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NATO'S USE OF FORCE IN AFGHANISTAN

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## ***1: Introduction***

The focus in this thesis is to find the main reasons for NATO's use of force in Afghanistan. The subject of this following research is within the field of social science, and more specifically peace and security studies. The research question is:

*What are the main reasons for NATO's use of force in Afghanistan?*

The aim with this research is to find out more about NATO; the North Atlantic Treaty Organization as a defense alliance, and how this alliance is given mandate to operate in international operations, primarily how and why NATO is using force in the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan. There are two military operations in Afghanistan today. Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), a combat operation led by the United States against Taliban and al-Qaida, and International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), led by NATO (Morelli & Belkin 2009). The main focus in this paper will be on ISAF and NATO, but as the United States was, and still is, the largest motivator and contributor in the armed operations in Afghanistan, this country will be given much attention, along with the general focus on the use of force in Afghanistan. I will undertake research in the attempt to find out how NATO legitimizes the use of force, the reasons, and how this is pursued in Afghanistan, a conflicted country that have faced war since 2001. In the paper there will also be a comparison between the NATO interventions in Kosovo, and Afghanistan, to see the similarities and differences between these two NATO operations. This comparison is found useful in order to understand the use of force in Afghanistan. The personal motivation behind choosing this field of research derives from my background, being brought up in a family with focus on knowledge regarding the global power relations, especially those concerning peace and security. Topics related to these themes has interested me throughout my studies as well as personally, and pushed me to develop my understanding. I have undertaken field studies in South America with focus on the military institutions in Bolivia, in India with focus on the female combat soldiers in the former Tamil Tigers on Sri Lanka, in the Middle East with focus on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and in Ethiopia focusing on political Islam.

The main focus in this paper will be on NATO, a defense alliance I took part in when serving as a border guard on the border between Norway and Russia a few years back from now. As Norway is one of the member countries in NATO, I learned a lot from this experience, as a

border guard and as soldier working for the Norwegian Intelligence. It was found particularly interesting to learn about the role of this small country in the large alliance of NATO, currently having 28 member states and still expanding. My interest in Afghanistan was enhanced by the experience and work I undertook as a soldier, since Norway has about 500 soldiers serving in Afghanistan, and my eyes were opened to see how the global powers of today cooperate on some levels, yet not on all levels. It made me question the many challenges facing the decision making power in the world today, especially with regards to the power relations.

The war in Afghanistan started in 2001 and is still going on to this day. I consider this conflict to be relevant on all levels and perspectives, academically and socially. If considering the war in Afghanistan as a consequence of the events of 9/11, the symbolic meanings attached to these events have awoken a new era, in terms of religion, politics, and challenges in terms of peace and security. The perspective and world view with regards to the turmoil of new prejudices, like the much debated term War on Terror has changed something in the human nature. I find it important to view this from an academic angle, not only from a military perspective, however will there be given much attention to the military perspective, as the armed operations in Afghanistan has been considered to have a militarist form.

The ongoing conflict holds relevance to this day and forward because it is considered as the largest military operation NATO has faced, and as the troops are predicted to leave the country by 2014, I am personally and professionally skeptical to this outcome. The fact that the military operations started in 2001 and still is taking place, makes it relevant in itself; the war on terror has been ongoing more than a decade already.

My intention with this thesis is to understand the conflict in Afghanistan, with emphasis on NATO's agenda in the country, and to both analyze and reflect the outcome of this large military intervention. The aim with the paper is not only to establish NATO's own reasons for the use of force in Afghanistan, but to provide a critical analysis of scholars view on the use of force in Afghanistan. And to find out if these reasons for the use of force have been undertaken in accordance with the intention. Firstly, in chapter two, I will look at the history of war in terms of war ethics. I will also describe the nature of NATO as a defense alliance,

with theory and methodology regarding the use of force in both Kosovo and Afghanistan. Chapter three includes theory regarding terrorism, just war, and conflict resolution, and how self-defense is considered as the reason for the use of force in Afghanistan, undertaken by the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). In chapter four the mapping of Afghanistan will take place, with a description of the country's many interventions and turbulent history, and in chapter five reflections on NATO in Afghanistan will be found, with regards to use of force and how the operations are undertaken. The purpose of chapter six is to connect the past and the future of Afghanistan, and in chapter seven there will be a discussion on the lessons learned. The conclusion is to be found in chapter 8, with bibliography located at the end.

## ***2: The human history is war?***

### **2.1 Trends in warfare**

*Even if the six billion people currently living on the earth used only bows and arrows in conflict with each other, war would still be tragic in human affairs (...)*

Barash and Webel (2002)

In this research the aim is to examine NATO's role in the international conflict taking place in Afghanistan. Existing material will be used as tools, with NATO and other institutional sources as primary sources, and academic scholars as secondary sources. The method used in the examination is text analysis with focus on theory regarding war ethics, the use of force, just war theory, conflict resolution, militarism and pacifism.

Starting off the analysis of how NATO and the Alliance justify the use of force in Afghanistan, some theory regarding modern warfare is found necessary. But even before modern warfare, the historical timeline far back provides us with quite a few scholars worth mentioning, with concepts still useful to this day, like Aristotle's view on just war in Ancient Greece; Sometimes, there must be war for the sake of peace (Graham 2008: 59). The tradition of just war is being used in warfare to this day as a principle about the use of force as well as the right use of force (Johnson 2005), and this will later be discussed with regards to the use of force in Afghanistan. The principle of the probability of success is also included in terms of just war, and this will also be discussed when discussing the future of Afghanistan.

Thomas Hobbes view on *bellum omnium contra omnes* (the war of everyone against everyone) has made quite an impact, as this 17<sup>th</sup> Century philosopher saw the need of a strong authority in the society; people cannot be left to themselves, since there is no law at all in the "natural state" (Graham 2008: 26). Immanuel Kant, the 18<sup>th</sup> Century philosopher, has also made an impact with his theories within the field of peace and conflict. In *Perpetual Peace*, written in 1795, Kant claims that standing armies will gradually be abolished, since they constantly threaten other states by being prepared for war, and he also claims that states shall not interfere in other states constitutions and governments, which can directly be transferred into today's definition of humanitarian interventions, a principle which will be dealt with later (Reichberg, Syse & Begby 2006:520).

In the early period of warfare in the preindustrial period, warfare was predominantly based on muscle power, and in the period from the Renaissance until the 20<sup>th</sup> Century wars were powered by gunpowder (Barash & Webel 2002:65). Modern warfare represents the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and onwards (Graham 2008:78) and is dominated by the threat of nuclear weapons (Barash & Webel 2002: 67). The British historian Michael Howard coined a new term, *bellicist*, in order to describe the role of what can be regarded as “militarist world view” in contemporary cultures (Barash & Webel 2002: 15), for instance in the way it has become regarded as natural, inevitable and right to settle issues with armed conflicts.

Modern warfare has an increasingly complex nature, much due to technology, strategy and weaponry, but this does not imply that wars in the past were less brutal (Graham 2008: 79). Wars such as the Crimean war, a battle between existing empires of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the American Civil war are only two examples of severe violence taking place (Barash & Webel 2002: 59). One of the most important changes in modern war is the destructiveness of the weapons used in battle, they are more deadly now than ever, and at the same time they are directed towards civilians (ibid 2002: 74). This is a new trend which in smaller degree took place in the earlier wars, like the mentioned Crimean War and the American Civil war, in the latter civilians even sat and watched the fighting take place, like watching a football match (Graham 2008:79).

## **2.2 Terms, definitions and NATO in a historical context**

*War is thus an act of force to compel our enemy to do our will (...)*

Carl Von Clausewitz 1976, On War (Reichberg, Syse & Begby 2006)

When discussing NATO's role, it is important to establish the foundation, like what constitute the organization NATO, and what is meant by the term “the West”? And how about force and violence? These terms can often be used interchangeably, hence let us begin here. There are various definitions on “the west”, most commonly understood in this context as:

*The United States, Canada, and the noncommunist countries of Europe, especially during the Cold War and/or: The nations of North America and Europe with developed capitalist economies, especially in contrast to less-developed nations.*



The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, mostly referred to only as NATO, was established in 1949 and was primarily a military alliance (Williams 2010:1) with the aim to defend Western Europe against the Eastern bloc constituting the Soviet Union and its allies. Today there are 28 member states in the alliance of NATO, and all members take part in the armed operations in Afghanistan (NATO 2012a).

The term force is described by Graham (2008:67) in the following definitions:

*Force is injuring or threatening to injure others to some end (...)*

Subsequently, force can be legitimate under certain circumstances:

*The end for which the force is just must be a rightful one, and the person using or authorizing the force must be the person entitled to do so.*

Now, what is war? According to Clausewitz (Reichberg, Syse & Begby 2006:555), war is waged through physical force to compel our enemy to do our will, and to secure this, render the enemy powerless. And this, says Clausewitz, is the true aim of warfare. He also brings up an important point, when communities goes to war, and especially civilized people, the reasons for war is to be found in a political situation, hence war is an act of policy (ibid). How about a defensive war worth fighting, as President Obama claims the armed conflict in Afghanistan to be? This will be dealt with later in the paper.

Now, back to NATO (2012a) which initially had a threefold reason to their very existence:

*Deterring Soviet expansionism, forbidding the revival of nationalist militarism in Europe through a strong North American presence on the continent, and encouraging European political integration.*

Then, what is meant by this statement? A strong North American presence so the horror of Second World War not could be repeated? And what about the encouragement of European political integration? To understand this, we must take a brief gander at the historical context in Europe in the aftermath of the war. According to NATO (2012a), 36.5 million Europeans died during the war, 19 million of these were civilians. There were areas where infant mortality rates were one in four, and in the city of Hamburg in Germany alone, half a million people were homeless. As for the political aspect; Communists in Europe aided by the Soviet Union threatened the elected governments, like the Communist Party overthrowing of the democratically elected government in Czechoslovakia in February 1948 (NATO: 2012a). Now, during the years of NATO's existence, their agenda and use of force altered, as the global security faced new challenges, and according to the alliance, the shift changed after the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989, going from being a static organization only by existing being enough to deter the Soviet Union and its allies, to the Balkan intervention in 1999, transforming the Alliance into an organization of more dynamic and responsive nature (NATO 2012a).

In the aftermath of the fall of the Berlin wall, a shift in the alliance took place, but how, and why? According to McCalla (1996), the quick end of the cold war left NATO in relief, yet confusion. The Berlin Wall was opened, Germany reunified, and the core factors of the Alliance, being a divided Germany and the Soviet threat, were gone. Now NATO reoriented the approach to military doctrine, among others the creation of "rapid reaction forces", a multinational force structure. In general, there are many changes that have taken place since the Cold war, among others the use of force in the Balkan, a matter considered unimaginable in the 1980s (ibid). According to NATO, peaceful means had failed, diplomacy and humanitarian efforts applied but not worked, and far gone was the Cold War doctrine of nuclear retaliation. One more change worth mentioning is NATO's closer ties with international organizations such as the United Nations, a matter in which can come in handy when the Alliance's interest is at stake outside of its geographic domain (McCalla 1996). Now then – what is the task of NATO today? And how can one compare NATO's use of force in the two NATO interventions in Kosovo and Afghanistan?

### 2.3 The task of NATO today

In the attempt of establishing theories on NATO's use of force, the task of NATO today would be a suitable place to begin. Much has changed in the history of warfare, from Cold War to aggressive combat, and the fight against terrorism being one of these, and a very high one on the NATO agenda (NATO 2012a). When examining NATO purpose it is clear to see the military and political role of the Alliance:

*NATO's essential and enduring purpose, set out in the Washington Treaty, is to safeguard the freedom and security of all its members by political and military means. Based on common values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law, the Alliance has striven since its inception to secure a just and lasting peaceful order in Europe. It will continue to do so (...)*

The New Strategy Concept, NATO (2012a)

The aim of the Alliance is to further enhance its capacity, among others through advanced technologies and more intelligence sharing among the partners (ibid). Already in 1999, the document The New Strategic Concept made clear the Alliance's global responsibility and security issues like terrorism, sabotage and organized crime (ibid). Why and how does NATO now have this global responsibility? In the NATO document The New Strategic concept, the Alliance recognizes the dangers from the Cold War, where NATO plays a central part in handling the challenges, for example by putting an end to the human sufferings in the Balkans. This we will see when turning to the intervention in Kosovo soon. If NATO's task and area of responsibility has been to secure the stability of Europe, why does the Alliance have a *global* responsibility?

According to NATO (2012b), terrorism has become a global threat, and must be tackled together by the international community. Terrorism knows no border, nationality or religion, and this constitutes a severe threat. In the aftermath of the attacks on September the 11<sup>th</sup> 2001, NATO invoked Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. Article 5, being NATO's collective defense clause, has never before in NATO history been evoked. The Lisbon Summit Declaration from 2010 made clear the threat of terrorism, among others by meeting the demands of the ongoing operations. According to NATO (2012b), the transatlantic forum is

capable of transforming the discussions into action, and when reaching the action-making level NATO has large military and civilian capabilities at its disposal. These capabilities are able to both contribute in the fight against terrorism, and manage the consequence of an attack. Is NATO pursuing the task of terrorism management; not only prevent, but also deal with consequences if terrorism take place? Now, if terrorism is one of the main reasons for the use of force in Afghanistan, which subsequently will be discussed, what was the reason behind the Kosovo intervention in 1999, and how can this NATO intervention be compared to the one taking place in Afghanistan? And are they both humanitarian interventions? When referring to Afghanistan, the term intervention, or *humanitarian intervention* is often utilized by scholars, a term defined by the Danish Institute of International Affairs as:

*Coercive action by states involving the use of armed force in another state without the consent of its government, with or without authorization from the United Nations Security Council, for the purpose of preventing or putting to halt gross and massive violations of human rights or international humanitarian law.*

(Human Rights Education Associates 2011)

When discussing the use of force, one may often refer to intervention, or war. What is war, and what is intervention? Finnemore (2003) argues that intervention is on the boundary between peace and war. For example, to deploy military force against another state is not considered a peaceful activity, yet is it common to distinguish these actions from war. Intervention is understood as being different and “less” than war (ibid). In the case of Afghanistan, the war on terrorism is much debated, yet has no declaration on war been made, although the Taliban government was overthrown. Finnemore (2003) refer to this as contemporary reluctance to declare war. This may be the case, but a reluctance to declare a global campaign against terrorism is not to be found, as we shall later see. According to Barash & Webel (2002:83), today`s armed conflict rarely includes a formal declaration on war, probably due to diplomatic formalities being less prominent.

## 2.4 From Kosovo to Kabul

*Today, this policy of force thinks that it has triumphed by establishing a false state. As long as the Serb people exist, Kosovo will be Serbia.*

*Serbian Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica (BBC 2008)*

NATO's use of force in Kosovo under Operation Allied Force, was reasoned in a humanitarian intervention to bring peace and stability and to halt and reverse the humanitarian catastrophe (NATO 2012a). It was a peace enforcement operation, and according to the mandate, among others, to demilitarize, establish a secure environment, support the international humanitarian effort, coordinate with and support the international civil presence.

The number of NATO troops in Kosovo is today 5500, and in 1999 the initial number of troops were 50 000 men and women. Although NATO is still present in Kosovo, the withdrawal of Serbian forces was complete only a few days after the intervention took place.

In the case of Kosovo, the Serbian state committed massacres of civilians (Hudson 2009: 156), and NATO reasoned that a humanitarian intervention was needed. In *Just and Unjust Wars*, Walzer allows humanitarian intervention if genocide, ethnic cleansing, enslavement or massacres take place (ibid). However, when NATO intervened in Kosovo in March 1999, this operation was not authorized by the United Nation Security Council, which raises the question in the center of a humanitarian intervention – is it legitimate for NATO to use force without a UN mandate, or let violation continue with severe humanitarian consequences? (Reichberg, Syse & Begby 2006:686). Why was this operation authorized by the Security Council? The case of Kosovo and Bosnia in the Balkans, is an example of the limitations in the United Nations, as they were unable to intervene and prevent the ethnic war, because Russia was an allied to Serbia (Barash & Webel 2002:357). Russia threatened to veto the action of intervening, and NATO eventually undertook the intervention. Another example of this can be seen in Cambodia in the 1970s, where the genocide by Khmer Rouge took place, and the United Nations did nothing to prevent it (ibid). Pol Pot and his Khmer Rouge took power in 1975, and during the rule 1 million from the population of around 7 million were killed (ibid 2002:213).

## **2.5 Releasing force against Taliban**

*The Taliban must act, and act immediately. They will hand over the terrorists or they will share the same fate.*

*President George W Bush` demands on the Taliban September 20 2001 (Ussery 2010).*

One of the aspects that differ the NATO intervention in Afghanistan from the intervention in Kosovo, may be the military capacity, and military focus. The intervention in Afghanistan in 2001 is the largest NATO operation in NATO's history, and deploys a number of troops estimated to be 130 000 from 48 countries (NATO 2012c). The initial reasons for the use of force were to protect the Afghan people, build the capacity of the Afghan security forces, counter the insurgency, and enable the Afghan people to be responsible for the security of their own country (ibid). However, the main reason for the use of force in Afghanistan may be considered as self-defense, and fighting terrorism, as the intervention is directly linked to the events of 9/11. The mission was clear, to eradicate Bin Laden's network of terrorism (responsible for the attacks on September 11) and to take out the Taliban regime as the sponsor of terrorism. In the following days of 9/11, the British Prime Minister Tony Blair proclaimed "We are all Americans", and even Fidel Castro expressed horror (Friedman 2003). Some allied European governments expressed their nervousness regarding the way the United States would respond to this attack, but expressed their support. The global support was nearly universal, and NATO declared an attack on a member state (McWilliams & Piotrowski 2009:574).

So far, one may consider this intervention as a direct vengeance, revenge, hence very different from the Kosovo intervention, since the West as a whole had been attacked, and a global campaign against terrorism was executed. President Bush gave a speech a few days after 9/11:

*War has been waged against us by stealth and deceit and murder. This nation is peaceful, but fierce when stirred to anger. This conflict was begun on the timing and terms of others; it will end in a way and at hour of our choosing*

*President Bush, speech at the National Cathedral, Washington DC Sept 14<sup>th</sup> 2001 (Bird & Marshall 2011:47)*

President Barack Obama has also explicitly given reasons for the intervention:

*This is not a war of choice. This is a war of necessity. Those who attacked America on 9/11 are plotting to do so again. If left unchecked, the Taliban insurgency will mean an even larger safe haven from which Al Qaeda would plot to kill more Americans. So this is not only a war worth fighting. This is fundamental to the defense of our people.*

*Speech by Barack Obama, Phoenix 2009 (NUPI 2012)*

How the use of force in Afghanistan would be shaped, was also very clear, as Obama calls this a defensive war worth fighting. Self-defense as a reason to resort to war will be discussed in the next chapter. Now, again the country of Afghanistan, like many times before in history, became the arena in which war would be undertaken. On October 8<sup>th</sup> in 2001 Secretary General Lord Robertson stated the following:

*“Yesterday evening, the United States of America and the United Kingdom began military operations as part of the global campaign against terrorism”*

(NATO: 2012b)

On October 7<sup>th</sup> 2001, military operations in Afghanistan were launched, as the Taliban refused to cease harboring al-Qaida, and the purpose was to disrupt the use of Afghanistan as a terrorist base (Ussery 2010).

The support from NATO was present:

*Yesterday’s actions were carried out by two NATO Allies. Other NATO Allies have pledged direct military support as this operation unfolds. The Alliance itself will continue to provide military and other support, to consult on the implications for its security, and to take whatever defensive measures are necessary.*

(NATO: 2012b)

Victory in terms of sustainability may not have come quickly, as we shall return to later when discussing the future of Afghanistan, however did military victory come fast, as the Taliban fled Kabul in November 2001, and in December leaving their stronghold, the city of Kandahar in the south (Ussery 2010). A general understanding is that the leaders of the Taliban and al-Qaida fled across the border to Pakistan. As the military intervention took place very fast, the form of the whole operation has had a militarist form from the start, and this may be considered as one of the predicaments of the Afghanistan intervention. This will be dealt with later in the paper. To fill the political void, the United Nations hosted the Bonn Conference in Germany in December 2001, with participants and representatives from the key actors in the interventions, and four Afghan opposition groupings, but not Taliban (Ussery 2010). The Taliban was not there, leading to criticism by Nikolaisen & Karlsrud (2011) which will be discussed later. A new Afghan government was chosen through the creation of an Afghan Interim Authority (Ussery 2010)

In Afghanistan, there was no period of formal occupation with foreign authority on behalf of the Afghans, and in order to provide security, ISAF was authorized by the United Nations already in December 2001. We shall now find out the purpose and mission of ISAF.





### ***3: Undertaking a just war on terror?***

#### **3.1 ISAF**

*War is the realm of danger; therefore courage is the soldier`s first requirement.*

Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War* (Reichberg, Syse & Begby 2006:555)

Who is undertaking the use of force in Afghanistan, and how did this come about? According to Morelli & Belkin (2009), ISAF was created by the United Nations Security Council in December 2001, and was limited to Kabul initially, before expanding took place. The mission statement of ISAF is as follows:

*In support of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, ISAF conducts operations in Afghanistan to reduce the capability and will of the insurgency, support the growth in capacity and capability of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), and facilitate improvements in governance and socio-economic development in order to provide a secure environment for sustainable stability that is observable to the population.*

(ISAF 2012)

Legal basis for ISAF forces is provided by the same institution in charge of the creation of these forces, as United Nations Security Council both authorized and established the ISAF forces, in order to assist the maintenance of security in Kabul and surroundings (Ussery 2010). The mandate was a based on the agreement undertaken in the Bonn conference, and in January 2002, the Interim authority of Afghanistan signed the military technical agreement with ISAF. In 2003, NATO assumed the leadership of the ISAF operation, responsible for the planning of force, command and coordination (ISAF 2012). The same year the United Nations extended the mandate not to be limited to Kabul any longer, but to the whole country, through Resolution 1510.

ISAF's task in Afghanistan is to undertake different areas of maintenance. These include security, governance, reconstruction and development (ISAF 2012). In terms of security, ISAF is today conducting the maintenance of security and stability together with the Afghan National Security Forces, aiding the Afghan Security forces with mentoring, equipping and training. ISAF has faced challenges in the many stages of the operations, namely in 2008, with the increase in incidents, leading observers to believe that "the Taliban was winning". This will be discussed further later in the paper.

### **3.2 Defining terrorism?**

*We will make efforts that, God willing, full and nationwide peace comes to the country as soon as possible and we call on our Taliban brothers to come home and embrace their land and we will ask the international community for assistance and co-ordination in this respect once again.*

*Afghan President Hamid Karzai (BBC 2009)*

Having elaborated the ways NATO fights terrorism, the inevitable discussion on what terrorism really is has arrived. International terrorism reached an international concern already in the 1960s, with a number of episodes of hijacked aircrafts, however has the term entered a new phase since 9/11 (Conte 2005:19).

The concept of terrorism is much debated among scholars, Walzer (Reichberg, Syse & Begby 2006: 643) writes in Just and Unjust wars:

*Terrorism in the strict sense, is the random murder of innocent people, emerged as a strategy of revolutionary struggle only in the period after World war II (...) only after it had become a feature of conventional war.*

US Department of State defines terrorism as:

*Premeditated, politically motivated violence against non-combatants by subnational or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience.*

US Department of State (2006)

According to Graham (2008: 123), the term is linked to a negative evaluation, and the term is not descriptive, but expressive. Graham argues that “freedom fighter”, on the other hand, entails a positive connotation with attached approved moral. What makes a terrorist bad, and a freedom fighter a hero, so to speak? And can there be a just war against a terrorist? According to Friedman (2003), *one side`s terrorists are the other sides freedom fighter*, and by this the author points out the unlikeliness of all governments in the world to ever unite in the war against terrorism. However, the sympathy, if and when occurring, for those turning to terrorism as a last resort, is very misplaced, since terrorism resorts to arms contrary to the principles of justice, whereas freedom fighters are aiming the pursuit of freedom from foreign rule or slavery, hence are defined by this (Graham 2008: 123). Terrorism represents the use of terror, whereas freedom fighters represent the struggle for freedom.

Since the attacks on world trade centers in New York September 11<sup>th</sup> in 2001 the terms Taliban, and al-Qaida have been in the attention of the global society, when debating terrorism. But what is Taliban, and who are Taliban, and what about al-Qaida? Al-Qaida, meaning “the base” in Arabic according to Global Security (2012), is an international terrorist network established around 1988 and was led by Osama Bin Laden. At that time, al-Qaida financed recruited and trained thousands of soldiers to fight against the Soviet troops in Afghanistan. The recruited men were from dozens of Arabic countries with the common goal to this day; to establish an Islamic Caliphate throughout the world by overthrowing regimes considered non-Islamic. There are many interpretations on Jihad, and according to Global Security (2012) the goals and objectives of Jihad is to:

*Establishing the rule of God on earth, attaining martyrdom in the cause of God and purification of the ranks of Islam from the elements of depravity.*

In 1998, al-Qaida declared war against the United States (NUPI 2012). The war launched after the attacks on world trade center in 2001, aimed to overthrow the Taliban, and destroy al-Qaida's bases in Afghanistan. al-Qaida are so far linked to many terrorist attacks, namely the Nairobi and Dar es Salaam bombings of the US embassies in 1998, the nightclub bombing in Bali 2002, and suicide attacks on Western interests in Casablanca, Morocco, to mention a few (Global Security 2012).

Terrorism, according to Barash & Webel (2002:80), is a vexing term, and can mean any attack, actual or threatening, against civilians. Terrorism is as old as human history, and is used by people to achieve political aims through violence, or the threat of violence. Terrorism is hence a form of contemporary guerilla warfare (ibid).

Following Aristotle's theory on Just War previously mentioned, holding that for the sake of peace, there must be war, a war may be just, although war in itself is evil (Graham 2008: 77). Yet, there are principles to be met if a war is to be just, notably the *ad bellum* principles (conditions to be met in going to war), and *in bello* principles (the principles the conduct of war must meet) (ibid). One of the *ad bellum* principles also includes to resource to war as a last resort. Now, according to Conte (2005:38), the terrorist attacks on American soil in September 2001, were the ultimate reasons for the Afghanistan intervention, and brought about a severe fight to eradicate international terrorism, and we shall now look at how the war on terror was launched. Is this a just war?

### **3.3 Just war or self-defense**

*A just war is in the long run far better for a man's soul than the most prosperous peace*

*Theodore Roosevelt, United States 26th President (Roosevelt War quotes 2012)*

For a war to be just, there are criteria's to be met. Already in the work by Aquinas *Summa Theologica*, written around 1265, to resort to using force is described, as Aquinas is today considered as one of the founders of what we today call Just War Theory (Johnson 2005). Following Aquinas, the resort to the sword must be justified by the authority; a just cause must be defined, as well as the intention, like the aim of securing peace. Having these principles in mind, the question if the West is waging a just war in Afghanistan will follow us

throughout this paper. As the Just War principles before resorting to war is called Jus Ad Bellum, the word *Bellum* in medieval times referred to *any use of armed force by a sovereign ruler, whether this force was applied internally to that ruler's society or externally* (Johnson 2005). The opposite of *Bellum* was *duellum*, which meant forced used by private authority. *Bellum* in just war theory can be just or unjust, whereas *duellum*, was always unjust (ibid).

Today, following Johnson (2005), the term war is highly debated today. Is war aggressive military force, is it national interest, or legitimate use of self-defense? As the war on terror is intimately and directly linked to the intervention in Afghanistan (Conte 2005: 9), so was the reactions following the process. One day after 9/11 2001, the United Nation Security Council adopted Resolution 1368, condemning the terrorist attacks as a threat to international peace and security (Conte 2005:23). The Security Council also called all states to cooperate in the work to bring the perpetrators to justice. In Resolution 1373, a resolution that was later adopted, and seemingly the most severe resolution of all times in the Security Council, requiring the countries to prevent the financing of terrorism, and cooperate on matters such as sharing information on terrorist networks (ibid). Resolution 1373 is mandatory for all UN member states, and Resolution 51, regarding self-defense, was activated. What is self-defense in this matter, and why is this so relevant in terms of launching a just war? According to the United Nations Human Rights Committee, the threat of, or to use force, is prohibited, unless the right of self-defense is violated (Conte 2005: 7).

Self-defense is considered by the United Nations (Conte 2005:41) as the actions taken by one state or more in self-defense, or in the defense of their neighbors. The armed operations in Afghanistan can thereby be considered as an international effort where self-defense is exercised through the activated Article 51 in the United Nation (ibid). Following the principles of just war theory, the jus ad bellum principles, regarding the justice when resorting to war, one of them being that the war must be fought in a just cause, with the right intention (Graham 2008:60 and Johnson 2005). Is self-defense a just cause, and the right intention?

The resort to armed force has to be both justified and necessary if it can be categorized as a just war (Johnson 2005). Right intention is the avoidance of wrong intention, and the aim of securing peace, along with the moral included in the purpose of using force, referring to the state of mind who authorizes the use of force (ibid). In the eyes of the United States, the

country had become a victim of an armed attack, and President Bush claimed the murderers to be the same as those who were responsible for the bombing of the American embassies in Tanzania and Kenya on the 1990s (ibid). The Security Council recognized the attacks as action where self-defense could be exercised, along with the threat of terrorism as a reason for taking action. Another just war principle before resorting to war, regarding the war to be undertaken by the leaders of the state, can also be seen both by the leaders of the United States; President Bush as a strong and leading figure, and in the support in the United Nations Security Council.

Barash & Webel (2002:385) gives many examples of the so called “wars of self-defense.” Self-defense could justify Poland’s attempt to resist the German invasion in 1939, or the Israeli invasion of Egypt in 1967, where Israel struck first, but Egyptian behavior supposedly was a provocation and threatening? Barash and Webel calls these self-defense war “loopholes” in international treaties, and the loopholes are large enough to drive an army through.

Another example is the USSR justifying invading Czechoslovakia in 1968, as a self-defense by the socialists against the western-inspired counterrevolutionaries (ibid).

### **3.4 Conflict resolution**

*There is no way to peace (...), peace is the way.*

*A.J Muste* (Barash & Webel 2002:264)

Why do we choose war? Is war inevitable? Is the war on terror inevitable? Why is resorting to war not prevented? When asked about how to maintain peace, most people, including government leaders, point to military strength (Barash & Webel 2002:291). Some of the blame of resorting to war can be found in what Samuel Huntington has coined the *military mind*, in his analysis of the soldier and the state.

The *military mind*;

*emphasizes the permanence of irrationality, weakness and evil in human affairs. It stresses the supremacy of society over the individual and the importance of order, hierarchy and*

*division of function. It accepts the nation state as the highest form of political organization and recognizes the continuing likelihood of war among nation states...it exalts obedience as the highest virtue of military men...it is, in brief, realistic and conservative.*

(Barash & Webel 2002: 214)

Can waging war sometimes be avoided, by the use of diplomatic solutions instead of resorting to war? Wars have been averted, as the history provides us with examples of negotiating, mediation and diplomatic successes. For instance in 1987, the Indian military exercised on the border to Pakistan, hence the Pakistani forces were mobilized. About 300,000 soldiers were soon facing each other as the tension was just about to escalate, and this is the very same border that has faced substantial violent earlier. Soon the tension eased, as diplomatic exchanges were made, for instance did both sides verbally agree on not attacking the other side`s nuclear facilities (ibid). There are numerous negotiating techniques for resolving conflicts, in which only a few will be mentioned here. According to Barash & Webel (2002: 283), negotiations should aim to achieve win-win solutions in which all sides are better off than they were before, and contending parties should seek to resolve their differences, not to prevail one another. The most common negotiating technique is to compromise, meaning to reach an agreement, intermediating the demands of both sides (ibid). Some of the disadvantages with compromise, is the odds of leaving both sides dissatisfied with the outcome, and in some cases, although compromising, one part may become the “winner” and the other the “looser” (ibid).

Peacekeeping can be seen as means of conflict transformation, and has become an international aid in conflicting areas. But what is peacekeeping? Are the soldiers in ISAF peacekeepers? According to ISAF Commanding General, United States Army General David McKiernan, the operations in Afghanistan are not peacekeeping, but war, and this we will come back to subsequently. Now, the system we today call peacekeeping came to life through Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjold and was first proposed by Lester Pearson, with the idea of enforcing the peace by placing UN presence between the conflicting parties, not favoring one side, hindering the targets to aim at each other (Barash & Webel 2002: 356). Following



this model, it may be correct not to consider the armed operations in Afghanistan as a peacekeeping mission.

#### ***4: Mapping Afghanistan***

*The struggle in Afghanistan is therefore not only confined to that country, but to the entire world.*

(Bakhtari 2011)

##### **4.1 Wars and foreign intervention**

*My spirit will remain in Afghanistan, even though my soul will go to Allah. My last words to you, my son and successor, are: Never trust the Russians.*

*Abdur Rahman Khan Amir of Afghanistan 1880-1901* (Afghanistan Online 2012)

Not many years ago, the country of Afghanistan was held hostage and a staging ground for terrorism, isolated from the international community and denied human rights (Bakhtari 2011: 97). Today a new Afghanistan emerges, with ideals of democracy, freedom and justice. 7 million Afghan boys and girls attend school, and 75 000 students study at 22 universities (ibid).

Media is free and the civil society is vibrant, with thousands of women in work. However, there are challenges, the very same challenges that were the initial reasons for the NATO invasion in 2001. Insecurity and terrorism still threaten, not only Afghanistan but internationally (Bakhtari 2011:97). The ongoing war is, for the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, a struggle to survive, and the attempt to create stability and sustainable security (Ussery 2010). For the international forces, the war concerns the same, but also to deny terrorists to use the country as an arena for terrorism networks to prosper (ibid). In the scope of the task, it is found necessary to include a short mapping of the conflicted country of Afghanistan. One may wonder where to begin when discussing the

history of a country such as Afghanistan. Rudyard Kipling used the phrase The Great Game when describing the relationship between India, Afghanistan and the Russian and British battles for hegemony in the region, and this is already in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Williams 2010:72). According to Bird & Marshall (2011:10), the NATO intervention in 2001 marked the latest in a long line of military interventions in Afghanistan, and we shall now take a gander at the complexity of Afghanistan's history and ethnicity, as it has been viewed as a "highway of conquest", with relatively unprotected borders (Williams 2010:71).

The emphasis in this chapter will be to include some of the factors constituting the country of Afghanistan. In what ways have the turbulent past shaped the Afghans of today? What is the relationship between the state, the people, the ethnicity and what about the role of religion in the country? Who is Taliban, and how did they rise to power? This we are about to find out. Bird & Marshall (2011:10) points out the significance of British interest in the country, intervening no less than three times, the first already in the Anglo-Afghan War in 1838 – 1842, the second 1878 – 1880, and the third in 1919. The British has made an impact on the modern history of the country, and was also eager to be an ally of the Americans when intervening in 2001 (ibid).

The Soviet Union intervention of 1979 – 1989 was a long war fought war to support the native Afghan Marxist government in the country. The pro-soviet Afghan Marxist party PDPA (People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan) was founded in 1965 and came to power in 1978 by a coup performed by the Afghan army (Bird & Marshall 2011:20). From 1957 and onwards the Soviet Union dominated the training, arming and equipping of the Afghan army, and this is the reason why the coup was successful, together with the fact that the Afghan officers were made up by left-leaning men, not religious Islamists (ibid). This will be discussed further in chapter 6.

After the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989, the conflicted country was suddenly forgotten and ignored by the world (ibid). This is when the Taliban came to power, and Soviet, currently under president Gorbachov, came to the same conclusion as the British had reached a century ago; the Afghan people were best off handling their own affairs (Barfield 2010: 242). This sent the country out in full out civil war (Williams 2010: 73), with a number

of different groups battling for power, and the Taliban, a conservative group with fundamentalist interpretation of Islam, won in 1996 (Barfield 2010:74). During the civil war, the United Nations tried to broker a settlement, but with no luck (Ewans 2005:159). Other than this, the international community did very little to assist the country, now that Afghanistan was no longer interesting in terms of the Cold War context. It was thought that the *mujahedeen*, the Afghan resistance groups, would come to a common understanding in order for the country to be stabilized and reconstructed, but instead they each fought for power, divided into ethnic, religious and tribal antipathies, often led by warlords (ibid).

#### **4.2 The Afghan state, and Afghan ethnicity**

*We will never allow you to dictate to us how to run our country and whom to employ in Afghanistan. How and where we employ the foreign experts will remain the exclusive prerogative of the Afghan state. Afghanistan shall remain poor, if necessary, but free in its acts and decisions.*

*Daoud Khan, President of Afghanistan 1973-1978 (Afghanistan Online 2012)*

According to Bird & Marshall (2010:11), the Afghan state has been structurally weak throughout the modern history, which has made it fairly simple for the invader to overthrow the ruling elite in Kabul. This was also the case in 2001. Attempting to shape the behavior of the Afghan people however, is another question, bringing up the notion of tribal identity, and a people with a “guerilla” mindset who know the natural terrain in their backyards (ibid: 2010:12). There are some 20 main ethnic groups coexisting with some 30 smaller ethnic groups, and there are about 30 languages spoken. Finding a correct number of the population is hard, somewhere around 29 million, and nearly half of these are Pashtuns, mainly living in the south and east, making these the predominant ethnic group in the country (ibid).

Although Afghanistan has been invaded on many occasions, and still is in the middle of a war, the country has, according to Bird & Marshall (2010:11), historically earned itself a reputation of being severely challenging for foreign forces to intervene in. These matters are

interesting, and moreover; they explain the very essential nature of the tribes constituting the Afghan people, the role of the state and the link to geography. The issues with the difficult terrain in Afghanistan was a matter in which all the invaders got a good taste of, for instance the Soviet tanks designed for the plains of central Europe meeting severe difficulties in the narrow valleys in Afghanistan. As for the nature of the people, being strong willed, warlike and independent, and as a country, Afghanistan has no historical experience of a central government exerting control over all the provinces with good intentions (ibid 2010:11). The first modern ruler of Afghanistan, Amir Abdur Rahman, advanced the central government to establish a savage personal dictatorship (ibid). “Iron Amir” as he was called, ruled the country after 1881, and if resisting him, horrific punishment followed. During his reign, it is calculated that he executed 120,000 people. Especially singled out for punishment were those of non-Pashtun ethnicity. In fact, the Pashtuns are still the predominant ethnic group in the country, and it is from this group many Islamists are drawn, as in the case of Taliban (ibid).

#### **4.3 Religion as a foundation**

*Religion does not require women to veil their hands, feet and faces or enjoin any special type of veil. Tribal custom must not impose itself on the free will of the individual.*

*Amanullah Khan King of Afghanistan 1919-1929 (Afghanistan Online 2012)*

Religion in Afghanistan has played an important role in the country's history and during the many foreign invasion, as Afghans have seen the wars as being fought between infidels and believers (Ewans 2005:12). One may add wars are still fought over the same reason to present day? Nearly all Afghans are Muslims, four fifth being Sunni and the rest Shi'as, and during the Soviet intervention the Sunni Muslims turned to Pakistan, Saudi-Arabia and China for support, whereas the Shi'as turned to Iran (Ewans 2005:12). Hence, the Afghans regardless of ethnicity were evoked to fight in order to protect the faith of Islam. Ewans (2005:14) underlines the religious influence Islam has been throughout Afghan society, on every aspect of both personal and public life. Religion in Afghanistan has served to unify the nation against common enemies, but has not, however brought the country together in a nationwide self-sustaining political system. The country is still a threat to international stability and security (ibid). The significance of Islam in Afghanistan is fundamental, especially jihad (holy war) is

a key principle (Ewans 2005:172) in Afghans history. Roy (2001) also underlines the importance of Islam in everyday life in Afghanistan. The mosque is normally to be found in the center of the village, and here religious rituals are performed. For instance every Friday at midday, the whole village is gathered in a collective prayer, and this collective prayer is regarded to have more spiritual value than personal prayer (ibid).

Religion can make a contributing factor in conflicts, and complicate the military intervention. In the findings of Durward & Marsden (2009), the religious dimension in the Afghan conflict has been underestimated. President Obama has been very clear, in which we shall continue to see later in the paper, that the war on terror is not an attack on the religion of Islam. However, according to Durward & Marsden (2009), more focus should be given to the religious faith of the terrorists, hence should more knowledge on Islam be acquired. This is also a point underlined by President Obama, recognizing the importance of understanding the religious motivations behind the violent actions. Religion, ideology and tradition may seem to have become terms defining the same nowadays. How can they be distinguished, when they all may appear to be representing the same? In terms of Afghanistan, it is especially difficult to distinguish between traditionalism and religion, which will be discussed in chapter in chapter 6.

In the aftermath of 9/11, there has been the lack of distinguish between Islam, the religion, and Islamism, the political ideology, and this is an unfortunate mistake (Durward & Marsden 2009). If this difference is understood, this could lead to building a bridge between Islam and the West. Islamists are not satisfied with the laws of Islam followed by many Muslims world wide, and see these Muslims as apostates that has to be killed, hence Islamists have found it necessary to reinterpret the Qur`an, in a way suitable for their purpose (ibid). This is found to be an important matter worth mentioning.

#### **4.4 The Taliban rule**

*We will not be a pawn in someone else's game, we will always be Afghanistan!*

*Ahmad Shah Masood Prominent Afghan Commander, fought against the Russians* (Afghan Online 2012).

In order to understand why the use of force is considered as needed in Afghanistan today, some background information in terms of Taliban is found not only relevant, but crucial. The resistance forces in Afghanistan often goes under the name *mujahedeen*, or Taliban, and this may lead to confusion; who constitute the resistance in Afghanistan? According to Dale (Ussery 2010), the *mujahedeen* were armed resistance groups waging war against the Soviet forces, and these were backed by the United States government. In 1989 the Soviet forces left, and by 1992, the Soviet-backed Afghan regime in Kabul fell, and now the power in the country was in the hands of the *mujahedeen*.

So who were the people in the conservative group the Taliban, and how did they come to power? Pakistan trained, armed and financed the Taliban, which quickly grew and was made up by Afghan and Pakistani students from a network of religious schools (Barfield 2010: 256). Hence is the meaning of the Taliban; religious students (ibid). According to Barfield (2010:255), the Taliban was a cross-border movement led by Afghan Pashtuns trained in Pakistan, where both the ideological and religious roots were. According to Cooley (2002), it was both Pakistan and Saudi-Arabia who created the monster of the Taliban. It was the disorder in Afghanistan that made it a strategic benefit to prosper here, and the Taliban was unlike any other political movement in Afghanistan, drawing a new class of people; refugee Afghans, many of them born in Pakistan (Barfield 2012:255). In 1994, the Taliban was led by Mullah Omar, and gained control over Kandahar in the south. In 1996, the Taliban captured Kabul and large parts of the country, in which they controlled until 2001 (Ussery 2010).

Initially, the Taliban was lauded to bring peace and security, but became widely unpopular, with the religious ideology of Salafi Islam and Pashtunwali, the Pashtuns cultural code (Barfield 2010:261). The refugee camps were “hotbeds” for radical movements (ibid 2010:256), providing a new start for poor people left without options, and to contribute to recovering a homeland was seen as a reasonable choice for young men. The men the Taliban recruited had been too young to fight under the Soviet intervention and now they were given a new possibility to fight a “jihad” – a religious holy war to bring a true version of Islam to Afghanistan (ibid).

The concept of Jihad can either be defined as an internal struggle to perfect faith of Islam (within the individual), or external; a holy war to defend justice and Islam (Ewans 2005:172). The men in Taliban are known for being hostile towards women. Women were not allowed to work, not even in medicine or as teachers, and they were enslaved and forced to wear a certain dress code (Cooley 2002). The penalties for men were also severe, also forced on dress codes, beard length. Barfield (2010:256) explains the specific hatred against women by looking at the all-male religious schools the students attended, as they were removed from their families at a very early age only to grow up among men. The fact that the young boys were removed from their families at an early age cannot explain the whole scale of the role of the women under Taliban, but it is a start. It is also interesting to point out that Taliban was skeptical towards the capital Kabul, a rather liberal city and a popular destination for young travelers in the 1960s and 1970s, where even Afghan women could wear make-up and short skirts (Williams 2010:74). Under Taliban, the women were severely oppressed, and human rights abuses were undertaken on a daily basis (Ewans 2005:160).

## ***5: Reflections on NATO's use of force in Afghanistan***

*The story of the human race is war (...)*

Winston Churchill (Barash & Webel 2002: 22)

### **5.1 Purpose and mission in Afghanistan**

*Once Isaf [International Security Assistance Force] is no longer a factor, the Taliban consider victory inevitable.*

Reflections from fighters detained by ISAF in Afghanistan (BBC 2012)

In order to understand the complexity of the use of force in Afghanistan, and why the intervention was undertaken in the first place, some details regarding the events in the aftermath of 9/11 is needed. As previously described, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) was created by United Nations Security Council Resolution 1386 on December 20, 2001, and was led by the United States (Gallis 2008). As the ISAF mission was initially limited to Kabul, the Afghan President Hamid Karzai, requested from the United Nations to ask for NATO's participation (ibid), and by this NATO had the commands of ISAF in August 2003. Resolution 1776 passed on September 17<sup>th</sup>, calling on NATO to disarm militias, train the national police force and army, reform the justice system, provide security for elections, and combat the narcotics industry. What are the challenges of the missions ISAF is undertaking? According to Gallis (2008), one of the biggest challenges facing the forces is to stabilize and reconstruct while combat operations against the Taliban is taking place. ISAF has faced challenges in the many stages of the operations, namely in 2008, with the increase in incidents, leading observers to believe that "the Taliban was winning" (Ussery 2010). According to Bowman & Dale (2009), the Taliban were trying to create a "sense of siege", and the same year the insurgents stroke the popular Serena Hotel in January, attempted to assassinate President Karzai in April, and bombed the Indian Embassy in July (ibid).

When ISAF was given the mandate to help Afghanistan to maintain security in the country, the major combat operations in the first stage of the war was regarded as a quick success,



however were the challenges by far not over, as the ISAF forces still is facing the resistance to this day (Ussery 2010). The challenges came about as the new Afghan leadership faced political difficulty as the state was fractioned and had very few resources, and the violence continued, both from local power-brokers and from al-Qaida and the Taliban. The leaders in the Taliban had, assumedly fled across the border to Pakistan, and perhaps were they defeated, but not eliminated (ibid). The challenges facing the international forces, does not only come from the resistance, mistakenly categorized as the Taliban. The Taliban, according to Ussery (2010), is a part of the insurgency, but the insurgency is not unified, and other types of challenges should not be listed as the Taliban, like the issues of criminality and drugs. The Taliban is more of a network than an organization, with two main councils (*shuras*) which are both located in Pakistan (ibid).

As the years have gone by, the mandate, composition and structure of the military presence in Afghanistan have changed (Ussery 2010). The NATO role have increased, and it has been found difficult to separate between the military strategy, and the grand strategy for Afghanistan (ibid). Perhaps this is an element in which contributes to the theory on the intervention in Afghanistan to have a militant form? Security is seen as essential for progress, and the military forces play a key role here.

## **5.2 Militarism or pacifism?**

*Between the pacifists and liberals, on the one hand, and the militarists and social Darwinists, on the other, stood the majority of ordinary citizens who could be mobilized for a defense of the fatherland to ward off an unprovoked attack, but no more (...)*

A description of civilians in World War I (Berghan 2005)

If the armed conflict in Afghanistan is said to have a militarist form, which will be discussed in the next subchapter, then what is militarism, and what is the opposite; pacifism? Could pacifism be an alternative in the conflict in Afghanistan? A definition of militarism includes:

*Glorification of the ideals of a professional military class, predominance of the armed forces in the administration or policy of the state, and a policy in which military preparedness is of primary importance to a state (Farlex 2009).*

By analyzing this definition, one may wonder if the militarist form in the conflict in Afghanistan could fit well. Pacifism, on the other hand, does not see glory in fighting, but in committing to peace, and hence oppose war (SEP: 2010). The term pacifism is a highly debated concept in contemporary times, and often this is linked to supporting war as a means towards peace, like Richard Nixon in his days, claiming to be a pacifist, yet did he continue to support the Vietnamese War (SEP 2010). When the reality of war and peace is brought to the surface, it is arguable easy to see the complexity of the concept pacifism, and what it entails.

Therefore, scholars have tried to categorize the concept, and according to Graham (2008: 66), the reasons for pacifists to object the use of force or of arms is because it causes pain, loss, death and damage, hence is pacifism often linked to absolute opposition to violence. Barash & Webel 2002: 47). Barash & Webel (ibid) divide between *absolute pacifists*; opponents of any use of military force, and *relative pacifists*, who believe it is possible to wage “good” wars or military action, like in Afghanistan. But whether the war is a so called “good” war, or an “evil” war, war is still war, and immediately we turn to the discussion on war ethics. The case of Afghanistan portrays the men in al-Qaida and Taliban as the “evil” forces that must be eliminated and overcome by the “good” force. But is this “evil” larger than the “evil” in the war itself?

Sometimes pacifism has been linked to the word “pacified”, and by this be used in military terms as to pacify the enemy territory by disabling or killing the enemy (SEP 2010). Here it is possible to see how interlinked pacifism and militarism may be, although not intended, perhaps especially from a pacifist standpoint. There are many pacifist arguments against militarism, and notably the theory behind just war bring about many arguments. Just wars take us back to the previously discussed matter of “overcoming the evil” to bring about a greater good, like the situation in the current Afghanistan.

Pacifists consider war to be wrong since killing is considered wrong (SEP 2010), whereas militarism see the glory in fighting (Graham 2008: 55) However, the formerly described just war theory standing between pacifism and militarism, holding the notion of justifying waging war, although war is an evil (ibid). We will now turn to how non-violence or just war is, or could be waged in Afghanistan.

### **5.3 Nonviolence or just war?**

*Depart from evil and do good, seek peace and pursue it.*

Psalm 34v14 (Bible on the Web: 2011)

Who is in charge of the use of force against states? In the Roman Empire, is the use of force was utilized alongside with the divine will, it was just (Conte 2005:2). Have the use of force changed since then? The use of force in Afghanistan was legitimized from many angles, namely self-defense and fighting terrorism. As the support from the international community was present, one may wonder what the alternatives could be, if not choosing to launch an armed operation. According to Falk 2001, a non-violent approach in Afghanistan would not be sufficient, with the risk of repetition being too high. Falk argues (2001) in his respond to the attacks of 9/11, that the perpetrators could not have been neutralized by diplomacy and nonviolent actions, but had to be met by military actions. Falk here share the same view as NATO, and one may wonder if there is another approach to the use of force in the country, other than armed operations? Was the intervention a last resort, which is one of the principles of just war? The militant approach came about as an immediate reaction of chock as the attack on not only the United States, but the whole “West”, took place, and this affected the decision making level, creating a common enemy for the international community (NUPI 2012).

According to Bertram (2002), the intervention was not a last resort because the United States failed to pursue a diplomatic solution, for instance mediation with Pakistan, as Pakistan could be able to persuade Taliban to surrender Bin Laden (ibid). The United States did not consider this diplomatic alternative to work, and has been the front runner of the intervention from the start. (NUPI 2012), and the energy fuelling the war still has a direct link to the chock of 9/11. The immediate chock may have vanished to some extent, but still strong even with Barack

Obama as the US-president, Bush successor. The main goal in Afghanistan is still to eradicate al-Qaida, and to establish formal and hierarchic institutions providing education, health and security. The system is according to a western model, a very much debated notion in terms of westernizing the country. Will democracy ever work in Afghanistan? This debate will not be included in the scope of this paper, however is it a question worth mentioning.

The resistance against the implementation of a western model is severe, both within groups inside Afghanistan and outside. A result has been to increase the use of force; the number of NATO forces has increased every year since 2002 (ibid). As the resistance is still fierce, a democratic system cannot be implemented without the use of force, or the use of sanctions from external powers (ibid). Like mentioned, the task is complex in nature, attempting to create a democratic system, while simultaneously using force against resistance forces like Taliban. How can these armed operations taking place in Afghanistan be considered as a just war, as the use of force has been legitimized from the start, and increased steadily?

According to Falk (2001), the war in Afghanistan is the first truly just war since World War II. Osama Bin Laden had a political vision of apocalyptic terrorism, making this war just in itself. However, this war can only be won if tactics adhere to legal and moral constraint, argues Falk (2001). This is in the middle of the predicaments of the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan. The battlefield arguably getting more and more violent, leaving less and less room for war ethics, legal and moral adherence. As the legitimacy of the use of force derives from the tradition of just war, one of the principles, according to Falk (2001) is that *force should be used only if nonviolent means to achieve military goals are unavailable*. So how can this principle be transferred to Afghanistan? In Falk's view, the principles of just war are abstract in nature, leaving no room for operational guidance.

#### **5.4 Humanitarian intervention?**

*Si vis pacem para bellum (If you wish for peace prepare for war)*

(Barash & Webel 2002:17)

Should the armed operation in Afghanistan be categorized as humanitarian intervention? Following the argument holding intervention as “less” than war, the term intervention may hold a softer meaning. Then what about a humanitarian intervention?

There are many discussions on humanitarian intervention, and how an armed conflict can be categorized as a humanitarian intervention. Following the definition of humanitarian intervention previously in this paper, the purpose of the intervention should be to prevent massive violations of human rights. The Carnegie Council discusses the ethics in international relation, often with regards to human rights, and claims that the intervention in Afghanistan was justified in terms of self-defense, rather than humanitarian or human rights concerns (Carnegie Council 2001). In an early stage after the attacks of 9/11, there were concerns that a war against Taliban and al-Qaida would produce a humanitarian disaster, but these concerns were replaced by the aim to eradicate these terrorist networks before they cost more harm (ibid). Suddenly the international community, who had not taken military action under Taliban rule with severe human rights abuses, now woke up with a new agenda; a military response was warranted (ibid). Now Human Rights arguments were utilized, since the attacks on America targeted innocent civilians, and violated the international humanitarian laws, like the Geneva Convention; concerning the basic rights of civilians during war (ibid). President Bush was clear in his agenda to engage in a war to defend American values, politics and religion.

In 2008, ISAF Commanding General, United States Army General David McKiernan stated:

*The fact is that we are at war in Afghanistan. It`s not peacekeeping. It`s not stability operations. It`s not humanitarian assistance. It`s war.*

(Ussery 2010)

Following Welsh (2004), humanitarian intervention was not launched, although severe abuses of human rights were undertaken, especially of women. The West answered only by sanctions, until the events on 9/11, and the war on terror begun. Whether the armed operations in Afghanistan should be considered as a just war, a humanitarian intervention or a war on terror, the use of force has been undertaken, and in order to do so, the United Nations have criteria that must be met. Following the United Nations Human Rights Committee’s take on self-defense previously described, the threat of, or to use force, is prohibited, unless the right

of self-defense is violated, an intervention was launched. What can make an intervention more humanitarian? According to Graham (2009:115), there are some requirements that should be met for an intervention to be categorized as humanitarian, one of them holding that the intervention seek to defend the citizens against threats. This would justify the use of armed forces. Another requirement holds that the intervention seek to deal with violations of rights, destitution or starvation among the population (ibid). To promote liberal democracy is not, one of the requirements, and can transferred to the present Afghan society, where a western model is attempted to be established, as described previously in this paper.

## ***6: Connecting the past and the future of Afghanistan***

### **6.1 Who is Bin Laden?**

*If the Israelis are killing the small children in Palestine and the Americans are killing innocent people in Iraq, and if the majority of the American people support their dissolute president, this means the American people are fighting us and we have the right to target them.*

Osama Bin Laden's respond to why he targeted British and American civilians around the world (Reeve 2002).

In this chapter, we shall look at the future of Afghanistan, and try to connect the dots to see if lessons are learned. Also, we shall discuss fundamentalism, traditionalism, and the probability of success in terms of a just war. The question of Bin Laden's death will occur, and how this affected the ongoing war in Afghanistan, but before turning to this we shall look at Bin Laden and his way to become the new "hate-figure" across the west. The relevance to include this derives from the very same reasons as NATO's use of force in Afghanistan; to eradicate terrorism and Bin Laden's networks of terrorism. Osama Bin Laden has been responsible for waging a war against the West since the 1990s, according to Reeve (2002). Few knew who Bin Laden was, until President Clinton was informed that this man was involved in the embassy bombings in Tanzania and Kenya in the 1990s (ibid). Already then, the US President was clear in the mission to eradicate terrorism, naming Bin Laden "perhaps to be the pre-eminent organizer and financier of international terrorism in the world today" (ibid). Bin Laden became the new hate-figure, and his photograph was to be seen on television across the globe.

Although the threat of Bin Laden is eliminated, Reeve (2002) underlines an important issue for the future, a point made already in 2002 and long before 2011 when Bin Laden's death was verified. According to Reeve (2002), Bin Laden was just one of the first terrorists unleashed, as new terrorists, filled with political and religious hatred, are representing the very same vision. The new wave of extremist terrorism can be traced to the mountains of Afghanistan, where the young men fought in the Cold War and defeated the Soviet troops aided and armed by America, the Gulf States and Britain. Bringing about the irony in warfare, since the United States now is fighting the very same mujahedeen they once supported, trained and financed. These young men, capable of driving the Soviet troops out of their homelands, believe they are able to do the very same with the Americans (and the allied forces of NATO) (ibid). One may ask; how did these events lead us to where the situation is today? The young men who defeated the Soviet troops, known as the Afghan Arabs, experienced the need for new enemies, already motivated for warfare and became tools for Bin Laden's aim towards the United States, in which he considered as the source of evil (Reeve 2002). The US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) has labeled this as "Blowback", an

unpredictable event, and admits that during the war in Afghanistan against the Soviet troops, it never entered their minds that the mujahedeen would come to the US to commit terrorist attacks (ibid).

Bin Laden was around 2002 in charge of an army of 5000 men, all willing to sacrifice anything for the noble cause of terror (Reeve 2002). Young, technically skilled and determined to be the carrier of terror against the west, these men are not representative from the Middle Ages, a misconception often occurring. Even if their leader Bin Laden dies, as the event stated in 2011, they will continue the task, to attack the West and the American Imperialism (ibid), and constitute an army not only from Afghanistan, but dozens of countries. Going back to the opening quote in this subchapter, Bin Laden`s hate against the West also includes Israel. According to Cooley (2002), the conflict between Israel and Palestine is by far the most important cause for the one billion Muslims worldwide. Having said this, this may not imply that hatred towards Israel is shared by one billion Muslims, however did Bin Laden`s followers experience a revival to claim the independence of the Palestinian state after 2001 (ibid). Reasons for this may stem from the collective memory among Arabs and Palestinian of broken American promises (ibid).

## **6.2 Fundamentalism or traditionalism?**

Now then, in the case of Afghanistan, if the west is determined to implement a society after western model, what is the ideology the resistance forces are aiming towards? According to Roy (2001), describing fundamentalism and traditionalism in Afghanistan, the transition to a modern society in this country is facing multiple challenges. Fundamentalism is often described as the revival of Islam, but that explanation is not found sufficient (ibid). It is also important to distinguish between fundamentalism and traditionalism, Roy (2001) argues, although these two walk hand in hand in the country of Afghanistan. Fundamentalism seek back to the roots, back to the Islamic scriptures, the return to the former, to strict religious practice, with re-reading of texts and search for origin (ibid). In the former chapter of this paper we saw how religion has a fundamental importance in Afghan society, a matter in which is emphasized by many scholars. In everyday life in Afghanistan, religion, in terms of Islamic practice, are viewed both as traditional and common law, leaving the difference



between fundamentalism and traditionalism very small (ibid). Then, what is meant by traditionalism? Following Roy (2001), traditionalism contain nostalgia for the conservative, but this nostalgia is concerned with moral, not so much social justice, and can be seen in for instance the women wearing veil, and obedience to the Islamic faith. If the Afghan society becomes a modern society established after western model, predicaments arise. Some of these being the social commitments, the social and moral norms, and the respect to hierarchy. This can be seen in the local communities (called *qawm* in Afghanistan), and their loyalty to the Muslim community (the *Ummah*). Roy (2001) also refers to the *qawm* as: *a constellation of closely knit groups*. He also brings about the history of the country to underline the importance of religion, and the difficulty of a transition taking place. For instance, the coup in 1978, as mentioned in the previous chapter, and the resistance still fighting to this very day, have been carried out in the name of an ideology, well mixed with Islam, be they nationalism, fundamentalism or Marxism (ibid).

### **6.3 A probability of success?**

*I remain determined that our Afghan national security forces will be responsible for all military and law enforcement operations throughout our country by 2014.*

*Afghan president Hamid Karzai 2010 (BBC 2010)*

If the use of force is righteous, according to just war theory, there should be a probability of success. Following the predicaments discussed, among others as the traditions of just war principles being abstract in nature and can difficult be transferred to operational level, the probability of success in Afghanistan can be viewed from many angles. The probability of success in terms of Afghanistan lay in the hands of NATO, and the Afghan Government, together claiming to have a clear vision of the transition process; a process called *Inteqal*, meaning transition in the local languages Dari and Pashtu (NATO 2012c). In terms of Afghanistan, why is it so important to take into account the ethnicity, and the Afghan identity? And how does this comply with the future and the reasonable probability of success? According to Allan (2003), ethnicity is a key word in the future of the country, and the future government has to solve both population representation in the government, and territorial representation of the major ethnic groups. Like mentioned in chapter 4, Afghanistan has no historical experience of a central government exerting control over all the provinces with

good intentions, and this is a matter in which is found interesting. How can this be successful this time around?

Allan (2003) consider the challenge not to be security exclusively, but the balance between regional powers; khans, warlords and their right to govern their territory. If this is the case – can there ever be a united Afghanistan, a country in which have failed to be united due to the conflicts emerging from the territorial and regional powers of warlords? According to Allan (2003), the seat of the conflict is in Kabul, where the centralized nation-state power is, and the only way to solve the problem is to devolve this nation-state power into regional powers.

How does this theory comply with NATO's mission of the transition, if at all? According to NATO (2012c), the Afghan forces, led and trained by ISAF, is leading the security for approximately 50% of the population, and the goal is to be in charge of the whole country by 2014. As the Afghan National Army and Police are growing in both size and strength, NATO-ISAF are enabled to shift the focus from leading the combat operations, to training and assisting the Afghan forces (ibid). In May 2012, the NATO Chicago Summit will take place, and the future of Afghanistan will be discussed further, in terms of reaching the goals by 2014. The NATO Training Mission in Afghanistan (NTM-A) is a long-term commitment, regardless of the goals met by 2014 or not, to make sure the fulfillment of the duties.

The Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI 2012a) are not that optimistic in their findings, concluding that the situation in Afghanistan are very hostile, and the implementation of a stable, democratic society to be nearly impossible. For the West, waging the war in Afghanistan, a lot is at stake, financially and strategic. The possibilities to create a system that will keep al-Qaida away is small, and the use of resources weakens the powers of the West even more, already weakened in global terms. According to Nikolaisen & Karlsrud (2011), the criticism towards the ongoing war have considered the armed operations to be a political and military defeat, however is the foundation of a democracy in place, together with a political channel to solve conflicts. Regardless if these institutions are in place, Nikolaisen & Karlsrud (2011) questions the stability and sustainability of the institutions, and if the country of Afghanistan have the economic sustainability to secure them in the long run.

According to Bertram (2002), the reasonable prospect of success is not met in terms of Afghanistan. If the aim is to eradicate terrorism anywhere on the planet, this is a goal that will not be achieved. Friedman (2003) agrees with this point of view. When President Bush declared war against terrorism, the President argued it was a universal evil all civilized people could unite in, but the war against terrorism is not possible to win, since some sort of terrorism will exist in the world always. However, in term of terrorism, al-Qaida has not been able to undertake similar terrorist action as those of 9/11, proving that the anti-terrorism goals are met, and that Afghanistan no longer is a place for terrorist network to grow (Nikolaisen & Karlsrud 2011). In 2009, President Obama held a speech on the new strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan (The White House 2012a), questioning the purpose in Afghanistan, where war rages on, even seven years after Taliban was removed from power. 2008 was the deadliest year for American soldiers in Afghanistan, and insurgency groups are still, in 2012, controlling part of the country. The President was clear in his speech about the reasons for the use of force in Afghanistan, pointing out the confrontation of a common enemy, the violent extremists, threatening the United States, allies and friends, and also the people of Afghanistan and Pakistan (ibid). The President also underlined the goal that must be achieved; to defeat and dismantle Al Qaida in both Afghanistan and Pakistan. There are numerous debates on Bin Laden's death on May 1<sup>st</sup> 2011, and as this is too recent to have scholarly opinions on, this will not be discussed in depth in this paper. Nevertheless was this event considered as a huge victory, which can be seen in Presidents Obama's speech in the immediate aftermath of the event:

*Tonight, I can report to the American people and to the world that the United States has conducted an operation that killed Osama bin Laden, the leader of al Qaeda, and a terrorist who's responsible for the murder of thousands of innocent men, women, and children.*

The White House (2012b)

#### **6.4 A critical respond to the use of force in Afghanistan**

*The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan once again wants to make it clear that the solution for the Afghan crisis lies in the full withdrawal of all foreign troops immediately and until this... happens, our armed struggle will increase from day to day.*

*Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid (BBC 2011)*

There are many critical responds to the use of force in terms of waging a just war in Afghanistan. Having discussed some of the jus ad bellum principles, the just war principle before resorting to war, we shall now look at another just war principle, namely jus in Bello, the justice in war. In addition, we shall turn to some critical respond to the outcome of the war in Afghanistan. According to Linden (2007), the term “the global war on terrorism” has been abused and misused for political purposes. However, when looking at the waging war in Afghanistan, the Jus Ad Bellum were arguably met, due to reasons as self-defense and the activation of NATO’s Article 5, as previously described. The Jus in Bello criteria’s were also met, to some extent, according to Linden (2007). The Jus in Bello principles includes that the actions in war must be proportionate, and non-combatants immunity from being attacked (Graham 2008:60). As Taliban knew the ISAF-forces reluctance to strike urban areas, they took advantage of this, and hence, there were casualties. As the hunt for Bin Laden continued, there were offered cash rewards for terrorist captured, which cannot be viewed as following the principles of justice in warfare (Linden 2007).

In terms of other critiques regarding the ongoing use of force in Afghanistan, Scheuer (2005) have some interesting standpoints, underlining the ignorance in the West to face the truth. The US leaders, Scheuer (2005) argues, is refusing to accept the fight not to be against terrorism, but against Islamic insurgency. Bin Laden has been clear on why he is waging war, and these reasons are not aimed at democracy, but the United States politics and actions in the Muslim world. Bin Laden’s war against the West is waged in the Islamic religion, but this is overlooked by the leaders in the West. The religion of Islam has not been considered as a threat, but Scheuer (2005) raises the question about how Bin Laden could have achieved this much success had it not been for the Islamic faith? In President’s Obama’s speech in the aftermath of Bin Laden’s death, the President made it very clear the fight against terrorism not to be against the Islamic faith:

*“As we do, we must also reaffirm that the United States is not -- and never will be -- at war with Islam. I’ve made clear, just as President Bush did shortly after 9/1, that our war is not against Islam. Bin Laden was not a Muslim leader; he was a mass murderer of Muslims”*

The White House (2012b)

Scheuer (2005) also predict Bin Laden`s networks of terrorism to strike again towards the West, in particular on United States soil, and this time the attacks will be worse than 9/11. Obama also underlines this in his speech, emphasizing that although the death of Bin Laden marks significance, there is no doubt that al-Qaida will continue their work to pursue more attacks (The White House 2012b). Scheuer (2005), on the other hand, also predicts the war to last until the next generation and beyond, and most of it to be fought on American ground, and wonder why these conclusions have not reached the public scene in the western world. He is accusing the White House and CIA to keep this information from the public. Both before and after 9/11 there were eminent leaders with great knowledge regarding Bin Laden, but these were not allowed to neither work nor share this intelligence.

In his speech, the President also repeated the reasons for the use of force in Afghanistan:

*We quickly learned that the 9/11 attacks were carried out by al Qaeda, an organization headed by Osama bin Laden, which had openly declared war on the United States and was committed to killing innocents in our country and around the globe. And so we went to war against al Qaeda to protect our citizens, our friends, and our allies (...).*

The White House (2012b)

### ***7: A repetition of history or lesson learned?***

*It is my strong opinion that the final answer in Afghanistan will not be a military one and cannot be a military one.*

*Jaap de Hoop Scheffer (BBC 2009)*

## **7.1 In retrospect**

Having already established the many foreign interventions in Afghanistan, and the British interest in the country, intervening no less than three times, The British has made an impact on the Afghan culture, but perhaps vice versa? According to Cooley (2002), Winston Churchill shall have said back in 1898:

*Except at harvest time, when self-preservation enjoins a temporary truce, the Pushtun tribes, the majority of today`s Taliban and indeed, more than half of the entire Afghan population are always engaged in private or public war. The life of the Pushtun is thus full of interest.*

As many scholars like to point out historic irony, the repetition of history, or the notion of never learning from past mistakes, Cooley (2002) underline the historic event taking place in 2002, when the former Cold War enemies Russia and the United States in 2002 became allies with a common enemy in radical Islamists. Already discussed is the outcome of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, but the question of the repetition is here bound to be asked. What if Afghanistan is again left to fight its own battle? As the Soviet troops left, during the 1990s, 4 million refugees were left without homes, and the country suffered under poverty, drug abuse and war injuries, among others from land mines (Cooley 2002). By 2001, the country had very little to offer, in terms of food, work or homes, and warlords and bandits ravaged the regions. The debate in the media has taken place since 2001; history is repeated in Afghanistan, and some even take the debate as far as not comparing today's intervention with the Soviet intervention some decades ago, but one of the British intervention, from 1839 to 1842, with the aim to stabilize the country but were driven out three years later facing one of the greatest defeats in British war history (Webb 2012). We shall now see if there are lessons learned by looking at the history of Afghanistan.

## **7.2 Learning from the past?**

*We have not come this far, at this cost, to falter just as we see our common goal take shape.*

*Anders Fogh Rasmussen, NATO Secretary General (BBC 2010)*

Former US Marine soldier JR Webb is providing some interesting observations worth mentioning. According to Webb (2012), from the British force of around 16 000 soldiers, only one survived in the war against Afghanistan from 1839 to 1842. As in all history lessons, these facts can be discussed as true or not, and reasons for the defeat can be multiple, however does Webb (2012) point out some findings underlined in this paper. The Afghan society, as described in chapter 3, is very different from Western society. Webb looks at this defeat, although taking place in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as a warning, since every foreign nation attempting to intervene in the country, has faced rebellions of fierce nature, and failed to grasp the culture of Afghanistan.

One may question if anger towards the west started here, as the perception among the people of Afghanistan were that the British corrupted the Islamic values of the country, among others by “westernizing” Kabul with skating rinks, lavish parties with local women and alcohol. These norms became common in the everyday life, straying far from the traditional Koranic values. Some Afghan women left their husbands to be with richer Brits, and soon the majority of the population of Afghanistan began to react. There are many factors pointed out by Webb that can remind of a tendency of repeated history, although shaped differently. Is it the very same “westernized” society the west is attempting to establish in Afghanistan today, more than a century after the British? The Brits would ride out of Kabul and visit the local warlords, giving them the choice or whether support the new Afghan king, become rich and hence influential, or refuse, and be subjugated under the British and in the name of the Shah. The Shah was to be the new king, and was to be implemented by the British, and was in the eyes of the Afghans a legitimate ruler. The Shah was an exiled ruler who had promised the British his support. The religious leaders across the country began to mobilize followers preaching about expelling the British, and tribal leaders concluded that the common enemy and threatened their Islamic values.

Webb underlines the operations in today`s Afghanistan not necessarily to end as bad as the British intervention in the country, but caution should be made carefully, as the differences are many, among values in the west, and values in Afghanistan. Many in the Afghan population are hostile against the ISAF-forces as they are perceived as non-Islamic foreigners with no respect for the Afghan values and social construct. Webb (2012) also point out if the Afghan support can ever be received, when after ten years the success is yet to be seen, as history shows the willingness to fight among the Afghan people. And will the people of Afghanistan ever adopt the society the west now is attempting to implement? Webb described the British to visit the villages outside Kabul. Roy (2001) takes this further, by describing the rural Afghan society, thus providing both examples and explanations of the Afghan world view.

As the ISAF forces operate on the homeland of today`s Afghans, it is found necessary to include this in this paper. Also, for the probability of success in Afghanistan, is it not crucial to know the culture of the people? Take for instance the view on power. According to Roy (2001), in Afghan peasant society, power is an elusive network, not attached to one specific person or locality. This elusive network depends on patronage, and needs constant maintenance. Power is not given for life, but by “deserved” consensus, as the social relations are dynamic, not feudal. The feudal system has, following Roy (2001), a stable architecture, whereas power in the tribes of Afghanistan is found in the man`s relations to others. This world view is hard to grasp, underlining an important observation in itself. Other examples are bureaucratic procedures and corruption. Corruption may not be wrong in the world view of the Afghan peasants, since, among others, the peasants do not have to deal with the case. These cases are often not understood the purpose of anyway, like agricultural production quotas, or pest control. When a bureaucratic official are visiting the villages, many different resistance methods are used by the Afghan peasants, suspecting the mission to have ulterior motive and tries to convince the official to leave. Also, when turning to corruption, this weakens both the power of the official, and the bureaucratic machinery (ibid).

Roy (2001) also explains how the hospitality in the tribes of Afghanistan also can turn into defensive, and at worst hostility. Examples given by ethnologists describes how Agriculture officials have visited villages with the purpose of locust control, and paid a small amount of money in order to never show up there again. Tourists and ethnologists have also been



unfortunate when visiting different villages. This takes us back to the elusive network of power and relations in peasant societies in Afghanistan, there is no structure, and the relationship between the civil society and the state is also elusive, and the lack of trust is evident.

How then, can the tribes of Afghanistan find trust in the government today, and in the ISAF-forces? This remains an unanswered question for now. Traditionally, the village community has been treated by the state as a unit, and taxes and fines are imposed, for instance due to maintenance of roads passing by the village etc. Remembering the war history in the country, the notion of democracy does not bring about positive associations, and the only way a western democracy would work here, is if the civil society is identified by the state, which has not been the case for Afghanistan. The elections in the 1960s were free but not exactly democratic, as this became a failed attempt of democracy in the country. The deputies came from the provinces only to gain privileges, seeking for favors from the state, as the state was considered as an agent to profit from. There were no political goals, no loyalty to the state from the people, and the parliament was anarchic, with unmet quorum (Roy 2001).

In the findings of Nikolaisen & Karlsrud (2011), this was the case in an early stage of the armed operations in Afghanistan, and is considered as a lack of understanding of the country's history. When intervening into a country, the culture must be taken into consideration from the beginning, and the countries undertaking the interventions should have sufficient knowledge on this culture. When the ISAF-forces started implementing political parties, free elections and a central government, they underestimated the already implemented traditions in the Afghan society, and the strength of these. The traditional society in Afghanistan does not include a modern society, but includes much more focus on ethnicity and religion. According to Nikolaisen & Karlsrud (2011), these factors were to some extent overlooked, leaving Webb to be right in his theory regarding the Afghan world view differing from the world view in the Western society. In fact, according to Nikolaisen & Karlsrud (2011), this was one of the most bitter tasks in which the West had to learn; the authoritarian, traditional, local institutions are much stronger than predicted, and democracy does not seem to be the solution. Instead of implementing a system found necessary to implement, one may rather ask what actually is possible to implement in a country like Afghanistan (ibid).

### **7.3 After a decade in Afghanistan**

*While they [the Taliban] are weary of war, they see little hope of negotiated peace. Despite numerous setbacks, surrender is far from their collective mindset. For the moment, they believe that continuing the fight and expanding Taliban governance are their only viable course of action.*

Reflections from fighters detained by ISAF in Afghanistan (BBC 2012)

Now we shall turn to NATO's use of force in Afghanistan and if they consider lessons learned from a decade of war. According to Nikolaisen & Karlsrud (2011), the international community has the last ten years attempted to bring peace to Afghanistan, and is now considering in pull out all the forces within 2014. This conflict has become a part of the contemporary western worldview of today, gaining heat in the 1970s, and came along into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, in terms of a new type of radical Islamism. As Al Qaida attacked on 9/11, from their bases in Afghanistan, the west, with the United States as a front runner, answered with invading the country (ibid). Formerly in this paper, the discussion on the conflict in Afghanistan having a militarist form for the start, have come to the surface. This perspective is also to be found in the report given by Nikolaisen & Karlsrud (2011), as they claim the international community not to prioritize the political dimensions of the operations from the early stage on. The general belief in the militarist solution, combined with the American's view on "either you are with us, or with the terrorists", led to the use of military force instead of political actions.

What are the lessons learned here? To use less military force in the future, and to utilize political means instead? According to the findings of Nikolaisen & Karlsrud (2011), the West has learned from the conflict in Afghanistan that military force cannot operate without the broad support from political solutions. The formerly described NATO-intervention in Kosovo in the 1990s are also brought up by Nikolaisen & Karlsrud (2011), the matter of not learning from this experience, as the decisions where made up, lacking a reflected world view. The belief to be able to "fix" Afghanistan by the use of military force is also considered as a lack

of great understanding. Also, that Taliban has been excluded from the mediation table, is not considered as a smart move, like in the Bonn conference in 2001.

Going back to the purpose and mission of the use of force in Afghanistan, one may ask if the goals of the armed operations in Afghanistan have been met, ten years after the intervention. As already mentioned, al-Qaida has not been able to undertake similar terrorist actions as those on 9/11 2001, which is considered as a goal in terms of anti-terror. However, other goals, like building the Afghan state, building democracy and laying the foundation of sustainable development, these are goals of a complex nature (ibid). Reasons for this complex nature may be the very same reasons as those described in the last subchapter. Can the Afghan people ever find trust in the state? In order for the people to trust the state, according to Nikolaisen & Karlsrud (2011), civil and political means should be used at an earlier stage in the intervention, instead of military force. This because it is these actors best suited for reconciliation, aid, rebuilding the society and earning trust from the population. It is also these actors best suited in the transition from military victory to political stability.

In the former subchapter, corruption was mentioned as a part of the Afghan society, and is still a problem in the country today (Morelli & Belkin 2009). The Karzai government is receiving both domestic and international criticism, as living conditions and security is not improving. Warlords continue to be anti-government, and the narcotics industry is still a threat to political health in the country (ibid).

#### **7.4 The Afghan women**

*It's like having a flower, or a rose. You water it and keep it at home for yourself, to look at it and smell it. It [a woman] is not supposed to be taken out of the house to be smelled.*

*Syed Ghaisuddin, Taliban Minister of Education, when asked why women needed to be confined at home (US. department of State 2001)*

We have already described the lack of respect for women in Afghanistan under the rule of Taliban, and as women often play different roles than men, yet very necessary roles in war, it is found interesting to include this topic. Is “forcing” women right in Afghanistan another way for the west to “force” democracy?

ISAF gender councilor (Nikolaisen & Karlsrud 2011) consider gender to be very important to strengthen women`s role in conflict resolution, and underlines the strong voice of women in Afghanistan that should be heard. Discussions have occurred that the focus on the Afghan women is present, yet marginalized, and perhaps it is time to take action in the empowerment of Afghan women (ibid). Hence questions arise if this would provoke the conservative world view of the Taliban even more. The Taliban has already defined, according to Nikolaisen & Karlsrud (2010) NATO as their main enemy, and the empowerment of the Afghan women may be considered as another step in western imperialism, leaving these women to be accused of “helping the enemy”. As the empowerment of women was not a reason in itself to intervene in the country in the first place, what does this have to do with anything, one may ask. If argumentation is necessary, women in conflicted areas hold great responsibility, for the present and for the future generations to come, and according to Nikolaisen & Karlsrud, the collective memories of Afghanistan, used to be eminent (before the Taliban rule). Some professionals may consider this as a reason to include more research on women`s role and tasks in war in future operations. The matter of gender in Afghanistan is especially important, since the society of Afghanistan is much more gender segregated than western society (ibid).

Following the discussion on humanitarian intervention previously in the paper, on question must be left unanswered, with regards to both the use of force in Afghanistan, and the Afghan women; why was it found legitimate to launch a war on terror, but not a humanitarian intervention in Afghanistan, to protect the Afghan women from human rights abuses?

## ***8: Conclusion***

The focus in this paper has been to find the reasons behind NATO's use of force in Afghanistan, and discuss these. Theory regarding war ethics, the use of force, just war, conflict resolution, militarism and pacifism has been discussed in this process.

NATO's focus was initially limited to Europe, as NATO's new Strategic Concept reads the following:

*NATO's essential and enduring purpose, set out in the Washington Treaty, is to safeguard the freedom and security of all its members by political and military means. Based on common*

*values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law, the Alliance has striven since its inception to secure a just and lasting peaceful order in Europe. It will continue to do so...*  
(NATO 2012a)

The tasks of NATO is not, however restricted to Europe today. Already in 1999, the document The New Strategic Concept made clear the Alliance's global responsibility and security issues like terrorism, sabotage and organized crime. So how did this global responsibility lead to the use of force in Afghanistan? Discussions arose if the intervention in Afghanistan was a direct consequence of the terror attacks on America September 11 2001, as the USA considered themselves as attacked, leading to act in self-defense when intervening Afghanistan. Self-defense is considered a legitimate use of force, and for the first time in history NATO invoked Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. Article 5 is NATO's collective defense clause.

In the findings of the paper, we have seen that the use of force in Afghanistan is legitimized through different channels. In addition to invoking NATO's collective defense clause, United Nation Security Council adopted Resolution 1368 the very next day after 9/11 2001, condemning the terrorist attacks at as threat to international peace and security. The Security Council also called all states to cooperate in the work to bring the perpetrators to justice. In Resolution 1373, a resolution that was later adopted, requiring the countries to prevent the financing of terrorism, and cooperate on matters such as sharing information on terrorist networks. Resolution 1373 is mandatory for all UN member states, and Resolution 51, regarding self-defense, was activated.

Self-defense was found to be one of the main reasons to launch a war on terrorism. The United Nations Human Rights Committee states that the threat of, or to use force, is prohibited, unless the right of self-defense is violated. Self-defense is considered by the United Nations as the actions taken by one state or more in self-defense, or in the defense of their neighbors. The armed operations in Afghanistan can thereby be considered as an international effort where self-defense is exercised through the activated Article 51 in the United Nation. Following the principles of just war theory, the jus ad bellum principles, regarding the justice when resorting to war, the war must be fought in a just cause, with the

right intention. Self-defense, and the threat of terrorism is hence found to be the main reasons for the use of force in Afghanistan, as the Security Council recognized the attacks as action where self-defense could be exercised, along with the threat of terrorism as a reason for taking action.

The country of Afghanistan has faced numerous foreign interventions, and the nature of the people includes a strong will, and warlike behavior similar to a guerilla mindset. Out of 16000 British soldiers back in 1839-1842, only one survived. Afghanistan has no historical experience of a central government exerting control over all the provinces with good intentions, and this is considered to be one of the challenges facing the country today, as the west is implementing a society after western model and a highly debated form of democracy. Religion in Afghanistan has served to unify the nation against common enemies, but has not, however brought the country together in a nationwide self-sustaining political system. The importance of acknowledging religion in everyday life in Afghanistan has been underestimated, according to scholars. The war on terror is not an attack on the religion of Islam, however should be given to the religious faith of the terrorists. Hence should more knowledge on Islam be acquired, also concerning the difference between Islam, the religion, and Islamism, the political ideology.

The war on terror was launched, and the reasons were multiple. To protect the Afghan people, build the capacity of the Afghan security forces, counter the insurgency, and enable the Afghan people to be responsible for the security of their own country. However, discussions arise if the main reason for the use of force in Afghanistan may be found in fighting terrorism, as the intervention is directly linked to the events of 9/11. The mission was to eradicate Bin Laden's network of terrorism, and to take out the Taliban regime as the sponsor of terrorism.

As the military intervention took place very fast, the form of the whole operation has had a militarist form from the start, and this may be considered as one of the predicaments of the Afghanistan intervention. The Bonn conference was an attempt to fill the political void, but the mandate, composition and structure of the military presence in Afghanistan have changed along the process, and NATO's role have increased. During this process it has been found difficult to separate between the military strategy, and the grand strategy for Afghanistan. Scholars argue that more focus should be given to political means from the start, as these may

be best suited for reconciliation, aid, rebuilding the society and earning trust from the population. It is also these actors best suited in the transition from military victory to political stability.

One of the just war principles before resorting to war holds that there should be probability of success. In terms of Afghanistan, this lay in the hands of NATO, and the Afghan Government, together claiming to have a clear vision of the transition process. Challenges facing the probability of success in Afghanistan are many. One of them being the balance between regional powers; khans, warlords and their right to govern their territory. As mentioned, Afghanistan has no historical experience of a central government exerting control over all the provinces with good intentions, and now the centralized nation-state power in Kabul is pursuing this. Another challenge is the resistance from insurgency groups not giving up, as the number of forces has increased every year, raising the question if the goals can be met by 2014 so the troops can leave. Scholars argue the situation to be hostile, and the implementation of a stable, democratic society to be nearly impossible. To create a system that will keep al-Qaida away is considered by scholars to be very challenging, and the use of resources weakens the powers of the West even more, already weakened in global terms. In conclusion, the intervention in Afghanistan has been undertaken with a justifying use of force, predominantly in terms of self-defense. If the use of force has been successful is debatable, much since the armed operations still takes place, with insurgency not willing to raise the white flag, and multiple challenges facing the whole country. However has the use of force in Afghanistan been successful on many areas, attempting to create better conditions for prosperity among the Afghan peoples of today.

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