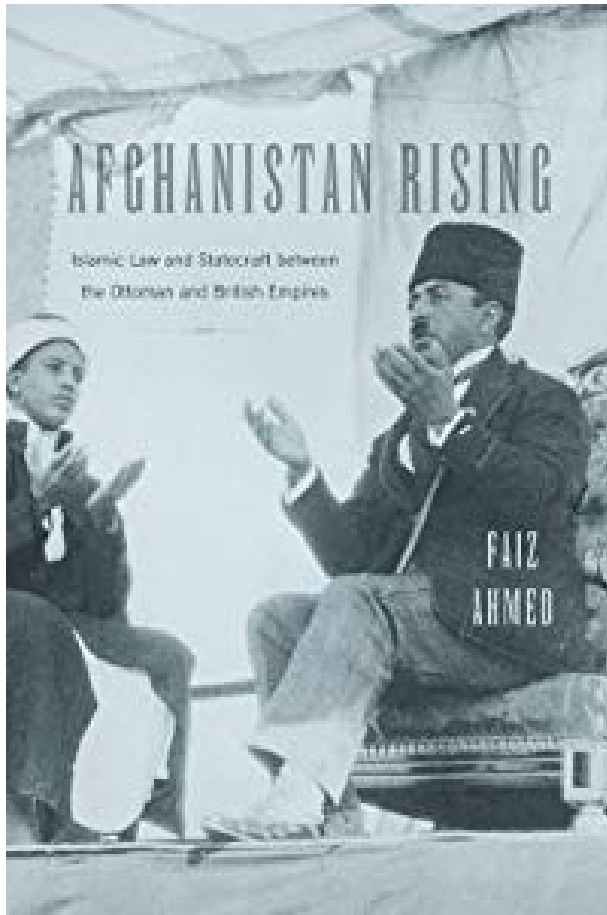


Afghanistan Rising: Islamic Law and Statecraft Between the Ottoman and British Empires



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Debunking conventional narratives of Afghanistan as a perennial war zone and the rule of law as a secular-liberal monopoly, Faiz Ahmed presents a vibrant account of the first Muslim-majority country to gain independence, codify its own laws, and ratify a constitution after the fall of the Ottoman Empire. *Afghanistan Rising* illustrates how turn-of-the-twentieth-century Kabul--far from being a landlocked wilderness or remote frontier--became a magnet for itinerant scholars and statesmen shuttling between Ottoman and British imperial domains. Tracing the country's longstanding but often ignored scholarly and educational ties to Baghdad, Damascus, and Istanbul as well as greater Delhi and Lahore, Ahmed explains how the court of Kabul attracted thinkers eager to craft a modern state within the interpretive traditions of Islamic law and ethics, or shari'a, and international norms of legality.

From Turkish lawyers and Arab officers to Pashtun clerics and Indian bureaucrats, this rich narrative focuses on encounters between divergent streams of modern Muslim thought and politics, beginning with the Sublime Porte's first mission to Afghanistan in 1877 and concluding with the collapse of Ottoman rule after World War I. By unearthing a lost history behind Afghanistan's founding national charter, Ahmed shows how debates today on Islam, governance, and the rule of law have deep roots in a beleaguered land. Based on archival

research in six countries and as many languages, *Afghanistan Rising* rediscovers a time when Kabul stood proudly as a center of constitutional politics, Muslim cosmopolitanism, and contested visions of reform in the greater Islamic world.