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POST-CONFLICT CHALLENGES AND STATE-BUILDING IN AFGHANISTAN

Ozan AKDENİZ

Supervisor
Prof. Dr. Zehra Nilüfer KARACASULU

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APPROVAL PAGE

University : Dokuz Eylül University

Graduate School : Graduate School of Social Sciences

Name and Surname : Ozan AKDENİZ

Title of Thesis : Post-Conflict Challenges and State-Building in Afghanistan

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Supervisor : Prof.Dr. Nilüfer KARACASULU

EXAMINING COMMITTE MEMBERS

Title, Name and Surname	University	Signature
Prof.Dr. Nilüfer KARACASULU	- Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi	.....
Assoc.Prof.Dr. İrem AŞKAR KARAKIR	- Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi	.....
Assoc.Prof.Dr. Ulviyye AYDIN	- Manisa Celal Bayar Üniversitesi	.....

Unanimity ( )

Majority of votes ( )

The thesis titled as "**Post-Conflict Challenges and State-Building in Afghanistan**" prepared and presented by Ozan AKDENİZis accepted and approved.

Prof. Dr. Asuman ALTAY
Müdür

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this master's thesis titled as "Post-Conflict Challenges and State-Building in Afghanistan" has been written by myself in accordance with the academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that all materials benefited in this thesis consist of the mentioned resources in the reference list. I verify all these with my honour.

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Ozan AKDENİZ

ABSTRACT

Master's Thesis

Post-Conflict Challenges and State-Building in Afghanistan

Ozan AKDENİZ

Dokuz Eylül University

Graduate School of Social Sciences

Department of International Relations

International Relations Program

The literature on state-building points to a requirement of an institution-building mission before liberal peace-building efforts. This narrative stems from the failure and some catastrophic results of such attempts in underdeveloped countries. Within the United Nations (UN) agenda, the "Brahimi Report" dated August 2000, is a milestone for such "integrated" state-building missions. However, some critiques questioned the concept for both its institutionalist reductionism and in the wider perspective the liberal peace-building's Western footprints. Similarly, this study problematizes the internationalization of state-building. In fact, it is originally an endogenous political endeavor in which a leader either builds or re-builds state institutions in the aftermath of war-like crises. However, in the contemporary model, exogenous actors intervene for such an initiative.

Depending on the Weberian legacy, policy literature also contributed a security perspective to the issue in that "failed" states diffuse international terrorism. Accordingly, the international community has initiated a post-conflict exogenous state-building in Afghanistan, in late 2001. Nevertheless, after two decades of intervention, it proved to be a state-building without building peace. Hence, this thesis aims to explore the reasons for the international community's failure to provide a critical component of state-building, that is legitimacy, as well as to envisage prospects of peace in the country's future. Arguing that the institutional reductionism fails to generate the non-material (societal) aspect of state-building, it specifically put that adaptation and centralization problems caused such failure in the Afghanistan context. Supported by the latest developments in Afghanistan, the findings of this study are noteworthy not only for the peace in the country but also for the future of state-building.

Keywords: International state-building, Afghanistan, state-society relations, legitimacy.

ÖZET

Yüksek Lisans Tezi

Çatışma Sonrası Zorluklar ve Afganistan'da Devletin İnşası

Ozan AKDENİZ

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Uluslarası İlişkiler Anabilim Dalı

Uluslarası İlişkiler Programı

Devlet inşası üzerine literatür, liberal barış inşası çalışmalarının öncesinde devlet kurumlarının tesisi misyonunun gerekliliğine işaret etmektedir. Bu husus, az gelişmiş ülkelerdeki bu tür girişimlerin başarısızlıklarından ve bazılarının felaketle sonuçlanmasından kaynaklanmaktadır. Birleşmiş Milletler'in (BM) gündeminde yer alan, Ağustos 2000 tarihli "Brahimi Raporu", bu tür "entegre" devlet kurma misyonları için bir kilometre taşıdır. Bununla birlikte, bazı eleştiriler söz konusu kavramı hem kurumsal indirgemeciliği hem de daha geniş perspektifte liberal barış inşasının Batı ayak izlerini sorgulamışlardır. Benzer şekilde, bu çalışma devlet inşasının uluslararasılaşmasını sorunsallaştırmaktadır. Özünde bu kavram, bir liderin savaş benzeri bir krizin ardından devlet kurumlarını ya baştan inşa ettiği ya da yeniden inşa ettiği iç siyaset ile ilgili çabadır. Ancak, çağdaş modelde ise, dış aktörler böyle bir girişim için müdahalede bulunmaktadırlar.

Weberci geleneğe bağlı olarak, siyasi literatür, "başarısız" devletlerin uluslararası terörizmi yaydığı gerekçesiyle meseleye güvenlik perspektifinde bir katkıda bulunmuştur. Bununla birlikte, uluslararası toplum 2001 sonlarında Afganistan'da çatışma sonrası dıştan devlet inşası başlatmıştır. Ancak, yirmi yıllık müdahalenin ardından, bu misyon barış inşa edemeden bir devlet inşa etmekle kalmıştır. Dolayısıyla bu tez, uluslararası toplumun devlet inşasının kritik bir bileşeni olan meşruiyeti sağlamadaki başarısızlığının nedenlerini araştırmayı ve ayrıca ülkenin geleceğine yönelik barış beklentilerini sunmayı amaçlamaktadır. Kurumsal indirgemeciliğin devlet inşasının maddi olmayan (toplumsal) yönünü sağlamakta başarısız olduğunu savunan çalışma, özellikle adaptasyon ve merkezileşme sorunlarının Afganistan bağlamında bu tür bir başarısızlığa neden olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Afganistan'daki son

gelişmelerin de desteklediği bu çalışmanın bulguları sadece ülkedeki barış için değil, aynı zamanda devlet inşasının geleceği için de dikkate değerdir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Uluslararası devlet inşası, Afganistan, devlet-toplum ilişkileri, meşruiyet.

POST-CONFLICT CHALLENGES AND STATE-BUILDING IN AFGHANISTAN

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ABBREVIATIONS

AMF	Afghan Military Forces
ANA	Afghan National Army
ANDS	Afghan National Development Strategy
ANDSF	Afghan National Defense and Security Forces
ANP	Afghan National Police
APRP	Afghan Peace and Reintegration Program
ARTF	Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund
ATA	Afghan Transitional Authority
CFR	Council on Foreign Relations
CLJ	Constitutional Loya Jirga
COIN	Counter-Insurgency
CSTC-A	Combined Security Transition Command–Afghanistan
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration
ELJ	Emergency Loya Jirga
EU	European Union
et al.	and others
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNI	Gross National Income
HCNR	High Council for National Reconciliation
HKIA	Hamid Karzai International Airport
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IDPS	International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding
IGO	Intergovernmental Organizations
INCAF	International Network on Conflict and Fragility
IR	International Relations
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
JEMB	Joint Electoral Management Body
LOTFA	Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NTM-A	NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan
ODA	Official Development Assistance

OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OFS	Operation Freedom's Sentinel
p.	Page
PDPA	People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
pp.	Pages
RSM	Resolute Support Mission
SIGAR	Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction
SNTV	Single Non-Transferable Vote
SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary-General
SSR	Security Sector Reform
TAA	Train Advise and Assist
TAAC-C	Train Advise Assist Command-Capital
UCTV	University of California Television
UKAID	United Kingdom Aid Direct
UN	United Nations
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNCA	United Nations Constitutional Assistance
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNSG	United Nations Secretary-General
UNSMA	United Nations Special Mission in Afghanistan
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WW II	Second World War

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INTRODUCTION

Despite the two decades of Western intervention, today Afghanistan is still yet to be stabilized. As of the time of writing this thesis, there is an ongoing conflict for power. The state is not the only authority that uses violence, nor can it guarantee the security of its citizens. On 9 March 2020, the international community witnessed simultaneous inaugurations of two Presidents in Afghanistan. This crisis was only solved when Abdullah Abdullah, the challenger candidate, accepted a higher position than his former one, waiving the presidency. In fact, the same episode between the two took place back in 2014 when they did not take results in the same attitude, and thus, after the second round, the international community had to intervene to broker a deal. At the end of the day, despite the international community's ongoing efforts and the latest power-sharing agreement between the two candidates, the instability and insecurity of Afghanistan make it the second most refugee cultivating country after Syria (Amnesty International, 2019). Similarly, according to the Global Peace Index, it is the least peaceful country in the world (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2020).

The conflict in Afghanistan is not recent. The country has been suffering conflicts since the Soviet invasion in late 1979. Since then, many governments have been established, and yet violence has remained. Afghanistan's problems not only stem from its political history. They are regional at the core. Bridging Central Asian steppes to the fertile Indian subcontinent, the country sits at an invaluable strategic position in South Asia. As such, many Afghan leaders strove for substantial state formation. Historically, they had to deal with both the multi-ethnic tribal Afghan community and the surrounding great powers. During the 19th century, the Great Game between Tsarist Russia and the British Raj in India and the subsequent Cold War between two superpowers of the 20th century had substantial effects on Afghanistan. Thus, to elaborate on Afghan state-building it is necessary to measure both local and international factors.

This thesis analyzes the post-conflict state-building in Afghanistan that started in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks. State-building is a political process of either establishing state institutions or reconstructing them typically in a post-conflict environment. Thus, it is mainly under the perspective of the political science. Indeed, as a conceptual and theoretical base of state-building, the literature refers to Charles Tilly's study of "Coercion, Capital, and the European States, AD 990-1990" in which

with a historical perspective, the author elaborates on the European state-formation. In this context, since a state-builder, typically a leader, mobilizes required resources, state-building is an endogenous process in its nature. However, in its contemporary form, state-building has become an exogenous one in which the international community intervenes to stabilize conflict-ridden states in the Third World. Within this context, state-building is a matter of the International Relations (IR) discipline. Thus, in the academic and policy literature there are conflicting views upon the extent to which tenets of the state-building can be provided exogenously. Accordingly, this research explores the viability of exogenous state-building efforts with the case study of Afghanistan. The rest of the introduction chapter covers the following: the problem, purpose and research questions, design, context, and conceptual framework, the significance of the research, and an overview of the following chapters.

The problem here is, although state-building is an endogenous process, to what extent an exogenous state-building intervention would be able to cater to the local dynamics of state-building. Both policy and academic scholars from the liberal school of IR base their argument on the liberal peace theory and its reflection in the policy documents of liberal peace-building. In this context, it is argued that the international community can provide the necessary components of state-building. Furthermore, by the 2000s there also appeared a “responsibility” to intervene in the United Nations (UN) structure. Thus, it can be argued that the international community and various scholars from the Liberal school tend to technocratic reductionism, in the way they focus on state institutions and functions. It was Max Weber who attributed the state a sole legitimacy of using coercive force, in a speech at Munich University in 1918 (Gerth and Mills, 2014). Building on this legal use of force, the literature of state-building focused on providing security as the prominent “function” of the modern state. Accordingly, if any state is not perceived as competent to provide this, it was argued to be a “failed” one. This was the moment the international community stepped in to “fix” it (Ghani and Lockhart, 2008).

In his study regarding the formation of European states, the three main components put by Tilly were: coercion, capital, and legitimacy. Accordingly, the state-building literature is built upon these components. It was argued that providing security by strengthening the army, and similarly providing foreign aid to support the economy would create the required legitimacy of the government in the eyes of the people. So that, prioritizing security-providing efforts, the research and studies focused on building a Weberian type of state. However, few studies have examined

the societal aspects of state in state-building. In this aspect, this study focuses on the significance of the non-material components of state-building. To analyze such a concept, post-conflict state-building in Afghanistan is selected as a case study. Indeed, Afghanistan is a prominent example since the international intervention will have lasted for literally two decades as the President of the United States (US) Joe Biden has recently announced that the international intervention would end on the symbolic date of September 11. Besides, the latest developments due to the inclusion of the insurgent group, the Taliban, in a recurrent state-building effort, provide essential evidence regarding the societal facts of state-building.

The purpose of this thesis is to explore the reasons for international state builders' failure to provide the societal aspect of state-building in the post-conflict environment of Afghanistan. Upon these findings, the thesis also aims to envisage prospects for future state-building and substantial peace in the country. Thus, through a case study of the international state-building process in the post-conflict era, this study will fill the gap in post-conflict state-building literature by elaborating on the neglected aspect of state-society relations. In this context, the main research question is: why Afghanistan is still not a stabilized democracy after two decades of international intervention as a state-building mission?

The western intervention failed to achieve the stabilization of Afghanistan. Given the astronomical amounts of money, time, and human lives, the reason behind this failure is worth studying upon. To find the answer to the main research question, the concept of state-building is investigated. Thus, the thesis first asked, what is state-building? And how did the concept take its latest interventionist version? The literature shows that there are various terms to be defined and clarified. Scholars often use the terms: nation-building, state-building, and further peace-building interchangeably. Sometimes discourse of scholars and policymakers indicates their conceptualization of the term. In this regard, after specifying the meaning of the term, the thesis has applied the theoretical and conceptual view to the Afghan case. However, before this, the dynamics of Afghan state-building history have to be delineated to compare previous and current projects. Hence, the thesis asked, what are the dynamics of Afghan state-building? Indeed, in a multi-ethnic environment, many Afghan state-builders have applied various indoctrinations to consolidate their power and attribute legitimacy to their rule. Besides, the regional and other international actors also affected the process. After reviewing two and a half-century of Afghan political history, local and international dynamics of Afghan state-building are identified. The following

questions are posed: what are the challenges for international state-building in Afghanistan? And how (if ever) did the international community cope with them? In analyzing the post-conflict international state-building mission in Afghanistan, a dual-track method is pursued. The technical problems related to the technocratic approach of institution building in all three aspects: political, military, and economic are investigated. Those technical problems represent the shortcomings of the state-building mission and further provide hints for any other state-building implications. In the second section, in addition, the theoretical implication and inconsistencies of the mission are elaborated.

A huge literature including secondary data collected from academic studies and most important primary data about the policy documents collected from the official websites of relevant institutions are used. Accordingly, this desk research is based on the qualitative research method. In addition, supplementary information from interviews conducted by other reporters and the latest developments from both regional and international newspapers with various views are also used in data analysis. Besides, minor statistical data from official websites are occasionally gathered in tables and figures to measure the success of policies. In this aspect, the thesis holds an eclectic approach.

The conceptual and theoretical framework of this thesis involves an analysis of state-building. State-building is not a new concept in social sciences. It is rather an older phenomenon. State-building can be pursued in either of the two ways: endogenous and exogenous. On the one hand, endogenous state-building is the activity in which a leader who is strong enough to consolidate the required authority; be it either traditional, charismatic, or legal/rational (Weber, 1964), maintains a contract with the society in a designated territory to the extent of retaining the mobilizing abilities of coercion, capital, and legitimacy (Tilly, 1990). The contract has an extroverted character since it obstructs foreign invasions. On the other hand, in exogenous state-building, the ruler maintains the contract with the external powers and thus it has an introverted character in the way that it obstructs domestic threats. In this view, the latter resembles a “postcolonial pattern” (Rubin, 2006: 178). Similarly, the contemporary model of state-building is exogenous too, however, since the 1990s it also has become international.

International state-building’s flag was raised in the UN structure with the “Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations” which was presented to the then Secretary-General of the United Nations (UNSG) Kofi Annan in August 2000.

Offering a rearrangement of international interventions in which the UN would be responsible for not just introducing peace but also implementing it, the report pointed to the need for “integrated missions” (the United Nations, 2000). The necessity of such a report was triggered by often failures and in some cases catastrophic results of Peace-building missions of the UN in the global south that is suffering intra-state wars, throughout the 1990s. Indeed, failures of such missions also resonated in the academic literature. It was argued by some scholars that liberal peace-building must be preceded by institution-building efforts to provide the expected liberal result. Such efforts thus would bring peace to the “failed” states (Fukuyama, 2004a).

Other scholars mainly from the critical school of IR approached skeptically to those arguments. Some scholars perceived those interventions as the contemporary form of imperialistic intentions. To elaborate on the argument, some others deconstructed the concept of “peace” in the first place, since the liberal peace theory was the very idea behind the state-building. However, with the lack of success in results, both the international community and the academic literature shifted towards the local needs. The “local turn” however has yet to make a substantial contribution to the viability of international state-building (Mac Ginty and Richmond, 2013). Thus, such hybrid approaches have steered the state-building wheel towards the non-state authorities (Lake, 2020). In this aspect, this thesis argues that in post-conflict Afghanistan the international community’s institutional reductionism has failed to generate the societal aspect of state-building.

Afghanistan case is significant for the state-building literature. Indeed, the case has become the identical state-building effort of the international community. Many state-building actors have been active since the mission’s inception. Their intervention started in late 2001 and as of the time of writing this thesis, the international soldiers are barely leaving the country incrementally. This does not necessarily mean a victory nor a successful mission. State-building has to occur endogenously, and the peace assuring this should rather be means, not an end. Afghan case is also identical in the way that it showed how not to deliver legitimacy to a state. The Taliban insurgency has been ongoing since the international coalition ousted them from Kabul in mid-November 2001. Yet, the insurgency is strong enough to endure the hybrid coercion of the international soldiers and those of the Afghan Government in Kabul. Thus, the Afghan case is important to show to what extent international state-building can be successful. Accordingly, the findings of this study are definitive for the future of international state-building since they contribute to the

state-building literature by elaborating on the latest developments due state-society relationship in Afghanistan.

Since international efforts in the case study have been active for approximately two decades, many actors have been involved in various types of activities. Led by the US, the international community has both multilateral and bilateral effects. Other non-governmental organizations are also still active. Specifically, this study has focused on the UN and its activities as a state-builder. The reason behind this is that the whole process started with the UN's initiative and was coordinated by various special representatives of the UN Secretary-General. The thesis also has discussed other actors and their effects on the process relatively from a wider perspective. Even though the scope of the research is the post-conflict period, the time between the establishment of the Interim Administration in December 2001 and today, the thesis has particularly highlighted the period between 2001 to 2006 since that was the time duration covered by the UN-brokered peace deal in the first place. Another limitation of the study is that although it aims to be definitive for the future of state-building, it accepts that every country has its political context and peculiar dynamics. Thus, there can be no one size fit all checklist for state-building, particularly for legitimacy, to be implemented in other missions.

This thesis consists of three chapters. In chapter one, the theoretical and conceptual framework has been introduced. The literature about state-building is reviewed and the concept and its three main components are defined. Besides, after summarizing the critiques, state-building's future is discussed. In chapter two, to identify the dynamics of Afghan state-building, two and a half-century of Afghan political history is elaborated. In chapter three, the thesis investigates how the international state-building mission has been conducted in the Afghan context. In this regard, the thesis analyzes to what extent three different types of state-building activities were compatible with the local and international dynamics of Afghan state-building. Besides, the thesis describes the post-conflict challenges that are peculiar to the Afghan context and measures their hindrance vis-à-vis the UN-led state-building efforts.

CHAPTER ONE
STATE-BUILDING: A CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, the thesis elucidates the concept of state-building and its theoretical background. State-building is a matter of politics. It requires a state-builder, typically a leader, to mobilize the necessary elements within designated borders for either building a state literally or making large-scale reforms and reconstruction. However, in the contemporary world, state-building has been internationalized and thus has become a matter of the IR discipline. Since the end of the Cold War, to some extent, the international arena progressed into a collaborative environment which was enough for the international community to intervene and align some other states with the rest of the world.

The first section demonstrates the milestones to the intervention. Then, the term state-building and its main tenets are defined. After setting the theoretical framework this chapter includes the critiques and transformation of international state-building efforts.

1.1. FOUNDATIONS OF INTERVENTION

International state-building is interventionist in its nature. It lies at the core of the liberal international world order. Thus, those efforts aim to build a liberal state. Moreover, to understand their purpose, it is necessary to deconstruct the concept of state and its functions. The literature on the liberal state is rooted in the Weberian approach to the state. So, it attributes some specific functions to it. Accordingly, if a state “fails” to deliver or has difficulties delivering those functions, the international community steps in.

The international community is a vague term. After the end of the bipolar world order, the term became widely used to delineate the UN with its resolutions. However, it can be argued that the term is closer to representing the West, and their interests. Within this context, it is argued in this section that international state-building is prone to serve the West’s interests. Similarly, to elaborate on this proximity, the liberal peace theory and the UN’s peacebuilding activities are also analyzed.

1.1.1. The Liberal State's Formation, Its Functions and Scope

The territorial state, or in Max Weber's words, "the modern state" (Weber, 2019: 137) was born after the 1648 Westphalia Treaty which put an end to the Thirty Years' War in Europe. Weber defined the state as "… a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory" (Gerth and Mills, 2014: 78). In this definition, instrumentalizing the force, Weber creates a link between the state and order against anarchy and disorder. Durkheim, however, contributes a societal aspect, as he impressively points out that the state constitutes the nervous system of society, in other words; the brain (Durkheim, 1992). To show this link between the society and the state it is worth quoting his own words: "Strictly speaking, the state is the very organ of social thought" (Ibid. 51). From these ground-breaking arguments, we can infer that it is the Westphalian/Weberian type of state which emphasizes security and legitimate use of power in the IR discipline (Richmond, 2014).

Another significance of this territorial, "modern state" is the very basic concept of "sovereignty", upon which IR was to be built. Stephen Krasner interprets sovereignty onto 2 basic concepts: "territory" and "autonomy" (Krasner, 1995: 115). According to him, the former is the stage in which the authority of the state comes true. However, the point where he calls attention to in his studies is the latter, which stands for the state's enjoyment as the sole performer, at least for the time being. Jackson argues that there are two types of sovereignty: negative and positive (Jackson, 1990). On the one hand, "negative sovereignty" stands for the legal autonomy on a designated territory and acknowledged title which is given to it generally after decolonization. It is solid and at rest. On the other hand, "positive sovereignty" is not just legal but also substantial, generally attributed to developed and strong international actors who supply relatively good conditions to their citizens (Ibid. 26-27). His illustration is useful in that it shows why these "quasi-states" aren't capable of fulfilling this positive dimension of sovereignty and how this relates to the decolonization following the Second World War (WW II) (Ibid. 21). Other authors also shed light on this issue with a more actional attitude which arouses an appetite to fill it; the "sovereignty gap" (Ghani and Lockhart, 2008: 23).

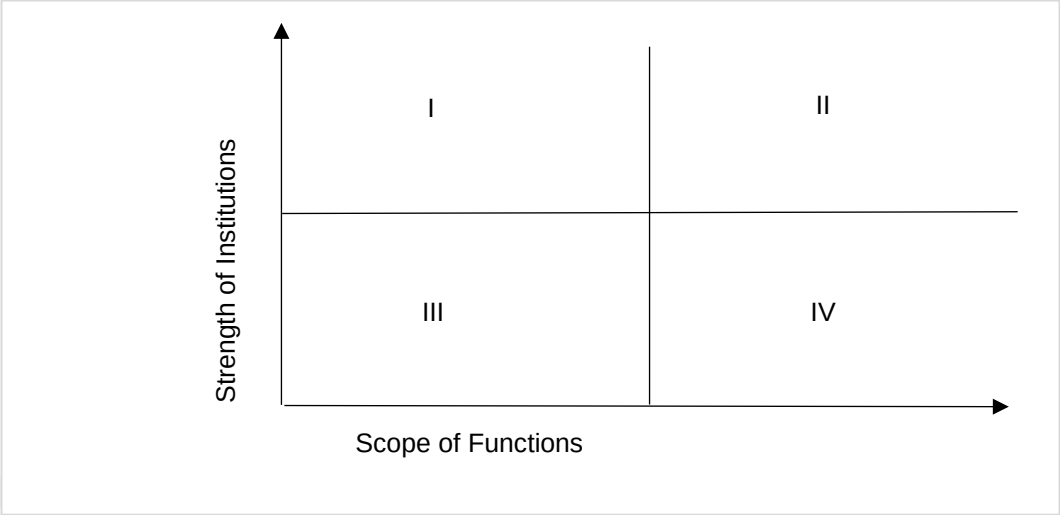
Since the nature of the relationship between the rulers and the ruled has changed as a part of the socio-political transformation throughout the years, the Westphalian state has evolved until today. Taking this to the next step, however,

Krasner postulates that compromise of Westphalian type of state is not only inevitable but also necessary (Krasner, 1995). Timothy Sisk's argument promotes this debut as it points to a need for a re-conceptualized twenty-first-century state in which sovereignty is shared internationally and that can satisfy the global needs and overcome the transnational challenges (Sisk, 2013).

Understanding just the concept of "state" would fall down on determining the approach to state-building. One must analyze characteristics, functions, scope, strength, and even the sociology of the concept of state at stake. Ghani and Lockhart claim that for the order of the international system it is crucial for its main element; the state to fulfill its functions effectively, regarding its stakeholders; the citizens (Ghani and Lockhart, 2008: 26). This point of view has a strong margin for international state-building interventions for the sake of liberal international world order. Thus, the functions of the state gain significant importance for state-builders. Concisely, Timothy Sisk designates four basic and rather simple functions for the historical and modern state: autonomy, which he uses in terms of sovereignty, authority, as the only perpetrator of law-enforcement or violence, capacity for delivering the services, and finally legitimacy, official entitlement to rule (Sisk, 2013). Similar to Sisk's point of view, Andrew Heywood, compiles five features for it: sovereignty, territory, collectiveness, legitimation, and coercion (Heywood, 2013).

Determining the functions and duties of the state opens up another discussion though; how far can a state go and how powerful should it be? In his widely discussed pivotal study in the discussion of state-building, "the imperative of state-building", Francis Fukuyama creates a chart so that he can illustrate the institutional/state capacity in terms of scope and strength. Adopting a Weberian approach Fukuyama argues that state strength (capacity) stands for the ability of the state's enforcement of laws, whereas the scope is the government's involvement in the everyday life of the people (Fukuyama, 2004a: 22-23). In this four-region figure, the welfare states are in the first region like the US and New Zealand which have limited scope and a stronger capacity of institutions (Ibid. 23). On the other hand, states from Africa would rather be in the third section. In his chart, it is obvious to see the justification of Fukuyama's neoliberal stance.

Figure 1: Institutional Strength Versus Functional Scope of the State



Source: Fukuyama, 2004a.

He points out that privatization in the context of liberalization would do more harm than good if the state lacks the capacity in terms of institutional strength otherwise that it could turn to give way to tunneling and renting, giving the examples of Russian Oligarchs (Ibid. 28). So, we understand that Fukuyama takes a side with a small but effective state, while he emphasizes the importance of the correct sequence of reforms (Ibid. 26).

1.1.2. Strong, Weak, Failed and Collapsed States

The concept of “state failure” was introduced to the literature in the post-Cold War period. It refers to the states’ disability to perform the basic functions of the states, and catch up with the Western states (Call, 2008: 1492). Ghani and Lockhart adopt a liberal view of the failing of states in the third world. They posit that the relationship between the state and its “stakeholder” which is citizen, is rather dynamic than static (Ghani and Lockhart, 2008: 112). When states fail to adopt this dynamic “equilibrium”, violence occurs, and it is the citizens who suffer most from this dysfunctional state (Ibid. 112). From this point of view, it is possible to assert that Ghani and Lockhart define a failed state as being not able to comply with contemporary functions of the state.

This liberal approach of state failure is introduced with a security-oriented one by Fukuyama who argues that after the Cold War, the existence of weak and failing

states became more visible in the third world. Yet he posits that those problems were rather local in Bosnia, Somalia, and East Timor, etc. until the 9/11 (Fukuyama, 2004a). According to him, the attacks made it a worldwide strategic problem and became a security concern of which suggests that weak states needed to be dealt with. Supporting his ideas Rotberg argues that, in the old eras in which there was less interconnectivity, the problem of weak and failed states was less and even no concern at all for the remaining parts of the world, however, today their problems leap their border and become a strategic problem for all (Rotberg, 2003). In line with these arguments, Krasner and Pascual tell us that weak states and the failed ones are in such a global world are a security threat both for the West and the world itself (Krasner and Pascual, 2005). Further, they give the symptoms of the collapse of such states which are extreme poverty, noticeable unbalanced distribution of income, weak and insufficient institutions so that in such situations the international community should take preemptive actions (Ibid. 155).

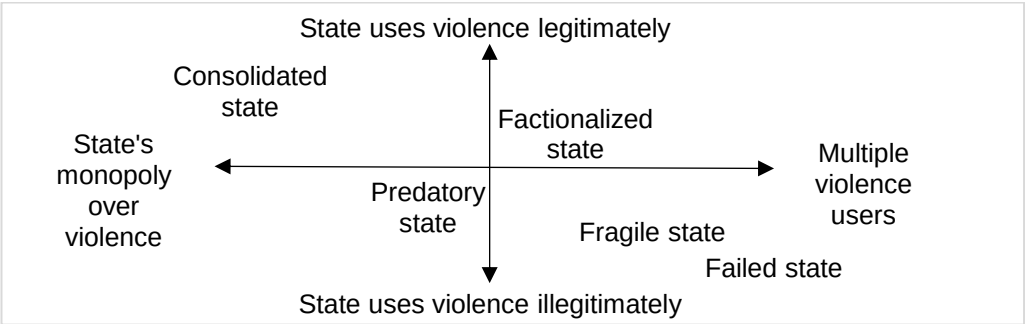
There are other categorizations of state if they are unable to build up. Rotberg classifies nation-states into four categories: strong states, weak states, failed states, and collapsed states. He defines being a strong state as being a good performer of delivering public goods and services to its citizens including security from internal or external violence, providing a promising just economic development and rule of law (Rotberg, 2003). From his point of view, they are generally nation-states like Finland, Denmark, the US, and most of the European states. The indication he accepts is high grades from the organizations and databanks like Transparency International, Human Development Index, Freedom House, and competitiveness level in Word Economic Forums. He mentions that there are approximately sixty states which can meet these requirements. Weak states, on the other hand, contain a high level of tensions between their constituents either ethnic or in another way (Ibid.; 2013; Ghani and Lockhart, 2008: 145). Weak states partially or cannot completely do the above-mentioned performance to their citizens and even prey on their liberty because its main drive is no more its citizens. This causes migration, extreme levels of poverty, and finally conflict (Ghani and Lockhart, 2008: 146). This performance is interpreted as “political goods” by Rotberg (Rotberg, 2013). Many (eighty to ninety he mentions) states are in this category; from Fiji to Papua New Guinea, from Central America to Africa (Ibid.). However, some states are difficult to assess as they conceal their status especially under the directorate of authoritarian regimes like North Korea and Syria before the civil war. In such states, the line between weakness and failure is rather

obscure. Although these findings of “weak” states harmonize with the data of the Fragile States Index, the latter appears to name those as “fragile” states, which is too “gentle” according to Rotberg (Ibid.). The Fund for Peace, when publishing this “fragility” index uses data from the effectiveness of security apparatus to the legitimacy and from public services to external intervention and escape of human capital. With these data, it colors the world map from blue to red, for “strong” and “collapsed” states respectively (Fund for Peace, 2020).

State failure occurs when the official government (or a despot) loses to be the only purveyor of announced violence. Other actors, often stemming from the prevalent unrest caused by the reasons mentioned above, initiate an armed rebellion against the central authority. This is the moment where the Weberian state is undermined. According to Rotberg, this revolt is not the cause but the symptom of state failure. He characterizes them with civil wars and extreme unrest like that in Syria after 2011, Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, Yemen, and Libya (Rotberg, 2013). In such a situation, it is wiser to fight against the illness rather than its symptoms, unlike most dictators do. In such states, state institutions become dysfunctional, rule of law is undermined and only a small, privileged group is provided state’s services from which the authority’s power comes (Rotberg, 2003).

States collapse in the most extreme situation when the rule of law is captured and becomes that of the strong, namely warlords that provide seminal political goods (Ibid.). This strength is hard to measure since there is no more authority. Rotberg argues that this form is the extreme type of the failed version which creates a power vacuum in which there are no more citizens, instead, they become inhabitants (Ibid.). In such situations, in the borders of the state, there is no government and governance like that of Sierra Leone, Somalia, Tajikistan, and Liberia (Rotberg, 2013).

Figure 2: State’s Failure and Its Relationship with the Use of Violence



Source: Lake, 2016: 33.

From a “consolidated” stage to the “collapse”, Lake explains the stages of how a consolidated state can end up as a failed state. His illustration is influential in that in his Weberian portray of the state’s consolidation, Lake argues states can turn out to be a predatory state if they use the violence illegitimately, which can attract a wide reaction like that of the Arab Spring and then end up as a failed state (University of California Television [UCTV], 2013). Also, he explains how a factionalized state like Afghanistan can fail in the same way (Ibid.).

On the other hand, these arguments of labeling states are limited as they look to the concept of state from a fixed perspective which is the monopoly of violence, and some specific requirements to cater for. Illustrating this, some argue that the discourse of “failed state” is of less use than thought. According to Call, failed state discourse is a “fallacy” as it is a monolithic term that tries to embrace a wide variety of problems relating to war-torn states (Call, 2008). He postulates six problems that “failed state” discourse can bring along: overdue aggregation of states with different characteristics, copy-paste prescriptions, alleged democracy, the presumption of “stateness” equals to peace, imposing Western values, and denying the west’s role in the first place (Ibid. 1494-1500). He concludes every war-torn state in the third world has its characteristics and such a standardization like a “failed” state should be abandoned because it represents the West’s only security-oriented interests which gained over attention especially after the 9/11 (Ibid.). In this context, Call argues that the capacity building of the alleged “failed states” in some situations can only make it worse than doing good if a problem like corruption is already rooted in the institutions meant to be strengthened (Ibid.). So, it can be argued that failed, weak, or fragile state discourse is a justification of external intervention (Goodhand and Sedra, 2013: 242).

1.1.3. International Community and Intervention

The international community led by the US plays the leading role in intervention. After the end of the Cold War, the international community’s interventions have increasingly taken place all around the world. Simultaneously, intra-state wars also became prevalent. Globalization and enlarging the arms bazaar further helped the spillover of those wars among states. However, the changing context of the Cold War’s end, in which ideological barrier and its hostility were removed constituted a cooperative environment against common threats to human security. Accordingly, the then UNSG Boutros Boutros-Ghali mentioned this issue and

drew attention to the need for wider “post-conflict peace-building” efforts in his report titled “An Agenda for Peace, Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peacekeeping” in June 1992 (Boutros-Ghali, 1992). He introduced new terms that would specify the phases of various peace-building efforts in the global South. From South Asia to the Caribbean, from Africa to the Balkans, with this “Agenda for Peace” under the leadership of the UN, Peace Operations have intensified to provide peace for democracy efforts in conflictual territories (Balthasar, 2017).

Along with the UN, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and the European Union (EU), and some other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have been actively taking roles within this context. In line with this trend, after the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty’s 2001 report of “the Responsibility to Protect” which was adopted later in the UN Summit of 2005, Member states accepted to take actions if some states become unable or unwilling to protect and watch the rights and security of its citizens (United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect, n.d.). In this context, the role of the “international community” is to build liberal democratic states with a functioning market economy under the paradigm of liberal internationalism or neo-liberalism, and it is possible to see this very footprint of the international intervention in the post-Cold War era (Balthasar, 2017: 476). Today, approximately 110,000 peacekeeping personnel serve in 13 countries all around the world (United Nations Peacekeeping, n.d.).

Even though Peace Operations have intensified after the end of the Cold War, civil wars and conflicts have never been peculiar to this era, rather it was a phenomenon that already existed during the Cold War. Thus, it was the trending proliferation of the Peace Operations that made civil wars obvious indicating “neo-trusteeship” (Fearon and Laitin, 2004: 10). So, after the end of the Cold War, there is a clear change in the UN’s attitude to the state’s sovereignty. This changing trend is also obvious from the US president George H. W. Bush’s “the new world order” speech of 1991.

Even though the term “international community” is a part of the UN Resolutions and adopted as rhetoric in political speeches, its radius is ambiguous (Zaum, 2007: 8). Referencing former UNSG, Kofi Annan’s herald speech regarding the international community of 1999, Zaum argues that there must be two elements in a global community: interdependence and common values (Ibid. 9). Bearing a resemblance to Hedley Bull’s solidaristic “international society”, and Max Weber’s theory of

“associative social relationships” Zaum posits that the goal of the international community is to develop moral common norms for intervention (Ibid. 10-11). That said, he finds no such common international values in the UN and NATO-led interventions of East Timor, Kosovo, and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Thus, the “international community” is “both rhetoric and reality” (Bliesemann de Guevara and Kühn, 2011: 148). The term is a stretchy phenomenon that may exist either in practical politics or in just a discursive one (Ibid.). But in general, the term has two aspects: one is the “normative” aspect which stands for common moral values and the second is the “descriptive” aspect that points out “the west” (Ibid. 138). In this way, the “international community” becomes an instrument of legitimization (Ibid. 139). So that the descriptive aspect of the international community is prone to undermine the normative aspect when realist terms of power politics and interests of “the west” are considered.

1.1.4. Liberal Peace Theory and Peacebuilding

Democratic Peace Theory, the central thought of liberal internationalism which has its roots in Immanuel Kant’s “Perpetual Peace”, posits liberal democratic states do not go to war against one another. Opposed to the idea that perceptions of security and power relations solely determine international relations, Doyle argued those perceptions were also subject to change by tenets and institutions of liberalism. In this view, liberal rights of property, equality, self-expression, and representation produce a constitutional structure that further brings mature conditions of a correlative non-aggression between liberal states while deteriorating relations vis-a-vis non-liberals (Doyle, 1983). To promote this, Owen built a historical mechanism in %75 of which liberalism helped prevent war between democracies, causing a near miss. Except for 1803-1812 Anglo-American relations, ideologically there was a “fellow” narrative that diluted war reasons and institutionally that of “structure” by which citizens with free speech and elections matter on peaceful governance (Owen, 1994).

The theory is yet to be convincing though. It is challenged by some other scholars since its explanatory power seems to be weak (Layne, 1994). Layne demonstrates a contradiction by four crisis cases in which liberal great powers pulled back from war’s brink, not because of their liberal domestic structures. Rather, it was either power politics or a matter of advantage on the field that caused this. Even though, Doyle points to the significance of crises that did not arise in the first place,

rather than resolved (Russett et al., 1995), democratic peace theory's empirical data are limited to a small universe (Layne, 1994). Thus, even though the thesis seems true on individual examples, the exact reasons for such a narrative among democracies aren't clearly and specifically put.

Even though the UN peace operations for the conflicts date back to its establishment years, only after the end of the Cold War, the UN started to enjoy the opportunity to fulfill its "original" duty mentioned in its charter: "social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom" (Boutros-Ghali, 1992: 2). Thus, to ensure the proper human rights, justice, security, peace and eradicate the sources of conflict, the UNSG has introduced the "peacemaking" and the "post-conflict peacebuilding" concepts along with the definitions of other relevant terms; "preventive diplomacy", and "peace-keeping" in the 1992 Agenda.

> *post-conflict peace-building- action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict. Preventive diplomacy seeks to resolve disputes before violence breaks out; peacemaking and peace-keeping are required to halt conflicts and preserve peace once it is attained. If successful, they strengthen the opportunity for post-conflict peace-building, which can prevent the recurrence of violence among nations and peoples* (Ibid. 6).

In this aspect, under the UN body, the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations were established in the same year. From actions to prevent conflicts in the first place to peace negotiations, deployments of troops, and wider support structures, it was a comprehensive commitment. Thus, there is a complementary relation between "liberal peace" and "peace-building" terms. Peacebuilders seek to build a peaceful environment in which a liberal market economy can run effectively. Through this democracy promotion to the third world, "shared sovereignty" advocates perceive an "opportunity" regarding multilateral response to the security threats (Krasner and Pascual, 2005: 158).

That said, not everyone is certain about the good intentions of liberal peace-building. For some, it is an "empire in denial" (Chandler, 2006) while for some others, liberal peacebuilding is just a "myth" (Selby, 2013: 81). Latter argues, peace-building studies are liberalized by war-ending efforts' alienation (Ibid. 80). Accordingly, the international community may carry out peace-building through agreements and negotiations, but not necessarily interventionist policies (Ibid.). Furthermore, in this mentality, contemporary interventions are not consistent let alone liberal (Ibid). We can infer from this that the other motivations behind interventionist actions like inter-state relations and geopolitics are poorly researched (Goodhand and Sedra, 2013;

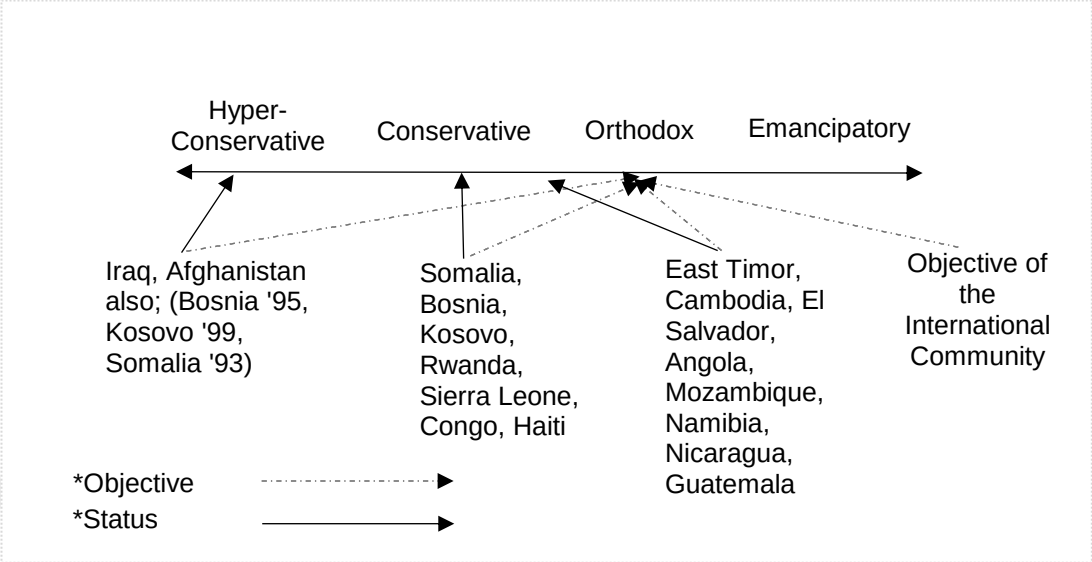
Selby, 2013). One can understand from these arguments that Liberalism and Liberal Peace are overstated in the liberal peacebuilding debate, and they are not the same thing (Goodhand and Sedra, 2013; Richmond, 2006; Selby, 2013).

Furthermore, Liberal Peace has become “a manifest” in almost all of the peacebuilding interventions of the “international community” after the Cold War (Mac Ginty, 2010: 578). According to Mac Ginty, the “democratic peace” assumption has been “fetishized” in the argument of peacebuilding so that the interventions are also accompanied by the promotion of democracy (Ibid. 579). Thus, he goes on to say that there are three components of liberal peace: free market, democracy, and state-building (Mac Ginty; 2010), to which Richmond adds; rule of law, human rights, and development (Richmond, 2006: 292).

To meet the standards of Liberal democracy, however, Paris and Sisk point to the need for a specific effort by which subject states are becoming ready for democracy, a concept they were never introduced before. Finding a solution to this, Paris describes a formula to the liberal peacebuilding efforts: “strategic liberalization” (Paris, 1997: 81). According to him, there are five elements of it. Gradual democratization, political moderation, growth-focused fiscal adjustments, central coordination of peacebuilding process, and finally more down-to-earth timetables (Ibid. 82). Thus, Paris’s strategic liberalization offers that free market and democracy for the war-torn states comes after the required institutional/capacity-building, or known as “state-building”, the linchpin of Liberal peacebuilding (Paris, 1997; Paris and Sisk, 2009).

Because state-building has been accepted as an ingredient of the wider peacebuilding agenda, the question is would it be useful to de-construct the concept of peace in the first place, upon which the state-building has been in the making for two decades? Focusing on peace and conflict studies, Oliver Richmond posits that, in the normative framework of peace, there are four main strands: institutional, constitutional, civil peace, and lastly the peace of victors (Richmond, 2006: 293). On this framework, Richmond argues that contemporary liberal peace is an amalgam of them all (Ibid.). It is victors’ because it rises on the shoulders of the global powers, it is institutional because of the UN and other International Financial Institutions, it is constitutional because of the discourse of democracy, free market, and cosmopolitan values, it is civil, because of the international society, and under this framework, Richmond names the liberal peace as “peace as governance” (Ibid. 299).

Figure 3: Models of Liberal Peace on the Making



Source: Richmond, 2006: 303.

Moreover, he argues that there are also four “graduations” of the liberal peace project: hyper-conservative, conservative, orthodox, and emancipatory models (Ibid. 300). Conservative liberal peace which resembles the victor's peace is characterized by its top-down and generally unilaterally led state-building efforts (Ibid.). Hyper-conservative is another version of the conservative in which a reaction to emergencies occurs like 9/11 (Ibid.). The US-led democracy promoting operations in the Middle East, Africa, and Balkans are representing this type. Orthodox liberal peace is while being still state-centric, more concerned about civil society and local ownership with the help of various NGOs (Ibid.). However, Figure 3, shows this orthodoxy of liberal peace is yet to be accomplished as it remained a highly state-centric imposition.

Finally, the critical version, the emancipatory liberal peace model is the one which is mainly bottom-up, dependent on local voices, critical of hegemonic coerciveness, not state-led but envisages various NGOs, state donors, and local actors and corresponds to the civil peace (Ibid.). Richmond concludes that the “liberal peacebuilding” has always been somewhere between orthodox and conservative-liberal peace stages and not emancipatory because it is laden with interventionist westerns’ interests, thus a “virtual” peace but not “virtuous” one (Ibid. 310). This shows that the UN’s approach to the peacebuilding concept will be the determining factor in the future of state-building.

1.2. INTERNATIONAL STATE-BUILDING

In this section, I demonstrate how state-building emerged and has turned into its contemporary nature. What I mention when I use the state-building term is also this contemporary internationalized state-building. Moreover, it is useful to make the necessary distinctions since the blurring of lines can cause ambiguity.

Scholars from various IR schools of thought have distinct approaches to state-building. Realist scholars tend to relate the concept to either security or realpolitik issues, whereas scholars close to liberal school explain how it is based on liberal peace thesis. Others from the critical perspective are skeptical of a new round of imperialistic intentions.

Basically, state-building is not a new concept. It can either be accomplished endogenously or exogenously. In history, great powers have pursued such politics to build or strengthen other states in return for serving their interests. The contemporary state-building however is not just exogenous in this aspect, but also international since many actors are involved. Besides and more principally, a divergence is that international state-builders seek one specific type of governance this time: a liberal democracy.

1.2.1. Defining International State-Building

Despite the ambitious agenda for peace-building activities in the global South, the UN operations had limited success and even ended up with catastrophes in several situations. Most prominent of those were Somalia (1993), Rwanda (1994), and Bosnia (1995). In these cases, the peacekeepers failed to meet the expectations, which pointed to a need for a comprehensive review of the agenda. Accordingly, a report was presented to the UNSG Kofi Annan by the chair of the Peace Operations Panel, a former Algerian diplomat Lakhdar Brahimi. The “Brahimi Report”, named after him, offered some structural changes in the peacebuilding activities, naming it “integrated mission”. Suggesting effectively protecting “victims” from “aggressors”, it offered to employ professional staff on the field with a chain of command and acting within a specific mandate towards achievable goals (the United Nations, 2000). Thus, the “integrated mission” was to bring both the military (peace-keeping) and the political (peace-making and peace-building) efforts under the same umbrella to establish a unified authority. In this aspect, UN personnel on the ground would work in cooperation with both other UN bodies and regional organizations, NGOs, and donor

countries. Furthermore, with the two subsequent reports of the UNSG, “A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility” of 2004; and “In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All” of 2005, the UN established a Peace-Building Commission and adopted “Responsibility to Protect” principle. These three reports attributed to peace-building a more proactive, comprehensive, and moral character. Under this perspective, the international community started to perform “state-building” under the peace-building perspective.

The state-building activity of the international community is the focus on the state’s monopoly on violence through increasing the institutional capacity of the state. It is the stage from which the international community believes that institutional capacity building must precede the liberalization or spread of democracy. In this aspect, state-building, as Charles Tilly shows with examples from European history, is a political and historical process with three components: coercion, capital, and legitimacy (Tilly, 1990). A sovereign ruler’s coercion is the legitimate use of violence via security institutions to external threats to the state. Moreover, to provide required services, the ruler needs to mobilize capital. Legitimacy, therefore, appears endogenously as “a shared clergy and a common faith linked to the sovereign provided a powerful instrument of rule” (Ibid. 107). This portrait of state-building based upon European history is therefore an endogenous process in which rulers negotiated with citizens against foreign threats (Rubin, 2006). Contemporary post-conflict peace-building, however, resembles that of the post-colonial process in which rulers negotiate with external powers for state-building: coercion (security) and capital (aid) against domestic threats to their rule (Ibid.). In this exogenous or “upside-down” state-building process the disenfranchised citizens do not necessarily attribute the required “legitimacy” to governments to complete the puzzle (Suhrke, 2011). To the three components of state-building, Astri Suhrke also adds “leadership”. Indeed, mobilizing coercion, capital and legitimacy requires decisive leadership for a state-builder. Besides, time is also crucial since a substantial state-formation is achieved throughout a long historical process which may contain multiple active state-building periods (Ibid.).

As a unilateral state-builder, the US experienced this process in Afghanistan after 2001 and Iraq after 2003. Lake argues that they learned that spreading democracy solely, which he refers to the interventions mentioned above of 2001 and 2003 respectively, is almost impossible in societies that lack a democratic culture or “western culture” back in their history (UCTV, 2013). From this point, justifying his

argument with the examples of liberalization politics in some African states, when Roland Paris argued that there must be an initial process of the security sector and government reform thoroughly, which is known as “good governance” is needed otherwise political liberalism (promotion of democracy and capitalism) can cause even a “perverse effect” which undermines the implementation of the liberal peace in the first place (Paris, 1997: 56). When Fukuyama interpreted Pritchett and Woolcock’s “get to Denmark” phrase as a focus on good-functioning institutions (Fukuyama, 2004a: 22), a debate emerged in the state-building literature. So, this activity is rooted in and a stage of the “liberal peace-building” project. In other words, a “sub-component of peacebuilding” (Paris and Sisk, 2009: 14). However, the state-building literature is a contentious one.

The first camp of scholars, on the one hand, argues that there is “the imperative” (Fukuyama, 2004a) of a reformist externally built Weberian liberal state which has functional institutions, ministries, and agencies that serve its people like those of the Western culture. Thus, economic development and security reform are needed to create the appropriate environment for the democracy and free market of liberal internationalism. Accordingly, Paris argued that liberal peace and liberal internationalism whose central tenets are democracy and capitalism had made a “perverse effect” in the war-torn countries (Paris, 1997: 56). To overcome this issue, he argued, the intervention as an institution-building process must precede the liberal peace implementation and liberalization (Ibid.). In this context, emphasizing institutional capacity, other policy scholars also supported such interventionist, stabilizing state-building efforts (Fearon and Laitin, 2004; Fukuyama, 2004a; 2004b; Ghani and Lockhart, 2008; Krasner, 2004; Krasner and Pascual, 2005; Rotberg, 2003). Thus state-building promises to create a governed state from a “failed state” or ungoverned spaces, from which humanitarian disasters, human rights problems, weapons of mass destruction, and more importantly the international terrorism that threatens the security of the globe emerge, they argue.

The second camp of scholars, on the other hand, skeptically posit that state-building resembles an international occupation that extends the West’s sovereignty over the underdeveloped countries as a contemporary version of imperialism (Chandler, 2006; Mac Ginty, 2010; Richmond, 2006; Sabaratnam, 2017). For instance, in his widely known critical book of this argument, “Empire in Denial”, Chandler argues that international state-builders see democracy as an end itself but not means, which causes inherent failure to build self-governed independent states

(Chandler, 2006: 494). When this “protracted and carefully controlled state-building” (Sabaratnam, 2017: 19) fails, state-builders conceive their limited success as a difficulty of bringing democracy to the third world (Chandler, 2006: 494). This is also related to the latest “resilience” discourse in the state-building literature (Chandler, 2013). So, it is this denial that makes Chandler think resemble the interventionist policies of both the US and the EU to the Wilsonian idealism (Chandler, 2006).

Moreover, liberal state-builders believe that the failed or weak states are “tribal”, “unfit for purpose” and, “clan-based” (Williams, 2010: 60). Thus, they are enthusiastic to build “the modern state” in those states. Williams argues that the capitalist and political liberalist reconstruction/state-building has become “danse macabre” of which the victims are the citizens of those developing countries because the Western democracies try to impose their interests under the cloak of the international community (Williams, 2010: 69). What he offers as an alternative is a full local reconstruction effort even though it is not at the standard level of liberal democracy (Ibid.).

From the US and more of a Realist schools’ perspective, David Lake argues that there are 3 historical periods of state-building processes mainly pursued by the US. He refers them to as “state-building 1.0” (SB 1.0), “state-building 2.0” (SB 2.0), and “state-building 3.0” (SB 3.0) (Lake, 2010: 258; 2016; UCTV, 2013), while Richmond, from the Critical school and a wider perspective of peace and conflict studies, argues that there are four “generations” of this “genealogy of conflict resolution” (Richmond, 2010: 14-35). In Lake’s aspect, SB 1.0 took place approximately between 1890-1930. This process is mainly characterized by the US’s realpolitik concerns (Lake, 2010; UCTV, 2013), which did not care about legitimacy, but only loyalty, especially in the Caribbean and South American countries. Thus, under the heavy effect of political realism this generation fits the “negative peace” and “victor’s peace” type, affected by the third parties’ interests (Richmond, 2010: 17). This process can trigger high levels of anti-colonialist reaction which can further become a communist state like that of Cuba (UCTV, 2013).

SB 2.0 is the liberal state-building, similar to the Carter Administration’s opening for human rights in Latin America, and in the liberal peace-building after the Cold War (Lake, 2010; UCTV, 2013). It is characterized by the international community’s intervention (the UN-authorized) on two pillars: participatory constitution/election and free-market economy (Ibid.). Characteristically, it is the international agencies’ interference and “win-win” or positive peace with the discourse

of civil-society focus and liberal argument of “democratic peace” and “civil peace” (Richmond, 2010: 19-20). This process was implemented in Balkan states such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, and Iraq, and Afghanistan, and South-Eastern countries like Timor-Leste. This version of liberal peace-building incrementally has come to be referred to as “state-building” in the literature and especially by the authors of the first camp and in this study. Accordingly, this thesis defines it as international state-building. The root cause of its transformation is the seek for success and stability. Similarly, Lake’s SB 2.0 fails since the externally built constitution and elections do not necessarily generate the legitimacy the state builders expected. Representative examples for this are the interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq of 2001 and 2003, respectively. Also, for its early models, Peace-keeping operations in African countries like; Namibia, Angola, and El Salvador (Paris, 1997; Richmond, 2010).

SB 3.0 focuses on counterinsurgency (COIN) and providing security and basic needs of the local people and winning their hearts and minds (Lake, 2010: 258; UCTV, 2013). Lake concludes that the legitimacy created by the public services of the state-builder does not necessarily transfer to the local leaders who are in power. In SB 3.0, democracy promotion and generating the free-market economy is “de-emphasized” (UCTV, 2013). Thus, what Lake refers to as SB 3.0 is a sub-component of international state-building on the ground that it is mainly conducted by Army elements. Even though the third generation or SB 3.0 is also concerned the state-society relations with the inclusion of numerous NGOs, and dependence on a “social contract theory” (Lake, 2010; UCTV, 2013), it is still a mainly top-down approach about the nature of peace and governance (Richmond, 2010), and this is why it is doomed to fail. As a result, making an over-arching comment on these three stages, Lake names this process and the array upon which state-builders wander between their interests (loyalty) and interests of the local population (legitimacy) as “state-builders dilemma” (Lake, 2016: 69-100).

1.2.2. State-Building vs Nation-Building

State-building and Nation-building terms are so close to each other that authors and policymakers consistently use them interchangeably. To realize the aim of this thesis, I consider it necessary to make a differentiating among these vague terms to the full extent. Even though they are different concepts in their essence, the thesis posits that the nation-building term was commonly used by policymakers and

scholars especially after the dissolution of former Yugoslavia and the emergence of subsequent wars. Moreover, nation-building has been transformed into the state-building term by those authors, either because it works for them, or they do not place any value on the nuance at all.

Some instrumentalize the nation-building term to their offer of interventionist "imperative" of state-building. Fukuyama ignores the "nation" factor in state-building, despite he accepts nation means a cumulative of shared values and that outsiders cannot achieve it and argues that he and the American literature mention state-building when they use the term nation-building (Fukuyama, 2004b). In a way, state-building is a problem solver theory of the nation-building policy for him.

Others deny multiple usages and accept only one of them while mentioning both. In their comprehensive RAND Corporation published book prepared for every segment of the international community, authors used nation-building only for all the international post-conflict actions since WW II (Dobbins et al., 2007). Another author who mentions both terms while using nation-building is Marina Ottaway. She accepts that nation-building is not a recent phenomenon and is dated back to the Roman Empire's collapse and that the most successful ones are Germany's and Japan's buildings carried out from outside, she argues (Ottaway, 2002a). In a way, she is aware and still ignores the societal way of nation-building when she puts it, "…the goal of nation-building *should not be* to impose common identities on deeply divided peoples but to organize states that can administer their territories…" (Ottaway, 2002a: 17, emphasis added).

Not accepting the use of the term nation-building, some others stick only to the state-building term. Illustrating the fact that nation-building is peculiar to post-colonial times, in which national leaders consolidate their population within a territory, Chesterman embraces state-building as its focus is the state and its institutions rather than the nation and its components (Chesterman, 2005).

Other than these, inter-governmental organizations also defined such terms according to their standpoints. According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), nation-building is an action in which generally national actors create a common identity endogenously, and they do it parallelly to an ongoing state-building effort (OECD, 2008). The key inference from this definition is that nation-building is prematurely associated with state-building. I argue that the two are different at the core as the former is endogenous in its nature whereas the latter is currently pursued by external actors, and that nation-building is a much longer

process. In this aspect, it can be related to state-formation, but not necessarily to state-building. Supporting this, Grotenhuis points to four reasons why nation-building should also be in the making, though not as just a part of the state-building but because they both are essential in fragile environments (Grotenhuis, 2016). First, every state needs a national identity that stands for togetherness. Second, loyalty to governmental institutions is viable by a common identity. Third, nation-building creates emotional commitment and solidarity which is necessary. Fourth, being proud of their common history, culture, language, etc. is necessary for the fragile states in a global context.

Table 1: Relationship Between Peacemaking, Nation-building, and State-building

	Peacemaking	***Nation-building***	***State-building***
Actors	Third parties	Local community leaders	Elected political representatives
Instruments	Negotiations, shuttle diplomacy	Stories, statues, heroes, cultural traditions	Rule of law, state institutions
Process	Mediation, talks, agreements	Building commitment and mutual understanding	Offering solutions by setting rules, regulations, and policies
Results	Agreement: Give and take	The 'we'-feeling	Well-organized state institutions
Time frame	Limited to avoid the resurgence of the conflict	Open-ended	Political election cycle
Referents	examples from other conflicts	Self-referential: Internal domestic process	International community, international laws, treaties, conventions

Source: Grotenhuis, 2016: 98.

The table above shows the distinctive relationship between the three terms which are sometimes used by authors from different schools of thought interchangeably. According to this table actors, instruments, process, results, time frame, and references show that peacemaking is a prerequisite concept that is conducted by the international community in conflictual environments, under the mandate of the UN. After that, on the one hand, open-ended endogenous nation-building and generating social capital while on the other hand, externally aided, state-building designated by politically limited time frames can take place. Thus, "blurring the lines" between the three causes never-ending interventions in the post-conflict situations which undermine their overall success (Ibid. 98).

1.2.3. Different Types of State-Building Activities

Since the state-building agenda is designated to the needs of the liberal world order the international community settled on that a (Weberian) state model must meet the following criteria: security/authority, democracy, rule of law, taxation, and public services. These are the tenets upon which the “rationale” of the state-building is built (Richmond, 2014: 65). Even though every post-conflict situation has its characteristics and specific requirements, a general state-building agenda which is rooted in Tilly’s argument upon European history, is expected to rise on the tripod of security (coercion), legitimacy, and economic development (capital).

1.2.3.1. Arguments on Security

Due to the Weberian conceptual framework, the international state-building process contains a prioritization of the state’s monopoly over violence, in other words, coercion. Then, as a sequence, security is first on the state-building agenda (Wolff, 2011), which is consisted of two main steps: “security sector reform (SSR) and demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration (DDR) programs” (Mac Ginty, 2010: 580).

1.2.3.1.1. Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR)

DDR in other words, de-construction of the fighting groups (military and/or paramilitary) is the first step in a post-conflict state-building agenda. Disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration stand for the collection/destruction of weapons discharging the fighting groups’ members, and either restructuring or the forego of the national army and police corps, respectively (Sisk, 2013: 89). It is a bargaining process during which the ex-combatants are induced to share the power structures of the subsequent SSR. Besides, the timing of the DDR is crucial. Ex-fighters are generally fond of laying down the arms sometime between the start of the peace process and its finalization (Ibid). Thus, if this is not assured, the ex-militants may abandon the DDR process and return to the front which is a more secure condition for themselves.

The DDR is not a sole project on its own. It also has a stabilizing effect on transitional justice, rule of law, and the issues about human rights (Ibid.). These

relationships help to speed up the DDR process itself. Thus, the question to ask is, what are the requirements for a successful transition from armed militia to legal security personnel or at least a civilian? Answering this question, Colletta et al. found that; political will, profiling of former militants, functional feedback system, and financing are crucial factors that matter to the outcome of the DDR process. (Colletta et al., 2003). Another answer, which adds a further dimension to the discussion is related to the number of militants groups. Using game theory in their research and gathering data from the DDR processes of Nepal and Congo, Ansorg and Strasheim, found that "the number of veto players" has a game-changer impact on the outcome of the DDR process, while the results regarding fractionalization among groups and the distance remain vague (Ansorg and Strasheim, 2019: 112).

Table 2: Effects of Certain Variables on the DDR Process

	DDR in NEPAL	**DDR in DR of CONGO**	**DETERMINATION**
Veto Players' Number	Few	Many	+
Ethnic Distance	Poor	Ample	-
Fractionalization	High	High	-
The DDR	Effective	Ineffective	

Source: Ansorg and Strasheim, 2019: 125.

It is possible to infer from this then, as the number of veto players increases, the possibility of a successful DDR process decreases, or at least the process gets more complicated which requires further efforts like the example in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The initial DDR processes especially in Africa focused on a policy widely known as the "one-man-one-weapon". This policy is mostly attributed to the disarmament and demobilization stages. However, further experiments showed that without reintegration into civil life, the process turns back to the first stage. Achieving this is not a simple task to do. Regarding complications, Munive and Jakobsen argue that the reintegration process is not automatically done but needs international intervention. However, they argue that the "unmake" of ex-combatants may result in blurring the identity lines of civilians and militants. As in the case of the Liberian DDR process, the opportunity of employment, and a better sustainable life, attracted and affected not only ex-combatants but also civilians. (Munive and Jakobsen, 2012: 361).

Consequently, these findings may have been more applicable and further meet with success if it is understood that every situation is unique and there appears to be no uniform approach to implement regarding the DDR.

1.2.3.1.2. Security Sector Reform (SSR)

The SSR has been the core tenet of the liberal international state-building agenda since it is the reconstruction of the security apparatus as a whole, starting with the DDR. This security apparatus is believed to be the first milestone of a state's legitimacy as the legitimate use of force of the state is required for the rule of law and therefore provides legitimacy (Chappuis and Hänggi, 2013). Thus, at the end of the day, the success of the reform can be measured by the legitimate authority of the state in the eyes of its citizens (Sisk, 2013). Also, in post-conflict environments, it includes not only ensure the state uses power but also ensure other potential non-state fractions do not (Ibid.), as in the COIN, the same process is carried out (UCTV, 2013).

The SSR is one aspect of building a state that is related to the liberal sense. Indeed, it seeks to build a state that is capable of not just security for its people but also that of the international community (Jackson, 2011). Thus, the international community plays a vital role both in the definition and in the practice and observation. The definition of SSR in international governmental organizations is mostly the same. According to the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) handbook on SSR, the SSR's definition is: "working together to manage and operate the system in a manner that is more consistent with democratic norms and sound principles of *good governance* and this contributes to a well-functioning security framework" (qtd. in Jackson, 2011: 1810, emphasis added). In the same line, in the UN Security Council's resolution 2151, which is the first resolution due to SSR, the Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon put the existence of SSR in a central position of the post-conflict operation, saying that: "The purpose of security sector reform, simply put, is to make people's lives safer" (the United Nations, 2014).

As a part of this "good governance" doctrine, SSR is a Western type of reform that has its roots in the basic division of the security sector. It is conducted in two main strands: external security and internal security (Chappuis and Hänggi, 2013). In this agenda, the former security reform is focused on the parameters that are about the territorial security of the state. These can be either the military, intelligence agency

and border security units along with their training and administrative procedures (Ibid.). The latter reform is focused on implementing the law and order within the borders of the territorial state. However, the reforms in police and the military are under the threat of instrumentalization and being damaged if not accompanied by the reforms in the judiciary. Moreover, independence of the judiciary and strengthening the institutions regarding human rights are prerequisites to the reforms in police and military. These include police, and other justice sector agencies and related ministries, along with their management procedures (Ibid.). Thus, the SSR is a multiphase process in which the composition is mainly determined by the ex-relations between the security administrations like the army, police, intelligence, and other internal security forces (Sisk, 2013).

New approaches of SSR can also play a role in the future of state-building of which it is the core tenet. This is worth noting as Sedra argues that the orthodoxy of the SSR has been decaying in the last decade. He argues that in Afghanistan, due to the insufficient human capacity, extremely insecure environment, and politics' ample fragmentation, the SSR has been leveled down to the classical "train and equip" program which focuses only on hard security (Sedra, 2013). Thus, he criticizes the SSR in Afghanistan for resembling a "euphemism" (Ibid. 371).

From this starting point, Mark Sedra calls for the need for a second-generation model (Sedra, 2017). He argues that as SSR implementations show, the current policy is thought to be over state-centric and technocratic. Instead, he points to the new schools of thought that emerged among practitioners and scholars that are less liberal and concentrated on non-state agencies and actors. There are three different schools of thought on the SSR. The first one is the "monopoly school", which is known for the Western-Weberian model of state structure (Ibid. 15). The second one is the "good enough" school which is a mediated type that makes do with limited Weberian ideals and is based upon long-term and iterative approaches (Ibid. 15), which reminds us of David Lake's offer of "good-enough governance" (UCTV, 2013). Finally, the third school is the hybrid school, which is based on the local realities, problems faced every day and the capacities in the area rather than sticking to the imposed liberal values (Ibid.). Since the SSR is at the core of state-building, elaborating on it, paves the way to further discussions of the future of the state-building itself.

1.2.3.2. Arguments on Democracy and Legitimacy

In the way of providing the required legitimacy to the government, democratic elections and constitution-making processes are still a challenge for the international community in post-conflict areas. As a part of the liberalization and democracy promotion, elections and new constitutions are held in the aftermath of civil wars and dictators' rules.

There is not only a complementary relationship between the two but also their sequence matters. And yet, there appears to be no one-size-fits-all approach for this issue. In this context, the following two sub-sections answer these questions: Should elections be before the constitution, to assign the legislative body for making it? or first, making a constitution and then hold elections for a substantial peace/state-building?

1.2.3.2.1. Constitution

Constitution-making or supporting the process of constitution-making has been a strategic component of the liberal peacebuilding agenda, or as the latest interventions being referred to as; state-building. Since the 1990s especially in Africa and since the 2000s with the terrorist attacks of the 9/11, highlighted in Iraq and Afghanistan, there is a clear shift from "peaceful settlement" to "conflict prevention", in which constitution-making and aid have been a part of the democracy promotion rhetoric via "anti-terrorism" interventions (Sripati, 2013: 144). This constitutional aid is named by the UN as the Constitutional Assistance (UNCA). Since 2009, UNSGs refresh the UNCA agenda periodically per the global developments. In the guidance report dated September 2020, it mentions that the UN is capable of aid to the constitution-making or amendment processes to any Member State in any context including times of intense conflict, peace negotiations, and stability (UNSG, 2020: 2). The UNCA reflects and imposes the UN's basic shared values related to the liberal international world order onto the Member States (Ibid.).

Even though the UNCA process is not one uniform process, and may change contextually, Secretary-General designates some basic steps:

> • *Setting the agenda, which may include peace talks, establishing transitional constitutional arrangements and designing the constitutional reform process.*
> • *Holding consultations on, negotiating, drafting, and adopting a constitution (or constitutional amendments).*

• *Implementing the new or revised constitution, including establishing institutions, enacting constitutionally mandated laws and building a culture of constitutionalism* (UNSG, 2020: 5).

This is interpreted as a new type of sovereignty by some authors. According to Sripati, the UN nominates this new type of sovereignty, especially for the third world. With the UNCA, the UN designates the rules and steps, mandates them, and creates the perception in the conflict-affected states that if they can build up the capacity for "good governance", they will be sovereign states, of which the first step is a solid constitution (Sripati, 2013: 152).

In post-conflict states, the constitution-building process should focus on the local needs and respect local people's life-long traditional heritages. So that the international community should rather intervene only to provide necessary aid and remain secondary. Thus, participation in the process is the core factor for the legitimacy and the implementation of the constitution (Ogun and Aslan, 2013). Encouraging the participation of the public in the constitution-making process yields sociopolitical institutions to be granted by the locals (Ibid.). Accordingly, the public participation examples of the liberal constitution-making process which occurred in Timor-Leste and Bougainville shows that "local and liberal are not inextricably opposed" and therefore can turn into hybridity (Ibid.). Accordingly, local-participated constitution-building assists people to reunite and help reconciliation, solving grievances, make people become substantial citizens and finally urge institutions to serve the public good more sensitively to their needs (Ibid.).

The balance between political dialogue and power-sharing is fastidious. Indeed, there is a problem in the constitution-making process that brings the elites around the table while asks them to sacrifice the prospective spoils. This is the "central paradox" of the constitution-making process in post-conflict environments (Rubin, 2004: 18). Because the time a post-conflict country most needs a proper constitution is also the time that it is least prepared for one, thus it may be possible to put in effect an interim constitution first with a "sunset clause" and then amend it when the dynamics ripen within the country (Ibid. 18-19).

In post-conflict state-building, the international community has a heavy footprint in constitution building. For instance, the constitution-making process of the early stages of Iraq and Afghanistan interventions showed that the US-led Western countries constructed their desired type of constitutions, imposed liberal and democratic norms, and made ways to the liberal type of state institutions to eliminate

radicalism from the Middle East countries and harmonize them to the “Western network” (Ogun and Aslan, 2013: 399-400). Thus, a constitution should consider the state’s sociological and historical background to contribute to a state formation.

1.2.3.2.2. Elections

Elections in post-conflict situations are a significant milestone and symbol of democratization. The main debate on the elections is going about the timing. The quick transition from war to peace and from peace to democracy is not promising. Similarly, after the Bosnian war of 1992-1995, the Dayton agreement provisioned elections in less than nine months, and this later proved to be a mistake. Since the support to the political parties was not ripe enough, it later became no different from supporting the warring parties during the conflict (Chesterman, 2005). This is a pivotal finding which is also supported by Paris who argues that elections should be postponed seven to nine years until a convenient atmosphere is established for democratization and backed up with democratic institutions (Paris, 1997).

However, waiting for elections so far may not be necessary for some situations. Indeed, the 2012 Libya elections proved this may not be necessarily true. Opposite to the idea of the international community’s DDR and SSR implementations before the elections, Libyan elections occurred in peace by “local ownership” without them (Sisk, 2013: 257). Thus, there is no uniform policy regarding the success of elections’ sequence in the state-building process or as an instrument of conferring legitimacy for the state at all, as elections in 2005 and 2011 of Democratic Republic of Congo showed (Ibid.). In this context, it can be argued that it is not when but how and how long to stay engaged after the elections (Ibid. 258).

Some others are skeptical of premature elections. They note that early elections can pave the way to the recurring conflict in situations where some requirements like security, demobilization, and power-sharing are poorly conducted or met and the actors of war are directly transformed into political actors (Brancati and Snyder, 2012). Besides, ex-combatants are more likely to become stronger than other political candidates as they had widely-reach to material sources in wartime (Ibid.). Agreeing with Paris, Brancati and Snyder note that the establishment of “good governance” before the elections may have a positive effect on the process. To support their arguments, they give the examples of elections in Liberia of 1997 and 2005 and other countries in which moderate success was obtained after elections due

to “good governance” like those in Sierra Leone, Bosnia, East Timor, and Kosovo (Ibid.).

What determines then, when to hold elections? Answering this question elaborates two pre-conditions to call an election in post-conflict situations: the same perception of state entity and pluralism (Ottaway et al., 2011). If these are non-existent, then elections would be destructive rather than constructive (Ibid.). In Angola, for example for the first requirement; in which both competing groups perceived the state as their own but not others and finally resumed war in 1990. The Iraq example on the other hand demonstrates that elections can’t be an instrument of democracy if power is over-centralized in just one group and there are no viable opponents at all (Ibid.). Thus, in such situations that meet these requirements, an early election would bring positive prospects for peace. Moreover, an alternative to early elections if it is not possible, either of the following four may be a solution: interim phases, bringing the situation to maturity, postponing the elections, or decreasing the expectations and standards for peacebuilding in the first place (Ibid.).

A comprehensive field study on the relationship between constitutions and elections showed that it is rather difficult to give a uniform answer to this question. Karina Mross, from extensive field research in Burundi and Nepal argues that the “gradualist” approach is not necessarily riskier than the “prioritization” strategy (Mross, 2019: 191). The former term stands for simultaneously promoting peace and democracy through frequentative steps, whereas the latter stands for first peace, then democracy approaches or also known as “sequencing” (Ibid.). She uses a double-comparative design to elaborate both elections and constitution-making processes respectively; Burundi’s 2005 constitutions and 2010 general elections and, Nepal’s 2015 constitution and 2008 general elections. She is reluctant to choose and recommend one over another and rather argues that it is the situation in which either of the strategies is to be followed which matters. Thus, in situations where there is a high concentration of power and inclusive institutions are poor, gradualist strategy is less risky while in inclusive and competitive situations prioritization would yield more favorable results (Ibid.).

In post-conflict situations, the timing of the elections matters. Not only the timing but also its relationship with other institutions and the constitution is also important. Despite being limited, as every case has its peculiar characteristics, case studies showed that elections and their timing should be determined based on the local’s condition, requirements, and points of view regarding peace prospects.

1.2.3.3. Arguments on Development

What Lake points at as the SB 3.0 stands for the institutional reconstruction of the war-torn and failed states. Accordingly, the “state-building” term in the literature is widely attributed to the capacity building of governmental institutions. This “neo-Weberian institutional approach” defines the state by its “institutional grasp” over its population and in the event of state “failure” the root cause is thought to be weak capacity and the prescription becomes institutional reconstruction (Lemay-Hébert, 2013: 10). However, newly built institutions under the state-building concept are likely to be accountable to their builders but not to the people that they exist for.

In this context, it can be argued that, along with the security sector, the government with its other institutions, departments, and bureaucracy, is on the scope of the international state-building and development agenda.

1.2.3.3.1. Institutionalization and Capacity Building

The international community’s efforts of institution-building are mainly focused on legislative, executive, and judiciary administrations along with the agencies of military, police, civil society, and free media. Thus, this shows that institutional capacity building is stemming from the “good governance” argument of the international community.

As an overarching definition, institution-building in post-conflict situations refers to: “organizing government departments and public agencies to discharge their functions both efficiently and democratically, following models found in Weberian states” (Ottaway, 2002b: 1004). However, Ottaway put that there was significant deviance between organization building and institution building. It is because International and bilateral donor-led building organizations can become state institutions to the extent that they meet the local needs and provide solid solutions to their problems (Ibid.). With the example of re-building state institutions in the post-apartheid South African model, Ottaway argues that experts’ and consultants’ “organizations” can graduate as successful state “institutions” by local down-to-earth politicians who sit at a table to solve everyday problems (Ibid.). Moreover, it is for this reason, that external institution-building can succeed only to a limited extent as states do not collapse due to the weak institution, but lack of legitimate authority. To this end,

because this legitimate power can be generated from inside – by local actors – there is less that can be achieved by the international community.

Weberian approach to state-building has caused institution-building or strengthening them to become the core component of the state-building agenda. In this aspect, state-building through institution-building has made it possible to "design" the circumstances according to "specific needs" and reach peace by reducing the violence as the elites bargain their differences via democratic instruments (Wolff, 2011: 1779). Further, Wolff proposes "liberal consociationalism" in the institution-building processes which have two main tenets: "power-sharing" and "territorial self-government" (Ibid. 1781). He argues that the latter helps prevent the dominance of the majority over minority groups and protects their rights by decentralization, whereas the former eliminates secession as it makes it possible for the elites to represent their segments in certain institutional arrangements that prevent an "institutional deadlock" (Ibid. 1797).

With these two tenets of the liberal consociationalism theory, it may be possible to build a bottom-up democratic state in post-conflict environments. The focus on bottom-up institution-building draws attention to the nonmaterial issues. It is because, in building Weberian-type state institutions, the donor community overrates the "material" side of the subject. However, in building states, the non-material side should be considered as well. State-building should also encompass "socio-political cohesion" as the state is not just built by strong governmental institutions but also by "social contract" and "shared values" (Lemay-Hébert, 2009: 21-45).

Related to the social dimension of state-building, the institution-building process can cause the following complications since in many post-conflict environments such state-society relations are susceptible to disregard (Eriksen, 2017). First is the recurrence of patrimonialism. It occurs when the rulers control the state not through effective and running institutions but through renting and rewarding clients and trading political support. This in turn reduces the institutional capacity since a regime is threatened by the strong democratic institutions in the first place. Second, institution building may damage national sovereignty. Indeed, with external donor aids, the recipient states become an object to be developed and thus these undermine its role of a subject to its resident population and strives to be accountable to the international community rather than its people. Third, even though the modern state and its strong institutional capacity are theoretically suggested, in practice the state in the making is undermined as it is imposed externally in the eyes of its society.

From these arguments, it can be inferred that institutional capacity-building has been promoted as a strong and preliminary stage in democracy promotion and accounts for the backbone of state-building. According to Weberian thought, it is believed that states fail because of low-level government and poor state functions. From this argument, strengthening the capacity to rule is prioritized by the international community in the last ten to fifteen years. However, this reductionist approach in terms of sole material capacity, made it clear that with its complications, the external capacity building is limited at best.

1.2.3.3.2. Economic Development and Aid

Economic instability has always been pointed to as one of the basic reasons for state failure. To ameliorate this, international aid providers or “donors” which can be both intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), NGOs, regional organizations, and bilateral governments, especially developed ones’ international development departments provide financial aid to fill in the “capital” gap of the state-building. Thus, in general, we can divide the donor community into two groups. In the first group, we shall name the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the UN, with its development program and other agencies, and the OECD. The second group consists of civil and military agencies of the developed countries like the US Agency for International Development (USAID), and the U.K. Aid Direct (UKAID). Such international aid can be either “humanitarian” after a disaster like an earthquake that occurred in Haiti in 2010 or as “Official Development Assistance” (ODA) which is attributed to the development aids for the Third world.

With its 30 member states, the OECD’s DAC works in close coordination with the UN. In the high-level forums, DAC sets policies to overcome global issues by aid. In the fourth high-level forum on Aid Effectiveness which was held in 2011 in Korea, OECD established “the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States with the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding” (IDPS), which is the first and thorough dialogue forum to bring three parties together; fragile states (recipients) also known as g7+ (now includes 20 fragile countries), developed states/DAC members and international organizations (donors), and civil society/media (International Dialogue, 2016). This “New Deal” of the IDPS, with its 5 goals of “inclusive politics, security, justice, economic growth, and institution service delivery”

has become one of the key platforms that generate international aid regarding state-building per the UN's 2030 sustainable development agenda (Ibid.).

External aid is expected to encourage the recipient states on making investments for the public service, institution-building for development, and mobilize capital. And for his reason, multinational donor aids must focus on the needs of recipient states, rather than their administrations' requirements and specific interests (Barakat, 2009). However, in some situations aid may have a perverse effect on the recipients causing an "aid-institutions paradox" (Ibid. 4-5). Acutely in sub-Saharan Africa, large amounts of aid had been devoted to recipients and yet they were unable to create the expected Weberian "rational-legal" type of state-capacity in such states (Ibid. 6). Thus, some of its undermining effects on recipients are as follows: destabilizing macroeconomic balances, reducing the competitiveness of exportation, jeopardizing the ability of budgeting, paving way for careless government spending (Ibid.). All these effects thus undermine the capacity of the state institutions to execute public services and need more aid which causes aid dependency.

In order not to cause aid dependency and elaborate on how aid supports the state-building, Bizhan investigates the relationship between state models and aid politics, and how they affect the state-building process. He argues that aid may strengthen ongoing state-building efforts if the recipient state has Weberian institutional continuity and state legacy. In South Korea and Taiwan examples, Bizhan posits that the international aid regime (no matter what type) strengthened state capacity as it was effectively used because they had inherited an already strong Weberian type of institutional legacy and mechanisms (Bizhan, 2018a).

In the following part of his study, Bizhan elaborates on the aid regime's effect on neo-patrimonial states like Afghanistan and Iraq. He argues that as these weak states inherit neo-patrimonial governance culture, aid regimes can pave the way to "parallel institutions" and bring about discontinuity in the public sector (Bizhan, 2018b: 1019). Bizhan puts three types of aid regimes: "donor", "recipient", and "transaction cost" schools (Ibid. 1015). The first group emphasizes the intentions and knowledge of the donors whereas the second does the same for the institutional-governmental capacity of the recipient state. The third one, however, takes into consideration the spending manner of the aid. Thus, not just the recipient's institutional capacity and legacy but also aid regime's role in terms of continuity and discontinuity matters in state-building processes as it worsens the already existing patronage relations, renting among elites and clients and undermines the capacity of institutions (Ibid.).

The aids of the international donor community have proved to be ambitious. However, there appears to be no thorough evidence that shows aid has positive effects on state-building. Rather, academic research tells us that the aid's effectiveness is limited, and it tends to be a component of the problem rather than the solution.

1.3. CRITIQUES, NEW APPROACHES, AND THE FUTURE OF THE STATE-BUILDING

In this section, the thesis reviews critiques, new concepts, and the future of state-building. Limited success in international interventions cast doubt on the legitimacy of both state-building and peace-building in a wider context. Accordingly, there are certain critiques of their viability. Critiques gather around one of the basic tenets of state-building: legitimacy. Indeed, international state-building will always suffer from a gap between the state and the society to some extent.

The international community is not necessarily oblivious of feedbacks. The UN, the icon of the current world order, is working for new initiatives to overcome the problem of the underdeveloped countries more effectively. In a wider development agenda, the UN has committed itself to focus on the local's needs and thus the socio-political dimension of the state-building.

1.3.1 Critiques

After almost three decades of intervention and "shared sovereignty" in the third world, the success remains limited despite efforts ongoing. There are two main critiques of the state-building agenda in the academic literature. The first one is related to technocratic reductionism which neglects the societal aspect of state-building. The second one, however, has its roots in the wider picture: targeting the liberal peace and peacebuilding themselves.

The first critique is the complainant of the impatience of exogenous state-building. This idea posits that the state is a phenomenon that is not available to realize while formation. It is only possible to mention a proper state-building when looking behind to the years in which both the nation and state are built simultaneously. However, contemporary international state-building is so impatient that the legitimacy and national leadership which are the crucial factors of state-building can't grow (Suhrke, 2011). Then, from four ingredients for a modern state according to this

critique: coercion, capital, legitimacy, and leadership (Ibid.), exogenously built states or in Chandler's words "phantom states" (Chandler, 2017) can only provide the first two, while the legitimacy and leadership remain missing. Moreover, the external aids to provide coercion and capital further undermine the latter two let alone providing.

Others also point to this impatience as it is not possible to build a state without the legitimacy that comes along with nation-building, which is an endogenous process (Lemay-Hébert, 2009). Thus, societal fusion is neglected in the "neo-Weberian" institutionalist state-building efforts (Lottholz and Hébert, 2016: 1479). A "re-reading of Weber" which will clarify the sociological and historical dimensions of authority, for the policymakers, may make them and their partners consolidate power and create the social order in the post-conflict societies which further can alter the course of the present security-oriented international intervention to more anthropological approaches (Ibid.). Thus, the reason behind state builders' impatience is the orientation of security.

The second critique refers to the liberal peace or the "manifest" and mastermind of state-building (Mac Ginty, 2010). In this point of view, the liberal peace argument is a cloak for geo-strategic interests. It is a "myth" (Selby, 2013), and an "empire in denial" (Chandler, 2006) which not only aids to evade its responsibility but also intervenes to stabilize its market.

This critique also sees the downsizing of the ambitious institution-building process and lowering down the standards to "good enough" state-building (Pospisil and Kühn, 2016), or "SB 3.1" in Lake's argument (Lake, 2010; 2016; UCTV, 2013) while focusing on "hybrid" forms and "local ownership" as the "relocation of power in peacebuilding" (Mac Ginty and Richmond, 2013). Because the power is shifting from the cause which is "Western ideals" to the effect which is "organic processes" in the society (Chandler, 2017). This reconceptualizing of international intervention as Chandler goes on to say may even take the intervention out of the scope of the IR discipline (Ibid.). Then, we are yet to see whether the relation of power and peace ends up as emancipatory peace as local turn refers to a society-centered state model (Mac Ginty and Richmond, 2013).

1.3.2. New Approaches and the Future of the State-Building

Contemporary debates on the state-building agenda are focused on legitimacy, and how this can be achieved in the eyes of the local people. Some call

this “local turn” (Mac Ginty and Richmond, 2013), some others “post-Weberian approach” (Lottholz and Hébert, 2016) and some others attribute this change of focus to the discourse of “resilience” (Chandler, 2013; Pospisil and Kühn, 2016).

Since the early 2010s, a discourse of “local ownership” on the subject of the local populations of the conflict-affected states has been held by the donor community. Research made by Mac Ginty and Richmond (2013) put that the term “local” was mentioned in UN’s and World Bank’s major documents of the years 2000, 2005, 2010, 2011, 2011 regarding peacebuilding by a percentage of %26, %83, %27, %133 and %158 per page, respectively. This study shows that the international donor community has become more interested in the “local” each succeeding year. As this “hidden agency” became popular, a shift occurred from a “supply-driven” policy to an “organic” agenda in which “everyday life” experiences of the local society were brought into the limelight (Chandler, 2017).

International non-governmental organizations also acted concurrently and in the same direction. One of them is Peace Direct, which works to highlight and fill the gaps by setting their agendas together with the local people, groups, and other members of the civil society in the war-torn countries towards “locally-led peacebuilding” (Peace Direct, 2020). Even though this local turn shows the first signs of the bottom-up approaches in the state-building policy, time will show if the mindsets of the policymakers will graduate to the emancipatory form of peace.

Another contemporary topic is “resilience” due to this matter. According to the OECD, resilience refers to: “the ability of households, communities, and nations to absorb and recover from shocks, whilst positively adapting and transforming their structures and means for living in the face of long-term stresses, change, and uncertainty” (OECD, n.d.). Thus, in this definition, the reasons for intervention; under-development, terrorism, poor human rights and democracy, and civil conflict are understood as societal concepts. The international community has eventually turned to posit that they can only play a limited role in the post-conflict societies as these “resilient communities” can cope with their imminent problems with outsider aid. However, this does not mean a retirement, but rather a cautious approach in which the recipient’s voices are louder than in earlier times. Indeed, many local communities in the global South have customary governance structures, which is appropriate for “decentralized state-building” (Murtazashvili, 2018: 18). This concept puts that the “ungoverned spaces” in “failed states” may not necessarily be so. The de facto structures of governance which supply basic public services and protection from the

predation of the state, indeed exist (Murtazashvili, 2020). Thus, a decentralized, “polycentric state-building” is expected to offer substantial participation and thus legitimacy (Ibid. 1-6). Furthermore, decentralization is perceived especially required in divided societies (Lake, 2020). Rather than externally building a centralized Weberian state and privileging dominant groups in such states, state-builders started to focus on the non-state authorities and preserve them to balance the authority of central states (Ibid.). Thus, the result of the “hybrid political orders” may quickly turn into a “decentralized hegemony” (Mac Ginty and Richmond, 2016: 234). To refrain from these “hybrid political orders” and help build “political hybrids” (Ibid. 221) state-builders must grasp the non-fixed nature of peace and approach hybridity not as an end but means. Thus, hybridity may have a chance to bolster legitimacy in state-building if international intervention dispels international injustice, and inequality (Ibid.).

Some others propose handing over the execution of state-building to the locals altogether. Williams for instance offers a “re-regulation of reconstruction” in which the authority should be given to the locals (Williams, 2010: 69). The latent mentality under this alteration is the understanding of the socio-political dimension of state-building. Based on the Durkheimian Sociology that the state and nation are constitutive entities to each other, Lemay-Hébert dubs it the “legitimacy approach” (Lemay-Hébert, 2013). This illustrates that resilience, and the local turn are interrelated.

The resilience discourse however is perceived as an excuse by certain critiques. The apparent shift from the “failed states” discourse to the “fragile contexts/situations” in the OECD documents, is read as the “last stage” of state-building (Pospisil and Kühn, 2016). They argue that when the institutional-capacity building has reached its logical end, resilience discourse made the international donor community revise their footstep as benign (Ibid.). While Chandler interprets this as “apologia” to the limits of international intervention (Chandler, 2013), some others see it as escaping responsibility (Mac Ginty and Richmond, 2013).

From “local ownership” to “resilience”, the international community has come to understand that the state-building agenda will have to face many future problems. Heywood elaborates on two of them; regarding creating institutions in a highly deep political tension, providing legitimacy to the local governments, and how to provide aid without causing hindrance (Heywood, 2013). While these questions need to be answered satisfactorily, with its organizations, the international community looks strenuous to cope with the complications via dialogue platforms. One thing remains

certain though, every post-conflict context in the contemporary world has its characteristics and there is no one-size-fits-all checklist to apply.

The future of state-building is dependent on the 2030 sustainable development agenda of the UN to a large extent. This is because the aid regime is designated accordingly, and countries all around the world have experienced internal conflicts in 2016 more than any time in the last 30 years and almost half of the world's poor population is expected to be influenced by these by 2030 (International Network on Conflict and Fragility [INCAF], 2018). Also, the relationship between peacebuilding and state-building is becoming more consistent. Since 2008, as a part of the INCAF, the "New Deal" of the IDPS has been approaching peace-building and state-building under the same umbrella, as the aspects of conflict management and fragility restoration, respectively.

Upon this theoretical and conceptual framework, given that the international state-building is the contemporary model of classical state-building, it has to build upon the specific dynamics of Afghan state-building. Thus, the next chapter reviews two and a half-century Afghan history of state-building.

CHAPTER TWO
AFGHANISTAN: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND DYNAMICS OF STATE-BUILDING

This chapter analyzes the political history of Afghanistan. Since the mid-18th century, many state-builders have tried to consolidate power and strengthen their rule. To do this, they used coercion, found ways to create and mobilize capital, and applied various indoctrinations to build their legitimacy.

Within this process, the dynamics which specify the relationship between rulers and society have emerged. Besides, ethnic, and geographical elements of the country have also affected these dynamics. In this context, Afghanistan has produced a peculiar type of inter-elite and society relations. Hence, first, the geographical location is examined. Indeed, the geographical factor is unamendable and has always had a prominent effect on the process. Secondly, the ethnic factor is reviewed. Afghanistan has a multi-ethnic society, all of which have contributed to the political history of the country. In this section, the thesis poses whether or not the ethnic factor was a matter of conflict in Afghan history. Then, in the subsequent third and fourth sections, the thesis scrutinizes Afghanistan's state-building milestones to put both international and local dynamics.

2.1. GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan henceforth Afghanistan stands in South Asia surrounded by Pakistan, Iran, Turkic republics of Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and slightly China. It is located among Central Asia, West Asia, Middle East, and the Arabian Sea. This attributes high strategic importance to Afghanistan as one should count it when considering geopolitics in the region.

It is not only the borders that Afghanistan shares with its neighbors but also culture, ethnic bounds, and religion, as it consists of large amounts of populations from them, especially from the Turkic republics, and Pakistan. The latter, Pakistan is the one Afghanistan shares its longest border which is 2430 km.

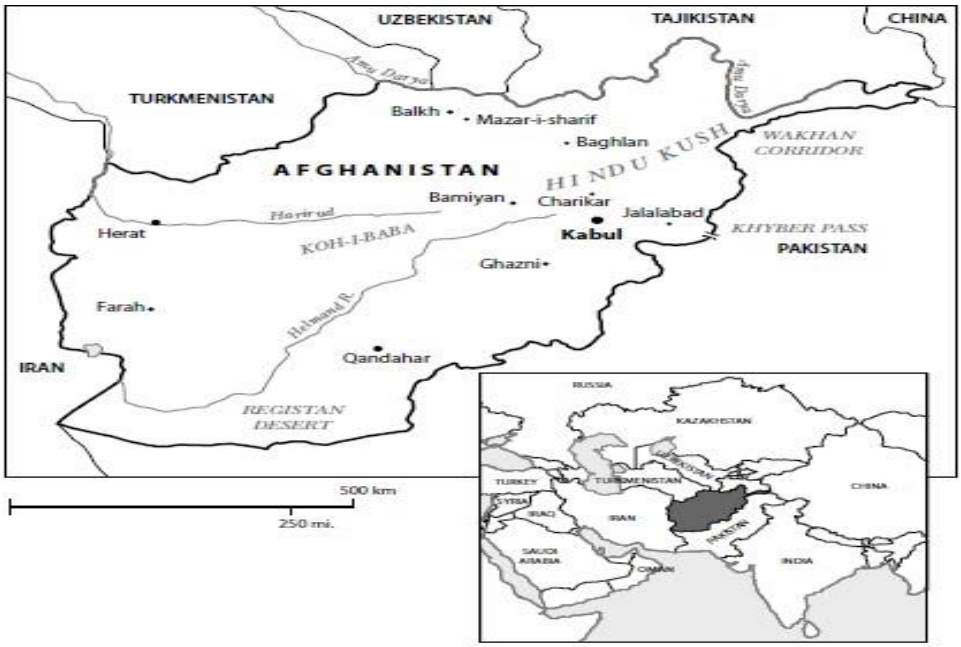
2.1.1. Geopolitics of Afghanistan as a Buffer State

Afghanistan is landlocked and a mountainous state. Its main terrain figures are high mountains (among the highest in the world), plateaus, steppes, scarce rivers,

and deserts. The country's major terrain system is the Hindu Kush Mountain range. It spans from the northwesternmost part of the Himalayas to the south of the Pamir Mountains. The Hindu Kush mountains hill the center and northeast parts of the whole country. Besides them, the Paropamisus mountains and Baba mountains also stand in the center-west of the country. From the snowy caps of these mountains, rises 4 main river systems: Kabul River, Hari Rud River, Helmand River, and the Oxus (Amu Darya) River. The latter also constitutes the north border of the country with the Turkic Republics.

Afghanistan's occurrence as a state goes back to the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in which the "Great Game" between the Tsarist Russian Empire and the British Raj in the Indian subcontinent took place. From the periphery of the weakened India-based Mughal empire, Ahmad Khan consolidated Afghanistan in 1747. In that era, the Russian Empire aimed to reach out to the south, to the Indian Ocean while the British Empire prevented this to happen. This understanding is crucial as it shows how Imperial powers crafted Afghanistan as a "buffer state" between them. Another sign that proves this is the narrow Wakhan Corridor which connects Afghanistan to China so that the Russian Empire is contained from the British Raj (Khan, 1998). The then Russian Empire border is now visible by Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan north of the Amu Darya (Oxus) river.

Figure 4: Overview Map of Afghanistan



Source: Barfield, 2010: xiv.

The then international actors and the Afghan rulers (Amir) strived to keep one another away from the control of this buffer area. In this aspect, the British and Afghans have fought three times in their history, known as the Anglo-Afghan Wars between (1839-1842), (1878-1880) and finally in 1919 from which Afghanistan earned its independence from the British Raj in India. Even though the British armies always had the superiority of firepower, they enjoyed only limited success in the Second Anglo-Afghan War after which they managed to change the Afghan Amir and put Abdurrahman Khan in rule who delivered the jurisdiction of foreign relations of his country to the British Empire. The second war also guaranteed the exclusion of Russian influence from the Afghan country. The overall defeat of foreign invaders and limited success is partly because of the rough terrain of the country.

To win the “Great Game” and prevent Russian Empire from the British Raj and thus the Indian Ocean, the British had two choices: either conquer and annex Afghanistan to the Raj or simply make it unattainable by Tsarist Russians (Khan, 1998). As the first two Anglo-Afghan Wars had proved, the British chose the latter. They pursued a dual method: on the one hand they encouraged Afghan Amirs to enlarge their influence into the North until the Oxus River either by settling locals from the south or by conquering and on the other hand leaving Afghanistan isolated especially with poor transportation means within the country (Ibid.). The first method shows today how Pashtun (or Pakhtun) tribes worked their ways through Hindu Kush mountains to the steppes in the north of Herat and near Mazar-e Sharif and how vast populations of Turkic Republics live within Afghan borders.

It was the Western powers and the Tsarist Russia who designated Afghanistan’s contemporary borders. Russia was more influential in doing so, especially before the second Anglo-Afghan War as the British Empire maximized its influence over Afghanistan especially by foreign affairs means from then on. Thus, before that stage, Russians and British decided that the northern border should be the Oxus River in 1873 (Ibid.). After the Second Anglo-Afghan War, while British General Maclean designated the Afghan Iranian border in 1891, Sir Mortimer Durand who was the British foreign minister for the Raj delineated the Afghan-Pakistan border in 1893 which is widely known by his name onwards (Ibid.). Besides, it was again the Western powers who created the narrow Wakhan Corridor, which establishes a short border of 75 km with China in 1895-1896 (Ibid. 491).

This buffer state feature of Afghanistan has partly lost its ground when Pakistan and India announced their independence from British Raj in 1947. The

independence of Pakistan escalated disputes between two countries regarding the sovereignty of the so-called “Pakhtunistan”, a term which is referred to the border territory of the two countries in which Pashtun tribes live for the most part. The main argument of Afghanistan has been reclaiming the lands in which Pashtun tribes live as remnants of the Durrani Empire predecessor of Afghanistan. Thus, it was this deterioration that put Afghanistan closer to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) side in the Cold War years. Unable to reach the Arabian Sea through Pakistan, Afghanistan got closer to the USSR. It eventually peaked with the subsequent invasion of Afghanistan by the USSR in December 1979 which put an end to the state of the buffer.

Today as a strategy in its international politics, to cater for its need of goods, Afghanistan balances its dependence on its neighbors. Afghanistan balances Pakistan by political and economic partnerships with India through Iran (Bhatnagar and Ahmed, 2020). Afghanistan has recently started to execute international trade with its neighbors and international community through Chabahar Port of Iran instead of depending only on Pakistan’s port of Karachi.

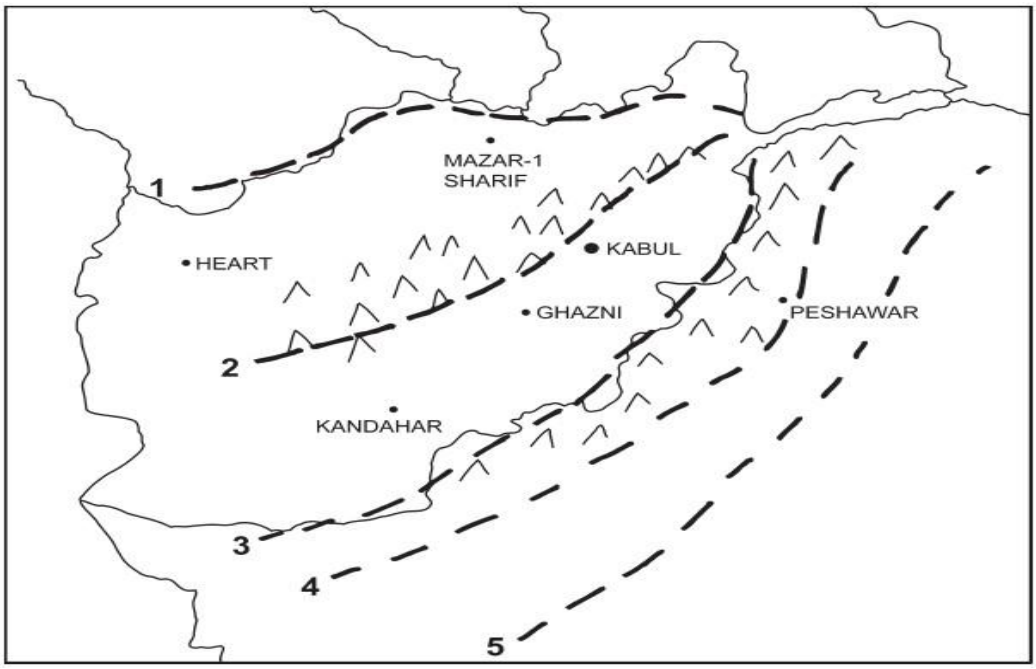
2.1.2. The Durand Line

After the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878-1880), the Amir of Afghanistan, Abdurrahman Khan, and the British Foreign Minister for Indian Raj, Sir Henry Mortimer Durand signed the treaty which demarcated a frontier between Afghanistan and the British Raj in 1893. This 2640 km long border has been known as the “Durand line” ever since (Khan and Wagner, 2013: 20). To secure the buffer zone of Afghanistan, Durand had two ideas in mind: secure the Afghan Northern border from Russian Empire and separate British India from the area so that any possible influence of the Russian Empire is blown away (Omrani, 2009). Even though the border between Russia had already been accepted as the Oxus River in the north in 1873, the river as frontier did not cover the little Pamirs and Wakhan area. So that is the gap Durand was meaning to fill (Ibid.).

There were various possibilities to set a frontier and protect the Indian subcontinent. Omrani designates five of them, depending on topographical features (Ibid.). The first one is the Oxus River which divides Central and South Asia regions. The second one is the Hindu Kush mountains that extend all through Afghanistan. Third, the Suliman mountains on which the Durand line sits. Fourth, the foothill of

those mountains until the Indus River, and the final one is the Indus River itself. In the negotiation process, some Pashtun tribes living in the Waziristan area (the region between Ghazni and Peshawar) were separated by the line, leaving some in British Raj and some in the Afghan territory.

Figure 5: Possible Borders Between Afghanistan and the British Raj



Source: Omrani, 2009: 179.

The Durand line's other feature is that since the independence of Pakistan, Afghanistan has been frequently and officially stating that the Durand Line as a border is unacceptable. It was also the main reason why Afghanistan was the sole vetoer against Pakistan's independence at the UN in 1948 (Bhatnagar and Ahmed, 2020). They have made four arguments (Ibid.). First, it became time-barred as its validity was meant for a hundred years. Second, they had made the treaty with the British, so that when Pakistan announced its independence, it is annulled. Third, it was imposed by force. Fourth, it is unacceptable because it is immoral. Even though none of these arguments have ground in international law, both the people and rulers insist on them, including the latest two Presidents of the country.

Overall, the Durand line, a bilateral issue incrementally has become first regional and then a global problem (Khan and Wagner, 2013). At first, it was just an ethnic problem about Pashtun tribes and the so-called Pakhtunistan along the border

between the two countries. Then, in the 1990s Pakistan added a religious dimension to it with the “strategic depth” approach in which Pakistan aimed two goals: first to crush Pakhtunistan claim and second to train combatants in the area to use against India over Kashmir dispute (Ibid. 20). Finally, with the Taliban militants who are known to be settled in the region, the issue has gained an international attraction after 9/11. A key argument to draw from this transformation is, it is the cooperation and possibly a “pooling of sovereignty” along the border between the two parts which is needed to redeem the past and not confrontation since it proved to worsen the situation (Ibid. 29). Thus, Afghanistan and Pakistan must solve the Durand line problem in a more constructive attitude to reduce the violence which stems from the border territory.

2.2. ETHNIC COMPOSITION

According to the UN, Afghanistan has a population of approximately 39 million. The population is not unitary in an ethnic manner, rather it has always been a composition of different groups. Besides, ethnic groups are not indigenous as they may have the same or more amounts of masses in neighboring countries. Referring to the difficulty of estimating numbers, it is thought that either major or minor, ethnic groups and their statistics are “validated through repetition” but no actualities (Barfield, 2010: 24).

2.2.1. Major and Minor Ethnic Groups

Ethnic diversity is a political issue both in Afghanistan and the regional powers. This brings about no consensus on the numbers and percentages of different groups in Afghanistan. However, there is an overall idea that Pashtuns hold the majority and that they comprise approximately more than %40 percent. Accordingly, this thesis holds that the largest group is the Pashtuns, depending on the fact that the Durrani tribe of Pashtuns founded the country and remained dominant in the last two centuries.

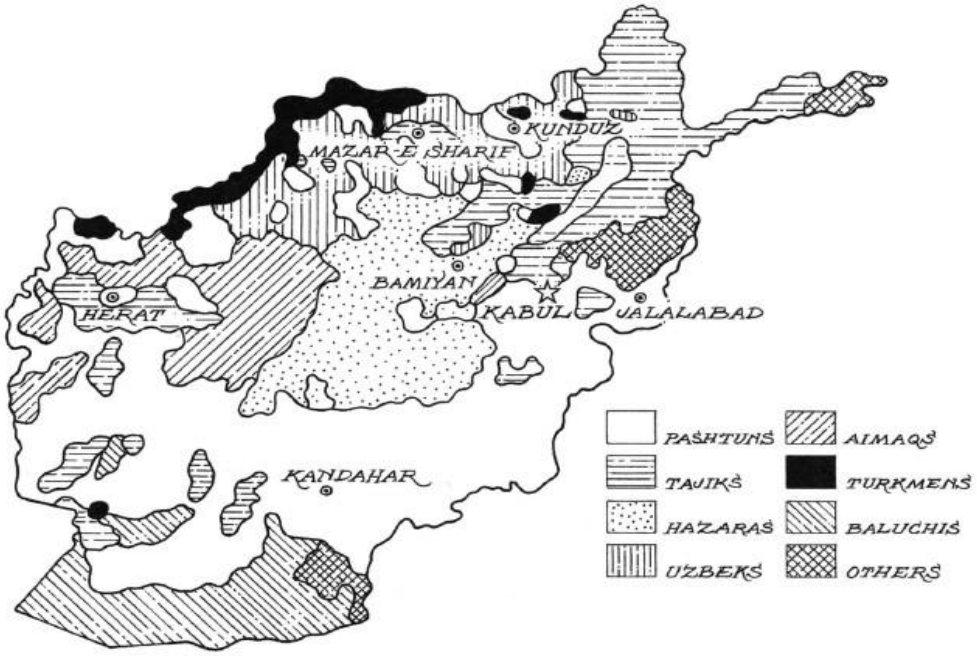
2.2.1.1. Pashtuns

Pashtuns are the largest ethnic group in Afghanistan. Speaking Pashto, they have a particular traditional culture and a code of values called “Pushtunwali” (Dupree, 1980: 104). They are mainly Sunni Muslim nomads or subsistence farmers who

generally live in the south and southeast areas of Afghanistan. However, as Amir Abdurrahman Khan settled some Pashtun tribes to the steppes north of the Hindu Kush mountains in the 1880s, it is possible to come across Pashtuns about Mazar-e Shariff.

Comprising about %40 percent of Afghans, they are originated from Qais Abdur Rashid's four sons who lived in about the sixth century. They are the Durrani, the Ghilzai, the Gurghust, and the Karlanri (Barfield, 2010). Just as the founder of Afghanistan, Ahmad Shah Durrani was a Pashtun, Pashtuns remained upper crust in the following two centuries. When Mortimer Durand drew the line, almost half of the Pashtuns were left in today's Pakistani, soil extending to the Indus River.

Figure 6: Ethnic Map of Afghanistan



Source: Mike Reagan (qtd. in Barfield, 2011: 57).

2.2.1.2. Tajiks

With a majority of about %30, Tajiks are the second largest group in Afghanistan. Mostly Sunni Muslims, they speak Dari which is a dialect of Persian. Even though Tajiks are mainly seen in the northwest of the country along the Tajikistan border, unlike Pashtuns they prefer to live all over. The term "Tajik" is no common among Tajiks. The name "Taj" or "Taz" means "Arab" in old Persian (Dupree,

1980: 59). So, it is rather others who call them Tajiks (Glatzer, 1998). When asked, they prefer to introduce themselves by their homelands or regions.

2.2.1.3. Hazaras

Hazaras live around the Hindu Kush mountains in central Afghanistan also known as “Hazarajat”. Hazaras who are mostly Shia Muslims, speak the Hazaraqi language which is similar to the Dari (Dupree, 1980). Comprising about %15 of the population they are the most isolated people due to the geography of their land. This also has an impact on their exclusion from the state bureaucracy in Afghan history (Barfield, 2010).

2.2.1.4. Uzbeks

Uzbeks live in northern Afghanistan, mainly about Mazar-e Shariff. Uzbeks and Turkmens were included beneath Afghan frontiers when Afghan Amirs conquered the lands until the Oxus River during the Great Game. Some others also followed them migrating south to Afghanistan when Turkic Republics entered the Soviet Union (Glatzer, 1998). Along with Turkmens they comprise %10 of the population and make Afghanistan famous for their renowned carpets which they make of Karakul sheep’s skins (Barfield, 2010). Uzbeks are Sunni Muslims and speak Uzbek (a dialect of Turkish) and mostly Dari.

2.2.1.5. Aimaqs

Aimaqs are usually living around Herat and in the area between Herat and the Hindu Kush mountains in western Afghanistan. However, just as Tajiks, they prefer to live all over and are seen in eastern Kabul. The term “aimaq” means “tribe” in old Turkish (Dupree, 1980: 60). They are Sunni Muslims and speak Dari. As semi-Turkish and semi-Mongolian descendants, Aimaqs invaded and settled the ancient “Ghor” region in Afghanistan which is between Hazarajat and Herat (Barfield, 2010: 28). They are divided into four tribes, forming the smallest of major concentrated groups in Afghanistan.

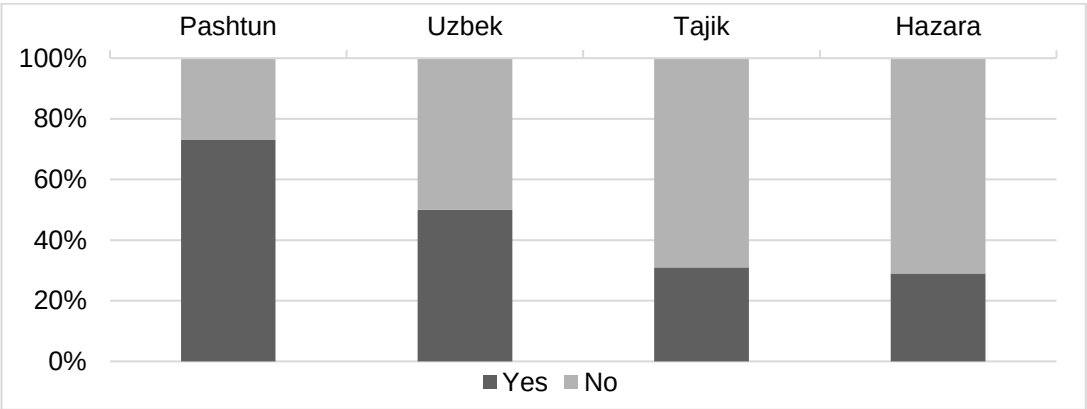
2.2.1.6. Others

Alongside these 5 major ethnic groups, other relatively minor groups exist and comprise about less than %5 of the population. Even though they are quite a lot in number, generally we can name them; Turkmens, Pamiris, Nuristanis, Baluchis, Qizilbash, and Arabs (Barfield, 2010; Dupree, 1980). Despite their less numbers, minorities were active in politics. In Afghan history, expecting them to be comparatively more loyal, Amirs appointed statesmen from minority ethnic groups, as they were also less likely to betray given their poor supports (Barfield, 2010).

2.2.2. Ethnic Factor in the Afghan Wars

To what extent ethnicity is a factor in the Afghan Wars matters for this study. Some scholars posit that ethnic pluralism is not a key factor behind Afghan civil unrest since ethnicity in Afghanistan is “prenationalist” as different groups are with similar interests and in no demand for a mutual ideology of separation or “overriding commonality” (Barfield, 2011: 56). However, a public survey held among 700 attendees from 16 provinces in Afghanistan shows that most Pashtuns among other major ethnic groups in Afghanistan would like to have an additional category that mentions their ethnicity besides nationality. This demand takes Pashtuns out of Barfield’s “prenationalist” Afghan nationalism, as Pashtuns still possess an idea of being elegant Afghans.

Figure 7: Preferences Due to an Ethnic Category in National Identification Cards



Source: Mobasher, 2018.

Pashtuns dominated the political and economic life of Afghanistan since the foundation by Ahmad Shah Durrani in the eighteenth century for two and a half centuries until the end of the Soviet-backed Najibullah regime in 1992 (Ahady, 1995). Accordingly, Ahady puts that, after 1992, the Pashtun dominance declined due to five reasons. First, in the post-Soviet chaos and with the help of the UN's initiative for pace, the alliance of non-Pashtun groups "Northern Alliance" took hold of the military power of the former Afghan army. Second, intra-Pashtun tribal rivalries made them relatively weaker. Third, there was a gap between Pashtun leaders and the Pashtun people. Fourth, Pashtun leaders had relatively poor relations with the Western powers. Finally, regional powers also favored other groups more than Pashtuns.

Even though the subsequent civil war seems to be ethnically rooted, the ethnic difference is only the surface of the glacier in terms of Afghan wars. The history of the Afghan wars has two faces. One face, the bigger root is in the fight between modernist rulers and conservative rural people (Barfield, 2011). Afghan people always have a tendency of resistance against modernism both by local Amirs and their foreign patrons. Both Amir Amanullah Khan's efforts to create a centralized state and the Soviet Union's intervention with their subsequent political and economic reforms faced the same reaction and eventually could not survive (Ibid.). The roots of this conservative resistance can be traced back to the 19th-century-Amirs' isolation politics to survive the Great Game between regional big powers. After isolationism, to compensate for the gap ended up with Soviet intervention in 1979, which caused Afghan people to be reluctant against foreign interventions.

Related to this issue, another face of the wars comprises ethnic differences but not caused directly by them. Different ethnic groups struggle against one another not to conquer most of the soil but to have a voice in the rule (Ibid.; Sahar and Sahar, 2019). If they don't struggle, they apprehend that their rights would be infringed, and they would be deprived of economic and political public resources. Thus, ethnic diversity had a role in deteriorating wars since Afghan people possess a feature of group-oriented culture. This easily leads to misinformation and stereotypes towards others. The language differences of Dari and Pashto for example can be an instrument for this.

Ethnic factor in Afghan politics has not been as vicious as to directly cause civil wars but also not as smooth as to live in proper peace. This issue especially becomes visible at times of elections. The first democratic transition of power was due to the 2014 elections. It failed to achieve a clean transition as competing candidates

did not take results in the same attitude and after the second round between Abdullah and Ghani, the international community had to intervene to broker a deal. This showed that unitary and single nationhood is still premature (Sahar and Sahar, 2019). The same episode recurred in the 2020 elections in which the results' announcement was postponed for 5 months. After official results showed Abdullah was behind Ghani, he kept insisting he received the majority of votes and that he eventually announced himself as President, causing two inaugurations simultaneously. Even though the results did not change, Abdullah's persistence is partly due to his representation of Tajiks thanks to which he earned the positions of Chief Executive and Chairman of the High Council for National Reconciliation (HCNR) to lead the intra-Afghan peace process. To reach the required civic awareness within a society, popular interests should replace ethnic and regional-based politics and that the resources and power are distributed evenly (Ibid.).

2.3. SHORT HISTORY UNTIL THE WAR ON TERROR

In this section, the short history of Afghanistan until the war on terror which started in late 2001 is reviewed. While doing this, the focus is on how Afghan state-builders mediated among various ethnic groups and the great powers beyond borders. Indeed, until its independence, Afghan elites ruled within the "Great Game" context between Russian and British empires. This situation has barely changed after the independence. Since then, resembling the "Great Game" it was the Cold War between two superpowers that wage an influence war in Afghanistan over foreign aids. Moreover, the end of the strategic confrontation pawed the way for a regional proxy war on Afghan soil since the confrontation's end also lowered the strategic stakes in it (Rubin, 2006). In this aspect, history reveals that Afghanistan has been a battlefield in the past four decades. With all its phases, this ongoing war is indeed an indication that the country lacks a substantial state-formation.

2.3.1. Foundation of Afghanistan

Because of its geographical location, the soil upon which Afghanistan sits today has seen many great emperors, kingdoms, and civilizations. Alexander the Great, Genghis Khan, and Babur Shah and their respective empires are among them. In the near history, it also staged the Great Game between the British and Tsarist Russian Empires to control Central Asia and the Indian subcontinent and their

subsequent invasions. None, however, have come to assume power permanently. This fact made some name Afghanistan as the “graveyard of empires” (Bearden, 2001). A narrow corridor between Jalalabad and Peshawar, Khyber Pass, which connects Central Asian steppes to the rich soil of the Indian subcontinent has been used as a key gate in all scenes.

Afghanistan was founded on the remnants of the Persian Safavid Empire all through Herat, Helmand, and Kandahar provinces in south and southwestern Afghanistan. Even though indigenous peoples had not portrayed themselves as Afghans, it was the Western conquerors who approached them from the Indian subcontinent and called these Pashto-speaking Pashtun tribes as Afghans (Hyman, 2002). Among the weakened Mughal Empire in India and Uzbeks in the north, a local “jirga” (advisory committee) chose Ahmad Khan as Shah upon the power vacuum in Afghan territory caused by Safavid emperor Nadir Shah’s death. He was the foremost Pashtun from the Abdali tribe to bear the title of “Durr-i Durran” meaning “pearl of pearls” (Barfield, 2004: 270). Thus, his descendants named themselves “Durrani” after him.

Ahmad Shah Durrani acceded to the throne in 1747. He expanded the country’s influence vastly to the India in east and southeast, the Indian Ocean in the south, the Oxus River in the north, and Mashhad of Iran in the West (Runion, 2007). For his success and power, Afghans recognize him as the “Father of Afghanistan” (Ibid. 10). His throne depended mostly on the revenues from conquered lands and the loot of captured properties. As long as he managed to divide them among subordinate Pashtun tribes, he ruled successfully. Thus, Rubin makes an analogy when he puts it: “this empire at first conformed closely to the Ibn Khaldun model of tribal conquest; the tribes, their group-feeling cemented by a charismatic leader and the sharing of loot, ruled over towns and villages” (Rubin, 2002: 46). However, the problem emerged when India retrieved its lands of Kashmir and Peshawar in the Punjab region from the Durrani dynasty, cutting revenues, this caused unrest in ruling Pashtun tribes and led the country to civil war until Dost Muhammad Khan assumed power in 1835 (Ibid.).

The British Empire which had been consolidating its existence in northwestern India helped Dost Muhammad Khan to retrieve Herat from the Persian Empire. When this drew the attention of the Tsarist Russian Empire, the British invaded Afghanistan in order not to give any chance to the Russians to take any further step (Barfield, 2004). For some scholars, this move was a “misconceived attempt” as they overstated

Russian influence (Hyman, 2002: 303). So that Afghans fought the British Empire and the subsequent British Raj in India three times in their history; also known as the Anglo-Afghan Wars. In this aspect, it is worth noting that the first two wars of 1839-1842, and 1878-1880 arose from the Great Game, in other words: the British and Tsarist Russian Empire's conflicts of interest in central and south Asia and particularly by the British invasion of Afghanistan due to this issue (Rubin, 2002).

Besides the short-term consequences as a defeat of Anglo-Afghan wars for the British army, in the long term, they made sure of two things. First, they directly served to help induce Afghans to have a national thought. Second, they indirectly consolidated the state of Afghanistan under the rule of Amirs who used them to their advantage (Hymen, 2002). The British policymakers have come to understand the fact that Afghanistan is a tough country to invade and control directly. So that they pursued policies to make pressure on the Amirs and keep them close by foreign aid. In summary, the Anglo-Afghan wars were the milestones of the balance of power among the Afghan state, Pashtun tribes, and the British (Rubin, 2002).

The first Anglo-Afghan war broke out in 1839 when the British invade and took control of Kabul. Their main goal was to block Russian interests in the south of the Oxus River and further India. Even though they replaced Amir Dost Muhammad with Shah Shuja when faced with the heavy costs and irregular resistance of Afghans they left the country with a catastrophe of approximately 16.500 losses during the withdrawal of 1842 (Hyman, 2002). Dost Muhammad regained his throne after the British exit and remained in power until he died in 1863. British also let him keep his rule and even supplied foreign aid and weapons as he accepted to remain neutral in the 1857-1859 Indian revolt (Rubin, 2002).

British Raj in India threatened Afghanistan by amassing an army at the gate of Khyber Pass in 1878 when they found out that there was a Russian diplomatic mission in Kabul (Runion, 2007). At first, the British also asked for a representative envoy in Kabul. However, when the successor of Dost Muhammad, Sher Ali refused, they invaded the country both from Jalalabad and Kandahar in November (Barfield, 2004). The British changed Amir and guaranteed the exclusion of Russian influence. Even though the most powerful heir was Sher Ali's son Ayoub Khan who won a victory against the British in Maiwand, they put Abdur Rahman Khan on the throne, and with the Gandamak treaty of 1879 new Amir delegated the authority of their foreign relations with the British, accepted to stabilize and not to pass over the border which would later become the Durand line, in return for power resources, and modernization

of his army (Barfield, 2004; Hyman, 2002). Furthermore, with these resources, he "foreshadowed a postcolonial state" (Rubin, 2006: 178).

Abdur Rahman Khan (1880-1901) pursued a policy to centralize his power in Kabul and subjugate all Pashtun tribes in the south and southeastern regions of his country. Just like his grandfather Dost Muhammad Khan, to do that he took British aid against rebellious tribes (Barfield, 2004). In consolidating power all through Ghilzai Pashtuns in eastern Afghanistan, he used the Muhammadzai tribe of Durrani Pashtuns based around Kandahar province (Shahrani, 2002). In the north, he subdued Hazaras in Hazarajat, and Turkmens, Tajiks, and Uzbeks beneath the Oxus River, and introduced Islam upon Kafiristan which is known to be Nuristan since then. While this made the British name him the "Iron Amir", it was also a type of colonialism or an "internal colonialism" (Rubin, 2006; Shahrani, 2002: 719). Today the "internal colonialism" of Iron Amir is still virtual as isolated Pashtun villages in the north of Hindu Kush mountains. Because of these resettlement policies of Abdur Rahman Khan, today there is also a remnant of resentment of Hazaras towards Pashtuns as they had become rich landlords in Hazarajat regions (Hyman, 2002). The first sign of this tension was revealed when Hazaras did not let Pashtun tribes coming from the south spend their time in fresh plateaus of the Hindu Kush after the Soviets left Afghanistan (Glatzer, 1998).

Afghans and the British fought for another but a relatively short period in 1919. This was because of the independence request of Afghanistan by Amanullah Khan from almost two decades of British domination. When Amanullah Khan forced the British to leave their territory through Khyber Pass, the British bombed Kabul with their air force. This forced Amanullah for an armistice and the parties signed the treaty of Rawalpindi which heralded the independence of Afghanistan and the end of the Great Game (Hyman, 2002). Since then, Afghans commemorate National Independence Day on the 19th of August every year.

2.3.2. Afghanistan as an Independent State

After succeeding full independence from the British, Afghanistan witnessed a series of modernization thrusts rapidly under the rule of Amanullah Khan between 1919 and 1929. After the end of the Great Game, the country in hand was such a ruin that Dupree implicates Afghanistan's whole 20th century as "non-alignment, independence, and development" (Dupree, 1980: xx). The main challenge ahead of

Amanullah Khan was the foreign aid cut from the British. As both internal and external colonialism ended, the only solution for the Amir was to initiate nation and state-building. This was not necessarily a short-term renovation as it meant undoing everything that his predecessors Abdurrahman and Dost Muhammad did.

To survive both internally and internationally, Amanullah sought resources, in other words, the capital. He went on a trip in which he observed western developed and developing states while asking for aid and investment. Besides receiving some amount of aid from those countries, he initiated mobilizing supply, resources, and revenue within Afghanistan and accumulation for trade in the region. To achieve this, he made reforms on the tax collection system, land distribution, and transportation means (Rubin, 2002). Germans built the first railroad between Kabul and Dar-al Aman upon which Amanullah had planned to build the new capital (Dupree, 1980). Under Amanullah Khan's rule, Afghanistan gained international recognition and mastered its international relations. Amanullah also sought good relations with its neighbors, and it was the newly established Soviet government in Russia who recognized its independence and opened a diplomatic mission in Kabul first.

Amanullah Khan tried to change the traditional lifestyle of Afghans and transform Afghanistan into a modern Western-like nation-state. Constitution was one of the milestones of this process. In 1923, Amanullah Khan introduced Afghans to the first constitution (Runion, 2007). It included some radical changes like abolishing veil obligation for women, dress reforms, and citizenship. The constitution also deprived tribal elders in rural areas of the authority on choosing whom to enlist in the army and whom to pay taxes. Arguably, the Afghan people had problems in keeping pace with all these radical changes, whereupon the tribal leaders and traditional elders fostered resentment on the Amir.

Modern Amir of Afghanistan also took a strong interest in education. He let foreigners found schools in Kabul. He let the French open a high school (Lycée) in 1922, Germans another college in 1924, and an Indian-British school in 1927 (Rubin, 2002: 56). Furthermore, girls had the chance to go to school as well as illiterate nomads at the local level.

One challenge that Amanullah could not overcome and perhaps the most crucial one is not being able to strengthen the army, in other words, the coercion, since he lacked revenues and insufficient taxes. Even though he modernized the army to some extent, its ineffectiveness broke the surface when Ghilzai Pashtuns and Tajiks revolted against the Amir and the army failed to suppress him. Habibullah led

the revolt who was a bandit and a former army officer that had witnessed grievances due to the new system (Ibid.). This illiterate Tajik also known as the “Bacha Saqqao”, or "son of a water-carrier" conquered Kabul, ousted Amanullah, and ruled Afghanistan for nine months (Dupree, 1980: 452).

Nadir Shah, who was an army general in the third Anglo-Afghan war seized Kabul and acceded to the throne in late 1929. It is denotative how he established an alliance with the Ghilzai Pashtuns against Tajik Habibullah whose tenure lasted only nine months as it gives the message that non-Pashtuns do not enjoy rights over the rule of the country (Barfield, 2004). With Nadir Shah, the throne passed to the Musahiban family, a clan of Muhammadzai Pashtuns, who would rule the country until 1978. Nadir Shah ruled between 1929 and 1933, a period in which he implemented the lessons he learned from his predecessor, as he puts it: “Amanullah tried to change the minds of people by changing their hats. He failed. I am working from the foundation” (Lee, 2018: 502). As his own words suggest, he shared the idea of modernizing Afghanistan but in a different manner. Nadir Shah slowed down the process of modernization. He gave many authorities back to the tribal elders in by 1931 constitution while pressurizing free speech. He imprisoned thousands of intellectuals, and many left the country (Runion, 2007).

1931 Constitution empowered the king’s authority over the Islamic basis. From education to the judiciary legal system rested upon Islamic Shari’a. Courts gave verdicts referencing Shari’a rules while the education system returned madrasas. Constitution also limited girls’ reach to education and the names of German and French schools in Kabul were renamed as “Nejat” and “Istiqlal” (Lee, 2018: 513). The Islamization of politics was so deep that it was unprecedented until the Taliban’s rule in the late 1990s (Ibid.). Sealing the Musahiban dynasty over the crown of Afghanistan, article 5 of the constitution recognized Nadir Shah’s family as the true heir of the rule (Ibid.).

Musahiban family gradually processed modernism. After the assassination of Nadir Shah by a student in a ceremony in 1933, his nineteen-year-old son wore the crown. Due to his inexperience, his uncles and nephews ruled the state as prime ministers mostly. During this process, the pioneers of a tendency towards democratization were Shah Mahmoud’s liberal parliament (1949-1952) and Zahir Shah’s constitution of 1964. However, the Musahiban family knew that the balances of power within the state prevented any strictly imposed change by the state (Rubin, 1988). So that rather than an internal tribal system they turned to the international

bipolar system for resources (Rubin, 2002). They created trade links and accumulation of capital which grew gradually by changing the tax system. To do this, rulers in Kabul collected indirect taxes from trade and merchandise rather than agricultural taxes as Amanullah used to do. A gradual decrease is visible in the agricultural direct taxes as they had dropped to less than %2 in the 1970s from %62.5 in 1926 in terms of the state's total revenue (Rubin, 1988: 1201).

Afghanistan established its National Bank (Bank-e Millie) in 1932 and became a member of the LON in 1934. These developments fastened economic relations with other countries. Abdul Majid Zabuli who became minister of the economy adopted a seven-year development model based on Lenin's model in Soviet Russia (Lee, 2018). Zabuli's economic policy increased foreign trade rates and decreased tax stress on the pastoral tribal system.

As their predecessor Amanullah Khan, the Musahiban family was also modernist, but they were rather reluctant and bound to the international system that was founded after the end of WW II. British withdrawal from the Indian subcontinent, the subsequent independence of Pakistan in 1947, and the polarization of world politics between the US and USSR influenced Afghanistan appreciably. After Pakistan's independence, Afghanistan claimed for a sovereign Pushtunistan state in the land where Pashtuns live majorly around the Durand line frontier, however, neither Pakistan nor global powers allowed this. Besides, its dependence on Pakistan on Karachi port in terms of a gate to the Arabian sea for trade made Afghanistan get closer to the Soviet Union side in international politics. These issues made Afghanistan more and more prone to foreign aids mostly from the Soviet Union and sometimes from the US.

From 1963 to 1973 rather than his uncles and nephews, Zahir Shah ruled on his own. In this era which is also known as the "new democracy", the last king of Afghanistan Zahir Shah strove for a constitutional monarchy. He established the 1964 constitution in which the word "Afghan" nominated all citizens of the country for the first time (Runion, 2007). Ethnic groups and religious sectaries in terms of Shia or Sunni acquiesced equal and had no privilege over one another by the constitution (Ahady, 1995). The 1964 Constitution was far more democratic than its two predecessors of 1923 and 1931. It took eighteen months to prepare as it represented all sectors of Afghan society (Thier, 2006). It sought development as well as balance, for example, on the one hand, it introduced provincial delegates in parliament and on the other hand authorized "Loya Jirga" the grand assembly in which all ethnic groups

are represented by their eldest which was an ad hoc council until then. Participation of women in political life was also another sign of the societal change (Runion, 2007). 1964 constitution was the first to bring together Afghan participation, representation, and accountability of government (Thier, 2006).

Per the liberty provided by the constitution, in 1965 a Marxist-Leninist party named the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) founded and entered parliament. With the help of leftist officers from the “Parcham” faction, later they supported Muhammad Daoud Khan to conduct a military coup and oust Zahir Shah from Kabul in 1973 (Shahrani, 2002). The affinity between Daoud Khan who was the former prime minister between 1953 and 1963, and the USSR was no secret after all as it was the politburo who persuaded Daoud Khan to be the prime minister in the first place when he attended Stalin’s funeral in 1953 (Lee, 2018). Daoud Khan declared the Republic of Afghanistan, annulled the constitution, and announced himself to be the president. Generally, four factors made Daoud do this and contributed to his success (Halliday, 1978). First, the perception of Zahir Shah’s irrelevance to Afghanistan’s prime troubles was worsened by his frequent long trips to other countries. Second, the country’s high level of dependence on foreign aid. Third, a severe drought that hit the country between 1969-1972 and the subsequent black market which included corrupt officials. Fourth, exchanging Helmand River waters for Iran’s oil during the drought.

The first President of the Republic of Afghanistan’s rule lasted for only five years. It ended with a Soviet-backed coup in April of 1978 which started a communist rule and ended the Muhammadzai dynasty’s almost two-century long rule. April (or Sawr) revolution was sparked by the event in which a police officer shot and killed Mir Akbar Khyber, a professor and editor for leftist “Parcham” journal and a pivotal figure for PDPA (Halliday, 1978). However, the circumstances that ended up as a coup were rooted in Daoud’s slipping away from Soviet control and high levels of coordination with the west and oil-rich Arabian countries. There are 3 reasons behind the end of Daoud’s tenure and the leftist coup. First, Daoud’s taking advantage of the 1973 oil crisis in which oil prices increased and Arabian countries’ revenue heightened dramatically (Rubin, 1988). This issue made Daoud receive financial banking aids from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Iraq, which countered Soviet influence in Afghanistan (Runion, 2007). Second, within the context of the Nixon doctrine, Iran intervened immensely in Afghan politics. In military terms, Iran’s former intelligence agency officials started training the Afghan army officers while ousting Soviet advisers within

so that it fell from 1000 to 200 from 1972 through 1976 (Halliday, 1978). In economic means, under the project of “Asian common market” Iran Shah induced Daoud for construction of the Kabul-Mashhad railway (Ibid. 30). In return, Daoud backed off in the Pushtunistan claim and even visited Islamabad in March 1978 with the help of the US and conducted some Pashtun and Baluchi prisoners exchange (Runion, 2007). Furthermore, this decreased popularity of Daoud among Pashtun tribes and resentments towards him account for the third reason (Ibid.).

With the April revolution, PDPA assumed power and announced the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan. Even though Afghanistan was not a part of the Soviet Union, the new regime was so close to it that it is obvious from PDPA’s discourse when they refer to the USSR as the “Great Northern Neighbor” (Hyman, 2002: 306).

PDPA had two factions: “Khalq” and “Parcham”. They possessed %60 and %40 ministerial positions respectively after the revolution (Rubin, 2002). Under the leadership of Muhammad Taraki and Hafizullah Amin, the Khalq regime used the state apparatus to change the codes of the Afghan people under the name of reforms. To consolidate their power, they tried to build a communist nation-state that was alien to the Afghan people. Banning Islamic daily salutations, changing the color of the National flag from Islamic Green to the Soviet-like red were among them (Ibid.). Besides, they also intervened in land distribution, education, and even the order of family (Barfield, 2004).

These radical reforms proved futile and even triggered reactions throughout the whole society. Firstly, undermining, and humiliating Islamic norms caused resentment and resistance in rural areas in which most of the people live their ordinary lifetimes upon Islamic culture. Second, it also recoiled in the northern steppes of Afghanistan in which Turkmens, Uzbeks, and Tajiks live with their kins who escaped from Soviet regimes in their Central Asian Soviet Republics.

Ultimately, widespread revolts started throughout the country including the army. Ismail Khan a former Captain of the Afghan Army revolted like many others against the army and their Russian advisors. When neither Taraki nor Amin could cope with the resistance, and with the fragility of the Afghan army, the Soviet Union decided to invade the country and take over the security and governance problem in late December 1979.

2.3.3. Soviet Invasion and the Civil War

The Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in late 1979. The invasion started with the deployment of the 40th Soviet Army to the Kabul Airport on 25 December 1979 (Runion, 2007). This was the first party of approximately 100.000 troops that set foot on the so-called “Graveyard of Empires”. While ending practically Afghanistan’s neutrality in the Cold War this invasion caused Afghanistan to be a field for a ten-year-period proxy war.

There are a few reasons why the Soviets took such a step. The most viable three reasons are: the matter of prestige, stabilizing effect, and crushing Islamist insurgency (Gompert et al., 2014). First, the fall of a communist regime led by the PDPA in a neighboring country to the Union would badly affect the USSR’s face in the international arena. This would be not just a disgrace for Moscow but also a sign of courage to the opponents in the other communist regimes. Second, the Soviets sought to stabilize the regime by solving the problem as an act of the Brezhnev Doctrine that confirms military interventions in fellow Socialist regimes in the case of threats. It was obvious that neither Taraki nor Amir's regime could overcome regional Warlords in military means let alone govern smoothly. Moscow put a puppet leader, Babrak Karmal (leader of Parcham fraction) as soon as they took over to solve the problem in Kabul. Soviets had thought expurgating Khalq fraction would help as Amin had been provoking the revolt, however, this was a repetition of the classical British mistake, putting an unpopular leader (Bearden, 2001). Third, preventing a pan-Islamist state on its border. This was especially of importance to the Soviet Union as it comprised a vast amount of Muslim population within its borders and Muslim insurgency in its Afghan neighbor fostered an ability to unite under anti-communism.

The Soviet-Afghan war quickly became a Cold War confrontation between the two sides: the US and the USSR. Besides, the fall of the Shah regime in Iran and its successor regime threatened the Western countries’ reach of oil that comes from the Persian Gulf. In this proxy war, those who resisted the Soviet army and the PDPA regime’s soldiers by conducting a typical guerilla fight were named Mujahedeen (fighters against infidels). In their war against the communists, the area called Federally Administered Tribal Areas in Pakistan namely, Kohat, Dir, and Bannu became centers of supply chains for the supporters of Mujahedeen and the Jihad including Osama Bin Ladin against the communists (Abbas, 2014). Only Islamist parties who fought against invaders received aid. It was mainly Gulbuddin

Hekmatyar's Hizb-e Islami representing Pashtuns, and Burhanuddin Rabbani's Jamiat-e Islami party representing Tajiks.

The war-induced three million refugees running from the war (Barfield, 2004), sheltered in neighbor Pakistan's camps along the border, in which Saudi Wahhabi and Deobandi madrassas took advantage and raised poor boys to turn them into fighters. Those fighters formed the basis of the Taliban in less than a decade. Thus, while the Soviets supported and fought together with the PDPA, Mujahedeen were supported by the US, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan.

The war made the US military spend increase immensely so that it climbed from 155 billion dollars in 1979 to 400 billion in 1989 (Gompert et al., 2014: 130). This changed the balance in the advantage of NATO against the Warsaw Pact, an outcome that USSR had not meant to. Indeed, without the US's military aid, the Mujahedeen would not last long. To overcome the USSR's airpower in Afghanistan, the US also sent "Stinger" surface-to-air missiles to the Mujahedeen which caused notable aerial casualties to the Soviet Air Force (Barfield, 2004; Bearden, 2001).

Just like the British did a century ago, the Soviet Army decided to evacuate Afghan soil as it proved no viable success compared to high costs. Soviets failed to estimate the Afghan resistance's willpower, the high terrain factor, and mistakenly believed that controlling the cities would be enough to control the country (Gompert et al., 2014). Besides, the war caused 1 million deaths in total (Rashid, 1999). The ten-year war's one difference from the Anglo-Afghan wars was it served as a pioneer experience for the transnational Jihad of Saudi Wahhabism (Barfield, 2004).

While the exit of the Soviet Army in April 1989 was a "cataclysm" for the Soviets, it was a national disaster for the Afghans (Bearden, 2001: 23). It revealed the faltering situation of the Soviet Union and that of the Eastern European satellite states as in Hungary and Poland, communists lost power (Ibid.). In Afghanistan, the communist Najibullah government lingered for three more years though. The reason behind this was the defeat of the invaders. When the Soviets left, the motivation of the Mujahedeen which was Jihad against infidels, turned out to be useless. Some former Mujahedeen even took part and served in the Najibullah regime (Barfield, 2004). It was the foreign aid of the Soviet Union that made the communist regime survived in Afghanistan. Thus, when the USSR dissolved in late 1991 so did the Najibullah regime only a few months later. After this, the fractions dissolved following their ethnic cliques. Rashid Dostum was one who later joined the "Council of the North" led by Ahmad Shah Masoud including Ismail Khan from Herat. The minority

leaders' sole joint idea was their refusal of former Afghan King, Zahir Shah's return as the head of Afghanistan as he was a Pashtun (Ibid.).

Even though the former Mujahedeen managed to form a provisional government led by Rabbani as head of the state and Masoud as Defense Minister in Kabul in 1992, the civil war raged for years. It was the Pashtun-dominated rentier rulers' "internal colonialism" that made this conflict severe (Shahrani, 2002: 719). Regional powers also manipulated this conflict in line with their interests (Ibid.). The country was mainly divided by Tajiks in the northwest led by Masoud, Uzbeks in North around Mazar-e Shariff led by Rashid Dostum, Farsiwans in the west around Herat led by Ismail Khan and Hazaras in the center, and Pashtuns in the south and eastern part led by Hekmatyar. At the end of the day, Afghans' usual way of resistance to the invaders, guerilla warfare, or in Barfield's words, "auto-immune disorder" now started to cause problems for themselves (Barfield, 2004: 286).

Hekmatyar, who fostered his abilities in the anti-communist youth organizations in Kabul University in the 1960s (Abbas, 2014), became Prime Minister of the provisional government with a deal with Masoud in Islamabad, supported by Pakistan. However, Hekmatyar's represent of Pashtuns diminished gradually as a new group called the "Taliban" (students) gained power and replaced his position.

Taliban emerged out of mainly the Ghilzai tribe of Pashtuns located around Kandahar. Rather than Durrani and Muhammadzai tribes, they were from underdeveloped and ignored areas whose at least one son is usually brought up in local madrassas in which food and Islamic education were free (Abbas, 2014). Later they grow bigger when the refugees in Pakistan returned as the Soviets left. Those who returned were specially decorated with Deobandism which also had its political party with the name of Jamiat-e Ulama-e Islam in Pakistan (Rashid, 1999). With the aid of Saudi Wahhabism, a mixture of Islamic extremism appeared, also known as "Afghan Arabs" among non-Pashtuns. These camps tailored approximately 100.000 fighters for the Taliban between 1994-1999 (Ibid. 27). From setting up a single and first checkpoint in Hawzi Mudat village near Kandahar, the Taliban grew so tremendously that in two years they conquered Kabul in 1996. The resentment against the Warlordism raging the country, and being a Pashtun, partly played a role in the Taliban's fast-track rise (Abbas, 2014).

Led by a one-eyed cleric Mullah Muhammad Omar, the Taliban used the religious card to their advantage to consolidate its power. However, the imposed rules were so strict that Afghans never were subject to in their history. The obligation of

growing a full beard for mean, veil for woman, banning school for girls, ban of going out without a “mahram” relative male for women, banning western clothes and separation of women and men in public and even in hospitals were among them (Lee, 2018: 636-637).

The Taliban’s two main sponsors were Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. The reason behind this was the pipeline project by which the US-based Union Oil Company and Saudi Arabia-based Delta Oil companies carry Turkmenistan’s natural gas through Afghanistan and Pakistan to the Arabian Sea (Bearden, 2001; Rubin, 2013; Shahrani, 2002). Accordingly, only Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and the United Arab Emirates recognized the Taliban government in the international community. To counter its neighbor India, Pakistan was so eager that the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) of Pakistan brokered a deal between Taliban and Osama Bin Ladin who had been exiled to Sudan by Saudi Arabia for Al-Qaeda militants’ extremism due to the American presence in Saudi Arabia since the Gulf War (Shahrani, 2002).

Pakistan supports the Taliban because of three main reasons, also known as the “strategic depth” (Rubin, 2013: 32). First, regarding the Pushtunistan issue, it seeks to guarantee its territorial integrity and designate Afghan politics through Pashtuns. Second, it takes advantage of international projects like the pipeline project. Three, it strengthens its position against India by establishing an ethnic ally (Abbas, 2014). Nevertheless, the Taliban proved shaky over the third reason when they claimed territories on the Pakistani side of the Durand line in June 1998 (Hyman, 2002).

The Taliban ruled Afghanistan from 1996 until being ousted by the US and the Western coalition forces during the war on terror after 2001. Even though they ruled for about five years and controlled the majority of Afghanistan, the Taliban’s legitimacy has always remained limited due to two factors. First, they imposed an Islamist rule so strict that Afghan people never experienced it before. The disaccord was rooted in Afghan’s main tradition of the Sunni-Hanafi school of Islam which sides with tolerance, something that the Taliban have never been fond of. Second, the Taliban’s representation of Pashtun-dominance to which other ethnic groups were prudent historically.

While Pakistan and Saudi Arabia supported the Taliban, others like Iran, Russia, India, and the former Soviet Turkic Republics supported the former Mujahedeen groups along with Dostum, which is named the “Northern Alliance”. It comprised, Jamiat-e Islami led by Sunni-Tajik Masoud, Junbish-e Milli-e Islami-e led

by Sunni-Uzbek Dostum, and Hizb-e Wahdat led by Shi'i-Hazara Mazari (Rubin, 2013: 35). The reason behind Iran's support of the Northern Alliance and especially the Shi'i Hazaras was the energy pipeline project which was meant to bypass Iran.

The US's Afghanistan policy after the Cold War was rather faint. After Al-Qaeda's attacks on US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania killing 224 people including the American personnel in 1998, capturing Osama bin Ladin constituted the main US policy towards Afghanistan (Bearden, 2001). However, the US was reluctant to take sides with the Northern Alliance for two reasons. First, it was unsure whether they would deliver Osama Bin Ladin and oust the Taliban from Kabul, and second, they preferred not to push all the Pashtuns towards the Taliban by supporting the minor ethnic groups in the north of the country (Ibid.).

Even though the Taliban remained in power until 2001, without foreign aid, it would not manage to accomplish this. Besides, the Taliban kept a low international profile. The leader Mullah Omar never held press conferences, he never contacted foreigners and non-muslims, and never used television as a mass media organ (Rashid, 1999).

2.4. DYNAMICS OF AFGHAN STATE-BUILDING

Afghan state-building has been problematic since the 19th century. It can be argued that a substantial state-formation has never occurred in the country. This was caused by both international and local dynamics. Various endogenous state-building efforts were hindered by either great powers or regional ones. Within the context of international politics, the Great Game, the Cold War, and the competition among its neighbors affected Afghan state-building since those international actors intervened with their national interests. Sometimes, their interests and those of the Afghan rulers conformed with each other and the outcome was a rentier state. The same scenario continued in the post-9/11 period which will be analyzed in the next chapter. This section elaborates on the international and local dynamics of Afghan state-building.

2.4.1. International Dynamics

Afghanistan, a land-locked state with a tribal society consisted of mostly pastoral nomads and subsistence farmers, became isolated deliberately and gradually in the 19th century by the compromise of various Amirs. The main reason behind this was that its geostrategic location. It became a buffer zone between the

major powers' rivalry in the Great Game. Subsidized by the British Empire, many Afghan Amirs, appointed their blood bond family members to the local and subnational positions to control the tribes in the periphery. In return for the continuity of the buffer zone situation and not sliding towards Russian influence, the British Raj intervened in intra-Afghan politics via strong Amirs, especially in Dost Muhammad Khan and Abdurrahman Khan eras. These person-based politics caused what Shahrani termed "internal colonialism" (Shahrani, 2002: 717).

"Internal colonialism" occurred when Afghan rulers failing to consolidate their power in the raging tribal strife for the Emirate, appeals or be proposed foreign subsidies in terms of cash and weapons by the British Raj, in return for keeping Russians at a certain distance. The first indications of such state-building efforts in Afghan history started in the 19th century when the initial Durrani dynasty had lost fertile soils beyond and along the Indus River into the British rule in today's Pakistan soil and the subsequent Amirs had to engage intra-tribal conflicts (Rubin, 2002). Thus, this Pashtun tribal state turned out to be a rentier state in the 19th century. However, the point is, the resistance to the British invasions of Afghanistan in the Anglo-Afghan wars, mainly Pashtun tribal soldiers in the south and southeastern parts of the country were not just a threat for the British but also the Amirs themselves.

A rentier state in Afghanistan caused the country to fail to create domestic resources, or in other words, the capital (Rubin, 2002; Shahrani, 2002; Verkoren and Kamphuis, 2013). 19th-century Afghan Amirs chose to engage with tax reforms and land distribution rather than creating the capital which required providing modern transportation means, constructing railroads, and developing regional trade relations (Rubin, 2002). While the British built railroads and increased capital in the Indian subcontinent and Russians did the same in the central Asian republics, despite the repercussion, Afghan Amirs connived at staying isolated as they perceived otherwise as insecure (Ibid.). This insecurity had two facets: both for the country and their throne.

One feature of the rentier state is that it is transferred between ruling dynasties. Except for Amanullah Khan (1919-1929) who tried to create domestic capital via direct taxes and trade relations, generally, all Durrani and Muhammadzai/Musahiban families, the subsequent Marxist PDPA rule, and the Taliban remained within this legacy. Historically, while most Amirs were aid-dependent to the British, the Musahiban family, the PDPA, the Mujahedeen, and the Taliban suffered the same with the Russians, Americans, and Pakistani, respectively. As in such a state, the

bureaucracy and aid are oriented to the regime supporters, there can be no created resources and domestic income cycle via viable tax collection let alone a developing economy (Verkoren and Kamphuis, 2013).

2.4.2. Local Dynamics

Not just international but also peculiar local dynamics deteriorated Afghan state-building. To some extent, these were indirectly caused by the international actors, however, it is the juxtaposition of those which makes a cumulative effect in the overall process. Accordingly, two local dynamics the thesis argues are over-centralization and poor state-society relations.

Despite being a loose collective system of tribes or a “centrifugal society” as Ibrahimi names it, Afghanistan has been an over-centralized state since Abdurrahman Khan, also known as the “Iron Amir” (Ibrahimi, 2019; Murtazashvili, 2018; 2019). To consolidate his power among regional tribes, Abdurrahman changed the codes of the nation by appointing his representatives at local levels who reported him directly. Moreover, he resettled some Pashtun tribes to the northern parts of Afghanistan and interfered with land distributions between Hazaras and Pashtuns. Abdurrahman Khan also instrumentalized Islam and Jihad discourse to judge those who challenged his rules.

Not just Abdurrahman Khan but also, Amanullah Khan, the Musahiban family, the PDPA, and the Taliban based their policies on centralized top-down impositions. Even though Amanullah Khan was a modernist ruler, his social transformation agenda was based on top-down measures which proved useless and caused his ousting by conservatives. The subsequent governments of the Musahiban family, the PDPA, and the Taliban also remained mainly dependent on centralized policies that sought to control the periphery from Kabul (Ibrahimi, 2019).

These policies caused radical blowbacks and sometimes extremism that counter them in the traditional Afghan society. Neither the communist ideology that PDPA imposed, nor the Wahhabi Islamism of the Taliban found a solid base on the Afghan people. Even the Musahiban family, namely Nadir and Zahir Shahs and their Princes ruled as Prime Ministers, too implemented over-centralized policies especially in terms of Soviet-like state-centered economic models and Kabul-based regional trade relations from which only the royal family and their close supporters benefited.

Thus, a traditional state like Afghanistan always fell out with top-down impositions in its history (Rubin, 1988).

Another local dynamic that deteriorated Afghan state-building was the poor state-society relations. It is such a problem that the international community strives to solve even today. Indeed, aid-dependent rentier state and Pashtun-dominated elitism caused “weak state institutions” and a “marginalized and reactive society” in Afghanistan (Ibrahimi, 2019: 41). When an over-centralized state imposes rules, regulations, taxes, and reforms, it automatically contradicts the decentralized society’s traditional everyday lives. Moreover, the disharmony between the state and society triggers not just more strict measures by the state but also counter-balancing reactions by society against governments (Ibid.).

The disharmony between the state and society reveals in a variety of forms. One is counter-revolution. We witnessed this when an illiterate Tajik peasant Habibullah, also known as the “Bacha Saqqao” meaning "son of a water-carrier" toppled modernist Amanullah Khan in 1929 and ruled for nine months. Thus, harsh handovers of the throne revealed the deep sociopolitical problems of the country. Another form is the all-out civil war. The Mujahedeen resistance against the Soviet Union and their puppet, PDPA regime, and the Northern Alliance itself against the Taliban are examples. Besides, the resentment and distrust of the ethnic minorities towards the national and sub-national elites who favor their close supporters is another symptom.

In the Afghanistan context, in which people seek incorporation and inclusion but do not get it, with the fear of defrauding and exclusion, they tied themselves to charismatic leaders and authorities of their ethnic groups as a last resort. Thus, ethnic diversity is not the cause but the effect of conflicts (Rubin, 2013). This helps only to the segregation of the country, and it is, even more, a reason for the ongoing vicious cycle. At the end of the day, despite various indoctrinations including Islam, nationality, modernity, and communism, these local dynamics undermined what Charles Tilly described as “a shared clergy and a common faith”, or legitimacy.

Reviewing the state-building history of Afghanistan, this chapter found both local and international dynamics peculiar to the Afghan context. Thus, any further state-building effort has to consider them. Accordingly, in the final chapter, the thesis has applied the theory and measured to what extent the international state-builders adhered to them.

CHAPTER THREE
ASSESSMENT OF STATE-BUILDING IN AFGHANISTAN SINCE 2001

This chapter analyzes the international state-building efforts in Afghanistan from late 2001 until the present. There are many contributors to Afghanistan's state-building with different aspirations and agendas. Elaborating all demands more than a master thesis, thus the focus here is on particularly the UN's efforts as an international actor. However, the role of the rest of the international community and bilateral donors is also scrutinized. International state-building efforts are considered according to the main tenets of any state-building action. They are building the state institutions, constitution, and parliament for legitimacy; security institutions for the monopoly on violence; and the economic development process.

Though its effectiveness has changed over time in Afghanistan, today the UN is still at the center of Afghanistan's state-building. It affected the country both politically and militarily. Their ramifications are still discussed both in policy and academic literature. One unique characteristic of the international project in Afghanistan was the ongoing insurgency. Thus, building a state while fighting was a challenge for the state-builders. Other challenges were subnational elites, corruption, and its shadow economy. These challenges surely had a perverse effect on the project.

Though it has been 20 years since efforts have begun, at the time of writing, by 2021 state-building has not still been finalized in Afghanistan. After two decades, the international community once again works on peace negotiations, power-sharing, and interim administrations for substantial state-building. Now having reached a consensus on the Taliban must be included in the state's future, and that the military solution is not possible against them, both the main bilateral donor, the US, and the international community initiated a comprehensive peace process both nationally and regionally.

3.1. INTERNATIONAL STATE-BUILDING EFFORTS

This section focuses on the early institution-building efforts, their technical problems, and ramifications reaching out today. Establishing effective institutions is essential for both state-building and long-term stability. Accordingly, after ousting the Taliban from Kabul, while the war against both insurgency and terrorism continued,

the international community implemented the three components of state-building: coercion, capital, and legitimacy.

Coercion stands for establishing a state's monopoly on violence, in other words, building security institutions. Capital refers to the economic sector. In international state-building, donor aid caters for the required capital. The ultimate aim of the aid however must be ensuring that the state mobilizes its revenue and the sustainability of economic development. Finally, legitimacy is essential for any state-building. However, building legitimacy externally is a challenging task. Since it is earned by an endogenous process, building a legitimate state by external intervention remains to be a problem for international state-building. Thus, building state institutions, making a constitution and elections are not just a part of the political process but also a wider phenomenon of state legitimacy.

3.1.1. Political Process

Overall, the political process can be scrutinized in two periods: the first one is the Bonn process which is the period until parliamentary elections as foreseen in the Bonn agreement; the second one is the subsequent Afghanization period in which the international community anticipated the shortcomings of the project and started to plan an exit strategy. Specifically, under the leadership of the primary Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) Lakhdar Brahimi for the post-Taliban period, the UN's role was pivotal. Until he leaves office in December 2004, the political process included establishing an Interim Authority, Emergency Loya Jirga for the Transitional Authority, another Loya Jirga for the constitution-making, and the first presidential elections. In addition, with the parliamentary elections held in December 2005, the Bonn process ended.

Within this first institution-building process, with the help of US Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad, SRSG Brahimi established personal contacts with the Afghan elites to ensure the stability of Afghanistan. At some points, his leadership prioritized stability rather than democracy which further caused losing one-time chances for both democratization and the future of Afghanistan. Thus, as for the political process of state-building, majorly the Bonn process is focused on here.

3.1.1.1. 2001 Bonn Conference and the Emergency Loya Jirga

After ousting of the Taliban from Kabul in mid-November, the UN sponsored an Afghan peace conference in Bonn, Germany in December 2001. The agreement was signed by the non-Taliban factions on 5 December 2001 under the official name of "Agreement on Provisional Arrangements in Afghanistan Pending the Re-establishment of Permanent Government Institutions" (the United Nations, 2001b). As clear by the title, the Bonn agreement's main purpose was to delineate the political and legal process until the elected government assumes duty. Under this perspective, the then UNSG Kofi Annan and his special representative to Afghanistan Lakhdar Brahimi invited former Mujahedeen fighters to reach an agreement due Afghanistan's future. Four groups regarding Afghans joined the Bonn conferences: Northern Alliance (former mujahideen), the Rome Group representing former King Zahir Shah, and two other groups known as "Peshawar" and "Cyprus" regarding their meeting places (Rubin, 2004). However, given the fact that the Taliban, one side of the civil war, was not invited, the Bonn agreement was a victor's peace or as put by itself peace of "champions" (the United Nations, 2001b: 2). So that the main idea was not the overcome the political problems of the past but to prevent future unrest among sides (Suhrke et al., 2002) which would further set the appropriate ground for the US-led War on Terror against the Taliban insurgency.

The main political framework was designated by the participants of the agreement which later became known as the Bonn Process. The Bonn process outlined the characteristics of the new Afghan state on the making as a liberal democracy respectful to human rights, gender equality; a market economy; and following the Islamic values (Barnett and Zurcher, 2009; Rubin, 2006). This democratic, stable, and representative state of Afghanistan would further neutralize the history-long internal conflicts and put an end to the vicious cycle of underdevelopment and more conflicts in the country. To do that, first, it designated the "Interim Authority" to serve until the holding of Emergency Loya Jirga (ELJ) which would select the President for the "Transitional Administration". Hamid Karzai, a Popalzai/Durrani Pashtun, was elected as the Chairman of the Interim Authority. The agreement decreed Chairman Hamid Karzai, his 5 vice-chairs, and 24 more departmental heads from foreign affairs to border affairs to take office on 22 December 2001. The distribution of key positions among warlords and strongmen showed a power-sharing among the actors of the Bonn agreement. While some

scholars argued that this was a “scoop up” of the newly emerging capital (Ruttig, 2012: 2), others argued that the Bonn conference was vague and reluctant not to startle the sides and further worsen the situation in Afghanistan (Barnett and Zurcher, 2009). However, this “warlord democratization” agreement (Rubin, 2006: 180), and the subsequent Interim and Transitional administrations paved the way for the legitimizing and empowering of local strongmen to whom ordinary Afghans did not trust (Schmeidl, 2016). Further, putting a puppet leader and supporting the centralist government in Kabul, or in Suhrke’s words giving them a “tight embrace” undermined local ownership, accountability of rulers, and the legitimacy of the state in the eyes of the Afghans (Suhrke, 2009). The only common ground among the sides was their commitment to the status quo in which the major ethnic group Pashtuns were not represented. Even though Hamid Karzai was a Pashtun from Kandahar, who can replace the Taliban’s legitimacy on Pashtuns, he was also a reformist and put by foreign powers. In brief, the Bonn agreement formatted the state-building process in Afghanistan upon the following agenda: two Loya Jirgas; one emergency and one constitutional, two national elections both presidential and legislative, the UN’s role in Afghanistan’s reconstruction, reform of the security sector, and the national army, charging the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) for the security, and the organization of aids (Johnson, 2006).

As denoted by the agreement, Afghans set the ELJ during 10-19 June 2002. The ELJ’s function was to elect the interim President and his Transitional Administration until a substantial one is elected within 2 years. The ELJ was of great value to the Afghans as it was the first national democratic organization after 23 years of ruthless war. Because of this, Chairman Karzai named the ELJ “Peace and Democracy Loya Jirga” (Ruttig, 2012: 1). However, the high expectation was far from put in action and the ELJ did not represent the public voice. The obvious problem of the Bonn made Interim Authority was that it caused resentments among the Pashtun population because of the Northern Alliance’s dominance in the key positions namely, security, internal and foreign affairs. Thus, on the way to the ELJ, Muhammad Younus Qanooni, a Tajik, the Minister of Interior affairs lost his position to a Pashtun, Taj Mohammad Wardak (Ibid.). Later, Karzai increased the number of Pashtun members in key positions from 11 to 16 in the Transitional Administration after the ELJ (Johnson, 2006). This was a sign of the arrangements of the power distribution of the Interim Authority.

After former King Zahir Shah set foot on Afghan soil after 29 years of exile in Italy, on 18 April 2002 who was the symbol of unity and stability in Afghanistan, the public opinion started to favor him for President as a sign of unity with the expectations of constitutional democracy and a strong parliament (Schmeidl, 2016). However, he was a threat to the “victor’s peace” and the ongoing war on terror and systematically marginalized starting from his first moments in the Kabul Airport with power-cuts and silencing radios (Ruttig, 2012). The lobbying of the US Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad and the SRSG Lakhdar Brahimi for Hamid Karzai among representatives against Zahir Shah (International Crisis Group, 2002), picking 50 members by Karzai himself and the withdrawal of Zahir Shah, paved the way for the electing of Hamid Karzai as the President of the Afghan Transitional Authority (ATA) (Ruttig, 2012; Schmeidl, 2016).

The outcome of the ELJ was mixed at best. Even though it accomplished a gathering without a conflict and put forward a national leader in a vague election process and established stability for the short term, in the long run, the ramifications due to lost chances of the civilization of politics, promoting public opinion, and marginalizing warlords undermined the prospects for substantial state-building and democratization (International Crisis Group, 2002). Then, 3 main responsibilities waiting to be done by the newly appointed ATA were as follows: gathering up a Constitutional Loya Jirga (CLJ) to start studying on the draft of a constitution within 18 months, carrying out a Presidental election in 24 months, and creating a national army by the remnants of ex-Mujahedeen combatants after their successful demobilization (Ibid.).

3.1.1.2. Constitution-Making Process

Bonn agreement proposed within 2 months of the creating of the ATA a Constitutional Commission to start working on a constitution draft. As the commission was created by President Karzai and the ATA, the ultimate authority on the draft of the constitution was Karzai. However, given the indeterminate terms of the Bonn agreement upon the inspection of the ATA to oversee the Bonn terms (the United Nations, 2001b: 10), the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the SRSG Brahimi enjoyed the jurisdiction to “monitor and assist” of the constitution-making process in Afghanistan.

In his comparative study of post-conflict constitution-making processes of the UN missions in Cambodia, East Timor, and Afghanistan, Michele Brandt designates six main points which show that the constitution-making process of post-conflict Afghanistan was unique among the others (Brandt, 2005). First, it was a dual process. Even though the main body was the CLJ which would gather in December 2003, there was another working group that drafted the constitution before the CLJ. Secondly, the Bonn agreement mandated a strict timeframe of eighteen months for the drafting but put no deadline for the adoption of the CLJ. Third, the agreement did not specify the methods with which members of both the commission and the CLJ were to be selected. Fourth, the commission was not an independent group. Fifth, even though the concept was exogenous, the process was ratified by a cultural phenomenon, that is Loya Jirga and finally, the agreement did not elaborate any principles for the constitution.

The constitution-making process had 2 main phases: drafting and ratifying. The drafting process also has two different phases in which two different commissions took part subsequently. First, President Karzai assigned a nine-member Commission Draft Committee to start working on a draft in October 2002. Vice-President Shahrani led the committee, and they conducted their work mainly based on the 1964 constitution (Thier, 2006). In April 2003, after six months of working behind doors, the nine-member committee submitted a draft under the name of “a set of recommendations …” obviously for the subsequent wider commission (Ibid. 567).

The second Constitutional Commission was larger as it comprised thirty-five members including women and experts from the field. The second commission planned public education and consultation processes to integrate the Afghan people into the constitution-making process. Primarily, the public participation process started with a massive spur, partially because the head of the commission, Farooq Wardak had a civil-society background (Schmeidl, 2016). The UNAMA and some other international NGOs helped the process of public participation. Constitutional Commission composed field teams of three people, including two men and one woman, to conduct surveys and public education (Brandt, 2005). Throughout the process, approximately 100.000 questionnaires were considered, and about 15.000 citizens submitted personal suggestions (Ibid.).

However, the overall contribution of the local Afghans to the drafting of the constitution was limited for several reasons. The first one is UNAMA’s doubts about the local capacity for such participation. The deputy SRSG Jean Arnault was one of

the actors who put forward the idea of the participation of the locals would jeopardize the stability let alone help, especially the ones in the rural sides of Afghanistan in which the legitimacy of the newly established government was shaky (Schmeidl, 2016). The slogans of those who oppose the wider participation were “constitution-making is not a referendum”, “quality, not quantity” and likewise (Ibid. 583). The second one is the elite compromise between the US and the local powerbrokers. This caused the Commission to ask the participants shallow questions only about vague issues while circumventing concrete issues for the elites to decide (Thier, 2006). For these reasons and because of such a short amount of time of approximately two months, the Commission revised the draft depending on the feedback of the people without revealing the draft to the public in the first place. Given the fact that the critical issues were decided by elites in backroom deals (ibid.), the overall effect of the public on the process was limited, if not nothing.

The second phase is ratifying, which makes the CLJ operational for this purpose. After receiving the final draft from the Commission in late September, Karzai did not declare it until 3 November which was approximately one month before the CLJ. The CLJ gathered during 13 December 2003 and 4 January 2004 with the attendance of 502 delegates representing overall Afghanistan, including women. Although the speeches were made, when one young woman started to criticize the existence of warlords sitting in the front row, she was almost thrown out of the hall and had to be protected by the UN officials (Brandt, 2005). This shows the nature in which the constitution was created, in the absence of free speech and no tolerance for criticism of the strongmen. Despite the ten working groups about miscellaneous parts of the constitution, the most important articles like the issues of power-sharing, the role of Islam, and official languages were designed in the VIP tent in which UN SRSG Brahimi and US Ambassador Khalilzad played an active broker role between the powerful warlords and the government elites (Thier, 2006). This caused a highly centralized presidential system, resembling the King's authority in Afghan history. After all, it can be said that Afghanistan lost the one-time chance to thoroughly contemplate its societal aspects rooted back in its foundation (Rubin, 2004). Eventually, President Karzai approved the Afghan Constitution on 26 January 2004 with a Presidental ceremony.

The US footprint is blatant in the political scheme of Afghanistan founded by the constitution. According to Article 82 of the Afghan constitution, the national assembly is comprised of two houses; the People’s house and the Elder’s house

which is like the system in the US. The people's house is the lower house (Wolesi Jirga) with 249 members and %30 of its members are women (Thier, 2006). The Elders house (Meshrano Jirga) is comprised of equal representatives from provincial councils and that of districts (Ibid.). Besides, it can be said that the new constitution was quite tolerable to the issues of the role of Islam and not just for Hanafi but also Shiite origin schools, women's position in the public, ethnic diversity, and the languages other than Pashto and Dari in their densely used areas. Furthermore, the 2004 constitution reflected the ideal point of view for the international community and especially that of the US for an Islamic Democracy ally in the Middle East that recovers from conflict.

3.1.1.3. Post-Conflict Elections

The Bonn agreement put that, "free and fair elections to be held no later than two years from the date of the convening of the Emergency Loya Jirga" (the United Nations, 2001b: 3). This includes presidential and legislative elections (Wolesi Jirga) and provincial councils at once before June 2004. However, due to numerous Taliban strikes during the process heading the polls, the elections were separated first and then postponed, respectively. The Presidental elections were postponed from June to September and yet held on 9 October 2004. The legislative elections, on the other hand, were held on 18 September 2005. After these elections, the Bonn process ended, and the new and "democratic" process started with the elected President, government, and a bicameral parliament. This was a new era for Afghanistan as elected officials took office after three and a half decades given the latest elections held during the Zahir Shah era on the parliament in 1969.

In the 2004 presidential elections, only the head of the ATA, Hamid Karzai had a substantial chance to win, not because of his popularity among ordinary Afghans but because of the political scheme set by the International Community (Schmeidl, 2016). Besides, the US and the European countries funded Karzai's election campaign and during his campaign a security contractor company provided close protection for him both of which were against the electoral laws of Afghanistan (Johnson, 2006). In short, the results were pre-determined to a great extent in favor of Karzai, so that the elections functioned as a "de facto referendum" on the ratification of the political process started with the Bonn agreement rather than the authority of

Karzai (Smith, 2012: 19). Given the %70 participation of which %40 were women, the transition under the umbrella of Bonn was accepted by the Afghan people (Ibid.).

According to the official results announced by the Joint Electoral Management Body (JEMB) on 3 November 2004, the acting president Hamid Karzai was elected as both President and the Head of the execution by receiving %55.4 of the total votes while the closest candidate, Younus Qanooni, received only %16.3 (International Crisis Group, 2004). However, the elections were flawed, and a shadow was cast on its credibility by multiple errors. Ink crisis, proxy voting, multiple registrations, absence of some vote's roll, and problems due to ballot counting were among the contested issues (Ibid.). Opposing candidates including Dostum, Qanooni, and Mohaqiq almost boycotted the elections if had not been persuaded by the US Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad to accept the JEMB's inspections (Ibid.). The JEMB, however, put that the election was fair enough as it found existed flaws were either "not politically motivated" or "not affecting the overall results" (Ibid. 12).

2004 elections failed to progress on the institutionalization of the politics of Afghanistan (Smith, 2012). An ethnolinguistic interpretation of Johnson based on the data of the 2004 presidential elections showed that none of the candidates received noteworthy votes from the regions other than their respected ethnic groups (Johnson, 2006). Furthermore, major ethnic groups in Afghanistan and most prominently Pashtuns and Tajiks are liable to vote against each other (Ibid.). This study suggests that the strong Presidental system is not a match for the Afghanistan context in which ethnolinguistic diversity is rich and yet to be converged. The president then had the jurisdiction over co-opting provincial governors, leading the executive branch of the state with a poorly organized parliament thanks to the 2005 legislative elections.

On 18 September 2005, Afghans cast their votes for legislative elections. The turnout of the 2005 legislative elections was quite low, only %49.8 (Johnson, 2006). Given, local strongmen and warlords affected the voting decisions of the people by intimidation it is no surprise that approximately 100 members out of 249 member-Wolesi Jirga had serious links to armed groups, human rights abuses, drug trafficking, and war crimes made their way to a seat in the parliament (Schmeidl, 2016). This was because of the poor transitional justice system and lack of capacity in the institutions to obtain proof and disapprove such candidates to fulfill the electoral law requirements (Ibid.). After all, the composition of the 249 member-Wolesi Jirga was distributed by these five fragmented groups: former Mujahedeen, individual technocrats and tribal leader who have no tie with political parties, some former communist warlords,

remnants of the Taliban, and former ministers who had been dismissed by Karzai from either interim or transitional governments (Johnson, 2006). This worked for Karzai's advantage as he diminished the roots of any alternatives to his personalized government. After all, party-affiliated candidates comprised 44 out of 249 members (%17.7) which shows that the legislation was quite fragmented vis-à-vis the executive (Tookhy, 2020: 13).

Single-Non-Transferable Vote (SNTV) system, which was adopted in 2004, marginalized organized political parties and worked to the advantage of individual candidates including former Jihadis and Mujahedeen. Even though the United Nations advised otherwise, Karzai's abolishment of the party names from the ballots was grown out of US Ambassador Khalilzad's urge (Johnson, 2006). This voting system mandated each Afghan to cast vote for only one candidate at the expense of others under each of the 35 constituencies, unlike the proportional representation system (Ibid.). This system, despite its simplicity, makes participation poor as a big amount of the voters remain unrepresented when the highest vote-takers presume seats sequentially. Karzai tried to limit the former Mujahedeen parties' power in the parliament by abolishing political parties' names on lists, however, this also prevented newly created parties to have their say and changed the future of Afghan politics, and further caused political individualism (Schmeidl, 2016). The SNTV system deteriorated the democratic visions. It both made the parliament unable to check the executive's authority and diminished the overall representation of the parliament of Afghanistan's diversity. Besides, with this system, the Wolesi Jirga was composed of parliamentarians who lack the will to cooperate and seek their good. This representation gap is generated by the "wasted votes" that are cast to those who are not elected by slight percentages (Tookhy, 2020: 5). The gap was so vast that the number of wasted votes was up to 4 million out of 6 million votes in total (Saikal, 2012). After two months, the National Assembly started its duty on 19 December 2005, which put an end to the Bonn process.

3.1.2. Security

Since state builders' ultimate goal is to build a modern, liberal Weberian state, securing the state's monopoly on force is the start point. To generate this coercion, the international community devoted itself to building effective Afghan security forces.

The first step to security sector reform (SSR) in a post-conflict state is disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of former combatants (DDR).

In the Afghanistan context, there were multiple groups to be disarmed before passing to the reform phase. Afghan Military Forces (AMF) the main group that comprised the former Northern Alliance, illegal armed groups, and other local militias were among them. However, due to the ongoing war against the insurgency, the international community processed both procedures mostly simultaneously.

3.1.2.1. Disarmament Demobilization and Reintegration of Former Combatants (DDR)

The DDR in Afghanistan was the preliminary step of establishing the monopoly of force by the state. This was important not just as a means of security but also as a transition from war to peace economy (Sedra, 2006). The initial Bonn agreement was not clear about what would happen to the armed groups all through the country. It only mentioned in its fifth chapter that all the military fractions including the former Northern Alliance also known as the Afghan Military Forces (AMF) were to be subject to the Interim and the subsequent Transitional Authority. This however was related to SSR rather than DDR.

The first step of the DDR in Afghanistan was set with the establishment of the Afghan New Beginnings Program (ANBP) by the UN and Japan in February 2003. The initial number of former combatants estimated by ANBP to disarm was about 100.000 (Lister and Wilder, 2005). However, later ANBP discovered that the real number was no more than 50.000. The reason behind this over declaration was the local militia commanders' intention to reach out more resources (Sedra, 2006). The problem with the work of ANBP was that the DDR process did not overarch all the AMF. Given the DDR started before the presidential elections, it can be said that the groups who were in contest with and have the potential to be a rival for Karzai were disarmed. These groups were also the ones that remained idle in the war on terror. One proof of this was the resistance to the DDR by the Ministry of Defense in the first place (Lister and Wilder, 2005). Disarming some groups among AMF diminished the power of Mohammad Fahim to a great extent. Even so that if ISAF had not been protecting Kabul, the head of the Ministry of Defense Fahim, would make a coup (Suhrke, 2007).

Although the process was ponderous in the beginning, it gained momentum as the presidential elections approached. There were two reasons behind this (Sedra, 2006). First, the political parties law issued by Karzai mandated for the political parties to cut their ties with armed groups. This channelized some militias who were seeking political careers to disarm voluntarily. Second, to make Karzai elected as president, the US got involved in the process, by drawing attention to issues related to security. After all, as of July 2005, the first stage DDR was completed with more than 60.000 former combatants disarmed and demobilized along with 36.000 light weapons which cost almost $141 million (Özerdem, 2015; Sedra, 2006).

In June 2005, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) started another program with the Ministry of Interior to disarm remaining illegal groups which is named the Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups program. This program targeted militias other than the former AMF many of whom had been used by the coalition forces against the insurgency. The number of these illegal groups was about 1800 which included approximately 80.000 fighters (Özerdem, 2015). Not being a part of this, the US impeded this process let alone support. Since the US and the coalition forces were conducting a war with the Taliban, they were establishing local militias whereas the Ministry of Interior was trying to disarm them (Suhrke, 2013). As a result, until its end in 2011, the program remained limited in the south and southeastern areas where the Taliban were active. Besides patrons of some of the illegal groups to be disbanded were strongmen who made their way into the parliament during parliamentary elections. Attributing them a half-legal status, it undermined the process.

In line with the transfer of security to the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) which was proclaimed firstly in London Conference in January 2010, the Afghan Peace and Reintegration Program (APRP) was introduced and led by the Afghan government after the approval of President Karzai in June 2011 as another DDR initiative (Dobbins et al., 2020). The difference between this late DDR process and its predecessors was that it included the Taliban. Another small-scale initiative was implemented by the Afghan Government under the name of Program Tahkim-e Sulh with similar aims to the APRP back in 2005. However, it fell short of its aim since the Taliban was approached by surrender rather than negotiation (SIGAR, 2019). Thus, the main idea of its successor, the APRP, was disarming the members of the Afghan Taliban by the end of 2014, who were hoped to be lured by sustainable employment and favorable livelihoods (Özerdem, 2015).

The APRP was mainly the first step toward peace with the Taliban. Since the first two DDR attempts showed that the prospects for sustainable disarmament were only possible through an armistice that had never been achieved since the beginning of the war on terror, APRP aimed to solve the insurgency problem by conditional promises. Thus, it was a two-fold process. The first step was to disarm and reintegrate low and mid-level commanders and their troops into the Afghan community. Secondly, it was hoped to reach out to the leadership of the Taliban by eroding its consolidation to persuade them to peace. The problem with this was that peace was attempted without any compromise given to the Taliban. This instrumentalization of premature peace attempts proved to be useless. Besides, the Taliban leadership behind the Durand line, and their foot soldiers are unwilling to negotiate without the end of the Western occupation.

Despite the enthusiasm, the killing of Usama Bin Laden in Pakistan by the US forces in 2011 and the Taliban's killing of Burhanuddin Rabbani who was an important figure of the alleged peace process, namely the then Afghan High Peace Council as a retaliation prejudiced the process (Özerdem, 2015). Also killing the leader of the Taliban, Mullah Akhtar Mansour by the US later in 2016 deteriorated the peaceful environment. Furthermore, according to RAND corporation's February 2020 report on Afghanistan's DDR process, it is believed that the Pakistani intelligence agency the Inter-Services Intelligence which has been supporting the Taliban to consolidate its influence over Afghanistan, also known as the "strategic depth" policy, undermined this APRP process (Dobbins et al., 2020).

Overall DDR processes in Afghanistan have been unsuccessful, they remained limited and lacked oversight. Empowering the militias at the very beginning was a crucial mistake that undermined the process and the overall state-building agenda (Suhrke, 2013). Those militias were the ones that fostered an ability to cooperate with the coalition forces against the Taliban. So that the DDR was a double-standard procedure. Besides, since it was the strong local leaders who decided for whom to leave weapons and demobilize, there was a de facto compromise between the demands of the international community and the key strong Afghan commanders.

DDR process in Afghanistan was also a political instrument that both the international and local actors exploited sometimes as a punishment and sometimes in terms of a reward. Strongmen and factional militia leaders of various ethnic groups made their way into strong positions in the government while low to mid-level commanders legalized their positions as sub-national administrators. Among them

were Tajik factional military leader Muhammed Fahim assigned as Defense Minister, his associate Bismillah Khan as chief of staff to the Afghan National Army (ANA), Uzbek leader Rashid Dostum as deputy of Defense Minister, Hazara leader Muhammad Mohaqiq as various governmental positions including chairman of the initial Interim Administration (Suhrke, 2013).

The US as a major donor and the sponsor of the ANA was reluctant to support the DDR. It can be said that the US only supported the initial DDR process on the way to the presidential elections, which helped Karzai to be elected. For the other two subsequent DDR initiatives, however, the US's support remained shaky. The main reason behind this was that the US's COIN warfare against the Taliban. In short, the conflict of interests among the international community particularly the US and the UN undermined the DDR processes in Afghanistan. Besides the reintegration part of the DDR processes was the most fruitless part. In the absence of a substantial peaceful environment, the economic and political conditions in Afghanistan proved fruitless for the reintegration of ex-combatants. The promised sustainable livelihoods have mostly remained precarious. According to the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction's (SIGAR) 2019 report of lessons learned, the reintegration part did not extend beyond vocational training (SIGAR, 2019). Today, there is no ongoing DDR process towards the Taliban since past initiatives showed that the foremost prerequisite is a political commitment.

3.1.2.2. Security Sector Reform (SSR): Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF)

The Bonn agreement's provisions over the security sector were vague and they lacked a clear prescription or a road map for substantial reform. Yet six weeks later, in the Tokyo Donors conference during 21-22 January 2002, as a part of the state-building agenda in Afghanistan, the SSR layout started to take on a shape. Subsequently, two donor conferences in Geneva in the spring of 2002 occurred by the Group of Eight's (G-8) initiative as leading donors to share the burden of components of Afghanistan's security sector. These were the training of the army which was later to become the Afghan National Army (ANA) by the US, counter-narcotics operations led by the UK, judicial sector reform by Italy and, police reform which was later to become Afghan National Police (ANP) by Germany and conducting

DDR by the UNAMA and Japan (Chesterman, 2002). The ANA and ANP are together mentioned as Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) in Afghanistan.

The lead-donor system was accepted due to two factors (Sedra, 2017). First, there was no proper and capable institution under the UN to oversee such a mission. Second, the US-led coalition was preoccupied with battling the insurgency and lacked the will to take over. However, this lead-donor system has been abolished by the Afghanistan Compact which trumpeted the second phase of the international state-building agenda in Afghanistan. The reason behind this change was the lead-nation approach did not necessarily generate the required coordinated policy-making processes which was especially important in the cross-sector reforms like police and justice sectors (Ayub et al., 2009). One coordination problem was that the US focused on short-term training and more soldiers in numbers whereas Germany relied on extensive training and fewer numbers (Ibid.). Besides, the commitment and accomplishments differed among sectors. The US was far more generous in terms of equipping the ANA than other donors in their respective sectors which undermined the holistic frame of the entire process (Sedra, 2017). So that the Afghanistan Compact's main purpose was to end the lead-donor system on different branches of sectors and create a better partnership, coordination, and coherence between donors and the Afghan government.

From the very beginning, the security in Afghanistan was delivered by two main actors. One was the international coalition forces led by the US. The other one was the UN-mandated International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). The former, US-led coalition's purpose was to topple the Taliban from power and secure Afghanistan from Al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups, in short, both counterinsurgency and counterterrorism. On the one hand, to succeed in its war against the Taliban, the US-led coalition supported local commanders and warlords which created short-term gratification (Rubin and Hamidzada, 2007; Suhrke, 2009). On the other hand, following the Bonn agreement and as mandated by the UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1386 on 20 December 2001, ISAF's efforts of DDR, establishing an army and securing the Kabul administration from the warlords, was ongoing. The preliminary mission of ISAF which was led by donor countries rotationally was to provide security for Kabul and its surrounding for the Bonn process to function (NATO, 2015). After NATO assumed power in August 2003 with the UNSC resolution 1510, ISAF was tasked to cover all of Afghanistan (Ibid.). To do this, when ISAF urged the local commanders, militias, and warlords to hand over the security

initiative, warlords who had gained both political and military freedom of maneuverability by the US, refused to do so at first (Rubin and Hamidzada, 2007). When they did, the ISAF provided security and humanitarian aids in all Afghanistan via Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) in four stages which were finished in late 2006 (NATO, 2015; Rubin and Hamidzada, 2007). However, the former short-term strategy undermined the long-term sustainability and state-building efforts and further created a “dual legitimacy problem” (Rubin, 2006: 179).

From 31 January-1 February 2006, both sides of the state-building in Afghanistan; President Hamid Karzai’s government and the international community including UNSG Kofi Annan and as the Prime Minister of the host country Tony Blair held a major donor conference in London. The conference also known as the Afghanistan Compact, evaluated the pros and cons of the Bonn process, and put the layout plan for the next five years as an interim version of the Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS) (Rubin and Hamidzada, 2007). The ANDS has 3 main pillars: security, governance, and development. Under these three pillars, the compact took the charge from individual donors and authorized the UN and the Afghan Government to oversee the state-building efforts including the SSR.

The time phase between 2002 and 2007 is the first phase of SSR in Afghanistan. During this first phase which is until the Afghanistan Compact, to build the Afghan security sector, the US undertook the responsibility of the establishment of the ANA, whereas Germany did the same for ANP in the spring of 2002. Geneva conferences decided the numbers to be about 60.000 soldiers for ANA and 62.000 policemen for ANP (Yasa, 2020). To do this the US deployed both its soldiers and private security companies. Until 2006, the US conducted the process of training ANA via US Special Forces, 10th Mountain Division, and Army National Guard at the Kabul Military Training Center (SIGAR, 2017). The first phase of the SSR was rather slow, and by the end of 2005, the overall size of the ANA was only 22.000 (Suhrke, 2013). However, after the end of the first half of the decade, the process accelerated.

In 2006, the US established the Combined Security Transition Command–Afghanistan (CSTC-A) in Kabul. This is a multi-national command comprised of thirteen contributing nations three of which are not NATO members. The main purpose of CSTC-A is to coordinate and provide resources to the efforts of training, advising, and assisting the ANDSF under the command of the ISAF (NATO-RSM, n.d.). On the one hand, the European Union Police Mission was helping to create a more civilian police force, the CSTC-A was conducting a militarized police reform. The

reason behind CSTC-A's slide towards a COIN focus was the upward trend in the Taliban suicide attacks which had been quintupled from 27 in 2005 to 139 in 2006 (Council on Foreign Relations [CFR], n.d.).

The period after 2007 can be named the second phase of the SSR. After 2007, when the US recognized that Germany's advancement level was lower than their expectations, the US contributed to the ANP's process with private security companies of DynCorp International and Blackwater (Yasa, 2020). Taking over the establishment of ANP by the US caused coordination and prioritization problems in the future of ANP. The reason behind this was the US's priority was militarized police as a local COIN unit whereas Germany and the European donors chose civilian police trusted by the local people. The deterioration of security made the US turn some police forces into a militarized defense force at the local level as the Civil Order Police and the Border Police which however increased abuse of power and corruption (Afghanistan Study Group, 2021). Further, this paramilitary function also caused an "identity crisis" in today's police corps in Afghanistan (SIGAR, 2017: vii; Suhrke, 2013).

The third phase of the SSR in Afghanistan started after 2008 when security providing US-led forces increased by President Barack Obama's instructions. Along with the surge of US troops, the President also claimed an increase of ANDSF to 352.000 and transferring the security to the local forces by mid-2011 (SIGAR, 2017). In this context, the NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan (NTM-A) was established in 2009 to overtake the responsibility of ANA and ANP training. This was an early sign of the US's intention for the Afghanization of the war against insurgency to find a way for an exit (Suhrke, 2013: 280). By the end of 2010, there were four hubs of ANA, distributed regionally in Mazar-e Sharif, Herat, Kandahar, and Gardez, besides the three infantry brigades located in Kabul (Ibid.). Thus NTM-A was the operational instrument of the CSTC-A both of which reported to the ISAF.

The goals determined in the London Conference of 2006, by the name of Afghanistan Compact included the creation of ANDSF which includes ANA and ANP. Even though these were reached, the goal of the successful transition of the security responsibility to the ANDSF which was set in the second London Conference of 28 January 2010, has yet to be reached. Accordingly, after the ISAF's mission was completed in late 2014, the NATO presence in Afghanistan has been transformed into a more compact mission, Resolute Support Mission (RSM) by 1 January 2015. Three main focused areas of RSM are as follows: train, advise, assist Afghan security forces

and their institutions, funding this mission along with the wider international donor community, and ensuring Afghan-NATO partnership (NATO-RSM, n.d.).

Afghanistan has been an inconvenient environment for SSR. From the very beginning, the main prerequisites for a successful SSR in Afghanistan were absent (Sedra, 2017). They are a minimum level of baseline security, human and institutional capacity, a political consensus, and sustainable amounts of resources (Ibid.). Given any SSR is meant to conduct in a post-conflict environment, there is a contradictory situation in Afghanistan. This ongoing war transformed the SSR into a train and equip program or more of a COIN operation which dismantled the governance effect from SSR and led to its "securitization" (Sedra, 2017: 168). As the SSR transformed into a COIN operation since the ongoing war against the insurgency, the classical SSR with all its liberal norms like good governance, focusing on human security, being people-centered and accountable are bypassed (Sedra, 2013). Thus, the deterioration of the original SSR project can be named as a "slide towards expediency" which preferring short-term gains over long-term and holistic state-building agenda (Sedra, 2006: 94-110).

Since the beginning, corruption has always been a challenge for the SSR in Afghanistan. It is so crucial that Ryan Crocker, a former US ambassador to Kabul, mentioned that endemic corruption was a bigger threat than the insurgency in Afghanistan (Yasa, 2020). Given the aid costs are huge, corruption and fraud are inevitable without a substantial mechanism to prevent them. From 2002 through 2016 the US spent more than $70 billion and continuing $4 billion per year on the reconstruction of ANDSF (SIGAR, 2017). However, corruption was not officially recognized by the US for more than ten years of state-building. Only after 2014, the US established monitor mechanisms and conditions upon which the aid flows through Afghan ministries (Ibid.). In this context, corruption causes poor utilization of resources, sabotages conducting reforms, and diminishes the legitimacy of both the international assets and the Kabul government in the eyes of the Afghan people. When the insurgency takes advantage of this, the situation becomes a vicious cycle and gets banal.

Fuel fraud and contract fraud are among the most common corruption methods from the bottom to the highest levels including ministries in Afghanistan. In one case, Afghan General Abdul Wase Raoufi received a bribe of $150.000 for tender-rigging in one of the ministry's contracts of fuel (Yasa, 2020). Another chronic issue over SSR is "ghost soldiers/police". Although the officials posit that there is more

than 320.000 ANDSF personnel, according to the Integrity Watch Afghanistan, the real number of boots on the ground might be around 120.000 (Ibid.). This situation occurs when corrupt officials linger to remove the names of the dead or lost soldiers from the cadres or sometimes even fabricate names indefinitely. Today, the “ghost soldiers” issue is still a threat to both the legitimacy and the very security of Afghanistan.

The collateral damage of the coalition forces undermined the SSR in Afghanistan. The perception that the Western soldiers and the government troops who support them were causing their lives let alone protecting, damaged the public support to both DDR and SSR processes. Two individual cases happened in 2007 during which on the one hand DDR and SSR were in the making and on the other hand Taliban activities hastened. One was the killing of a dozen innocent civilians by the US troops after a Taliban roadside bombing in Jalalabad which they suffered from, and the other was the killing of more than fifty civilians in Herat by a US bomber aircraft (Suhrke, 2007).

In the 2010 NATO Summit in Lisbon, member states agreed upon the transition of security providing to ANDSF by 2014 and the end of ISAF mission. Although transferring security responsibility to ANDSF is accomplished, it is still dependent on donors and NATO and US troops remain in Afghanistan. It needs US supervision in secondary services like weapons management, medical service, air support, and maintenance. The US remains the main donor. As of 2021, the US still pays for %80 of ANDSF’s disbursements and %85 of the general security budget including the monthly salaries of ANA personnel (Afghanistan Study Group, 2021). Without this aid, ANDSF cannot stand. Even with the huge amounts of aid flux, self-sufficiency is yet to be achieved. The main reason behind this is the ongoing war on terror and donors’ strategic interests. Other than that, poor coordination, diverging agendas, corruption, collateral damage, and ongoing insurgency have all deteriorated the SSR in Afghanistan.

3.1.3. Economic Development and Aid Politics

Since the post 9/11 intervention and the subsequent state-building efforts started with the Bonn process, Afghanistan has become a subject to decisive aid injection. Bilateral and multilateral donors specify the roadmap for aid politics of Afghanistan during UN-administered donor conferences. The first donor gathering

was the Tokyo Conference which was held on 21-22 January 2002 right after the Bonn agreement and the most currently occurred in Geneva on 23-24 November 2020. In these biannual or once-in-four-year conferences the International Community assesses the developments on both the security and economic developmental conditions during the interim processes, upon which they pledge aids for the country. Besides, these donor conferences have become a political arena for national technocrats like former Finance Minister Ashraf Ghani, to show up their capabilities to work with the International Community (Suhrke, 2013). Thus, in the post-conflict state-building agenda, it has been taken for granted that foreign aid would ameliorate both security and overall economic development.

The aid flows into Afghanistan in two ways: one is the on-budget aid and the second is the off-budget aid. The former goes through either the governmental institutions or trust funds whereas the latter is spent directly by donors mostly through local contractors or those of NGOs. The main multi-donor trust funds are World Bank operated the Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) and UNDP operated the Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan (LOTFA). However, the overall donors and their types are so numerous that Karzai complained in a donor conference for a reason when he said: "…There are too many groups of donors, reconstruction groups, assistance groups. I don't know the names of all of them" (qtd. in Chesterman, 2002: 42).

This aid expenditure ratio of on-budget to off-budget was 1/3 in the first decade which later increased to 1/2 in the second decade of state-building which was decided at the 2010 Kabul conference (Suhrke, 2013). For instance, in 2002, $20 million was spent through ARTF for the civil servants' salaries whereas $1.8 billion was spent directly by donors, or through NGOs (Bizhan, 2018b). This direct injection of huge amounts of money made the entire system vulnerable to corruption and further undermined the capacity-building of the state (Suhrke, 2013).

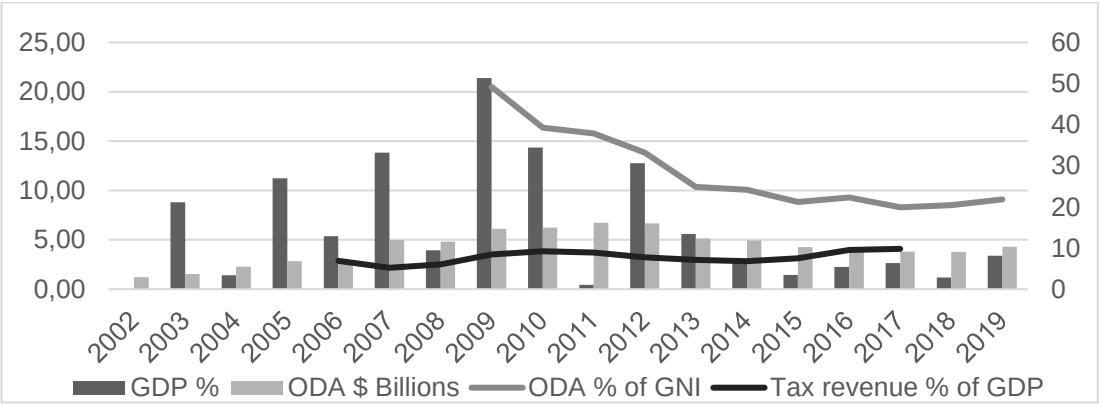
This external budget not only serves a "shared sovereignty" (Ibid.) over the state's capital but also created a parallel public sector (Bizhan, 2018b). Higher salaries paid by donors in such a secondary public sector caused brain drain. For instance, the UN or an international NGO pays 15 to 400 times more than the government (Chesterman, 2002). Furthermore, up to 35 multinational "project management units" which help government institutions to implement reconstruction efforts along with the PRTs that work at the local level to win the "hearts and minds"

of Afghans in 34 provinces caused inefficiency of the public sector, which further undermined the states' legitimacy (Bizhan, 2018b: 1019).

The on-budget aid system was also flawed. Even though about half of the aid money goes through the state's financial institutions, because of high levels of corruption, inefficiency, low capacity, and brain drain, the aid only helps the continuation of the rentier state (Verkoren and Kamphuis, 2013). Since Afghanistan has a history of patrimonial governance, the liberalization imposed by the post-conflict state-building agenda caused the emergence of a neo-patrimonial state in which both formal and informal relations exist within state institutions. Personalized relations among patrons and their staff are a characteristic of such a state. Besides, corrupt patrons give stakes to their staff to stay in power, and in such an environment donor aid induces discontinuity, and the parallel institutions become active (Bizhan, 2018b). Moreover, when civil servants tend to flee to the NGOs that pay much more salaries, the dual legitimacy problem occurred in Afghanistan.

Figure 8 below shows that ODA at the end of the first decade of Afghanistan's state-building process comprised approximately half of gross national income (GNI). That amount of aid also let the annual rate of gross domestic product growth (GDP) peak. After that point, when the ODA reached about 5 billion dollars line so that the percentage of ODA/GNI and GDP. Besides, throughout the change in other data, the tax revenue percentage of GDP remained mostly the same and below %10. This shows that Afghanistan has not yet become more of a rentier state in its aid history. Foreign aid today still comprises almost %20 of gross national income, and the country still has a weak capacity to generate capital to cater for its expenditures.

Figure 8: Aid Efficiency in Post-Conflict Afghanistan



Source: World Bank, n.d. (Various data sets are conjoined by the author. To review elaborate charts, visit: https://data.worldbank.org/country/afghanistan)

Rentier state concept for Afghanistan is not new. The same characteristics were present in its history. However, the high flux of aid and low level of development have come to make it obvious. Rentierism makes the ruling elite of a state accountable only to its patrons but not the people (Murtazashvili, 2015). In the Afghanistan context, it is the International Community that gathers in donor conferences with national elites. Furthermore, national elites in Afghanistan have used this condition to bypass long-term institution-building and manipulate the process to widen their political arena of maneuverability with "short-term survival strategies" (Suhrke, 2013: 278). Hamid Karzai did this in three ways: exploiting donor's conflicts of interests over external budget; bargaining with local elites in the event that foreign support ends; and accumulating capital for himself (Ibid.).

Despite the huge amounts of aid injection, another way of explaining the slow rate of capacity building in Afghan institutions other than rentierism is "gaming the state" (Murtazashvili, 2015: 78–92). "Gaming the state" occurs when local contractors, but not necessarily civil servants, use donor aids for their accounts after reaching them licitly (Ibid.). In this sophisticated fraud, the procurement is legal, but the money ends up in a faraway purpose than it was intended in the first place. It can happen either in the form of extortion, cronyism, or theft. In extortion, local contractors who have ties with local militias or the insurgency increase the donor amount by attacking construction sites and then excusing the insecurity. Cronyism happens when relatives of the state elite reach donor aid and make fortune, like Karzai's brother Mohammad Karzai did 12 million dollars from the contract with USAID for the establishment of Chamber of Commerce (Ibid.). Another way is theft in which contractors simply abscond with the money. A good example of theft was the collapse of the Kabul Bank in 2010 with the salaries of the ANDSF members stolen up to 900 million dollars (Ibid.). "Gaming the state" has undermined the economic development and capacity building of Afghan institutions and in the larger context, the state-building agenda as large amounts of donor aid has been siphoned off of the country by contractors who have an interest of the huge fluxes in the first place.

The relation between aid and security is also problematic in Afghanistan. Since there has been an ongoing insurgency, donor aids are also being used in winning "the hearts and minds", namely COIN and stabilization operations. In this context, PRTs are an important part of the aid's disbursement. That said, in a US report, it has been put that the Taliban makes up %50 of their revenues from US army logistics and most of the remaining from the illegal drug economy (qtd. in Maley, 2018). Supporting this

evidence, in his detailed study, Christoph Zurcher showed that in an insecure environment like Afghanistan, aid creates more violence and thus leads to less stability (Zurcher, 2019). The mechanism for this is twofold: predation and sabotage. Via these two strategies he argues, the Taliban, regulates aid flow in line with their legitimacy at the local level so that donor aid becomes a profit for them let alone diminish them. On the one hand, sabotage is the form that the Taliban prevents the possibility of a fruitful relationship between the local community and government (Ibid.). However, the Taliban only sabotages ideological and/or strategic types of aids like those related to gender equality and infrastructure building. On the other hand, predation is the method in which the Taliban allow aid as they misappropriate it, in other words, they too have an interest in it. Taliban sometimes even provide security guarantees for the activities as they undertake intermediary roles between the local community and the contractors as “enablers of development” (Ibid. 848). When they accomplish a good balance between these two methods, the legitimacy of the Taliban increases which further diminishes the overall stability in Afghanistan.

As years went by in the state-building, the corruption grew bigger along with the Taliban insurgency. As they both geared up, the international community did the same and increased aid. However, doing this not just rendered aid dependency but also aid curse in Afghanistan. Moreover, some amounts of aid even end up in the insurgency’s hands. The donor aid failed to stimulate Kabul to invest in the public sphere, to carry out institution building, generate revenue, and collect tax, thus undermined Afghan ownership. Besides, tight schedules proposed during biannual donor conferences supplied temporary solutions for short-term goals rather than permanent development strategies for Afghanistan. Consequently, principles set in the 2005 Paris Declaration on aid effectiveness are yet to be met. Today, Afghanistan is still an aid-dependent state. If aid is pulled back unless the institutional capacity reaches a promising level, the whole system would likely collapse just like the Najibullah government did in 1992 when its financer, the USSR, cut both military and economic aid.

3.2. POST-CONFLICT CHALLENGES AND THE UNITED NATIONS IN AFGHANISTAN

This section scrutinizes the theoretical implication of international state-building in Afghanistan. The Afghanistan context is unique among other peace-building/state-building interventions not only because of its massive extent but also of

the ongoing conflict. The high level of insurgency and terror activities technically do not fit the “post-conflict” nature of state-building. Accordingly, the inherent problems of the country made the war rage even at the time of writing and constituted challenges for the project, which were mentioned in the first section. Another part here is allocated to the UN’s role in Afghanistan because it is the main actor despite its effectiveness have declined over time. After that, analyzing the implication, two main problems in the project are postulated.

3.2.1. Challenges for the State-Building in Afghanistan

The Afghanistan context has unique challenges for international state-building. The international community failed to comprehend the inherent problems of the country. The analysis of Afghan history in the second chapter has shown both exogenous and endogenous problems to consider for any state-building on Afghan soil. Inevitably, attempting an international project upon them proved vain. Accordingly having their roots in the past two and a half centuries of Afghan history, the strongmen, warlords, the war on terror, and the endemic corruption have all deteriorated the process.

3.2.1.1. The War on Terror

After four hijacked airplanes by Al-Qaeda members hit the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington causing nearly three thousand lives, US President George W. Bush announced the war on terror by the following: “Our war on terror begins with al Qaeda, but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated” (Bush, 2001). Following his statements on 7 October 2001, initially, US-led, and British-aided coalition forces commenced air-strike and ground invasion of Afghanistan, also known as the Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF)[1] (CFR, n.d.). Despite Usama Bin Ladin was killed by US forces ten years after the intervention, in May 2011 in Pakistan, the operation has always been iterative between counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency since the never-ending Taliban insurgency.

[1] OEF is replaced by Operation Freedom’s Sentinel (OFS) in January 2015, corresponding to ISAF’s replacement by RSM. Despite less troop numbers, the contexts of the two remains mostly the same. OFS performs counter-terrorism missions as well as supporting RSM’s training of Afghan security personnel on the field.

The OEF initially was a light military footprint one regarding US boots on the ground. It was rather dependent on massive airpower. About one thousand US Special Forces and Marines who coordinated with local militias operated at first. Although the numbers increased gradually, the initial model of the US in Afghanistan reminded the intervention of Kosovo in its strategic bombing, that of Somalia in its commando raid, and that of Nicaragua in its cooperation with anti-insurgency militia fractions (Daalder and Lindsay, 2001). By mid-November, OEF forces along with AMF mostly removed Taliban forces from Kabul and the UNSC with its resolution 1378 charged the UN with the duty to play a central role in establishing a new administration in Afghanistan. However, ousting the Taliban from Kabul proved no substantial victory and the war has become America's longest war. This longest and ongoing war indeed was a challenge for the state-building since it undermined the "post-conflict" narrative in the first place. The never-ending Taliban insurgency caused the US, and its allies to try to build a state while fighting at the same time. This inherent tension between the two grew bigger ever since.

Shortly after ousting the Taliban and the establishment of the Interim Administration President Bush announced "reconstructing" Afghanistan on 17 April 2002 (CFR, n.d.). After such an announcement, the US started to build reconstruction teams on the field (PRTs) in November 2002. Under US Army's command, PRTs' main purpose was to provide security and public services to the local people. Besides, with this method, the US hoped to diminish the Taliban's effect on the ground by extending the Kabul government's "good governance" to the district level while hoping to get intelligence about the insurgency in exchange. Thus, PRTs provided basic duties of a legitimate state at micro levels in areas like security, health, education, and utility infrastructure. However, after ISAF's expansion, contributing nations assumed their control along with the US.

The war on terror undermined the international state-building in Afghanistan in all of its essential components: security, economic development, and legitimacy. First, the US military forces within the OEF made alliances with the local militia against Al-Qaeda and the Taliban. Those militias were the remnants of anti-Taliban forces during the civil war and were later meant to be included in the DDR. While ISAF and the UNAMA were conducting DDR of former combatants, the US army supported, financed, and instrumentalized militias for their strategic purposes. Arguably, the relationship was mutual since the latter get paid in cash (Perito, 2005). The numbers of those US-funded forces were as high as 45.000 (Saikal, 2012). This dilemma

undermined the overall SSR which is an essential part of state-building. After all, the OEF's priority was counter-terrorism whereas that of ISAF was counter-insurgency.

The war on terror also had ramifications on the economic development process of Afghanistan. Since PRTs were military assets co-working with civilian personnel and conducting civilian affairs, they blurred the lines between civil and military (Perito, 2005). In the eyes of the local people, on the one hand, the US military was fighting in their land, and on the other hand, they were constructing buildings, hospitals, and other small-budget infrastructures. Besides, since PRTs were focused on quick-impact projects and they were fully funded by the US and their respective nations, their work conflicted with NGOs on the ground who work with UNAMA and the Afghan Government. In a USIP report which investigates US PRTs in Afghanistan Perito found that the frugality of NGOs versus PRTs' free-spending and "ad hoc approach" undermined NGOs and the Afghan Government's development and overall capacity-building efforts (Ibid.).

Finally, the US forces and their operations also diminished the legitimacy of not just all the foreign troops in the country but also the Afghan government. Civilian casualties played a major role in this. On one occasion, US aircrafts hit a wedding ceremony mistakenly in Uruzgan in July 2002 and killed about 50 innocent civilians which has become symbolic regarding this matter. These massive collateral damages made Afghan people suffer ever since the intervention's beginning and continued to rise by %330 lately (BBC, 2020). Besides, even though Bush Administration named the intervention a "war on terror", they did not confer "prisoner of war" status to the captured members of Taliban and Al-Qaeda for a time. This prompted torture, long detention durations, and human rights abuses in US detention centers (Human Rights Watch [HRW], 2004). Even though the captured members of the Taliban were later conferred the status, those of the latter remain as "unlawful combatants".

3.2.1.2. Afghan Warlords and State-Building

Since its foundation in the mid-eighteenth century, Afghanistan has always been a land of strongmen. As a result, Afghan rulers lasted as long as they conciliated tribal elders and mediated the great powers. Since the country is composed of micro-societies with different cultural, ethnic, and traditional characteristics, the environment in which the political economy of the country is being shaped is dominated by local and state elites that represent each of them. These national (state) elites and sub-

national (local) elites thus have critical effects on Afghanistan's post-conflict state-building (Barnett and Zurcher, 2009).

In Afghanistan's state-building, the international community put an elite into effect with whom they signed the "peace-builders contract" (Ibid. 23-53). It was Hamid Karzai who sworn in as the state elite to initiate the process and make reforms. Furthermore, when peace-builders promise resources and legitimacy for the elite in return for the reforms and stability, there appears what authors name compromised peace-building (Ibid.). Compromised peace-building is somewhere between fulfilling the international community's full expectations due to reforms and stability and what the state elites can do since the latter also want to stay in power and maintain the status quo. The result is limited to symbolic political reforms at best.

However, the compromised peace-building has been affected and complicated by the sub-national elite factor. In Afghanistan's context, these sub-national elites are warlords. Warlords are non-state armed actors who have their private army, resources to generate their economy, and most importantly who use or threaten to use coercion at the expense of the state's monopoly of violence (Mac Ginty, 2010). In short, they present a threat to the state elite's commitment of stability to the peace-builders (Barnett and Zurcher, 2009). Since warlords are both a result and a consequence of insecurity (Mac Ginty, 2010) they spoil any advancements in the contract at their expense. The three main components of warlords are resources, legitimacy, and state weakness (Ibid.). In terms of resources, warlords generate income from foreign patrons, trade, levying a tax, drug, etc. since they have to supply for their army, followers, and their families (Ibid.). As for legitimacy, warlords exploit ethnic bonds by manipulating perceptions that they are the only ones who can protect their rights. The weakness of the central state enables the conditions for them to operate. Besides, since they are existent in the war economy, they would not survive in a peaceful condition.

That said, the Afghanistan context has shown that warlords are also good survivors. To survive, they have fostered an ability to adapt themselves to changing political contexts. Indeed, since warlords first appeared in the second half of the 1970s in which the Communist April revolution and the Soviet invasion occurred, decades passed with civil war, Taliban rule, 9/11 intervention, and the state-building, and yet warlords survived. Especially, two of them, Ismail Khan and Rashid Dostum are still influential.

Romain Malejacq argues in his recent book “Warlord Survival”, how Afghan warlords apply two methods: “power conversion” and “power projection” to survive decades of changing political contexts (Weigand, 2021). In power conversion, warlords adapt their components to different contexts. Rashid Dostum for example, a former pro-government militia commander, joined Masoud’s forces against the Najibullah government when the Soviet Union collapsed and thus could no longer support the government. He again parted company when the Taliban gained significant power in 1994, yet again joined back the Northern Alliance against the Taliban in late 1996. Furthermore, after 9/11 performing a pro-American action, he managed to regain control of Mazar-e Sharif with US forces (Malejacq, 2016). Another example is, Ismail Khan, a former Mujahedeen commander, consolidated his power around Herat in the West of Afghanistan after the Soviet withdrawal. Later, he seized border posts, levied taxes, fostered good diplomatic relations with Iran, Turkmenistan, and Pakistan, and also let NGOs work in his region (Ibid.). After the international community assigned Karzai to Kabul, both warlords assumed significant positions like Governor, Minister, and Vice President.

In 2004, the US changed its policy of “warlord democratization” and decided to diminish the parallel authority and make Karzai seem stronger as the presidential elections approached. Accordingly, Muhammad Fahim, another former Mujahedeen warlord, and Marshall lost his position of Defense Minister in 2004. Ismail Khan also lost his position as Governor of Herat in the same year. Because that was the only time that the US utterly committed to the DDR. In such an environment, warlords were forced to become dormant (Ibid.). However, it did not necessarily mean that they were to languish. In this process, they strengthened their legitimacy in the eyes of both the international community and their fiefdoms as non-violent, traditional, and legendary leaders of the nation. To project their power and prove that they were indispensable, the ones who can protect their rights and interests, Ismail Khan opened a Jihad Museum in Herat, Dostum started broadcasting a tv channel (Aina TV and B-TV) in which he showed himself as the heir of Tamerlane and with Fahim, they kept sponsoring buzkashi[2] (Ibid.). The above shows how warlords successfully shifted their power base from violence to traditional ethnic kins and projected themselves in power to their followers.

[2] Buzkashi is the Afghan version of a centuries old traditional Central Asian game in which horsemen chase and grab a headless carcass of a goat to put it in goal circle. For Afghan men, beyond a game, it is a way of showing strength and an inspiration for boys to grow up to play.

Warlords not only profit from state weakness but also state-building (Mac Ginty, 2010). The reason behind this is that state-building was attempted while there has been an ongoing counter-insurgency struggle (Ibid.). In an ongoing insurgency even today, the US allied with warlords and sponsored them. This undermined state-building in two perspectives. First, strengthening the warlords and their militia undermined the DDR and SSR. On the one hand, the UN and the government, and ISAF were trying to disarm the militia, and on the other hand, the US was supporting them against the insurgency. Lucrative contracts with the US made them linger to disarm. Indeed, lesson three of the SIGAR report of September 2019 on DDR put that: "Partnering with militias to achieve short-term security objectives can seriously undermine wider peace-building goals, including demobilization and reintegration efforts" (SIGAR, 2019: 95). This made local militias especially those in the southern parts of the country escape the DDR and further diminished the monopoly of violence of the state.

Second, warlords' incorporation into the government prevented the bureaucratization that the institution-building needs at the core. Once they get the positions like minister and/or governor, they scoop up the essence of bureaucracy with the neo-patrimonialism that they brought with them. Accordingly, lesson four of the SIGAR report of September 2016 against corruption argues:

> *Many warlords were brought into government, where they continued their abuses, maintained private militias, and had links to narcotics, smuggling, and criminal networks. With a weak central government and no fear of law enforcement, the warlords gained impunity. Over time, their criminal patronage networks became more entrenched. The warlords did not "self-correct" upon entering government; rather, they sought to maximize private gains within a system lacking accountability* (SIGAR, 2016: 77).

Warlords scoop up the essence of bureaucracy by simply buying it out and further have a significant influence on laws and regulations. In the Afghan context, this was common in the places where warlords were governors (Mehran, 2018). Mehran argues that warlords like Ismail Khan in Herat, Atta Mohammad Noor in Balkh, and Gul Agha Sherzai in Nangarhar established a single patronage network with which they controlled and exploited the Police, Army, and customs (Ibid.). They also helped some MPs get their seats in the parliament so that they serve their patron's interests regarding laws, reforms, and supporting the ministers who have good relations with warlords (Ibid.).

3.2.1.3. Endemic Corruption and the Shadow Economy

Corruption has been an endemic problem in Afghanistan. According to the international authorities, the country ranks 165 out of 180 countries in corruption perceptions (Transparency International, 2020). The experience of Afghans is a good sign that proves it. Given citizens are “demanded” to give bribes by officials to have their service provided (Integrity Watch Afghanistan, 2018), there is a major trend of patronage relationship in the public sphere in contrast to liberalization (Verkoren and Kamphuis, 2013). An Afghan NGO, Integrity Watch Afghanistan put that %83 of people believe corruption harms their daily lives (Integrity Watch Afghanistan, 2018). This level of corruption undermines the legitimacy of Kabul since corrupt sub-national statemen only strengthen the insurgency’s hands (Suhrke, 2013).

The corruption in Afghanistan has a characteristic of banality. The shadow economy of poppy production and drugs has a certain role in this narrative. The nested relationship between drugs and corruption has been transforming power relationships between central rulers and those in the periphery. Since various warlords and local strongmen were co-opted into the bureaucracy as a necessity of simultaneous state-building and fighting against insurgency, the state has become a sort of resource that is reached and maintained by illegal methods (Bak, 2019). In this context, Afghans tend to tolerate corruption as long as statemen provide public goods to them. That said, their perception of corruption is more about the international organizations’ existence and those who get rich easily by corrupt contracts. In a state with a weak institutional capacity to absorb such a high flux of aid like Afghanistan, aid induced a major off-budget parallel public sector. When combined with the poor monitoring caused by the insurgency, high levels of corruption became inevitable (Suhrke, 2013). Kabul Bank’s collapse in which the corruption level was about 900 million dollars, is a good example of this. Thus, Afghans think that the corruption’s root cause is the international presence itself.

Corruption is also pernicious for international state-building efforts. Rigging on contracts creates a vicious cycle by which a rentier relationship grows stronger. When actors access the bidding of reconstruction contracts via political support, the profit or the rent that emerged strengthens the patronage relations among the people involved (Ibid.). Those people have a dedication to this aid cycle’s perpetuation.

Endemic corruption and the illegal drug industry are embedded in Afghanistan. After the Taliban’s ousting, the shadow economy of poppy production remained

vibrant. In 2019, Afghans grew poppies on lands 4 times as they could back in 2002 which equals 82% of the world's supply (Whitlock, 2019). Besides, encouraging strategies made a perverse effect on the process. When British officials offered Afghan farmers 700$ for each destroyed acre of poppy fields, farmers cultivated poppy, sold some in the market, and then destroyed the rest like they already had a poppy farm in the first place to get the award of $30 million in total (Ibid.).

Karzai government is also responsible for the proliferation of the drug economy. The whole Bonn process which required rendering stability before reforms ended up in poor development in all sectors including the judiciary. Thus, Hamid Karzai came under pressure from the dual legitimacy problem (Ibid.). On the one hand, effective eradication of the poppy economy could strengthen its legitimacy among the international community. On the other hand, it could diminish himself, especially among Pashtun farmers if he could not replace poppy with effective labor sources. A UN report showed recently that the income to the domestic economy of opium is about US$ 1.2 - 2.1 billion which comprises %7 - %11 of GDP (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime [UNODC], 2021). Given a domestic income of licit goods only comprises %4.8 of GDP (Ibid.), the seriousness of the problem is much easier to realize.

This shadow economy is a fruitful resource for the Taliban. Most poppy cultivating provinces in the southwest like Kandahar, Helmand, and Uruzgan are mainly controlled by the Taliban. Taliban's tax system, "ushr" comprises multiple incomes from local Afghans, especially farmers. In 2019, it is reported that farmers paid 6% of their income of opium, and 10% from overall agricultural production to the Taliban (UNODC, 2021). Besides, not just the insurgency, but also considerable numbers of government officials and warlords who are responsible for security are making their fortunes by corruption. Sectors at risk are judiciary, education, health, security, and finance (Bak, 2019). Among them are private security companies, local police chiefs, and tax officials who demand bribes via their jargon like "my slippers are torn" (Ibid. 6). In one case, Bojicic-Dzelilovic et al. (2015) revealed that General Abdul Raziq, former Mujahedeen, and former warlord-turned governor of Kandahar were handling about 700 trucks of drugs in a day in his police chief duty of Kandahar (qtd. in Bak, 2019). He was later killed in an assassination by the Taliban in late 2018.

Privileging stability and counter-insurgency outshined fighting against corruption for years. Only lately Afghanistan has started to bear down on corruption. In 2016, President Ashraf Ghani established a uniform body against anti-corruption.

High Council for Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption, also known as High Council, pledged itself solemnly on the issue. However, its independence of domestic politics is questioned since President Ashraf Ghani is the chair and chief executive Abdullah Abdullah and many other statemen are members of it (Ibid. 2019).

3.2.2. The United Nations and Its Effects on the State-Building of Afghanistan

The UN has been active in Afghanistan since the 1980s. Since then, its role has changed depending on international politics. Even though, after the Cold War, it gained momentum in peace-making for the country, it became the central actor in Afghanistan after the September 11 attacks. Besides, Afghanistan became the first experiment of the UN's "integrated missions" following the "Brahimi Report".

The UN had deep effects on Afghanistan despite the "light footprint", a strategy that refers to deploying as few as possible foreign expatriates. In this section, the thesis investigates how this light footprint turned heavier and its effects on the country both from political and military perspectives. The UN and especially the SRSG Brahimi, have initiated a top-down legitimization process. After his tenure, however, the UN's potency vis-à-vis national and sub-national elites tapered. Since the time Afghanization and further reconciliation with the Taliban appeared to be a viable option, the US and the Afghan Government stood out with peace negotiations.

3.2.2.1. United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA)

The UN's footprint in Afghanistan dates back to June 1982, three years later the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan to step into the breach of the PDPA's conflictual administration. Since the UNSC could not adopt a resolution to get involved directly against the veto power of the USSR, the UN's initiatives were at the General Assembly level which was not binding and rather limited. Even though the UN brokered a political stage among Kabul, Islamabad, and Moscow in Geneva in 1988, the consequences on the field proved fruitless since the Mujahedeen had not been invited. Later on, the USSR removed its troops after a decade-long war before its dissolution in 1991, which made the Najibullah government collapse subsequently as the Soviet backing ended and drifted the country into a civil war. In retrospect, the 1988 Geneva accords were profitable only for its guarantors: the US and the USSR

since the US celebrated Soviet troops leave as another successful stage in its containment policy, and since the USSR relieved of its hump by Afghanizing the war (Saikal, 1996). After the context of the Cold War, the UN established a Special Mission in Afghanistan (UNSMA) in 1994. The main idea was to establish stable governance in Afghanistan. However, it failed to do this, because of vibrant regional dynamics.

In the 1990s, the UN's "peace-building" activities intensified. From Central America to the Asia-Pacific it involved mainly three types of peace-building activities (Suhrke et al., 2002). First, those reconstructions of states who were recovering from civil wars with a compromise. In such a context, the UN interferes to target the causes of the war and brokers a peace like the Dayton agreement of Bosnia in 1995 and the El-Salvador peace agreement in 1992 (Ibid.). Second, the UN oversees missions in newly emerged states after civil wars with almost total victories. Examples of this are East Timor and Kosovo. The third is the involvement in failed states in which coercion, capital, and legitimacy factors that build up a state's authority are no more. The case of Afghanistan in the spring of 1995 resembled the first type of UN peace-building activities in which the UNSMA had a chance to broker a peace agreement. This was possible since Masoud's forces defended Kabul effectively against the Taliban and highly damaged their strike capability until September 1995 (Saikal, 1996). However, as months passed, Pakistan's increased support to the Taliban within the context of the "strategic depth", made the Taliban capture Kabul and then gradually gain control of almost all through the country. After losing this chance which was caused by the UNSMA's "over the horizon" approach (Ibid. 24), the situation in Afghanistan worsened gradually until it ended up as a failed state.

The UN has always been central in the state-building of Afghanistan. After the coalition forces ousted the Taliban from Kabul in mid-November, the international community put in action its intent to transform the Taliban-led Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan into a liberal and pro-Western, democratic but still Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (Saikal, 2012). To do this transformation and creation of legitimate government, the UN is authorized by UNSC resolution 1378 dated 14 November 2001 (the United Nations, 2001a).

Within this context, on the request of the newly created Interim Administration in Kabul, UNAMA has been established by the UNSC Resolution 1401 on 28 March 2002 as an annually renewable mandate (the United Nations, 2001b: Annex 2). Directed by SRSG, the UNAMA's mission is fulfilling the UN's task mentioned in the Bonn agreement which is managing and coordinating all institution-building efforts

along with promoting peace and stability, supporting national reconciliation and regional cooperation, monitoring human rights with gender equality by its good offices (the United Nations, 2002).

When the UNAMA replaced UNSMA in Afghanistan, the situation on the ground was like this: the Bonn agreement's compromise among attendants (Interim Administration) was being tested, the situation was almost a total victory against the Taliban, the AMF was divided under the command of various warlords, and the state infrastructures were devastated by two decades of war. Thus, the mission looked like to cut across all types of peace-building activities (Suhrke et al., 2002). During and after the Bonn agreement, the traditionally largest linguistic and ethnic group, the Pashtuns, were somewhat unrepresented if not reckoning Hamid Karzai who was selected by the International Community. So that the UN and the Bonn agreement targeted future developments without trying to solve Afghanistan's endemic problems. Establishing institutions and dividing the spoils carefully to integrate strongmen into the bureaucracy were clear signs of this.

The UNAMA mission in Afghanistan was unique among other UN missions in various regions of the world. First, it blurred the traditional divide between peace deals (peace-making) and their implementation (Chesterman, 2002). Indeed, this was the very idea behind the "Brahimi Report". Accordingly, the Bonn agreement made sure of this by authorizing the SRSG (owner of the report himself) with the jurisdiction to involve actively in the process. This was because that the Bonn agreement was indeed a process that oversaw an Interim Administration, the Emergency Loya Jirga, Transitional Administration, Constitutional Loya Jirga, and the subsequent elections. In all these phases, the UN took full action over coordination and conducting Bonn's intentions via its SRSG Lakhdar Brahimi as mandated by the agreement (the United Nations, 2001b: Annex 2). Second, the UNAMA was rather a small mission in its size which came to be known as "the light footprint approach" to provide "Afghan ownership" in the process. Indeed, at first, only 75 expatriates were deployed to the Kabul Headquarters of UNAMA, and approximately 15 expatriates were distributed to each of 7 regional offices in namely: Bamiyan, Jalalabad, Kunduz, Mazar-e Shariff, Kandahar, Herat, and Gardez (Stimson Center, 2002). As of 2019 despite those numbers are higher than that of 2002, the locals still outnumber foreigners by 833 to 378 in the UNAMA (UNAMA, n.d.). According to SRSG Brahimi, this small mandate aimed to win the "credit and influence" of Afghans by giving them the leadership (Chesterman, 2002: 40). Third, in the beginning, the mission reported to the

Department of Political Affairs of the UN, rather than the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, as normally it would (Stimson Center, 2002)[3]. The final argument shows that the mission is rather an interlocutor of a political transition in Afghanistan.

3.2.2.2. Political Effects

The UNAMA, as a civilian mission, was established with two main pillars: a "Political Affairs" pillar and a "Relief, Recovery and Reconstruction" (development) pillar (Stimson Center, 2002). These pillars have their roots in the UNSMA and the UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and each is run by Deputy Special Representatives who report to the SRSG. With their "good offices", the UNAMA put in effect the "light footprint" approach which aimed to deploy as few as possible foreign expatriates in the country to provide the Afghan people local ownership and leadership. This was a divergence from the UN's direct rule by de facto and de jure trusteeships in Kosovo and East Timor respectively (Suhrke et al., 2002).

The term "light footprint" was used officially for the first time in the Report of the Secretary-General dated 18 March 2002, ten days before UNAMA's declaration. It was proposed as one of the basic operating principles: "UNAMA should aim to bolster Afghan capacity (both official and non-governmental), relying on as limited an international presence and on as many Afghan staff as possible, and using common support services where possible, thereby leaving a light expatriate "footprint" …" (the United Nations, 2002: 16). That said, despite the UNAMA's presence was light, SRSG Brahimi compensated this with his individual relations on the field. Enjoying his broad authority given by the Bonn agreement to "use his/her good offices with a view to facilitating a resolution to the impasse or a decision" (the United Nations, 2001b: 10), Brahimi promoted close relations with Karzai and his three key ministers namely: Abdullah Abdullah; Muhammad Qassem Fahim and Mohammed Younus Qanooni to make sure the Bonn process was functioning correctly (Chesterman, 2002). Compared to those SRSGs in Cambodia and East Timor, Brandt supports this argument that Brahimi was quite effective and a trusted individual among all Afghan

[3] In 2019, Department of Political Affairs and Peacebuilding Support Unit jointly formed a new unit under the name of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs while the Department of Peacekeeping Operations is renamed as Department of Peace Operations. Despite the differentiation of missions that the former is rather a political department whereas the latter is military in nature, the two departments mostly work in coordination since they share eight regional sections.

elites and conducted regular meetings with Karzai to make sure the Bonn process was on the track (Brandt, 2005).

The political effects of the UN and its field office UNAMA on the international state-building of Afghanistan should be investigated within two periods. The first period is the Bonn process. Under the supervision of SRSG Brahimi and after his term is finished, his former Deputy on Political affairs, Jean Arnault, the UN had a deep impact on Afghanistan's state-building despite its "light" footprint. The second period can be named Afghanization. The sign of this change of context is the Afghan Compact signed in London 2006 donor conference after the Bonn process's end with the national assembly taking office on 19 December 2005. The latter is the context within which the significance of the local structure is recognized and reconciliation of Afghan people, especially with the Taliban, has been put in practice. The Afghanization process also is the time in which the donor's discourse has been changed from "failed states" to "fragile contexts" notably in OECD documents. Even though the SRSGs have been granted the "super envoy" position among all actors in Afghanistan after 2008, the overall effect of the UN was relatively poorer than it was in the first period. Thus, the ramifications of the first period understood by the international community further reduced the UN's political effect on the second process.

The Bonn process was an attempt of the top-down legitimization of the newly established Afghanistan. The light footprint approach was a part of this legitimization process in the eyes of both the international community and the Afghan people. On the one hand, Brahimi's tried not to make Afghan state-building look like a neo-colonialism in the eyes of the international community (Goodhand and Sedra, 2010), and on the other hand, he thought it would be much more legitimate if Afghan's were on the driver's seat. However, in the process, former Northern Alliance strongmen who had not been necessarily representing the majority of local Afghans maneuvered themselves into key positions and ministries. Consequently, the process failed to revive "national ownership" (Ayub et al., 2009) which was intended by the light footprint and rather caused a "regime ownership" of a narrow clique (Goodhand and Sedra, 2010).

The legitimization from above wrapped up the modern/liberal with the traditional in the Afghan context. Brahimi used the traditional grand assemblies existing in the Afghan culture, "Loya Jirga", in which tribal elders and representatives of the local Afghans decide upon significant matters (Maley, 2013). Another point was

the denomination of former King Zahir Shah as the “father” of the nation (Ibid.). The inviting and honoring of the former King were only a part of the legitimization of the newly established regime and nothing more since SRSG Brahimi and Khalilzad lobbied against him to make Karzai selected as the head of the Interim Authority. Indeed, Karzai was a compromised name for de-Talibanization. He was representing the Popalzai tribe of Durrani Pashtuns who had been the rival of Ghilzai Pashtuns of which many had joined the Taliban (Saikal, 2012). Besides, he had close links with the US dating back to his Deputy Foreign Minister years of Mujahedeen ruling era (Ibid.). Thus, Karzai, a Pashtun tribal leader, was a key figure in the legitimization of the new regime, hoping that he could represent the biggest ethnolinguistic part of the country and mediate with the Northerners.

The UN-brokered Bonn agreement and its implementation, the Bonn process, had strict time pressure (Maley, 2018). This was ironically created by itself since not all parties were invited to the conference. The conditions before the Bonn paved the way to exclusion of the Taliban in the Bonn table. Two days before the 9/11 attacks, on September 9, two suicide bombers of the al-Qaeda terrorist organization, which was under the Taliban government’s protectorate, disguised as journalists, killed Ahmad Shah Masoud. Masoud was a strong figure in the Northern Alliance and Rabbani’s Jamiat-e Islami in particular. In this context, it would not be realistic for Brahimi to expect other participants to sit at the same table with the Taliban. Furthermore, when the US-led coalition ousted the Taliban from Kabul in mid-November, its control was captured by one specific group, Jamiat-e Islami’s forces who were led by Masoud’s successor Fahim. This leverage won by a sleight of hand was not something agreed upon by other non-Taliban groups especially Hazaras, Uzbeks, and Pashtun representatives. Thus, not to perpetuate this situation, Brahimi had limited time.

One of the Bonn conference’s functions was to distribute the spoils of the state among participants. Indeed, 29 different ministerial departments were established and distributed to various fractions. In his memoir, James Dobbins, the then US representative at Bonn, explains how they even divided one of the departments into two to make sure participants were rewarded fairly (qtd. in Maley, 2018). This explains how the scope and strength of the state were not discussed in the conference (Ibid.). With the 29 different ministries, it became further complicated to conduct state-building activities since there was no coordination among ministries owned by different factions. Thus, the Bonn agreement created a state with a wide range of

scope, from education to air transport and tourism, despite its relatively lower strength level. Arguably, this newly established Afghanistan's position in Fukuyama's scope-strength chart would be in region four, which has not changed much in the last two decades.

The most important effect of the Bonn process and SRSG Brahimi to Afghanistan was creating an over-centralized political environment and neo-patrimonialism. Neo-patrimonialism occurs when legal-rational bureaucracy is mixed with patrimonial ties. In the long run, this neo-patrimonialism undermined the overall state-building and liberalization of the state. Neo-patrimonialism occurred when Karzai converged his jurisdiction given to him by the constitution with his governance upon patron-client relations. The latter is also known as "Peshawar politics" which stands for Karzai's exile years during Soviet rule in Afghanistan in which he mastered his abilities of clientelism and alliance-building (Ibid. 1005). To some extent, contacting directly to one man was of use to the international community. However, the centralization proved not to be convenient for an environment like Afghanistan which contains various micro societies (Saikal, 2012). Indeed, it was put in surveys that the two major groups; Pashtuns and Tajiks were reluctant to vote for each other's candidates. Besides, over-centralization brought about a weak parliament and impunity. The SNTV voting system adopted by Karzai caused the fragmentation of the opposition and forced them to make alliances secretly rather than openly which is a standard issue in democracies (Maley, 2018). Moreover, impunity for outlaws and corrupt officials was provided by Karzai himself when he sometimes asked the law enforcement officials to consider law and order within the "Afghan Framework" (Ibid. 1006).

The centralization of politics in Afghanistan occurred step by step. First, with US ambassador Khalilzad, SRSG Brahimi lobbied against former King Zahir and helped Karzai to be elected as the head of the ATA in the ELJ (Maley, 2013). The same scenario took place in the constitution-making process too. Brahimi played an effective role in the establishment of the Constitutional Commission by Karzai. Afterward in the VIP tent of the CLJ Brahimi and Khalilzad were again in the leading role upon designating the critical articles of the constitution. Given that Afghanistan had lacked a civil society culture with the ability to mobilize to limit rulers' authority and has various micro societies (Saikal, 2012), the constitution-making process was challenging. Warlords like Rashid Dostum, Ismail Khan, and Mohammad Fahim were in the first row during the ELJ. This was because Brahimi prioritized peace over

justice. Indeed, he later argued that “security is more important than justice” in an interview in 2009 (qtd. Larsen, 2010: 21). Besides, there were also conflicting interests of the state-building actors at stake. The US, the biggest donor, and combatant of the war on terror aimed to create a secular, modern, and Muslim ally against its war in the middle east, whereas the UN, NATO, and the rest of the international community including the EU wishes Afghans to determine their future with a gender-equal and human rights-based state institutions (Ibid.). However, as one scholar on humanitarianism, Antonio Donini put that “Afghanistan thus confirms the rule that when superpower interests are at stake, principled humanitarianism suffers. Conversely, when the superpowers are not paying attention, principles have a better fighting chance” (qtd. in Saikal, 2012: 221). Despite these obstacles in the Afghan context for a successful constitution-making process, the Brahimi-led UN managed to come up with a constitution in the CLJ which lays the foundation of an Islamic republic looking towards the West.

Another ramification of the light footprint strategy other than the politics was it suffered deficiency caused by limited resources. In any state-building endeavor without enough resources both in money and human capacity, it is difficult to achieve success. The light footprint tied UNAMA’s hands and made it a secondary state-building agent in terms of economic development and SSR (Goodhand and Sedra, 2010; Sedra, 2017). Many members of the international community injected most of their aids through non-state channels and bilateral funds, by-passing the UN-administered fund, the LOTFA. Predominantly the US injected only %3 of its aid through international funds between 2007-2008 (Goodhand and Sedra, 2010). Thus, the UN-administered LOTFA’s budget has always been smaller than the US-administered USAID. The US started to fund LOTFA only after the 2006 Afghan Compact and it injected aid only through USAID until 2006. Thus, significant aspects of the state-building programs namely SSR and economic development process have been ceded to the lead-donor system which suffered a lack of coordination. In addition to this, the UNSC-assigned ISAF force had been stuck into Kabul and its surrounding region until assumed by NATO in late 2003.

After Brahimi ceded his duty to his deputy in political affairs, Jean Arnault in December 2004, the overall impact of the UN started to decrease in the Afghan state-building. The best example was its management of elections. Due to security and other administerial issues, the presidential elections of 2004 were postponed for 4 months and held on 9 October 2004. Despite multiple fraud issues the UN ignored

and mediated the situation with the help of Khalilzad and the JEMB. After one year, in the parliamentary elections of 2005, the voter turnout significantly decreased, from %70 to %50 which shows the loss of Afghan people's faith in the international civil presence led by the UN. On the way to the 2005 parliamentary elections, SRSG Jean Arnault failed to prevent Karzai from adopting the SNTV system with an election law by a presidential decree in May 2004, showing that the UN was frustrated with the leader and his government to whom they helped to assume power (Saikal, 2012). The result was a fragmented parliament with wasted votes. Furthermore, in the 2009 elections, the reported fraud was more serious. Karzai won slightly with his opponent Abdullah Abdullah contesting results. Later, SRSG Kai Eide and his deputy Peter Galbraith were disputed over the action of the UN whether or not to intervene (Ibid.). This dilemma further ended with the UNSG Ban Ki-Moon's removal of Galbraith from his duty. All these diminished the UN and its overall effect on the state-building process.

The Bonn process meant to build a state in Afghanistan by ousting the Taliban from Kabul, winning them on the battlefield, and hoping that they would never return. However, since 2005 Taliban have risen again. The security started to deteriorate and the high levels of corruption and the rentier government in Kabul helped the environment to change to the advantage of the insurgency. At the same time at the 2006 London Conference, the donor community signed the Afghan compact with an ambition to increase the coordination among the state-building efforts. Abrogation of the lead-donor system in various sectors, putting the Afghan government forward along with the UN were among its decisions. Some scholars argue that this was a signal of evasion of responsibility (Goodhand and Sedra, 2010; Rubin and Hamidzada, 2007). When combined with the US troop surge and demand of the US for increasing the number of ANDSF to more than 350.000, especially after 2008 with the Obama administration, all these show that the international community came to understand the local realities, the limits of the state-building and were preparing for an "Afghanization" period. One proof of this was the US's increased aid to the ANDSF from $11.8 billion between the 2002-2007 period to $40.4 billion between 2007-2012 period (Sedra, 2017).

In the second period of international state-building, the light footprint thus has turned into a heavy footprint. The Afghan government and the SRSGs have assumed responsibility for the state-building project with the new "Super Envoy" position given to SRSGs during Kai Eide's rotation of duty (Saikal, 2012). With the UNSC Resolution,

1806 SRSGs have assumed the leading civilian actor in Afghanistan among other actors. Besides the budget and personnel numbers of the UNAMA have been increased to today's numbers, which clearly shows that the light footprint proved useless.

Realizing that the "policy of picking winners" proved flawed (Goodhand and Sedra, 2010: 83), the first offer to reconciling the Taliban into the Afghan community came from SRSG Tom Koenigs in 2006. In an interview, SRSG Koenigs argued that the Taliban was a "real insurgent movement" with a practically limitless reservoir of fighters, and thus killing them would not be of use and there was a need for reconciliation for Afghanistan's stabilization (Der Spiegel, 2006). However, actors other than the UN were unwilling to accept the power of the Taliban nor their failure to build a legitimate state (Saikal, 2012). Besides, the Taliban reconciliation was also hindered by their political and strategic interests. First, Karzai did not want such a thing as it would undermine his central political role (Ibid.). Second, the US was over ambitious in its war on terror due to its strategic interests. Third, it assured NATO to "reinvent" its alliance (Goodhand and Sedra, 2010: 83). That said, after 2010 the US started secret talks with the Taliban, and the process gained momentum with the Taliban's opening an office in Doha, Qatar in June 2013. Since the main actors were the US and the Afghan Government, the UN played less role in the process. In retrospect, the overall effect of the UN over the second period, namely the Afghanization period was less than it was in the Bonn process in which SRSG Brahimi's key inputs sacrificed pluralistic democracy for a fast-track, top-down legitimacy, and state-building.

3.2.2.3. Military Effects: Boots on the Ground

The preliminary announcement of international boots on the ground regarding the poor security conditions in Afghanistan was made in Annex one and Paragraph three of the Bonn agreement when it put: "… the United Nations Security Council to consider authorizing the early deployment to Afghanistan of a United Nations-mandated force" (the United Nations, 2001b: 9). After fifteen days of this announcement, UNSC Resolution 1386 mandated an International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) for six months on 20 December 2001. This force had been established as a temporary force in line with the Chapter VII of the United Nations' Charter to enable the necessary conditions for securing peace in Afghanistan. The

idea behind the resolution was to provide the international state-builders the necessary coercive power, which is one of the core functions of any state. Originally thought for rotational duties for six months under member state's commands, the force remains the longest international mission to provide security and peace in history despite the UN no longer owns it.

ISAF provided security and helped the legitimacy in and around Kabul representing the UN during the Interim Administration, the Emergency Loya Jirga, and the Transitional Government it authorized. Upon signing the Military Technical Agreement on 4 January, ISAF and the Karzai's Interim Administration designated the specifications due to rules of engagement, sizes, roles, and the sharing of intelligence (Saikal, 2006). The first contractor of ISAF was the United Kingdom and under its command, 18 others provided troops that stepped foot on Afghanistan in January 2002. Turkey, Germany, and the Netherlands were the subsequent contractors who assumed the commanding responsibility of the force on the ground until NATO stepped in to take charge of ISAF on 11 August 2003 (NATO, 2021b).

As ISAF set foot, on the one hand, the Taliban and Al-Qaeda had already been ousted from Kabul and the Afghan Military Forces of the former Northern Alliance were in control of the capital. On the other hand, the US-led coalition forces were conducting the OEF to root out the remnants of the former throughout the country mainly in Eastern and South-eastern Afghanistan which borders Pakistan. Thus, ISAF was originally confined to Kabul and its surrounding area by the resolution that mandated it. However, in retrospect, this was a mistake to limit ISAF to Kabul and its surroundings since during this time local militias and strongmen carved out an ability to operate with the US-led coalition which undermined the subsequent DDR and SSR processes. Despite the domestic request from the Karzai government, the main reason for ISAF's limitation within Kabul was the US and its strategic interests (Berdal, 2019).

The expansion of the ISAF out of Kabul and its surroundings was crucial and essential because of three reasons (Saikal, 2006). First, the newly established Afghan administration's authority and legitimacy were at stake. The ongoing state-building efforts were hampered by the US-dominated war against the Taliban within the local context. To generate the monopoly of force and the legitimacy of the state, it should have been the ISAF and Afghan Military to assume this. Second, the sooner Afghans were provided a stabilized everyday life the better it was. The third was to diminish local strongmen who later became a threat to the institutionalization of the state.

Nevertheless, this was exactly what happened since the ongoing war on terror supported the local strongmen in exchange for their cooperation against the Taliban insurgency and Al-Qaeda. Despite these crucial necessities, ISAF remained within Kabul because of the US strategic interests.

The US was against the ISAF's expansion until 2003 because of two main reasons as various US officials have mentioned. Firstly, the US did not want to be constrained by its North Atlantic allies in its war on terror (Berdal, 2019). Indeed, the then Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz mentioned in 2001 that they were willing to act "in appropriately flexible ways" (qtd. in Berdal, 2019: 529). Given the excessive force, mistreatment, indefinite detention, tortures, and homicides of the captured insurgents/terrorists by US officials in Bagram Airbase in Kabul and other military centers and detention facilities in Kandahar, Jalalabad, and Asadabad uncovered by the Human Rights Watch (HRW, 2004), it would have been difficult to conduct such operations with opposing allies. Secondly, the US administration was reluctant to get involved with a wider state-building effort in Afghanistan until 2003. As Condoleezza Rice put in a Foreign Affairs article in 2000, the then foreign policy advisor of Presidential Candidate George Walker Bush:

> *the military… is most certainly not designed to build a civilian society...Military force is best used to support clear political goals…It is one thing to have a limited political goal and to fight decisively for it; it is quite another to apply military force incrementally, hoping to find a political solution somewhere along the way* (Rice, 2000: 53).

Nevertheless, given the two decades of intervention and state-building efforts, it was the latter that happened exactly in Afghanistan.

During the Prague Summit of November 2002 members decided that NATO could go out of its responsibility area which had been designated as member states' territories in North Atlantic Treaty's article six as mainly Europe and North America. This paved way for NATO's taking charge of ISAF later in August 2003. This duty takeover occurred after the US had changed its policy of confining ISAF. There were four reasons behind this. First, the security out of Kabul was still not ripe to generate enough legitimacy of Karzai Administration, and that the Second Loya Jirga for the constitution and the subsequent Presidental elections were approaching (Saikal, 2006). To reinforce the Karzai administration's legitimacy, ISAF needed to go out of capital and took control of the field. Second, since the US was over-loaded by their Iraq invasion of March 2003, they needed the help of their European Allies in Afghanistan who had opposed the Iraqi war from the beginning (Ibid.). Third, the Bush

administration needed more rapid and positive results from their Afghan intervention to use in the re-election campaign at a time in which the Iraqi operation was becoming a burden (Suhrke, 2008). In addition to these factors, there was a transformation process in NATO signaled in the Heads of States and Governments Summit in Prague 2002 to redefine itself against the future global challenges of the post 9/11 landscape related to security (Berdal, 2019).

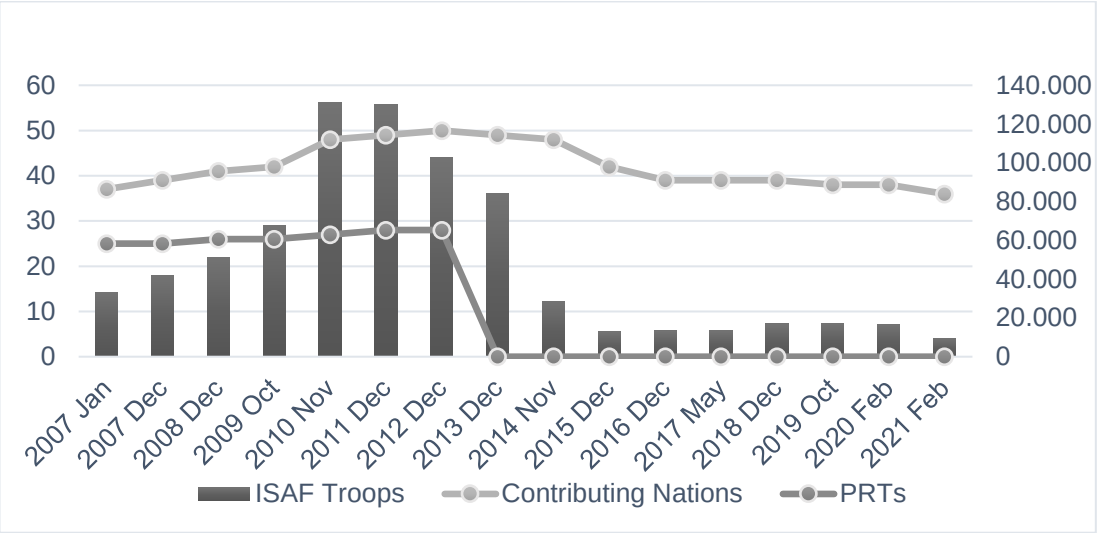
NATO-led ISAF established its permanent headquarters and command chain in Kabul. This put an end to the rotational duty handover among the international community and expansion of the ISAF to all through the country in four stages. The expansion began with ISAF's taking over of the German PRT of Kunduz in the north of Afghanistan in December 2003 (NATO, 2021b). This expansion occurred step by step by taking commands of PRTs respectively in North, West, South and finally ended in East of Afghanistan in October 2006.

As NATO-led ISAF expanded, it merged in state-building activities namely DDR, SSR, and reconstruction efforts via its PRTs each of which was led by individual donors contributing to "good governance". With the expansion, troop numbers doubled from about 10.000 to 20.000 by the end of 2006 (NATO, 2015). To implement the DDR and SSR of ANA, CSTC-A was established by the US to work in line with the ISAF on the field. ISAF assigned training and mentoring assets through PRTs and increased the boots on the ground gradually (NATO, 2021b). In PRTs, in coordination with NGOs, donor states, and Kabul Government, ISAF provided quick impact projects which include building hospitals, roads, and wells to win the "hearts and minds" of the local people (Berdal, 2019). However, those short-sighted relief-based reconstruction efforts proved useless in the long run because of two issues. First, the assumption that providing those services to local people would increase Kabul Government's legitimacy was wrong as the latter was seen as corrupt and abusive regarding their cooperation with abusive warlords by local people (Ibid.). The second reason is taking for granted the idea that the root cause of the insecurity was the Taliban insurgency and being unable to grasp multi-layered problems of historical grievances, resentments to predatory government officials, and the war-drug economy generated by the local strongmen (Ibid.).

Accordingly, the numbers of soldiers and PRTs peaked by 2010 when they reached 130.000 and 28, respectively. This was because of the deteriorating security situation on the field. Indeed, the Taliban revived out of the power vacuum caused by both the political failure and the incoherence between the US and its NATO allies as

the former's counter-terrorism undermined and complicated the latter's state-building efforts (Ibid.). Namely, the US's "kill and capture" operations, night-raids, and airstrikes which cause collateral damage undermined ISAF's winning "hearts and minds" of the Afghan people (Saikal, 2012: 227). Besides, NATO increased troop numbers as the then US President Barack Obama declared a troop surge by 30.000 in December 2009 (NATO, 2021b). This was the second period of ISAF's involvement in Afghanistan which can be named counter-insurgency.

Figure 9: Change of Numbers Related to Troops, Nations and PRTs Overtime



Source: NATO, n.d. ISAF-RSM Placemat Archives. (Various "key facts and figures" data are conjoined by the author. For more data see: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/107995.htm)

As shown in Figure 9, after fully expanding to all of Afghanistan in 2006 ISAF got involved in a counter-insurgency operation and the military engagements ramped up between 2009-2011. 40.000 troops were deployed as a part of this (NATO, 2015). Along with more than 130.000 troops in 2010-2011, the number of troops contributing nations and PRTs numbers also peaked. Given, out of about 50 countries that contributed troops 23 were non-NATO members, by 2012 ISAF became a popular international force. However, ISAF's counter-insurgency conflict was doomed to fail because of two reasons. First, it simplified the resistance to a retrograde insurgency against a "legitimate" state administration in Kabul and could not grasp the political, and war economy and deeper historical grievances among people (Berdal, 2019). Second, long intervention by ISAF stimulated Afghans' tendency to resist foreign invasions which is deeply rooted in their history (Ibid.). Accordingly, it was clear that after this troop surge, the international community was planning a drawdown of troops

to a great extent and shutting down PRTs which would further transform NATO's role in Afghanistan into a smaller mission.

Indeed, in the 2010 Lisbon Summit, NATO partners and Afghanistan declared an Enduring Partnership and agreed upon transferring security responsibilities to ANDSF starting in 2011 and ending ISAF mission by the end of 2014 (NATO, 2021b). This security hand-over occurred step by step and in December 2014 ISAF flag have returned to Brussels. In line with this, the Resolute Support Mission (RSM) replaced ISAF in Kabul by 1 January 2015. RSM is announced as a non-combat mission that provides train, advise, and assist (TAA) to ANDSF via Afghan institutions in Kabul (hub) and four spokes in Mazar-e Sharif, Laghman, Kandahar, and Herat, operated by Turkey, Germany, the US, and Italy, respectively (NATO, 2021b). In the hub, Turkey commands the train, advise, assist, command-capital (TAAC-C) base in Hamid Karzai International Airport (HKIA). Assuredly, given high troop contributions, assuming second rotational command of ISAF, arranging regional trilateral Istanbul Heads of the States Summits among Turkey, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, and experience of managing two PRTs in Wardak and Jawzjan provinces, Turkey's role in Afghanistan's state-building is constructive (Karacasulu, 2010).

Both NATO's and the US's military engagements have been generally decreased since 2011. After Lisbon Summit's "Enduring Partnership" agreement in 2010, NATO foreign ministers decided in May 2015 for a continuing "civilian-led" presence even after RSM's mission ends (NATO, 2021b). Furthermore, in April 2018, they declared their commitment to "Afghan-led" and "Afghan-owned" peace negotiations between the Government and the Taliban, and following this, they designated a "conditions-based approach" role for RSM (Ibid.). Hence, ISAF-RSM's balances started to shift from military towards politics since NATO assumed its command. When European allies realized that the "warlord democratization" was not of use for Afghanistan's stability, they were involved in further state-building and development activities hoping that it would gain legitimacy to Kabul which would further make them able to exit later on (Berdal, 2019). This made the international boots on the ground politicized and further be shaped according to the political conditions in seek of solution along the way which was meant to abstain in the first place as Condoleezza Rice put two decades ago.

3.2.3. Implications of State-Building Efforts in Afghanistan

Cooperated involvement in stability and reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan was only made possible after the end of the Cold War. Now that with the leadership of the UN, the Western countries have an interest in stability, free global market, and security in the country. Today, in the form of internationalized (exogenous) state-building, a substantial historical state-formation that is combined by recurrent endogenous state-building initiatives, is a difficult task to achieve. Accordingly, in the Afghanistan context, exogenous state-building efforts can theoretically offer coercion and capital. But legitimacy and leadership are matters of endogenous state-building processes (Suhrke, 2011).

International state-building efforts have contradicted Afghanistan's socio-cultural characteristics. Accordingly, democratization also fell short of intended goals. Prominent components of any democracy; elections, constitution, representation, and accountability have become instruments for neo-patrimonialism. The erroneous voting system made the national parliament not only less representative but also ineffective vis-à-vis the executive. Besides, its competence in the state's budget is faint. The main factor behind this was the direct transfer of Western-style democracy. Thus, it had a limited chance of giving expected results. Afghanistan has a majorly Muslim population that is bound to their cultural values. This does not necessarily mean that Islam and democracy are not incompatible. On the contrary, Afghans do have historically strong mechanisms like Loya Jirga for joint decision-making, which is the main tenet of democracy.

One problem was the absence of adaptation. The democratization process of Bonn only transferred the democratic system from Western countries since it was believed that institution-building should be before the liberalization. In a context without adaptation of politics into unique local conditions, it was elites who took over. However, substantial democratization needs more than an "elite co-optation" (Schmeidl, 2016: 587). Indeed, Afghanistan has a history dominated by elites. It can be argued that Max Weber's "traditional authority" type is deeply relevant to the political context of the country. Traditional authority and its legitimacy are based upon "traditionally transmitted rules" exercised by a "chief" (Weber, 1964: 341). In such a legitimacy, subjects to the authority present their personal loyalties rather than official binds to institutions. In this context, monarchs (khan), land-owners, religious figures (ulema), communist elites, Mujahedeen elites (warlords), and ruling elites (technocrat)

who either put or supported by the international community are among Afghanistan's elites until today (Schmeidl, 2016). Hence, post-Bonn Afghanistan's political context has been a stage for a power struggle between the latter two. This "warlord democratization" undermined the state-building at the core since it diminished all three: coercion, capital, and legitimacy (Rubin, 2006: 180). Picking a cooperative leader, Hamid Karzai, and then manipulating the process to his advantage in the following elections, further eliminated chances for democratization. In such a context, both the ruling elite and the warlords have an incentive problem since they are willing to preserve the status quo rather than taking on state-building (Suhrke, 2011). This status quo puts donors in a dilemma in which paying elites more would increase the state's overall aid dependency and cutting aid would lower the development. Thus, the gap between the elite and the Afghan people remains today, which the Taliban make use of. Rather than a liberal-shelled patrimonial system, a true hybrid model, inclusive state-building is what Afghanistan needs.

Despite the traditional authority/legitimacy to which the Afghan case is more convenient, the international project in Afghanistan, building a Weberian state focused on "good governance", resembles the implications of Weber's "legal-rational authority" and legitimacy. Indeed, legal-rational authority is obtained by specific rules, competence, technical qualifications by the superior (Weber, 1964). In such a legitimacy, persons and kinships do not matter in promotions. In the Afghan context, however, patronage and kinship relations in the political environment are highly relevant even today.

Historically, Afghan state-builders have mostly used either Islam or Afghan nationalism to consolidate their legitimacy (Suhrke, 2011). Allying with non-Muslim Western powers and fighting other Afghans (the Taliban) who declared jihad not just to foreigners but also the Afghan government, however, do not correspond to either of them (Ibid.). Besides, being dependent on foreign aid, Afghan elites do not have room for confident reforms, which diminishes the required leadership for state-building. Thus, the Western-supported elites fall short to represent the broader constituency. This incompatibility has enlarged the gap between the state and society.

Another problem was building a centralized state. Afghanistan has a "centrifugal society" (Ibrahimi, 2019), a country comprised of micro societies with various ethnic, linguistic, and traditional characteristics. And yet, the 2004 constitution put that it was a unitary and centralized state. A centralized Afghanistan was preferable for the international community for several reasons. Having one

interlocutor with a powerful authority even on provincials would fasten the process (Murtazashvili, 2019). Besides, it provides simple influence and control over the installed leader, via personal relations (Ibid.). In fact, centralized politics is not new for the country. It was markedly the “Iron Amir” Abdurrahman Khan who implemented it. Similarly, many subsequent leaders or governments have repeated same-like politics. Amanullah Khan, the Musahiban family, the PDPA regime, and the Taliban are among them. It certainly blowbacks, as all mentioned above experienced, and which eventually ended their rule. Thus, the international community should have been aware of the ramifications of centralization for the state. The executive, the President, and his cabinet are stronger than the judiciary and the legislative branches. Provincial and district-level rulers are appointed by the President and have no authority over their budget. Thus, with the centralized army, judiciary, and public budgeting, state institutions easily become predatory for the Afghan people (Ibid.). As a result, two decades of centralized international state-building, in terms of coercion, capital, and legitimacy have proved predatory, rentier, and neo-patrimonial in Afghanistan.

The centralization inclination of the international state-builders is also caused by the assumption that failed states or fragile contexts were “ungoverned spaces” from which insecurity for both the country at stake and the rest of the world is generated (Murtazashvili, 2018). Accordingly, rural Afghanistan with its villages and districts are not necessarily ungoverned, thus, a “decentralized state-building” can be implemented in the country (Ibid. 18). Indeed, a community torn by decades of war has mastered traditional ways of governance at the local level, against predatory centralized governance. International state-builders should have taken into consideration Afghan’s customary governance, rather than building a “parallel local government”, giving what they thought they needed. At the local level, Afghans have decision-making and conflict resolution mechanisms like; “Malik” who represents a village, “shura/jirga” as village council, and “mullah” who is the consultation body for religious matters (Ibid. 21). The international state-builders have ignored such systems, because of which again the insurgency grew. Thus, a hybrid decentralized state-building based upon these existing structures can be established in the country.

3.3 FUTURE PROSPECTS FOR AFGHAN STATE BUILDING

The Afghan case for state-building shows that top-down legitimization does not work. An international project has to include all sides to ensure all tenets of state-building, including leadership. Nevertheless, from the very beginning, the Bonn

agreement has proved little more than a victors' peace. This further complicated a state-building upon it. Accordingly, the Taliban insurgency grew bigger, threatening the development, and undermining the legitimacy of the state. They have resisted the exclusion of both the international community and the Afghan government against them. With foreign aid, they have contributed to their legitimacy while diminishing that of the government. Now that after two decades, the international community has come to realize the state-building in Afghanistan must bring the Taliban and regional powers in and that there was no military solution in Afghanistan.

3.3.1. Taliban: The Inconvenient Truth

In the last two decades of international intervention and state-building efforts in Afghanistan, the Taliban have sustained a consistent insurgency against the Kabul government, the US, and the international community. It is reported that the Taliban has about 60.000 to 150.000 full-time fighters based in Afghanistan and Pakistan (Dobbins et al., 2020). With these fighters, they fight both international and government troops, and conduct terror attacks in residential areas, sabotaging the stability and development of the country. Civilian casualties are the most prominent face of this. Between 2009[4] and the first quarter of 2021, 39.132 civilians were killed and 73.544 were injured due to opposition to the government of which the Taliban is responsible majorly (UNAMA, 2021). With this record of violence, the Taliban has been trying to diminish the Kabul government's legitimacy on the ground that it cannot provide security for its people.

Ousting the Taliban from Kabul in mid-November proved useless for the US and the International troops. This is mainly because the Taliban themselves are a part of the local people. Strictly bonded with the "Pushtunwali" tradition they represent a majority of Pashtuns in Afghanistan. Indeed "the Taliban" is an umbrella term that contains different groups in an alliance who have their roots in the Jihad against the Soviet invasion. The commonality of these groups is the resentment against warlordism and their predation of people in the turmoil and civil war which happened after the Soviet exit. Thus, the Taliban is committed and has considerable legitimacy on protecting their people, providing justice, fairness, and conflict resolution.

[4] UNAMA is reporting civillian casulties in Afghanistan since 2009. The casualty reports are published annualy with additional quarter and mid-year updates on UNAMA's website. For details see: https://unama.unmissions.org/protection-of-civilians-reports.

Arguably, their success in this made them control approximately half of the country. Even though the statistics of different sides are conflictive, as of April 2021, according to the Long War Journal's live map, the Taliban controls %19 districts of the country (76 districts, and %14 of the population which equals 4.642.129 people) whereas the Kabul government does %32 of districts (127 districts, %43 of the population which equals 14.061.284 people) (Roggio, n.d.). The remaining %49 of districts (194) are contested[5], showing that how the Kabul government's legitimacy is alternated by the Taliban all across the country, especially in rural parts.

The Taliban's organizational scheme reveals many about the group. The leader, "Amir al-mu'minin", Sheikh Mawlawi Haibatullah Akhundzada[6], has three deputies each of which leads particular branches. Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar is one, who also leads the peace process. "Rahbari Shura" (leadership council) decides upon political decisions which has bases in Quetta and Peshawar, Pakistan (Jackson and Weigand, 2019). Religious and Jihad-related affairs were led by the founder Mullah Omar's son Mullah Mohammad Yaqub while insurgency and armed Jihad affairs were led by Sirajuddin Haqqani, who is the leader of the Haqqani network (Ibid.). Arguably the group is rather a combination of different family clans and individuals who seek expediency. According to Thomas Ruttig, a prominent Afghanistan analyst, the major groups are Mansour and Haqqani family clans (qtd. in Weigand, 2017). This is indeed visible since the political affairs branch or "Rahbari Shura" is represented in peace negotiations as a group rather than as an individual. Thus, it is possible to argue that the major dynamics of the Taliban are "Shariat" (Islamic System), armed Jihad (Semple, 2014), and also the interests of the fighters on the field. Additionally, "Shariat" and armed Jihad have adapted themselves to changing contexts while the interests of the fighters remain mostly the same.

The exclusion of the Taliban from the Bonn process was a crucial mistake, a repercussion of which spoiled a substantial state-building and a national reconciliation. When speaking to Ahmed Rashid, a prevailing author on Afghanistan, former SRSG Lakhdar Brahimi accepted that excluding the Taliban from Bonn talks was the "original sin" (qtd. in Sedra, 2017: 164). In retrospect, this is a recurring

[5] According to the LWJ report, "contested" means; the capital of district is controlled by the Government whereas the Taliban is preponderant in the remaining parts. "Control" however means Taliban is overtly ruling the district, including the capital, with its schools, public administration, security etc.

[6] Haibatullah Akhundzada is the third and current Amir leading the Taliban. The first and founder was Mullah Mohammad Omar who died in 2013 due natural causes. Mullah Akhtar Mansour replaced him as second Amir, though he later died by US air-strike in 2016.

mistake of the international community due to major power's strategic interests in Afghan history. Indeed, the same mistake was done when the then UNSG's special representative for Afghanistan, Diego Cordovez excluded the Mujahedeen, one of the sides of the Soviet-Afghan war, from the 1988 Geneva peace accord (Saikal, 1996). Back then, in the context of the Cold War, one guarantor of the accord, the US made do with Soviet removal and humiliation in Afghanistan. Further, to encourage Gorbachev and earn him a restorative face in his domestic and international reforms, the US waived its policy of removal of Najibullah and bringing tenet problems of Afghans to the table to encourage Afghans' reconciliation (Ibid.). As a result, the 1988 Geneva Accords lost the chance of national reconciliation. A similar scenario occurred in the 2001 Bonn process during which the strategic interest of the US as a major power, the war on terror, was at stake.

From exclusion to exile and to back in controlling almost half of the country, the Taliban has proved itself to be an alternative to the Kabul government. To do this and consolidate itself in the eyes of the people, it uses two instruments. One and the major one is to prove that the Kabul government cannot protect its people hence their life is at risk which undermines Kabul's legitimacy (Weigand, 2017). Within this context, it conducts attacks in urban areas and symbolic places like Kabul and security forces' bases. Second, exploiting the poor state-society relations deeply embedded in Afghan history, the Taliban builds its legitimacy depending on security provision, fairness in rule of law and conflict resolution via justice systems, and imaging at least less corrupt governance (Jackson and Weigand, 2019). They even run Shariat-based mobile courts that come to villages on particular days of the week (Ibid.). Indeed, widespread corruption in Kabul and its governing agents at province and district levels is an everyday problem and has a destructive effect on people's lives according to %83 Afghans. Thus, the Taliban have carved themselves a way to legitimacy depended on negative and positive tactics. It is worth noting though, this legitimacy is clustered around people who mainly live in the rural parts of the country. Besides, and more importantly, the majority of the people who attribute legitimacy and sympathy to the Taliban, do it regardless of their Shariat and armed Jihad but because of pragmatic reasons (Weigand, 2017).

3.3.2. Peace Talks

Exit strategy with a peaceful and stabilized Afghanistan has always been pursued by the international community since the 2006 Afghan Compact signed at the London donors conference. However, after the resurgence of the Taliban and deterioration of security in the summer of 2006, the process became arduous and checkered.

Early signs of exit intentions were expressed by the Obama administration whose Afghan policy was indeed based on timelines. President Obama announced July 2011 as a start day of troop drawdown while he surged 30.000 more troops in December 2009 (CFR, n.d.). At the same time, he confirmed that the US had been conducting preliminary peace negotiations with the Taliban. President Trump, however, endorsed conditions-based policy on the ground, loosening combat restrictions of US forces (Ibid.). That said, his administration also confirmed they had begun direct talks with the Taliban in July 2018. Later, on 29 February 2020 US delegation led by the US Special Representative Zalmay Khalilzad and the Taliban delegation led by Abdul Ghani Baradar met in Doha, Qatar. Four main tenets of the "Agreement for Bringing Peace to Afghanistan" were reduction of violence, withdrawal of all foreign forces including that of the US, NATO, and their allies by 1 May 2021, the promise by the Taliban not to allow Al-Qaeda or other terrorist groups threaten the US and its allies' security and subsequent intra-Afghan peace negotiations for bringing substantial peace (Afghanistan Study Group, 2021).

Later, on 12 September 2020, the first round of Afghan Peace Negotiations started in Doha. The reason behind the latency was the Ghani-Abdullah election crisis, which was indeed a symptom of Afghanistan's deeper political problems. September 2019 presidential election was marred by criticism due to fraud. According to the official results that were announced almost five months later, in February 2020, the voter turnout was the lowest since 2004. Even though incumbent president Ghani won the elections according to the official results, former Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah, the rival of the President, did not accept the results and claimed his victory. Thus, on 9 March 2020, Afghanistan witnessed simultaneous inaugurations of two presidents. This crisis was only solved when Abdullah Abdullah accepted the position of Chairman of the HCNR in May 2020 which was to assume leadership of future intra-Afghan peace negotiations.

While the council assumed the duty to negotiate with the Taliban, the rejection of President Ghani a breakthrough in procedures of negotiations made a spoiler effect (Afghanistan Study Group, 2021). Arguably, President Ghani might have tried to delay improvements on intra-Afghan negotiations at least to see the result of the US Presidental elections. Providing political leverage for President Ghani, Joe Biden for the presidency could mean a postponement or at least a re-evaluation of troop withdrawal (Kaura, 2020), which it did indeed. Even though the second round of intra-Afghan talks, started on 5 December 2020, was more productive than the first round as the sides agreed upon rules and procedures with it, the overall process is rather bumpy since the Taliban has intensified its attacks on Kabul and civilians as political leverage on the table.

On the one hand, the US is ambitious to end their two decades of military intervention in Afghanistan, and on the other hand, it is in an effort not to make it look like a defeat that would diminish their international prestige. Certainly, President Biden remarked: "I am now the fourth American president to preside over an American troop presence in Afghanistan…I will not pass this responsibility to a fifth" (qtd. in Zurcher, 2021). Despite failing to fulfill its obligations of the Doha Agreement due to completing the withdrawal by 1 May 2021, as agreed by the Trump administration, he announced later that the final date was September 11, 2021, the twentieth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks. Doing this, the Biden Administration not only earned five more months for the Kabul Government to make use of Intra-Afghan talks but also symbolized the action as an accomplished mission. This is not without risks though. Despite Biden noted that they would keep supporting ANDSF to encourage The Taliban for peace, if the Kabul government cannot make a deal with them by the time US troops leave, the Taliban may take over Kabul, given the deficiency of the ANDSF (Ibid.). In such a scenario, some acquisitions of the two decades of international efforts would be at stake. Women's rights, education, and participation in public life are the foremost. To jump-start the process, President Biden asked Afghan President Ghani to stand down early and find a solution of power-sharing within the constitution, though President Ashraf Ghani insists on the condition of an election which does not necessarily have to be at the end of his five-year tenure (Doucet, 2021). He further denoted that "this is not Vietnam" pointing to South Vietnam's fall as US forces left the country (Ibid.).

Despite US officials repeatedly announce that the US has around 2500 troops in total in Afghanistan, reporters argue that the real US troop number on the ground is about 3500, including those who operate out of the NATO framework (Gibbons-Neff

et al., 2021; Zurcher, 2021). Those “off the books” soldiers are reported to be Special Forces and part of an elite Army Rangers working in coordination with the US Central Intelligence Agency (Ibid.). Given President Biden announced a complete withdrawal of “all 2500” US and other international forces by September 11, these additional 1000 US forces might be kept as leverage on the ground as a fail-safe mechanism.

In fact, the US national interests are at risk if a total exit occurs. Given the top US national interest both in Afghanistan and in the region are constraining terrorist groups to prevent a scenario resembling 9/11 and obtain nuclear weapons; observing stability of the region which hosts nuclear powers; help Afghans control extremism, illegal drug trade, and mass migration; preserve the US influence and gains of two decades including protecting women’s rights, that of minorities and reconstruction, it is less likely to look after them without any boots on the ground (Afghanistan Study Group, 2021). Assuredly, Secretary General of NATO Jens Stoltenberg noted similar arguments when he announced the withdrawal of NATO troops along with those of the US starting on May 1 and would be completed in a few months. The very same day, on 14 April 2021 President Biden announced the withdrawal of US troops, Stoltenberg noted:

> *Withdrawing our troops does not mean ending our relationship with Afghanistan. Rather, this will be the start of a new chapter. A sustainable peace in Afghanistan will have at its foundation an enduring, comprehensive, and inclusive peace agreement that puts an end to violence, safeguards the human rights of all Afghans, particularly women, children, and minorities, upholds the rule of law, and ensures that Afghanistan never again serves as a safe haven for terrorists* (qtd. in NATO, 2021a).

These arguments show that both the International Community and the US have committed to ending the war. The one which is the longest of the US and the pioneer out-of-area for NATO. But that does not necessarily mean the North/Trans-Atlantic influence’s end in Afghanistan and the wider region. From the US perspective, the peace talks are a chance to “close the book” in President Biden’s words. While he virtualized an accomplished mission for the American Nation, the Taliban also imaged a victory for their fighters on the ground. Similarly, one shadow mayor of the Taliban in Balkh, Haji Hekmat said BBC: “We have won the war, America has lost” (BBC, 2021). In fact, looking after the morale and the interest of their cohorts on the field is one of the three components of the Taliban.

On a higher level though, international politics are underway. The UN, the US, and NATO are willing to internationalize the peace in Afghanistan once again after decades. Pointing to the significance of the regional cooperation for prospects of

peace in Afghanistan, the UNSG António Guterres appointed Jean Arnault as his "personal envoy" in cooperation with regional countries, in support of SRSG Deborah Lyons in March 2021 (UN Affairs, 2021). Given Arnault's experience of more than thirty years in UN peace operations (Ibid.), including SRSG in Afghanistan, UNSG Guterres attributed high value to regional cooperation. Accordingly, the US Secretary of State Blinken's letter to President Ghani expressed an urgency to fasten and internationalize the deal process or at least put in effect a permanent cease-fire by the time their exit. In his letter, Blinken urged President Ghani to perform leadership in a collective effort (TOLO News, 2021). Three main points of the letter were UN-hosted ministerial level meeting that would gather together all sides including Afghanistan's neighbors whose interests are also at stake for permanent peace, US prescriptions for negotiations regarding the future of Afghanistan, and another round of intra-Afghan talks in Turkey to finalize a peace-deal (Ibid.). Nevertheless, the Taliban refused to attend the latter since the US did not prove its commitment to the agreement regarding the completion of withdrawal by 1 May.

Still, in the Taliban's eyes, the Kabul government is a US puppet. They refer to them as the enemy and stick to their armed Jihad against the ANDSF despite the latter is also Muslim and Jihad by definition is meant to be against non-muslims only. Besides, today the Taliban is not just a shadow government but also "a government in waiting" that oversees daily services in its controlled areas (BBC, 2021). In part, the direct negotiations with the US have contributed to this elevation (Afghanistan Study Group, 2021). Shadow mayor Hekmat argues at the interview that the Taliban is at war, an armed Jihad against Kabul and that it will continue until the "Islamic System" is established (qtd. in BBC, 2021).

Even though what Mayor Hekmat refers to as the Islamic system is "Shariat", it is a vague concept that is open to negotiation and thus will be at the center of the peace negotiations with Kabul. Indeed, the Taliban is not the same Taliban founded in "madrassah" (religious schools) in Pakistan during the 1990s. Founding Amir Mullah Omar was rather isolated from the international community. He never held press conferences nor used TV. Today the Taliban has a web page and a spokesman on social media platforms who makes announcements and comments about the process. Besides, Shariat was stricter in their rule between 1996-2001 than that of today. It can be argued that it has been softened through the years. Contrary to the girls' education ban back then, now that girls are having primary education with their UN mantled notebooks on their desks in Hekmat's district (Ibid.).

Intra-Afghan peace talks are underway as of this thesis's time of writing. In the future, the main discussion is going to be over power-sharing between the Taliban, the Kabul government, and other factions that are represented in the HCNR which is led by Abdullah Abdullah. However, the outcome may not be glittering for the elites who have been empowered by the international community, in particular by the US. Since another pillar of the Taliban is Shariat, a Taliban in power, even in a coalition government, would strive for punishment of corruption, a widespread problem in the current government officials (Semple, 2014).

Other topics will be about the DDR of the Taliban fighters, a revised constitution, elections, newly designed institutions, and women's position in public and their rights and that of the minorities. All these issues were decided upon and implemented either during the 2001 Bonn agreement or the subsequent Bonn process two decades ago. This shows that the entire international state-building process of the last two decades is proved crippled at best. Now that the Afghans must decide on their own what their future will be like. Certainly, any peace process must be substantially inclusive both domestically, including but not limited to the Taliban, and internationally, as Afghanistan's location has a geostrategic significance. Additionally, any state-building further in Afghanistan, either exogenous or endogenous, is likely to be successful to the extent that it is isolated from unilateral interferences of major powers based on their national interests and conjoined by multilateral dialogues of regional powers and neighbors of the country.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to explore the reasons for international state builders' failure to provide the societal aspect of state-building in post-conflict Afghanistan, as well as to foresee prospects of peace in the country. Since the literature on state-building regarding Afghanistan has mostly focused on the institution-building process, answers to the questions of international intervention's failure gathered around technical issues. Thus, studies related to the non-material aspect, in other words, the legitimacy component of state-building remained insufficient. In this context, to realize the purpose of this study, the thesis argued that in post-conflict Afghanistan, the international community's institutional reductionism has failed to generate the societal aspect of state-building, which is indeed a crucial component of it. Accordingly, the main research question of the study was: why Afghanistan is still not a stabilized democracy after two decades of international intervention as a state-building mission? Thereby, shedding light on the neglected issue of state-society relations in the post-conflict era of Afghanistan example, this study put that state-building is an endogenous procedure in nature.

In the first chapter, searching the term's origins and transformation into its contemporary version, it is asked, what is state-building? The first chapter is related to the first part of the argument: institutional reductionism. To find out what is state-building the thesis investigated its interventionist origins which were rooted in arguments related to the idea of the state, international community, liberal peace theory, and Peace-building policy.

The Westphalian state is the avant-garde narrative relating to the idea of the state. The dominant concept in the state was the order. It was Max Weber who specified the state, contrary to the anarchy, as an order which was provided by the exclusive authority to use the legitimate force. Since then both policy and academic literature attributed functions to the state. The main theme however among the functions was providing security. Indeed, the idea behind the external intervention to "fix" those "failed" states in carrying out those functions was the discourse of the "imperative" of state-building in the policy literature. Especially, after September 11, which proved that the developed countries could be targeted from the "failed" states, the West's security-oriented interests justified their external intervention.

Another justification discourse is the term "international community". Assuredly, in both academic and policy literature, the term "international community"

has been used to justify international interventions. The term attributes righteousness to the actions taken by the UN resolutions. However, this environment has only been activated after the end of the Cold War. The reason behind this was that the end of the bipolar world order and its strategic competition brought a cooperative environment with it. Since then, the UN's peace operations became abundant, even though such ambitions like social progress and better standards for living were already embedded in its establishment charter signed in 1945. Under such auspices, the international community oversaw the duty of adapting the problematic Third World states to the liberal international world order. Accordingly, they aimed to help others establish liberal democratic states with a functioning market economy. However, within this context, the term international community has two facets. While the display shows common moral values, the subject behind is the West.

The idea of building liberal democratic states stems from the liberal peace theory. Depending on the presumption that liberal democracies barely go to war against each other, scholars from the liberal school of IR argued that democracy promotion was possible to reduce global insecurity. Accordingly, the policy literature and the UN itself introduced peace-related terms. Among them, "peacemaking" and "peace-building" were the most prominent since they referred to the post-Cold War agenda of the UN. However, just like the persuasion of the liberal peace theory remains shaky, the relationship between the theory and peace-building policy is under-investigated. In this aspect, this study also shows that on the other facet of such interventions lies the geopolitical motivations of the West. Thus, international state-building is prone to serve the West's interests.

With this theoretical background, the international state-building activity is the contemporary form of peace-building policy. In this study, by making comparisons to other interchangeable terms like peace-building, and nation-building, post-conflict state-building is defined as institutional capacity-building activities of the international community in post-conflict environments. The reason behind this was that with the failures and in some situations catastrophic results of the 1990s peace-building activities, the international community pursued a renovation of such operations. The "Brahimi Report" was definitive in such efforts since it pointed to the need for "integrated missions" which takes a further step and not only introduces peace but also implements it. This new mission definition however blurred the line between military and political efforts, and further became more deliberative in the intervened state's future. Accordingly, in the academic literature, some argued that liberalization

was then required a preceding institution-building effort to increase the governing capacity of such states. These efforts mainly focused on Weberian “modern” state functions and establishing a monopoly over the legitimate use of violence. According to this argument, since states “fail” because of poor governance, the international community’s prescription was “good governance” and strengthening capacity. In this context, state-builders set out an exogenous activity to provide basic components of state-building, which are coercion, capital, and legitimacy. However, this solely material reductionist approach based on building state institutions remains limited to cater for the most important component, legitimacy.

International state-builders were not the first with such ambitions. In the political history of Afghanistan, many state-builders have strived for consolidating their power in such a state with a high geostrategic location. Thus, the second chapter of the study answered another research question, what are the dynamics of Afghan state-building? Since its establishment years in the 18th century, Afghan rulers and their relationship with the society has been weak. The main reason behind this was the over-centralized, and predatory politics of Afghan Amirs despite the country has a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural society.

The international dynamics made many Amirs conduct internal colonialism to make sure their rule’s continuation to the extent of providing the great powers’ requests. Since the beginning of Afghanistan history, the country has been vulnerable to the great power confrontation. In the 19th century, it was the Great Game between Tsarist Russia and British Raj in India that confined Afghanistan to a buffer zone in South Asia. Then in the 20th century, the strategic competition between the Soviet Union and the US made the country an aid-dependent and rentier state. In the last decade of the 20th century, although the end of the Cold War reduced the country’s strategic stakes, this time it was the regional competition that tore the country apart through a civil war. Consequently, the country brought a legacy of an isolated, underdeveloped, rentier state with a fragmented society to the 21st century.

Any state-building project in Afghanistan has to consider these dynamics. Afghanistan is a traditional state with a multi-ethnic society. History shows that Afghan people are prone to counter-revolution, and resentment to top-down policies which radically change their lifestyles. Nevertheless, the post-conflict international project has failed to consider such dynamics. Thus, to find out the specific causes of failure, the thesis asked, what are the challenges for international state-building in Afghanistan? And how (if ever) did the international community cope with them? The

data which is collected to answer such questions has provided two reasons regarding the remaining part of the argument in the thesis; failure to fulfill the societal aspect of state-building.

Technically, the international state-building mission was erroneous in all aspects. First of all, the Bonn agreement was a victor's peace. Only non-Taliban factions attended the conference. The international community excluded the Taliban since they were incongruous with the prospects cut for Afghanistan. The role for the country was an Islamic liberal democracy respectful to human rights and gender equality with a free market economy. Setting up 24 ministerial departments in a such weak state was for sharing out the capital to the attendants so that no future unrest among groups emerges. Thus, the conference has not solved the country's problems. The US ambassador Khalilzad and SRSG Brahimi made sure the process was in line with the West's interests. They put a Pashtun leader and then helped him to be elected as President in elections with frauds. The international community then helped Karzai to draft a constitution in line with their interests. The constitution-making process was not a participant one as it was drafted in a compromise of elites' interests. Moreover, the parliamentary election which was crucial to provide the legislative branch of the democracy was marred by the SNTV vote system. The result was a relatively weak and unrepresentative parliament. Thus, despite the devastating outcomes of early state builders' over-centralized politics, the international state-builders have repeated the same mistake.

The security sector was problematic too. Because of the ongoing insurgency, the DDR and SSR processes had to be conducted simultaneously. However, for successful reform, the former had to be accomplished before the latter. The DDR became a political instrument for Karzai which he used to eliminate his powerful opponents. Lead donor system caused coordination problems regarding developments in various branches of the security sector. Besides, the short-term exit strategy of the US and the long-term state-building strategy of the UN contradicted which further undermined building a substantial security sector. Donors' strategic interests and diverging agendas also caused coordination problems in police and army branches. Now that as of 2021 the US still supplies %80 of ANDSF expenses and %85 of the overall security budget of the country.

High amounts of foreign aid have not ameliorated Afghanistan's poor economy. It neither produced the required capital nor mobilized the ability to collect taxes. The problem behind such failure was in large part the direct injection of aid.

Although the country could not digest aid flow, the donors continued to intervene by off-budget aid flows. This further caused shared sovereignty. It was not the parliament that had the authority on budget expenses but the donors that pay for it. On-budget flows were also problematic because of the high level and widespread corruption. Furthermore, national leaders instrumentalized donor conferences for their political advantages, manipulating long-term institution building. Thus, a rentier state, which was embedded in Afghan political theme as a dynamic was triggered and the country ended up as an aid-dependent state.

Theoretically, the implication of the post-conflict state-building project was unfit for the Afghan context. First of all, by the time peace negotiations started in Bonn, there was no cease-fire on the field. Despite being ousted from Kabul, the Taliban has never laid down their weapons and continued to fight as an insurgency. This situation is still relevant for the time being. Thus the “post-conflict” narrative was irrelevant for Afghanistan. Other challenges for the project stemmed from the dynamics of Afghan state-building. Since the international state-builders lacked coordination, they failed to consider thoroughly and take lessons from the history of Afghan state-building dynamics. Thus, the embedded problems like strongmen, corruption, and rentier state re-emerged. Such challenges undermined the overall process. Indeed, the Afghan case showed that warlords have fostered an ability to adapt to changing international political contexts. Accordingly, rather than alienating them, incorporating into government diminished bureaucratization. Besides, widespread corruption and the related shadow economy of poppy cultivation helped the insurgency grow. Not taking lessons from Afghanistan’s political history, and pursuing strategic interests, the international community failed to cope with these challenges.

The UN is at the center of international state-building in Afghanistan. It has been conducting development and reconciliation activities on the field since the Soviet era in Afghanistan. Its mission, the UNAMA has had deep effects on Afghanistan despite the “light footprint” approach of SRSG Brahimi. In fact, with this approach, the SRSG fostered personal relations with all sides including the international community and the Afghan national and sub-national elites. His key inputs sacrificed pluralistic democracy for a fast-track, top-down state-building. In this context, the UN’s activities are analyzed in two main periods: the Bonn process and Afghanization. In the Bonn process, which is between 2001 and 2006, the SRSG Brahimi and his predecessors made sure the provisions of the agreement were followed. They aimed to align Afghanistan with the West. Such an over-centralized environment created by the

SRSG and his prioritizing security over justice caused neo-patrimonialism in the country. However, in the period after 2006, the UN's effect was rather faint. The Taliban's revival and the intensification of the war made NATO and the US overshadow the UN's authority. In fact, with NATO's takeover of the UN's military power of the UN, ISAF in late 2003, ISAF gradually expanded all through the country, and the US along with the NATO became more effective in the country's future.

Both technically and theoretically the implication of exogenous state-building in Afghanistan failed to provide legitimacy for the government in Kabul. The first two components, coercion and capital are still being met by the international community, in most part by the US. However, legitimacy is yet to be earned by Afghan rulers. This study has shown that two specific overriding problems caused the legitimacy crisis of exogenous state-building.

The first one is the absence of adaptation, in other words, direct transfer of the Western model of state institutions. Thus, institution building before liberalization proved limited in the Afghan context. Without adaptation, elites captured power and engaged in power competition among each other. Perceiving democracy as an end rather than means, the process could not go further than warlord democratization. When legal-rational authority imposition did not fit traditional authority habits, the result was a liberal-shelled patrimonial system. Given the centuries-old consultation mechanism, the Loya Jirga, and customary governance models, Afghan society is compatible with democratic culture. That said, they are also a traditional community which means any exogenous state-building process needs a sophisticated effort with sufficient resources, political will, time, and national leadership.

The second one is building a centralized state. Centralization is a critical mistake when the "centrifugal society" of Afghanistan with various ethnic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds is at stake. The international community should have been aware of such policy's ramifications. Yet, being designated by the constitution, it was indeed a deliberate one to fasten the process. Firstly, communicating with one interlocutor was preferable for the international community, however it certainly blowbacks since the state inevitably becomes predatory over the people. Secondly, the international community believed that "ungoverned spaces" were the root cause of insecurity, however, data shows that Afghanistan has peculiar customary governance models at the local level. Thus, it is compatible with a decentralized state-building effort.

Moreover, current developments in Afghanistan and the wider region also support this thesis's argument. Incumbent President of the US, Biden lately asked his Afghan counterpart Ashraf Ghani to do an early stand-down. Though the latter insisted on elections in such an event, the situation in Afghanistan has come to this stage because of the Taliban insurgency. Taliban has consistently undermined Kabul's legitimacy while building their own in the eyes of both the Afghan people and the US. Peace negotiations with the US and the Taliban indicate this. Pending the intra-Afghan talks, on the field, both sides are striving to gain the upper hand for the future political arena.

Data shows that, once again, now the international community is willing to internationalize peace in Afghanistan. There are attempts to seek another round of Afghan peace conferences including the regional countries. After two decades of intervention, the international community discusses matters of power-sharing, a new constitution, and coalition government. This shows that the 2001 Bonn agreement and the subsequent institution-building process have failed to provide the societal component of state-building, which is legitimacy so that the process needs a repetition but this time with the Taliban on the table.

Since Afghanistan has a diverse society and stands at a critical geostrategic location, the key to prospects for peace in the country is inclusive politics. This is required at all levels including local, regional, and international. Accordingly, this study fills the gap in exogeneous state-building literature by illuminating the neglected component of legitimacy, in other words, the state-society relations. Material and technocratic reductionist approaches to build a Weberian liberal state fall short of providing this component. Indeed, state-building is endogenous in nature. Leadership and time are also significant for substantial state-formation, which may comprise multiple state-building initiatives. The political history of Afghanistan however shows that unilateral interventionist policies of major powers undermine endogenous state-building's success. Be it either Tsarist Russia and British Raj or the US and the Soviet Union, major power's interferences related to their national interests have had negative impacts on Afghan state builders initiative and in the wider perspective, devastating impacts on the overall state-formation of the country. Resembling this two-century-old political history, in the 21st century the US's war on terror, and more lately in his final letter to President of Afghanistan Ghani, US Secretary of State Blinken's urgency in his tone can be read as another unilateral interference regarding the peace process in the country. However, this time the Afghan people have to

decide on their future in most part for a substantial state-building. Today, aid-dependent Afghanistan's biggest problem is lacking national reconciliation, and such a thing as this thesis shows is not likely to be achieved only exogenously.

Limitations of this study are related to generalization based on the results and time span. Firstly, since the thesis has investigated the societal component of state-building, it has elaborated on dynamics peculiar to the Afghan state-building. In this context, dynamics like internal colonialism or over-centralization may not necessarily be relevant for other state-building projects somewhere else. Thus, there is no one-size-fits-all approach in this manner. Secondly, this study covers the post-conflict project, which is the time duration from September 11 until the present, with a specific focus on the 2001-2006 period. However, as of the time of writing, both intra-Afghan peace talks and withdrawal of international troops from the country are underway. Thus, the thesis has not covered short-term anticipations until the time of withdrawal's completion, the twentieth anniversary of 9/11.

Future work related to peace and state-building in Afghanistan may focus on the role of non-state actors and private subordinate authorities such as Afghan non-governmental organizations, and other civil society groups (Lake, 2020). Since the topic of this thesis was state-building and the thesis specifically focused on the UN-related process, the unit of analysis was state actors including the Afghan government's factions, warlords, and the Taliban. In making an argument of poor state-society relations the thesis drew attention to the national and sub-national elites' abuse of power and along with the international community how they excluded the Taliban despite they are a part of the local community. However, the latest developments show that even though the Taliban has earned itself a chair on the table, during the two decades of struggle, the societal context has also evolved since the position of the Afghan new generation and especially the women is not the same with that of two decades before. Hence, studies related to legitimacy may focus on not vertical but horizontal segments of Afghan society. Accordingly, since the intra-Afghan talks began in late September, journalists, human rights activists, women's rights defenders, civic leaders, educated people, women professionals in bureaucracy, and schoolgirls are systematically being targeted by unclaimed attacks (Ferguson, 2021). Thus, the future of state-building is not just endogenous but also away from the scope of inter-state relations.

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