nasr Allah Khan who provided financial support to Pratap in the sending of two Indian missions to Czarist Russia.[61] As with the pioneering Ottoman journeymen of the first decade of the 20th century, Mahmud Tarzi played an important role in smoothing the way: even before his arrival into Kabul, Sindhi had with him letters of

[59] Ramnath, *Haj to Utopia* (2011), p. 185. See also, F.C. Isemonger and James Slattery, *An Account of the Ghadr Conspiracy, 1913-15* (Lahore: Superintendent Government Printing, 1919). Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 137.
[60] Nirode K. Barooah, *Chatto: The Life and Times of an Indian Anti-Imperialist in Europe* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 64, n. 8.
[61] Raja Mahendra Pratap, *Reminiscences of a Revolutionary* (New Delhi: Books India International, 1999), pp. 49-50.

introduction from Mahmud Tarzi, and also from Nadir Khan.[62] Once he arrived, he would frequently dine with Afghan royals.[63]

More than merely finding new dining-companions, Afghan state officials were also quick to make use of the technocratic and religious knowledge, worldly connections, and linguistic skills that these revolutionary journeymen brought with them. The previous chapter has illustrated the crucial role of British Indians in the foundation of Afghanistan's new educational institutions in the early 20th century. Building on these links, many of these revolutionary travellers also taught in the new schools of Kabul. Muhammad 'Ali Qusuri, who housed Sindhi in the early days of his time in Kabul, moved to Afghanistan to become a teacher, later headmaster, of Habibiya College.[64] Dr 'Abd al-Hafiz, a mining engineer who had studied at Aligarh followed by post-graduate study in Britain and Germany, lived with various British Indians in the Deh Afghanan district of Kabul, and was given a stipend by Sindhi.[65] Another traveller from even further afield was Sinath Bannerjee, a Bengali, who taught mathematics at Habibiya College.[66] Typifying the complex motives of politics, economics and adventurism that drove such travellers, Bannerjee would later travel with Sindhi and Aibak overland to Russia, seemingly purely for the adventure of it.[67] 'Abd al-Akbar Khan Akbar, the young Pashtun traveller, would also teach at Habibiya College, although without pay.[68] With all these educated Indians in Kabul, a vogue emerged amongst Afghan elites to hire private British Indian teachers for their children: Zafar Hasan Aibak found himself in Kabul teaching not only the future king, Zahir Shah, but also perhaps the most famous of all 20th century Afghan

[62] Sindhī, *Kābul mēn sāt sāl* (1976), p. 37.
[63] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 99.
[64] Baha, 'The Activities of the Mujahidin' (1979), p. 108; Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 100.
[65] *Ibid*., p. 198. For 'Abd al-Hafiz, see also Ansari, 'Pan-Islam' (1986), p. 514.
[66] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 209.
[67] *Ibid*., p. 214.
[68] Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah* (1968), p. 193.

historians, Mir Ghulam Muhammad Ghubar.[69] Alongside school education, there was also work for revolutionaries with medical experience. One such man was Dr Nur Muhammad, a medical doctor from Hyderabad in Sindh who had trained at Bombay University and had also been Secretary of the Sindh Congress Party. Nur Muhammad quickly gained a reputation in Kabul for his medical skills, gaining influence with Mahmud Tarzi and Nadir Khan at the same time as becoming a close friend of Sindhi's.[70] The revolutionaries also found work in the nascent public sphere in Kabul: during Mahendra Pratap's extended sojourn alongside the Turco-German mission in Babur's Gardens, he contributed articles and even editorial work to Tarzi's newspaper *Sirāj al-akhbār*. Maulawi Barakat Allah even acted as editor of the same newspaper while Mahmud Tarzi was engaged with the Turco-German mission.[71] The Afghan government also enjoyed using these revolutionary journeymen as *ad hoc* advisers: a friend of Badrakhi's Qazi 'Abd al-Wali, was made a member of Amir Habib Allah Khan's special consultative *darbār*.[72] Religious advice, too, was a highly sought-after commodity, and Nasr Allah Khan in particular aligned himself with religious figures from India. The main source of these Indian religious scholars was Deoband, where alumni had passed an extremely rigorous seven to ten years of training in the religious sciences, as well as Arabic and often Persian. While such scholars often struggled to find jobs in the new colonial education and legal systems, Afghanistan welcomed them. Afghanistan had no madrasa of such rigour or standing, and these Indian scholars were treated with great respect. Perhaps the most prominent of these men was a Deobandi alumni Hajji 'Abd al-Razaq Khan, who was a senior

[69] For Ghubar, see Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 116. For Zahir Shah, see *ibid*., p. 123.
[70] *Ibid*., p. 182.
[71] Marwat, *Evolution and Growth of Communism in Afghanistan* (1997), p. 130.
[72] Badrakhī, *Da āzādī pah talāsh* (1987), p. 48. For other such advisors, see Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah* (1968), p.70.

judge at the Afghan court, and who also taught at the *Madrasah-e shāhī* in Kabul.[73] He also lived next door to Sindhi.[74]

The great exodus of refugees, deserters, and escapees produced by the First World War, combined with the Afghan state's continued long-term policy of support for such groups, meant that Afghanistan also became a home for increasing numbers of radicals on the run, seeking a safe haven from imperial powers. One such man was Sarfaraz Efendi, an Ottoman captured by the Russians while fighting for the Ottoman Empire in the First World War. Sarfaraz Efendi had managed to escape after the Bolshevik revolution of 1917, and made his way from Siberia to Afghanistan, where he made a living as a boot-maker in the north of the country.[75] Many of these new journeymen in Kabul were frequently veterans of fighting in other parts of Europe or Asia: Badrakhi's Indian friend Qazi 'Abd al-Wali had worked for the Red Crescent fighting in Trablus in 1912 during the Italo-Turkish War. The Afghan state could be very opportunistic in its incorporation of these exiles and refugees. In 1915, twenty-two Austrian escapees from a Russian detention camp made their way to Kabul. While not Muslims, the fact that they were fighting the British and Russians meant at least they shared a common enemy. The Afghan state gave them housing and an allowance and soon many of them were working in the government's public works department.[76] At the end of the war, it was reported there were over a hundred Austrians and Germans, mostly ex-prisoners of war, working in Afghanistan.[77] For

[73] For the role and status of such Deoband-trained scholars in Afghanistan, see Sana Haroon, 'Religious Revivalism across the Durand Line' in Shahzad Bashir and Robert D. Crews (eds.), *Under the Drones: Modern Lives in the Afghanistan-Pakistan Borderlands* (Cambridge: Massachusetts, 2012). For the *Madrasah-e shāhi*, see May Schinasi, *Afghanistan at the Beginning of the 20th Century: Nationalism and Journalism in Afghanistan: A Study of Siraj ul-Akhbar (1911-1918)* (Naples: Istituto Universitario Orientale, 1979), pp. 136-138.
[74] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 100. Also Haroon, *Frontier of Faith* (2007), pp. 109-110.
[75] Badrakhī, *Da āzādī pah talāsh* (1987), p. 134. For more details on this character, see Ramnath, *Haj to Utopia* (2011), p. 206.
[76] Marwat, *Evolution and Growth of Communism in Afghanistan* (1997), p. 122.
[77] *Ibid*., p. 131.

firebrands and *flüchtlinge* alike, Afghanistan offered political shelter and a livelihood during these years of great global upheaval.

The incorporation of such large numbers of journeymen inside the Afghan state during the First World War should not, however, make us think that this was a harmonious affair. In fact, the travel memoirs of Muslims under analysis in this chapter note how fraught the state employment of revolutionary journeymen was. Apropos the tension between Afghans and Indians, Aibak quotes an Afghan saying that runs 'Leave me, kill the Indian instead' (*marā bān, Hindustānī bekushan*').[78] Aibak suggests that such hostility may stem from the use of Indian troops by the British in the Anglo-Afghan wars of the 19th century.[79] For Aibak, Indian Muslims may have been inspired to come to Afghanistan, but there was no guarantee that Afghans felt inspired by their arrival. The main proponent of these British Indian Muslims' incorporation inside the state was Nadir Khan, later King Nadir Shah, who had himself been raised in Dehra Dun in north-west India and who spoke fluent Urdu. All the travelogues make clear the great support that British Indians received from Nadir Khan, who treated them as distinguished guests and worked tirelessly on their behalf, finding them work and supporting their various projects.[80] He even defended the young Lahori *mujāhidīn* when they were threatened with prison.[81] For Aibak, Nadir Khan and his brothers were the most educated Afghans in Afghanistan at that time.[82] For the Bikaner radical Shaukat Usmani, Nadir Khan's grasp of international politics and European diplomacy was astonishing, particularly considering he sat 'in

[78] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 210.
[79] *Ibid*.
[80] See Akbar's description of Nadir Khan, Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah* (1968), p. 85. His descriptions of meetings with Nadir Khan and Sindhi can be found at *ibid*., p. 183. Badrakhi describes Nadir Khan's kindliness towards him in Jalalabad, Badrakhī, *Da āzādī pah talāsh* (1987), p. 35. Usmani also describes meeting Nadir Khan in Jalalabad, Usmani, *Peshawar to Moscow:* (1927), pp. 2-3. For Nadir Khan's support to Sindhi, see Sindhī, *Kābul mēn sāt sāl* (1976), p. 37.
[81] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), pp. 117-18.
[82] *Ibid*., p. 69.

the remotest caves of the Hindukush.'[83] Another kindly figure was 'Abd al-Hadi Khan, an Afghan adviser to the future Amir Aman Allah Khan who became close to 'Ubaid Allah Sindhi.[84] But Nadir Khan and 'Abd al-Hadi Khan were just two of many powerful voices at the time, and others were not so supportive; Aibak makes clear that Nadir Khan was frequently opposed in his support of British Indian Muslims by Mahmud Tarzi, whose sympathies were known to be significantly more *alla Turca*.[85] The minister in charge of court finances, known as the *mustaufī al-mamālik*, was hostile towards Sindhi as well as to the whole aims of the pan-Islamist movement. Aibak describes him gloating over the defeat of the Ottomans in 1918.[86] The failure of the Turco-German mission did not make life easier for the Indian revolutionaries either; Aibak and the Lahori students were put under even tighter restrictions, and two even left to join the *mujāhidīn* of Chamarkand and Asmast as a result of frustration over their living conditions in Kabul.[87] In 1917, under pressure from the British, Habib Allah Khan even put several Indians, including 'Ubaid Ullah Sindhi, under house arrest.[88]

Moreover, frictions between the revolutionaries themselves in Kabul undercut the sense of shared solidarity amongst them. The Turco-German Mission of 1915 was hampered not just by Amir Habib Allah Khan's loyalty to Britain but also by infighting inside the group and with prominent figures in Kabul like 'Ubaid Allah Sindhi. For Sindhi, Mahendra Pratap was a Hindu nationalist who had little interest in the plight of British Indian Muslims or of the wider '*umma*, the global community of Islam. Sindhi claims that Pratap worked at crossed purposes from the rest of the

[83] Shaukat Usmani, *Peshawar to Moscow* (1927), p. 3.
[84] Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah* (1968), p. 74.
[85] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 70.
[86] *Ibid*., pp. 124-5.
[87] *Ibid*., p. 112.
[88] Sana Haroon, 'Religious Revivalism' (2012), p. 47.

Indians in Kabul: he describes one supposed scheme of Pratap's in which he planned with the King of Nepal to set up a Hindu state in India.[89] In fact, this was probably untrue; Pratap in his own memoirs mentions that he did make contact with the King of Nepal through an envoy sent from Afghanistan, but the letter sent was simply a signed note from the German Kaiser encouraging the King's support against the British, rather than any plan on Pratap's part to set up a Hindu state.[90] Either way, Sindhi's accusations are instructive of the tensions between revolutionaries of different ideological stripes. Pratap, for his part, grew angry at Sindhi's meetings with the Turco-German mission without Pratap being present, and in which he used one of the runaway Lahori students, 'Abd al- Bari, as a translator. Maulawi Barakat Allah, too, was not free of Sindhi's criticisms, Sindhi claiming that Barakat Allah was ignorant of the region and that he had never even seen a map of Afghanistan and Northwest India.[91] The setting up of the Indian Provisional Government, therefore, was a fraught affair with the three charismatic principals – Sindhi, Pratap, and Barakat Allah – at significant ideological and personal odds with one another. Relations between Sindhi and Mahendra Pratap only grew worse after the failure of two missions through which they had planned to forge revolutionary links in Japan and Turkey. Sindhi had wanted a mission to Turkey, while Pratap had preferred Japan. In the end both missions were sent.[92] But both missions failed when the revolutionaries were seized in Mashhad by the Russians and handed over to the British.[93] The antagonism brought about by this double failure had also been compounded by a mysterious incident in which Sindhi was robbed of £300 he had been given by the Germans in

[89] Abdallah Khan, *Mawlana Ubayd Allah Sindhi's Mission* (2000), p. 45.
[90] Pratap, *Reminiscences of a Revolutionary* (1999), p. 49-50. For Kala Singh, see also Baha, 'The Activities of the Mujahidin' (1979), p. 100.
[91] Sindhī, *Kābul mēn sāt sāl* (1976), p. 44.
[92] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 107.
[93] *Ibid*.

Kabul for the missions. Rumours and allegations ran rife through the narrow alleys of the Shor Bazaar.[94]

The failure of the two missions to Japan and Turkey, as well as of the short-lived transnational organizations set up in Kabul, are indicative of both the idealism – and difficulties – of running revolutions from Kabul. For while Kabul during the period was an increasingly popular destination for idealistic revolutionaries, it was in many ways a very unsuitable base for their work. Unlike other counter-imperial centres in Berlin, Tokyo, or San Francisco, Kabul was still very patchily connected to the rest of the world. Newspapers were hard to come by: Zafar Hasan Aibak found the only way to find out about what was going on in the First World War was to go to the hospital where the Turkish doctor, Munir Beg, used to receive copies of an Indian newspaper.[95] The communications systems in Afghanistan at the time were extremely hit and miss. While letters seemed to travel between Kabul and India without too many problems,[96] further afield was difficult: Aibak makes clear that there were no communication links at that time between Germany, Turkey and Kabul, thus making various anti-imperial projects extremely hard to put into practice.[97] Moreover, the intelligence networks of the British and Russians surrounding Afghanistan meant that it was difficult to communicate with associates across the waters. This was perhaps most famously displayed in the 'Silk Letter Conspiracy' in which letters written by 'Ubaid Allah Sindhi were written on yellow silk and sewn into the lining of a messenger's coat with the hope of reaching the Sheikh al-Hind in the Hejaz. While the conspiracy triggered many anxious telegrams between British diplomats in Delhi and Istanbul, the whole scheme is more illustrative of the *lack* of

[94] *Ibid*.
[95] *Ibid*., p. 91.
[96] See, for example, *ibid*., p. 113.
[97] *Ibid*., p. 101.

communications between activists across Asia than of their connectivity. The letters, for example, demonstrate that Sindhi did not know of Sherif Husain of Mecca's siding with the British against the Ottomans - a key blow to Sindhi's plans - even though this had taken place a month before he wrote the letters.[98] The extreme lengths Sindhi went to in order to get the letters to the Ottoman Empire, and the failure of the plan before the letters had even left India, also illustrate the extent of surveillance regimes that the British were able to mobilize against the revolutionaries in Kabul, as soon as they crossed out of Afghanistan. The lack of support from the Afghan state for such revolutionary projects is also clear from the reaction: bowing to British pressure, the Afghan state put Sindhi under house arrest in the house of the pro-British *mustaufī al-mamālik*, until the assassination of Habib Allah Khan in 1919.[99]

V. The Rise of the Revolutionary Amir: Aman Allah Khan in Power

While Amir Habib Allah Khan had attempted, with great success, to keep his country neutral during the First World War, the armistice of 1918 and the assassination of Habib Allah Khan in 1919 led to a shift in policy on the part of the Afghan state. The new amir, Aman Allah Khan, was more determined than his father to wrestle full independence for his country from the British, and made much use of Muslim revolutionaries in that endeavour. A more idealistic personality than his father, Aman Allah Khan had long disagreed with Habib Allah Khan's policy of neutrality with regards to the First World War. As part of the informal 'War Party' amongst Afghan senior officials, Aman Allah Khan had pushed for declaring war on

[98] For the Silk Letter Conspiracy, see Saul Kelly, '"Crazy in the Extreme"? The Silk Letters Conspiracy,' *Middle Eastern Studies* Vol. 49, No. 2, pp. 162-178.
[99] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 114.

Britain, as a means to both show support for the Muslim Ottoman Empire which had allied with Germany against Britain, and to gain full independence for his country.

Post-war, Aman Allah Khan's pan-Islamic and anti-British sentiment chimed with the rise of the transnational Khilafat movement in India, a political protest movement driven by the Muslims of British India, driven by anger and resentment at the defeat of the Ottoman Empire and the occupation of Istanbul by allied forces.[100] The timing suited the young amir very well: with Islamic sentiment roused in India, Aman Allah Khan could play up his own pan-Islamic credentials to gain support and influence both inside and outside his borders. Moreover, with the Ottoman Empire and the Caliphate in a state of uncertainty and ambiguity, Aman Allah Khan and Afghanistan could fill the vacuum created by the lack of a clear symbolic leader or location for India's Muslims. To this end, Aman Allah Khan built on his father and grandfather's public advertising of the Afghan state as an 'Islamic state'; he stressed his Islamic credentials in speeches, lamented the plight of India's Muslims, and more vociferously than his father positioned himself and his country as dynamic, independent and authentically Islamic. Early speeches on the resurrection of the Caliphate, something the Indian Hajji Muhammad Khan had been advocating in his text of 1906, were matched by public shows of cross-border Islamic solidarity. One such event was a grand meeting of cross-border tribes at Hadda, where the Afghan government represented by Nadir Khan symbolically 'united' the tribes under a banner with an image of a white mosque on it.[101] Such pan-Islamic rhetoric fostered the amir's popularity, and also, he hoped, strengthened his position vis-à-vis Britain in his quest for full national independence.

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[100] For studies of the Khilafat movement, see Minault, *The Khilafat Movement* (1982); M. Naeem Qureshi, *Pan-Islam in British Indian Politics: A Study of the Khilafat Movement 1918-1924* (Leiden: Brill, 1999).
[101] Dietrich Reetz, *Hijrat: The Flight of the Faithful* (Berlin: Verl. Das Arabische Buch, 1995), p. 32.

Aman Allah Khan's combined pan-Islamic, anti-imperial, and nationalist agenda meant that British Indian revolutionaries found themselves well received at the start of his reign. Soon after his accession, Aman Allah Khan freed 'Ubaid Allah Sindhi from his house arrest in Jalalabad, and gave him a sizeable new home in Kabul.[102] Further, Aman Allah Khan treated Sindhi and the Provisional Government of India in these early days with much respect.[103] As his main goal was full independence for Afghanistan, these Indian revolutionaries' cross-border networks in India seemed to offer a far-reaching communications network and source of manpower and support which could prove very useful. The following section analyses Indo-Afghan interactions in the early days of Aman Allah Khan's reign, using case studies of those revolutionary journeymen who were involved in the Afghan independence movement.

V.1. Anglo-Afghan, Indo-Afghan: Afghanistan's War of Independence

The Third Anglo-Afghan War, known as the 'War of Independence' in Afghanistan, is heralded by many Afghan nationalists as a defining moment in the creation of contemporary Afghanistan, an event memorialized to this day in Afghanistan with an annual 'Independence Day' celebration held in the heat of mid-August. While the war has been analyzed from British and Afghan perspectives, what has been lacking is an analysis of the role of Indians at the 'dawn' of Afghan independence.[104] This section focuses on the young Lahori Zafar Hasan Aibak; his role in the Third Anglo-Afghan War is a fascinating case study of the kind of social

[102] Sindhī, *Kābul mēn sāt sāl* (1976), p. 72.
[103] *Ibid*., p. 83.
[104] For the Afghan perspective, see Ghulām Muhammad Ghubār, *Afghānistān dar masīr-e tārīkh,* (Kabul: Matba'ah-e Maiwand, 2009 repr.), pp. 756-785. For the British perspective, see George Molesworth, *Afghanistan 1919: An Account of Operations in the Third Afghan War* (New York: Asia Publishing House, 1962).

mobility by which a foreign-educated Muslim could gain a position of great influence in the Afghan state during the period. Aibak himself was well aware of his swift rise, noting how he had started as a homeless refugee and ended up as a military adviser and confidant to the future king of Afghanistan.[105]

The Third Anglo-Afghan War was designed by Aman Allah Khan to both strengthen support for his rule in Afghanistan in the wake of his accession to the throne, and to take advantage of the weak position of the British in India in the aftermath of World War One. Buoyed by exaggerated reports of unrest in British India, Aman Allah Khan planned an attack on British India on three fronts – Dakka, Khost, and Kandahar – while also hoping for an uprising in Peshawar that would support the Afghan army's offensive. The regular Afghan army troops, it was hoped, would be bolstered by *lashkars* of border tribesmen. As war-planning began amongst Afghanistan's senior military officials, Zafar Hasan Aibak, who had been living in Kabul for four years under the close eye of the Afghan state, was suddenly allowed to leave the capital and was made a military advisor on the 'southern front'.[106] Aibak was not an anomaly in this regard; every command centre on the front had Indian advisers at the highest level. Alongside Aibak, 'Ubaid Allah Sindhi and the Indian Khushi Muhammad were advisers in the Eastern front working from Jalalabad, and Sindhi's nephew Muhammad 'Ali worked on the Kandahari front.[107]

By what means did these Indian advisers gain such prominent positions in the Afghan military? Aibak commented on his lack of military expertise and was convinced he was unsuited for such a role. Part of his rise was a matter of trust – Nadir Khan had protected him on his arrival in Afghanistan and the two had grown close, with Aibak tutoring his sons and even becoming Nadir Khan's chess partner.

[105] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 216.
[106] *Ibid*., pp. 145-6.
[107] Abdallah Khan, *Mawlana Ubayd Allah Sindhi's Mission* (2000), p. 65.

Aibak owed Nadir Khan loyalty for Nadir's support, and their four years together in Kabul seems to have made Aibak a more trusted confidante in Nadir Khan's eyes than his own Afghan staff officers.[108] Like the Qizilbash courtiers of the 18th and 19th century who served Afghan royalty, the lack of familial and kinship ties with Afghans seemed to have made Aibak an attractively independent asset for Nadir Khan. At the same time, Indians like Aibak offered experiential knowledge of the cross-border tribes and provided networks, at least in theory, stretching down into the Punjab and Sindh. For Afghan state officials involved in war planning, these networks offered the promise of fomenting a 'fifth column' of Muslims in India to rise up against the British, at the same time as the Afghan military could make their attack across the border into India. To this end, during the planning stages of the war, Aman Allah Khan asked 'Ubaid Allah Sindhi to send messages to his associates in India, informing them of the impending war and asking them to help.[109]

While Aibak denied having any particular military aptitude, his supposed knowledge of the tribal areas and Nadir Khan's belief in his general trustworthinesss meant that he was asked to gather information on troop numbers, military positions, trench layouts of the British and Afghan lines. He also prepared maps that were used by Afghan commanders in planning their attacks.[110] Aibak would continue such mapping projects after the war, when he combined his information gathering with the introduction of new technologies, such as the 'pantograph', imported from India, with which maps could be scaled to different sizes.[111] Nadir Khan saw that these maps

[108] *Ibid*., p. 151.
[109] Zafar Hasan Aibak, 'Ubaidullah Sindhi in Afghanistan,' *Journal of Regional, Cultural Institute Tehran* Vol. 1, p. 133 quoted in Marwat, *Evolution and Growth of Communism in Afghanistan* (1997), p. 190. I have been unable to find this original article by Aibak.
[110] For example, Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 151, 167.
[111] *Ibid*., p. 191.

were printed at the government presses.[112] Soon after the end of the war, such military cartographic projects would usher in a new era of scientific and technical travel-writings on behalf of the Afghan state, ranging from accounts of Amir Aman Allah's inspection of the administration of Kandahar to detailed anthropological and cartographic studies of the border regions of Qataghan and Badakhshan.[113] This last endeavour, including the drawing of detailed maps of the region, was carried out by Nadir Khan, along with another associate of Aibak's, the Afghan journalist Burhan al-Din Kushkaki.[114] Aside from the Indo-Afghan collaborative cartographic projects, during the war Indian revolutionaries worked with the Afghan printing presses to produce and disseminate anti-British propaganda. 'Ubaid Allah Sindhi used the Afghan presses in Kabul to print a message which was carried across the border by Sindhi's nephew and one of Aibak's Lahori classmates.[115] Such Indians in Kabul were also used as envoys by the Afghan court to the Tribal Areas of the Indo-Afghan border. Sindhi acted as the go-between for Aman Allah Khan and a union of mullas of the frontier tribes of Mohmand and Bajaur. These mullas agreed to Sindhi to provide fighting men to the Afghan amir in return for material and moral support and the promise that their internal affairs would not be interfered in by the Afghan court.[116] Another Indian Deobandi in Afghanistan, 'Abd al-Razaq Khan, was used by the Afghan court to enlist men amongst the Waziri tribes. Aman Allah Khan deputed

[112] *Ibid*.
[113] For Aman Allah Khan's inspection reports of the provinces, see A'lā-hazrat Amān Allāh Khān Ghāzī, *Hākimiyat-e qānūn dar Afghānistān*, ed. Habīb Allāh Rafī' (Peshawar: Kitābkhānah-e darwīsh, 1999). For the account of Qataghan and Badakhshan, see Burhān al-Dīn Kushkakī, *Rāhnamā-ye Qataghan-o-Badakhshān* (Kabul: Wazārat-e harbiyah, 1923). Parts of this last work have been translated into French by Marguerite Reut as Maulawi Borhān al-din Khān Koshkaki, *Qataghan et Badakhshān*, trans. Marguerite Reut (Paris: Editions du centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1979).
[114] For the role of cartography in 'nation-building' in Afghanistan's neighbor Iran, see Firoozeh Kashani-Sabet, *Frontier Fictions: Shaping the Iranian Nation, 1804-1946* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999).
[115] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), pp. 136-140
[116] For a detailed analysis of these arrangements see Haroon, *Frontier of Faith* (2007), pp. 107-112.

him to organize the risings of the tribes on the Indian side of the border, giving him an official seal and authority to act on his behalf, as well as sanctioning his use of government funds for the purpose.[117]

While the Afghan state gave significant responsibility to Indian revolutionaries like Aibak, this does not alter the fact that the results of these Indians' work were very mixed. While we have seen how Muslims' view of Afghanistan during the period could be idealized through a lack of knowledge, so too could Afghans idealize Muslims in British India. There seems to have been large-scale exaggeration and over-confidence on the part of these Indian advisers in Afghanistan about the actual conditions in India and the likelihood of widespread uprisings.[118] Indians in Peshawar, along with the Afghan postmaster based there, had given the impression to Kabul that India was on the verge of revolt and that Peshawar would rise up against the British as the Afghan troops crossed the border. In fact, there were no great uprisings, and, after a brief aerial bombing campaign by the British against targets in Jalalabad and Kabul, Aman Allah Khan was forced to accept a cease-fire in early June 1919. Nevertheless, even in peace negotiations, the Afghan government still felt inclined to give prominent roles to Indian advisers: the Kabuli Hindu Narinjan Das and the Punjabi educationalist Dr Abdul Ghani (recently freed after many years languishing in jail) were part of the eight-strong Afghan delegation.[119]

V.2. The Rise and Rise of the Indian Revolutionary in Kabul

The rise of Nadir Khan, who was treated as a war-hero for his command of Afghan troops in the Third Anglo-Afghan War, meant that those Indians close to him

[117] See *Ibid*., p. 110.
[118] Adamec, *Afghanistan 1900*-1923 (1967), p. 113.
[119] Marwat, *Evolution and Growth of Communism in Afghanistan* (1997), p. 159.

were able to gain further prominent roles in Afghanistan's post-independence era. Aibak was moved to the general staff in Kabul, where he worked on 'tribal relations', keeping files on the border tribes, and gathering information on 'the head and leaders of each tribe, their number of members, their estimated military strength, estimated number of weapons, their financial situation, their political inclinations and other things.'[120] Like the cartographic projects above, such work was the result of the Afghan state's awareness of its lack of knowledge of its own country; the Afghan state did not have the kind of systematized bureaucratic knowledge of the tribes that the British in India had been compiling for the best part of a century. Aibak's research on the tribes was thus an attempt by the Afghan state to 'get to know itself', building up more formalized information about the tribes to inform policy. Ironically, in order to gain more information on the tribes, Aibak used British books, and even started to translate into Persian the British military officer H.C. Wylly's book 'From the Black Mountains to Waziristan', a study of border tribes based on official British government sources.[121] While this episode offers an intriguing glimpse into the use of colonial sources by non-colonial powers, Aibak believed that the translated book never, in the end, made it into print.[122]

Aibak's literary endeavours were more successful, however, in the realm of newspaper publishing. His knowledge and experience of the trans-border region meant that he found employment in the Afghan state's new newspaper, *Ittihād-e mashriqī* (Eastern Union) set up by Nadir Khan with the aim of reinforcing the bond between the eastern tribes of Afghanistan and the border regions and the Afghan state. The newspaper published foreign news from the English and Urdu press in India,

[120] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 190.
[121] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), pp. 190-191. H.C. Wylly, *From the Black Mountain to Waziristan* (London: Macmillan and Co, 1912).
[122] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 191.

mostly focusing on the Khilaftist actions of agitation in India and Turkey and the need for jihad.[123] Unsurprisingly given his seeming ability to put his hand to any task set him, Zafar Hasan Aibak was its first editor.[124] Another British Indian, Allah Nawaz Khan of Multan, was assistant editor.[125] Intriguingly, however, the Afghan government did not wish to admit openly to Aibak's editorship and so Burhan al-Din Kushkaki, an Afghan from the north of the country who had been educated in British India, was named as the official editor. In his memoir, Aibak criticized Kushkaki, stating that although he knew some Urdu, he knew little of the world.[126]

VI. Post-War Afghanistan

During the aftermath of the First World War, a feeling of despondency and resentment reigned amongst Muslims across Asia. The break-up of the Ottoman Empire had put an end to the last great Islamic empire, and western imperialism seemed to reign supreme.[127] Afghanistan's gaining of independence from the British in 1919, the first Muslim nation to do so, thus offered one of the few sources of hope and inspiration for Muslims around the world amidst the general gloom. As in the time of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan and Habib Allah Khan, the Afghan state was quick to latch onto the opportunity presented by such world events for Afghanistan's own gain. With the break-up of the Ottoman Empire, Aman Allah Khan suggested that Afghanistan could take the Ottoman Empire's place as the spiritual and political centre of the Muslim world. To that end, Aman Allah Khan lobbied for himself to be

[123] *Ibid*., pp. 183-4. While the only extant copy of this newspaper I have seen is in the Afghan National Archives in Kabul, there are many translated excerpts of articles in the India Office records. See, for example, IOR/L/P&J/6/1701.
[124] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 183.
[125] Adamec, *Afghanistan's Foreign Affairs* (1974), p. 117.
[126] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 184.
[127] For a popular historical overview of this period, see David Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace: The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East* (New York: Avon Books, 1989).

recognized as the new Caliph; British archival documents from the period demonstrate that various members of the Afghan government approached the British about the possibility of his being acknowledged as such.[128] While this was as much rhetoric and front as serious intent, the Afghan state's vociferous publicizing of its successes in war and the patent energy and chutzpah of Afghanistan's young amir in turn inspired a new wave of revolutionary journeymen into Afghanistan. On a more pragmatic level, Aman Allah Khan's desire to overhaul the Afghan state's administrative, military, educational and bureaucratic systems, meant more job opportunities for educated Indians from the great labour pool across the border.

The Afghan military, buoyed by their proclaimed success in the Third Anglo-Afghan War, continued to attract and employ revolutionary journeymen. Aside from Zafar Hasan's Aibak's work at the Ministry of War, he was now also employed to teach at the military academy in Kabul.[129] Another British Indian, Aziz Hindi, came as a *muhājir* in 1920, joined the Afghan army and rose to the rank of Colonel.[130] The biggest coup of all for the Afghan army, however, was the arrival at Kabul of the Ottoman Jamal Pasha (1872-1922), one of the 'Three Pashas' who had acted as *de facto* rulers of the Ottoman Empire during the First World War.[131] Jamal Pasha had fled the Ottoman Empire after its defeat in October 1918, and had made his way to Berlin, Switzerland, and then on to Afghanistan, arriving into Kabul in 1920 with a small team which included the old head of the Istanbul police force, Badri Beg and

[128] See R.R. Maconachie, *A Précis on Afghan Affairs From February 1919 to September 1927* (Simla: Government of Indian Press, 1928), IOR/L/P&S/20/B285, pp. 261-265.
[129] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 176.
[130] Hindi is supposed to have written a study of Aman Allah Khan, Azīz Hindī, *Zawāl-e Ghāzi Amān Allah Khān* (Amritsar: n.p., 1934), quoted in Marwat, *Evolution and Growth of Communism in Afghanistan* (1997), p. 192. I have unfortunately been unable to find this work.
[131] For Jamal Pasha's memoirs of his role in the First World War, see Jamal Pasha, *Memories of a Turkish Statesman*, 1913-1919 (New York: George H. Doran, 1922).

his aide de camp, Ismat Beg.[132] Jamal Pasha was soon put in charge of reorganizing the Afghan army.[133] The exact process by which Jamal Pasha ended up in Afghanistan remains somewhat unclear, although his need to find a safe haven after being sentenced to death for war crimes by a Turkish military court was clearly one motivation. Jamal Pasha also had a certain previous connection with 'Ubaid Allah Sindhi's pan-Islamic network, even meeting with the Sheikh al-Hind, Sindhi's spiritual and political mentor, during the latter's time spent in Madina.[134] Jamal Pasha was soon living close to 'Ubaid Allah Sindhi in Kabul.[135] Despite their geographic proximity and seeming shared ideological ends, Sindhi and Jamal Pasha were not close. Indeed, the two usually sent messages to each other through an intermediary, the omnipresent Zafar Hasan Aibak.[136] Aibak claims that Jamal Pasha never understood 'Ubaid Allah Sindhi's status and had little respect for it.[137] Indeed, Jamal Pasha seems not to have understood the subtle dynamics of relations between Afghan officials and revolutionary journeymen in Kabul. This most clearly manifested itself in very poor relations between himself and Nadir Khan, both of whom considered themselves the senior military authority in the country.[138]

Alongside work in the military, the revolutionary journeymen's multi-lingual skills found them work in the polyglot Afghan capital. 'Abd al-Akbar Khan Akbar took a translation exam and got a job as a personal translator for Jamal Pasha, who did not speak Persian, Pashto, Urdu, nor English, in a little office manned by another

[132] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), pp. 192-5. For Jamal Pasha's arrival, see Qureshi, *Pan-Islam* (1999), p. 223.
[133] For this period, see Stephanie Cronin, 'Building and Rebuilding Afghanistan's Army: An Historical Perspective,' *Journal of Military History* Vol. 75, No. 1 (2011), pp. 45-91.
[134] Abdallah Khan, *Mawlana Ubayd Allah Sindhi's Mission* (2000), p. 19.
[135] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), pp. 192-3.
[136] *Ibid*., p. 196.
[137] *Ibid*.
[138] *Ibid*., pp. 192-4.

Indian exile Iqbal Shedai (1888-1974).[139] Shedai would later use the money he had saved while running the office to pay for his revolutionary travels to Central Asia.[140] Another British Indian, a Lahori student named Allah Nawaz Khan, worked for Nadir Khan's brother, Hashim Khan, and went on to translate for the Mehtar of Chitral who had recently made a home in Kabul, and whose daughter Allah Nawaz Khan married.[141]

Such transnational collaborations were to continue and flourish as newly independent Afghanistan gained control of its foreign policy for the first time. As a result of the peace treaties after the Third Anglo-Afghan War, Afghanistan was now able to send and receive diplomatic missions, and to communicate with other governments on issues of foreign policy. Such burgeoning diplomatic relations meant that there were new job opportunities for the well-travelled revolutionary journeymen of Kabul. Some Indians in Kabul were asked to join diplomatic missions coming into Afghanistan: Mahendra Pratap managed to get himself included in the Soviet Union's first deputation, since the Soviet Union considered it would smooth the way of their Ambassador to have a friend of the amir's to introduce him.[142] Another Indian, a Pashtun veteran of the Khilafat movement named 'Abd al-Rahman Khan Peshawari, had fought in the Balkan wars and then spent many years in the Ottoman Empire. When the Turkish government sent their first embassy to Kabul in the spring of 1921, Peshawari was their representative and became a popular figure on the social scene; Akbar describes Peshawari's love of Pashto poetry and literature, and the two would

[139] Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah* (1968), p. 185; Abdallah Khan, *Mawlana Ubayd Allah Sindhi's Mission* (2000), p. 95. For Shedai's own account of his travels, see his serialized account, 'Inqilābī kī sarguzasht,' which appeared weekly in the Lahori newspaper *Imrūz* from January through May 1967.
[140] Abdallah Khan *Mawlana Ubayd Allah Sindhi's Mission* (2000), p. 84.
[141] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 190. For the Mehtar of Chitral, see *ibid*., p. 214.
[142] Pratap, *Reminiscences of a Revolutionary* (1999), p. 38.

meet to recite the poetry of the contemporary Pashto poet 'Makhfi', which Peshawari would then translate into Turkish.[143]

Foreign diplomatic missions brought with them spies, and financial reward beckoned for those happy to work as paid informant or secret agent. The Soviet Union had been very keen to foster strong links with Afghanistan, and was the first state to recognize Afghanistan's independence and sovereignty on March 27th 1919.[144] Many revolutionaries in Kabul soon had links of one sort or another with the Soviet Legation. The Indian communist, Khushi Muhammad, who had visited Moscow before and was the head of the Kabul branch of M.N. Roy's Communist Party of India, acted as a recruiter for the Bolshevik government; he brought at least one prominent Indian in Kabul, Colonel Aziz Hindi, under the influence of the Bolsheviks, from whom he received money presumably in return for information.[145] Sindhi, too, became a frequent visitor to the Soviet Legation. Badrakhi visited there to meet Maulawi 'Abd al-Rabb Peshawari (not to be confused with the Ottoman poetry-loving 'Abd al-Rahman Khan Peshawari described above), a British Indian who had worked at the British Embassy in Baghdad before coming to Kabul.[146] In 1919 Peshawari travelled to Moscow with Maulawi Barakat Allah, who was sent by Aman Allah Khan as a kind of Afghan 'Extraordinary Ambassador' in Moscow. Peshawari then returned to Kabul where he was involved in attempting to persuade Aman Allah Khan to smuggle Bolshevik materials and agents into India. Peshawari also set up with other socialist-inclined Indians a new revolutionary body, the

[143] Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah* (1968), p. 187.
[144] The text of this announcement from Lenin to Aman Allah Khan can be found in Hay'at-hā-ye tahrīriyah-e afghānī wa shūrawī, *Munāsibāt-e Afghānistān wa Ittihād-e Shūrawī dar sāl-hā-ye 1919-1969* (Kabul: Arshīf-e wazārat-e khārijah, 1971), p. 3; also, Marwat, *Evolution and Growth of Communism in Afghanistan* (1997), p. 159.
[145] *Ibid*.
[146] For information on 'Abd al-Rabb Peshawari, see Muzaffar Ahmad, *Myself and the Communist Party of India, 1920-1929* (Calcutta: National Book Agency Private Ltd, 1970).

Inqilābiyūn-e Hind ('The Indian Revolutionaries'), to carry out anti-British activity from Kabul.[147]

Within a short space of time the Soviet Legation became a particular locus of anti-British activity, combining activities in Kabul with links to the Chamarkand *mujāhidīn* colony through the anti-British Deobandi scholar Hajji 'Abd al-Razaq Khan.[148] Like Kabul, Chamarkand was less dangerous in itself than in its role as a node, what British intelligence called 'a link' or 'agency' between other revolutionaries.[149] Aman Allah Khan had at first encouraged these connections with the Soviet Legation, keen to find a bulwark and counter-balance to British influence in his country. To this end, the amir had even sent Maulawi Barakat Allah and 'Abd al-Rabb Peshawari to Moscow to seek assistance from the Soviets.[150] For the revolutionaries, the Soviet Union provided the opportunity for further education, networking, and support from a great power that nevertheless at this stage seemed supportive of anti-colonial independence struggles. 'Abd al-Rabb Peshawari mentioned to Badrakhi the possibility of infantry or air-force training in Tashkent if it were useful, and many of the revolutionaries took up similar offers.[151] The creation of a university in Tashkent - the Eastern University for Asiatic Toilers – would go on to attract many Indian and Afghan revolutionaries, including Aibak, Khushi Muhammad, and 'Abd al-Akbar Khan Akbar.[152] In this way, Afghanistan acted as a 'gateway' through which many Indian radicals became involved with international communism and leftist ideologies and politics.[153]

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[147] Some of this propaganda material made its way into British India, and into the British archives, see Ansari, 'Pan-Islam' (1986), p. 520.
[148] Baha, 'The Activities of the Mujahidin' (1979), p. 115.
[149] *Ibid*., p. 116.
[150] Ansari, 'Pan-Islam' (1986), p. 517.
[151] Badrakhī, *Da āzādī pah talāsh* (1987), pp. 57-8.
[152] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 181. For Khushi Muhammad in Tashkent, see *ibid*., p. 182.
[153] For a fuller study of the development of socialism amongst Indians outside India, see K. H. Ansari, *The Emergence of Muslim Socialists and their Ideas in India between 1917 and 1947* (Ph.D.

The Afghan state's anti-British stance and Afghanistan's status as a safe haven and training camp for Indian anti-imperial revolutionaries during the early days of Aman Allah Khan's reign, also meant that attacks on British Indian targets could be plotted and planned by Indians in Kabul, and carried out in collaboration with the *mujāhidīn* colonies just across the Afghan border. As early as 1914, the U.S. based newspaper, *Ghadar,* had noted the rise of Kabul as a revolutionary centre, advertising Kabul as a place where revolutionaries could go 'to learn to manufacture rifles, boxes full of which they could then bring back for lavish distribution in Punjab.'[154] This is exactly what happened a few years later during the 'Gujranwala Conspiracy' of 1920, in which a Chamarkandi *mujāhid* attempted to murder a Police Constable. Later, a cache of bombs used in various attacks in the area was found to have been manufactured in Kabul and transported by Chamarkandi *mujāhidīn* across the border.[155]

At the same time, the shifting political situation in Central Asia, with the downfall of the Bukharan amirate, the rise of the Bolsheviks, and the emergence of the anti-Bolshevik counter-revolutionary *bāsmāchi* meant that Afghanistan could be a launching pad for attacks on Soviet Central Asia as well as British India. With many Indian journeymen in Kabul building links with the Bolshevik Embassy in Kabul, and counter-revolutionary *bāsmāchi* flooding the country, the Afghan state now found itself housing and supporting revolutionary journeymen with diametrically opposed views. Of particular note was the arrival of the last amir of Bukhara, Muhammad 'Alim Khan (1880-1944), who had been driven out of his own city and escaped to Kabul. First settling in a house in the Qal'ah-e Hazarah-ha district of Murad Khani,

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dissertation, University of London, 1984); Tilak Raj Sareen, *Indian revolutionary movement abroad, 1905-1921* (Delhi: Sterling, 1979); G.L. Dmitriev, *Indian Revolutionaries in Central Asia* (Kolkata: Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies, 2002).

[154] Ramnath, *Haj to Utopia* (2011), pp. 184-5.

[155] Baha, 'The Activities of the Mujahidin' (1979), p. 112.

'Alim Khan was later given a palace known as *Qal'ah-e Fatū* in Chehelsitun on the western outskirts of the city, and a stipend by the Afghan government.[156] From this location 'Alim Khan kept in touch with his commander-in-chief, Ibrahim Beg, who was waging a counter-revolutionary campaign against the Bolsheviks in Bukhara.[157] The amir used messengers on horseback to dispatch his orders and to gather news from the front.[158] This counter-revolutionary movement in Kabul was bolstered by the arrival of Enver Pasha (1881-1922) in 1921, which meant that two of the 'Three Pashas' that had effectively ruled the Ottoman Empire during the First World War had now sought refuge in Kabul. Enver Pasha had originally been working for the Soviet Union as a military commander, but had changed sides to lead the *bāsmāchi* as part of his grand vision to create a pan-Turanian federation under his leadership in Central Asia.[159] Afghan state officials were not consistent in their views on such counter-revolutionary figures. For some excitable officials, Enver Pasha's mission could be used to provide an opportunity for the Afghan state to annex Bukhara; for others, the defence of Islam against the atheist Bolsheviks deserved Afghan state support;[160] for others, such a mission was a menace and potentially damaging to Afghanistan's courting of the Soviet Union as a promising new ally against the British

[156] For the amir's own account of his time in Afghanistan, see A'lā-hazrat Amīr Sayyid 'Ālim Khān Amīr-e Bukhārā, *Tārīkh-e huzn al-millal-e Bukhārā* (Kabul: Intishārāt-e faizī, 2009). This house in Murad Khani is attested by current Murad Khani residents, although it now longer exists. It is not clear if this is the *Qala'ah Sakhī* which he mentions in his memoirs, *ibid*., p. 49. For the amir's arrival into Kabul, see the speech of Amir Aman Allah Khan published in *Amān-e afghān* Year 1, No. 45, pp. 4-5.

[157] For Ibrahim Beg, see Yuri V. Gankovsky, 'Ibrahim Beg Lakai: An Outstanding Leader of Bāsmāchi Movement in Central Asia,' *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies* Vol. 16, No. 4 (1993), pp. 1-8.

[158] Khan, *Tārīkh-e huzn* (2009), pp. 53-55.

[159] For a study of the *bāsmāchi* movement, see Hélène Carrère d'Encausse, *Islam and the Russian Empire: Reform and Revolution in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2009 repr.); Martha B. Olcott, 'The Bāsmāchi or Freemen's Revolt in Turkestan 1918-24,' *Soviet Studies* Vol. 33, No. 3 (1981), pp. 352–369; Fazal-ur-Rahim Khan Marwat: *The Bāsmāchi movement in Soviet Central Asia: A study in political development* (Peshawar: Emjay Books International, 1985).

[160] British archival records note that Mahmud Tarzi, then Foreign Minister, approached the British Ambassador Sir Francis Humphrys about the possibility of the British supplying weapons to the *bāsmāchi* forces through Afghanistan, see *Review of Events in Afghanistan, December 1921 to December 1923*, L/P&S/12/1049, Part 7, p. 103.

in India. Such diverse views created a complex and contradictory set of policies pursued by members of the Afghan state, including financial and military support for Enver Pasha against the Soviet Union, at the same time as the Afghan state was building diplomatic relations with that same country.[161]

The contradictory policies of the Afghan state towards the Soviet Union and *bāsmāchi* movement are indicative of the confusions and difficulties of life for foreign journeymen in post-war Kabul. The range of motives and aims driving these travellers meant that there was much tension and mutual suspicion amongst this small and dynamic circle in Kabul. Personal jealousies and paranoia were rife in the city: in the case of the Soviet informant Khushi Muhammad, his proximity to the Bolsheviks angered elements of the Afghan government. Fortunately, 'Ubaid Ullah Sindhi intervened on Khushi Muhammad's behalf and kept him out of trouble.[162] It was a complicated alliance between Sindhi and Khushi Muhammad; Sindhi knew that Khushi Muhammad was both a communist and a Soviet spy, and yet he seems to have supported him while in Kabul, perhaps aware of the possible value of his links to the Soviet Union in the future.[163] For the young Indian nationalist, Shaukat Usmani, 'Ubaid Allah Sindhi's 'face spelt reaction, his speech revealed intrigue.'[164] When Sindhi tried to gain Usmani's support, Usmani told him that, 'we, who had traversed so many mountains in search of knowledge were not going to be utilized as dupes by self-aggrandizing or self-advertising adventurers.'[165] Aibak, too, was not immune from charges of espionage: having been accused of being a British spy once by the

[161] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 203.
[162] *Ibid*., p. 209.
[163] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 213.
[164] Usmani, *Peshawar to Moscow:* (1927), p. 7.
[165] *Ibid*., p. 7.

Afghan state, Aibak was later accused again, this time by a British Indian refugee named ‘Abd al-Latif who was working as a personal tutor in Kabul.[166]

One of the most illuminating examples of the tensions between Afghans and Indians was the issue of creating a higher education facility in Kabul. For, while the development of an education system teaching the ‘new sciences’ had been ongoing in Afghanistan for almost twenty years, there was still no university in the country. ‘Ubaid Allah Sindhi therefore proposed the setting up of an Urdu University in Kabul.[167] Aibak, ever willing to turn his hand to a new project, was given the task of overseeing its administration and finances.[168] Nadir Khan, a fluent Urdu speaker himself, was extremely supportive of the project, and even provided land at Aliabad for the proposed university.[169] Nevertheless, the project was abandoned without getting off the ground. Aibak suggests that the university was effectively vetoed by Afghan officials and even Afghan students who feared an erosion of Afghan national identity.[170] He describes open hostility manifested against Indian teachers and the Urdu language, with Afghan students even protesting and going on strike against the proposed plan.[171] While Nile Green has argued for the importance of Urdu as a mediating language between Afghanistan and its neighbours, this episode reveals that Urdu could be a politically divisive language as well as a medium of collaboration.[172]

The failure of Indo-Afghan projects like the university is indicative of the ambiguity in the relationships between Afghan state officials and Indians in Afghanistan. For the Afghan state’s nationalist agenda contained both institutional and ideological dimensions; in the case of institutions, the Indians clearly brought

[166] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 201.
[167] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 202.
[168] *Ibid*.
[169] *Ibid.*
[170] Aibak, p. 210
[171] *Ibid*.
[172] For this argument, see Green, ‘Transborder Traffic’ (2011).

much practical ability and technical knowledge that the Afghan state could use. But ideologically, Indian influence in Kabul was a much more divisive question. Aman Allah Khan was playing a dangerous game during this period, championing national and transnational ideologies simultaneously, and at times they jarred: much of his espousal of pan-Islamic solidarity with Muslim brothers in India and Turkey and pan-Pashtun solidarity with the cross-border tribes was an attempt to gain allies in his more narrowly nationalistic independence movement. These transnational ideologies of pan-Islam and Pashtun ethno-nationalism clashed with his espousal of an Afghan nation-state nationalism, which promoted the rights and culture of 'Afghans', a word newly appropriated to mean anyone living inside the nation-state of Afghanistan. These Indians were a complication: they were not Afghan citizens, did not speak 'Afghan' languages, and their political aims did not always chime with the foreign policy directives of the Afghan state.

The travel memoirs of these revolutionary Indians therefore challenge the view of harmonious Afghan-Indian interactions in Afghanistan during the period, and rather stress how the idealism of the Muslim turn to Afghanistan was slowly eroded. Unlike the travelogues of earlier chapters, these travel memoirs much more explicitly analyse the fraught and unhappy relations between Afghans and Muslims in Afghanistan. Nowhere is this gap between idea and reality clearer than in the case of the disastrous Hijrat Movement of 1920, to which this chapter now turns.

VII. The Hijrat Movement of 1920

Over the previous sections we have watched the steady rise of Afghanistan as an uneasy revolutionary centre. The shifting contexts of external and internal political change - the break-up of the Ottoman Empire at the end of the First World War, anti-

imperial agitation in British India, the rise of the Soviet Union, the death of Habib Allah Khan and the accession of Aman Allah Khan – have been illustrated as driving the influx of an increasingly disparate group of radicals using Kabul as a base for their varied projects of resistance and reform. The Hijrat Movement marks the extraordinary culmination of such cross-border interactions, as handfuls of educated revolutionary journeymen were replaced by tens of thousands of indigent Indian Muslims seeking to leave the moral and physical hardships of life under colonial rule in British India.

Despite the Hijrat Movement being the largest single movement of people between British India and Afghanistan in the first half of the 20th century, the movement has received relatively little scholarly attention.[173] The fullest treatments thus far have been Dietrich Reetz's extended monograph on the movement, which reconstructs the events of 1920 using British colonial sources, and K.H. Ansari's detailed account, which combines British colonial sources with Urdu sources - primarily newspapers - from the period.[174] What is lacking from accounts of the movement, however, is a detailed analysis from the perspective of those who took part.[175] What were the motives, mindset, and changing emotions of the participants as they made their way from British India to Afghanistan, and the conceptual impact of the Hijrat Movement on those who were involved, Afghans and Indians alike?

The main sources used to answer these questions are the Pashto language travel memoirs of the young Pashtun intellectuals and activists Akbar Mian Shah

[173] The Hijrat Movement receives only four and a half pages (pp. 103-107) in Minault, *The Khilafat Movement* (1982) for example.
[174] Reetz, *Hijrat* (1995). See also M. Naeem Qureshi, *Pan-Islam* (1999), Ch. 3; *idem*, 'The 'Ulamā' of British India and the Hijrat of 1920,' *Modern Asian Studies* Vol. 13, No. 1 (1979), pp. 41-59; Ansari, 'Pan-Islam' (1986); Lal Baha, 'The Hijrat Movement and the North West Frontier Province,' *Islamic Studies* Vol. 18 (1979), pp. 231-242; F.J. Briggs, 'The Indian Hijrat of 1920,' *Moslem World* Vol. 20, No. 2 (April 1930), pp. 167-86. I have unfortunately been unable to find Rāja Rashīd Mahmūd, *Tārīkh-e hijrat 1920* (Lahore, 1986).
[175] *Pace* Ramnath, 'Hajj to Utopia', pp. 194-232.

Badrakhi and ‘Abd al-Akbar Khan Akbar, both of whom took part in the movement, as well as the 1927 English language text of the Indian Shaukat Usmani. The texts offer a wealth of information on the experiences of those involved, and, crucially, a window onto the worldview of these ill-starred *muhājirīn*. The texts open by describing the boiling fervour of idealism and excitement amongst Indian Muslims about the promise of Afghanistan. However, as their narratives progress, the texts reveal something quite different: the unbridgeable gap between how Afghanistan was imagined and how it was in reality. The texts’ narrative thus mark the profound disenchantment produced by the experience, a disenchantment felt by both Afghans and Indians alike. It was this disenchantment, the chapter argues, that destroyed the dream of Afghanistan as the great hope of Islam and Asia. Relations between British Indian Muslims and Afghanistan would never be the same again.

VII.1. The Roots of the Hijrat in India

We have seen earlier in this chapter how Aman Allah Khan played off widespread Muslim despondency and anger in the aftermath of the First World War to gain influence at home and abroad at the beginning of his reign. His rhetoric of Islamic solidarity, and his military forays into British territory during the Third Anglo-Afghan War, stoked both Muslim idealism and British paranoia about Afghanistan. For both Indian Muslims and British administrators, Aman Allah Khan’s forceful words and energetic actions suggested what Afghanistan *could* be: for Indian Muslims, Afghanistan looked like it could be a strong, independent Muslim land; for British administrators, Afghanistan looked like it could be a headache.

The background to the Hijrat Movement of 1920 is best understood through a triangulation of these three players – Afghan, British Indian, and British. In India,

Indian anger at the lack of reward for services rendered in fighting alongside the British in the First World War had been matched by the increasingly confrontational attitude of the British colonial powers, as witnessed in such events as the 'Amritsar Massacre' of August 1919. Added to this was the ignominy of the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire, the last great Muslim empire in Asia, which was felt keenly by India's Muslims. From such wellsprings of unrest came the parallel and, at their beginning, interwoven movements of Gandhian non-cooperation and the Khilafat movement.[176] In the pressure-cooker environment of an increasingly repressive and uneasy colonial India, the idea of 'flight' from the country was one that understandably caught the imagination of many Muslims in India. Such an idea of religious flight had historical and religious precedent: the question of whether British India was *dār al-harb* or *dār al-Islām* had periodically engaged the ulema of British India, ever since the famous 19th century *fatwā* of Shah 'Abd al-Aziz (1746-1824) had argued that British India was indeed *dār al-harb*.[177] As such, 'Abd al-Aziz had promoted hijrat i.e. flight to *dār al-Islām,* although such pronouncements seem to have been more an act of protest than a genuine call to action.[178] As we have seen in the previous chapters, however, this idea of 'religious flight' from British India had for decades spurred Indians to look across the border to Afghanistan; in return, the Afghan state had followed a 'hijrat policy' which had encouraged and welcomed such Indian Muslims to seek shelter in Afghanistan 'in the shade of the protection of the government of Islam.' However, up to this point, the notion of hijrat had been more a

[176] For an account of the context and emergence of the Khilafat Movement, see Minault (1982), Ch. 2.
[177] Qureshi, 'The 'Ulamā' of British India' (1979), p. 41. For an excellent discussion of the debates about the status of British India as *dār al-harb* or not, see *idem, Pan-Islam* (1999), pp. 174-180. For a discussion of the concept of hijrat, see Muhammad Khalid Masud, 'The obligation to migrate: the doctrine of *hijra* in Islamic law' in Dale F. Eickelman and James Piscatori (eds.), *Muslim travellers: pilgrimage, migration, and the religious imagination* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1990).
[178] For an analysis of 'Abd al-Aziz's *fatwā* see P. Hardy, *The Muslims of British India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), p. 51; Qureshi, 'The 'Ulamā' of British India' (1979), pp. 41-2, n. 3; *idem*, *Pan-Islam* (1999), p. 176.

matter of personal choice than a banner under which to foment large-scale political action by India's Muslims. Spotting the potential of the concept, two prominent Khilafatists, Shaukat 'Ali and his brother Muhammad 'Ali, raised the question of hijrat in a memorial to the then viceroy, Lord Chelmsford (1868-1933) in April 1919, stating that 'when a land is not safe for Islam a Muslim has only two alternatives, jihad or hijrat.'[179]

As an offshoot of this larger Khilafat movement, many of the Hijrat Movement's intellectual instigators were the same as those of the Khilafat, most particularly the Indian religious scholars Qiyam al-Din Muhammad 'Abd al-Bari (1879-1926) and Abu al-Kalam Muhyi al-Din Ahmad Azad (1888-1958), who had provided the intellectual underpinning and religious sanction for the Khilafatists' actions. Azad first mentioned the option of hijrat in a speech in February 1920, and the concept was soon taken up by Indian religious scholars elsewhere. While still only a theoretical possibility at this stage, Aman Allah Khan in Kabul voiced his support for such a hijrat, mentioning in a speech of the same month - later made public in India in April 1920 - that he would welcome all those who wished to make hijrat from British India. The publication of Aman Allah Khan's support for hijrat in April 1920 was well timed; an Afghan delegation led by Mahmud Tarzi had that month travelled to India to resume peace-talks with the British at Mussourie in the aftermath of the Third Anglo-Afghan War, and such a call for hijrat seems designed to put the British on the back foot at the negotiating table.[180] While it thus appears more of a publicity stunt and negotiating tactic than a heart-felt call on the behalf of

[179] Memorial to Lord Chelmsford dated 24th April, 1919, quoted in Qureshi, 'The 'Ulamā' of British India' (1979), p. 43.
[180] *Ibid*., p. 45. For the negotiations at Mussoorie, see Adamec, *Afghanistan* (1967), Ch. 7.

the Afghan amir, the Central Khilafat Committee in India took Aman Allah Khan's words seriously, and published a summary of his promises.[181]

That month, 'Abd al-Bari, the principal theorist of the Khilafat Movement, was asked for an opinion on the issue of hijrat. Although 'Abd al-Bari had opposed the idea of hijrat and denied that British India was a *dār al-harb,* he sent a telegraphic reply to questioners on the subject which was so brief and ambiguous that it was interpreted by many as supporting the idea of hijrat.[182] This seeming *fatwā* from 'Abd al-Bari was then circulated throughout the regional press in Delhi, Lahore and Bombay.[183] In April 1920, 'Abd al-Bari was forced to publish a clarification, stating in the Lucknow newspaper *Hurriyat* that 'when continued residence may not be as useful as emigration then in that case hijrat becomes permissible.'[184] This qualified statement – more a suggestion than any form of order – was further delimited by the assertion that 'if able and competent people present hijrat to Afghanistan or if industrious and hardworking indviduals emigrate then it is hoped that Islam will doubly benefit and also render service to our beloved country.'[185] Such an 'elite hijrat' to Afghanistan was an attractive idea to the Afghan state, since it seemed like the continuation of a policy that had served them well for the last several decades, when educated Indians were welcomed to serve in the new institutions of the Afghan state. The Afghan newspaper, *Ittihād-e mashriqī*, edited by Zafar Hasan Aibak, commented on 'Abd al-Bari's *fatwā* and highlighted exactly what type of *muhājirīn*

[181] Qureshi, 'The 'Ulamā' of British India' (1979), p. 46.
[182] I am reliant here on Qureshi's account at *ibid*., p. 47 and *idem*, *Pan-Islam* (1999), pp. 183-5, which are themselves heavily reliant on an article I am unfortunately unable to find, 'Azīz Hindī Amritsārī, 'Tahrīk-e hijrat kī tārīkh' in Sayyid Ra'īs Ahmad Ja'farī Nadwī (ed.), *Awrāq Gumgashtah* (Lahore: n.p., 1968). This 'Aziz Hindi Amritsari is presumably the same man as the 'Aziz Hindi described in this chapter who rose to the rank of Colonel in Afghanistan and would later write a work on Aman Allah Khan.
[183] Qureshi, 'The 'Ulamā' of British India' (1979), p. 47.
[184] Qureshi, *Pan-Islam* (1999), p. 184. Reetz, *Hijrat* (1995), p. 37 has a slightly different wording of this text.
[185] Qureshi, *Pan-Islam* (1999), p. 184.

the Afghan state was looking for: ideally doctors, engineers, and (perhaps in a nod from Aibak to his own talents) 'editors of newspapers who are well up in Science and Arabic, Persian and English literature.'[186] But despite the calls from Indian religious scholars and the Afghan state for a qualified elite hijrat, the idea of religious flight captured less the imagination of doctors and engineers than of thousands of villagers from rural areas, most particularly the North West Frontier Province of British India.[187]

What motivated these indigent *muhājirīn* to decide to make the journey to Afghanistan despite the equivocation of religious leaders and the Afghan state? Based on the reports of British officials, Reetz extrapolates the main motivations as three-fold: firstly, the *muhājirīn* believed that the hijrat would bring them great religious happiness and fulfillment. In this way, it was like the hajj, but due to its rarity it promised even greater religious rewards. Reetz notes the millenarian aspect of this reasoning, whereby the strength of religious imagination made many Muslims in India believe that Afghanistan was a promised land of religious fulfillment, in which colonies of emigrants would set up as self-sustaining communities. Secondly, rumours of the destruction of Mecca and Constantinople greatly angered Muslims, making concrete the rather more abstract danger of the end of the Caliphate. Thirdly, economic deprivation drove large numbers of indigent Indian Muslims to try their luck in a new land. But to what extent do the travel memoirs of this chapter chime with this analysis?

Rather than merely rumours of destruction in the holy lands, both Akbar and Badrakhi's texts suggest an awareness and knowledge of the wider context of the Khilafat Movement, and describe their interest and support for the movement in the

[186] Reetz, *Hijrat* (1995), p. 37.
[187] *Ibid*., p. 52.

region. Such an awareness of context certainly betrays their education: both Akbar and Badrakhi were young men studying at Islamiya College in Peshawar at the time of the hijrat. There is also found in their work an idealistic desire to set up and support Islamic rule in the region.[188] Akbar also notes the historical role of hijrat to, or through, Afghanistan and the precedent set by previous travellers from British India: he tells the story of one Taj Muhammad Khan who sold all his land to go and fight in Libya several years before.[189] Both accounts also make clear that there was a martial element to their flight, the idea of hijrat fused with the idea of jihad: Badrakhi tells a fellow-traveller that he is going to Afghanistan for jihad,[190] and Akbar's travelling companion Khan 'Abd al- Ghaffar Khan tells Akbar's mother that 'the Mullas have made a *fatwā*, we are to go and wage war (*ghazā*) against the infidels (*da kāfirū bar khalāf*).'[191] Such a statement highlights the inter-relation of hijrat and jihad; hijrat was often the precursor to jihad, and shared a similar religious vocabulary and imagery.

In describing the actions of other *muhājirīn*, Akbar stresses the real idealism and religiosity of those travelling to Afghanistan. He describes people selling all their goods – land, cattle, sheep, wheat – for very low prices,[192] as well as acts of support by those villagers who stayed behind in providing the *muhājirīn* with money and even clothes to take with them.[193] Travelling through the North West Frontier Province of British India, the travel memoirs reveal a land in real ferment. Akbar's journey to the Afghan border captures a moment of great energy and movement; thousands of people – from various areas of the frontier – are described on the move all around him

[188] Badrakhī, *Da āzādī pah talāsh* (1987), p. 24.
[189] Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah* (1968), p. 12.
[190] Badrakhī, *Da āzādī pah talāsh* (1987), p. 24; Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 54.
[191] Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah* (1968), p. 40.
[192] *Ibid*., p. 42.
[193] *Ibid*., pp. 34-35.

as he makes his way from Peshawar up to Mardan and west.[194] The combination of religious encouragement from scholars and practical support from the Afghan state reveals itself as a potent one: Akbar notes that *fatwās* had a great effect on the villages of his local area,[195] together with the announcement by Aman Allah Khan that the Afghan government would provide all support to any *muhājirīn* who came from British India.[196]

The religious tenor of the journeys continues as Akbar describes caravans gathering fellow *muhājirīn* as they pass through village after village; at each stop passages of the Qur'an are read and prayers made.[197] This sense of gathering momentum is captured in a conversation Akbar has with someone he sees working in the fields on his way; the worker asks him where he is going and when Akbar says he is going on hijrat, the worker decides to drop his tools and come with him.[198] Whether this actually happened or not is immaterial; the poetics of these hijrat texts focus on idealism, spontaneity, and religious fervor. The religious atmosphere of these early hijrat actions continues in Akbar's text: before he leaves, he stops at home to say goodbye to his mother. Khan 'Abd al- Ghaffar Khan is at the parting as well and speaks to Akbar's mother, saying: 'God needs your son; do you give permission?' She replies, 'Whatever exists belongs to God.'[199] As Akbar says farewell, his mother gives him a Qur'an to take with him.[200] Akbar also makes clear that his own motivation was largely religious: 'I wanted the death of martyrdom (*shahādat*).'[201] This kind of idealistic motivation was, the older Akbar admits as he writes, a product

[194] *Ibid*., p. 38.
[195] *Ibid*., p. 33.
[196] *Ibid*.
[197] *Ibid*., p. 39.
[198] *Ibid*., p. 45.
[199] *Ibid*., p. 40.
[200] *Ibid*., p. 43.
[201] *Ibid*., p. 37.

of his youthful inexperience; he was just twenty years old during the Hijrat Movement, and had 'no worldly or political experience.'[202] The journey to Afghanistan was to give him plenty of both.

VII.2. Landscapes of the Hijrat

If the previous section has explored the mental landscape of some of the participants of the hijrat, it is now time to turn to the representation of physical landscape around them. How is Afghanistan represented by the Pashtun *muhājirīn*? From the beginning, there is a religious colouring to the descriptions, with Afghanistan portrayed in the early parts of their works as a sacred landscape, connected to the authors' lands in British India by bonds of religion. Movement through space is Islamicized: instead of heading west, Badrakhi and his friends head 'towards the Qibla.'[203] Movement through time is also measured Islamically: rather than the standardized global timeframes experienced by cosmopolitan steamship travellers like Mahmud Tarzi and Prince Nasr Allah Khan, time passing is often measured and marked by the ritualized set of five prayers. The spiritual tenor of their journey is even reflected in the passports they take with them. While the Afghan state under Habib Allah Khan and then Aman Allah Khan was working to develop an increasingly sophisticated documentary regime of passports and visas, Badrakhi simply takes with him a letter from Hajji Sahib of Turangzai (1858-1937), the famous anti-colonial fighter and activist, which he describes as more useful than a passport (*rāhdārī*) for travelling in the border areas and Afghanistan.'[204] The efficacy of such religious patronage is later put into action: when challenged by some Pashtuns they

[202] *Ibid*., p. 81.
[203] Badrakhī, *Da āzādī pah talāsh* (1987), p. 7.
[204] *Ibid*., p. 28. For a study of Hajji Sahib of Turangzai, see 'Azīz Jāwīd, *Hājjī Sāhib Turangzai* (Lahore: Idārah-e tahqīq-o-tasnīf, 1981); Haroon, *Frontier of Faith* (2007), esp. Chs. 3, 4, and 5.

meet as to who they are, Badrakhi's answer that they are Hajji Sahib's guests prevents any further problems.[205]

The impression of moving through an Islamicized time and space is strengthened by references to the sites of a glorious Islamic past which the *muhājirīn* pass through. Badrakhi, like Aibak, describes stopping off at Chamarkand, the *mujāhidīn* colony on the border of Afghanistan and British India, which he describes as the living legacy of Sheikh Ahmed Barelvi (1786-1831), the famous Muslim activist who fought the Sikhs in the early 19th century.[206] While for Aibak the *mujāhidīn* colony was a disorganized shambles, in Badrakhi's text, Chamarkand is described in glowing terms: the four travellers are treated with much honour, given food, and Badrakhi is able to buy a horse and a gun for the onward journey.[207] After leaving the descendants of Sheikh Ahmed Barelvi and passing into Afghanistan, Badrakhi passes through the narrow pass of Khurd Kabul, the site of the destruction of a British imperial army in the First Anglo-Afghan War.[208] Beyond these historic sites of great Muslim victories is a pastoral landscape of great power. Travelling through Afghanistan's Kunar Valley, Badrakhi feels the power of God in the land.[209] At times the mountainous landscape is punctuated by lush valleys and villages: the village of Butkhak, outside Kabul, has unforgettable mulberries, which the hungry *mujāhidīn* gather up in their scarves;[210] Kabul's outskirts are full of wonderful gardens and rich in fruit.[211] To travel through Afghanistan is to travel through a landscape of austere beauty and a historic landscape of imperial resistance. Less 'progressivist' than the visions of the previous chapter, these hijrat travel accounts

[205] *Ibid*., p. 27.
[206] *Ibid*., pp. 27-29.
[207] *Ibid*., p. 28.
[208] *Ibid*., p. 43.
[209] *Ibid*., p. 31.
[210] *Ibid*., p. 44.
[211] *Ibid*.

thus point to a different representation of Afghanistan, which chimed with the more radical and heterodox motivations of these religious refugees.

And yet, Akbar and Badrakhi's travel memoirs bear the mark of other ideological influences beyond a Muslim romanticism. Akbar notes the influence of international socialism on the young Pashtun travellers, with the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 offering a new model of society, which had significant influence amongst British Indian Muslims of the time. Akbar describes the effect on him of the socialist 'Comrade' newspaper produced by Muhammad Ali Jauhar, a socialist journeymen who had studied in Britain before setting up his newspaper.[212] But more than socialism is a burgeoning Pashtun ethno-nationalism, which made Akbar feel a sense of solidarity with Pashtuns on the Afghan side of the border, and motivated him to travel to Afghanistan. The combination of the kind of scientific materialism espoused by the Bolsheviks and the spiritual sentiments of pan-Islam and Pashtun ethno-nationalist are visible as Akbar describes the tumult of ideas driving his action: 'On the one hand my heart had a desire for science and art, on the other was… a madness of religious and ethnic spirits.'[213] Moreover, Akbar reveals how his Pashtun ethno-nationalist sentiment was itself spurred by other ethno-national movements taking place across India: Akbar describes the influence of a Bengali professor at Islamiya College in Peshawar, who was involved in the movement in Bengal aimed at reviving the Bengali language. Akbar remembers the Bengali telling him, 'You Pashtuns are a strange lot; you have no love for your own language. You don't understand that no progress is possible without knowledge of your language.'[214] Inspired by the Bengali model, Akbar and a couple of friends had started a newspaper

[212] Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah* (1968), p. 21.
[213] *Ibid*., p. 81.
[214] *Ibid*., p. 22.

'*Rūz*' ('Day'), written solely in Pashto.[215] Alongside this interest in the Pashto language, Akbar's text also exhibits a burgeoning fascination with Pashto literature; at a poetry gathering on his way to the Afghan border, Akbar spends time with the poet known by the *takhallus* of 'Makhfi' who rather than singing of the '*gul'* (rose) or *'bulbul'* (nightingale) of the classical Persian and Pashto canon, is composing strident ethno-nationalist poetry on the subject of their homeland (*watan*).[216] Indeed, the very fact that these texts were composed in Pashto is testament to the importance attached by these writers to writing in their mother tongue, the printing of which was still in its infancy during the 1910s and 1920s.[217] While we must be wary of inferring too much from Akbar's text, owing to its late publication date, Badrakhi's text was most likely written in the early 1920s, pointing to Pashtun intellectuals' growing interest in writing in Pashto during the period.

Such Pashtun ethno-nationalist sentiment is further fired by Afghanistan's successes in the Third Anglo-Afghan War. This was a moment when Afghanistan's promise seemed to have been translated into real tangible action, as forces composed of Afghan troops and cross-border Pashtun tribal levies crossed into British Indian territory and fought bravely against the British forces. Akbar recalls going out on the streets with college friends to celebrate and speaking with the troops.[218] Such success in gaining independence by a country so close to their own homes - and whose population was significantly Pashtun in ethnicity - was clearly a spur to Akbar's desires for independence back home. Badrakhi makes the link explicit, describing the great hopes they had for their 'brothers' in Afghanistan, tying Afghanistan's

[215] *Ibid*., p. 23.
[216] *Ibid*., p. 50.
[217] See Thomas Wide, 'Demarcating Pashto' in Green and Arbabzadah (eds.), *Afghanistan in Ink* (2013); also, Shah Mahmud Hanifi, 'A History of Linguistic Boundary Crossing Within and Around Pashto' in Hopkins and Marsden (eds.), *Beyond Swat* (2013).
[218] Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah* (1968), p. 25.

successful independence campaign to Indians' struggle for the 'freedom of the homeland' (*da watan azād*).[219]

Such ethno-nationalist sentiments are further inspired by Akbar and Badrakhi's journeying through Pashtun Mohmand country. Their encounter with the more rugged Pashtuns of the border areas fosters a romantic respect and admiration on the part of the educated young Pashtuns for their country cousins. Akbar and Badrakhi cannot but notice the difference between themselves and the Mohmands who act as their escorts. Badrakhi praises the manliness of one such escort, Ta'wus Shah, who, although only fifteen years old, guides them stealthily past an English customs-post.[220] Such a young man portrays all the idealized attributes of the Pashtun code of ethics (*pashtūnwālī*), and Badrakhi comments frequently on the hospitality (*mēlmastiyā*) he receives amongst the Pashtuns along the border of British India and Pakistan. When they sleep out rough one night, Ta'wus Shah gathers stones to use as pillows for their head.[221] Unlike the Punjabi urbanite, Zafar Hasan Aibak, who complained of the difficulty of sleeping in local mosques due to the loudness of prayers in the early morning, Badrakhi is impressed by the spartan existence and hospitality of the Pashtun villagers he meets on the frontier.[222] For Badrakhi, such hardiness and hospitality acts as a kind of ideal model of Pashtun behaviour, and reflects a form of romanticism that betrays his life in Peshawar and his higher level of education. For Akbar, too, Mohmand country may be difficult terrain, but the people are hospitable: Mohmands escort their caravan to show them the way, and on their arrival at the next stopping-place, women bring them water to quench their thirst.[223] Arriving at the Hajji Sahib of Turangzai's house, they are treated with great

[219] Badrakhī, *Da āzādī pah talāsh* (1987), p. 6.
[220] *Ibid*., pp. 10-14.
[221] *Ibid*., p. 12.
[222] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 53.
[223] Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah* (1968), pp. 47-48.

hospitality, a cow is slaughtered in the halal way, and they sleep in the mosque. The accommodation may be simple, but the people's religious solidarity is heartening; at evening prayers a great crowd gathers, poetry is recited and people are exhorted to be selfless in their common cause.[224] The Pashtuns' martial valour is frequently mentioned; for Akbar, 'every Pashtun is a soldier from birth; love for the rifle is in the Pashtun soul.'[225] Badrakhi, too, notes that every Pashtun carries a gun, and praises the fact that Afghanistan is awash with guns, not suffering from the strict controls of British India.[226] Such praise for Pashtun values illustrates that the Hijrat Movement relied on - and in turn inspired - a burgeoning Pashtun ethno-nationalism alongside its Islamic vocabulary of religious flight.

VII.3. The Rocky Road to Kabul

While the motivation and framing of these travellers' journeys is thus very much a romanticized, sacralized landscape of religious purity and independence, it is not long before the dream of Afghanistan starts to collapse in the face of these *muhājirīn's* experiences on the road. In Jalalabad, Badrakhi meets Nadir Khan who tells him Amir Aman Allah Khan has ordered all the *muhājirīn* to wait for permission to go on to Kabul. The command is clearly an attempt to try and regulate the flow of people and impose some kind of order on the thousands of people arriving each week. Badrakhi notes that ten to twelve other *muhājirīn* had been waiting for permission for twenty-five days without success.[227] Badrakhi was one of the fortunate ones: Nadir Khan showed him special favour due to his educational background, and telephoned ahead from Jalalabad to explain that four Islamiya College students had arrived. As a

[224] *Ibid*., p. 49.
[225] *Ibid*., p. 65.
[226] Badrakhī, *Da āzādī pah talāsh* (1987), p. 39.
[227] *Ibid*., p. 37.

result, they soon they got approval from the representative of the *muhājirīn* in Kabul, the British Indian Maulawi Bashir.[228]

The experience in Jalalabad is the first warning sign of the Afghan state's inability to cope with the sudden influx of thousands of indigent travellers. Initially, the Afghan state tried some measures to help the travellers, including providing money to the *muhājirīn* for food, but there were just too many and the food soon ran out in the bazaar.[229] When thousands of *muhājirīn* started to turn up, week on week, tempers began to fray.[230] Unlike Akbar's travels on the Indian side of the border, where he had been given food for free and shown all hospitality, he now finds that he is forced to pay for everything. He notes that this left a bad impression on the *muhājirīn*.[231] While Aman Allah Khan had proudly announced, like his grandfather 'Abd al-Rahman Khan before him, that all *muhājirīn* would be accepted in Afghanistan, it is clear that the Afghan state was completely unprepared for the vast numbers of poor *muhājirīn* who were now flooding into the country. The *muhājirīn*, too, were hopelessly unprepared and had almost no practical information about what awaited them. Some had come on foot from Peshawar, others by train to the end of the British-built railway line; many thought there would be horses at the border, which there weren't. There were no carriages (*gādī*) on the Afghan side as there were on the Indian side, and there were very few even in Jalalabad. Many of the travellers were simply incapable of making the journey by foot across mountainous terrain to reach Kabul.[232] There was almost no accommodation infrastructure in Afghanistan for this influx of travellers either; Zafar Hasan Aibak, who witnessed the scenes,

[228] *Ibid*.
[229] Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah* (1968), p. 57.
[230] *Ibid*., p. 58.
[231] *Ibid*., p. 56.
[232] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 186.

states that Jalalabad had almost no hotels or restaurants for the *muhājir*.[233] Once in Afghanistan, there was also no way for *muhājirīn* to communicate with their families back home.[234] Afghan villagers they met on the road would provide them with a smoke, but nothing more: 'for who could provide so many people with food?'[235] Many *muhājirīn* were forced to sell their utensils to pay for what food they could find.[236]

As soon as the caravans were able, Akbar tried to move from Jalalabad on to Kabul, but in great disorder.[237] Day on day brought more people, and even more hardship. On the Jalalabad - Kabul road there were few local people, and fewer arrangements for the increasingly dishevelled *muhājirīn.* There were no carriages, only horses, donkeys and camels for the lucky ones. The rest walked. The footsore journeys of these *muhājirīn* were also made more difficult by robberies on the road. Akbar describes an ambush made on their caravan as they travelled; without weapons, they were unable to defend themselves and money and blankets were taken.[238] Unsurprisingly, such behaviour made the *muhājirīn* extremely angry at the local population.[239] Other *muhājirīn* from Peshawar, whom Akbar meets, had been robbed two or three times on the road, and had decided to head back to Peshawar.[240] Aibak also notes particularly the difficulties for women, who he claims were abused by Kabulis on their arrival.[241] While the Afghan mullas encouraged the local population to share half their food with the *muhājirīn*, Akbar describes the local population as not doing so. Betraying an ethnic prejudice which flares up intermittently in his travel

[233] *Ibid*.
[234] Badrakhī, *Da āzādī pah talāsh* (1987), p. 70.
[235] Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah* (1968), p. 58.
[236] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 187.
[237] Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah* (1968), p. 57.
[238] *Ibid*., p. 59.
[239] *Ibid*., p. 60.
[240] *Ibid*.
[241] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 187.

memoirs, Akbar describes those who spoke Persian as 'nothing people' (*khushī khalq*),[242] but those Afghans who spoke Pashto did not seem much better, telling the *muhājirīn* to 'go back to your own place before speaking.'[243] By the time Akbar reached the outskirts of Kabul, many *muhājirīn* had decided to head back to Peshawar, and the rest were a 'despondent, bedraggled, and confused group.'[244]

The disillusionment of the travellers continued as they reached Kabul. There, a committee was set up to support the administration of these thousands of *muhājirīn*. This committee was made up of a mix of long-standing Indian residents of Kabul, elders who had travelled on the hijrat, and senior Afghan officials such as Sardar 'Abd al-Aziz Khan and Nadir Khan.[245] However, the committee designed to create order is described by Akbar as itself extremely disordered, with everyone working at cross purposes and according to their own interests.[246] At first, some progress was made: at a meeting at the 'Ain al-Amarat palace with Khan 'Abd al- Ghaffar Khan and others, it was decided that 200 rupees worth of food a year would be given to each *muhājir*, as well as thirty *jarīb* of land in Khanabad, Kunduz and surrounding areas of Turkistan for those who wanted to cultivate land, and money for building a house.[247] Akbar became a go-between between the committee and the *muhājirīn* camp, asking the disheveled travellers to be patient, and stating that this situation was 'a source of shame for both Afghanistan and the *muhājirīn.*'[248] However, Akbar found a mood of real hostility amongst the *muhājirīn*, so much so that even Khan 'Abd al-Ghaffar Khan could not gain their trust; many more *muhājirīn* at this moment

[242] My thanks to Ahmad Shah Wahdat for his help in translating this expression.
[243] Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah* (1968), p. 61
[244] *Ibid*., p. 65.
[245] *Ibid*., p. 66. For a list of committee members, as recorded in British colonial sources, see Qureshi, *Pan-Islam* (1999), p. 211.
[246] Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah* (1968), p. 66.
[247] *Ibid*., p. 67.
[248] *Ibid*., p. 68.

packed their bags to leave. In August 1920, with seven to eight thousand *muhājirīn* crossing into Afghanistan each week, the Afghan state made the decision to suspend the movement of *muhājirīn* across the border until further notice.[249]

Yet, even with the border now closed, the Afghan state still had the challenge of what they were to do with the thousands of *muhājirīn* already in the country. In the discussions carried out regarding their treatment, Akbar notes that it was decided that 'educated' *muhājirīn* would have every legal right, and be treated no differently from Afghan citizens doing service in the Afghan military.[250] Such a policy illuminates the different ways that the Afghan state viewed those foreigners it thought it could make use of, and those who were simply a drain on resources. Such different treatment for the rich and educated *muhājirīn* as opposed to the poor and indigent is confirmed from the accounts of Akbar and Badrakhi's experiences. Akbar had a little money, and he and his friends were able to pay for their own accommodation in Kabul, thus avoiding being forced to move to the site of the proposed *muhājirīn* settler colony at Jabal al-Siraj north of Kabul.[251] Badrakhi's education, too, meant that he was treated better than many other travellers. Shaukat Usmani, travelling in a group of educated *muhājirīn* who had managed to get hold of horse-drawn traps, encountered Amir Aman Allah Khan himself, characteristically meeting the travellers in his automobile. From his seat, Aman Allah Khan stressed his support and solidarity for these educated Indian arrivals:

> I welcome you as brothers. I shall entertain you according to my resources. The colleges and military institutions are open to you. Those of you who are gifted with higher education may be pleased to enter the

[249] *Ibid*. For the numbers of *muhājirīn* crossing, see Qureshi, 'The 'Ulamā' of British India' (1979), p. 56.
[250] Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah* (1968), p. 67.
[251] *Ibid*., p. 69.

> University. The services shall be highly paid for, and those less talented may join the military.[252]

Such bonds of solidarity between Afghans and educated *muhājirīn* continued in Kabul; Badrakhi was invited to dinner with the aristocratic Afghan Brigadier Ghulam Nabi Khan, the kind of *soirée* where Afghan army officers mingled with high-status Indians and Turks.[253] In such cosmopolitan urban settings, the conversation turned to the inexorable connection between India's independence and that of the whole of Asia: if India was a slave, then the whole of Asia was a slave.[254] Such shared solidarities of the dinner table seemed far away, however, from the life of indigent *muhājirīn* sleeping in camps a few hundred yards away on the outskirts of the city.

Despite the prestige of Badrakhi and Usmani's education, they were both still ordered to leave Kabul for the proposed *muhājirīn* holding camps at Jabal al-Siraj. It was not clear to the educated *muhājirīn* why they were forced to go. Usmani believed that the Afghan government was trying to mould the *muhājirīn* to be pro-Afghan while also hoping to detect any British agents amongst them.[255] It also seems likely that Afghan officials wanted the *muhājirīn* out of Kabul while they worked out what to do with them. Badrakhi tried to avoid the forced movement, but was unable to get a message to Aman Allah Khan to plead his case to stay in Kabul, and soon he found himself travelling with hundreds of others up across the Shomali plains to Jabal al-Siraj.[256] For these *muhājirīn*, being forced to leave Kabul was an inhospitable act, and one that made them deeply suspicious of the Afghan amir's motives.[257] Unable to stay in Kabul, which they had hoped to use as a base for revolutionary activity, the

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[252] Usmani, *Peshawar to Moscow* (1927), p. 4.
[253] Badrakhī, *Da āzādī pah talāsh* (1987), p. 38. I assume that this figure is Ghulam Nabi Khan Charkhi.
[254] *Ibid*.
[255] Usmani, *Peshawar to Moscow* (1927), p. 10.
[256] Badrakhī, *Da āzādī pah talāsh* (1987), p. 46.
[257] Usmani, *Peshawar to Moscow* (1927), p. 6.

educated Indians in Kabul argued in 'a hard contest of slanders and blasphemy' where they should go next, some acquiescing to go to Jabal al-Siraj while others suggested pushing on to Turkey or Turkistan.[258] In the fighting, groups of Indians stood up against 'Ubaid Allah Sindhi, who had encouraged them to go to Jabal al-Siraj. Usmani accuses Sindhi of kowtowing to Aman Allah Khan, and using his quasi-official status as an advisor to the amir to get his own way.[259] Sindhi's main opponent in the argument, Qazi 'Abd al-Wali, was later interned for stirring up trouble amongst the *muhājirīn*.[260]

VII.4. De-Sacralizing Afghanistan: Discord and Difference at the Mountain of the Lamp

Jabal al-Siraj, 'the Mountain of the Lamp' had been developed in the early 20th century to be a beacon of Afghanistan's material and social progress. It was here that A.C. Jewett, the American engineer from San Francisco, had come to build Afghanistan's first electric power plant, and where Habib Allah Khan had built himself a stately pleasure-palace.[261] But while the electricity plant had been built using equipment imported from India, dragged across the passes by imported Indian elephants, Jabal al-Siraj was less prepared for India's latest imports. When Badrakhi was there, 200 *muhājirīn* were crammed into a single fort. They received an amount of money from the government for wheat and flour, and were also occasionally given clothes.[262] A single government official had been appointed to over-see their wellbeing, but he was soon overrun with work and requests. Badrakhi describes

[258] *Ibid*., pp. 7-8.
[259] *Ibid*., p. 8.
[260] *Ibid*., p. 11.
[261] A.C. Jewett, *An American Engineer in Afghanistan, From the Letters and Notes of A.C. Jewett,* ed. Marjorie Jewett Bell (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1948).
[262] Badrakhī, *Da āzādī pah talāsh* (1987), p. 65.

many 'uneducated' *muhājirīn* revolting against conditions and fighting with this official every day.[263] To counteract this, a *muhājir* committee was set up, as well as a weekly *jirgah* (council) with a British Indian – Muhammad Akbar Khan Quraishi, an old Islamiya College friend of Akbar's – as its representative.[264] This committee even attempted to set up a *muhājir* army and provided it with training, part of the Afghan state's attempt to find some use for these *muhājirīn*. A student of Punjab university, 'Abd al-Rahim, was made the head, with two knowledgeable Lahoris and various others who had fled from the British Army conducting training and drill. Without a dedicated space, they paraded on the ground of the electricity plant.[265] This *muhājir* army – a mirror image of the Hazarah regiments of British India made up of Afghans who had fled to British India in the late 19th century – was small in number and more importantly lacked weapons. Instead of guns they used *dangs*, the traditional sticks many carried on their travels, and a larger stick was used as a flagpole.[266]

While Afghanistan had promised a land of plenty populated by Islamic and ethnic 'brothers', the reality of Jabal al-Siraj destroyed any sense of shared solidarity with Afghans there. It started promisingly, with a government official who had spent time in India and spoke Urdu and Punjabi,[267] and who treated Badrakhi well since Badrakhi was considered educated (*ta'līm-yāftah*).[268] However, aside from this well-travelled Afghan state official, the *muhājirīn* found themselves unable to communicate with the local Afghans, who did not speak Pashto. These locals are not described by Badrakhi as 'Afghans' at all, but as *kuhdāmanīs* i.e. residents of the

[263] *Ibid*., p. 66.
[264] *Ibid*., p. 67. For Quraishi's friendship with Akbar, see Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah* (1968), p. 145. Quraishi would later be sentenced to ten years in a British Indian prison for spreading Bolshevism in India, Usmani, *Peshawar to Moscow* (1927), p. 12.
[265] Badrakhī, *Da āzādī pah talāsh* (1987), pp. 67-8.
[266] *Ibid*., p. 69; Usmani, *Peshawar to Moscow* (1927), p. 12.
[267] Badrakhī, *Da āzādī pah talāsh* (1987), p. 63.
[268] *Ibid*., pp. 62-3.

Kuhdaman area north of Kabul. Such signifiers highlight the extremely localist nature of identities in these rural areas, more identified by their local region than any national or supranational identity. Unable to communicate with local Afghans, Badrakhi had more in common with the 200 Pashtun Afridi tribesmen stationed at Jabal al-Siraj, who had come to Afghanistan to fight with the Afghan army in the 1919 war. Despite their being very badly paid, he found them extremely hospitable.[269] These Afridis, like Badrakhi, felt the local residents extremely hard to get on with, some of them so unhappy that they had decided to head home back across the border.[270]

These disenchanting encounters with unintelligible Afghans is matched by a change in the tenor of Badrakhi's text, the religious vocabulary and imagery of the early part of his travel memoir falling away as he describes the hardships of life at Jabal al-Siraj. It is essentially a de-sacralization of Afghanistan, from an imagined sacred *dār al-Islām* to a place of danger, despondency, and mutual incomprehension. Badrakhi even starts comparing the country unfavorably with Europe: at least in Europe there are theatres, cinemas, entertainment; in Afghanistan, however, there is nothing and 'a man there knows that travel is a hard task.'[271] For Usmani, the supposed Muslim refuge of Afghanistan had become secular 'exile'.[272] Far from finding solidarities and similarities between his own people and homeland and that of Afghanistan, Badrakhi's experience of travel in Afghanistan reinforces the differences between them: 'the distance to our homeland (*watan*) was small, but the conditions made the distance very great.'[273] In such inhospitable surroundings, the *muhājirīn* stuck together for mutual support. They would visit each other's camps for dinner,

[269] *Ibid*., p. 63.
[270] *Ibid*.
[271] *Ibid*., p. 71.
[272] Usmani, *Peshawar to Moscow* (1927), p. 9.
[273] Badrakhī, *Da āzādī pah talāsh* (1987), p. 71.

taking it in turns to host and be hosted, and made a certain life for themselves, appreciating the freedoms of being able to say what they liked to each other away from the surveillance regimes of British India.[274]

However, even these simple pleasures were ruined by the arrival of a newspaper to the *muhājirīn* in Jabal al-Siraj. *Amān-e afghān* was the newspaper that had taken the place of *Sirāj al-akhbār* as the print mouthpiece of the Afghan state. The newspaper announced that Afghanistan had made peace with Britain and the Third Anglo-Afghan War had come to an end.[275] The *muhājirīn* were devastated, feeling betrayed by the Afghan state's acquiescence to Britain. Badrakhi remembers the scene:

> 'Someone said: "The Afghan government has tricked the Pashtun tribe." Another cried "What have they done for Islam?" Another shouted out: "What difference now is there between India and Afghanistan?"'[276]

At this point, Badrakhi describes spontaneous arguments erupting about what the *muhājirīn* should do. In the arguments that followed, a respected elder Hajji Mi'raj al-Din stood up and, in a powerful religious idiom, offered his own, unofficial *fatwā* against Afghanistan: 'I announce to the world, from this fort in Jabal al-Siraj, that Afghanistan is a *dār al-harb* like India.'[277] These travellers' idealistic hijrat to Afghanistan thus ended not with their triumphant settling in the *dār al-Islām,* but the declaration of Afghanistan as itself a *dār al-harb,* and a place not to perform hijrat to, but to perform hijrat *from*. Some *muhājirīn* counseled that they return home, while others suggested they push on to Turkey.[278] 300 *muhājirīn*, led by Muhammad Akbar

[274] *Ibid*., p. 72.
[275] *Ibid*.
[276] *Ibid*., p. 73.
[277] *Ibid*., p.77.
[278] *Ibid*.

Khan Quraishi, planned to go to Bukhara to take part in the jihad against the Bolsheviks there.[279]

As for the British in 1842, however, Afghanistan proved a much more difficult place to get out of than to get into. The Afghan state had made a rule that every *muhājir* who entered the country had to become an Afghan citizen; this was another way by which the Afghan state could try and control the movement of these *muhājirīn*, since it meant that anyone hoping to leave the country would need the correct documents. Akbar needed a passport, which was only procured through the help of a friend.[280] Badrakhi, along with eighty-two other *muhājirīn*, applied to the Afghan Foreign Ministry for an exit travel pass, with a *muhājir* from Peshawar helping him write the application in Persian.[281] In this application, Badrakhi's religious vocabulary returns, as he describes the duty (*farz*) of Islam for these travellers (now described as *mujāhidīn*) to wage jihad in Turkey, which had recently been attacked by infidel Greeks.[282] Hoping that he could thus inspire the Afghan government to support the cause, he even asked for eighty-two guns for them to take with them for this religious war (*ghazā*). The Afghan government, now thoroughly scarred by the hijrat experience and aware of their recent armistice with the British, refused.[283]

VII.5. A Walk in the Hindu Kush

At this point, the travel narratives of the *muhājirīn* become nothing less than desperate escape narratives, as Akbar, Badrakhi, and Usmani must face both

[279] Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah* (1968), pp. 81-2.
[280] *Ibid*., p. 83.
[281] Badrakhī, *Da āzādī pah talāsh* (1987), p. 82.
[282] *Ibid*.
[283] *Ibid*., p. 84.

treacherous conditions and the now-hostile gaze of the Afghan government as they attempt to leave north. Akbar describes terrifying paths through the Panjshir valley - as narrow as two feet and extremely slippery - plunging down to the waters below.[284] The weather is brutally cold, they are extremely weak and hungry, and there is little wood with which to make a fire, forcing them to use the scant camel dung they find as fuel.[285] Badrakhi's travels are all the more fraught because he must make his way to the border illegally due to his lack of proper documents. Making their way to Gulbahar in the Panjshir valley, they decide to hide in a caravan making its way north.[286] From here, as fugitives, Badrakhi and a couple of friends make their way through thick snow, always unsure of how they will be received by local Afghans and government officials: on their first night, they are fortunate to find Afghans who welcome them in and allow them to escape the cold.[287] So too with the nomadic populations: Badrakhi and his companions find the nomads, (described as *khānah bedūsh* i.e. 'those with houses on their backs'), very friendly in contrast to the often-hostile behavior of the Afghan government.[288] For instead of narrow nationalist agendas, these cross-border nomads practice a simple humanism (*mazhab insān*) to be admired.[289] Badrakhi praises such humanism in contrast to the deadening materialism and denial of humanity of European 'culture'.[290]

As they travel, Badrakhi and his friend Sadiq must improvise ways to make their way across the mountains of the Hindu Kush. Prefiguring the amateur adventurism of the British travellers Eric Newby and Hugh Carless thirty years later,

[284] Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah* (1968), p. 85. Usmani describes the journey in similar terms, Usmani, *Peshawar to Moscow* (1927), p. 51.
[285] Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah* (1968), pp. 88-89.
[286] Badrakhī, *Da āzādī pah talāsh* (1987), p. 86.
[287] *Ibid*., p. 95.
[288] *Ibid*., p. 104.
[289] *Ibid*., p. 95.
[290] *Ibid*., pp. 95-6.

Badrakhi and Sadiq somehow make their way across steep mountain faces, tied together with ropes fashioned from rags.[291] Once across, the two intrepid Indians take on disguises to escape detection: Badrakhi becomes a Kunari *sayyid,* Sadiq disguises himself as the son of an Afghan colonel;[292] later on Badrakhi describes themselves as pilgrims on their way to the Sakhi Sarwar Shrine.[293] Akbar, too, uses disguises, himself and his friends acting 'like traders' to escape suspicion.[294] Badrakhi seems to have gained a taste for disguises from his fugitive travels, later on in Karachi disguising himself as both a coolie on the Karachi docks and then later a mulla.[295] Travels in disguise, amateur adventurism, a romantic appreciation of the 'nomadic alternative' – these Pashto narratives of Afghanistan unwittingly share many of the same tropes as the tradition of British travel-writing on Afghanistan of Alexander Burnes, Eric Newby, or Bruce Chatwin.

VII.6. Rhetoric and Reality in Rural Afghanistan

Contrary to the Muslim travel accounts of the previous chapter in which glowing reports were written of Afghanistan's state-backed 'progress', Akbar and Badrakhi's journeys through the north capture a country whose harsh landscape and climatic conditions is matched by a government which combines weakness with brutality. In Khanabad, Akbar comes across the macabre site of two horse-robbers hanging from a pillar, flies circling them.[296] At Chul Duzdan, Akbar describes seeing the bones of a robber who had been imprisoned alive in a cage and left to die, one of

[291] *Ibid*., p. 86
[292] *Ibid*., p. 96.
[293] *Ibid*., p. 108.
[294] Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah* (1968), p. 101.
[295] Badrakhī, *Da āzādī pah talāsh* (1987), pp. 511-513.
[296] Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah* (1968), p. 92.

the most infamous punishments of Amir 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's reign.[297] In Farah, Akbar sees a woman executed before his eyes.[298] An innkeeper he meets on the road describes the landscape ahead succinctly: 'The road is very dry. It's uninhabited. There is no water. There are many robbers.'[299] At Serai Qafsan, they are told to flee since an Uzbek attack is imminent.[300] At Mazar-e Sharif, Badrakhi finds a city in chaos, with an uprising led by a mutinous general under way. Akbar, who is there at a similar time, meets many Bukharans fleeing the fighting in Bukhara, including the amir who has just arrived and is on his way south.[301] Aibak notes that in such lawless and non-governed spaces everyone simply has to defend themselves.[302] Without the correct travel documents, Badrakhi is forced to hide from government soldiers, [303] and is eventually captured after an informer in the bazaar tells the local authorities.[304] Rather than being welcomed as a religious traveller and brother-in-religion, Badrakhi is accused of being a British spy – a 'green-eyed traveller' (*shīn stirgei musāfir*).[305] Eventually, the Soviet consul in Mazar-e Sharif provides support to Badrakhi in the form of necessary documents to get him to the Soviet Union. Akbar, too, is treated with great suspicion by Afghan government officials, who accuse him of being a 'traitor' to his country.[306]

In this landscape, loyalties and identities are hard to discern. Far from a coherent Afghan nation-state nationalism of the kind propounded by intellectuals in Kabul, these *muhājirīn* find an unfathomable web of local loyalties and allegiances.

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[297] *Ibid*., p. 95. I am unable to locate 'Chul Duzdan' in Afghanistan. See Chapter One, for western accounts which mentions 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's hanging cages.
[298] Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah* (1968), p. 182.
[299] *Ibid*., p. 95.
[300] *Ibid*., p. 96.
[301] *Ibid*., p. 104.
[302] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 54.
[303] Badrakhī, *Da āzādī pah talāsh* (1987), p. 123.
[304] *Ibid*., p. 125.
[305] *Ibid*., p. 127.
[306] Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah* (1968), p. 63.

The Afghan people in the north, themselves beset by uprisings and unrest around Mazar-e Sharif and a bewildering range of armed groups, are unsurprisingly suspicious of these Indian *muhājirīn*. There is little sense of Islamic fraternity; Akbar is accused by some Uzbeks he meets of being an 'infidel' (*kāfir*) since they do not look like Muslims, as is Shaukat Usmani.[307] One Uzbek notes that since they are not Muslims it is thus halal to rob them.[308] When Akbar replies using religious language that 'thanks and praise to God, we are Muslims', another Uzbek tells him to shut up, declaring that Akbar 'looks like a *jadīdī*',[309] a reference to the progressive Muslim reformers of Central Asia who the conservative *bāsmāchi* opposed. Akbar is soon surrounded, and they are beaten and robbed.[310] Usmani fares even worse, being captured by Turkomans just across the Afghan border and dragged along 'like slaves' beside their captors on horseback, until they are rescued by a detachment of the Red Army.[311] The de-sacralization of Afghanistan in the eyes of these *muhājirīn* is most neatly symbolized in a short trip Akbar makes to visit the supposed location of the Qur'anic story of the 'sleepers of the cave' (*ashāb al-kahf*) near Maimanah. While caves have often represented 'mystic places of refuge' in the 'landscape of jihad,'[312] this cave turns out to be nothing more than a tourist trap, with money-grabbing custodians running after the visitors for payment. Akbar and his fellow travellers then suffer the indignity of being accused by these venal chancers of 'looking like infidels.'[313]

[307] Usmani, *Historic Trips* (1977), pp. 27-35.
[308] Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah* (1968), pp. 97-8.
[309] *Ibid*., p. 98.
[310] *Ibid*., pp. 98-99.
[311] Usmani, *Historic Trips* (1977), pp. 28-9.
[312] See Devji, *Landscapes of the Jihad* (2005), p. 44.
[313] Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah* (1968), p. 117,

VII.7. The Real State of 'Progress'

These travel memoirs, taken together, offer a striking counterpoint to the positivity and optimism of Muslim travellers to Afghanistan of the last chapter. Far from presenting Afghanistan as a 'progressive' country with a benign and virtuous government, all these travel memoirs instead create an image of a country with extremely weak state institutions and in significant disarray. In terms of Afghan state institutions, the travel memoirs note how the reach of the government seems to stop at the outskirts of Kabul. For Aibak, military education in Afghanistan is extremely basic, with no more than a model school in Kabul. Beyond Kabul, the standard is very poor.[314] Akbar notes that there is very little pride in the Afghan army, nor discipline.[315] Badrakhi agrees, stressing the lack of good weapons amongst the army.[316] The weakness of the Afghan army is tempered for Badrakhi by the strength of the levies of tribes who will fight for Afghanistan when occasion demands.[317] In terms of provincial education, while travelling through Maimana in the Northwest, Akbar notes that this sizeable city has no educational system at all.[318] In Herat, he notes that the city does have a school, but the building is surrounded by *chars*-addled beggars.[319] Maimana has no hospital that Akbar can see, and the people are 'a tough, uneducated and ignorant bunch.'[320] The complete lack of medical facilities outside Kabul is reinforced by the case of Aibak's classmate 'Abd al-Majid, who falls sick on the road, and wrenchingly dies.[321] Aibak himself almost dies of cholera.[322]

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[314] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), pp. 69-71.
[315] *Ibid*., p. 70.
[316] Badrakhī, *Da āzādī pah talāsh* (1987), p. 39.
[317] *Ibid*.
[318] Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah* (1968), p. 116.
[319] *Ibid*., p. 167.
[320] *Ibid*., p. 116.
[321] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 111.
[322] *Ibid*., p. 93.

The rural journeys of these revolutionary journeymen suggest an almost non-existent communications infrastructure in rural Afghanistan. While that may have seemed part of the attraction to the idealistic travellers before they set out, after time travelling in Afghanistan the difficulties become extremely wearing. Indeed, such poor communications is viewed less as a natural product of Afghanistan's mountainous terrain, but more due to the corruption and venality of the Afghan state. Aibak at one point writes out a list of the roads built in the country, only to note that they are destroyed in the rains and only get repaired when a governor is passing by.[323] In the busy market town of Narin in the north, Badrakhi describes his sadness that despite it being a big centre of trade, the Afghan state takes no care of the roads, and do not repair the bridges, preventing the development of trade in the country.[324] Badrakhi can only lament the state's negligence (*da hukūmat pah ghaflat*).[325] Throughout the places these travellers visit, motorcars remain the preserve of royals and official business only. Even horse-drawn *tongas*, can only be found in Kabul and Jalalabad, and a few in Kandahar.[326] Instead of offering a vision of a proximate future, these travelogues in fact point *backwards,* to the enduring and time-honoured mobility of peoples in and out of Afghanistan: the long and short distance travels of merchants, be they Peshawaris on their way to Central Asia or Turkmen on their way to cattle market; the pilgrimage sites around Mazar-e Sharif thronging with pilgrims and wandering mendicants (*malang*);[327] the recreational travels (*sair*) of picnickers on balmy Kandahari evenings.[328]

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[323] *Ibid*., p. 68.
[324] Badrakhī, *Da āzādī pah talāsh* (1987), pp. 102-3.
[325] *Ibid*., p. 103.
[326] For carriages in Kandahar, see Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah* (1968), p. 174.
[327] *Ibid*., p. 178.
[328] For one such mixed pilgrimage/picnicking site at Kandahar, see *ibid*., p.175. For an anthropological approach to such daytripping, see Magnus Marsden, 'A Tour Not So Grand' in Hopkins and Magnus Marsden, *Fragments of the Afghan Frontier* (2011).

These travel memoirs taken together offer a powerful contrast to the narrative of 'progress' created by Afghan officials and foreign journeymen alike in the previous decades. While the pre-1914 Muslim travelogues portrayed an optimistic vision of the Afghan state as young, progressive, and independent, with a growing economy and a bright future, these travel memoirs instead describe Afghan officials who are corrupt and ignorant. Akbar rails against the nepotism of the political and administrative system, describing the process by which aristocratic families were able to get jobs through connections, despite their lack of any education.[329] The moral standards of the court, too, are a source of reproach; Amir Habib Allah Khan is lambasted in almost all the accounts for his moral turpitude.[330] Afghan court figures are criticized for smoking and drinking at the new foreign consulates popping up around Kabul.[331] Far from progressive, government officials are often illiterate and with very conservative views. In Farah, Akbar meets the Governor who is 'fiercely against education' and described by Akbar as 'living in a world 500 or 600 years past.'[332] Despite the Afghan state's focus on documentary regimes of passports and visas, Badrakhi finds (fortunately for him, paperless as he is) that Afghan state officials are often illiterate, and even the official clerks (*mirzā*) are only semi-literate.[333]

So too the Afghan people, who can be kind and hospitable, but are portrayed less as brothers in arms than as a people beset by ignorance and disunity.[334] Aibak mocks Afghans for confusing Lahore and Rawalpindi, which he says they refer to as

[329] *Ibid*., p. 75.
[330] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), pp. 83-4; Laghārī, *Maulānā 'Ubaid Allāh Sindhī* (1980), p. 166.
[331] For one such attack, see Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah* (1968), p.78.
[332] *Ibid*., p. 171.
[333] Badrakhī, *Da āzādī pah talāsh* (1987), p. 108.
[334] For the filthiness of their surroundings, see the account of Akbar's journey from Herat, Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah* (1968), p. 180.

'*lāhūrpindī,*'[335] and for the ignorance and arrogance of Afghans who he mocks for believing that India is less developed than Afghanistan.[336] The poverty of local villagers is so great that they often cannot provide the travellers with food. Even when they have food, the locals either charge extortionate prices or refuse to give food or shelter to these religious travellers.[337] The rural economy, too, is described as failing; Akbar spends a sustained amount of time with carpet-weavers in Herat (and provides a rare glimpse of an old Jewish carpet-weaver's workshop), and notes the decline in carpet production.[338] While the quality is still very high, Akbar notes that the official class in Afghanistan (despite their public support of Afghan-made goods) would rather buy European goods for their houses.[339]

However tinged with romanticism parts of Akbar, Badrakhi and Usmani's narratives are, their encounters with rural Afghan villagers confirm the disconnect between the imagined solidarity of religion and region and the reality. When writing in 1927, Usmani's experience of rural Afghanistan clearly changed his view of transnational religious solidarities between Indian Muslims and Afghans:

> The Khilafat which meant so much to the Indian Muhammedans had no meaning whatsoever for the Afghan masses. They remained quite indifferent to it, save a few who saw in it a potent weapon against the British Government...Whomsoever we questioned about the allegiance to the Khalifa, his reply used to come as a rude shock[340]

Any sense of shared identity with Afghans is challenged by their experiences: while catching a raft across a river in eastern Afghanistan, Badrakhi notes that he is charged

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[335] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 93.
[336] *Ibid.*
[337] For being over-charged, see Usmani, *Peshawar to Moscow* (1927), p. 21; for locals refusing to provide food, see *ibid*., p. 22.
[338] Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah* (1968), p. 168.
[339] *Ibid*. For the Afghan elites' public support for home made goods, see *Tulū'-e afghān*, Vol. 2, No. 49, p. 3. Also, Thomas Wide, 'Astrakhan, Borqa', Chadari, Dreshi: The Economy of Dress in Early 20th Century Afghanistan' in Stephanie Cronin (ed.), *Anti-Veiling Campaigns in the Muslim World: Gender, modernism and the politics of dress* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014), p. 184, fn. 165.
[340] Usmani, *Peshawar to Moscow* (1927), pp. 14-15.

extra since the raftsmen could spot that they he was not a local (*bal watan*).[341] Just outside Narin, an Afghan scoundrel attempts to get Badrakhi to give him money as taxes, aware that Badrakhi is a foreigner and thus easily fleeced.[342] The linguistic differences of Pashto and Dari mean that Badrakhi is often unable to communicate with Afghans he meets.[343] Any idea that Akbar would find a great Pashtun solidarity amongst Afghan state officials is quashed by his encounters with them; most of the Pashtun officials have forgotten their own language and now speak Dari.[344] While speaking of language education in the country with Amir Aman Allah Khan, Akbar rails against the fact that Afghanistan is 'a Pashtun country' and yet 'there is no provision for [teaching] Pashto in it.'[345] While this may reflect a later interest in Pashto language reform on the part of the older Akbar, such discussions in Kabul are confirmed by accounts of other Pashtuns in Kabul at the time.[346] Despite the Islamic tenor of his journey, Badrakhi cannot rise above ethnic particularism: he notes the differences of the Tajiks and Uzbeks he meets in Afghanistan, and is delighted when he comes across Pashtuns, befriending Pashtun Shinwaris and Afridis he meets on the way.[347] Where once Aibak had dreamt of travelling to the wild green mountains of Afghanistan, Akbar can now only long for his old homeland *(watan*) back in British India.[348]

[341] Badrakhī, *Da āzādī pah talāsh* (1987), p. 34.
[342] *Ibid*., pp. 100-101.
[343] *Ibid*., p. 95.
[344] See for example his encounter with the Governor of Farah, Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah* (1968), p.171; for the Governor of Herat, see *ibid*., p. 167.
[345] *Ibid*., p. 194.
[346] See Wide, 'Demarcating Pashto' (2013), pp. 110-112.
[347] For the Shinwaris, see Badrakhī, *Da āzādī pah talāsh* (1987), p.109; for Afridis, see *ibid*., p.63.
[348] Badrakhī, *Da āzādī pah talāsh* (1987), p. 34.

VIII: The End of The Affair: Post-Hijrat Afghanistan

The repercussions of the disastrous Hijrat Movement were pronounced and profound, affecting both Afghans and Indians alike. Deeply scarred by the encounter, Amir Aman Allah Khan would never again encourage such grand cross-border travels, nor make such extravagant public claims to cross-border solidarities. Coming at the same time as it was making peace with the British, the Afghan state was now much less inclined to support such potential anti-British troublemakers.[349] With the British offering financial aid on condition that the Afghan state did not court the Bolsheviks, Aman Allah Khan expelled those he viewed as disruptive and unhelpful influences.[350] Bolshevik sympathisers such as 'Abd al-Rabb Peshawari used the chance to head to the new up-and-coming revolutionary centre of Tashkent.[351] The Provisional Government of India, too, was forced to end its activities in Kabul.

From the Indian side, the ideal of Afghanistan as an imperial counter-space and a young, progressive Muslim nation lay in tatters. The Afghan state's role in the disastrous hijrat aroused the ire of Indian Muslims. Such disillusionment with the Afghan state was capped by Afghanistan's seeming *volte-face* in making peace with Britain. On a practical level, life grew increasingly difficult for the British Indians who remained in Kabul. Few of the *muhājirīn* remained, and even the established revolutionary journeymen, such as Sindhi and Aibak, faced increasing scrutiny. The general air of suspicion was brought to a head by the case of one Sheikh 'Abd al-Haq, a religious scholar from India, who was arrested on charges of being an English spy

[349] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 199.
[350] See Ansari, 'Pan-Islam' (1986), p. 524.
[351] Marwat, *Evolution and Growth of Communism in Afghanistan* (1997), p. 171. 'Abd al-Rabb and his friend from Kabul M.P.T. Acharya would work with M.N. Roy, not always harmoniously, to encourage the founding of the Communist Party of India, see Ansari, 'Pan-Islam', pp. 531-2; also, M.N. Roy, *Memoirs* (Bombay: Allied Publishers, 1964), pp. 464-5. For Acharya's autobiography, see M.P.T. Acharya, *Reminiscences of an Indian Revolutionary* (New Delhi: Anmol Publications, 1991).

and thrown into jail.[352] From that moment on, Akbar notes, none of the British Indians were free of suspicion.[353] Even Nadir Khan, the great champion of British Indians in Afghanistan, started to behave a little differently towards them.

Kabul's coldness towards these revolutionary journeymen increased to the point where many British Indians decided to either return home or press on to Central Asia, Russia, and Turkey. Sindhi, Akbar, Badrakhi, and Aibak all decided to leave and seek support for their political goals elsewhere. Badrakhi would make his way to Iran, before circling back to Karachi by ship. After seven years in Afghanistan, Zafar Hasan Aibak and Sindhi now prepared to head north through the country in winter. Aibak left on the 15th October 1922 after selling his horse and household implements and renting packhorses. He was not sure if they were going to survive.[354] In a final indignity, Aibak was banned by Aman Allah Khan from visiting his old friend Nadir Khan, who in 1922 was working as the head of the military organization (*hey'at-e tanzimiyah*) in Qataghan and Badakhshan in the north-east of the country. Aibak's Afghan guides, clearly under state orders, took his group on a different route so that the friends would be sure not to meet.[355]

For 'Abd al-Akbar Khan Akbar, the dream of Afghanistan had been shattered; the possibility for revolution now seemed more likely back amongst the Pashtuns of the frontier regions than in Afghanistan.[356] Akbar's plan was to return to the frontier and open madrasahs there, which would have the two-fold purpose of bringing education to the frontier, and providing centres for those engaged in anti-British

[352] Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah* (1968), pp. 182-184.
[353] *Ibid*., p. 184.
[354] Aibak, *Khātirāt* (1990), p. 215.
[355] *Ibid*., p. 217.
[356] Akbar, *Da Rūsī Turkistān au Afghānistān safarnāmah* (1968), p. 198.

activity.[357] On his way out of Afghanistan, Akbar heard the news of the death of his friend Jamal Pasha, who had been assassinated in Tiflis.

IX. Conclusion

These Indian travel memoirs have illustrated the arrival of a new type of traveller – the revolutionary journeyman – into Afghanistan during the First World War. The appearance of such travellers is testament to the gradual drawing of Afghanistan into larger circuits of exchange, as anti-imperial movements across the world made use of Afghanistan as both an imagined space and practical base for their own varied political projects. The chapter has followed the efflorescence of a view of Afghanistan as a site of refuge and opportunity. In contrast to the 'progressivist' visions of Muslim reformers of the early 20th century, we have seen in the travel accounts of *mujāhidīn* and *muhājirīn* how Afghanistan was aestheticized as a landscape of Islamic purity, austere beauty, and martial values during the extreme agitations of the First World War and its aftermath. Such a heady vision succeeded in encouraging tens of thousands of Muslims to make the long journey across the mountain passes. We have also seen how such an idealized vision could not stand up to the realities of living and working in Afghanistan. The Hijrat Movement thus acted as both the crowning moment, and death knell, of the Muslim turn to Afghanistan, and the end of its 'revolutionary moment'. It would not be until the jihad against the Soviets in the 1980s that such a vision of the country would be revived - although this time it would be tens of thousands of Saudis, Egyptians, Chechans, Kashmiris and

[357] *Ibid*. Akbar's desire to focus back on his own community rather than abroad for independence was one shared by many members of the Hijrat Movement, see Mukulika Bannerjee, *The Pathan Unarmed: Opposition and Memory in the North West Frontier* (Oxford: James Currey, 2000), pp. 49-51.

others, who would follow in the footsteps of the ill-starred Lahoris, Sindhis, and Peshawaris of several generations before.

Conclusions

This dissertation started with a puzzle: how and why did the poor, remote and isolated country of Afghanistan become the site of Muslim aspiration and imagination in the early 20th century? The following chapters have attempted to solve that puzzle, first interrogating the terms of the question – how remote and isolated really was Afghanistan to begin with? - and then plotting the process by which Afghanistan became a site of succour, solace, and spirit for Muslims from across the world. The dissertation has argued that the development of Afghanistan in the Muslim imagination was the product of large-scale changes on the global, national, and transnational level, and the interactions between these different levels: the development of global communications and warfare and their impact on state politics and individual movement; the changing nature of imperial rule in India and the rise of transnational anti-imperial movements in India and the Ottoman Empire in response; the policies of the Afghan state towards its own subjects and foreign Muslims during a period of nation-state formation.

The dissertation has also made a case for 'travel' as a useful framework and subject of study for historians. First of all, such a study of the travels of a diverse range of historical actors has allowed us to focus on the multiple sources and resources of the 'Muslim turn' to Afghanistan. Such a study has also allowed us to situate change in Afghanistan in relation to dynamic processes of movement of exchange: a story of 'routes' rather than 'roots'.[1] Moreover, 'travel' as a framework allows us to move beyond studies of 'mobility'. For 'travel' is a framework that

[1] See Tim Cresswell, *On the Move: Mobility in the Modern Western World* (New York: Routledge, 2006), p. 1. Also, Stephen Greenblatt, 'Cultural Mobility: An Introduction' in *idem* (ed.), *Cultural Mobility: A Manifesto* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

combines both action and discourse; to study 'travel' is to place both action and discourse in the same field of analysis. Such an approach is highly relevant to those interested in 'mobility studies', which has continued to grow as a sub-set of anthropology, sociology, and history, and which has often not paid sufficient attention to the relationship of action to discourse and discourse to action. By studying 'travel', scholars have the opportunity to move beyond writing in either a 'culturalist' or 'materialist' mode. As this dissertation has argued, the representation of 'Afghanistan' by these travellers cannot be separated from their physical movements in and out of the country. Both travel and travel accounts need to be studied together. Afghanistan was both imagined space and practical base for Muslims during the period: the physical and conceptual dimensions of 'Afghanistan' are inextricably linked.

As a contrast to the political and diplomatic actions of the Anglo-Afghan wars of the 19th century or the Soviet occupation of the 1980s, the focus of this dissertation has been on a less immediately gung-ho period of Afghan history and on less visible elements of Afghan public life: less 'great men' than 'journeymen'. In following the songlines of such largely forgotten travellers as Indian businessmen, Ottoman zincographers, Bukharan physicians, and Lahori students, a central aim has been to bring out some of the individuality of various characters involved in Afghan social, political, and cultural life, and the idiosyncrasy of their worldview and work. To an extent, capturing something of the plurality and diversity of Afghan and Muslim voices in Afghan history is an end in itself. But if the work's central purpose has been to understand a historical moment in its own context, a secondary purpose has been to excavate the roots and development of an idea of Afghanistan that was to become extremely powerful in the late 20th century. For, in the jihad of the 1980s

against the Soviet Union, we see clearly many of the same representations of Afghanistan that are found in the early 20th century texts of anti-imperialist Muslim adventurers; and, in the travels of tens of thousands of contemporary foreign *mujāhidīn* to Afghanistan, we see the use of many of the same intellectual and physical pathways that were used by Muslim travellers of an earlier age. While the causes of these late 20th century jihads are quite different from those of a hundred years ago, the representations of Afghanistan are remarkably consistent. Afghanistan as symbol and site of Islamic revival, Afghanistan as Muslim refuge and base for action - these are ideas that have motivated, and continue to motivate, various strands of Muslim thought to this day. And, just like 'Ubaid Allah Sindhi, Zafar Hasan Aibak, Shaukat Usmani et al., many of the *mujāhidīn* of recent history found that Afghanistan's reality could not live up to its imagining. While the West may have concocted dark fantasies of a unified set of extremist ideologies and collaborations between foreign al-Qa'eda operatives and the Taliban, in fact relations between foreign Muslims and Afghans in the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s were quite as fraught as in the days of Habib Allah Khan and Aman Allah Khan.[2]

I. Departures

While this dissertation has traced the development of a powerful imaginary of 'Afghanistan' during an important moment of formation, there is much work to be done to understand fully the links between the past and present. To trace the relations between the Afghanistan of the early 20th century and that of today will require us to plot the way Afghanistan interacted with the world around it between the 1920s and

[2] See Alex Strick Van Linschoten and Felix Kuehn, *An Enemy We Created: The Myth of the Taliban/Al-Qaeda Merger in Afghanistan, 1970-2010* (London: Hurst & Co., 2012).

the 1980s.[3] By ending with the aftermath of the Hijrat Movement of 1920, this dissertation deliberately stops at the moment in which transnational flows peaked in Afghanistan. The dissertation has argued that the failure of the Hijrat Movement brought an end to the dream of Afghanistan as a genuine home or base for India's Muslims. But that is not to say that Afghanistan did not continue to exercise the imagination of Muslims around the world; in fact, Afghanistan received increasing scrutiny and interest in the 1920s, largely due to the highly visible - one might say theatrical - actions of Amir Aman Allah Khan. The difference is located in the types of interaction: whereas this dissertation has largely focused on the rise of an idealistic *transnationalism* in Afghanistan, the rest of the 1920s in Afghanistan was characterized by a rising *internationalism*. A newly independent Afghanistan now increasingly sought a place amongst the global community of nations, establishing diplomatic relations for the first time with many countries, founding embassies and consulates abroad and inviting diplomatic missions to set up in Kabul. While select Muslim journeymen, including scattered remnants of the Hijrat Movement, continued to make a living in Kabul, increasingly incoming travellers and technocrats came at the sponsorship and under the aegis of foreign governments. A flood of Italian, German, French, and Turkish foreign consultants entered the country to re-write its laws, develop its new schools, transform its urban built environment, and study its archaeological, geological, anthropological, environmental past and present. Such new international forces and relations encouraged the formation of new government departments and bureaucratic systems, as well as new ideas and ideologies that brought about their own challenges, opportunities, costs, and conflicts. After the

[3] One article has offered a brief attempt to trace some of the connections between the jihad of the early 20th century and that of the 1980s, see Sana Haroon, 'Religious Revivalism across the Durand Line' in Shahzad Bashir and Robert D. Crews (eds.), *Under the Drones: Modern Lives in the Afghanistan-Pakistan Borderlands* (Cambridge: Massachusetts, 2012).

downfall of Aman Allah Khan in 1929, and the rise of Nadir Khan to power, there would be a certain revival of interest in Afghanistan amongst Indian intellectuals. Nadir Khan would even invite such prominent figures as Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938), Sayyid Sulaiman Nadwi (1884-1953), and Ross Mas'ud (1889-1937) to visit Afghanistan during the period, who would write travelogues of their experiences in early 1930s Afghanistan.[4] With the Indian independence movement at its height, independent Afghanistan continued to exert a certain imaginative hold over Indian Muslim intellectuals in the 1930s. In 1936, Muhammad Iqbal transmogrified his brief trip to Kabul into a Persian poetic travelogue, '*Musāfir'* ('Traveller'), which limned Afghanistan as a burial ground of the mighty Muslim dead.[5] But during the decade leading up to the Second World War, Afghanistan would remain more an intellectual trope than a genuine site of largescale Muslim optimism and action.

Beyond the 1920s and 1930s and right up to the communist revolution of 1978, histories of Afghanistan's cultural, institutional, and intellectual engagement with the world around it remain largely unwritten. With the formidable exception of James Caron's study of Pashtun ethno-nationalism during the period, there has been no in-depth analysis using local and regional sources.[6] Afghanistan's relation to various independence movements across Asia, the Soviet Union, and the Second World War, all remain vast areas where research is extremely limited and our knowledge concomitantly patchy.[7] It is hoped that the writing of such histories will

[4] Sayyid Sulaimān Nadwī, *Sair-e Afghānistān* (Lahore: Sang-e mīl, 2008); Khwāja Hasan Nizāmī, *Safarnāmah-e Afghānistān* (Lahore: Ātish fishān, 2007, repr.). An analysis of these texts can be found in Nile Green, 'The Trans-Border Traffic of Afghan Modernism: Afghanistan and the Indian 'Urdusphere,' *Comparative Studies in Society and History* Vol. 53, No. 3 (2011), pp. 479-508.

[5] This poem, which concludes with an address to the young Afghan ruler and '*pādshāh-e Islām*', Zahir Shah (1914-2007), can be found in Muhammad Iqbāl, *Kulliyāt-e ash'ār-e fārsī maulānā Iqbāl lāhūrī* (Tehran: Intishārāt-e sanā'ī, 2002).

[6] James Caron, *Cultural Histories of Pashtun Nationalism*, (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 2009).

[7] For two excellent articles on the post-Second World War and pre-Communist era in Afghanistan, see Paul Robinson and Jay Dixon, 'Soviet Development Theory and Economic and Technical Assistance to

allow us to connect the transformations of the early 20th century with those of the 21st century. Such histories may also help us understand the enduring power of Afghanistan in the imagination.

Afghanistan, 1954-1991,' *The Historian* Vol. 73, No. 3 (2010), pp. 599-623; Nick Cullather, 'Damming Afghanistan: Modernization in a Buffer State,' *The Journal of American History* Vol. 89, No. 2 (2002), p. 512-537.

Note on Transliteration and Dates

This dissertation uses a variety of sources in Afghan Persian (henceforth called Dari),[8] Pashto, Urdu, Arabic, and Ottoman Turkish, so a standard transliteration system is impossible to implement. For Dari, I use a modified version of the International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies' (IJMES) transliteration system for Persian. I follow IJMES' system for vowels, consonants and dipthongs with several modifications: *izāfah* is indicated by adding –e to the first member of such compounds; I use *au* and *ai* for dipthongs, aesthetically preferring these to *aw* and *ay*; I use 'w' for 'و', preferring this to IJMES's 'u' or 'v'; diacritics are not used to distinguish consonants with the same pronunciation in Dari; the long vowels are rendered as 'ā', 'ī' and 'ū'; for doubled *i* and *w*, I use *-yy-* and *–ww-* respectively; final 'ه' is indicated by *ah*.

For Ottoman Turkish and Arabic, I follow a modified version of the *IJMES* system.

For Urdu, I follow the guidelines laid out in the *Annual of Urdu Studies* (AUS) 'A Note on Transliteration (revised 2007)' with certain modifications. I use the digraph such as *ch* where AUS has *č*.

For Pashto, I also use this modified version of the AUS guidelines. For the Pashto palatal consonants and affricates I follow Mackenzie.[9] Thus I use *j* for ځ and *c* for څ.

[8] The attempt to 'Afghanize' Persian through calling it 'Dari' was a product of the 1910s in Afghanistan. While thus an essentially nationalistic project, it does usefully distinguish the linguistic distinctions between Afghan Persian as it has developed and that of Iranian Persian, see Nile Green, 'Introduction' in Nile Green and Nushin Arbabzadah (eds.), *Afghanistan in Ink: Literature Between Diaspora and Nation* (London: Hurst & Co., 2013), pp. 12-13.

[9] David Mackenzie, 'Pashto' in Bernard Comrie (ed.), *The World's Major Languages* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987).

Due to the complexities of transliterating five different languages into English, I have included a table below setting out the system used, for ease of reference.

Well-known toponyms in Afghanistan are rendered according to long-standing English usage, thus Herat, Kandahar, Ghazni. For smaller towns and villages I follow Persian transliteration of the place, as found in the contemporary source. Likewise for toponyms in Iran and Central Asia. For toponyms in India, I follow English usage.

Arabic words which are found in the Oxford English Dictionary are transliterated according to IJMES' system for Arabic and are un-italicized. Thus: Qur'an, Shi'a, jihad. The exception to this is if the word occurs in quotation, in which case the author's rendering has been left intact.

Compound names are divided according to their Dari/Arabic/Pashto/Urdu/Ottoman spelling, thus Habib Allah Khan and Aman Allah Khan, not Habibullah Khan and Amanullah Khan. Names employing Arabic constructions are transliterated with the article *al-*. Where we know the preferred spelling in Latin script that a person used for their name, that spelling has been used; otherwise I have transliterated their name according to the system for the language in which they write. Macrons are only used for the names of authors referenced in footnotes.

Following convention, when transliterating titles of books, articles, newspapers, and publishing houses into English I have only capitalized the first word and any proper nouns.

All dates of publications have been converted to Anno Domini (A.D.).

Transliteration Table

Consonants					
	Dari	Ottoman Turkish	Urdu	Pashto	Arabic
ب	b	b	b	b	b
پ	p	p	p	p	-
ت	t	t	t	t	t
ټ / ټ	-	-	t	t	-
ث	s	s	s	s	th
ج	j	j	j	j	j
چ	ch	ch	ch	ch	-
ح	h	h	h	h	h
خ	kh	h	kh	kh	kh
ځ	-	-	-	c	-
څ	-	-	-	j	-
د	d	d	d	d	d
ډ / ډ	-	-	d	d	-
ذ	z	z	z	z	dh
ر	r	r	r	r	r
ړ	-	-	r	r	-
ز	z	z	z	z	z
ژ	zh	j	-	zh	-
ږ	-	-	-	g	-
س	s	s	s	s	s
ش	sh	ş	sh	sh	sh
ښ	-	-	-	kh	-
ص	s	s	s	s	s
ض	z	z	z	z	d

ط	t	t	t	t	t
ظ	z	z	z	z	z
ع	‘	‘	‘	‘	‘
غ	gh	g	gh	gh	gh
ف	f	f	f	f	f
ق	q	k	q	q	q
ک	k	k	k	k	k
گ / ګ	g	g	g	g	-
ل	l	l	l	l	l
م	m	m	m	m	m
ن	n	n	n	n	n
ڼ	-	-	-	n	-
ں	-	-	n	-	-
ه	h	h	h	h	h
ھ	-	-	h	-	-
و	w	v	v	w	w
ی	y	y	y	y	y
ء	’	’	’	’	’

Vowels and Dipthongs					
	Dari	Ottoman Turkish	Urdu	Pashto	Arabic
اَ	a	a	a	a	a
اِ	i	i	i	i	i
اُ	u	u	u	u	u
آ (representing *alif madda* in initial position,	ā	ā	ā	ā	ā

and *alif* in medial and final positions)					
و	ū	ū	ū	ū	ū
ي	ī	ī	ī	ī	ī
اے	-	-	ē	ē	-
اَو	au	au	au	au	au
اُے / اَی	ai	ai	ai	ai	ai
ائ	-	-	-	ei	-

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