

The Place of Ethnic Groups in the Formation of Afghanistan's Political Structure and Governance after 2001

2001 Sonrası Afganistan'ın Siyasi Yapısı ve Yönetiminin Oluşumunda Etnik Grupların Yeri

ABSTRACT

Among the discussions in political geography, the discussion of ethnicities, the ways of formation and aggregation of ethnicities In terms of geographical areas and the way of their intra-ethnic and extra-ethnic interactions with other ethnic and racial groups, ethnicities in Afghanistan have played a significant role in the formation of the phenomenon called the country with ethnic integration in various forms.

Therefore, the country of Afghanistan, which is the central subject of this research, can be examined, studied, and investigated in various geographical dimensions, especially political geography. This research, using a descriptive-analytical method, seeks to identify the place of ethnic groups in the formation of the political structure and sovereignty of Afghanistan after 2001.

The results of this study and some other studies show that the tribal power structure in the past, supported by the ideology of ethnic nationalism, has also led to tribalism and ethnocentrism among non-dominant ethnic groups, turning ethnocentrism into natural and widespread phenomena in all corners of society and causing a national identity crisis in Afghanistan.

Long-term ethnic dominance has led society to a state in which ethnic norms and interests determine the political behavior of individuals and socio-political groups. On the other hand, Afghanistan, due to its diversity of ethnicities and tribes, has been described as a great museum of diverse races and nations. In this country, people of the Pashtun, Hazara, Tajik, Uzbek, Turkmen, Baloch, Kyrgyz, Qizilbash, Aymak, Nuristani, Kashmiri, Hindu, Sikh and other ethnic groups live.

Since Afghanistan has an ethnic structure, it is natural that the actions and activities of the political structure and the circulation of political power take place only within a particular tribe and tribe, and accordingly, the political system in this country has been mostly related to the population subsystems in the form of tribes and tribes.

Keywords: Afghanistan, Sovereignty, Ethnic Power, Ethnicity, National Unity

ÖZET

Siyasi coğrafyadaki tartışmalar arasında etnik kökenlerin tartışılması, etnik kökenlerin oluşum ve bir araya gelme yolları Coğrafi alanlar ve diğer etnik ve ırksal gruplarla etnik içi ve etnik dışı etkileşimlerinin yolları açısından Afganistan'daki etnik kökenler, çeşitli biçimlerde etnik entegrasyona sahip ülke olarak adlandırılan olgunun oluşumunda önemli bir rol oynamıştır.

Bu nedenle, bu araştırmanın merkezi konusu olan Afganistan ülkesi, özellikle siyasi coğrafya olmak üzere çeşitli coğrafi boyutlarda incelenebilir, incelenebilir ve araştırılabilir. Betimsel-analitik bir yöntem kullanan bu araştırma, etnik grupların 2001'den sonra Afganistan'ın siyasi yapısının ve egemenliğinin oluşumundaki yerini belirlemeyi amaçlamaktadır.

Bu çalışmanın ve diğer bazı çalışmaların sonuçları, geçmişte etnik milliyetçilik ideolojisiyle desteklenen kabile güç yapısının, baskın olmayan etnik gruplar arasında kabilecilğe ve etnosentrizme de yol açtığını, etnosentrizmi toplumun her köşesinde doğal ve yaygın bir olguya dönüştürdüğünü ve Afganistan'da ulusal bir kimlik krizine neden olduğunu göstermektedir. Uzun vadeli etnik egemenlik, toplumu etnik normların ve çıkarların bireylerin ve sosyo-politik grupların siyasi davranışlarını belirlediği bir duruma getirmiştir. Öte yandan, Afganistan, etnik köken ve kabile çeşitliliği nedeniyle, çeşitli ırkların ve ulusların büyük bir müzesi olarak tanımlanmıştır. Bu ülkede Peştun, Hazara, Tacik, Özbek, Türkmen, Beluç, Kırgız, Kızılbaş, Aymak, Nuristani, Keşmirli, Hindu, Sih ve diğer etnik gruplardan insanlar yaşamaktadır.

Afganistan etnik bir yapıya sahip olduğundan, siyasi yapının eylem ve faaliyetlerinin ve siyasi gücün dolaşımının yalnızca belirli bir kabile ve kabile içinde gerçekleşmesi doğaldır ve buna bağlı olarak, bu ülkedeki siyasi sistem çoğunlukla kabileler ve kabileler biçimindeki nüfus alt sistemleriyle ilişkili olmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Afganistan, Egemenlik, Etnik Güç, Etnik Köken, Ulusal Birlik

INTRODUCTION

Afghanistan is a country with ethnic diversity that is part of its geography. Although this diversity exists and continues to exist in many countries of the world, no country in the world is as troubled and unstable as Afghanistan. Another distinguishing feature of this country is the long-standing ethnic dominance and domination that has shaped its history and nature differently from other countries; Perhaps because the general or specific structure of Afghan society is a factor in these differences, it has caused inter-ethnic relations and ethnic conflicts in this country to take a different course than in other countries.

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This has paved the way for the formation of ethnic identities. According to Shahrani, “The tribe, kinship, and Islam form the basis of individual and collective identity in Afghanistan, and most organizations and social structures are formed on this logic, and these concepts play a determining role in the mobilization of social movements and the regulation of the mutual actions of individuals and social groups” (Afkhami, 2015:33).

Currently, the bridge of communication between nations is formed by symbols and values of the tribe, tribe, and kinship, and this act of political structure – It has made the nation seriously ill. The tribal culture has still maintained its shadow over the people of this land and even in the most ordinary circumstances it finds its way into fateful matters, which has resulted in crisis and instability in relations between the nations.

Political instability in society occurs when the political behavior of government leaders becomes discriminatory, tense, and unhealthy in the presence and political participation of other peoples, while their good and peaceful behavior, which has rarely occurred, has led to unity and friendship between peoples.

Based on historical facts, Afghanistan's political system in the past has always been based on ethnic and tribal traditions. It is a country with a history full of secrets and mysteries. At no point in its political history has it achieved the desired stability. It has always been involved in internal conflicts or trapped in the interference of foreign powers, turning Afghanistan into a field of competition between external powers and their proxy wars, resulting in an unstable, fragmented, disjointed, and unintegrated geography. National integrity and territorial unity are at stake in this country.

This issue itself would completely undermine the coexistence and participation of the peoples living in Afghanistan within the framework of an effective state. This action has brought about group alignments and ethnic conflicts in the country and has been a factor for contradictions and conflicts in different historical regions, with the influence of internal and external factors, always fluctuating and changing. These fluctuations have taken shape with the sensitivity of the issue, the situation, and the available resources, and have led to the formation of internal wars, insecurity, crisis, migration, hardship, and political instability.

Therefore, in this study, we seek to examine the place of ethnic groups in shaping the political structure and governance of Afghanistan after 2001. From the perspective of some, the formation of the current political system in Afghanistan is considered the definitive end of ethnic wars, but in the current conditions and with the establishment of the current political system, we are only witnessing the subsidence of severe ethnic clashes, and that too in purely military dimensions, while the various ethnic tensions of this country, hidden and overt, will continue in its political, social, and cultural dimensions.

The main question of the article is: What is the most important factor influencing the creation of sustainable geopolitical stability in Afghanistan? Based on this basic question, the main hypothesis is based on the fact that it seems that the participation, unity, solidarity, and mutual acceptance of the peoples in political, social, and cultural matters in Afghanistan can lay the foundation for the creation of sustainable geopolitical stability in this country.

Theoretical Foundations

Ethnic Geopolitics

Ethnic geopolitics, as a trend in geopolitics, studies and analyzes the human structures of minorities (especially ecological and spatial minorities) and their anatomy and structure, the changing patterns of relations between minority groups and the majority group, as well as the patterns of relations between minorities and other minorities, or in general, the political behavior of minorities. It also considers and examines the role of this behavior in state policy and international policy. (Hafez Nia, 2017:140).

Ethnic conflicts and sectarian violence have an international dimension and are not easily resolved. As some of these conflicts become a scene of international mediation and competition due to the involvement of strategic interests and geopolitical interests of regional and sub-regional powers in the context of these types of conflicts.

For example, the Karabakh crisis, which is the result of an ethnic-racial conflict in the South Caucasus region, initially began with widespread clashes between Armenians and Azerbaijanis living in the Karabakh region, then led to a war between the two countries of Azerbaijan and Armenia.

At present, even though a ceasefire has been established between the two nations through the mediation of regional and sub-regional powers, after two and a half decades of extensive negotiations between the two parties, there are still conditions of neither war nor peace between the two nations, and past differences still remain strong. (Valigholi Zadehand Yashar, 2008;58-60).

Land

Land is the expanse of water and soil that is under the control of a nation-state. The concept of a nation-state loses its meaning without the territorial dimension. From another perspective, geography constitutes one of the elements of

the national power of countries. Geographical formations, how social groups are established, and how geography is used to confront threats can be considered factors of national power.

The reflection of geographical factors can be observed in social life, political relations, and patterns of international behavior. The realities of the social environment, in conjunction with the regional and international geographical indicators of that country, reflect aspects of complex and tense geopolitics. Each of the geographical indicators of Afghanistan can affect the social structure and political action of the citizens of that country (Farjirad et al., 2011: 119-120).

Stability and Security

Internal stability and security are the most basic needs of every society and the most important factor in the sustainability of social life.

Each country defines its security environment in the global, regional and domestic arenas based on its goals, interests, fundamental values and the extent of its power.

Based on this principle, a correct understanding of the security environment has the greatest impact on shaping the national policies of each state. Therefore, no program in the country will undoubtedly be feasible without security, and security infrastructure is a prerequisite for social stability.

Nation

According to Smith, a nation is a distinct human population with a common ancestral myth,

common memories, cultural elements, a connection to a historical territory or homeland, and a degree of sense of interests and responsibility (Smith, 1998: 187). The main reason for the difficulties of definition is that the term ethnicity is a relatively new term in social science, and its meaning has also changed along with the expansion of the field of study.

The definition of ethnicity or ethnic group given in the late nineteenth century has criteria that are different from those used in the second half of the twentieth century. The word "ethnicity" in the English-language international dictionary has two meanings:

1. Non-Christians and non-Christians; those who have not converted to Christianity, such as infidels and pagans who are opposed to Judaism and Christianity;
2. Pertaining to the physical and mental characteristics of races or relating to distinguishing racial groups of humankind based on shared customs and characteristics.

While the first definition is now considered obsolete, the second definition is still in use and refers specifically to "race", "racial groups", and "physical and mental characteristics within races". In other words, the first definition, i.e., "nations not inclined to Christianity," has lost its application in favor of the second definition, i.e., "human races." (Ahmadi, 2008:29-30).

Ethnicity: Ethnicity is a type of ethnic orientation. Considering one's own nation as the center of the world or considering the cultural norms of one's society as absolute and unquestionable, and looking down on other societies that have different norms.

Ethnicity or ethnocentrism creates stereotypes, misunderstandings, and conflicts between societies. Ethnicity is a view that holds that the self is the center and axis of everything, and that everything is evaluated and measured in terms of the body. (Aghabekhshi, and AfshariRad, 2010:224).

Ethnic power: Ethnic power is a reflection of the political, social, and economic power of a particular group, which facilitates the political-economic dependence of minorities and creates discontent. As well as being a source of deprivation and the loss of rights for other groups. In contrast to such power, the strengthening of other ethnic identities can be considered the basis for mobilization and organization for violent actions. (Maqsudi, 2001:55).

Ethnic cleansing: 1 Ethnic cleansing is primarily a result of the desire for territorial expansion and complete colonization, carried out in the name of greater power, greater greatness, greater antiquity and greater roots, or in today's language, more developed and in the language of nations that are considered hostile, backward and historically condemned. Finally, ethnic cleansing carries within itself the concept of the nation-state; with the difference that it uses methods that belong to ancient times to achieve this concept. (Breton, 2017:200-201).

Ethnic divide: Ethnic divides are the conflicts and differences that flow within a society along ethnic lines and tend to solidify and persist, because a divide is a conflict that is not temporary and arises from the context of society and persists in a society for many years, and its origin is often important historical events. (Benihashemi, 2002:581). Ethnic and tribal structures within societies do not alone lead to the formation of ethnic conflicts; in fact, these structures create the conditions for ethnic conflicts to arise. According to structuralist theory, social structure is the

main factor in events, regardless of the players. Some criticize this theory for being a one-factor approach and view social structure as merely the basis and basis for the formation of social conflicts.

Accordingly, the ethnic and tribal structure in the society under discussion provides favorable conditions for the emergence of violent social tensions and conflicts, which, if the necessary causes and factors are met, will be inevitable (Kuper & Kuper, 2004: 124).

Research Methodology

The present study, in terms of its objective, falls within the category of developmental and applied research, and its method is descriptive-analytical. Regarding the nature and type of the subject under study, information collection was based on library and documentary methods.

Discussion and Findings

Ethnic Composition of Afghanistan

The Afghan society is made up of different ethnic groups and tribes with different languages and religions. Each of the ethnic groups is divided into various branches that are sometimes rivals (such as the Abdali and Ghilzais) (Baqeri, 2017:161); to the extent that the land and country of Afghanistan have been referred to with titles such as "Museum of Ethnic Groups," "Treasure of Ethnic Groups," and "Mosaic of Ethnic Groups." This country is the fourth most ethnically diverse country in Asia (after India, China, and Malaysia) and the thirty-seventh in the world (Uruzgani, 2011:36). According to Ahdi, about fifty-seven ethnic groups, forty-five languages, and dialects belonging to several specific language families live in Afghanistan (Rahimi, 2017:100). The well-known Afghanist, Aryval, has named the following ethnic groups in Afghanistan: "Arabs, Aymaks, Baloch, Brahui, Ishkashmi, Persians, Firuzkuhi, Ghorbat, Gujar, Hazara, Hindu, Jalali, Jamshidi, Jat, Jogi, Kyrgyz, Kutana, Malki, Maori, Mish Mast, Mongol, Tajik, Monjani, Nuristani, Ursuri, Parchi, Pesh'i, Pashtun, Qarlaq, Pikraj, Kazakh, Qibchak, Qizilbash, Roshan, Sanglich, Sikh, Tatar, Taimani, Timuri, Tirah, Turkmen, Uzbek, Wakhi, Jewish and Wuzuri. (Sajjadi, 2016:77).

In the Constitution and National Anthem of Afghanistan, out of the total number of ethnic groups living in this country, fourteen ethnic groups are named as the nation of Afghanistan and the nation is introduced as consisting of ethnic groups that are:

Pashtun, Tajik, Hazara, Uzbek, Turkmen, Baloch, Peshawar, Nuristani, Aymak, Arab, Kyrgyz, Qizilbash, Gujar, Brahui and other ethnic groups. (Constitution of Afghanistan, 2003:4).

From the combination and synthesis of the above statements, it can be concluded that at least fourteen and at most 57 independent ethnic groups live in the geography called Afghanistan, speaking a total of more than thirty different languages. Among the ethnic groups in Afghanistan, the four main ethnic groups are Pashtun, Tajik, Hazara and Uzbek, with Turkmen constituting the largest population of Afghanistan (Javadi, 2018:30).

The ethnic composition of the Afghan population is estimated as follows: Pashtun, mostly (40%), Tajik (25%), Hazara (12%), Uzbek (9%), Turkmen (7%), and other ethnic groups (6%). (Baqeri, 2017: 14).

Political Structure of Afghanistan

Afghanistan has had different structures over the past few decades. From the monarchy-type governments, the People's Democratic Republic (Communist), the Taliban's Islamic Emirate to the ruling government system that came into effect in Afghanistan following the Bonn Conference in December 2001, which is an Islamic Republic. (Office of Political and International Studies, 2007:224)

The governing political structure in Afghanistan consists of two permanent houses (the Senate, the Wolesi Jirga, the Parliament), a temporary house (the Loya Jirga, the Executive), and a judiciary (the Supreme Court) and an executive branch.

- ✓ The Meshrano Jirga: (House of Elders and Elders), which is the same as the Senate, has 102 members.
- ✓ Wolesi Jirga: which is the same as the parliament and has 249 representatives who are elected for a five-year term according to the population of each province (Bilal, 2013:46).
- ✓ The National Assembly of Afghanistan, which consists of two chambers (the Assembly of Elders and the Wolesi Jirga). It has the highest representation of the people in terms of specific work in terms of regional, ethnic and gender spectrum, which this country has not experienced before. (Lindh, 2003: 253)
- ✓ Loya Jirga: Loya Jirga is formed on important issues such as the independence of the country, national sovereignty, territorial integrity, amending the provisions of the Constitution, and the trial of the President. (Constitution of Afghanistan, 2003: 56-57).

- ✓ Executive power: The executive power is the cabinet of ministers or the government, headed by the President, who, as the head of state, is responsible for implementing the law (Bilal, 2013:46).
- ✓ Judiciary: The judiciary is an independent branch of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. This power is composed of a court, appellate courts, and primary courts. (Constitution of Afghanistan, 2003:58).

Bonn Conference

The new political process in Afghanistan emerged after the collapse of the World Trade Center in New York and the US military attacks on Afghanistan. At the same time, and simultaneously with the overthrow of the Taliban, a meeting of the Afghan political parties was held in Bonn, with the mediation of international organizations and countries involved in the Afghan crisis. The historic and international Bonn Conference was held under the auspices of the United Nations (December 5, 2001) in the Hotel Petersburg, Germany (Daikandi, 2006:122).

This conference ultimately led to the Bonn Agreement, which, like the principle of holding the conference, was supported and approved by international organizations, powerful world countries, and neighboring countries. In this agreement, all influential political players in Afghanistan committed to a new process for the political system of this country. The country was to be carried out under the supervision of the United Nations and with the full participation of all ethnic groups and political groups, and each of them should provide the necessary cooperation in this regard.

The agreement covered all stages of the formation of institutions and the establishment of a new political system in Afghanistan based on the principles of democracy, free and general elections, and the proportionate participation of all ethnic groups and political groups in Afghanistan. Many Afghan commentators believe that the new conditions of Afghanistan after The Bonn Agreement is the beginning of a new and different chapter in the history of this country.

Therefore, in terms of popular sovereignty and attention to democratic values, it has transformed this period into a distinct era in the history of Afghanistan. In other words, the Bonn Agreement is considered the basis of a new political era and the starting point for the formation of the current political system of Afghanistan. (Farjirad et al. 2011: 116-117).

The Political Solution of the Bonn Conference and Its Consequences.

With the convening of the Bonn Conference in 2001, the international community and Afghan internal forces accepted the reality that Afghanistan is a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, and multi-ethnic country. Therefore, without a fair sharing of power, the country will not achieve stability and a national state will not be established. The result of such an approach was the drafting of a new constitution on January 29, 2006 (2003), which resulted in the current Islamic republican system based on the idea of presidential democracy. (Baqeri, 2017:159)

At the conference, four main anti-Taliban groups had come together to reach an agreement on issues related to the interim government and the future of Afghanistan. The first group, the Northern Alliance, was a fractious coalition of jihadist parties that had fought against each other during the civil war, but had now formed a coalition against the Taliban.

The second group, the Rome Group, was formed to represent Western demands from among the Shah's supporters. The former, Zaher Shah, was elected. The third group, the Peshawar group, was linked to Pirgilani, the leader of the Mohadzmali organization.

The fourth group, known as the Cyprus group, was linked to Hodayun Jarir, who was based in Iran (Sharan, 2017: 92). During the Bonn negotiations, participants optimistically anticipated the achievement of lofty goals, including "the establishment of an inclusive national government in which women and minorities "The tribes should also have representatives," they intended. (Kissinger, 2021: 267).

The Benghazi Conference had three main and major consequences for the post-2001 state-building in Afghanistan:

First, the power-sharing process was rushed and carried out with immediate Western concerns in mind. For this reason, the Benghazi agreements did not reflect the wishes of the Afghan people, but rather reflected American policies and interests. As Godhand puts it, it was a "grand bargain," a division of the spoils of war with foreign motives among a small number of participants who were directly involved in the war on terrorism.

Second, the Bonn conference did not include all the rival political groups and small communities that these networks claimed to represent. Notably, the Taliban and the Hezb-e-Islami organization, which were reluctant to support Karzai, were not invited. Burhanuddin Rabbani, as the former president, did not attend the conference, while Mohammad Karim Khalili (leader of the Unity Party), Haji Abdul Qadir (a powerful Pashtun leader from the southeast), and Abdulstar Sirat (head of the Rome delegation) complained about international interference and the failure to achieve their specific goals. General Abdul Rashid Dostum questioned the conference's membership, as he felt that few representatives of the Uzbek people attended the conference.

Third, the Bonn Conference fostered distrust, disunity, and dissatisfaction among the elites of the political groups. Following the conference's model, Afghanistan's four main political groups agreed on a political balance based on the multi-ethnicity of Afghan society as a whole. The fact is that the Northern Alliance, especially the military wing of the Islamic Jamiat Ulema, which was mainly composed of Tajiks from Panjshir, had a lot of power. The Northern Alliance took seventeen out of thirty government posts, including the Ministries of Security, Foreign Affairs, Planning, and Economy. Only the presidency and the Ministry of Finance remained out of their reach, and Qasem Fahim also became Karzai's vice president.

This power-sharing was consistent with the logic of "the winner takes all," as the Northern Alliance had liberated Kabul and controlled two-thirds of the country. Ethnically, Tajiks received the largest share of power, while Pashtuns, Hazaras, and Uzbeks complained about their share. (Sharan, 2017: 94-95).

Table 1. Ethnic composition of the members of the interim and transitional government of Hamid Karzai

Ministries	Interim Government	Ethnic Group	Transitional Cabinet	Ethnic Group
Defense	Mohamad Qasim Fahim	Tajik	Abdul Rahim Wardak	Pashton
Finance	Hedayat Amin Arsala	Pashton	Anwarulhaq Ahadi	Pashton
Foreign Affairs	Abdullah Abdullah	Tajik	Abdullah Abdullah	Tajik
Interior Affairs	Younus Qanoni	Tajik	Zarar Ahmad Muqbel	Pashton
Plan	Mohammad Muhaqeq	Hazara	Mohammad Jalil Shams	
Industry and Commerce	Sayed Mustafa Kazemi	Sadat	Mohammad Amin Farhang	Tajik
Mines	Mohammad Alem Razm	Ozbek	Ibrahim Adel	Tajik
Small Industries	Arif Noorzai	Pashton	Dissolved	
Information and Culture	Makhdum Rahin	Tajik	Abdul Karim Khurram	Pashton
Telecommunication	Engineer Abdul Rahim	Tajik	Amirzai Sangin	Pashton
Labor and Social Affairs	Mirwais Sadeq	Tajik	Noor Mohammad Qaqin	Turkman
Hajj and Religious Affairs	Mohammad Hanif Balkhi	Tajik	Nematullah Shahrani	Ozbek
Martyrs and Disabled	Abdullah Wardak	Pashton		
Education	Rasool Amin	Pashton	Mohammad Hanif Atmar	Pashton
Higher Education	Sharif Fayez		Amir Shah Hassanyar	Hazara
Public Health	Sohaila Sediqi	Pashton	Sayed Mohammad Amin Fatemi	Pashton
Public Work	Abdul Khaleq Fazl	Pashton	Suhrah Ali Safari	Hazara
Rural Development and Rehabilitation	Mohammad Hanif Atmar	Pashton	Mohammad Ehsan Zia	
Urban Development	Abdul Qadir	Pashton	Engineer Mohammad Yousuf Pashton	Pashton
Construction	Amin Farhang	Tajik	Dissolved	
Transport	Sultan Hamid	Hazara	Hamidullah Farooqi	Tajik
Water and Electricity	Shaker Kargar	Ozbek	Mohammad Ismail Khan	Tajik
Migration	Enayatullah Nazari	Tajik	Mohammad Azam Dadfar	Ozbek
Agriculture	Sayed Hussain Anwari	Sadat	Obaidullah Ramin	Tajik
Justice	Abdul Rahim Karimi	Tajik	Sarwar Danish	Hazara
Civil Aviation	Abdul Rahman	Pashton	Dissolved	
Struggle against Narcotics			General Khudaidad	Hazara
Frontier Affairs			Mohammad Karim Brahwi	Brahwi
Women Affairs	Sima Samar	Hazara	Hassan Bano Ghazanfar	Ozbek

(Source: Sharan, 2017:96)

Hamid Karzai's government (2001-2014)

The post-Taliban political system provided a suitable opportunity for the peoples, especially the Shiites, of Afghanistan, because for the first time in the country's history, the Ja'fari religion was officially recognized in the country's constitution and any kind of religious, ethnic, and linguistic discrimination was denied by the country's constitution.

The names of all the peoples of the country, as constituent peoples of the Afghan nation, were included in the constitution and the national anthem of the country. Any citizen of the country, regardless of ethnic, linguistic, or religious affiliation, can run for president, vice president, or representative in the country's parliament, and there are no legal restrictions on this. The participation of women and all citizens of the country, regardless of ethnic, linguistic, or religious affiliation, in positions of power and participation in various political, cultural, social, military, and other fields has been officially recognized. Freedom of expression, holding presidential and parliamentary elections are considered the most important developments and progress during the years of Karzai's government.

Although elections were accompanied by fraud, in the modern history of Afghanistan, and especially in the recent more than three decades of war and instability, elections have been established as a principle in accessing political power and sharing in power. (Andishmand, 2013: 275-276).

Although this situation cannot be considered ideal, it can be said that the achievements achieved during the years after the fall of the Taliban are historic and unprecedented for the people of Afghanistan, especially the country's disadvantaged minorities.

Patterns of Ethnicity in the Hamid Karzai Era

After the formation of the government (after 2001), as a result of political competition, reconciliation and reconciliation between rival political networks took shape. Once again, the Afghan state bureaucracy took on a completely political form, as the bureaucrats were not state employees, but rather employees of the ethnic and political groups that had brought them to state office.

In this way, they could use their positions and connections within the state to advance their ethnic interests, not national interests (Sharan, 2017:97-98). Table 2 examines the statistics of the cadres and soldiers of the Afghan National Army and Police based on the different ethnicities of this country, which clearly shows the ethnic dominance of the two ethnicities, "Pashtun" and "Tajik," in these forces.

In fact, Table 2 illustrates the complexity of Afghanistan's ethnic and demographic composition and the problem of forming a unified national identity in one of the most important pillars of the nation-state, namely the "army."

Table 2 - Statistics of the Afghan National Police and the Afghan National Army by ethnicity, early 2011

Forces	Pashton		Tajik		Hazara		Ozbek		Other Ethnic Groups	
Type of Force	National Army	National Police	National Army	National Police	National Army	National Police	National Army	National Police	National Army	National Police
Administrative Staff	42	41	41	47	8	4	4	3	5	3
Graded	51	31	36	56	8	6	3	4		4
Soldier	43	47	29	36	12	4	9	6	7	7
Total Forces	45	43	32	42	10	5	7	5	5	6
Average	45	40	34	45	10	5	6	5	5	5

Source: (Brookings,2020)

Ethnic-Bound Elections and Ethnic Voting

The people of Afghanistan have experienced free and fair elections since the fall of the Taliban regime, and have gone to the polls several times during this period, including three rounds of presidential elections in 2004, 2009, and 2014.

However, elections in Afghanistan have so far been heavily influenced by ethnic bias. Ethnic political rationality and political awareness of Afghan citizens, which is a product of the situation, have been the most significant variables in the transactions of political elites and the consultations and coalitions of political parties and currents. On the other hand, ethnic awareness has had the greatest impact in directing people's votes towards a particular candidate. (Khoati, 2011: 14). Statistics from the three presidential elections can better explain this reality at the macro level and in terms of ethnic divisions. (Khoati, 2011:16). To illustrate this view, we examine the results of the first and second rounds of the presidential elections and the formation of the national unity government.

The Role of Ethnicity and Ethnic Vote in the First Round of the Presidential Elections (2004)

Observing the polling stations at the level of various provinces and the distribution and dispersion of votes indicates that these elections cannot be national and transnational. Based on the distribution and dispersion of votes cast at the level of different provinces (provinces) and considering the ethnic composition of each province (province), considering the level of participation of the ethnic groups in each province (province), and in favor of a specific ethnic candidate, it can be confirmed and measured at the level of the entire country. Map 1 shows the role of ethnicity in the people's vote in the first presidential elections.



Map 1 - Ethnic votes of the four leading candidates in the first presidential elections of 2004

Source: <https://www.boell.de/en/2014/03/10/wie-man-afghanistan-eine-wahl-gewinnt>

The statistics in Figure 1 by the leading candidates represent ethnic and regional votes, not transnational and national votes, as the first post-Taliban presidential elections provided a suitable opportunity for the leaders of political parties, ethnic and regional.

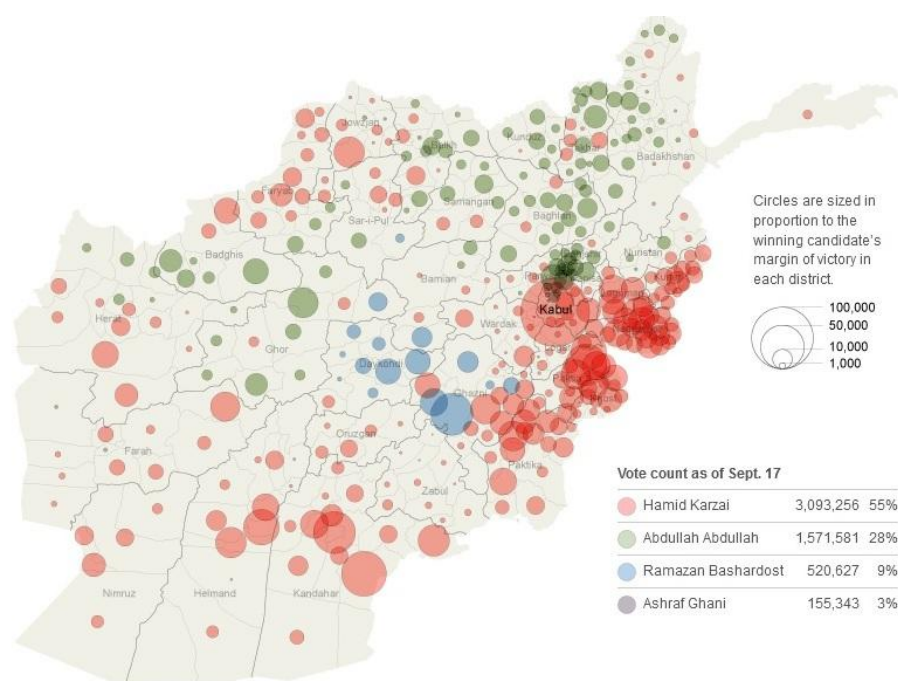
Although Karzai won the 2004 election with 55 percent of the vote, his three main rivals, Mohammad Yunus Qanuni (a Tajik), Mohammad Mohaqiq (a Hazara), and General Abdul Rashid Dostum (an Uzbek), each won 11.7 percent, 16.3 percent, and 10 percent of the vote, respectively, and were able to establish their influence and power base.

In his analysis of the results of the presidential election, Johnson (2004) finds a strong relationship between ethnicity and voting for candidates. He writes: "None of the candidates supported the right-wing agenda in areas outside their own linguistic ethnic group." Ethnic groups in Afghanistan voted along ethnic lines and not for candidates from other ethnic groups without considering ethnic considerations. (Rahimi, 2017: 129)

Candidates appealed to their respective ethnic and regional constituencies, claiming that by entering the electoral arena they wanted to defend the interests of their people, and thus gave the general public's vote an ethnic and regional character.

The Role of Ethnicity in the Second Round of Presidential Elections (2009)

To show the role of ethnicity and ethnic affiliations in the second round of presidential elections, only three candidates from three ethnicities were selected: Hamid Karzai, Abdullah Abdullah, and Ramadan Bashardost. As based on the results of the votes, these three people have also allocated themselves the first to third positions, respectively.



Map 2- The ethnic votes of the three leading candidates in the second presidential election of 2009,

Source: https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/interactive/2009/09/21/world/asia/0921-afghan-election-analysis.html?_r=0

Map 2 clearly shows that Pashtun-dominated areas voted for Hamid Karzai, Tajik-dominated areas voted for Abdullah Abdullah, and Hazaras voted for Ramadan Bashedost. Although Abdullah Abdullah is of Pashtun descent, he also has Tajik roots, and his mother is Tajik. More importantly, Abdullah's appearance and lifestyle have been more closely aligned with Tajiks, and for this reason, his political career identifies him as a representative of Tajiks.

Neither Abdullah's opponents nor his supporters considered him a representative of the Pashtuns. However, since he is a Pashtun by blood, he has secured the most votes in Pashtun-dominated areas, second only to Hamid Karzai and Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai. (Khoati, 2011:22)

The importance of ethnic and regional symbols in the selection of two vice presidents by each candidate, in order to maintain ethnic balance and attract the attention and votes of the majority of ethnic groups, was clearly evident. Karzai's first vice president was a Tajik (Qasim Fahim) and his second vice president was a Hazara (Karim Khalili). Abdullah, who is half Tajik and claims to represent the predominantly Tajik-based Islamic community, chose a Pashtun (Humayun Asafi) as his first vice president and a Hazara (Ali Chirag) as his second vice president.

Hamid Karzai also did not shy away from enlisting the support of tribal leaders, who were seen as having strong popular bases; Mohammad Mohaqiq and Karim Khalili, because of the Hazara vote; General Abdul Rashid Dostum was favored by Karzai for the Uzbek vote, Marshal Fahim and Ismail Khan for the Tajik vote; Shir Mohammad Akhundzada in Helmand; Jan Mohammad Khan in Uruzgan; and Karzai's brother Ahmadullah Karzai for the Pashtun vote in Kandahar (Sharan, 2017:141). On the other hand, Abdullah Abdullah sought to attract some of the most influential figures to his power structure.

Atta Mohammad Nur, the governor (provincial) of Balkh, and Burhanuddin Rabbani, the spiritual leader of the Jamiat-e-Islami, were the most important and visible figures in the Tajik vote; although Rabbani had not officially endorsed Abdullah. Abdullah's power networks among the Pashtuns, Hazaras, and Uzbeks were largely made up of second-tier power networks, such as those of Syed Hossein Anwari and Qurban Ali Irfani.

It is worth noting that these political networks were formed on the basis of a principle of bad luck. While Hamid Karzai had promised ministerial positions as political resources to these supporters, supporters of Hamid Karzai's network, such as Mohammad Mohaqiq, leader of the People's Islamic Unity Party of Afghanistan and a powerful political network among the Hazaras, had formally requested five ministries from Hamid Karzai for his political network.

In addition, the researcher had demanded the power to appoint individuals to important government positions and also to convert the districts of Jaghori and Behsud into provinces. Similarly, General Dostum had also been promised two ministries. The demands of Qurban Ali Irfani, the leader of the political network of the Islamic Unity Party of Afghanistan, which had allied with Abdullah, provide a good picture of the nature of the demands that were made. He announced his conditions as follows:

Twenty percent of the political, economic, social and cultural rights of the Hazaras within the state, construction of a highway in the central regions of Afghanistan from Kabul to Herat, a just solution to the conflict between the nomads and the Hazaras, and the elevation of two districts (cities) in the central regions to provinces. (Sharan, 2017: 143-144).

The role of ethnic identities can also be seen in the third phase of the presidential elections. For example, Mohammad Ashraf Ghani chose a Pashtun face, the Uzbek strongman, General Abdul Rashid Dostum, as his first vice president and Sarwar Danesh, a Hazara politician, as his second vice president. His main rival, Abdullah Abdullah, chose Mohammad Khan, the former Pashtun commander of the Hezb-e-Islami party, as his first vice president and the Hazara strongman, Mohammad Mohaqiq, as his second vice president. Abdullah expected to win a majority of the Tajik and Hazara votes. (Sharan, 2017: 133).

The 2014 election crisis, with the presidential election being extended to a second round and then the rejection of the election results by Abdullah Abdullah's supporters, raised the possibility of a civil war between the factions of Mohammad Sharif Ghani and Abdullah Abdullah, and this issue led to the formation of a national unity government with the mediation of US Secretary of State John Kerry. (Baqeri, 2017: 150).

The 2014 elections, like the 2009 elections, took on a tribal tone. Ethnicity was key in mobilizing the people. If we draw a simple map of the ethnic distribution in the elections, we find that the elections were evenly balanced between the Hazara and Tajik ethnic groups on the one hand and the Pashtun and Uzbek ethnic groups on the other.

Most of the Pashtun political networks and the Uzbek network, namely the National Movement Party led by General Abdul Rashid Dostum, were aligned with Mohammad Ashraf Ghani. Similarly, most Tajik and Hazara networks (with the exception of Khalili, the leader of the Unity Party) sided with Abdullah Abdullah. (Sharan, 2017:152).

By reviewing historical documents and evidence, we come to the conclusion that after the formation of the current political system, we have only witnessed the subsiding of intense ethnic clashes, and that too in purely military dimensions, while the various ethnic tensions in this country continue to be evident in its political, social, and cultural dimensions.

Mohammad Ashraf Ghani's Government (2015–2021)

The 2014 election crisis not only discredited the Independent Election Commission and questioned the legitimacy of the candidates, but also increased the risk of ethnic and regional division in the country.

Some of Abdullah's powerful supporters, angered by the announcement of the initial election results by the Independent Election Commission, announced that they would form a parallel government; Something that could have ended in war (Sharan, 2017:151) and this issue led to the formation of a national unity government through the mediation of John Kerry, the US Secretary of State.

In this agreement, a position as an executive director was envisaged to overcome this crisis, which, taking into account the agreements reached, reformed the electoral system, held a Loya Jirga to change articles of the constitution, and defined the post of prime minister, and should have been operational within the past two years. (Baqeri, 2017: 150).

And considering that the leadership of the Afghan National Unity Government, which was formed after the disputed 2014 elections, included seven people from different ethnic groups (President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani is a Pashtun, General Abdul Rashid Dostum, his first vice president, is an Uzbek, and Sarwar Danesh, his second vice president, is a Hazara).

In the executive branch, Abdullah Abdullah represents the Tajik ethnic group. Mohammad Khan, the first vice president, is a Pashtun, and Mohammad Mohaqiq, his second vice president, is also a Hazara, Ahmad Zia Massoud, the Presidential Representative for Reforms and Governance, was also of Tajik descent.

In addition to the two teams included in the government's political structure, power was divided between the lower ranks of the cabinet, provinces, and embassies, with the American mediator, in a way that reflected the ethnic realities of the country, so as to ensure a fair representation of Afghanistan's ethnic composition in the political structure.

Table 2. Ethnic composition of the cabinet members of the National Unity Government

Ethnicity	Pashton	Tajik	Hazara	Ozbek	Other Ethnic Groups	Total
Number	10	8	5	2	1	26
Percentage	38	31	19	8	4	100
Members of the Transformation and Sustainability Team (Mohammed Ashraf Ghani)						
Ethnicity	Pashton	Tajik	Hazara	Ozbek	Other Ethnic Groups	Total
Number	8	2	2	1	1	14
Percentage	57	15	14	7	7	100
Members of the Reform and Integration Team (Abdullah Abdullah)						
Ethnicity	Pashton	Tajik	Hazara	Ozbek	Other Ethnic Groups	Total
Number	2	6	3	1		12
Percentage	17	50	25	8		100

Source: www.bbc.com/persian/afghanistan

Trends and Consequences

The formation of the National Unity Government failed to bring the necessary legitimacy and restore the people's trust in Afghan government institutions such as the Office of the President and the Executive Directorate.

The executive branch does not yet have a legal basis under the constitution (although, according to the agreements reached in the National Unity Government Agreement, a Loya Jirga was scheduled to be held within two years and the constitution amended, which has not yet been implemented (April 2019).

The number and diversity of power centers have led to the emergence of differences between the two factions (Mohammed Ashraf Ghani and Abdullah Abdullah), and the power of the president emanates from the institution of the presidency, while the power of the executive branch is delegated.

Meanwhile, Abdullah wants half of the power and government appointments under the National Unity Government Agreement. This has therefore led to the weakening of governance and the ineffectiveness of the government of President Ashraf Ghani.

The divisions and fragility in the National Unity Government were revealed when President Ghani dismissed the deputy minister of labor, social affairs, and martyrs and disabled in June 2015, alleging widespread corruption. Abdullah Abdullah has demanded that he be reinstated, claiming that The President did not consult him on its removal. (Sharan, 2017:159).

This incident shows that the reform process at all levels is a victim of political negotiations and that an understanding must be reached for all important aspects. For example, after President Ghani dismissed Ahmadinejad Massoud, his special representative for reforms and good governance, from his post on 1/19/2017, Ahmadinejad Massoud announced in a press conference that he did not accept the president's decision. He emphasized that the national unity government was formed on the basis of a political agreement and therefore no group should exclude another group from the political structure. (Neshat et al., 2017: 15). In addition, the slow process of introducing cabinet ministers is partly related to these differences. Abdullah Abdullah sees the national unity government as a compromise for power-sharing, while Mohammad Ashraf Ghani sees it as a coalition government. (Sharan, 2017: 159). The president's monopoly of power has led other members of Ashraf Ghani's leadership to express their dissatisfaction with the government.

For example, General Abdul Rashid Dostum, First Vice President and leader of the Islamic Movement Party, calls his role in the system symbolic and considers himself incompetent. This dissatisfaction of General Abdul Rashid Dostum reached such a height that it strained his relationship with the presidential palace circle and led to General Abdul Rashid Dostum's exile to Turkey.

As a result, these political divisions and dissatisfactions led to the formation of coalitions within the system against its functioning. For example, the leaders of three political parties, who also held high government positions, began to form a new political coalition.

Salahuddin Rabbani, leader of the Jamiat-e-Islami Party and Foreign Minister, Atta Mohammad Noor, chief executive of the Jamiat-e-Islami Party and governor of Balkh, General Abdul Rashid Dostum, leader of the National Islamic Movement of Afghanistan and First Vice President, and Mohammad Mohaqiq, leader of the People's Unity Party of Afghanistan and Second Deputy Chief of the Executive Board, founded the "Afghanistan Salvation Coalition" during a meeting in Turkey.

The leaders of this political coalition accused President Ghani of extra-legal actions and attempts to monopolize political power in a resolution and called for reforms. (Neshat et al., 2017:15).

The differences in power between the two political factions intensified the polarization of the government and led to the emergence of parallel structures. President Ghani tried to centralize power around his new administration and advisors. The president planned and acted more closely with the administration, the Security Council, and his special advisors, and in isolation from other government institutions (Sharan, 2017:159).

Regarding Inayatullah Babar Farhamand, the chief of staff of the First Vice President (General Abdul Rashid Dostum), he says: "Mohammad Sharif Ghani does not consult General Dostum, as First Vice President, on any major decision-making.

"The constitution has not delegated any defined authority to him, and the president has given the chairmanship of this committee to the National Security Council." (www.bbc.com/persian) On the other hand, Abdullah Abdullah has tried to bring his former jihadist allies, whom Hamid Karzai had marginalized, to power, and has appointed his supporters as governors (provincial governors) and high-ranking government officials in the national unity government. These ethnic orientations have caused leaders to become dependent on a small number of people (Sharan, 2017: 161).

Tensions and disagreements between the leaders of the National Unity Government on the one hand and the monopoly of power on the other led a number of prominent political figures to announce the establishment of a political movement called the Axis of the People of Afghanistan as an opposition wing on 25/4/2017.

Seventy-two people, including Rahmatullah Nabil, former head of Afghanistan's National Directorate of Security, and Rangin Dadfar Espenta, former adviser to the Afghan National Security Council, were members of the leadership council of this fledgling political movement.

The leaders of this movement, in a meeting held to announce their existence, said that the national unity government had failed in managing political, security, economic and other important national affairs. The people-oriented leaders of Afghanistan have stated that the main goal of establishing this movement is to return to the constitution and strengthen political legitimacy.

Rahmatullah Nabil said: "Our presence on the political scene is not to participate in power-sharing negotiations with the national unity government, but on the contrary, we want to put an end to the policies of lies, deceit, fraud, and the use of state resources to achieve the interests of a self-serving circle." (Neshat et al., 2017:16) .

These internal differences within the National Unity Government can be seen in the peace consultative Loya Jirga. In the most recent case, the Presidential Palace convened a Loya Jirga on 2/9/2019 with the participation of at least 2,500 people's representatives from across the country, consisting of different segments of Afghan society, whose aim was to decide on how to negotiate peace with the Taliban, among the main issues discussed in this Loya Jirga.

However, the Executive Directorate of the National Unity Government of Afghanistan (headed by Abdullah Abdullah) issued a statement on Sunday (2019/1/25) stating that they would not participate in this jirga. The statement stated: "We in the Stability and Cohesion Team, neither at the level of the parties and personalities comprising this team, nor at the level of the government, have been party to the consultation to hold such a meeting until this stage, and at the same time, we do not have any convincing reasons for this meeting." The Jamiat-e-Islami, the Islamic Movement and the Islamic Unity are among the prominent parties included in this electoral team that boycotted the Peace Consultative Jirga, with representatives from all three parties confirming to the BBC that they support the team's "Stability and Integration" theme and that their representatives will not be present in the upcoming Loya Jirga. This is while the Loya Jirga, according to Article 110 of the Constitution of Afghanistan, is the highest expression of the will of the people of Afghanistan and consists of members of the National Council (House of Representatives and Senate), heads of provincial (provincial) and district (city) councils.

According to the law, decisions on issues related to "independence, national sovereignty, territorial integrity, supreme interests of the country and amending the Constitution and the trial of the President" are among the duties of this Jirga. (www.pajhwok.com)

Ethnicity in the National Unity Government

Ethnicity is at the center of the reshaping of political structures. Ethnic polarization between two camps has played an increasing role in shaping the new political order and the balance of power.

A study of the ethnic composition of key offices, including the Office of the President, the Office of the Executive Director, the Office of the Second Deputy Executive Director, and the list of presidential advisors, shows that these offices have become dangerously ethnically colored. A striking example of this social divide is the ethnic composition of the State Department, which is known as the Office of the President.

An analysis of the ethnic composition of the State Department staff at that time shows that there was a clear dominance of Pashtun technocrats (75 percent or 21 Pashtuns, compared to 4 Tajiks or 14 percent), as well as in the positions of presidential advisors (69 percent or 22 Pashtuns compared to 19 percent or 6 Tajiks). Similarly, it is not

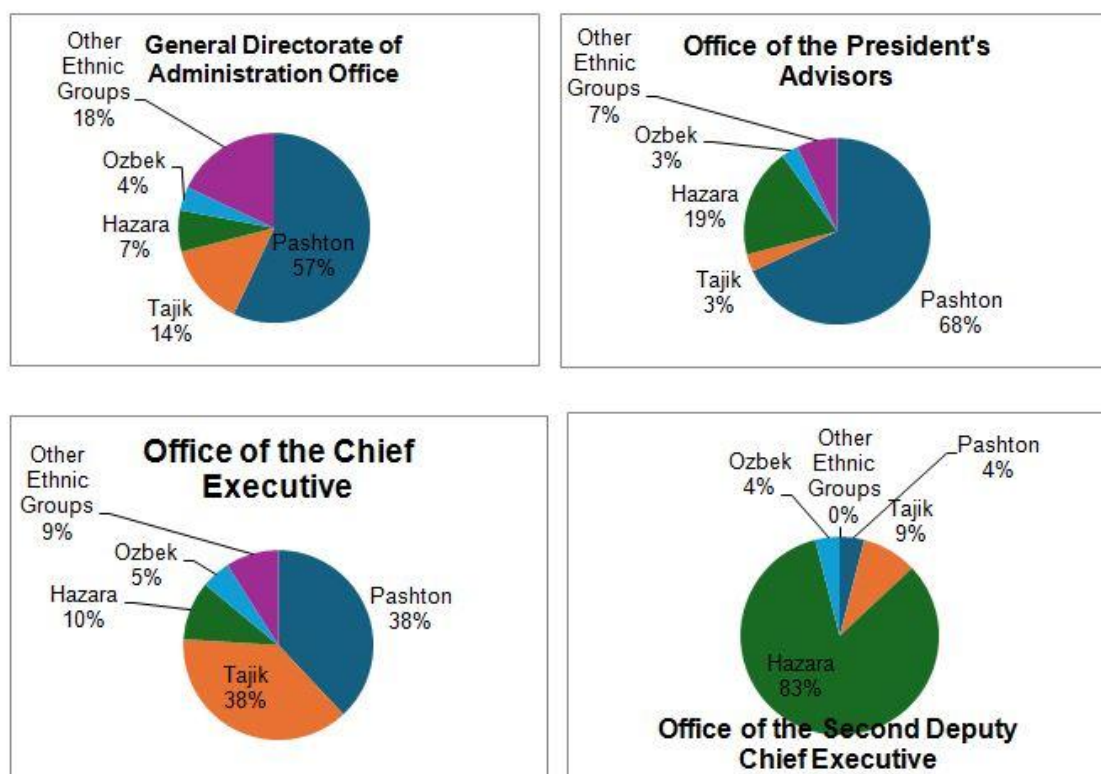
only the Affairs Department that has an ethnic structure, but Abdullah Abdullah has also tried to bring jihadists into his network.

The ethnic composition of the Affairs Department differs from that of the Executive Directorate, as the latter has an equal number of Tajik and Pashtun employees (38 percent each), but the introduction of ministerial nominees and employees of the Executive Directorate shows a preference for jihadist Tajiks.

Mohammad Mohaqiq has also chosen his assistants mostly from the Hazara ethnic group, which is 87.5 percent of his office staff. Similarly, ethnic biases have led to leaders becoming dependent on a small number of individuals. (Sharan, 2017:160-161).

Amrullah Saleh accuses the leadership of the National Unity Government of ethnic bias. Saleh, who appeared on Tolo News TV's Black and White program, said that the nationalist slogans in the National Unity Government are a lie and that all government actions are based on ethnic and linguistic issues. Amrullah Saleh emphasizes that incompetent, incompetent, and incompetent individuals are appointed to lead the security forces, and that in the national unity government, the positions of officials are not defined and they are placed at the top and bottom based on their identity and ethnicity (Dunya, 2017:2). The following diagrams show the ethnic structure in the composition of national departments in the national unity government.

Figure 2. Ethnic composition of the regulations in the executive offices (as of September 2015)



CONCLUSION

Afghanistan is a country that has a more traditional fabric than any other country. This characteristic, in its own way, has led to other obvious differences in various dimensions of Afghan society. For this reason, the functioning of the peoples in this country has also developed differently from other countries.

And now, after three decades of crisis and war, and especially after a decade of ethnic war, a new political system has been formed in Afghanistan, and the basic foundation of the new political system has been established based on the principle of participation of peoples and nationalities. Many believe that the formation of the current political system will be the definitive end to ethnic wars.

However, it seems that this hypothesis was presented a little prematurely and optimistically, because in the current conditions and with the establishment of the current political system, we are only witnessing the subsiding of severe ethnic clashes, and that too in purely military dimensions, while the various ethnic tensions of this country, in its political, social, and cultural dimensions, continue to persist, both hidden and overt, and the establishment of which was clearly influenced by foreigners. The results of the study indicate that today, considering the emergence of some inadequacies and disorganizations in the management of the country of Afghanistan and the increasing security problems, political logic and rationality require that, far from differences and political motives, all nations, with solidarity and mutual acceptance, can reflect and consult nationally on the aforementioned matters to carry out

political, social, and cultural affairs, because the distribution of power among nations and reconciliation between them are among the most important components of Democratic governance is considered a multi-ethnic and diverse society and plays a very important role in the participation of groups and peoples in political decision-making and, consequently, in nation-building and the creation of social cohesion, and it lays the foundation for creating lasting geopolitical stability in this country.

The participation of ethnic groups in matters such as politics, society, and culture, as a fundamental principle and legitimacy of the administrative-political structure of Afghanistan, provides the basis for internal unity and is a serious obstacle to external interference, because foreigners, by inciting ethnic feelings and conspiring to sow discord among ethnic groups, cause ethnic tension and challenge national unity.

Today, all groups and peoples in Afghanistan have the necessary opportunities and capabilities to achieve their own goals and aspirations and those of their country, and no group is capable of governing the country alone and without the participation of others.

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