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The Balance of Power in Asia; A Perspective from Afghanistan

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Abstract:

Balance of Power is one of the main areas of discussion among the theorists in International Relations and national security. The state as a key player plays to balance power with other states against an offensive power within an order to maintain security by reducing threads. Asia has been a good model for studying the balance of power in different sub-systems and all-around Asia. I would discuss in this paper, how the formation of alliances happens in Asia's various regions, Asia's trans-regional spheres, and overall, Asia. The nature & significances of the Asiatic equilibrium of power, the role of the US as an outside balancer, and what we would be witnessed in the 2020s, are also at the core of this paper.

Keywords: Asiatic Balance of Power, Rigid Balancing, Sub-Systems, Outside Balancer, All-Around Balancing, Afghanistan.

1. Introduction

The world has faced a transformation in the 2020s; Asia has been more into these changes. Henceforth, the concepts, nature, and functions of peace and security are the new concerns of small, middle, and big powers of Asia. The new trends in Asian politics and economics have driven many rising powers of Asia to ambitious objectives on one hand and terrifies smaller ones to ally the power equilibrium on the other. This has been begun in Asia since the end of the Cold War where many states played a power politics to fill the gap and take control of the remnants of Cold War powers. Although this has been the game of all continents and regions across the world.

Asia unlike many other continents in the world is a peculiar land; a trans-regional sphere where it is experienced by great imperial powers, the cradle of civilizations and potential powers of present in human resources and economy and creation of new smaller states decided by the colonial intentions. These two different common memories of the various nations in Asia

have given some to be ambitious and some others defensive. Some have been the heirs of medieval imperial states who have taken a deep breath after the Cold War on one hand, and some others have been concerned about their survival to oppose the ambitious regional powers. The world is not as it was a decade before; since the fall of the Soviet Union and the end of the cold war until the 2020s, the Asian states went through a state of unclarity. The band-wagoned regional representatives of the global ideological power of the Cold War would have played their independent politics within their region with unlimited ambitions to reach their imperial pasts and the newly created nation-states would have played in a way to survive and place themselves in the family of newly formed nations.

The 2020s are in consolidating period for both big and small states in Asia. The rising stars of different subsystems are looking to consolidate other competent nations to accept its supremacy and dominance in the region or all over Asia. The opposing identities, common memories, ambitions, and many other drivers create a situation where regional powers oppose each other. Small states located in the regions of Asia that were concerned about their survival have passed by the dangers of disintegration and These states are now alliancing through various capacities to consolidate their group position and take part in regional and Asian destiny.

Since the paper is oriented on the Asiatic model of balance of power within the system and subsystems, I would not discuss here the role of Asia in balancing power all-around the world. The dynamism of power politics and economic interactions are more fluid than the outsider's approach to shaping the roles of the game within Asia. Thus, an Asian introvertly look is necessary.

I have also looked at the power ordering from Afghanistan's perspective. Any nation would have seen the formations of alliances through the lens of its capital. Certain judgments would be involved in the interpretations of power equilibrium, since peace and security of his/her nation-state is concerned.

2. The Trends of Balance of Power in the World in the 2020s

There is a hypothesis that the equilibrium of power has been not stable, and it is temporary according to times; by the transformations of time and situations, the nature and significance of the balance of power also changes and gives way to another system of balance of power. Neither a balance of power system nor its original contending powers can live long (Politicalscienceview.com: 6.3.2021). Hence, the meaning, nature, form, order, and functions of the balance of power change from time to time. When we discuss the term equilibrium of power

in Asia, we have to be concerned about all changes not only in meaning but also in physical condition.

Theoretically, there is a realistic hypothesis that without the Balance of Power among the states, the structure of the international system would not continue. This means equilibrium of power is the motor for the continuity for the survival of states. “What is the balance of power? This is the question that has been asked by so many scholars. Briefly put proponents of the balance of power theory argue that the world is in an anarchical state and as a result, states act under a natural inclination on each other’s military power, trouble-shooting propensities, ability to cause trouble and capability to disrupt international order.” Hans J. Morgenthau believes that regional balance of power is an approach applied in a special situation; a situation where the power would be distributed among the players within the region. The condition is a pattern for defining relations among the countries in which no state would have enough power to control others.

The trends in the balance of power of the global system show that Asia is the changing scenario that affects other parts too. There are rapid transformations in Asia that shape the trends of the balance of power in the 2020s; the US continuous alliance with Asian middle and small powers, ending cold war ideological rivalries, China’s rapid growth (Rajamohan, 6.3.2021), and a new phase of Asian cold wars. I would here discuss these trends in Asia under the “Asiatic Balance of Power” based on certain nature and significances that Asia has in it.

3. Asiatic Balance of Power

Asia is a unique trans-regional terrain with a single name but many worlds within it. There are certain characteristics of Asia as, a peculiar land, cradle of civilization, colonial memory, and potential powers. All the uniqueness resulted in the power politics experiences among the Asian states from the national level to the international cosmopolitan one. With the failures of nationalism and internationalism after the cold war, there has been a dominant view that the new rising powers of Asia would play a key role in global politics and economy. Since that, the term “The Asian Century” was coined by hoping the 21st Century and propagated by academic journals, newspapers, and Televisions. “The questions that are asked and the debates held, in this context, are mainly about the magnitude of the Asian power, the division of this power amongst Asian countries and the implications of this reality about the traditional Western world domination.”

Balancing and hegemony are the main approaches in the security and defense strategy of Asian state action. On one hand, the countries who are in an ambitious position in any region

of Asia are trying to expand their sphere of influences within their regions or in different other regions and on the other, smaller states are located in the geography of threads or geopolitics of threads who are more concerned about their survival. Therefore, the states who enjoy a civilizational legitimacy inheriting resources, power and huge territory play the hegemon role in Asia while those deprived of all the privileges struggle for survival.

I believe that in the 2020s the role of outside balancer would be preserved in Asia but at the same time, a tree-tier formation of power among Asian players would define the nature of power politics. Asia is transforming from a simple balancing to multiple ones. This would change the significance, concepts, functions, and accountabilities of players in Asia.

3.1. The Geopolitical Determinism of Asiatic Balance of Power

The balance of power acts differently in a different region; that is based on the order and arrangement of socio-economic and power of the state actors and non-state actors in any region. Of course, the factors behind defining the nature of the balance of power in Asia in the 2020s are both concrete and transforming based on geopolitical determinism and indefinite conditions.

- i. *Too diverse Order*: a quick look at economic and nation-states in Asia shows how the continent is far more diverse than any other continent in the world (Monticone, 2008: 507). Unlike many continents and regions around the world, states in Asia are diverse in different capacities; in economics and politics, the nations of Asia are not united. Each nation in Asia looks at other nations as their potential hostile. For instance, China seems to be a potential enemy for some countries. Japan is the country that could most likely become aggressive. Moscow is the new aggressor. India looks at Pakistan as a traditional enemy and Pakistan sees India as vice versa (Monticone, 2008: 508). The nature, potentials, and capacities of the states are also different from each other. As Lampton states, “Singapore has an economic and technological capacity of advanced industrial States. Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand are growing at a favorable rate, and India with greater potential than any of the countries so far mentioned in this paragraph is still behind. It is unlikely that India will become an economic and military power in the first quarter of the 21st Century, but it will become an economic and military superpower in the second quarter of this century provided that human civilization survives. China, with a population of 1.3 billion which will soon reach 1.5 billion and whose astronomical rate of economic growth and industrial potential has surpassed all previous estimates, will undoubtedly be an economic and military superpower in less than one decade” (Lampton, 2007).

- ii. *Many ASIAs*: Asia is a trans-regional land in which more than one region, nation, and civilization live. It's a complex of big civilizational worlds by various and different traditional power centers. Each region of Asia is characterized by a civilization (sometimes more than civilizations as in the case of West Asia; the Aryans, Sumerians, Babylon, Dilmun, and others existed) or a dominant culture. A state or states within these regions are representing the legacy and hereditary of being the cradle of this big civilizational world and through soft or hard power play as the core of the region by defining others as peripheries. There is a unique definition of nation in Asia than Western knowledge; in Asia nation is not the group of people who shared commonalities in language, history, ethnicity, and culture. A nation in Asia means a group of human beings who shares the same ethnicities and prevail in different trans-boundaries.

There is no single Asia; if we take a history, people, cultures, environment, geographies are any other abstract and physical signs and demarcations, there are many ASIAs. East Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia, Central Asia, and West Asia are five different ASIAs with differences in all aspects. A Japanese in Southeast Asia is strange to the Western regions of Asia in Turkey. The only similarity is that they belong to a huge and vast continent which carries the name "Asia". No other index can bring Turkish with Japanese on the table. This plays an important role in defining the significances of power formation in Asia; whether this shared ethnicity prevailed in different parts of Asia feel integration or disintegration.

- iii. *Outside balancer*: Asia because of its population and resources, is a region that fulfills global powers. Therefore, outside Asia, big powers are looking for competing for Asian regional powers not to let any Asian state control the greater region on one hand and to preserve its interests on the other. They play as balancers in Asia. The US policymaking community has always encouraged the White House to play its balancing policy in Asia. Henry Kissinger for example advises the American politicians to resist the effort of any Asian nation to dominate across Asia. He also emphasizes that Washington must extend good and cordial relations with all Asian nations (Kissinger, 2001: 1). He believed that a hostile Asia is not suitable for the national interests of the US.

This policy of equilibrium by the US in Asia, because of the significances of Asia's different regions opposes the regional interests of Asian regional powers. The US plays differently in different regions in Asia. Washington is concerned about China's growing dominance in greater East Asia, therefore, the US since 2000 aligned with Japan, South Korea, Thailand, and the Philippines to oppose Beijing (Twining, 2007: 79).

Political Islam is the most important factor upon which the US opposes in Asia. The literature produced during and after the cold war by the Islamists and their anti-American activities obliges the US to use its presence of troops as deterrence to tackle these organizations at home. Even during Cold War when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan, the Afghan Arabs and Ayatullah Khomeini were blaming the US for anti-Islamic approaches. Writings and books sprout among Islamists created an Americano-phobia resulting in the Al Qaeda attack on the US on 9/11.

- iv. *Non-State Actors*: unlike other parts of the world, one unique significance of the balance of power in Asia is playing around the presence of transnational non-state actors who would challenge the very basic philosophy of the existence of the specific nation-states and limit the sphere of the influences of many other big regional powers. These groups challenge the Westphalian system of non-states and through this notion, they do not believe in the current political order of the players. Non-state political actors have increasingly taken an important role across Asia after the collapse of the Soviet Union especially when the power vacuum resulted in the rise of new ambitious state actors who have tried to use proxies for a new regional cold war.

Many people live all around Asia who pledge their allegiances to their ethnic or religious groups or narratives than any state. Therefore, national liberation movements, terrorist organizations, proxy assets are spread out across the Asian regions who dependently or independently pose threads to the smaller and bigger regional state actors. Taliban, Islamic State of Iraq and Syria ISIS, Islamic State of Khorasan ISK, Naxalite Maoists, Arab Struggle Movement for Liberation of Ahvaz, All Tripura Tiger Force ATTF, Baluchistan Liberation Army BLA, Donetsk People's Republic, East Turkistan Liberation Movement ETIM, Hezbollah, Houthis, Kurdish Movements, and many more organizations and movements in different parts of Asia. These non-state actors are ethnic, religious, ideological, and political; some of them are state-sponsored proxies and assets.

3.2. Asiatic Model of Balance of Power

In the aftermath of the Cold war, a three-fold balance of power has been in practice both in the world and in the regions. Asia is one of the two important regions of the world after Europe in which different regional powers emerged to play as hegemons. The vacuum of power resulted from the disintegration of the erstwhile Soviet Union which had overshadowed the independent significances of potential regional powers across the Asian continent, encouraged the newly independent players to fill up by positing themselves as Asian hegemons. Therefore, Asian

ground has been witnessing three layers of balancing power; on the first layer, the broader players from outside Asia like the United States of America.

In the second layer, a five-sided hegemonic competition began among different state actors in Asia. Many rising regional powers in Asia like China, India, Japan, Saudi Arabia, Iran who once were the strategic allies of Great powers during the Cold War, departed from power politics and drive to their destination by forming regional alliances or keeping the status quo with the US to play an independent role and dominate Asia.

The politics of balancing power and balancing force is naturally a vital approach in the foreign policy of Asian big and smaller states. On the one hand, all nation-states in Asia have a historical memory of threats being posed by the offensive super or great powers; colonial memory is almost a shared bitter background that no nation wants to be repeated. Smaller and up to a certain level the middle powers of Asia are still being terrified by the big powers and regional powers who would dominate them either using soft power or invading brutally.

Many of the Asian states -whether big or small- area located in the geopolitics of thread and would have always expected threads from any already or potential enemy. I here give a clear example of Iraq. The history of Iraq shows that the Western world and the United States have a political and identity drove against Saddam Hussain. The idealist leader of Iraq had humiliated them several times. Therefore, since the 1980s the Western world was looking for ways to topple down Saddam's regime in Baghdad. Many potential methods were examined to find a way from the internal balance of power against him but in the end, they failed to achieve success and attacked Iraq from outside.

In the 2020s, the Asian equilibrium of power is transforming from a simple balance of power to a multiple one; the Asiatic formation of alliances based on the wide dispersal of states in regions and across Asia defines the nature of the balance of power as the complex balance of power. The term is used in which several states or groups of states balance each other; it is a complex of sub-systems where local balances of power happen within the system. Therefore, a single local system is not there in play.

4. Asian Equilibrium of Powers

Since Asia is divided into sub-regions; thus, the equilibrium of power among the states inside the regions, overall, Asia and with the outside balancers are different; based on the level and spheres of influence, states joint in a convergence of objectives against another group of states. This balancing has its significance in the 2020s based on the new facts and situations. We have discussed the Asian balance of power both at the regional level as well as across Asia.

4.1. Asiatic Sub-System Balancing

According to Asia Society Policy Institute (ASPI, May 31, 2021), Asia is sub-divided into five major regions as follows: South Asia, East Asia, South-East Asia, Central Asia, and West Asia. In these regions, there are balancing powers by the states of shared interests inside a region or states from the region ally with an outside region or globally. I would discuss here how in different regions, the balance of power is shaped, who are the actors, and how they play equilibrium.

- i. *Balance of Power in West Asia:* West Asia as the cradles of various civilizations has many regional dominant powers within it. These regional powers play a five-sided formation of alliances; Israel against the Islamic States, Arab states against Iran, Arab states against Arab states, ISIS and allies against nation-states, and US+ allies against traditional enemies. The nature of the balance of power in West Asia is a rigid one in which many regional powers contradict each other's influences as their span of control overlap. The main contradictory indicator is the traditional memory where each of these powers claims to be the epicenter of power. Israel is claiming a larger part of West Asia as its natural and historical lands. Arabs, Turks, and Iranians are with the same view to have large parts of Asia as their tributary. These balancings are not supposed to be consolidated in the 2020s by fueling proxy wars in the region.
- ii. *Balance of Power in Central Asia:* five nations of Central Asia have passed wavy ups and downs from 1991 to 2020; the power vacuum in the region and weak status of the countries provoked the bigger powers of the region and globally to extend their sphere of influences into Central Asia. But in the 2020s, I don't see the same condition to be continued. States in Central Asia have changed from an individual evolution to a collective identity. Currently, Central Asia has positioned as an important strategic location where internal political, social, and economic balances are set. Externally also, Central Asia created an independent identity to engage in global trends for Central Asia issues. I think, in the 2020s, Central Asia would attempt to preserve the status quo by siding Russia and China as the balancers for the survival matter; Washington has been always for the regime changes in Central Asia for a more democratic region to leverage accordingly. This policy of the US contradicts the authoritarian regimes of the region. Therefore, politically, Central Asia tilted towards Moscow but economically, try to play collectively and independently.

- iii. *Balance of Power in South Asia:* South Asia is a block formation region since the post-colonial period. The end of the first half of the 20th century was the emergence of newly independent states in South Asia where from the beginning India as the mainland of South Asia partitioned in epistemological hostilities to India and Pakistan. The artificial creation of new nations and religious clashes resulted in opposing identities for the survival of states. The internal issues of South Asian nations and threads from outside oblige the countries to form an equilibrium of power within South Asia and since the region is small in several states, with outer regions in neighboring. At the same time, the US as an outside balancer was attracted to South Asia for securing its strategic allies to stop Chinese influences. This has been the situation in South Asia till 2020. But the new rising capabilities and the gradual political dispensaries going to change the nature of power formation in South Asia in the 2020s. I believe the region is transforming towards self-reliance.
- iv. *Balance of Power in East Asia:* East Asia is significantly a different region in Asia. The states of the region have gone through the economic establishment and transformed to the potential global economy as Yamazaki states “21st is the Asian century; especially for East Asia” (Yamazaki, 1996). The most likely transformation of East Asia to an established economy and the existence of China, Japan, and balancing of the US balancing strategies have added to its peace and security. The current dynamics in the region show that the years ahead (the 2020s) may not change the scenario. I don’t think many new dynamics like; democratization process, prestige policy in Japan’s international relations, and the rise of powers like Singapore, Malaysia, and Thailand may not affect the ongoing trends. The US-Japan alliance.... And China. Washington outside and Japan inside the region are more concerned about Beijing’s economic and trading leverage and its interests in East Asia; that is why Washington has deployed more military tools to the region.
- v. *Balance of Power in South-East Asia:* Southeast Asia unlike other regions in Asia has been a ground for balancing of power by the regional and trans-regional powers. The threads for current world order and dominance of the West have arisen from this region from one hand and on the other, the new rising stars of the region are ambitious or fearing. A 3 tiers formation of power exists in this region; 1) regional alliance of small/defensive states against an ambitious outsider, 2) the interests of a trans-regional ambitious power to expand its sphere of influence, and, 3) the engagement of an outside

balancer. India, Japan, Singapore, Australia, Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, and Indonesia against Chinese dominance in Southeast Asia (Rajagopalan, 2021) is the likely balancing of the 2020s.

4.2. Asiatic All-Around Balancing

Despite the alliance formation in the sub-systems of Asia among the regional powers in which each region is defined as a single independent power ordering, there are states in Asia who play their hegemonic dominance all-around Asia. There is a contradiction and clash of Asian power's dominance against the US balancing role in the Asiatic balance of power. Russia, China, and up to a certain level India are the new giant faces of Asia who are trying to dominate Asia by extending their sphere of influence. A three-sided power formation in Asia is happening in the 2020s.

The states who maneuver politics of power formation against each other and the outside balancer are the "great powers". In International Relations though there is little ambiguity in defining a great power, but in response to the quest of what is a great power. "The answer is, on the one hand, that they are simply greater in terms of the relative resources they can bring to bear on interaction with other states, and, on the other hand, that they are prestigious due to some superior moral quality" (Neumann, 2021). Interacting capacity and moral quality are the index of great power for recognition. Although in common, "a major world power in international affairs is an economically and politically developed state that controls large territory, possesses significant energy resources and population, as well as strong military capacities and authority to influence the decision-making processes on the global scale" (Azarkievi, 2016). These are the factors upon which Russia and China within Asia and the US from outside are recognized among other states. Therefore, two Asian great powers are there to form power across the continent.

The two-sided formation of power is between Russia and China who are authoritarian; both Moscow and Beijing are in a divergence-convergence status. They side with each other to cut the influence of the US in Asia but also oppose each other's geography of influences. Especially, both are in a position to grab the socialist legacies in different lands. India is in a democratic method to use strategic culture and siding with the US as an outside balancer to oppose Chinese expansion of influence while not being afraid of Russia's sphere of influence as it does not contradict New Delhi.

4.2.1. Russia: Russia is the potential great power of the second half of the 21st century. Although some scholars like Persson and Petersson (2014), Mankoff (2016), Giusti and

Penkova (2008) put it on the other way and call Russia the superpower. President Putin is investing enormously in the goal as currently Russian foreign policy is dominated highly by the elements of “Great Power” (Tsygankov, 2005). Moscow is looking at the surrounding regions and different parts of Asia to expand its sphere of influence. In 2014, Russia seized Crimea to deliver an international message to all major competing that Russia is returning as a Great Power (Bećirbegović, 2021).

Russian political leadership has formulated three strategies to achieve the aforementioned objectives using erstwhile social imperialism/expansionism, posing the US presence in Asia and empowering Russia physically. The policy of expansionism is branded as “Putin’s Imperialism” (Saradzhyan, 2021) by using the historical leverages of the Soviets in the past Socialist territories. Also, Moscow is trying to side with the anti-US smaller states of Asia to form power to stop the US’ gradual influence. “Russia continues to have ‘one of the world’s two largest inventories of strategic weapons. Moscow plans to spend \$28 billion by 2020 to upgrade the capacity of its nuclear triad” (Brown, 2021).

In the 2020s Russia is supposed to consolidate its position by military capacity and all other non-conventional approaches. One particular capacity of Russia during peace and war is Cyber-attack capacity and strategy. Russia is capable to affect information technical effects to information-psychological effects which can impact the US and the West heavily (Brown, 2021). Although, Russia may face a price rise in the decade ahead as unlike the 2000 Moscow had faced in the 2010s (Gaddy & Ickes, 2011). Its primary sources like oil and gas may not be used as its leveraging tools but upon entering its fourth cycle of Moscow’s post-Soviet history, President Putin would invest more in power formation with other anti-US states and using China and India’s leverage at SCO and different other platforms.

4.2.2. China: China is also pretending to be a potential power/superpower of the second half of the 21st century in Asia. This self-confidence of China is emerged out of its common memory as the Chinese believe that they are a natural world power. They are proud of their civilizational achievement since ancient history. China has had a superpower position in different stages of human history; the Han dynasty, Tang dynasty, and Qing dynasty are the most powerful imperial powers of the times (Misti, 2012). Beijing is investing in China to be the next economic and technological world power.

The Chinese approach is different than Russia in positing itself as Asian power; that is convincing the US and Russia as rival and opposing powers to accept Chinese dominance in Asia. Economic ties with Washington and security ties with Russia in Shanghai Cooperation

Organization (SCO) are the tools that the Chinese play with. This is based on Chinese historical believes in harmony. For them, war and conflict among nations are the disharmonies of the world (Misti, 2012). The Chinese believe that the rise of China is complementary to the world global market and science; China as a world power would benefit the global economy by creating a huge market and substantial contribution to scientific progress (Xuetong, 2001).

In the n 2020s, China would play more practical ever in its history to achieve its goals. Recently, many changes are visible in the foreign policy of Beijing towards the world. One of these changes is foreign policy focus on nationalism, which was abandoned since Mao's socialistic revolution (Misti, 2012). This new approach challenges smaller states around China and the global powers like the United States (Friedman, 1997, p. 5). Patriotism is a step that China has taken by putting cultural approaches towards the world; China is integrating a nationalistic agenda side by side with their socialist internationalism (Harrison, 1969, p. 2).

4.2.3. The US balancing role: The United States of America has been the only outside balancer of power in Asia since the Second World War and the rise of the Cold War. The US security system and economic ties are there in all regions of Asia and almost all countries. Even those small states who are excluded from the US presence are potentially alerted by an unprecedented attack or posing danger. States like Iran, North Korea as hostile, and Turkey as independent players are somehow pressurized by Washington's shadowy presence around them. There are many reasons that the US is seeking a strategy of balancing power in Asia, justifying the unwinnable war of Afghanistan and Iraq, avoiding a clash of civilizations with the Muslim world, reasserting leadership in Asia (Muni, 2021), opposing Russia and China. All four reasons are equally important for Washington's interests.

To achieve the above-mentioned objectives, the US has drawn five principle policies in Asia in the 2020s; firstly, the US would be present in all Asian meetings, secondly, avoid security clashes with the Asian nations and instead focus on cooperation, thirdly, taking the advantage of ad hoc and formal groupings in Asia, fourthly, doing efforts for Asian trade liberalizations, fifthly, accepting the Asian institutions which exclude the US in a pluralistic way (Feigenbaum & Manning, 2021). Therefore, the US presence in Asia and accommodative approach whether by the hostile states like Iran and North Korea, or rivals like China and Russia and other smaller states who are playing independently within their sphere of influences like India, Pakistan, and Turkey.

5. Locating Afghanistan in Balance of Power

As mentioned, states formal alliances with a regional states/power or an outside balancer based on ambitions, historical memory of threats, or the geopolitics of threads; sometimes, it could be all of them to drive a state towards the formation of balance. Afghanistan has been experiencing all drivers after the disintegration of the Soviets and in the 2020s.

Since Asia is in the status of formations and anti-formations of by power politics at regional, trans-regional, and all-around Asia, Afghanistan as a state locating at unique geography, geopolitics, and ambitious tradition has to define its destiny in the 2020s. The country resides in the geography of threads; as Afghans have a hostile common memory through invasions of British India, Soviet Union, and Pakistanis on its modern history. Kabul also knows well that Afghanistan is in the geopolitics of thread; the unique location has given many ambitious regional and international powers to take advantage of.

The people of Afghanistan have a strong memory based on medieval achievements in history; The Thahiris, Safaris, Sāmānids, Ghaznavids, Ghorids, Hotaki, and Abdali's empires have given the illusion to follow expansionist objectives. All ethnic groups in the bordering areas of the country are to expand the territories to the historical realm of the medieval dynasties whom they belong. Tajiks in the north, north-east, and north-west dream to have Bukhara, Samarkand, Marv, Nishapur as part of the greater Khurasan (the medieval name of Afghanistan). Pashtuns in the South, South-east dream to attach Pakhtunkhwa region as part of greater Afghanistan. Uzbeks and Hazaras and other minorities also dream to expand Afghanistan to their ancestor's territorial realm.

Afghanistan is interacting among the regional, trans-regional, and international power formations; Kabul is in Pakistan-China power formation, Tehran and Russia formation, SCO formation, NATO formation. We have to weigh the opportunity and challenges of Afghanistan in this power formation and then to see which formation we have to side as a bandwagon strategy. Afghanistan's current all-over presence is not for the interests; Kabul is everywhere but not anywhere in practice.

It would be for the interests of Afghanistan to alliance power with the. The raw forming blocs of power surrounding Afghanistan and the internal authoritarian nature of their members could not benefit Afghanistan in the med-run. There is no stable alliance based on Asian players to stabilize and secure Afghanistan despite many efforts by the Asian state actors. The non-conventional non-state actors are sponsored by the members of the same alliance of powers. This gives a complex game around Afghanistan. Therefore, Afghanistan can join an international alliance that is stable and secure. NATO also is facing many non-conventional

threads, which oblige the Organization to expand its security built to a larger region in Asia. Cyber-attack, terrorism, drug trafficking, and continental missiles are the new thread for the NATO region (Balkhi, 2015).

Status	Afghanistan
Ambitions	Imperial Common Memory
Historical Memory of Threads	Imperial Invasions, Colonial Greed, and Neighboring Interventions.
Geopolitics of Thread	Geopolitical Location

6. Conclusion

The nature of the balance of power in Asia is based on politics of formation and anti-formation. This significance of the power formation bloc is followed by the fact that a geographic and geopolitical determinism of Asia.

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