



A Study of Amir Dost Mohammad Khan's Efforts to Recover Peshawar from 1833 to 1839

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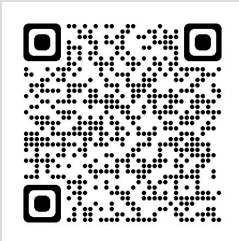
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Abstract: Internal wars among claimants to power on one hand, and the competition of European powers such as England, France, and Russia on the other, led to the weakening of ruling systems in nineteenth-century Afghanistan. As a consequence, the territory and geography of the country were divided in various ways. One of the most important and strategic regions that was separated from Afghanistan was the city of Peshawar, which was occupied in 1823 by Ranjit Singh, the ruler of Punjab, at a time when internal conflicts among Afghan power contenders were raging, and regional rivalries between Tsarist Russia and British India were emerging. The central question addressed here is: What efforts did Amir Dost Mohammad Khan undertake to recover Peshawar between 1833 and 1839? The aim of this study is to examine Amir Dost Mohammad Khan's efforts to reclaim Peshawar during this period.

The findings, based on a systematic review method, indicate that Peshawar was first occupied in 1823 by Ranjit Singh due to internal disputes and wars among the sons of Timur Shah and the brothers of Wazir Fateh Khan; however, its administration was later assigned to Yar Mohammad Khan, one of Dost Mohammad Khan's brothers. The second occupation occurred in 1833 when Ranjit Singh again captured Peshawar. In response, Amir Dost Mohammad Khan resorted to both military and political measures to reclaim the city. Militarily, he prepared an army of 20,000 to retake Peshawar, but this force was defeated due to the betrayal of Sultan Mohammad Khan. Diplomatically, Dost Mohammad Khan sought assistance from the British, Russia, and Persia; however, conflicting interests among these powers resulted in the British aiming to overthrow Dost Mohammad Khan's throne, and Shah Shuja was instead brought to power by the British. According to the Treaty of Lahore in 1838, Shah Shuja, as committed, relinquished Peshawar in favor of Ranjit Singh. This study is significant for several reasons. First, it highlights an example of how Afghan territories were lost. Second, it demonstrates how internal conflicts and negotiations with foreign powers for power contributed to territorial loss. Third, it provides insight into British policies in Afghan affairs and allows a deeper understanding of the history of crises and territorial divisions in the region. Finally, this research can serve as an important resource for students and scholars seeking to better understand the contemporary history of Afghanistan and the region.

Keywords: Recovery, Peshawar, Dost Mohammad Khan, Ranjit Singh, Delegation, Regional Rulers.

Introduction

Peshawar, the current capital of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province in Pakistan, borders the eastern provinces of Afghanistan and has deep historical, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic ties with the people living in eastern Afghanistan. Before the establishment of the Abdali government in Kandahar, this city was considered part of the Kabul province and was administered by the Babrians of India. Its ruler, Nasir Khan, was loyal to the court of Delhi. Ahmad Shah Baba annexed the city to his territories in 1748, which indicates the strategic importance of Peshawar to him. In the second year of the establishment of the Abdali government, Peshawar was included in Ahmad Shah Baba's dominions. During the reign of Timur Shah, the city served as the winter capital of the Durrani government. Timur Shah's foreign policy aimed at responding to requests from Muslim rulers in India while also preventing British expansion into India.

At that time, the Sikhs of Punjab were emerging as a major power and a significant obstacle to access India. In 1798, Timur Shah appointed Ranjit Singh as the governor of Lahore to remove this obstacle. The British, through various schemes and conspiracies inside and outside Afghanistan, eventually caused the fall of Timur Shah's government in 1800, and his brother, Shah Mahmud, ascended the throne. Shah Mahmud entrusted all affairs to his minister, Fateh Khan, who had played a major role in bringing him to power. Fateh Khan appointed his brothers as military commanders and provincial deputies. In 1817, due to internal conflicts in Herat, Fateh Khan was first blinded and then killed by order of Shah Mahmud. His brothers rebelled against the government, triggering civil war in Afghanistan, which led to the collapse of central authority. The country was divided into five independent political zones: Herat, Kandahar, Kabul, Peshawar, and the northern territories.

The main beneficiary of these internal conflicts and the weakening of central authority was Ranjit Singh, the governor of Punjab, who had been appointed by Timur Shah earlier. In 1823, during the Battle of Nowshera, he captured Peshawar, which had been an integral part of Afghanistan's political geography. This event caused serious consequences in the region, including the separation of the populations of Peshawar and Jalalabad, the loss of part of Afghanistan's territory, migration crises due to tribal structures in eastern Afghanistan and Peshawar, regional tensions, and the facilitation of intervention by imperial powers such as Russia and Britain.

The question addressed in this study is: What efforts did Amir Dost Mohammad Khan make to recover Peshawar during the first period of his rule? This study is significant for several reasons. First, it highlights how the territorial extent restored by Ahmad Shah Baba gradually became limited, with lands separated from Kabul's central authority. This research specifically examines how Peshawar, one of Afghanistan's key regions, was lost. Second, it illustrates how internal struggles and foreign alliances for the sake of the throne led to the separation of Afghan territories. Third, this research provides deeper insight into British policies in Afghanistan, their historical role in crises, and the regional territorial divisions, revealing the historical context of the Great Game between Russia and Britain in the region.

This research can serve as an important resource for students and scholars seeking to better understand the contemporary history of Afghanistan and the region. Such studies are essential for clarifying the various internal and external factors contributing to Afghanistan's crises. The main objective of this study is to examine Amir Dost Mohammad Khan's efforts to recover Peshawar during the first period of his rule. The secondary objectives include investigating the process of Peshawar's separation from Afghanistan, Amir Dost Mohammad Khan's military responses to reclaim the city, and his political strategies for its recovery. The central research question is:

What measures did Amir Dost Mohammad Khan undertake during his first reign to recover Peshawar?

Regarding the research background, it should be noted that the historical process of Afghan territorial loss began in the early nineteenth century through various treaties and military-political maneuvers, which have been covered in multiple sources. These sources provide detailed discussions on Peshawar's historical trajectory. Atiqullah Naibkhil, in his book *Afghanistan's Treaties*, discusses two Peshawar treaties during the second reign of Amir Dost Mohammad Khan with the British in 1855 and 1857. He mentions that Dost Mohammad Khan regained power with British support but relinquished his territorial claim over Peshawar in 1855; however, he does not address the efforts made by Dost Mohammad Khan to recover Peshawar during his first reign.

Mir Ghulam Muhammad Ghoobar, in *Afghanistan in the Course of History*, discusses the collapse of central authority, the rise of regional principalities in Afghanistan, external threats from Russia, Britain, Persia, and the Sikhs to occupy Afghan territories including Peshawar, Shah Shuja's deal with Ranjit Singh, and the eventual relinquishment of Peshawar in exchange for the throne. Mohan Lal Kashmiri, in the second volume of *The Life of Amir Dost Mohammad Khan*, details the collapse of central governance, the emergence of regional principalities, and the historical process of Peshawar's separation from Afghanistan.

This study extends previous research by specifically, comprehensively, and analytically examining Amir Dost Mohammad Khan's efforts to recover Peshawar from 1833 to 1839.

Research Methodology

The present study employs a systematic review methodology. The first stage of the research involved identifying sources relevant to the topic. These sources were primarily obtained from the Central Library of Herat University, the Afghanistan Studies Center at Kabul University, the Ibn Khaldun Library in the Faculty of Social Sciences, the Herat Public Library, as well as private libraries. In general, the sources used in this research are divided into two categories: domestic and international. As noted earlier, due to Afghanistan's strategic location, it has always attracted global attention, and numerous scholars and researchers have conducted extensive studies and publications on the history of Afghanistan, particularly its contemporary history. Therefore, in addition to credible domestic sources, this research also utilized reliable international sources.

Next, data and information were collected from these sources. These materials were accessed in both physical and electronic formats. The research process proceeded as follows: first, sources relevant to the topic were identified; in the second stage, the materials and information pertaining to the topic were examined to gain a comprehensive understanding of the subject. Subsequently, relevant materials and information were extracted and analyzed, and finally, after organizing the data according to hierarchy and significance, they were systematically analyzed and interpreted.

Introduction to the City of Peshawar

Peshawar, also known as the "City of Flowers," was one of the important centers of Buddhism in ancient times and was referred to as Purushapura. Due to its strategic location, the city has always been significant as a major commercial, cultural, and political center. Historical sources indicate that Peshawar has a long historical background. Its water sources come from rivers and underground wells; the climate is warm, the land is flat, and it was home to approximately thirty thousand households. Most houses in the city were two- or three-story buildings. Its fruits and rice were renowned worldwide. The population consisted of Pashtuns, Tajiks, and Turks, with

Pashtuns forming the majority (Mirza, 1986: 28). Today, the city's population is predominantly Muslim and Pashtun. Historically, Peshawar was always part of the territory and administration of ruling dynasties in Afghanistan; however, in 1823 it was captured by Ranjit Singh, the ruler of the Sikhs. Currently, it is part of Pakistan and serves as the capital of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province (Kamgar, 2020: 64).

Historical Development of Peshawar and How It Separated from Afghanistan

In the 19th century, Peshawar experienced a turbulent political life and changed hands multiple times among various individuals and political factions, as briefly outlined below. Historically, Peshawar once served as the winter capital for some Afghan rulers. It was the center of the Kushan Empire under Kanishka, and at that time the city was known as Purushapura, located in the eastern part of Gandhara and serving as Kanishka's winter capital. During the rule of the Kidarite dynasty, Peshawar also functioned as a winter capital. In the middle period, the city came under the control of the Sassanian Persians (Kamgar, 2020: 62-64).

After the Sassanians, the city was conquered by the Muslim Arabs and later by independent rulers of Khorasan, including the Ghaznavids, Ghurids, and Timurids. Under the Durrani rulers, Peshawar was a rich region and a major trading hub connecting India, Punjab, and Kashmir. It also held military strategic importance for the Durrani rulers, and most of the Sadozai kings minted coins in the city. During the reign of Timur Shah, Peshawar once again became the winter capital. Timur Shah spent most winters in Bala Hissar, Peshawar, and entrusted its administration to his trusted officials; towards the end of his reign, he delegated its management to his son, Prince Abbas.

During the reign of Shah Zaman, the administration of Peshawar was initially given to Zardad Khan Popalzai and later to Shuja-ul-Mulk, who held authority over the city until 1217 AH, the end of Shah Zaman's rule (Vakili Fufalzai, 1967: Vol. 2, p. 439). Shuja-ul-Mulk, the fifth Durrani ruler, had a particular attachment to Peshawar, and Shah Mahmoud, the last Durrani ruler, was the last to mint coins there (Kamgar, 2020: 64).

In 1817, Shah Mahmoud blinded and then executed his minister, Fateh Khan, which led to an uprising by Fateh Khan's brothers and the beginning of a civil war (Faryad Afghan, 2005: 398). In this uprising, Mohammad Azim Khan and Dost Mohammad Khan played significant roles. Dost Mohammad entered Peshawar from Kashmir and installed Prince Ayub, son of Timur Shah, as king. He then left Ayub in Peshawar and proceeded to Kabul, where he defeated Shah Mahmoud's forces and seized control of the city (Ansari, 2016: 140).

Meanwhile, Mohammad Azim Khan, the leader of the uprising, invited Shuja-ul-Mulk to Peshawar to reach a political agreement regarding the future of Afghanistan. Shuja-ul-Mulk came to Peshawar, but due to mistrust and lack of confidence between the parties, no agreement was reached. At this point, Mohammad Azim Khan declared the aforementioned Prince Ayub, previously appointed by Dost Mohammad Khan, as the new king and appointed himself as his minister (Rashtia, 1998: 40).

Assignment of Peshawar to the Peshawari Chiefs

Mohammad Azim Khan delegated the administration of Peshawar to his brother, Yar Mohammad Khan, and himself, along with Ayub Shah, proceeded to Kabul to formally manage governmental affairs. With Mohammad Azim Khan's departure to Kabul, Ranjit Singh attacked Peshawar and occupied the city. However, upon returning to Punjab, Yar Mohammad Khan returned to the city and reclaimed Peshawar from Ranjit Singh's officials (Rashtia, 1999: 45).

Yar Mohammad Khan, together with his four brothers—Atah Mohammad Khan, Saeed Mohammad Khan, Pir Mohammad Khan, and Sultan Mohammad Khan—known collectively as the Peshawari Chiefs, jointly managed the affairs of Peshawar (Farhang, 2015: 231). However, the city remained under constant threat from Ranjit Singh, who was one of the most powerful rulers in India and had built a strong, modern army with the help of four French generals named Allard, Ventura, Court, and Avitabile. Ranjit Singh's power was such that the British always dealt with him diplomatically; they never interfered in his internal affairs and maintained a policy of patience, moderation, and political tact in their interactions (Farkh, 1992: 157).

As a result of a political agreement between the British and Ranjit Singh in 1809, he pledged not to cross beyond the Salt Range toward the east; nevertheless, his advance toward Afghan territories remained open (Ghobar, 2011: Vol. 2, p. 246). Consequently, the collapse of Afghanistan's central authority provided Ranjit Singh with the opportunity to expand his influence into Afghan lands. He continued a series of attacks and advances toward eastern Afghan territories until, in 1823, he reached Peshawar and demanded submission from the Peshawari Chiefs. The chiefs agreed to Ranjit Singh's request by paying tribute and sending several horses, thereby becoming his vassals (Sykes, 2003: 395).

At this time, Mohammad Azim Khan had consolidated power among his brothers in Kabul and assumed leadership. He attempted to reclaim Peshawar from the Sikhs for several reasons: first, he had a strong attachment to the city; second, he had appointed a new king there; third, the city was under the authority of his brothers, and as the head of the family and administrator of Kabul, he was obliged to defend them; fourth, Peshawar and Kabul were considered part of the same province, which could pose a long-term threat to Kabul's sovereignty; and finally, fifth, the majority of Peshawar's population was Muslim and Afghan. Therefore, as the ruler of Kabul, Mohammad Azim Khan was compelled to respond.

In 1823, Mohammad Azim Khan engaged in battle with the Sikhs; however, due to the betrayal of his brothers, his efforts failed, and the plan to reclaim Peshawar was unsuccessful (Kahzad, 2014: Vol. 2, p. 248). Although Ranjit Singh had captured Peshawar, he assigned its administration to Yar Mohammad Khan in exchange for a nominal tax. He recognized that ruling over a predominantly Muslim and Afghan city was nearly impossible for a Sikh ruler. Therefore, the administration was entrusted to Yar Mohammad Khan, brother of Mohammad Azim Khan. Even though the city was managed by an Afghan governor and one of Fateh Khan's brothers, from 1823 onwards, Peshawar was administratively tied to the Sikh government, and Afghanistan no longer exercised political or administrative control over the city (Fryer, 2012: 232).

Consolidation of Dost Mohammad Khan's Power among His Brothers

Another ruler who made significant efforts to reclaim Peshawar was Dost Mohammad Khan. Here, we briefly discuss how Dost Mohammad Khan consolidated his position as the ruler of Kabul.

Upon the death of Mohammad Azim Khan, his son Habibullah Khan, who suffered from mental disorders, assumed the ministerial position of Ayub Shah (Faryad Afghan, 2005: 74). At this time, Dost Mohammad Khan entered into conflict and battle with Habibullah to gain the throne of Kabul; however, Sher Dil Khan arrived from Kandahar and took control of affairs (Ghobar, 2011: Vol. 2, p. 250). Sher Dil Khan's authority in Kabul prompted the other brothers, including Yar Mohammad Khan, Sultan Mohammad Khan, and Atah Mohammad Khan, to move from Peshawar to Kabul (Farkh, 1992: 154). Disputes arose among the brothers and claimants to

power until peace was eventually established and a new division of territories was announced: Dost Mohammad Khan received control over the mountains, while Sultan Mohammad Khan was assigned the administration of Kabul (Farhang, 2015: 235).

Dost Mohammad Khan, dissatisfied with this division, attacked Kabul and forced Sultan Mohammad Khan to flee via Deh Sabz to Jalalabad and Peshawar. Consequently, Dost Mohammad Khan's power in Kabul was consolidated, and he became the primary political and military figure among his brothers (Kahzad, 1997: 33).

Shah Shuja's Agreement with Ranjit Singh over Peshawar

After losing the throne in 1809, Shah Shuja had spent the past seven years in Ludhiana, India, under British protection, but he constantly contemplated regaining the Afghan throne, which he considered his hereditary right (Barkzai Khalis, 2017: 280–281). In 1832, he sought British assistance to reclaim the Afghan throne. The British did not fulfill his request; instead, they provided him an advance on his annual pension of fifty thousand pounds sterling (Farhang, 2015: 238). They also facilitated an alliance between him and Ranjit Singh through their political agent, Captain Wade (Faryad Afghan, 2005: 64).

This alliance benefited Ranjit Singh, as supporting Shah Shuja allowed him to neutralize Kabul's territorial claims over Peshawar and maintain permanent control over the city (Rashtia, 1995: 70). According to the 1832 treaty between Shah Shuja and Ranjit Singh, Shah Shuja pledged that if he regained the throne of Kabul, he would relinquish any claims over Peshawar in favor of Ranjit Singh (Sykes, 2003: 380).

When Shah Shuja marched toward Kandahar in 1833, Ranjit Singh attacked Peshawar and forced Sultan Mohammad Khan to flee to Kabul (Fryer, 2012: 255). Rashtia notes that when Jalalabad was captured by Dost Mohammad Khan, Sultan Mohammad Khan, fearing that Dost Mohammad Khan might advance on Peshawar, requested assistance from Ranjit Singh. Nevertheless, Ranjit Singh occupied the city under the pretext of visiting Nunehal Singh without waiting for Sultan Mohammad Khan's request (Rashtia, 1995: 73).

The 1832 agreement between Shah Shuja and Ranjit Singh had already been concluded. Dost Mohammad Khan, having returned from Kandahar with the support of his brothers, successfully repelled Shah Shuja's attack. Upon entering Kabul, he learned that Ranjit Singh had seized Peshawar. It was at this point that Dost Mohammad Khan declared his intention to reclaim Peshawar and proclaimed a jihad, or holy war, against the Sikhs (Ghobar, 2011: Vol. 2, p. 257).

The call for jihad gained momentum when reports reached Kabul regarding direct Sikh rule over Peshawar's inhabitants and the mistreatment of Muslims (Zamani, 2013: 89). As previously mentioned, Peshawar and Kabul were considered part of the same province, so Sikh control over Peshawar implied control over Kabul. To gain popular support and legitimize the jihad, Dost Mohammad Khan proclaimed himself Amir al-Mu'minin (Commander of the Faithful) (Atai, 2005: 93). This title was bestowed in Kabul's Eidgah Mosque by Mir Haji, who placed several ears of wheat on his turban (Kahzad, 2014: Vol. 2, p. 431).

At this time, the people of Jalalabad pledged 500,000 rupees in support of the Amir (Ikhlas, 2021: 46), reflecting the deep social, cultural, and historical ties between the populations of Jalalabad and Peshawar. In 1835, Dost Mohammad Khan, leading an army of 60,000, advanced against Ranjit Singh to reclaim Peshawar (Jami, 2017: 46). A detachment of 10,000 soldiers was under the command of Sultan Mohammad Khan. The arrival of this army instilled great fear among Ranjit Singh's troops (Ghobar, 2011: Vol. 2, p. 259).

Ranjit Singh, alarmed by the approaching Afghan forces, sought to reopen negotiations with Dost Mohammad Khan. At this point, the American envoy Harlan was dispatched ostensibly to negotiate, but secretly to sow discord within Dost Mohammad Khan's army (Farhang, 2015: 240). Harlan succeeded in persuading Sultan Mohammad Khan and his 10,000 troops to withdraw from battle in exchange for governance over the Kohat region under Ranjit Singh's protection (Ghobar, 2011: Vol. 2, p. 259). Sultan Mohammad Khan feared that, in the event of Dost Mohammad Khan's victory, he would not be granted control of the city. Consequently, he withdrew with his forces.

Due to this betrayal by Sultan Mohammad Khan, the opportunity to reclaim Peshawar was lost. The Afghan army suffered significant casualties and financial losses and returned to Kabul (Mobariz, 2013: 64).

Dost Mohammad Khan's Diplomatic Efforts to Reclaim Peshawar

When Amir Dost Mohammad Khan failed to reclaim Peshawar through military action, he attempted to recover the city through diplomacy and by exerting pressure on Ranjit Singh. Dost Mohammad Khan sent a letter to Lord Auckland, who had recently been appointed Viceroy of India, containing congratulations and a request for assistance in the matter of reclaiming Peshawar (Rashtia, 1999: 89).

Lord Auckland responded that, first, his government did not customarily interfere in the affairs of neighboring states (Farhang, 2015: 241), which was contrary to reality. Second, he stated that the British had friendly relations with Ranjit Singh, similar to those enjoyed by Dost Mohammad Khan, and wished for any disputes between the two to be resolved peacefully (Rashtia, 1995: 89). The British were allies and friends of Ranjit Singh, but had no formal alliance with Dost Mohammad Khan. Third, Lord Auckland informed that a British delegation was to enter Kabul to establish friendly and commercial relations (Ikhlas, 2021: 46).

This delegation, led by Alexander Burnes, who had previously conducted commercial missions to northern Afghanistan, arrived in Kabul in 1837 (Kahzad, 2014: Vol. 2, p. 438). Amir Dost Mohammad Khan requested the delegation, in exchange for establishing friendly relations, to assist in returning the city of Peshawar (Habibi, 2010: 407). However, the delegation did not provide a clear response to the Amir's demands. Negotiations continued between Burnes and the Amir when Captain Vitkovich, the Russian representative, entered Kabul via Kandahar in 1838 (Kahzad, 2014: Vol. 2, p. 438).

Amir Dost Mohammad Khan, still awaiting a definite answer from the British regarding the reclamation of Peshawar, welcomed Vitkovich (Farhang, 2015: 249). The Russian envoy carried two letters: one from Count Simonich, the Russian ambassador in Tehran, and another from the Tsar of Russia (Zamani, 2013: 93). Vitkovich assured Dost Mohammad Khan of full cooperation in reclaiming Peshawar. Understanding that the return of Peshawar could only be achieved through British pressure on Ranjit Singh, Dost Mohammad Khan shared all negotiation developments with Burnes. Burnes, in turn, reported the events and the Amir's requests to the Viceroy of India (Atai, 2005: 95).

Lord Auckland rejected the Amir's requests (Zamani, 2013: 93) and demanded the expulsion of the Russian representative from Kabul, without providing a clear response regarding Peshawar (Ikhlas, 2021: 48). Burnes also informed the Amir that Ranjit Singh had not attacked Kabul and had restored part of Peshawar's administration to Sultan Mohammad Khan with their consultation (Majidi, 2003: 80). This indicates the extent of British oversight in the region and their deep involvement in the political affairs of both Sikh and Afghan governments.

Realizing British intentions, Amir Dost Mohammad Khan lost confidence in them and suspended negotiations with Burnes, instead placing his hopes on the promises of the Russian representative, who had pledged full support (Ikhlas, 2021: 48). Burnes' presence in Kabul became untenable, and he either left voluntarily or was expelled by the Amir (Habibi, 1995: 407).

Kahzad notes that Amir Dost Mohammad Khan had also sought military support from Persia to reclaim Peshawar from the Sikhs (Kahzad, 2014: Vol. 2, p. 437). His rapprochement with Russia caused the British to consider plans to overthrow his throne.

Decisions of the 1838 Treaty of Lahore Regarding the City of Peshawar

Amir Dost Mohammad Khan's closeness to Russia, his claims over Peshawar, and other factors prompted the British to replace him with Shah Shuja and, in effect, resolve the Peshawar issue. A political consensus was formed in Lahore among three parties: Ranjit Singh, the ruler of Punjab who now controlled Peshawar; Shah Shuja, the exiled king willing to make any commitments in order to reclaim the throne; and Macnaghten, the representative of the British. This treaty, also referred to as the "triangle," was concluded in 1838 (Habibi, 1995: 407).

The treaty stipulated that Shah Shuja, in exchange for British and Sikh support to regain the throne of Afghanistan, would renounce any territorial claims over Peshawar in favor of Ranjit Singh (Farrier, 2013: 348). These decisions were implemented once the provisions of the Lahore Treaty were executed in practice. In 1839, British troops advanced into Afghanistan from the east and south. The main force, under the command of General Keane, Macnaghten, and Shah Shuja, moved from Baluchistan through the Bolan Pass toward Kandahar (Zamani, 2013: 103).

As the British advanced toward Kabul, Dost Mohammad Khan proposed a reconciliation with them, but his offer was rejected (Patzun, 2009: 159). The Amir, together with his sons Afzal Khan and Akbar Khan, began preparations for defense; he entered the camp with the Holy Quran and swore the soldiers to loyalty and resistance against the British. However, due to the inclination and closeness of some military leaders and local chiefs to Shah Shuja, the resistance proved futile. Observing this situation, the Amir refrained from confrontation and moved toward Bukhara (Faryad Afghan, 2005: 79).

The Amir's objective in going to Bukhara was to secure support from the Emir of Bukhara and Russia. However, the ruler of Bukhara imprisoned him. Dost Mohammad Khan managed to escape with great difficulty and returned to Kabul. On one of the days when the people's resistance and jihad against the British had begun, he ultimately surrendered (Zamani, 2013: 104). The British exiled Amir Dost Mohammad Khan and his family to India, thereby fully implementing the provisions of the 1838 Treaty of Lahore and solidifying Ranjit Singh's authority over Peshawar.

Conclusion

In 1817, the central authority of Afghanistan collapsed, and the country was divided into five independent political regions: Herat, Kandahar, Kabul, Peshawar, and the northern territories. During this period, the fragmented governance of Peshawar, due to its proximity to Punjab and the absence of a strong central government in Afghanistan, was under threat from Ranjit Singh, the ruler of Punjab. Taking advantage of the internal conflicts in Afghanistan, Ranjit Singh captured Peshawar in 1823; however, he handed its administration back to Yar Mohammad Khan, one of Fateh Khan's brothers. Muhammad Azim Khan made efforts to reclaim Peshawar, but due to the betrayal of his brothers, he failed.

In 1832, a treaty was concluded between Shah Shuja and Ranjit Singh, stipulating that Shah Shuja, upon regaining the throne of Kabul, would relinquish any territorial claims over Peshawar. Shah Shuja advanced toward Kandahar while Ranjit Singh moved toward Peshawar. Ensuring internal unity and reclaiming Peshawar from the Sikhs became the central focus of Amir Dost Mohammad Khan's policy. In response to Ranjit Singh's actions, the Amir obtained a fatwa for jihad and undertook both military and political measures. Initially, he assembled an army of 20,000 troops and attacked Peshawar. Ranjit Singh, unable to resist, created division among the Afghan soldiers, leading to the failure of the military operation.

Dost Mohammad Khan then sent a letter to the British Governor-General of India, requesting that pressure be applied on the Sikhs to return Peshawar. The British provided a vague response but sent a delegation in 1837 to Kabul to assess their interests in Afghanistan. The Amir emphasized the recovery of Peshawar to Alexander Burnes, head of the delegation. However, for the British, Ranjit Singh's alliance was prioritized over that of Dost Mohammad Khan. Additionally, the British aimed to create a chain of independent princely states from Herat to India, all aligned with their foreign policy interests. During these negotiations, a Russian representative arrived in Kabul. Disappointed with the British delegation, Dost Mohammad Khan allied with the Russian envoy, Vitkevich, who had entered Kabul via Kandahar in 1838. Vitkevich promised full cooperation in reclaiming Peshawar. The Amir shared all developments with Burnes and requested the return of Peshawar through British pressure. The British, viewing the Amir's actions as contrary to their plans, instructed him via Burnes to expel the Russian delegation from Kabul. Frustrated with the British, Dost Mohammad Khan sided with Russia and Persia to recover Peshawar with their support.

To implement their plan of establishing a chain of princely states acting in accordance with British interests, the British launched a military intervention in Kabul and Kandahar. According to the Lahore "Triangle" Treaty of 1838, Peshawar was officially recognized as belonging to the Sikhs, and the future ruler of Afghanistan, Shah Shuja, renounced any territorial claims over it. Dost Mohammad Khan, unable to resist, went to Bukhara to seek Russian support against the British but was imprisoned. He eventually escaped, returned, and surrendered to the British, who exiled him to Calcutta, India. Consequently, all provisions of the 1838 Treaty of Lahore were implemented, Ranjit Singh's authority over Peshawar was consolidated, and Amir Dost Mohammad Khan's efforts ended unsuccessfully.

Research Recommendations

It is recommended that further research be conducted on the following topics to provide a clearer and more comprehensive understanding of the subject:

1. Examination of Amir Dost Mohammad Khan's efforts to reclaim Peshawar during the years 1844 to 1848.
2. Comparison of the religious significance of Peshawar in the ancient and medieval periods.

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