

Sub-Nationalism and Nationalism: The Dilemma of Power and Ethnicity in Afghanistan

Osman Mohammed Afzal

Faculty of Public Governance, Budapest National University of Public Service, Budapest, Hungary

Email: afzalosmani9@gmail.com

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Abstract

Afghanistan is a multinational country with a weak nationalism. The fragility of nationalism and nations often has been due to races, religion, and stereotypes; however, in Afghanistan, the centralization of power has created fragility and significant rifts among ethnicities which the outcome is sub-nationalism. Sub-nationalism could be harmless in a decentralized political system, however, not definitely in a centralized political system. Throughout history, the centrality of authority strengthened ethnic cleavages, rivalries of ethnics overpower, single-ethnic hegemony, weak governance, and significantly disrupted the unity of ethnics. The big hurdle of Afghanistan for being a nation-state has been the centralization of power. Most authors and pamphlets advise concentration of power versus decentralized system in the country to preserve the unity of ethnicities. At the same time, Afghanistan experienced that such a system did not trigger unity of the nationalities.

Keywords

Nationalism, Sub-Nationalism, Decentralization of Power, Ethnicity

1. Introduction

Afghanistan is a multinational country that, by its current boundaries specified in the 19th century in the reign of Amir Abdul Rahman Khan 1880-1901 (Rahimi). The country comprises Tajiks, Pashtuns, Hazaras, Uzbeks, and minor ethnicities, such as Baloch, Kirgiz, Kazakh, Sadat, Arab, Gojar, Pashai, Turkmen, and Tatar (Kayser, 2012). All these ethnicities have different cultures, languages, and historical values; thereby, it is essential to form a structure to preserve these values and bring stability and unity in the pivot of it. Therefore, the question that always came up is how to make a nationalism that encompasses all ethnicities' values? Furthermore, what nurtured the roots of sub-nationalism in the

country? Why is sub-nationalism being considered as the shelter for criminals and corrupt officials in the government?

From two dimensions, the fragility of Nation and Nationalism in Afghanistan is considerable: the first coerced nationalism by authoritarian regimes and single ethnic-cultural pattern imposed upon the other ethnicities throughout the history, that precisely eroded the roots of an inclusive wide rang Nationalism in Afghanistan. The second discussion of the article is the centralization of power that preserves a weak nationalism in the country and is considered as the main factor of a vicious sub-nationalism. It was the centralization of power that created rift and conflict among the ethnicities. Decentralization would solve the long-standing rifts and conflicts between ethnicities over political power. However, on the other hand, it would institutionalize Democracy, the nation's unique pattern in the country. Although the society of Afghanistan and ethnicities are in convergency and a close relationship with one another, however, at the same time, elitism by nationalities seems a deniable fact in society. Though politicians, instead of thinking nationally, are relatively responsive to their ethnicity and region where he belongs to and comes from. However, this is not so vital how they are behaving nationalistic. A politician is reliable and thinks nationally, willy-nilly they attributed to their tribe or ethnic branches. Also, the same vision exists upon the factions and factionalism that factions have not comprised of all ethnicities.

The article precisely illustrates the coerced nationalism roots and sub-nationalism, which is the outcome of centralized political power in the multiethnic society of Afghanistan, where the centrality of power ultimately would lead to a big conflict quagmire. Therefore, by contrast to all deliberations that prefer the centrality of the system for a united, stable Afghanistan, I believe that Decentralization is the key element for supporting nationalism and a nation-state in Afghanistan. A centralized political system does not respond to a comprehensive nationalism in the country, nor can it unite a decentralized society and root out the ethnic sub-nationalism notion.

2. Methodology

The research has been conducted based on the qualitative method. Regarding the formation of the state, ethnicity and nationalism in Afghanistan exist abundant materials, books, articles, and pamphlets that clearly illustrate the tyrannic hegemony of a single ethnic in the country. Therefore, two types of resources books show the formation of the state in Afghanistan based on the ethnic vision. The second is articles that concern multiculturalism and nationalism in multiethnic societies. Ethnicity and power have been the key element and causes of the fragility of the state in Afghanistan. Both primary and secondary resources have been used; however, the primary resources collections challenge the research, though most of the primary resources have been Non-English sources.

3. Nationalism as an Ideology

A nation composite of a cultural group that encompasses different ethnicities, religions, ethnocultural and civic values, and such a country admittedly will have a problem if there are inequality and lame distribution of power (Spencer & Wollman, 2005). Multiethnic societies will always be fragile unless there is no equal distribution of power. Gellner (1980) defines nationalism as a sentiment that masses, due to legitimacy and non-legitimacy, raise their voice collectively if the government violates the social contract's basic principles. In other words, "nationalism is a theory of political legitimacy, which requires that ethnic boundaries should not cut across political ones" (Gellner, 1980). Although some argue that there is no specific, unequivocal definition of nationalism, however, there are abundant arguments and theories out of national feeling and patriotism considering the roots of nationalism in a state. However, the nation and nationalism through the conceptions, such as political culture, national identity, language, and territory, have been defined (Hobsbawn, 1996). As Barrington (1997) quotes from Anthony Smith that "the nation is a human population sharing a historic territory, common myth, historical memories, mass public culture, common economy" (p. 712). From 1600-1815 nationalism was considered the political ideology that nurtured and formed a revolution for shaping the nation-state, such as the French revolution in Europe. Nationalism is an ideological movement for maintaining the autonomy and unity of society that has been considered a key element in defining a nation (Jensen, n.d). Definition out of Nationalism shows that nations are the outcome of nationalism and movements in the nineteenth century; and the nineteenth century has considered the era of the revolutions for Nationalism across the World, though it was the nationalism that led the revolutions and movements to give birth the modern nation-states (Hill, 2020; Wimmer & Feinstein, 2010).

Nationalism encompasses two phenomena: one is the cultural nationalism that illustrates the membership of individuals of the nation and their identity, the second is the nation's members take responsibility for political sovereignty. If we go through the sense of oneness and feelings upon the state attributed to nationalism, there is another conception that determines it; it is patriotism. Although patriotism does not have a political aspect, nationalism goes beyond patriotism and has political implications that can lead to movements and evolutions (Harrison & Boyd, 2018). The individual attachment to the country, to the nation, and their values, often defined patriotism. In other words, patriotism is a noun that means devoted love to a territory, states, and defending from the country, sense of belonging to the motherland, values born in a specific region, and patriotism to the people. Terrence E. Cook discusses John Jaque Rousseau's theory of public education that patriotism inspired through public education to generation in childhood (Cook, 1975, Hobsbawn & Eric, 1996).

Nationalism is a concept that often being linked to the U.S. and French revolution back to the 18th century that from the modern perspective, nationalism,

considered as the movement that strengthens the national feeling, as Max Weber also in the definition of the nation concept use national sentiment and feeling for the community (Norkus, 2004). But on the other hand, civic nationalism is a new Nationalism that came up after the French revolution, which is premised on enlightenment features and considered as the central discourse in terms of the nation-state (Ali & Khalil, 2015, Maza, 1989).

Ernest Gellner believes that nationalism is the outcome of rational modernization in industrial societies that parallel with events and revolutions that came up in the 19th century, thereby creating opportunities for the modern state and even influencing a state's foreign policy by nationalism is undeniable too. However, the contemporary theorist's conceptualization of nationalism is varying compared to the classic theory of nationalism. The classic theorist believes that before defining nationalism, it is essential to determine first the concept of the nation, though nationalism derives out of the nation. According to classic theorists, a nation is a collection of people who strive to achieve their desire through collective action. In general, they prioritize the nation and attribute them to the history of humankind and their goal in life. On the other hand, Gallner (1980) assumes that the nation does not create nationalism; instead, it is the nationalist movements that define nations and adds that "Nationalism is a theory of political legitimacy" (Gellner, 1980: pp. 1-2).

In contrast to Gallner assumption, the nationalist movements in mosaic society such as Afghanistan conversely, led to increasing ethnic rifts; yet, the actions that have put forward the identical debate and gone through the cultural and historical values for boosting nationalism and rights of ethnics in Afghanistan, all these movements have failed, and always brought misogyny among ethnicities. Thus, the nationalist movement in Afghanistan wouldn't gain public support due to ethnic identical challenges that ethnicities tolerated through history from a centralized autocratic system. The new nationalism in multiethnic societies premised on pluralism and the nationalities' identities specified and respected legally (Delanty, 1996).

4. Nationalism as an Ideology in Afghanistan

Nationalism neither works as Gellner (1980) points out that it is the *nationalist movements* that define nationalism in a state, nor it can be a *political ideology* in Afghanistan to strengthen the unity of nationalities in the country. Though the nationalist movements in Afghanistan never have been formed to have a specific inclusive object; there is numerous cause that has eroded the nation-building basic concepts and nationalism that has led to sub-nationalism. Unless not to dissolve the power dilemma and embedded characters as the national brand in Afghanistan's constitution, such as the national anthem, flag, money, identity, that does reflect the rest of ethnics identity, could not call Afghanistan as the nation-state. The same challenge is with the definition of nationalism as a political ideology, though the political ideology is either in the pivot of ethnicity and tribe

that employees of the institutions roughly being hired based on ethnicity and clientelism. In this regard, two more concepts exist, clientelism and tribalism, the vicious factors of corruption in the entire polity of the country that pervasively eroded and weakened the institutions in Afghanistan (Singh, 2014). The politics and polity in Afghanistan are under the pressure and manipulation of ethnicity; thereby, politics and polity both consider ethnically rather than nationally.

Decentralization has different aspects; however, its primary purpose is predominantly to facilitate the puzzle of power, transfer of power from the center to local authorities with the aim of good governance, as well as consider a unique approach for smoothing the way for Democracy. The other aspects and purpose of Decentralization of power are the salvation of power problems in multiethnic societies (Shahid, 2017). Thus, there is a different roadmap for the devolution of the political system. According to Hymen (2020), “Afghans are neither one people nor one political community. The state itself is broken-backed, and the country is divided between two rival governments: a Taliban-ruled state competes for control of northern regions under mutually rival governments, warlords. Ethnic, tribal, and sectarian divisions have worsened and further fragmented the country” (Hyman, 2002). The sectarian division has not been the predominant challenge versus nationalism, and nation-building in Afghanistan as the political authority and power have been devastating for the country; however, on the whole, apprehension against the Shias precisely erupted during the Taliban regime (JHA, 2013; Conversi, 2014).

In the multiethnic society of Afghanistan, making nationalism based on a centralized political system does not guarantee the country’s future as, within history, efforts regarding making nationalism by rosy words and coercion did not come to fruition. Afghanistan and Afghan nationalism and identity are artifacts of the Great Game rivalry between Russia and Britain in Asia (1880-1901). Mahmud Tarzi, the co-author of the Afghan nationalism who architected nationalism in favor of one ethnicity after colonial hegemony in the region. The architected nationalism by the Tarzi had two specific goals in the country; first, Pashtuns were not the major ethnic of Afghanistan; thereby, they should be settled and spread across the country. The settlement of Pashtuns to the north “Qataghan” was an official, coded approach of the Abdul Rahman administration (1880-1901), and later on, his son King Amanullah Khan (1919-1929) followed that principle which is called “Nizamnamayee Naqileen ba Samti Qataghan” the nomad’s settlement principle to the north “Qataghan” (Shahrani, 2018). The Pashtunization of Afghanistan through history by Kings and later on by hybrid-democratic regimes also continued in the country.

The second goal of Tarzi was the ethnic assimilation that followed the Mustafa Kamal Ataturk model in Turkey. Ataturk deliberately ignored and assimilated the Kurdish identity; Kurds and Turks are still in conflict and skirmish within Turkey (Mousavi, 2015; Sullivan, 2016). Expressly, the ethnic nationalism tai-

lored by Mahmud Tarzi in Afghanistan was affected by Pan-Turkism and Nazism ideology, that to communalize and legitimize an ethnic identity to the whole nation as Mustafa Kamal desired in Turkey. Yet, Tarzi, to close the mouth of criticism over the nationalism that its cornerstone is based on ethnicity, promptly ascribed it to the religious narratives, least not to flamm incentive of other nationalities in Afghanistan (Gregorian, 1967). The main points of this nationalism were the spreading and institutionalizing of “Pashtunwali”¹ Pashtun culture and Pashtun language officialization over all the country. The Pashtunwali is a potent tribal Pashtuns ideology; in other words, the Pashtun customary law, that its principle somewhat has been codified as the national character. The *Loya jirga* (grand national assembly) is a traditional approach of Pashtuns primarily for conflict resolutions. The elders of Pashtuns used to gather to dissolve the tribes’ inner cleavage and conflicts in the tribal system, which is called *Jirga*. However, today, the Loya Jirga is the legal assembly debating and ultimately deciding over the draft documents. Thus, the Loya Jirga somewhat gives legitimacy to government decisions in the national constitutions, which does not have efficacy and efficiency from a modern perspective; however, it is a resource for the government’s legitimacy in Afghanistan that admittedly has diminished the dignity of parliament and senate in Afghanistan (Benson & Seddiqui, 2014).

Throughout history, the single ethnic identity and its values were deliberately embedded in the legal system and imposed upon the rest of the ethnicities in the country that the Afghan concept and identity is the outcome of colonial rivalries, the British and the USSR (Ibrahimi, 2019). Colonialism prolonged the Pashtuns ruling class hegemony over the other ethnicities. The ruling ethnic class then nationalized the values that the rest of the nationalities did not have cultural or historical affiliation with. Even though the government employee was obliged to learn the Pashtu language, whereas the prevalent language was Farsi. While Farsi/Dari served as the country’s lingua franca language, the 1964 constitution under the new Democracy recognized the Pashtu language officially and added it as its second official language. This procedure from long ago was architected, specifically in 1937 under the name of Pashtu Academy, *Pashto Tolaney* (Hyman, 2002). The Pashtu academy mindset was to replace Persian words and terminologies with Pashto words; however, these efforts for the language did not end cooperative to compete with Farsi/Dari Language.

Nation-building and state-building based on ethnic visionary begin with the formation of the state from 1880-1901 by Abdul Rahman and following that by King Amanullah from 1919-1929. After a tour to Europe, Amanullah begins with the European model of state-building, based on a secular and liberal pattern in Afghanistan. According to Ibrahimi (2019), the state-building by Amanullah in Afghanistan was a radical approach, which ultimately triggered a revolt in the country (Ibrahimi, 2019: p. 48; Amir, 2005). In general, chaos and conflict throughout history in Afghanistan took the opportunity to define the nation’s values.

¹Pashtunwali is the cultural values of Pashtuns and the unwritten code of the Pashtuns.

The precise ethnic demography of the ethnicities in the country is not explicit; there is a rough and incredible estimation about the populations that Pashtuns are in the majority, which does not detail based statistical research. Afghanistan is a country of minorities; there is no major ethnic group, all assumptions premised on estimates, without any official demography Pashtuns considered the major ethnic group in the country which does not have academic roots. Overall, estimation is that Pashtuns are nearly 32% or 42% percent, Tajikis about 27%, Uzbeks and Hazara's about 9%, and smaller groups that this is not a credible statistic from the ethnicities number in Afghanistan (Qayam, 2012).

Ethnics in Afghanistan live for more than 5000 years; they united against Britain and the Soviet Union interventions that ethnics stubbornly withstood against colonization and foreign invasion (Rahimi, 2017: pp. 42-47). The three Anglo-Afghan wars ended with the treaty of Rawalpindi in 1919, and Afghanistan got its independence from the British and shaped it into a modern independent state. According to Riedel (2014), "The Durand Line was reaffirmed as the border, but Afghanistan was given total independence in conducting its foreign policy. It promptly became the first country in the world to recognize the new communist government in Moscow. Russia's leader Vladimir Lenin sent a Soviet delegation to Kabul in September 1919 to open diplomatic channels, and the Soviets equipped and trained the Afghan air force" (p. 10). Even though it is so clear that Durand Border is a recognized official border between Afghanistan and Pakistan, however, the Afghan Pashtun diaspora nevertheless of history does not accept the Durand as the border between the two countries.

5. The Outcome of Coerced Nationalism

The decentralization of power in many pluralists societies emerged after the collapse of the Soviet Union. In the communist regimes, regionalism debates and nationalism were considered the severe threat to communism. In Balkan countries, the nationalist and regionalist movements under the communist yoke could not raise their hands and request explicitly for their rights, though somewhat suppressed by the communists' regimes. In the communist regime, multiethnic states were faced with a coerced Nationalism that the states willy-nilly ought to accept the favored communist regimes Nationalism. Eventually, it was the potent nationalist movements outcomes that resulted in the demise of communism (Beissinger, 2009; Marinov & Vezekov, 2014: p. 470). As a multicultural state, Afghanistan was either faced with single ethnic coerced nationalism throughout history. In most post-conflict states, after the Soviet Union collapsed in 1990, the governments' system changed. Nationalism was redefined in multiethnic countries, pacifically in Balkan countries; however, Afghanistan remained in the same situation, although two-hybrid regimes after the communist regime in Afghanistan came to power, the Mujahideen and the Taliban that both bloody conflicts in the country were the outcome of power and both regimes did not offer an alternative government that the deconcentration of power is posed either (Mari-

nov & Vezenkov, 2014). There is no severe sectarian conflict to consider a potential challenge in Afghanistan, whereas, in most multiethnic societies, ethnic cleavage originates from religious beliefs, races, and cultural diversities; however, there has never been cleavage for races or religious beliefs (Fox, 2000; Kadayifci, 2009).

Even though from the beginning of state and nation-building in 1880, the ethnics roles have not been a considerable topic in Pashtun-centric governments in history. The autocratic and dictatorship system in the history of Afghanistan took the chance of non-Pashtun ethnicities to request their equal rights. Admittedly, endeavor for a pluralistic and peaceful society is necessary to define the ethnics values and dissolve the puzzle of power that considers the primary hurdle for an expansive Nationalism. Identifying of non-Pashtun identities would culminate to bring close convergence among ethnicities. Although in previous Pashtuns regimes, Pashtuns themselves identity under *Ghelzai* and *Durani* divided, and their tribal identity was saved. However, it does not mean that the Pashtun rulers did not assimilate or restrict other ethnicities from politics (Balkhi, 2020; Newell, 1989). One of the critiques regarding the U.S. state-building in Afghanistan after 2001 was supporting the centrality of authority, and the constitution legitimized a coerced identity.

The political rivalries over power have been a big hurdle for the sense of oneness in Afghanistan to support nation-building in the country. However, a single ethnic dictatorship highly influenced the process of both state-building and nation-building. Amir Abdul Rahman, a modernist king of Afghanistan from 1880-1901, codified the state with ethnic notions that, except for Pashtuns, other minorities were marginalized from political power. Such a policy could create a secessionist movement in the country. In the regime of Abdul Rahman, Pashtuns were considered an admirable tribe than other ethnicities; the administration also dedicated salary only for men and women of Pashtun (Balkhi, 2020: pp. 84-85).

6. Roots of Coerced Nationalism that Lead to Sub-Nationalism

Except for Habibullah Kalakani 1929-November 1929, Babrak Karmal 1979-1986, Burhanuddin Rabbani 1992-2001, the Tajiks rulers, the rest, Pashtuns had been in political power and leadership. Within the reign of Pashtuns in Afghanistan, especially since Abdul Rahman in 1880, Afghanistan and Afghan identity came up. According to Mr. Balkhi's (2020) findings, the *Afghan* concept was derived from one of the Arian Rulers (Ashefkan) (Asakan) who ruled in Kapisa and Kabul, then added (Stan) the Persian word, which means the territory (Balkhi, 2020: pp. 62-63). But Afghan identity in Rahimi's findings means Pashtuns, that *Afghanistan* and *Afghan* both have ethnic affiliations, though Khurasan, the historical name of Afghanistan, was replaced to Afghanistan. Thereby Pashtun elites affiliate other ethnicities to neighboring countries that, except for Pash-

tuns, the rest of ethnics are immigrants in Afghanistan. This notion concerning different nationalities created potential pitfalls in the political and social arena (Rahimi, 2017: pp. 240-241). In Afghanistan, power and ethnic diversity are a chronic tangible challenge; nation-building and state-building unconditionally without considering conflict over power in Afghanistan mean certifying a historical fallacy. Coercion in the political history of Afghanistan is an inevitable broad-based ethnic policy. The ethnic mindset and attitudes toward the rest of the ethnicities by Pashtuns still are faintly tangible. The single ethnic autocratic regime nurtured stereotypes against other nationalities in Afghanistan that somewhat exist today, and emphasizing the centrality of power predominantly by Pashtuns is ideological, that Pashtuns power dynasty would break if the system changed from centralized to decentralized one (Thier, 2020). The Nuristan inhabitants During Abdul Rahman converted forcefully to Islam, as well as rest of the ethnics such as Hazaras Shiata Muslim despised and dispossessed of their lands, enslaved them and rest of ethnics such as Tajiks, Uzbeks, Turkmen brutally brought under control, and rich lands distributed to Pashtun settlers (Hyman, 2002: p. 307).

In most multicultural states, the conflict has been over resources division, development inequalities, “internal colonialism”, and religious diversity (Blauner, 1969). However, in Afghanistan is no evidence to illustrate the functional aspects of internal colonialism in the country to go through and find the specific reasons for it. Still, the regional stereotype has been evident in recent years that fundamental developments functioned asymmetrically. The previous pages mentioned that politicians, even in the higher position, feel responsive to serve their people and region first, which is the flaw of the centralized political system in the country. Centralization, on the one hand, considers a hurdle for Democracy. On the other hand, Democracy and the centralized systems are not compatible concepts with each other, though Democracy gives rights for the people to decide upon their political destiny; however, the vertical structure of power interrupts the democratic process by fallacy (Gomes, 2018).

7. Why Is Decentralization Is Necessary for Afghanistan?

Political Decentralization means transferring authority and responsibility to local authorities. Participatory governance is a prior issue for today’s modern world and has excellent international support and advocacy, predominantly in participatory governance, which is the outcome of a decentralized system; citizens’ voice plays a crucial role in government decision-making (Muriu, 2013). Decentralization can happen in different areas; however, political Decentralization is incumbent for multiethnic societies. In pluralistic states, the infinity of power resulted in political decay. The Decentralization studies in most multiethnic instantly in African countries show that it is usually posed to settle down the ethnic cleavage overpower. From two perspectives, Decentralization seems urgent for Afghanistan: from a developmental perspective that would lead to good

governance, stability and pave the way for solving the identical dilemma. Secondly, its necessity and purpose are for the strengthening of Democracy and sustainable peace that all efforts toward Democracy in a centralized system have been in vain; though, a centralized system from the governance perspective remarkably is weak and unresponsive (Muhammad, 2016). From the good governance perspective, democratic Decentralization has five key characteristics.

According to Guido Bertucci, “They are 1) legal reforms to devolve power not only to local governments but also to local communities (giving decision making power and authority to them especially in matters of socio-politico-economic local concern); 2) strengthened local governments’ capacity (in terms of finance, personnel, organization structures, management systems, data and information, facilities, networks, etc.), 3) local government accountability to both citizens and central government, transparency, and responsiveness; 4) enhancing the role of civil society both at the local level and national levels (practicing what we prefer to call horizontal decentralization) and 5) showing both intent and progress in improving the quality of life of the local people (i.e., enhancing people’s access to public goods and service.” (Bertucci, 2001)

The goal of democratic Decentralization is to find the exact ways of having a democratic government that people ought to have a strong influence on political decision-making and follow up if the government violates the social contract. Some critics argue that Democracy is not a suitable model for post-conflict states, though, Democracy legitimizes the war legacies and lacks the necessary institutional infrastructure (Sadr, 2021). Democratic Decentralization creates a smoothing relationship between the government and the masses. Convergence among government and the people guarantees the legitimacy of the regime and states; with due attention to mentioned points, Decentralization is posed as the preconditions for democratization (Chatterjee, 2014). Yet, the first and essential step for Democracy is to consider the Afghan society and its compatibility with modern phenomena such as Democracy. From a sociological perspective, the Afghan society is a decentralized society with a different attitude towards the government. Still, assemblies have efficiency in settling down the conflicts by feudal in remote areas (Barry et al., 2009). Democracy and its promotion have a dependency on the political system; it is the political system that nurtures the roots of the democratic values in society and promotes the participation of people in political events and the government’s right decision. Also, in an ethnic community, power always creates pitfalls if it is not divided democratically; thereby, the criteria of Democracy do not meet in the unitary system of administration. A Single ethnic dictatorship in a centralized political system emerged that still goes in tandem with falsifying the identity and making a fake nationalism that does not reflect and encompass the rest of ethnics values is the outcome ethnicities in Afghanistan with an autocratic approach under the name of Democracy leads the country to a further miserable future and would keep the government at bay from development and modernity either. After the Bonn

agreement, the 2004 constitution for Afghanistan was a replicate of the past autocratic centralized system. Although the 2004 constitution proposed village council, district council, and giving authority to people for mayoral elections, which would strengthen the local governance, it did not function by the government (Thier, 2020; Qayam, 2012).

The centralization of power and ruling of Afghanistan by Pashtuns throughout history and excluding the rest of ethnics from the political arena is an inevitable fact in Afghanistan, which has triggered a broad discussion about changing the structure of power in the country. However, twenty years of state-building after 2001 and surge of aid for developments, rehabilitation, reconstruction, and efforts toward Democracy did not end helpful for the country, loss of opportunity for Afghanistan sacrificed by the ethnic vision and sympathy to the Taliban. The decay of Democracy in the country has numerous reasons; however, one of the inevitable vicious phenomena has been ethnic vision toward Democracy and election. According to Sadr (2021), that owes the term from Huntington theory of democratization, that it was the fourth wave of democratization in Afghanistan; however, due to centralization of power, the re-emergence of the Taliban, and fundamentalism influence in the country, Democracy stayed fledgling, did not institutionalize in the country (Sadr, 2021: p. 59). As aforementioned, the society of Afghanistan typically has a decentralized form. Decentralized form means, ethnicities have their heroes; a Hazara's patriotist who even gives sacrifice for the whole country, never can be the pride of Pashtun or Uzbek, but only for Hazaras; exact deliberation match also about the other ethnics too. As well as factions have been the same formed based on the ethnicities, there is no multiethnic supported faction in Afghanistan that absorb and encompass all nationalities; the most populous factions focal point is their ethnicities benefits. Without a doubt, this is the outcome of the centrality of power in the country (Sadr, 2020: p. 90).

8. Conclusion

Afghanistan is a multiethnic country; conflict over power in a centralized system has led the country to be at bay from development and stability, most notably harmed to have an inclusive nationalism. Although retardedness and instability of the country have different aspects, however, on the whole, the country suffered from a chronic challenge which is power and ethnicity. The political power and ethnicity puzzle in the main text illustrated that in what content concentration of power in Afghanistan from the early formation of the modern state has been destructive and led the country toward instability. The authoritarian regimes from two perspectives harmed the country. First, torturing, restricting, enslaving, assimilating identities, and dictating single ethnic values to the whole nationalities ultimately sub-nationalism versus nationalism emerged in the country. Secondly, the centralized political system legacy has been a fragile state; Democracy with a centralized system has not been compatible as Afghanistan expe-

rienced the authoritarian system throughout history. Political parties and elites strived for the institutionalization of Democracy; however, not coming to fruition relatively preserved a single ethnic authority in the country. Thus, Democracy and a centralized system of power in a mosaic society are irreconcilable. Therefore, the irreconcilability of Democracy with a centralized political system defamed the democratic values in the country.

On the other hand, it has been proven that authoritarian Democracy lost its decency and cannot respond to the diverse society of Afghanistan. Representative Democracy in a decentralized system could be embedded somewhat fair, where people can have a pivotal role. Therefore, the puzzle of power one way another ought to be changed by a political system.

The only element that has classically united ethnics in Afghanistan is religious nationalism. Islamic Nationalism has been the most influential incentive against foreign invaders. Jihad had been a robust spiritual incentive that all ethnicities in the pivot of religion stood up for defending the country without distinction, and religious nationalism united the nationalities whenever the foreign factor invaded the country. At the same time, there is no cleavage based on ethnicity or language diversity among people in the country.

Due to the mosaicity of the Afghan society and conflict of power, it is essential to have a system that strengthens the unity of nationalities, resolves the dilemma of power and the identical issue. Based on evidence and literature regarding Afghanistan, the country needs a political system that guarantees the role of the people to that at least mass could be able to choose their governor, mayor, and the local officials in general. Another factor that created Sub-nationalism in Afghanistan is the lack of confidence among the government and ethnicities; instantly, in the province where Uzbeks are the significant population, the central government appoints a Pashtun or a Hazara the governor of them, and the people cannot trust him as the governor. The reliable governor for the people considers the one who is the inhabitant of the province or the region. Therefore, the only way to lead the country to peace and tranquility and lead to a stable Afghanistan is to decentralize the political system by choosing the Federal as the political system. Admittedly numerous multiethnic societies have chosen Federal, which is a decent system for Afghanistan too. However, regarding Federalism, much negativity and delusion exist in the community. First, Federalism might increase the ethnic rifts in the local domain; society is not ready for such a developed system; Federalism would nurture warlordism in the sub-regions. Despite the delusion and concerns regarding the federal system and its non-efficiency for Afghan society, Federalism could be a fair model for controlling and resolving the power dilemma and guaranteeing peace in the country.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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