

Insulator state and continuity of the Afghanistan conflict

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| Article Info | Abstract |
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| Original Article Main Object: International relations Scope: Afghanistan Received: 24 May 2023 Revised: 18 June 2023 Accepted: 21 June 2023 Published online: 27 June 2023 Keywords: buffer state, ethnicity, insulator state, surrounding regions. | This article seeks to understand why the conflict of Afghanistan has been continued in the past decades. This research is done with qualitative method using document-library sources. The roots of continued conflict and instability in Afghanistan can be categorized in three levels. 1. Internal factors influencing the continuation of the conflict include ethnicity, language, religion, and the lack of political and economic institutions; 2. The regional factor; Afghanistan is not a full member of any of the neighboring regions but it is always affected by the neighboring regions; In other words, one of the most important factors of the continuation of the conflict in Afghanistan is the spillover of conflicts from the surrounding regions in Afghanistan. 3. The level of the international system, including the competition between the great powers and Afghanistan's neighboring to China and Russia, affecting the continuation of the conflict. The research question is, "How the surrounding areas of Afghanistan effect on the continuation of the conflict in this country?" In response, the hypothesis of the research is that Afghanistan, as an insulator state, does not belong to its surrounding regional security complexes (South Asia, Central Asia and the Middle East). The location of Afghanistan in this position has weakened the shared destiny between Afghanistan and the above regions, and as a result, it has become a place for conflicts in the surrounding regions to spill. |

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Extended Abstract

Introduction

The Afghan government has always been involved in the continuation of the conflict. The reason for this is that Afghanistan is located in a position where it is not a member of any of the security systems of the surrounding regions (South Asia, the Middle East and Central Asia), and this position is called an "insulator state". Therefore, the conflicts of peripheral areas in Afghanistan always spill over. On the other hand, since this country was formed by the two empires of Britain and Russia in the 18th century, it has not yet achieved internal unity and a nation has not been formed. Therefore, the internal dispersion has the role of contributing to the continuation of the conflict in the case that it is the main driver of the conflict spill over in the neighboring regions.

Research question

The research question is how the surrounding areas of Afghanistan affect the continuation of the conflict in this country?

Research hypothesis

The hypothesis of the research is that Afghanistan, as an insulator state, does not belong to its surrounding regional security complexes (South Asia, Central Asia and the Middle East). The location of Afghanistan in this position has weakened the shared destiny between Afghanistan and the above regions, and as a result, it has become a place for conflicts in the surrounding regions to spill over and the conflict continues.

Method

This research was conducted using a qualitative method and relied on document-library and internet sources. The approach of the article is descriptive-analytical.

Results

This article has analyzed the causes of the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan. This allows us to pinpoint the most significant aspects of the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan. The important thing about the internal situation of Afghanistan is that this country was formed as a buffer state by the two empires of Russia and England during the Great Game. This government continued to play the role of a buffer state during the Cold War until the military intervention of the Soviet Union in this country. When the Soviet Union collapsed, and the bipolar order ended, the country became an insulator state. Consequently, the Afghan government used to act as a buffer between great powers, but now it serves as an insulator between regions.

At the regional level, since Afghanistan is not part of the peripheral

regions and is not dependent on their security systems, it has become a land for resolving the conflicts of the countries of the peripheral regions. In fact, its special position of Afghanistan as an isolated country separates the three regions of Central Asia, South Asia, and the Middle East, but it does not belong to the aforementioned regions. Thus, this country has been heavily affected by the security campaigns of these areas and is somehow involved in its continuation. As a result of the constant conflict, the government has become unstable, resulting in the country always needing foreign aid.

Conclusion

This country is considered one of the failed governments in the international system, and instability, poverty, civil war, corruption, and weak governance are the characteristics of a failed government, which all apply to Afghanistan. Afghanistan is also heavily influenced by the international system. It was formed by great powers in the 19th century and attacked by great powers in the 20th and 21st centuries. Based on the points outlined above, Afghanistan has political and identity roots of conflict at three levels: internal, regional, and international. Afghanistan is not a part of the country's security system at the regional level. Surrounding areas, and there is no place to overflow. Proxy wars are regional and international powers. A state like this is referred to as an insulator because of this property.

Conflict of interest

The authors declared no conflicts of interest.

Authors' contributions

All authors contributed to the original idea, study design.

Ethical considerations

The author has completely considered ethical issues, including informed consent, plagiarism, data fabrication, misconduct, and/or falsification, double publication and/or redundancy, submission, etc.

Data availability

The dataset generated and analyzed during the current study is available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

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