Subordination, Migration and Mobilization

Strategies for coping in an altered security situation

Nina Langslet

Master thesis in Sociology

Department of Sociology and Human Geography

Faculty of Social Sciences

UNIVERSITY of OSLO

May 2008

Subordination, Migration and Mobilization

Strategies for coping in an altered security situation

Nina Langslet

Master thesis in Sociology

Department of Sociology and Human Geography

Faculty of Social Sciences

UNIVERSITY of OSLO

May 2008

Abstract

Why do people respond differently to an apparently equal security threat, and which factors are decisive in the decision making? The present thesis explores different strategies for coping with an altered security situation among Pashtuns in northern Afghanistan. In 2001 a US-led coalition toppled the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. This had severe implications for persons belonging to the Pashtun ethnic group in northern Afghanistan. The Pashtun constitute the biggest ethnic group in Afghanistan. In the north, however, Pashtuns are a minority, who have traditionally benefited from being associated with the power-holders in Kabul, who have been largely Pashtun. After the fall of the Taliban, all Pashtuns in the north were accused of being loyal to the Taliban, which had drawn most of its support from Pashtuns. The new non-Pashtun power-holders in the north made the Pashtuns in the north targets of severe harassment. The thesis explores how Pashtuns in northern Afghanistan coped with the new political context after the fall of the Taliban.

This is a qualitative, explorative study, drawing on both primary and secondary sources. The primary sources consist of informal conversations and qualitative open-ended interviews with key persons. The secondary sources are made up of reports, surveys, news articles and academic literature relevant to the case.

Drawing on resource competition and political opportunity structure approaches, and inspired by Hirschman's *Exit, Voice and Loyalty*, three possible response strategies are discussed: subordination, migration and mobilization. Subordination implies remaining in the area and subordinating to the new power-holders. The second strategy, migration, involves leaving the area, and the final strategy is to mobilize against the new power-holders in order to protect or to win back access to resources.

By assessing the costs and benefits of the various strategies, Pashtuns choose the strategy which is perceived as most beneficial. However, if the costs of one of the strategies change, this will influence the relative costs of the residual strategies, even though their actual costs remain the same. I argue that the choice of which strategy to adopt is

dynamic, and that people continuously reassess their alternatives, and may combine the various strategies, either simultaneously or in a sequential manner.

Acknowledgements

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Map of Afghanistan

Map adapted from worldpress.org

Map of northwestern Afghanistan
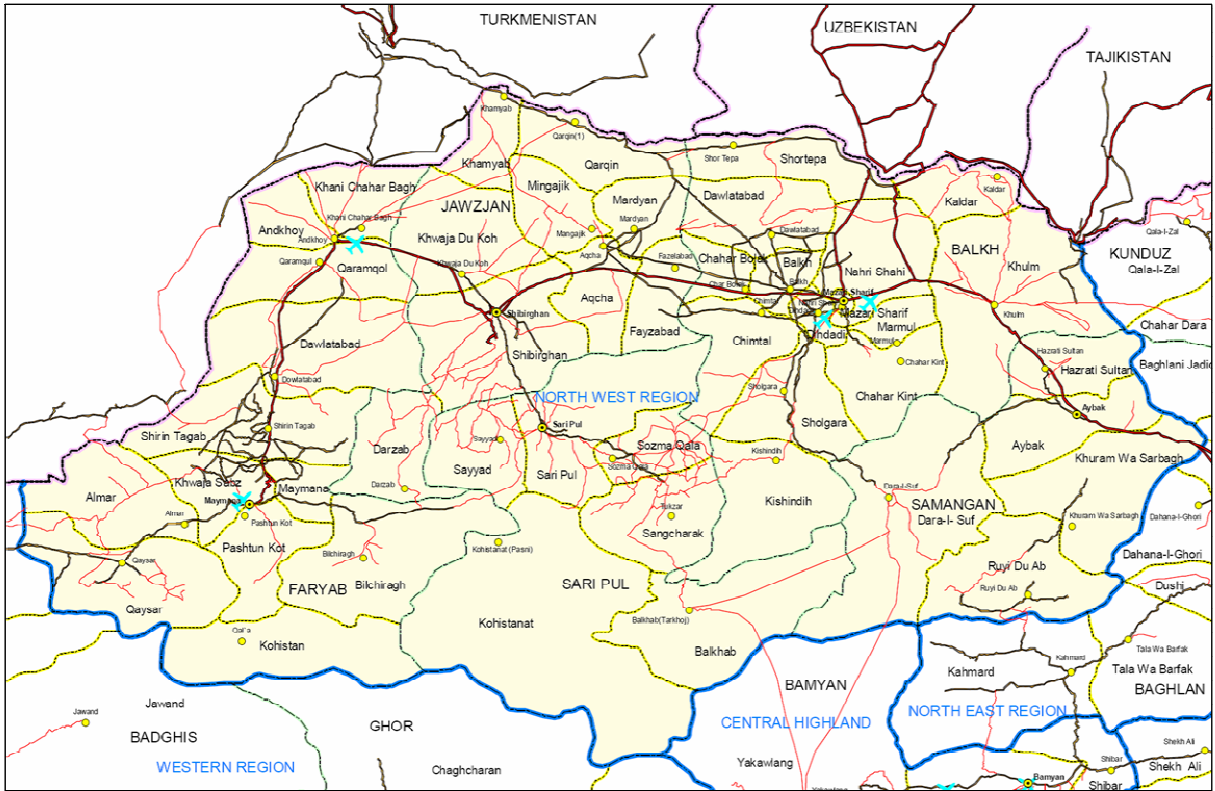
Map adapted from AIMS

1.0 Introduction

Why do people respond differently to an apparently equal security threat, and which factors are decisive in the decision-making? Given the number of armed conflicts in the world, exploring how people react to severe security threats is of relevance, not only to understand better how people cope with conflict, but also to enhance our knowledge of why conflicts persist. Afghanistan has been affected by conflicts much of the last three decades, and is still considered as one of the most conflict-ridden countries in the world. In early October 2001, only a month after the terrorist attack in New York and Washington, a US-led coalition launched an armed attack on Afghanistan's Taliban regime. Within a month Kabul was under allied control. This marked the end of one of the more stable, yet oppressive periods in recent Afghan history. The fighters on the ground were almost exclusively Afghan, a vast majority of them returning from exile in neighbouring countries. In the north, an alliance of political cum military movements, most of which had been active in the *mujahedin*[1] war against the Soviet invasion and in the following civil war, made up the troops on the ground. After the ousting of the Taliban, these factions controlled northern Afghanistan (Harpviken forthcoming).

1.1 Approaching the research question

The fall of the Taliban had severe implications for the Pashtun population living in northern Afghanistan, who are the subjects of this study. The Pashtun is the largest ethnic group and constitute the majority in Afghanistan. In the north, Pashtuns are a minority, making up approximately 13 percent of the population. Despite being a minority in the north, Pashtuns have traditionally benefited from being associated with the power-holders in Kabul, who have been largely Pashtun. To a large extent that means that Pashtuns have also held powerful positions in the north. The Taliban have been perceived as a Pashtun movement, in spite of the fact that they have never portrayed themselves as such, or mobilized using ethnic arguments. To the contrary, the aim of the Taliban has been to

---

[1] *Mujahedin* are Islamic resistance fighters. The *mujahedin* war was the war against the Soviet invaders 1979-1989. See appendix 1 and 5.

provide security and reunify Afghanistan (Dorronsoro 2005: 258; Rashid 2001). Since the Taliban was perceived as a Pashtun movement, all Pashtuns in the north were accused of being loyal to the Taliban, and became targets of brutal harassments committed by groups loyal to the new power-holders after 2001 (HRW 2002; Marsden and Turton 2004).

The aim of this thesis is to *explore how Pashtuns in northern Afghanistan responded to the new political context after the fall of the Taliban. Why did some choose to subordinate to the new power-holders, while some chose to migrate, and yet others chose to mobilize?*

The harassments against the Pashtun minority in the north have been no secret to the allied forces, the interim government or the international community, yet little documentation is available. I have not been able to identify any academic research on the Pashtun response to the new political situation (but see HRW 2002). Harassments against the Pashtuns were for the most part perpetrated by allies of the international forces present in Afghanistan. Speculation inevitably arises that this is one of the reasons for why the topic has been largely neglected.

The lack of research on the topic was a prominent reason for making the northern Pashtuns the subject of this study. Methodologically, the lack of documentation led to severe challenges. It has been necessary to invest considerable effort in data collection in order to be able to document on the course of events. Simply establishing the exact chronology of the actions has been challenging, and this is not even of supreme relevance to understand the overall development of the case. The sensitivity of the topic has further complicated the data collection. Some of the means taken to overcome these challenges include triangulation and cross checking of references.

1.2 An ethnic conflict?

Most armed conflicts in the world today take place within rather than between states, and a significant share of the conflicts are fully or partly ethno-nationalist (Harbom and Wallensteen 2007). The sheer frequency of ethnic conflicts is a major reason for conducting studies of the topic. However, many Afghans are reluctant to identify the

post-Taliban conflicts in Afghanistan as ethnically based, rather claiming that they are ideological, and it is often argued that politicians are more ethnicized than ordinary people (Simonsen 2004).[2] Also Giustozzi argues that it might be tempting to see conflicts as manifestations of ethnic tensions where in reality local factors are at play (2005: 11). This is an important aspect to recognize, and one should be careful not to project ethnic dynamics to conflicts that are in reality not ethnically founded. Still, in the present case, it seems clear that ethnic dynamics are at play.

The local conflicts in northern Afghanistan are most conspicuous in the areas where many Pashtuns live.[3] Ethnic identity has increased its significance during the years of conflict, and especially in northern Afghanistan, ethnic identity plays an important role (Dorronsoro 2005; Giustozzi 2005; Roy 1992; Simonsen 2004). This does not necessarily mean that specific actors have worked to reinforce ethnic identity, ethnicization may as well be an unintended consequence of regionalization (Dorronsoro 2005: 258; Giustozzi 2005). Regardless of how ethnicization has occurred, ethnic identity seems to have a strong influence on the security situation, work and life opportunities for people in northern Afghanistan. Local conflicts within a country hinder an overall stable and sustainable security situation. Thus, reaching a better understanding of the conflict processes on a local level may have implications for actors who try to create stability on the national level generally and in the local area of conflict specifically.

1.3 Outline of the thesis

This study is a qualitative and explorative study, aiming at reaching a better understanding of why people respond differently - in the form of subordination, migration and mobilization to the seemingly same security threat. I draw on both primary and secondary data to build my arguments. The primary data were mostly gathered during a field trip to Kabul in April 2007, and the secondary data consist of reports, news articles, academic literature and a survey conducted by the UNHCR. In chapter two I

---

[2] Interviewee # 2, Informal conversation # 1.
[3] Interviewee # 3; 4; 9, Informal conversation # 3, UNHCR. 2002. "District profiles, Faryab." UNHCR, Mazar-e-Sharif.

present the theoretical framework against which the data will be analyzed. In chapter three, I account for the methodological choices I have made in relation to this thesis, while chapter four gives a historical and contextual background to the case.

The main theoretical perspectives in this thesis come from the larger literature on social movements, more specifically from resource competition and opportunity structure approaches. Inspired by Hirschman's classical work *Exit, Voice and Loyalty* (1970), three main response strategies are identified; migration, mobilization and subordination. These three strategies are not mutually exclusive, and it is possible to pursue two, or even three of these strategies simultaneously or in sequences. Yet, it is useful to distinguish between the three strategies on an analytical level. The basic threefold typology constitutes the structure of this thesis, and each strategy is discussed in separate analytical chapters (chapter five, six and seven). In chapter five I discuss why some Pashtuns chose to be subordinated to the new power-holders, which consequences the subordination had and what kind of tactics of subordination that were adopted. Chapter six explores why some Pashtuns migrated and what factors that were significant when deciding whether to remain displaced or not. Chapter seven examines why and how Pashtuns mobilized after the fall of Taliban. In chapter eight I argue for the need to see the three strategies in relation to each other, as complementary strategies to cope with an altered security situation. The Pashtuns constantly reassessed the costs and benefits of the various strategies, and when the costs of subordination increased, some Pashtuns migrated, and similarly, when the costs of remaining displaced increased, some Pashtuns returned to their place of origin to subordinate. The strategy of mobilization was also found together with each of the other strategies, either simultaneously or in a sequential manner.

2.0 Theoretical framing of Mobilization, Subordination and Migration.

This thesis focuses on understanding various responses to cope with an altered security situation. In line with this focus, three main response strategies are studied: subordination, migration and mobilization. The theory presented in this chapter is meant to introduce some concepts against which I will discuss my data in the following chapters. Inspired by Hirschman's classical *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty* (1970), where he discusses how the management in firms or organizations realize they are failing in producing a good product for their costumers or members either by *exit,* that customers stop buying the product or membership declines, or by *voice*, that customers express their dissatisfaction with the products. To add nuance, *loyalty* is introduced. Loyalty diminishes the likelihood for exit, and enhances the likelihood of voice. Hirschman's concepts, in particular loyalty, do as I will discuss later on not make sense in the context of my case. Thus drawing on the concepts exit, voice and loyalty, the present thesis introduces subordination (loyalty), migration (exit) and mobilization (voice) as its central concepts. In terms of theory, I will present contributions from sociological literature, and I will particularly pay attention to resource competition theory, and political opportunity approaches. Central concepts here are ethnic boundaries, collective action and political opportunity structure.

I will first turn the attention to the definition of ethnic groups and how the boundaries between ethnic groups are maintained, drawing on Fredrik Barth's classical *Ethnic groups and boundaries* (1969), before the concepts of collective action and opportunity structure are discussed.

2.1 Resource Competition
In his influential *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries* (1969) Barth argued that ethnic identities are sustained by the maintenance of boundaries. Boundaries may be understood as the social lines that distinguishes one group from another (Barth 1969; Fenton 2003:

106). In turning the focus away from culture, which was to be seen as a result of, rather than a condition for an ethnic identity, one would be able to distinguish between effects of ecological and cultural traditions on one side, and ethnic identity on the other. Such an approach to ethnic identity allows variations within an ethnic group, depending on the ecological *niche* the subgroups fulfil (a discussion of niches follows below). Following Barth's (1969) definition, ethnic groups should be understood as categories of ascription and identification as defined by the actors themselves, but noticeably also by actors outside the group. The actors display and look for overt signals, such as appearances, dress, language, and general style of life, and basic values to distinguish themselves from other ethnic groups.

The signals and values distinguishing ethnic groups may vary over time, whereas the boundaries are more persistent. However, also the boundaries between ethnic groups are dynamic. Once defined as an exclusive group, the preservation of this group depends on the maintenance of group boundaries. The features that actually divide one group from another, that establish group boundaries, may vary over time. This may also be the case for the characteristics of the members. Group identity should thus be understood as a process, no identity is constant. To the contrary, it will develop over time. The important aspect is the maintenance of an "us" versus "them", a dichotomisation between the in-group and the out-group. It does not matter that members may behave differently, if actors claim allegiance to the shared culture of one group, and as long as the other members of the group accept this allegiance, that is where they belong.[4] Hence, ethnic groups may be understood as dynamic social organizations. The group members are the ones with the power to define which features are important for their specific group, and who are to be accepted as group members (Barth 1969).

Before Barth's book was published, it was not uncommon to assume that the boundaries between groups would decline or become more transparent when actors with different ethnic identities interacted. Barth (1969) and Olzak (1983) deny this assumption. On the

---

[4] This aspect also opens for actors to change their ethnic identity. See Barth Barth, Fredrik. 1969. *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*, Edited by F. Barth. Bergen: Universitetsforlaget. 22-25.

contrary, Olzak (1983) emphasizes the importance of interaction between groups for maintaining ethnic boundaries when stating that as interaction between groups intensify, boundaries between them become more salient. Interaction between groups – and the constant reminder of "us versus them" may be seen as one of the main dynamics for group maintenance. This view contrasts the main point of contact theory and postulates a negative correlation between contact among ethnic groups and conflicts. The contact hypothesis postulates that the more contact there is between two groups, the more they get to know each other and the less conflict there will be between them. With a few modifications of its original outline, Forbes argues that the contact hypothesis is still relevant (Forbes 2004). The contact hypothesis raises the question of when contact breeds conflict and when harmonious co-existence is possible (Forbes 2004). Forbes points at three crucial determinants for whether contact is going to cause conflict or create harmony. First, the status of the interacting groups is of relevance. If there is inequality of status, contact is more likely to cause conflict than if the groups have relatively equal status. Second, competitive interdependence in the pursuit of common goals matters; if both groups should rely on the other in order to reach their goals this will foster cooperation. Third, the presence or absence of social norms supporting intergroup contact is decisive for the result of interaction. If there is a lack of social norms supporting contact, contact will most likely breed conflict (Forbes 2004). Still, two main intergroup trends may be spotted in the world today: massive migration and increasing group conflict. These trends are not easily explained by the contact hypothesis; rather, they seem to give support to Olzak (1983) and Barth's (Barth 1969) emphasis on interaction as a significant feature of boundary maintenance.

> "Entailed in ethnic boundary maintenance are also situations of social contact between persons of different social cultures: ethnic groups only persist as significant units if they imply marked difference in behaviour, i.e. persisting cultural differences. (...) [Interaction between groups indicates] not only that ethnicity have criteria and signals for identification, but also that the structure of the contact is of a type that allows having different cultural affiliations and still interact with others" (Barth 1969: 15-16).

In resource competition theory, *niche* is a central concept. Niche refers to the place of an ethnic group in the environment and its relations to resources and competitors. Four main points can be made: first, the allocation of ethnic groups is influenced by the ecological

7

niches which the group with its particular economic and political organization is able to exploit. Second, if two ethnic groups have the same ecological niche, they will compete over the same resources, and the stronger will replace the weaker. If however, two ethnic groups have differing and even complementary ecological niches, they may co-exist, and even live a symbiotic life. A fourth possible scenario comes if two ethnic groups live in the same area, but the weaker is better than the stronger at utilizing the environments that are less good. Then a new niche is open for the weaker group, and the two groups may be able to co-exist (Barth 1981).

2.1.1 Power Differences

Even though two ethnic groups may co-reside, there most likely is a power difference between them. Crucial for establishing the rank is social organization. Thus, it would be an error to assume that the bigger group, the majority, automatically is the dominant part. The political context and the relations between majority and minority is dependent on, and influenced by, the political context on national level (Eriksen 2002: 121-124). Even though a group is a minority in an area, this minority may have good relations to a third, powerful party, and by drawing on its good links, the minority may be the dominant part in the area. One example of this is the Hutu and Tutsi relations in Rwanda. Under the Belgian colonial rule, the Tutsi minority was given advantages and were favoured by the colonial power, at the expense of the Hutu majority. This led to escalating ethnic tensions in Rwanda and ended up in several rounds of massacres and genocide (Lischer 2006: 73 ff). When boundaries are redrawn and the political context changes, the minority-majority relationship will change as well. Reshuffling of power on a national level, may thus have major influence on minority-majority relations on the local level. Even though the power-relations between the respective groups in an area are changed, one should note that the boundaries themselves may remain stable throughout the process (Eriksen 2002: 122).

2.2 Collective Action and Opportunity Structure

Collective action and opportunity structure approaches are based on the assumption of rational choice. In this thesis, three main strategies to cope with an altered security

situation are emphasized. These are subordination, migration and mobilization. Whereas mobilization processes figure in the collective action literature, it is less common to analyze migration and subordination in terms of collective action.[5] Collective action theories assume that the actor is rational and acts out of self interest. This implies that the actor will weigh the costs and benefits, or opportunities and constraints, of the various possible actions before choosing the most beneficial option. In his classical *The Logic of Collective Action* (1965), Olson argued that rational self-interest may lead to inaction, known as the free-rider problem. In order to overcome the free-rider problem, actors must be offered selective incentives which will stimulate the rational individual to act in a group oriented way. Such incentives are most often material or concrete, like for instance money, promotions and power, but may also be abstract, such as ideology, recognition and prestige. Lastly, incentives can also be carried out as threats (Olson 1965: 51). A critique against Olson's theory is that it cannot account for the production of the resources needed to overcome the free-rider problem, thus creating a second order free-rider problem (Harpviken 2006b). To overcome the second order free rider problem, attention was turned to structures which provide opportunities and constraints for action, such as mobilization, migration and subordination. These approaches are referred to as opportunity structure theories, and have primarily dealt with political mobilization (see e.g. della Porta and Diani 2006; Tarrow 2006). However, the approach of opportunity structure may well be relevant for migration and subordination too.

Regarding mobilization, opportunity structure approaches have focused on the relationship between the political regime and the challengers of the regime. The political regime is commonly understood as the state, but may as well be local power-holders, as in the case of the present thesis. The main clue is to understand the context in which political mobilization takes place and where social movements are established. The idea is that changes in the political environment also change political opportunities and constraints. The levels and types of opportunities people experience, and the threats they

---

[5] But see e.g. Harpviken, Kristian Berg. 2006a. "Networks in Transition. Wartime Migration in Afghanistan." Department of Sociology and Human Geography, University of Oslo, Oslo. and Tilly, Charles. 1990. "Transplanted Networks." Pp. 79-95 in *Immigration Reconsidered: History, Sociology, and Politics*, edited by V. Yans-McLaughlin. Oxford: Oxford University Press

perceive to their interests and values, vary widely from time to time, and place to place. Depending on the opportunities and constraints provided by changes in society there will be a response (Tarrow 2006). Thus, understanding the political context is crucial when exploring why certain courses of actions are taken. Understanding the political context is crucial when exploring why actors within the same group choose different responses to the seemingly same political context.

A set of factors must be in place if action is to take place. The participants must recognize their common interests, because this is what triggers the movement into action. They must in other words share the same preferences, the same ideologies (Tarrow 2006). If the actors want more people to join them in their response

> "...they have to frame their demands in ways that will attract followers and build
> on social networks, and connective structures must link them to one another
> through changing seasons of opportunities and constraints" (Tarrow 2006: 90).

Social networks may play a crucial role for which response an actor is likely to adopt after changes in political context. If most other people in ones' network adopt one strategy of response, it is likely that more will follow the same response pattern. The likelihood of adopting others' response patterns increase when there is a lack of substantial and multiple sources of information, and when the actors are largely relying on observing others (Bikhchandani, Hirshleifer, and Welch 1992). In migration research this mechanism is often referred to as waves of migration (Harpviken 2006a: 80-81), and in mobilization studies the equivalent may be the concept of critical mass. The same mechanism may also be found in cases of subordination. Common to these effects are that they may be referred to as threshold. Schelling (1978) assumes that collective behaviour, such as a wave of migration or political mobilization, is characterized by binary choices; should one or should one not migrate, or mobilize? The next assumption is that actors are rational and therefore make a cost-benefit assumption of the various outcomes, and that the cost-benefit of joining a group depends partly on how many others make the same choice. Schelling seeks to explain the mechanism of the segregation processes in US city neighbourhoods with thresholds: how many others making the same

choice are needed before a certain person decides to leave? The threshold that needs to be reached for a certain person to leave is individual and based on each person's preferences. If a person's threshold is at 20 percent, this means that he will adopt the same action pattern when 20 percent of his group has done so (Harpviken 2006a: 80-81; Schelling 1978). Thus, if a higher percentage of a group adopts the same response strategy, more are likely to follow.

2.2.1 Subordination

Hirschman's concept of loyalty was introduced to bring forward the nuances and the complexity of the relationship between exit and voice. In short, loyalty to an organization has a negative effect on exit, and enhances the probability of voice (Hirschman 1970: 76-ff). A loyal member of an organization will stay in the organization and try to influence it to the better from within. In the context of war or armed conflict, it does not make sense to speak about loyalty, even if actors choose not to migrate (exit) or mobilize (voice). It is not necessarily loyalty to the present power-holders that makes people linger in the conflict area, rather there are other decisive factors. Furthermore, staying in the area, not mobilizing must also be recognized as an actual choice. Hirschman's concepts have been used in the study of migration and group rebellion, among others by Okamoto and Wilkes (Okamoto and Wilkes 2008; Okamoto and Wilkes 2003). Even though they do recognize that some people choose not to rebel or not to migrate, they fail to give any account as to why they do not choose either of these strategies.

In the context of conflict, subordination is a more suitable concept than loyalty. Subordination under local power-holders is not necessarily based on loyalty towards the power-holders; rather the subordination may be seen as a strategy of self-adjustment to the new political context. The Sámi population of the Norwegian Arctic coast may serve as an example in this regard. Being stigmatized and discriminated against because of their Sámi identity, many Sámi subordinated to the Norwegian majority and under-communicated their Sámi identity in order to obtain the same rights and status as the Norwegian majority (Eidheim 1969). This was not done because of loyalty towards the

11

Norwegian power-holders, but was a strategy to reduce the discrimination against themselves.

When subordination of one group under the other find place in the context of armed conflict, the subordination may be understood as a contractual relationship between dominator and subordinated, where both parts have certain expectations to the role of the other (Barth 1986). The weaker group recognizes the stronger group's military superiority, whereas the stronger group recognizes the need for protection that the subordinated group has. The power difference between the groups is significant, and it is not uncommon that the dominant group uses a great amount of force in order to enforce the weaker groups' subordination. Still, it is unlikely that the weaker group will subordinate without having any benefits from the status as subordinated. Inherent in the contract, there might be an understanding that the dominating group will allow the subordinated group to access humanitarian aid and other resources in the area. Thus, like the Sámi minority in Norway, the weaker group may subordinate as a strategy to lessen discrimination. Other benefits may be absence from violence and harassment. Still, it is important to keep in mind that the dominating group may still use force and assault, as well as exploit and discriminate the subordinated group. If a weaker group has been in armed conflict with the stronger, the weaker group may choose to subordinate for tactical reasons. One of the motives may be to subordinate and keep a low profile in order to re-organize for later mobilization. In such a case, subordination may be seen as an intermezzo between two periods of mobilization. Thus, the weaker group may also benefit from subordinating to the stronger. If there are several strong groups competing over the same area, the weaker group may be in a position where it can choose the lesser of evils among the stronger groups.

In sum, subordination should be seen as a chosen strategy in the same way as migration and mobilization. Both in migration and mobilization studies there is a lack of focus on the actors who choose not to mobilize or not to migrate. These actors are not passive and indecisive, they might very well have chosen to subordinate.

2.2.2 Migration

First, I wish to emphasize that insecurity and violence are the root causes of most wartime migration (Zolberg, Suhrke, and Aguayo 1989). However, insecurity and violence alone are not sufficient to explain migration (Lubkemann 2004; Schmeidl 1996; Zolberg, Suhrke, and Aguayo 1989). Literature on migration is divided into two basic types: voluntary or involuntary migration. Forced migration studies often emphasize violence and categorize migration in relation to its degree of "forcedness", leaving forced migrants with very little choice about their decision to migrate (Lubkemann 2004; Schmeidl 1996). Forced migrants are understood as trying to protect their current livelihood, while voluntary migrants are seen as trying to improve their livelihood. This is a rather reductionist way of understanding an actor's response to a crisis situation, as it fails to scrutinize the actors' agency and the social, economic and cultural factors influencing a decision on whether to stay or leave (Lubkemann 2004). Furthermore, such an understanding fails to account for variations among migrants. Richmond argues that "[i]*n all cases economic, social and political factors are interdependent"* (Richmond 1988: 12) and further that "*migratory decisions, even those taken under conditions of extreme stress, do not differ from other kinds of decision governing social behaviour. The same sociological model of motivation is applicable*" (Richmond 1988: 17). After all, wartime migrants are no less rational than voluntary migrants, and their ability to make a decision is not eliminated by the cause of their decision. Thus, even though insecurity and violence are essential, other underlying factors of economic and social nature do interact with the political ones (Schmeidl 1996). It is when several of these factors play together that wartime migration is most likely to occur. When a part of a population in addition to experiencing political insecurity, is economically oppressed by being denied access to their source of income this will cause migration. Famine is another example. In Africa several examples of famine being the decisive factor for migration from a conflict area may be found (Zolberg, Suhrke, and Aguayo 1989). Social factors, such as having a social network outside of the conflict area, can also be a factor that influences the choice and direction of migration.

In sum, insecurity and violence are the root causes of wartime migration. Still, in spite of insecurity and threats of violence, not all people migrate from a conflict area. Thus, other socio-economic factors in interaction with the security factors may actually be decisive of whether an actor chooses to migrate or not.

2.2.4 Mobilization

Ethnic mobilization is defined as collective action that takes place on the background of some set of ethnic markers (Olzak 1983). Mobilization may take on many forms; from demonstrations, meetings, forming of organizations and lobbying to armed actions. When I refer to ethnic mobilization, I refer to action taken in order protect or further empower rights and privileges of an ethnic group. It is however important to underline that not all members of a group need to be active in mobilization, in order to call the group mobilized. Furthermore, in the context of armed conflict it can be reasonable to divide between passive and active mobilization, and willing and unwilling mobilization. Obviously, there is a great difference between an active willing supporter and a passive unwilling supporter of a cause.

The link between Barth's model and formal competition theory is, according to Hannan (1979), that in no case does more than one ethnic group occupy the exact same niche. As ethnic groups come to compete in the same labour market, over the same ecological resources or over the same political positions in a given place, ethnic mobilization is likely to take place, and the stronger will replace the weaker (Barth 1969; Hannan 1979). A niche overlap will hence result in competition. The resource competition approach is in line with more general mobilization theories suggesting that increased access to scarce resources results in political mobilization and collective action (Olzak 1983). Nagel and Olzak (1982) point to the main arguments linking ethnic mobilization and resource competition:

> "Ethnic identification is created or maintained as a basis for collective action where there are clear competitive advantages attached to an ethnic identity (as opposed to class, occupation, or some other). There are several conditions under which resource competition comes to be structured along ethnic lines." (Nagel and Olzak 1982: 130)

As examples of mobilization structured along ethnic lines, Nagel and Olzak (1982: 130) mention historical demographic processes which have great influence on the current inter-ethnic competition. This is for example found in many decolonized countries, where the civil war and genocide in Rwanda again might serve as the prime example. Other conditions that may foster ethnic mobilization may be the result of recent "*economic and political processes (...) that provide the rationale for ethnic mobilization*" (Nagel and Olzak 1982: 130). The organization of an ethnic vote or the demand for extra resources for an ethnic group may be examples here. Competition over resources between ethnic groups promotes ethnic mobilization, and may be expressed through the creation of ethnic organizations or political parties which again may foster ethnic identities (Nagel and Olzak 1982). The formation of the indigenous organization 'Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador' (CONAIE) in Ecuador may be an example of the former. The organization was founded in order to promote the indigenous peoples rights and access to political structures, and in 2002 they were part of a coalition that won the 2002 presidential elections (Cott 2007: 2). An example of the latter may be the formation of political parties in Bosnia-Herzegovina, where several parties were established to represent respectively Serbian, Croatian and Bosnian populations.

If a certain set of conditions are in place, the likelihood for mobilization increases. Redistribution of resources targeted at specific ethnic groups increases the probability of ethnic collective action. Ethnically targeted policy may increase the awareness of ethnic boundaries, give legitimacy to, and therefore also increase the likelihood of ethnic mobilization (Olzak 1983: 368-369). Incorporation of peripheral regions into the national economy is another condition stimulating mobilization, especially if the region has valuable resources. The centre's claim to resources in peripheral regions may activate regional or often ethno-regional loyalties, at the expense of national loyalties, and may even result in the claim for regional independence. The Iraqi exploitation of oil in Kurdish claimed territory, or the Nigerian exploitation of oil in the Eastern (Ibo) region have activated such claims (Nagel and Olzak 1982: 136).

In conclusion, if current or former distribution of resources was based on ethnicity, and if the centre tries to exploit a resource located in a periphery, mobilization is likely to take place.

2.3 Decision making

When making the decision on which strategy to adopt, actors will weigh the costs and benefits of each strategy against the others. It is not the absolute cost of a strategy that becomes determining, but the cost of one strategy compared with the costs of another strategy, in other words the relative costs of the strategies. If the costs of one strategy increase, this will influence the relative costs of the other strategies. The absolute costs of the second strategy will still be the same, but the relative costs might have changed. Thus, changes in the costs of e.g. subordination may make e.g. the migration strategy appear as a better strategy to pursue even though the costs of migration have been stable. These points were already recognised by Hirschman (1970) who highlights that the alternatives (exit, voice and loyalty) should be conceptualized as alternatives that are related to one another. Drawing on Hirschman, Okamoto and Wilkes (2008) make the same point when highlighting that when one strategy is unlikely or impossible due to high costs or low levels of opportunity, the other strategy will be adopted in order to survive (Okamoto and Wilkes 2008: 351).

The three strategies are not mutually exclusive - rather to the contrary. In *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty* Hirschman (1970) argues that the strength of voice is precisely the possibility of exit, and the possibility to threat the management with exit if the management does not improve the product. Similarly, sequencing the various strategies conceptualized in this chapter will be possible. Subordination might be followed by migration: if for example the costs of subordination increase, the relative cost of migration seems less, and an actor can choose to migrate instead of remain subordinated. Migration may be followed by mobilization, or even combined with mobilization. In fact, there have been several studies exploring the combination of migration and mobilization. In these studies, the combination of migration and mobilization has been referred to refugee warrior

communities.[6] Thus, an actor chooses one strategy at one point, but will always be able to reconsider the choice, and pursue another strategy if the costs and opportunities of the respective strategies change.

2.4 Concluding Remarks

This chapter has introduced the main theoretical concepts of the present thesis: ethnic boundaries, boundary maintenance and resource competition. It has also developed the main analytical concepts in the thesis: subordination, migration and mobilization. The thesis is structured around the three latter concepts, as they all represent possible strategies for coping in an altered security situation. Subordination implies an acceptance of being dominated by the local power-holders and the relationship between the dominator and the subordinated may be characterized as a contract, where both parties have some expectations of the role of the other. Migration takes place when the weaker part is not ready to accept being dominated, and is not willing or able to fight the stronger part. Mobilization takes place when a group decides to fight to reach equilibrium between the two groups, or aims for the dominating role.

Resource competition theory and the political opportunity approach overlap are related on several points. They both view ethnic collective action, which I argue that all the three above presented strategies may be characterized as, as a political phenomenon. Both approaches recognize the agency of the actor, assuming a rational individual. This does not mean that the analysis level is laid at the individual level; rather the aim is to explore collective action. In addition to the main theoretical reflections, I draw on theories from other research areas such as the study of mobilization, (forced) migration and subordination. The concepts presented do not represent one single sociological theory;

---

[6]The concept of the refugee warrior was first introduced by Astri Suhrke and her colleagues in *Escape from Violence: Conflict and the Refugee Crisis in the Developing World* Zolberg, Aristide R., Astri Suhrke, and Sergio Aguayo. 1989. *Escape From Violence. Conflict and the Refugee Crisis in the Developing World*. New York: Oxford University Press. where they define refugee warrior communities as "highly conscious refugee communities with a political leadership structure and armed sections engaged in warfare for a political objective, be it to recapture the homeland, change the regime, or secure a separate state" Zolberg, Aristide R., Astri Suhrke, and Sergio Aguayo. 1989. *Escape From Violence. Conflict and the Refugee Crisis in the Developing World*. New York: Oxford University Press..

rather they are useful separate yet inevitably interconnected notions to draw on when analyzing my findings.

3.0 Methodological Framework

This thesis is of qualitative character and is based on both primary and secondary sources. During a field trip to Kabul, I conducted open-ended interviews with key informants and had informal conversations with relevant actors. These interviews constitute the primary sources. The secondary sources the thesis draws on are mainly reports, news articles and academic literature. Since the aim of the study is to gain a comprehensive understanding of a complex situation, qualitative methods were considered suitable to answer the research questions (Widerberg 2001).

In this chapter I will give an account of the different choices and considerations I have made in the work with this thesis. Studying in a foreign country, with an unfamiliar culture is challenging, but gaining access to the field is crucial in order to obtain necessary and sufficient data. I will provide a discussion of how I dealt with the challenge of 'getting in' (Lofland and Lofland 1995: 37-41), and how I overcame language problems. This section is followed by a discussion of the data obtained. Both in regards to the amount and to the quality of my data, there are clear weaknesses. To attempt to deal with these weaknesses, I have introduced criteria that the data must fulfil in order to be considered in the thesis. I have also triangulated the data. The final section of the chapter gives an account of the process of analysis.

3.1 Access to the field
Conducting a study in an area where an armed conflict is ongoing brings forward many methodological challenges in addition to the ones one usually has to deal with. The value of doing field work and gathering data in the concrete area must be weighed against the risk of staying in a conflict zone. Thus, the first decision I had to make when I had chosen Afghanistan as the case for my study,[7] was to decide whether or not to do field work. Would it be possible to gather enough information about my case from Norway? Would I be able to conduct interviews and do a proper field work in Afghanistan? I finally

---

[7] Sudan was also considered as case, but the opportunity to draw on my supervisor's knowledge about and contacts in Afghanistan was important for choosing that country over Sudan.

decided to go on a field trip to Kabul. In Kabul, I was reliant on assistance to get access to the field. Lofland and Lofland (1995: 37-41) have four strategic pieces of advice on gaining access to the field: connections, account, knowledge and courtesy. I will in the following give an account of how I got access to the field.

3.1.1 Getting in

The beginning of my stay in Kabul overlapped with one of many stays my supervisor, Kristian Berg Harpviken, had in the city. He was my main contact point in Afghanistan as he has a broad network there, to which he introduced me. My second contact point was my research assistant, who also had a broad network within the field of NGO workers, Members of the Parliament and within ministries. By drawing on Harpviken's and my research assistant's respective contacts, I was able to organize several interview appointments on relatively short notice. Without having my own network, I was largely dependent on my research assistant who also functioned as my driver. My dependency on the research assistant to organize appointments may have led to overrepresentation of a certain kind of people among my interviewees, thus affecting the data material. However, I did organize some of the interviews myself, and others were organized by Harpviken. In accordance with Lofland and Lofland's (1995) advice, I built on pre-existing relations to remove barriers of entrance to the field. Regarding giving an account of my study, my assistant was instructed to give an introduction to its purpose when he spoke to potential informants. I had little opportunity to control if this was actually done, but the interviewees seemed informed and prepared when I met them. I also spent some time in the beginning of each interview to inform the respondents more about the study. Furthermore, both my research assistant and I had a letter of introduction written by Harpviken. These letters were also used to gain access to some of the informants. Even though anonymity was not promised, I have chosen to anonymize my informants on the background of the sensitivity of the issues discussed. On the topic of knowledge, a dilemma occurs. On the one hand, a certain amount of knowledge is required to get access to informants. Especially members of elites that I interviewed, had expectations in this regard (Arksey and Knight 1999: 123-124). On the other hand, particularly in relation to elite interviews, the purpose of the interview is often to gain more knowledge

about a certain topic. In some instances, it thus proves advantageous to adopt a 'learner role', since the aim of the interview is precisely to learn more about an issue. I adopted such a role while doing interviews. Partly, the role was given to me, and partly I adopted the role myself. The ascription of the learner's role made me more uncertain and added to the feeling of having less status than the informants. This occurred more often when interviewing men than women, and might reflect my uncertainty regarding my role as a woman and researcher in this masculine environment. However, adopting a learner's role granted me a dose of goodwill and allowed room for making mistakes. Not being expected to know certain things can be an advantage, as it allows the interviewer to ask naïve questions (Lofland and Lofland 1995). If the informant assumes that (s)he and the interviewer have shared knowledge about the topic discussed, (s)he will maybe leave out information that would be valuable to the researcher. Thus, adopting a learner's role may be a clever strategy to get the informants to explain even 'obvious' aspects of an occurrence. Lofland and Lofland's (1995) final concept is courtesy. The key here is to show general respect and knowledge of the cultural codes (Harpviken 1995: 42). Within the limited time frame of the field work, I tried to be flexible and meet the interviewees' preference of time and place to meet. This being my first trip to Afghanistan, my knowledge of the cultural norms was limited. I was unsure of the norms for my interaction with Afghan men. One example was the greeting procedure, as not all men will shake hands with women. Thus, I never took the initiative to shake hands with a man, but did accept his hand if he offered it to me. As for the rest, my experience is that general politeness and respect, in addition to observing and mirroring other's behaviour steered me clear of the worst blunders. In sum, all strategies presented by (Lofland and Lofland 1995: 37-41) were of relevance to me, and were actively used to gain access to the field.

3.1.2 Independent researcher vs. NGO affiliation

A challenge often experienced by researchers who work through or for an aid organization is that the respondents expect that the researcher has an influence on the assistance to interviewees (Harpviken 2006a: 97).To me, it was therefore important to distance myself from humanitarian organizations and to emphasize my role as an

independent student.[8] Close association with an organization could have influenced my interviewees' responses to me. When on the road, I was driven in a civil car, and I stayed in a low profile hotel. Even though I stressed my role as a student, I was on several occasions asked what 'my organization' was doing. Most people assumed that I was in Kabul with an NGO. While doing field work for his PhD in Afghanistan, Alessandro Monsutti experienced the same. He suggests that this might be because the western aid worker is a familiar figure in Afghanistan, while the researcher is not (Monsutti 2005: 54-55).

3.1. 3 Linguistic challenges

I neither speak Pashtu or Dari, the official languages in Afghanistan. In this section I will discuss some of the linguistic challenges I met during my field work, and what means were used to diminish the effects of these challenges.

Of 12 interviews, six were conducted in English, four were mostly in English with some Dari in between, one was completely in Dari, and the final interview was conducted in Norwegian. English was a foreign language too all my informants, my research assistant and also to me. The language skills varied and affected our ability to communicate. Regarding the interviews partly in English, partly in Dari, and the Dari interview, I was reliant on my research assistant to interpret all or parts of the interviews. It is probable that some information, such as nuances and intonation, was lost in the interpretation. As a means to diminish the effects of the linguistic challenges, both regarding the English and the Dari parts, both my research assistant and I took thorough notes. After each interview, we would go through the notes, to see if we had the same understandings of what had been said, and to discuss the results of the interview. Whereas my research assistant was to translate only during the interviews, during these meetings, I was also interested in his evaluation of the interview; if he found the informant frank and cooperative (cf. Hunt, Crane, and Wahlke 1964: 63-64). Furthermore, he helped explain Afghan words, titles

---

[8] This was important to me not only because of the quality of the interviews, but it also had a security dimension. By flagging that I was an independent student, not associated with any organization I hoped to minimize the risk of being exposed to insurgent's activity.

and customs that were mentioned in the interview. These meetings were, as I will return to, also relevant for the first analysis of the data.

3.2 Data

One of the advantages of using qualitative research methods is that analysis is an integral part of the process, and not something left to the end of the project. Qualitative enquiries allow the researcher to value the data obtained, and if necessary adapt the research questions to the data (Widerberg 2001). This can be a great advantage if the first round of information gathering shows that certain information is unattainable or if the data collection exposes new relevant traces of enquiry. In the initial period of data gathering, my focus was restricted to the Pashtuns from Faryab. The data from Faryab showed many of the same characteristics as the information received from the rest of the northern region. Therefore, I decided to widen my perspective to include also Sari Pul, Jowzjan, Balkh and Samangan in my study. This allowed me to draw on examples of Pashtun responses also outside Faryab, but still in the north. However, since the original focus was on Faryab, I have more extensive information about Faryab than the other provinces. This is evident in the thesis. I will now turn to how I obtained the data, and what kind of data I gathered. During the field trip, I conducted 12 open-ended interviews, I had informal conversations with a number of persons, and collected some of the reports used as secondary sources.

3.2.1Field trip

There were many considerations before I finally decided to go on a field trip to Kabul in April 2007. Even though Afghanistan is considered as an unsafe place to stay, there were many advantages of me going to the country of my case study. One was the access to information. Originally, I planned to stay in Afghanistan for a full month, and stay approximately two weeks in Kabul, one in Faryab and one week in Herat. For security, logistical and financial reasons, however, the final field trip was reduced to 16 days in Kabul. I did not have the finances to pay for the security I necessary to feel safe when travelling in Afghanistan. For safety reasons, I would have wanted an assistant to travel

with me both in Kabul and when leaving the city. The trip to Faryab and Herat would have required me to cover travel expenses and accommodation for both me and an assistant, the cost of which would have exceeded the budget for the field trip. A second obstacle preventing me going to the north and the west of Afghanistan was transport. From Norway, such transport was difficult to find and organize. Upon arrival in Kabul, however, some options emerged. My assistant offered to drive me, and the Norwegian Embassy made attempts to get me onboard a military plane.[9] The military however could not transport me and the drive from Kabul to the north would take about 24 hours, appearing both tempting and intimidating. In the end, I stayed in Kabul, knowing that I gave up a chance to talk to the people I was studying. Even though I was not able to go to northern Afghanistan, the field trip enabled me to obtain information that would otherwise be inaccessible. I am convinced that the field trip has given me a better understanding of the chosen case, and it has proven to be an advantage in the analysis of the data.

3.2.3 Primary sources

My primary sources were obtained through interviews, informal conversations and observations. The observations are not directly linked to the research questions of the thesis, and will thus not be discussed in detail, but they are a part of constituting the backdrop for the general understanding of the topic. The interviews and the informal conversations were for the most part held in Kabul, but some took place in Oslo and in Geneva.

Interviews - In total, I conducted 12 open-ended interviews, with key informants. Open-ended interviews imply that the researcher can ask the informants "*about the facts of a matter as well as their opinions about the events*" (Yin 2003: 90). Thus, the researcher may use the informants both to uncover facts and incidents, and to comment on these. My informants may be referred to as elite informants (Arksey and Knight 1999: 122-125). They were all recruited because of their knowledge about the subject of the study, and

---

[9] Norwegian military have regular flights between Kabul and Mazar-e Sharif.

were either representatives of NGOs or IGOs, or were officials of the Afghan state. Additionally, one researcher was interviewed.[10] The approach of open-ended interviews allowed me to be flexible in the interview situation, and open to new topics the interviewees brought up (Thagaard 2003; Yin 2003). During the interviews I had an interview guide[11] that contained a list of topics that I wished to discussed during the interview. In line with the advice of Arksey and Knight (1999), the interview guide was adapted to the interviewee and the role the interviewee had in relation to the focus of the study. During the interviews, the focus was first and foremost on maintaining a good conversation, and to let the informant talk freely, but without loosing focus. The flexible interview setting brings about both advantages and challenges; the interviewees may bring up new and interesting topics missing in the interview guide, but on the other hand the risk of loosing focus is greater than with structured interviews (Arksey and Knight 1999). The issues I wanted to discuss are highly politicized and sensitive. Thus, I generally asked less sensitive questions first, before I turned to more sensitive issues, a recommended strategy to get answers also to the more sensitive questions (Arksey and Knight 1999: 95, 109-112). Yet some of the informants did not want to discuss certain topics, and self-censorship did occur. One example is the interview with an official from the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation (MoRR). When asked about land conflicts, and illegal occupation of land, he suggested that there were no problems with such issues, and *if* there were any such problems, the government would solve it. Furthermore, the district offices of MoRR (DoRR) are responsible for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and returnees in the Northern provinces. According to this informant, the government experiences no problems with local commanders regarding resettlement of IDPs.[12] This information is surprising since most other data reveal some local commanders do constitute a threat to returning IDPs.[13] The credibility of this statement is low, and I doubt that the informant actually believes what he is saying. Such statements were nevertheless to be expected due to self censorship from the interviewees' side.

---

[10] For an anonymized overview of informants see appendix 2
[11] See Appendix 5
[12] Interviewee # 8
[13] Interviewee # 1, 2, 6

Hence, a valuation of the interviews was important. After every interview, I made a short interview assessment, where I noted details about the interview. I noted my impression of the interview and the interviewee. Did (s)he seem frank and cooperative? Were we interrupted, did we have language problems and how was the chemistry between the interviewee and myself? These assessments made up the basis when I was later to weigh the interviews.[14] All interviews were weighed against four criteria: frankness cooperation disturbances and language. The criteria of frankness relates to willingness to discuss own (organization's) role in relation to the Pashtuns from the north, the criteria of cooperativeness refers to how adequate the responses were to answer the research questions (Hunt, Crane, and Wahlke 1964). Disturbances and language relate to the interaction during the interview, if we were able to understand each other, and if we were disturbed during the interviews. The maximum score of the weighing was four, and this score further had an impact on how much emphasis I would put on the information obtained in the analysis. As a criterion for being used as a source in the thesis, an interview had to score three. Only one interview scored less than three, and this interview is referred to only once. Not all interviews are referred to in the text, but all interviews have contributed to my understanding of the case studied.

None of the interviews were recorded. This decision was taken on the basis that the information required was politicized and that the interviewees might have been reluctant to talk as freely as they did had they been taped. Our daily meetings functioned as a means to deal with the obvious drawbacks of not recording. As soon as possible, I would write interview reports based on notes and my memory. This information was kept on my computer which was always safely locked away in a closet whenever I was not in my hotel room. The books with my notes were with me at all times. Not recording the interviews had implications for the use of quotes. The quotes are referred as accurately as possible, but the wording may deviate slightly from the original quote.

Informal conversations - Both during my field trip and at home I have had numerous informal conversations which have increased my general knowledge of the situation for

---

[14] Overview of interviewees with weighing see appendix 2

Afghans in general and especially the Pashtuns in the north. It should however be noted that the Afghans I met in Kabul, mostly belonged to the elite. Most of them, also the women, had higher education and were working in local or international NGOs or within the public sector. Therefore, they should not be considered as representative for Afghans in general.

Survey Lastly, I conducted a small survey where the aim was to gather information about Pashtun IDPs who had repatriated to the Faryab province. This survey was distributed and organized through a local humanitarian organization called Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (CHA). It would have been the only primary data I would have had from the north. However, the lack of control with the implementation of the survey, together with the small number of respondents I chose not to include these data in the thesis.

3.2.4 Secondary sources

The primary sources gathered during the field work were not sufficient for the whole analysis. Given the subject of research, there were still gaps in the data material. Therefore, secondary sources were also important for conducting my analysis. The secondary sources consist of written and statistical sources, such as reports from IGOs, NGOs and research organizations, news articles, a survey conducted by the UNHCR and academic literature. I will here give an account of the types of secondary sources and the criteria for selecting them, as well as discuss their reliability (Harpviken 1995: 38-39).

Reports – The reports are written by NGOs or IGOs which have offices in Afghanistan. These are organizations with agendas in Afghanistan, and reports are the organizations' means to influence the policy makers and to set the public agenda. Thus, the reports will bear the impress of the respective organization's strategic interests. Common critiques against the quality of such reports are the methodology, and specifically that such reports are based on small samples. To control the quality of the source, my criterion was that the report had to give an account of the methods used for data gathering. Smaller bulletins and leaflets produced by NGOs and IGOs are also referred to. They did however not meet the criteria of accounting for methods.

News Reports – I also draw on news reports, but only when other sources are not available. News reports are primarily referred to in the chapter concerning mobilization, and are referred to in footnotes. Generally, the quality of the publisher or knowledge about the author has steered the selection (Harpviken 1995: 39).

Survey – In chapter six, I draw on a survey published by UNHCR. Here no accounts of the methods are available, and this is a serious weakness. However, the UNHCR has high credibility, and is counted as a serious actor. Further, this survey gives valuable information about the Pashtun IDPs from northern Afghanistan that I would otherwise not have access to. However, the data from the survey is analyzed in relation to other sources, to control the strength of the survey.

Academic literature – Academic books and articles are important sources. Most of the literature referred to is written by social scientists and historians. Here, it has been difficult to establish a criterion. In general, I have tried to review the literature relevant to my case, and through reading and assessing it, I have decided whether to use it as a source or not. My main academic sources are two experienced researchers who have conducted several extensive field works in Afghanistan: Giustozzi (2005; 2007) and Harpviken (1995; 2006a).

Despite the limitations of the secondary sources regarding credibility and methods, they have been crucial to conduct the current analysis. Now, I will turn to the analysis of the data.

3.3 Analysis

When conducting qualitative research, analysis of the data takes place at all stages of the research - from formulating the research questions to writing the conclusion (Widerberg 2001). The choice not to record the interviews had consequences for the analysis, as I already in the interview setting had to decide what to take a note of, and what to leave out.

An analysis may be data driven or theory driven, and which approach one chooses influences the analysis. Data driven analysis has a more explorative character, while

theory driven analysis implies that the analysis is based on a theoretical tradition or theoretical concepts. In qualitative research, a combination of theory and data driven analysis is common (Widerberg 2001: 127). I have combined the two approaches. The meetings I had with my research assistant to discuss the days' findings and look for 'analytical threads' in the data (Widerberg 2001: 20). Analytical threads refer to topics and elements that raised our attention and curiosity. This process was continued after the field work, when all the interview reports were finished. Later in the process of analysing I was inspired by Hirschman's concepts exit, voice and loyalty (Hirschman 1970). These concepts were 'translated' into the more fitting concepts migration, mobilization and subordination, and constituted the point of departure for my analysis. Among the advantages of theory driven analysis is that the 'silence' of the data material, what the data material does *not* tell, is easier to spot (Widerberg 2001: 27). I continued to go through my data material, both the primary and the secondary sources, categorizing the findings under the headings subordination, migration and mobilization. Each heading was simply given a colour, and as I went through the material, I highlighted the sections according to the category they fitted into. This was done manually, but could have been done in a similar way by using software for qualitative analysis. When going through my material, I kept in mind the negative case, meaning to analyze cases in which an outcome that had been expected did not occur (Emigh 1997: 649). In other words, I was continuously looking out for the action that did not occur. When analyzing migration not only the migrants were interesting, but also the Pashtuns who decided *not* to migrate, and likewise regarding mobilization and non-mobilization. Remembering the negative case, allows the researcher to compare findings within a case (Emigh 1997).

The topic of this study is highly politicized, and actors will always seek to portray their version of the truth. As one of my informants put it: "*It is difficult to research this, because all the ethnicities exaggerate. The Pashtuns, the Hazaras and the Uzbek all exaggerate the problems they experienced. This is to a large part a political play.*"[1] The difference in how western and insurgent friendly news agencies describe the same incident is striking. Accordingly, critical assessment of the information obtained is of utmost importance. In order to get access to information, I have used a number of

different methods. This way, I have tried to diversify the approach to the field, in order to get a better understanding of the reasons for choosing different strategies. This approach is called triangulation, and the basic idea is "*that data are obtained from a wide range of different and multiple sources, using a variety of methods, investigators or theories*" (Arksey and Knight 1999: 21). As this quote implies, there exists a variety of triangulation methods. Two triangulation approaches have been relevant to this study, namely triangulation of sources and methods. To begin with the latter, I have used different methodological approaches to obtain data. Regarding the former, my data sources are constituted of statistics, written sources and oral sources. This is what Yin refers to as *real* triangulation: "*when you have really triangulated the data, the events or facts of the case study have been supported by more than a single source of evidence*" (Yin 2003: 99) Arksey and Knight (1999) further distinguish between two purposes of triangulation; triangulation for confirmation and triangulation for completeness. These are two different but complimentary matters, and in this study triangulation was used both to gain more information that would add depth and breadth to the understanding (completeness), and as a means to confirm data (confirmation).[15]

3.4 Conclusion

In this chapter I have aimed to give an honest and thorough account regarding the many choices made during the research process. I have discussed the weaknesses of the data material, and described which strategies were used to attempt to overcome them. The main elements of the methodological approach utilized in the present thesis, are the combination of sources and the altering between a data driven and a theory driven analysis. By drawing on multiple sources, I have organized information that was previously disorganized (Harpviken 1995: 47). This information has further been analyzed through the lenses of theoretical concepts, allowing the study to conclude both in regards to the specific case, and to make a small contribution to the general knowledge of minority responses to a changed political context: from previously being associated with the power-holders to becoming a minority with little power.

---

[15] For criticsim against triangulation approaches, see e.g. Silverman, David. 2001. *Interpreting Qualitative Data. Methods for Analysing Talk, Text and Interaction.* . London: Sage Publications. pp. 233-235.

4.0 Context

To enhance the understanding of the political situation in Afghanistan, a short introduction to the social, political and historical background is needed. In this chapter I attempt to give an account for these factors, and how these factors influenced the situation in the north after the fall of the Taliban. A first section deals with ethnicity and ethnic boundaries. The Pashtun ethnic group is presented first, and here I focus on the markers of its ethnic boundaries, arguing that language and religion, livelihood and social organization are central and mutually reinforcing factors. Second, the remaining ethnic groups in northern Afghanistan are presented, to give an introduction to the political power sharing, and a further insight into the ethnic boundaries in Afghanistan. This is followed by a historical background. Here, the internal colonization which may be seen as the starting point for the tensions between Pashtuns and non-Pashtuns in the north is addressed, before I turn to the consolidation of ethnic tensions. The emergence and development of political movements is discussed, they may be divided into traditionalists, Islamists and ethno-nationalist. The civil war represents an ethnicization of the conflict. As a result of the civil war, a new movement emerges: the Taliban.

4.1 Ethnic groups in northern Afghanistan

Ethnic boundaries are categories of ascription and identification distinguishing between populations (Barth 1969). Afghanistan is a multi-ethnic country where different ethnic groups always have co-existed. The last decades of conflict have reinforced ethnic identities. Especially the civil war (1992-1996) was fought along ethnic divisions (Roy 1992; Simonsen 2004).[16] The numbers suggesting the ethnic composition of Afghanistan vary widely. There has been no national consensus estimating the percentage of ethnic composition since a partial count in 1979. The following decades of conflict and large scale displacement has made any accurate estimate of ethnic composition unfeasible, and the sensitivity and possible misuse of such information makes a new consensus unlikely. Thus, the following numbers are only rough estimates taken from the CIA world

---

[16] Interviewee # 1

factbook, 2007.[17] Pashtuns are recognized as the largest ethnic group, comprising of approximately 42 percent. Next comes Tajiks with 27 percent, before Hazaras and Uzbeks, both at nine percent. Aimaks comprise four percent and Turkmen three percent.

Ethnic map of Afghanistan

Map from National Geographics

Northern Afghanistan is ethnically heterogeneous. Ethnic identities can be difficult to determine as people use varying levels of ethnic identification to decide their ethnic identity (Roy 1992: 74). Ethnicity is at least partially voluntary, and there are examples of groups who have changed ethnic identity (Barth 1969; Olzak 1983: 362). On a national

---

[17] CIA. 2007. "CIA World Factbook, Afghanistan." vol. 2008. Washington: CIA.

level, Pashtuns are the majority, and have also been the dominant ethnic group. A good indicator on social status of the different ethnic groups is to view marriage preferences: one will only give women to an equal or superior group (Roy 1992: 77).

Despite being the majority in Afghanistan as a whole, Pashtuns are a minority in northern Afghanistan, making up approximately 13 percent of the northern population. The major ethnic group in the north is the Uzbek, accounting for approximately 32 percent, followed by Tajiks at 24 percent, and Turkmen at 14.5 percent. Approximately 10 percent of the population in the regions are Hazaras.[18]

4.1.1 Pashtuns

Most Pashtun living in the north came to the region towards the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century (see below) (Tapper 1973). Despite being a minority in the north, the Pashtuns have been privileged, as they have benefited from their links to the predominantly Pashtun power-holders in Kabul.[19] I will here present the main traits of Pashtuns in the north, emphasizing language and religion, livelihood and social organization.

Pashtuns speak Pashto, which is one of two official languages in Afghanistan.[20] Language is seen as a marker of identity, and in order to be a "pure" Pashtun, both the actor self and his or her parents should be native Pashto speakers (Weekes 1984: 622). Yet most Pashtuns in the north are fluent in Dari, a necessity for interacting with other ethnic groups (Tapper 1984). Like most Afghans, Pashtuns are Hanafi Sunni Muslims. Hanafi is one of four orthodox Sunni schools, and is viewed as the most liberal one, practicing the most liberal interpretation of Islamic law, *Sharia* (Adamec 2003: 177).

---

[18] These estimates are produced by Antonio Giustozzi and are based on an informal survey conducted in the districts in northern Afghanistan, while he was working for UNAMA. Antonio Giustozzi, personal communication.
[19] With few exceptions, the power-holders in Afghanistan have been Pashtuns, stemming from the Popolzai tribe.
[20] Dari is the other official language, Dari is a Persian dialect.

All the Durrani Pashtuns in the north were long-range pastoral nomads by origin, but as they reached the north, some settled and started cultivating instead (Tapper 1991: 28). The Pashtuns may be divided into three main categories; pastoral nomads, tent-dwelling nomads and semi-sedentary. The semi-sedentary own lands and are the most affluent of the groups. Neither of the two former groups own much land, but the tent-dwelling nomads often dry-farm neighbouring pastures, whereas the pastoral nomads do not cultivate land at all (Tapper 1991: 35). However, decades of conflict has had an impact on the livelihood of Pashtuns; urbanization being one change.

Pashtuns are tribally organized, and the various tribes are relatively diverse (Simonsen 2004; Tapper 1973). The two main Pashtun tribes in Afghanistan are the Durrani and the Ghilzai tribe, which again are divided into subtribes. Pashtuns in the north come from both tribes. The most numerous are the Ishaqzai, a subtribe of the Durrani (Tapper 1984). The tribal system is complex, but embedded in Pashtuns, and something they relate to (Liebl 2007: 493). In addition to ones own tribe, Pashtuns have most familiarity with the closest tribes. More important than ethnic groups and tribes is the *quam*. The *quam* may be defined as a solidarity group, which can be based on various elements, such as tribe, clan, professional group, caste, religion, village or an extended family (Roy 1986: 12). The *quam* is an elusive, dynamic network, which needs constant maintenance and reconstruction. In many cases, a *quam* correlates with a village, but since the *quam* is a network, and not a territory, like a village, the *quam* cannot be taken over by the state (Roy 1986: 12-ff). Furthermore, large scale migration has resulted in the fact that persons belonging to the same *quam* live apart from each other, some might live in displacement camps, whereas others have remained in the place of origin. The people belonging to the same *quam* are working for the common good e.g. at their common land for pasturage. Internal quarrels are settled within the *quam*, in a *jirga* or a *shura*, and most importantly: the people can rely on each other in times of crisis (Roy 1986: 26). The leader of a *quam* is the *khan* or *bai*, or an *arbab* or a *malik*. The difference between *khans* and *bais*, and *arbab* and *malik*, is that the *khans* and *bais'* power to a larger extent is based on wealth and the power of a *quam*, whereas the *arbabs* and *maliks* are elected by heads of families, and can be heads of local, or smaller *quams*. There can therefore be several *maliks* within

34

one village, as there can also be several *quams* within a village (Roy 1986: 19). *Quams* are relatively stable, even though the leadership of the *quam* changes. The leader is granted power by consensus, and must constantly prove that he is worthy of the responsibility. This is done by showing his generosity and availability to those in need, by solving disputes and defending the interests of a *quam* in clash with others. A *khan* only exists in the context of a *quam*, thus action that a leader of a *quam* undertakes represents the *quam* as well. It is in fact essential that the quam of a political leader follows him, even when its members might not necessarily share his political views (Roy 1986: 112). On the other hand, if the *quam* members are not satisfied with the *khan*, the *khan* is removed. Thus, whereas *quams* tends to stay stable over time, the leadership if relatively unstable (Barth 1981). *Maliks* may be appointed by the state, and when getting their legitimacy from the state, many have used their position as an intermedium between the state and the *quam* to strengthen their personal position. To use their position to strengthen their own personal wealth and power is not alien to the *khans* either. For the peasant, the actual possession of manifested power is enough to legitimize it, and power is recognized because it exists and no one challenges it (Roy 1986:19-ff). Local commanders and political leaders are often *khans* or *maliks*.

4.1.2 Other ethnic groups in northern Afghanistan

Uzbeks - The Uzbeks are the biggest ethnic group in northern Afghanistan. They speak Uzbeki, a Turkic language, also spoken in Uzbekistan. Most Uzbeks speak Dari fluently as well (Tapper 1984: 9). Like Pashtuns, Uzbeks are Muslims, belonging to the Hanafi Sunni tradition. Unlike Pashtuns, most Uzbeks are sedentary and gain a living from agriculture, mainly cotton production on irrigated plots. They also produce grain and fruit, and hold animals. A distinguishing feature with the Uzbeks is their common territory, *watan* (Rasuly-Paleczek 1995: 11). In towns many Uzbeks are craftsmen and tradesmen (Tapper 1984). Uzbeks like Pashtuns are organized in *quams*, which again are divided into sub-groups (Rasuly-Paleczek 1995).

Tajiks - Tajiks are Dari speakers and are also Hanafi Sunni Muslim (Weekes 1984: 739). They are for the most part mixed farmers, both cultivating cotton, grain, crops and fruits, and raise sheep and cattle (Tapper 1984: 234). Tajiks are mainly sedentary. In addition to

Pashtuns, Tajiks are the only ethnic group to have positions within the upper middle class, holding clerk positions in the government administration, being tradesmen and artisans (Adamec 2003: 363; Weekes 1984). The Tajiks normally refer to themselves by valley or region of origin. In the north, they mainly live in and around Balkh Province (Adamec 2003: 363). Aimaqs are a confederation of several relatively autonomous tribes, often mentioned as a subgroup to Tajiks. They also go by the name Farsiwan, meaning that they are Farsi speakers.

Turkmen- Like the other ethnic groups presented here, the Turkmen are Hanafi Sunni Muslim. Like Uzbeks, they speak a Turkic language, Turkmani (Adamec 2003: 377). Turkmen are tribally organized and largely pastoralist. They organize themselves in big livestock corporations headed by chiefs. Turkmen are known for having introduced the qaraqul sheep to Afghanistan, and for their weaving of carpets (Tapper 1984: 233). Turkmen live mainly along the border to Turkmenistan, in Faryab and northern Jawzjan.

Hazaras - Hazaras are Shia Muslims. They speak Dari, but have a dialect with Turkic and Mongol origin (Harpviken 1995: 21-22). Hazaras have been and still are the most impoverished and underprivileged ethnic group in Afghanistan. They are mostly farmers, cultivating both irrigated and dry plots, in addition to keeping animals. In urban areas they work mainly as day labourers and servants (Weekes 1984: 329). Hazaras mainly live in the southern part of northern Afghanistan; in Sari Pul, Samangan and Balkh (Weekes 1984: 327).

4.2 Internal colonization
Northern Afghanistan is often referred to as Turkistan (see e.g. Roy 1992; Tapper 1973). The area was dominated by Uzbek khanates, and then became the political border between Afghanistan and Uzbekistan. In the 19th century, the area was largely depopulated because of conflicts between Uzbek khanates, Turkmen raids and diseases. Tajiks were probably the original population in the area (Roy 1992: 74-75). To understand the ethnic tensions in the north, history plays a significant role. In 1883, *amir*

Abdur Rahman[21] initiated the process of internal colonization, which implied expanding his territory from Kabul and surroundings to the waste land of northern Afghanistan (Dupree 1978: 417-ff). Northern Afghanistan was among the most fertile land in Afghanistan and the *amir* had spent much of his youth in the area. Because of the scarce population, the *amir* now feared Russian expansion, and as a way to secure the Afghan border, he initiated the internal colonization, where he ordered people to migrate to the area and settle there. The aim of the internal colonization was to establish firm borders between Afghanistan and the neighbouring countries, and to secure more control over the area (Dupree 1978; Tapper 1973). The method to reach this goal was to populate the area. The process of the colonization was longer and more complicated than the *amir* originally assumed; it took several attempts and more than two decades to accomplish. After a failed attempt to re-localize Aimaqs from the Herat region, the Durrani *amir* decided to send people of his own ethnicity, but belonging to another tribe: Ghilzai Pashtuns were sent to the north. The Ghilzais could be in opposition to the *amir* in their own tribal areas, but in the north, among non-Pashtuns, they lost their tribal affiliations and became loyal to the Pashtun rule (Dupree 1978: 419; Tapper 1973: 60). By moving large numbers of the dissident Ghilzais, the *amir* accomplished two immediate aims, he moved his enemies from close by areas, where they could possibly revolt against his rule, and he established a loyal force to himself in the north, where he earlier had little or no support. As a bonus, Abdur Rahman increased his revenue, by confiscating the former land of the migrated Ghilzais (Tapper 1973: 60). However, many of the Ghilzais who were forced to move returned to the south after a year. In a third attempt to encourage both Durrani and Ghilzai Pashtuns, to migrate to the north the *amir* introduced incentives such as tax dispensation, road expenses, provision of grain and maybe most importantly: free land (Tapper 1973: 61; Wily 2004b: 59). The land was partly already owned by the local Uzbek Khans, who were also forced to assist the newly arrived Pashtuns in building shelters and give them food. They also had to pay taxes to cover the costs the state was having with the assisted colonization (Wily 2004b: 59).

---

[21] Afghan King, reigned from 1880-1901.

Pashtuns' and Uzbeks' notions of tenure differed from each other, a factor that has contributed to the many land disputes along ethnic boundaries. The local paradigm of land tenure included a strong sense of common land, pastures that were open to all inhabitants in the area, Pashtuns included. The Pashtuns interpreted these common pastures as un-owned land ready for privatization or as within the terms of land grants they had received from the government (Rasuly-Paleczek 1995; Wily 2004b:61). The Pashtuns were supported by the *amir*, who ordered them to establish that they were the superior and ruling ethnicity (Wily 2004b: 60). Abdur Rahmans redistribution of resources along ethnic boundaries increased the competition over resources, a factor that enhances the likelihood of ethnic mobilization (Barth 1969; Olzak and Nagel 1986). Furthermore, the colonization of the north was perceived as a tool for stronger state control of northern Afghanistan (Roy 1992: 78). Land disputes and other conflicts between Pashtuns and non-Pashtuns was the result, and many of today's land disputes are traceable back to this period, which laid *"a foundation for bitter inter-ethnic dispute"* (Wily 2004b: 60).

4.3 Consolidation of ethnic tensions in the north: 1901-1978

The ethnic tensions in the north did not fade away with the death of *amir* Abdur Rahman in 1901. Pashtuns from the south continued to settle in the north, and competition over land increased. By 1907 the Pashtun dominance over other ethnic groups in the area was established and reinforced by government support, which granted the Pashtuns with both formal and informal advantages over other ethnic groups (Tapper 1973: 78). Since Tajiks and Uzbeks had complimentary ecological niches, they did not compete with each other, rather they became allies against the Pashtuns (Roy 1992: 78). Abdur Rahmans descendants were modernists. Amanullah (1919-1929), his grandson, opened schools for both girls and boys, and tried to force Afghans to wear western clothes, among other by taking the veil from women (Dupree 1978: 452). The reform programs were met with resentment among the more conservative and religious leaders, and when a Tajik, Bacha Saqqao, challenged the Durrani dynasty in Kabul, he was supported by most of the Tajiks and Uzbeks in northern Afghanistan (Roy 1992: 78). This coalition was both anti-Pashtun and fundamentalist. In the north, the non-Pashtuns took advantage of the chaos in Kabul and rebelled against the Durrani *khans* in Sari Pul, driving them into the mountains and

expropriating their land. Soon, Nadir Khan re-established Durrani rule in Kabul, and restored "order" in the north. The *khans* returned, retook the land, and expropriated even more land. The leader of the Tajik/Uzbek uprising was imprisoned, and later died in custody. The following decades Pashtun power in the region was entrenched. The local authorities turned a blind eye to the suppression and discrimination of non-Pashtuns. From the internal colonization till the present, there have continuously been clashes and conflicts of varying degree between Pashtuns and non-Pashtuns in the north. A standard scenario would be a Pashtun *khan* stealing land from Uzbek farmers, and if the farmers complained to the government, they would be "handled" by agents of the *khan* (Tapper 1984: 242-243). Not surprisingly, a general opposition to the Pashtuns emerged, and the pattern of non-Pashtuns allying with each other against Pashtuns, as seen in 1929, has remained.

4.4 The emergence of political movements

In 1931 the University of Kabul was opened, constituting an environment that was to have great impact on the political sphere in Afghanistan. It was from the student environment that the first political movements were to be established. Jamiat-e Islami (Islamic society, hereafter Jamiat) was established by a group of intellectuals, with among others Burhanuddin Rabbani and Sebghatullah Mujaddidi at the forefront.[22] The movement was an Islamist movement, and aimed to develop a modern political ideology based on Islam; they translated the works of foreign Islamists and updated religious terms and teaching methods (cf. Misdaq 2006; Roy 1986; Sadowski 2006). An element of their policy was to reform everyday life, by health education and distribution of seeds in rural areas. Roy argues that this is a typical feature with the Islamists: they were both reformist and practical (Roy 1986: 74). Many of the movement's supporters were religious engineers and technocrats which strongly opposed the secular rule of the government of King Zahir Shah. The conflict between Jamiat and the government, led by Zahir Shah's cousin, Mohammad Daoud, forced Jamiat to operate secretly (Roy 1986: 69-74).

---

[22] See appendix 3 for a short introduction to Burhanuddin Rabbani, Sebghatullah Mujaddidi and Jamiat.

In 1965 the communist Peoples Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) was founded. The PDPA consisted of two constantly conflicting factions; Khalq and Parcham. Khalq was most doctrinaire, and drew most of its support from Pashtuns with a rural background. On the other hand, Parcham was more pragmatic, drawing support from urban families with various ethnic identities. After a bloodless coup in 1973, where Prince Mohammed Daoud replaced his cousin *amir* Zahir Shah,[23] Parcham joined his government. Both factions recruited among students at the university, but Khalq soon grew to three times the size of Parcham (Harpviken 1995: 35). Being a Pashtun secular nationalist, Daoud was strongly opposed to the Islamists, arresting them in large numbers. Rabbani made a proposal to Daoud, offering him his support, if he would break with the PDPA, but when declined, most of the leaders fled abroad, and a long period of resistance fighting started. This furthermore led to a split in the Islamist movement. The radical faction, led by the young engineer Gulbuddin Hekmatyar,[24] wanted an uprising against Daoud, whereas Rabbani opted for a long-term solution, where infiltration of the army in order to lay the ground for a counter revolution was central. Most of those remained with Rabbani in Jamiat had a Tajik ethnic identity. Hekmatyar thus left the movement, and founded Hezb-e Islami (Islamic Party), a radical Islamist movement, drawing most of its support from Pashtuns (Roy 1986: 75). Hezb-e Islami, supported by the Pakistani government, carried out clandestine missions in Afghanistan. They were not however able to mobilize peasants to a mass uprising against the government, instead they were arrested in big numbers. Set off by the mass arrest, a new conflict emerged, this time within Hezb-e Islami. As the last conflict within the Islamist movement, this conflict was regarding the acceptance or rejection of radicalism, and as last time, it ended in a new split. Hezb-e Islami was divided into the radical Hezb-e Islami led by Hekmatyar, and the more moderate Hezb-e Islami led by Khalis. The failure of the 1975 uprisings taught the Islamists that despite being sceptical towards the *ulama*, no major uprising could take place without their support, since they were the ones with influence over the traditional people, and thus were the ones in a position to mobilize peasants.

---

[23] See appendix 3 for a short introduction to *amir* Zahir Shah
[24] See appendix 3 for a short introduction to Gulbuddin Hekmatyar

Furthermore, the Islamists learnt that proper coordination of the uprising was needed in order to be successful.

The quarrels within the Islamist movement suited PDPA well; they seized the opportunity to launch the Saur Revolution in April 1978. The coup was bloody, eliminating Daoud and his whole family. The main policy of the PDPA was to reform the agrarian sector, eliminate illiteracy and to strengthen the state machinery. Furthermore they aspired to decrease the ethnic divisions in the country, by elevating the status of Uzbeki, Turkmani and other minority languages. To achieve these aims, they imposed reforms with an authoritarian force, which evoked major resistance. At the same time, the PDPA made great use of the tribal structures to maintain power. Receiving most of their support from Pashtuns, this policy forced non-Pashtuns into the opposition. In the end, the PDPA reforms were only supported by a few isolated groups which later became members of local militias. The overwhelming majority supported the *mujahedin*, the Islamic resistance fighters (Roy 1986: 92).

Since the Khalq administration was predominantly Pashtun, the PDPA administration evoked double hostility in the north. In fact, the first acts carried out by Tajik and Uzbek *mujahedin* in northern Afghanistan were not aimed at the PDPA regime, but were a series of attacks against Pashtun *khans* (Wily 2004b: 62). The most notorious of the commanders was the Uzbek Rasul Pahlawan, who killed many Pashtuns in Faryab (CPAU 2004). He was the leader of a resistance group affiliated with the Harakat-e Enqelab-e Islami (Islamic Revolutionary Movement). Besides, both Jamiat and Hezb-e Islami had support in northern Afghanistan. Among the Pashtuns in the north, Hezb-e Islami (HIG) was more popular. Despite PDPA's attempt to attract the minorities of Afghanistan, many supported the resistance. A factor that contributed to that was the large numbers of Uzbek, Tajik and Turkmen refugees who had fled the Bolshevik suppression of Muslims in the Soviet Union and were now residing in northern Afghanistan. They supported the resistance for ideological reasons, and mainly joined Jamiat (Naby 1984: 17; Sharani 1984: 50). Dorronsoro and Lobato suggest that especially Uzbeks, who were largely disliked and perceived as poorly integrated joined the

41

resistance for economic reasons (1989: 101-102). Within the year, more or less the whole country rose against the regime. By the time of the Soviet invasion in December 1979, three-quarters of the country was rebelling against the government.

The Islamist movements were however only one part of the resistance, Afghan nationalism and traditional Islam, embodied by the *ulama,* had existed for a long time. It was the acceptance of the *ulama* and the Islamic ways that shaped the basis of the Afghan resistance (Misdaq 2006: 152). The resistance parties all had bases in neighbouring countries, particularly in Pakistan, where they were welcomed, trained and financed by both Pakistan and other countries to fight the Soviets and the PDPA regime (Lischer 2006: 55; Misdaq 2006: 154). Yet by playing on ethnic tensions and playing local commanders up against each other, the PDPA was able to mobilize support from various groups. One example is Faryab, where the resistance was split up into poorly organized factions, ending up in conflicts with each other. They were the ideal target for the PDPA offensives. After getting involved in a violent conflict with a local Jamiat faction, Rasul Pahlawan came over to the government side. For several years, he played a double game, being provided with weapons by both the government and the resistance, but after complications with the weapon delivery, he opted for the government side (Dorronsoro and Lobato 1989: 101-102). Opportunism was in many instances decisive for making new alliances.

After the Soviet invasion in 1979, resistance parties mushroomed till over 30. The first parties could be divided into the typology of Islamists and moderates, but soon also nationalist and leftist movements emerged. Unwilling to have a united Afghan front against the government in Kabul, Pakistan recognized first six and later seven political parties. The three Islamist parties, Jamiat and the two Hezb-e Islamis, and three moderate parties, Jabh-i-Nejat Melli (the National Liberation Front, NLF) led by Sebghatullah Mujaddedi; Mahaz-i-Melli Islami (National Islamic Front of Afghanistan, NIFA) of Sayed Ahmad Gailani and the *ulama* party Harakat-i-Inqilab-i-Islami (Movement of Islamic Revolution), led by Muhammad Nabi Muhammadi (Misdaq 2006: 158). To counterbalance the Sunni influence, Iran recognized eight small Shia parties, which were

at a later stage merged into one, Hezb-e Wahdat Islami (Islamic Unity Party, hereafter Hszb-e Wahdat), which can be recognized as a Shia-oriented ethno-nationalist party, representing mainly Hazaras. The Sunni movements with bases in Peshawar, Pakistan, had formed a *mujahedin* government, waiting to be transferred to Kabul with the fall of the communist regime.

Afghan resistance movements

Name	Type of movement	Leader	Ethnic origin
Jamiat	Islamist	Burhanuddin Rabbani	Tajiks
Hezb-e Islami (HIG)	Islamist	Gulbuddin Hekmatyar	Pashtuns (Ghilzai)
Hezb-e Islami (Khalis)	Islamist	Mawlawi Yunus Khalis	Pashtuns (Ghilzai)
Ittehad Islami	Islamist	Sayyaf	Pashtuns (Ghilzai)
Jabh-i Nejat Melli	Traditionalist	Sebghatullah Mujaddedi	
Mahaz-i-Melli Islami	Traditionalist	Sayed Ahmad Gailani	Pashtun
Harakat-i-Inqilab-i-Islami	Traditionalist	Muhammad Nabi Muhammadi	Pashtun
Hezb-e Wahdat	Islamist/Ethno-nationalist	Khalili	Hazaras
Jombesh	Ethno-nationalist/leftist	Dostum	Uzbeks (Turkmen)
Taliban	Traditionalist	Mullah Omar	Pashtuns (Ghilzai)

4.5 Civil war – ethnicization of the conflict

After 10 years and many defeats, Soviet withdrew its troops from Afghanistan in February 1989. The puppet regime in Afghanistan was to last another three years. The strong Pashtun profile of the regime was opposed by the resistance, especially in the north, where an anti-Pashtun alliance was formed by Jamiat, Shura-i Nezar of Masoud, Hezb-e Wahdat and an Uzbek militia, which was a former PDPA militia later to be known as Jombesh-e Melli Islami-ye Afghanistan (National Islamic Movement of Afghanistan, hereafter Jombesh). This alliance was the Northern Alliance (NA). After having disarmed the remaining government groups in the north, they fought Najibullah with joined forces. After the fall of Najibullah in 1992, the various factions were unable to agree upon sharing power, and a civil war broke out. By that time, the resistance factions had lost much of their legitimacy among the war tired population (Misdaq 2006).

Rabbani was given the presidency by the interim government in Peshawar, with Masoud as defence minister, and Hekmatyar as prime minister. Still unable to agree upon power sharing, and with Rabbani and Masoud denying to give up their power after the initial four months they were granted, the fighting in Kabul escalated, now with Jombesh and

Wahdat joining Hezb-e Islami (HIG) forces against Rabbani and Masoud. All the fighting factions committed horrible war crimes, killing and raping civilians because of their ethnic identity (AJP 2005). The competition for power was in fact increasingly fought along ethnic lines, and ethnicity became a prime factor in political actor's claim to legitimacy (Simonsen 2004). Ethnicization was not only evident in Kabul; in Mazar-e Sharif, the urban identity weakened and was replaced by ethnic identities (Dorronsoro 2005: 257). It can be argued however, that local factors may have played just as significant a role as ethnic identities. But as regional geographic areas to an extent correlate with ethnic identities, it can be difficult to establish what is what. Dorronsoro divides between ethnicization as a strategy of mobilization and ethnicization as an unintended and counter-productive result of regionalization (Dorronsoro 2005: 258-ff). Hezb-e Wahdat and Jombesh may be mentioned as examples of the first type of ethnicization, whereas Jamiat and later the Taliban may be mentioned as examples of the latter type of ethnicization.

4.6 Taliban

As a response to the civil war, Taliban, literally meaning students of the Koran, emerged in Kandahar in 1994. It rapidly grew to become one of the largest and most influential movements in the Afghan civil war, and increasingly conquered new areas, despite heavy fighting against all the other resistance movements. Taliban, led by Mullah Omar, was a religious movement, drawing its support from Pashtuns in the south, and especially the *ulama*, village *mullahs* and *madrasa* graduates. Many of the Taliban were indeed *mujahedin* who had been affiliated with other factions such as the two Hezb-e Islami and Ittehad Islami. Because the Taliban movement emerged rather spontaneous in a time when the political environment was highly ethnicitized, the Taliban is often perceived as a Pashtun movement. This is not correct, rather Taliban may be classified as a traditionalist and orthodox religious movement, with the official goal to unite all Afghans under an Islamic government (Dorronsoro 2005: 266-267; Senlis 2006: 54-55). It drew most of its support from the rural areas where it first emerged: Kandahar province, in the Pashtun belt. Though having most supports among Pashtuns, the Taliban is not to be

perceived as an ethno-nationalist movement, and all Pashtuns are not to be perceived as Taliban supporters. This is important to note.

By 1995 Taliban expanded from their main bastion in the south to the west. Only two years after their origin, Taliban captured Kabul. One reason why the rapid expansion of the Taliban was possible was due to their behaviour contrary to the other factions' behaviour. The other factions raped and pillaged, in fact, pillaging and stealing from their opponents, including civilians, was seen as part of the payment of the troops. The Taliban movement, on the other hand, emerged as a reaction to the misbehaviour of local warlords in Kandahar, and refrained from pillaging. During their rule, the Taliban issued a law of proper conduct. These laws were strict, complicated the daily lives for both men and women, and contributed to a decline in their popularity (Misdaq 2006: 190).

For a long time, the only stronghold against the Taliban was the north, chiefly controlled by Dostum and his commanders. After Kabul fell to the Taliban, mujahedin and members of the former PDPA government sought refuge in the north, joining Dostum and his men in the battle against the Taliban. There were several big battles between Jombesh and allies against the Taliban. One of them was the massacre of the north, where more than 600 Taliban were massacred and over 1000 captured, after a group of Hazaras refused being disarmed by the Taliban in Mazar-e Sharif. These prisoners were later massacred in the most horrific way (Rashid 2001: 58-59). Northern Afghanistan was the last stronghold against the Taliban. Ironically, it was rivalling within Jombesh, between Dostum and Abdul Malik Pahlawan, that brought Taliban to the power in the north. Malik had been Dostum's ally, but when Maliks brother Rasul Pahlawan was killed in June 1996, Malik accused Dostum of being responsible for the murder. In order to revenge his brother, Malik allied with Taliban. He offered to help them take Mazar-e Sharif, the last big city not yet under Taliban control. However, when Mazar-e Sharif was taken, Taliban reneged on the agreements with Malik, in particular the call for representation on an ethnic basis together with a federal system (Dorronsoro 2005; Misdaq 2006; Rashid 2001). But the battle of Mazar-e Sharif was not finished with the first capture by the joint Taliban-Malik alliance. Even if he was weakened by Maliks

betrayal, Dostum managed to retake Mazar-e Sharif in November 1996 and kept his position there until August 1998, two years after the Taliban had captured Kabul. As Jombesh had increasingly based their legitimacy on ethnic identity, the Pashtuns of the north became more and more vulnerable. When the Taliban finally captured the north, it was partly because they had managed to win over the loyalty of the Pashtun enclaves in the north (Dorronsoro 2005; Giustozzi 2005; 2007). By first taking Faryab and Samangan in the spring 1998, Taliban was finally able to control the whole country. In the north, as in the rest of the country, Pashtun rule was re-established. The Pashtuns in the north, who for several years had been marginalized by the Jombesh rule in the region, were again favoured by the central power holders. The Taliban committed a series of severe harassments against non-Pashtun in the north. Far from all Pashtuns in the north supported the Taliban, and even fewer actually committed these crimes against their neighbours. In fact, Taliban rule in the north was carried out by non-Pashtun commanders in addition to Pashtun commanders (HRW 2002: 10-12). However, both Pashtun and non-Pashtun Taliban commanders committed atrocities against the non-Pashtun population. Some Pashtuns seized this opportunity to regain or increase their personal power, which had partly been lost during the years of civil war. Some civilian Pashtuns also raped and pillaged Uzbek villages. Land was also being expropriated. Most atrocities were justified by saying the acts were reprisals for the perpetrators own suffering during the time of Rasul Pahlawan (Wily 2004a: 14-15). However, the act committed by the Taliban in the north was the reprisal for the massacre of the north, where hundreds of Taliban soldiers had been massacred: In 1998, fierce fighting broke loose in Mazar-e Sharif, resulting in the massacre of 2000 civilians, mainly of Hazara origin, and the detaining of thousands more, including Uzbeks and Tajiks (HRW 2002: 12).

In sum, then it may be established that the ethnic tensions in the north have long roots, and may be traced back to the internal colonization. The predominantly Pashtun power-holders have been perceived as oppressive and have had little legitimacy in northern Afghanistan. Pashtuns in the north have been viewed by many of the non-Pashtun population as the oppressive government's representatives. Whenever there has been a Pashtuns government, the Pashtuns in the north have benefited from their links to the

government, and often been given administrative positions and other advantages in the north. On the other hand, whenever there have been non-Pashtun (mainly Uzbek and Tajik) power-holders in the north, the Pashtuns have become a marginalized minority, being the targets for vengeance motivated harassments. After the terror attacks against the USA on September 11th 2001, Operation Enduring Freedom was launched, with the aim to oust the Taliban regime. The troops on the ground were almost exclusively Afghan, and in the north, Dostum and his Jombesh forces drove the Taliban from power. Uzbek and Tajik rule was again established in the north, and Pashtuns immediately lost the privileges they had enjoyed during the time of the predominantly Pashtun Taliban regime. Another area with vindictive power-holders were about to begin.

5.0 Subordination

In studies of mobilization and migration, many researchers tend to forget the ones who neither migrate nor mobilize, but rather stay in the conflict area, subordinated to the local power-holders. By examining why some choose to remain in an area rather than to migrate or to mobilize against the power-holders, we might get an enhanced understanding of why others *do* migrate and *do* mobilize. In this chapter I will explore why Pashtuns chose to subordinate to the new local power-holders in the north. Subordination under the local power-holders means to accept the domination of another group over one's own group and in many cases also to accept being discriminated against and harassed by others living in the same area.

The lack of attention to those who remain in a conflict area without mobilizing, is reflected in the fact that there is virtually no literature regarding subordination. In a methodological perspective, subordination may be perceived as the negative case, seen in relation to migration and mobilization. Negative cases can serve as a better picture of history than positive ones, but are largely forgotten (Emigh 1997). As argued in the theoretical framework, one might view the relationship between the subordinated and the dominator as a contract, where both parties have certain expectations to each other. The subordinated group might expect absence from harassments and access to resources necessary to uphold their daily lives. The dominators, on the other hand, might expect the subordinated to abstain from mobilizing against them. The dominators furthermore benefit from expanding their area of control. It should be emphasized however that the relationship between the subordinated and the dominators is not based on loyalty or trust, and that the two parties by no means are equals. Rather, the dominators are militarily stronger and have the power to control and harass the subordinated group.

After the fall of Taliban several Pashtun villages were targeted by commanders and others of non-Pashtun ethnicity. Severe types of harassment against Pashtuns were reported, for example by the Human Rights Watch report "*Paying for the Taliban's*

Crimes: Abuse Against Ethnic Pashtuns in Northern Afghanistan" (HRW 2002). The types of harassment may be classified in the following way:

- Assaults – harassments of a physical appearance, like violence, rape and murder.
- Exploitation – economic exploitation, like illegal tax and expropriation of land and goods, but also forceful recruitment of work force.
- Discrimination – denied access to facilities, aid and to decision-making structures.

As elaborated upon below, Pashtuns were targeted for harassments. These harassments were justified by their perpetrators as revenge for harassments committed by Pashtuns during the time of Taliban rule. Some Pashtuns in the north have willingly admitted that prior assaults committed by their villagers against non-Pashtun neighbours have contributed to the cycle of abuse that was directed against their own village after the fall of Taliban (HRW 2002: 10-12, 31).

In this chapter I first seek to understand how these harassments influenced the choice of subordination and the situation as subordinated. Next, I examine the various factions' competition over Pashtun subordinates. Is the timing of the shift of allegiance significant to whether a commander is allowed to subordinate or not? This will be discussed in the third section, before various tactics of subordination are explored.

5.1 Why did Pashtuns subordinate to the new power-holders?

Change of political context has implications not only for commanders and political actors, but also for ordinary families. The new political climate in Afghanistan after the fall of Taliban was relatively hostile against Pashtuns in general. Independent of their former political stand, Pashtuns were accused of having been loyal to the Taliban (HRW 2002). Predominantly Pashtun villages were looted and villagers harassed. In the following I will give an account of the nature of the harassments the Pashtuns

50

experienced, and explore how these harassments may have contributed to their subsequent subordination.

5.1.2 Assaults against Pashtuns: Violence, Rape and Murder

Towards the end of 2001 and in the beginning of 2002, there were reports of massive assaults and organized raids against the Pashtun population in the north. Local commanders and soldiers aligned with Jombesh, Jamiat and Wahdat, the new power-holding factions, were responsible for violence, rape and murder of hundreds of Pashtuns (HRW 2002). An example from a village in the Balkh Province will serve as an illustration of how violence and murder can lead to subordination - not only in the village the assaults take place, but also as a spill-over effect in other villages. It also exemplifies that subordination not automatically puts an end to assaults.

Violence and Murder. After the fall of Taliban, the predominantly Pashtun village Bargah-e Afghani in Chimtal District in Balkh Province was disarmed by and subordinated to the Uzbek commander Manzullah Khan.[25] In return for the weapons and the subordination, Manzullah Khan placed 12 of his soldiers in the village to protect it, and wrote a note to confirm that the village was disarmed. However, there were still conflicts between the various ruling factions over who should control which area. When a group of approximately 300 Hazara soldiers approached the village by the end of December, the Uzbek soldiers fled the scene together with many of the villagers. Among the villagers who remained, 37 men were killed and many others were beaten severely (HRW 2002: 12-15).[26] Thus subordination alone was not sufficient to protect the villagers, as the soldiers who were placed there were unable and unwilling to protect it from other movement's soldiers. This massacre had severe implications, not only for the village, but for the whole region. The news about the killings spread rapidly, and created a fear among Pashtuns that they would suffer the same destiny as the villagers of Bargah-e Afghani. In order to avoid this fate, the villagers, represented by a village elder or a

---

[25] See appendix 3 for a short introduction of Manzullah Khan

[26] Mohan, Geoffrey. 2002. "Vengeance Is Taking Its Toll in Wake of Taliban." vol. 2008. Bargah/Los Angeles: Los Angeles Times.

local commander, contacted the power-holders in the area to announce their subordination under them. In return, the villages expected not to be assaulted by the local power-holders, but rather receive protection from their new superiors. However, as the massacre shows, subordination per se did not automatically offer protection of a village. The strength of the commander to which the villages subordinated was also of importance. The neighbouring village to Bargah-e Afghani, Tagabi, which was also populated by Pashtuns, subordinated to a local Hazara commander, after having been looted by an Uzbek militia, and were spared from the Hazara massacre (HRW 2002).[27]

Out of fear of being massacred if they did not migrate, Pashtun villages everywhere in northern Afghanistan subordinated to the local power-holding commanders, and appealed for the local commanders' protection against rivalling commanders and armed civilians. In this way the massacre in Bargah-e Afghani affected Pashtuns all over northern Afghanistan, and contributed to the subordination of several Pashtun villages throughout the north. Subordination under the new power-holders was adopted as a strategy to lower the risk of assaults.

Rape. In the period when assaults against Pashtun villages took place, it was not uncommon for the men to flee the village to escape assaults, while the women remained. An example of this can be found in Shoor Darya Valley in Faryab Province. While the men had been away, the village had been looted (HRW 2002). One of the informants of HRW was asked about what had happened to the female members of his family while he and the other men had been away:

> "[…] For forty days, if there are no men in the village and only women are remaining, what do you think happened? It [rape] is unmentionable for us… They have dishonoured some of our women, but did not kidnap any of them. It would have been better if they killed all of us." (Pashtun villager quoted in HRW 2002: 33)

Rape and sexual violence is connected with social stigma and shame, and will only in remarkably few cases be reported. Still, there is evidence that rape and sexual violence against Pashtun women was widespread in the north (HRW 2002). Pashtun women

---

[27] Ibid

symbolize the families' honour, and control over women's behaviour and their marriages are among the most important criteria used to define their ethnic identity (Tapper 1991: 207). By raping a woman, one does not only dishonour the woman herself, but her whole family and *quam*. If a woman has been sexually active outside of marriage, even though it is rape, the shame falls, depending on if she is married or not, on her husband and in-laws, or her father and brothers who have not been able to control her sexuality. The accepted sanction for sexual activity outside of marriage, be it incest, adultery or rape is death to both parts involved. This sanction is not as much seen as a punishment for moral misconduct, but rather as a re-establishment of the man's (or men's) honour (Tapper 1991). In Chimtal District in Balkh a 16 year old girl was raped by four soldiers in front of her father. After the incident, the girl was sent away, because her father and brother refused to see her, and threatened to kill her for bringing shame upon the family (HRW 2002). In contrast to the example above, Tapper (1991) claims that if rape or sexual abuse happens in the context of inter-ethnic conflict the re-establishment of the man's honour is not always the primary concern, meaning that it is possible for the family to continue daily life without re-establishing the family's honour. However, the shame associated with rape and sexual violence is so strong that many families avoid seeking medical assistance for the victims of rape, even if they are severely injured (HRW 2002).

Despite the victimized Pashtun families' attempts to cover up the rapes of their women, rumours about the rapes were spreading throughout northern Afghanistan. The rapes became yet another reason for Pashtuns to subordinate, as subordination under a local commander was perceived as a means to protect women from sexual assaults. The alternative, as will be elaborated on in the next chapter, was to migrate.

The above examples illustrate assaults against Pashtuns that could have motivated them to subordinate to the local commanders, assuming that it was perceived that such subordination could offer some protection against these kinds of assaults. Due to the disarmament, Pashtuns were dependent on protection from other armed groups to protect their villages against the harassers. Thus, subordination may be seen as self-adjustment

to the political context, but it does not mean that the choice of this strategy equals being loyal to the commander giving protection.

The acute security situation did improve, and the intensity of physical assaults against the Pashtuns did decrease after a while. But while the physical assaults diminished, Pashtuns experienced a new type of harassment: economic exploitation.

5.1.3 Exploitation of Pashtuns: Looting, illegal taxation, *ushur*[28] and forced labour

The economic exploitation of Pashtuns took on many forms. Looting of livestock and expropriation of land was widespread and had severe consequences, since livestock farming was among the main sources of income for the Pashtun peasants. Being looted of their sources of income was detrimental for the already poor Pashtuns. Not only did it mean that the Pashtuns were dependent on others to survive, it could also affect their chances to migrate at a later point of time, since they with no money would be unable to pay for transport to migrate. Not all were deprived of their livestock and land, but many were instead forced to pay illegal taxes and *ushur* to local commanders.[29] Not uncommon, the *ushur* was demanded before the crops were harvested, and if the farmers were unable to pay, they received threats or were exposed to violence.[30] The demand of *ushur* did affect all ethnic groups, but it can be argued that Pashtuns were more severely affected by the demand. In the multi-ethnic Gorzad village in Faryab Province 800 families out of which about 500 were Uzbek, 100 were Arabic and 200 Pashtun, this was the case. Here, the Uzbek *wuluswal,* the district administrator, demanded *ushur* from the Pashtun, but not from the Uzbek villagers. The Arabic villagers paid *ushur* directly to an Arab village commander in exchange for his armed protection (CPAU 2004). This was an

---

[28] One tenth of income earned from agriculture, gifts, trade and so forth is paid, often in form of harvested goods, like rice, corn, wheat etc.

[29] Babak, Bashir and Sayed Yaqub Ibrahimi. 2005. "Afghanistan: When Cops Become Robbers." in *Afghanistan*, vol. 2007, edited by IWPR. Mazar-e-Sharif: IWPR. ; Ibrahimi, Sayed Yaqub. 2005. "Villagers Flee Intimidation." in *Afghanistan*, vol. 2007, edited by IWPR. Mazar-e-Sharif: IWPR. ;IRIN. 2004a. "Afghanistan: Regional commanders continue with illegal taxation." vol. 2007. Kabul: Integrated Regional Information Networks. UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

[30] IRIN. 2004a. "Afghanistan: Regional commanders continue with illegal taxation." vol. 2007. Kabul: Integrated Regional Information Networks. UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

option not open to the Pashtuns, foremost because of the one-sided disarmament process of Pashtuns after the fall of Taliban. Thus, the Pashtuns became an easy target to exploit economically, and assumingly, the poorest Pashtuns did not have the resources to migrate, and thus were indirectly forced to subordinate.

A third way the power-holders exploited the Pashtuns, was to force them to work for the commanders. Pashtun farmers were forced to farm land and give nearly all the crops to the commanders, permitted to keep only a very small part of it for themselves and their families.[31]

Despite having subordinated, the exploitation did not stop, thus exploitation did not directly lead to subordination. However, exploitation may indirectly lead to subordination, in the way that poor Pashtuns lose any surplus resources needed to migrate. With the exclusion of migration as a strategy, exploitation indirectly leads to subordination.

At the same time, evidence seems to point to the fact that Pashtuns experienced a shift from assaults to exploitation when they subordinated. Hence, it seems that exploitation replaces assaults after subordination, but that this is a price subordinated Pashtuns are willing to pay in exchange for not being assaulted.

5.1.4 Discrimination against Pashtuns: Denied access to international aid, resources and political structures[32]

Many Pashtuns in the north have experienced some sort of discrimination. They have been denied access to resources in various fields, such as access to humanitarian aid, natural resources and political structures (CPAU 2004; HRW 2002).[33] Due to the lootings and overall political circumstances, Pashtuns in particular became dependent on humanitarian aid. Non-Pashtun control over aid was used to deny Pashtuns access to

---

[31] Interviewee # 7, Informal conversation # 3
[32] Political structures are here understood as *shuras* or *jirgas* at various levels, in addition to district and provincial government.
[33] UNHCR. 2002. "District profiles, Faryab." UNHCR, Mazar-e-Sharif.

humanitarian assistance. An example of this took place in Balkh, where villagers, after being denied ration cards in their village, went to the centre of Dawlatabad District to get hold of cards. There they got the message that "[…] *there are no cards for Pashtuns*" (interviewee referred in HRW 2002: 28). This sort of abuse of power is a great concern for humanitarian organizations who have to rely on locals, most often young educated men, to distribute their aid. These men are given power which may be misused, as the example above clearly shows. The operations of organizations may also disturb or influence traditional power relations. Both Centlivres and Centlivres-Demont (1987) and Terry (Terry 2002) make the same findings in their research on Afghan refugee camps in Pakistan: Humanitarian organizations interfere with the power structures in the areas they operate, as "*control of the aid distribution channels can be essential in securing support for one faction over another*" (Terry 2002: 50), or to discriminate along ethnic markers. In the camps, not only the competition for humanitarian assistance follows ethnic divides, but also the competition over natural resources such as pastures and water. In Dawlatabad district, in Faryab Province, Pashtun sheep owners were denied access to water points in the desert. These water points were controlled by a village mainly populated by ethnic Turkmen, who denied the Pashtun sheep owners' access to the water since the Pashtuns had restricted their access to pasture and watering points under the Taliban (Pain 2004: 7-8).

The last category of discrimination to be explored here is the discrimination against Pashtuns regarding their participation in decision making structures on village, district and province level. Largely Pashtuns were not represented in district and province *shuras* and *jirgas*, making it nearly impossible for them to influence and improve their living conditions through traditional political structures (CPAU 2004). The degree to which the Pashtuns were allowed or able to participate in the district and provincial *shuras* depended on their relationship with their neighbouring villages, the local commander and/or the *wuluswal*. If they were denied access, their ability to influence decisions taken in the *shura* would be very limited, unless they were able to convince a non-Pashtun member of the *shura* to speak their case. One way of achieving access however, was to improve their relationship with the local power-holders through subordination. This

would be a time consuming process which would depend on trust between the parties. It is thus possible that discrimination against Pashtuns could lead to subordination under the local power-holders for tactical reasons.

After the fall of Taliban, Pashtun families in the north became extra vulnerable and many chose to subordinate, in the belief that subordination would improve their life situation to some degree. As I have argued earlier, one might understand the subordination-domination relationship as a contract. When the vulnerable Pashtuns are denied access to humanitarian aid or natural resources, one can question if the dominators are violating the contract with their subordinates. When this happens, the costs of staying subordinated increase compared to the other two strategies; migration and mobilization.

In sum, the harassments against Pashtuns, based on their ethnic identity, contributed to the subordination of Pashtuns. Pashtuns subordinated in order to avoid assaults, and the amount of assaults did in fact diminish as Pashtun villages subordinated. However, exploitation did not stop because of subordination; rather, subordinated villages had to pay *ushur* in order to get protection against assaults.

5.2 Competing factions seeking Pashtuns' loyalty

After the ousting of the Taliban, the main three factions that had been active in the ousting – Jombesh and Dostum, Jamiat and Ustad Mohammad Atta, and Wahdat and Mohaqiq[34] became power-holders of Mazar-e Sharif. A UN-backed security force was established, consisting of 600 men out of whom 240 came from Jamiat, 180 from Jombesh and 180 from Wahdat. Still, the military fire-power largely remained in the hands of local gunmen with alliances to the three rivalling factions instead of the joint security force (HRW 2002: 5). In the rest of the northern region, the factions had established power-bases which constituted a complicated patchwork of area control and alliances. Dostum and Jombesh dominated Faryab, Jawzjan and most of Samangan province, while Balkh and Sari Pul (and Kunduz) were still contested over. In the struggle for power of different parts of the north the support of newly disarmed Pashtun

---

[34] See appendix 3 for a short introduction of the factions Jamiat, Wahdat and Jombesh and their respective leaders in the north Ustad Atta Mohammad, Mohaqiq, and Dostum.

commanders became important, as it could be decisive in the struggle for more land to control. This might be one of the reasons why the factions scaled down the physical abuse of the Pashtun societies after some months, and instead tried to convince them to seek protection and hence subordination under their respective faction. The subordination of Pashtun villages thus became a tool for the rivalling commanders to secure power over larger areas. The subordination of one Pashtun village could result in a significant expansion of area controlled by the local power-holder, as the land under control of the subordinating commander would also come under control of the power-holder. Hence, having Pashtun commanders subordinate became attractive, because it meant a stronger position in the region. The competition over Pashtun commanders may have contributed to some improvement regarding the hostility towards Pashtuns in general, and Pashtun commanders in particular. The data I have collected does not allow me to draw any conclusions in this matter, but it would be reasonable to assume that Pashtun commanders used their sudden popularity to negotiate with the respective factions, and play them against each other, in order to get the best possible agreement for himself and his *qaum*. This competition could have enhanced the Pashtun commanders' possibility to choose which power-holding faction they wanted to subordinate to.

5.3 Point of shifting allegiances

One should be careful to understand the movements as fixed parties; rather the commanders are generally quite opportunistic, and tend to shift their allegiances quite often. There are examples of commanders shifting allegiances every time there is a new power-holder in the area, always making sure to be in an alliance with the present power-holder (Giustozzi 2005). Several crucial factors are in play when decisions of accepting a shift in alliance are made. One of them is timing. If the shift of allegiance comes too late, it will be obvious to the new power-holder that the faction or commander seeking their cooperation might be purely opportunistic. In order to seem sincere the negotiations with the potential new power-holder has preferably to start before there is a clear winning part and, the shift of allies should come when there is still competition or fighting for power.

58

When it comes to accepting shifting alliances, Dostum was rather pragmatic in accepting latecomers into or as allies of Jombesh (Giustozzi 2005: 8-ff).[35] Not all of Dostum's commanders appreciate his pragmatic style. During the time of Taliban, Hashim Habibi,[36] an Uzbek commander controlling Division 200 and known for his changing allegiances, was controlling Faryab province. Several of Dostum's commanders participated in the fighting to oust Taliban from Faryab. Just as Habibi understood that the Taliban regime was about to fall, and that Jombesh, Jamiat and Wahdat were most likely to end up controlling northern Afghanistan, he started negotiating with Dostum and his men, in order to be accepted as a commander loyal to Jombesh. Dostum accepted Habibi into Jombesh (Giustozzi 2005).[37] This created a lot of dissatisfaction in Jombesh. One of the strongest opponents to the acceptance of Habibi was the Uzbek commander, and now Member of Parliament, Haji Fatullah Khan. He argued that Habibi's negotiations with Jombesh had started too late, and that the shift of allegiance was not to be taken seriously.[38] However, Fatullah Khan's protests were overruled and Maimana, the province capital of Faryab province, was controlled by Habibi until he was ousted by Dostum three years later.[39] Habibi's virtually autonomic leadership was disputed, and even though supposed to report to Habibi, several Jombesh sub-commanders never accepted him as their leader and chose to report directly to Dostum (Wily 2004a: 71-72).

The trustworthiness of a commander's shift of allegiances depended on the timing of the shift. If the commander did not subordinate or migrate at the right time, the consequences could be fatal. Nevertheless, there were exceptions. As long as a commander was able to appear trustworthy, allegiance shifts were possible even after a defeat. Mohammed Wali,[40] a Pashtun Taliban Commander, was accepted as a sub-commander to Jombesh after the fall of Taliban (HRW 2002: 19-20). Due to the ethnic tensions in the region after the fall of Taliban, one would assume that it would be more difficult for a Pashtun commander to be accepted, than an Uzbek commander. However,

---

[35] Interviewee # 1and # 3
[36] See appendix 3 for a short introduction to Hashim Habibi
[37] Interviewee # 1
[38] Interviewee # 1
[39] Witt, April. 2003. "Karzai Powerless As Warlords Battle." in *The Washington Post*. Washington.
[40] See appendix 3 for short introduction to Mohammed Wali

it may have been a point for Dostum to appear multi-ethnic and inclusive to the outside world which was partly sponsoring his activities.

In light of the above, it may be concluded that it is not the timing of the allegiance shift, but the trustworthiness that is crucial for whether a commander is accepted or not. However, the time aspect should not be totally neglected, as the timing has consequences for the trustworthiness. As will be discussed in chapter seven, local commanders in Faryab are now establishing contact with the Taliban.[41] It seems reasonable to assume the reason for establishing contact with the Taliban is in order to position themselves, and this might be seen as a sign that local commanders view the Taliban as potential winners.

Pashtun commanders had different tactics and motivations for subordinating. This is what I will turn to next.

5.4 Tactics of Subordination

Immediately after the fall of Taliban, mobilization against the new power-holders was not an option for former Taliban commanders, as the new faction's grip on power was strong, and the costs of mobilizing were extremely high. Their options were either to migrate or to subordinate.[42] Several Pashtun commanders who had earlier been loyal to Taliban subordinated to Jombesh, Jamiat or Wahdat. Some of these commanders had been loyal to Jombesh earlier, demonstrating the opportunism in Afghan politics. In the 1990's Pashtuns made up nine percent of the total recruits into Jombesh, only one percent lower than the actual percentage of Pashtuns in the area (Giustozzi 2005: 9). In Balkh several Pashtun commanders who had been loyal to Dostum pre-Taliban realigned with Jamiat in 2002 (HRW 2002).

Two main tactics of subordination can be identified in this case; 1) subordination to merge, and 2) subordination to build alliances. These two tactics may again be divided into two subcategories: 1a) Merging to demobilize, in other words to disarm and become an ordinary villager or 1b) merging into the organization of the other, to become a loyal

---

[41] Interviewee # 1 and # 3
[42] Interviewee # 1

commander of the new faction. Also the second alternative is dividable into two subcategories: 2a) subordination to build new alliances to be loyal to the new faction, or 2b) subordination in order to build new alliances and positioning oneself for a possible counter-mobilization.

Tactics of subordination
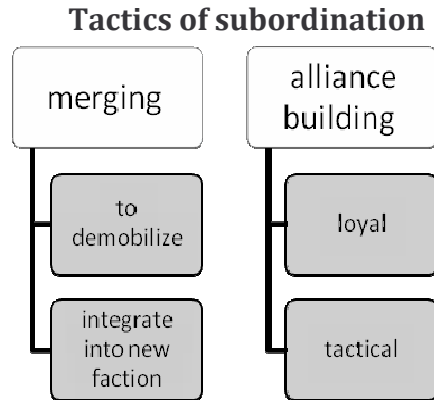
These tactics are not mutually exclusive; rather they may be adopted in a sequential manner, e.g. a commander may first merge to demobilize (1a), but later start to build alliances to become a loyal commander (2a) to the power-holding faction.

5.4.1 Merging to demobilize

Commanders who merged to demobilize were disarmed and had to live as ordinary citizens. Even though there was strong opposition and pressure on all former Taliban commanders, the commanders who merged and demobilized were arguably under stronger pressure or force than the commanders adopting the other tactics. Merging to demobilize implied that the commanders had to give up their authority as commander, thus accepting downward social mobility. It seems reasonable to assume that many commanders who were forced to demobilize and had lost their authority chose to migrate instead of remaining subordinated and demobilized in the area of origin.

5.4.2 Merging to be integrated into the organization of the other

The second tactic identified was the merging of a commander into the organization to become an integral part of a faction of the new power-holders. The commanders choosing this tactic still acted as commanders, but were sub-commanders to the new power-holders. The commanders provided their sub-commanders with weapons, an example being the Spin Kot settlement in Balkh province, where the former Taliban commander who had asked Jamiat leader Ustad Atta Mohammed for protection was given rifles to protect the village (HRW 2002: 24-25). A sub-commander was able to give orders to soldiers, even of non-Pashtun identity. A commanders motivation to merge to be integrated into the organization of the other could be to provide better security for the villages that had been under his control earlier, but assumingly more egoistic motivations were also central, such as maintaining their own power and status. Pashtun commanders did not only merge with Jamiat, also Jombesh was joined by a significant number of Pashtun commanders. In 2002 Pashtuns made up 17 percent of the total of the leading commanders in Jombesh (Giustozzi 2005: 8-9). Seen in relation to the total percentage of the Pashtun population[43] in the region, the number is quite high.

5.4.3 Alliance building to become loyal

The commanders adopting this tactic kept more of their autonomy than the commanders merging into the organization of the other. These commanders kept a private armed force with soldiers and weapons and were fairly independent of the commander, presupposed that they were loyal to the commander. Mohammed Wali may again serve as an example: After the fall of Taliban he built an alliance with Dostum and Jombesh, and prevented Uzbek soldiers from exploiting and assaulting the villagers in the area he controlled. In return for his protection, the villagers had to provide a number of men who could serve as soldiers in Mohammed Walis army (HRW 2002: 18-21).

---

[43] It is estimated that approximately 10 percent of the population in the northern regions are Pashtuns (Giustozzi, Antonio. 2005. "The Ethnicisation of an Afghan Faction: Junbesh-i-Milli From Its Origins to the Presidential Elections." London School of Economics, LSE, London.)

5.4.4 Alliance building to position oneself for later mobilization

As argued above, mobilization against the new power-holders was not an option to the Pashtun Taliban commanders, as Jombesh, Jamiat and Wahdat together with the Operation Enduring Freedom-forces had a strong grip of power. Commanders who wanted to mobilize against the new power-holders therefore either restructured their forces and planned the operations from exile, or subordinated, and used their time as subordinated as an intermezzo to restructure and position themselves for mobilization at a later point in time. The motivation for them to subordinate was therefore the prospects of mobilization in the future. After the fall of Taliban, the commander of a Pashtun militia known to be opportunistic, Khan Aga Khan, for the second time aligned with Dostum and Jombesh.[44] However, Khan Aga Khan has now broken with Jombesh, and instead focuses on promoting Pashtun rights by lobbying in the Parliament, and by aligning himself with the Taliban.[45] As will be discussed in chapter seven, Juma Khan Hamdard[46] is another example of a commander who subordinated for later mobilization.

In sum, many Pashtun commanders subordinated to the new power-holding factions after the fall of Taliban. The motivation for their subordination was varied, some were more or less forced to subordinate, others subordinated for opportunistic reasons, either to maintain their personal power or to restructure for future mobilization.

5.5 Conclusion

The harassment against the Pashtuns described in this chapter could be understood as the key factor contributing to the subordination of so many Pashtuns. In order to avoid, or at least diminish the assaults, exploitation and discrimination against themselves and their families, many Pashtuns chose to subordinate. Thus, subordinating under the power-holders can be seen as a strategy to diminish or avoid the assaults against oneself. The amount of assaults did in fact decrease after subordination, but exploitation did not as many villages experienced that assaults were replaced by exploitation. Furthermore, discrimination of Pashtuns did not stop with the subordination of villages. That Pashtuns

---

[44] They had already been allies once before, during the civil war.
[45] Interviewee # 1 and # 3
[46] For a brief introduction to Juma Khan Hamdard see appendix 3

were discriminated against after having subordinated may be understood as a violation of the contract between subordinated and dominator. Despite subordinating to avoid assaults, exploitation and discrimination, subordination only had an effect on ending assaults.

The timing of shifting allegiance had some importance to whether a commander was accepted or not, however the key point was the trustworthiness of the subordination. The fact that there was still conflict over which of the factions that should control which area, and that Pashtun commanders and villagers were attractive because they were disarmed and depended on protection from assaults, may have contributed to the fact that trustworthiness was more important than timing.

Pashtun commanders who subordinated did either demobilize, become a part of the ruling party or build alliances with it. The motives for subordination varied. For some commanders it was simply an intermezzo to reorganize and build new alliances for future mobilization. By subordinating the many commanders could keep much of their power over the ordinary Pashtuns who had to subordinate to them yet again, and thus kept their powerbase relatively stable. Thus, to the sub-commanders, subordination may have been less costly than for example migrating, since power structures in displacement camps are influenced by the humanitarian agencies and western values, and traditional structures may be less respected. By subordinating in the place of origin, most commanders would still have a relatively powerful position even though it might be slightly less powerful than before.

The strategy of subordination is difficult to research in the conflict areas in which it takes place. However, understanding why people stay in their place of origin may give an enhanced insight into why others migrate or mobilize. Therefore, more research focusing on the people who subordinate is needed, not only to get a better understanding of migration and mobilization, but also to understand those who stay and comply.

6.0. Migration

What characterises the choice of whether to migrate or not? Is it possible to distinguish the Pashtuns who migrated from the Pashtuns who subordinated? In the course of the last decades, Afghanistan has produced millions of migrants. There has been a continuous movement of people, with migration peaks during the mujahedin war against the PDPA, the following civil war, the time of Taliban and lastly as a consequence of the US-led intervention to topple the Taliban regime. With regime shifts, some have left, while others have returned. However, Monsutti argues that to many Afghans, migration has been a part of their lives long before the PDPA coup in 1978, due to their nomadic or semi-nomadic origin, and that the first wave of migration in recent times came as a result of the severe droughts in the 1970s (2006: 23-27). The fall of Taliban in late 2001 was followed by a large-scale return of migrants. But it also set off a wave of migrants - the Pashtuns from northern Afghanistan. In February 2002 Agence France-Presse (AFP) reported that nearly 20,000 people, mostly Pashtuns, had fled northern Afghanistan over just a few days.[47] In April 2003, UNHCR reported that approximately 52,500 of the 350,000 IDPs in settlements in the southern provinces Kandahar and Helmand were Pashtuns from the north.[48]

This chapter will explore why many Pashtuns chose to migrate as a response to the new political situation in northern Afghanistan. Which factors made them consider the relative costs of staying to be higher than the relative costs of migrating? And why were many of the IDPs so reluctant to return to their place of origin even if the main reason for their escape – the bad security situation – had improved? The outline of the chapter is as follows: first, I will explore reasons for leaving, next the attention is briefly turned to where the Pashtun IDPs went to, before I explore the choice of whether to remain displaced or return to the place of origin. Finally I conclude.

---

[47] Luna, Alfons. 2002. "Tens of thousands flee ethnic persecution in northern Afghanistan." vol. 2008. Kabul: AFP/Relief Web.
[48] IDMC. 2006. "Afghanistan: Fighting in the south sets off new wave of displacement. A profile on the internal displacement situation." Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, Geneve.

6.1 The decision to migrate

Given the many Pashtuns who subordinated under the new power-holders and thereby chose to remain in their home areas, why did so many Pashtuns choose to migrate? The assaults discussed in the previous chapter as reasons for subordination can at the same time be reasons for migration as well. Both the Pashtuns who were actually assaulted and those who witnessed or heard about the assaults against other Pashtuns were confronted with a difficult choice; should they stay or should they migrate? The deteriorating security situation was important for the Pashtuns when making the decision to escape. According to a UNHCR survey among IDPs in southern Afghanistan, 64 percent of the Pashtun IDPs gave security reasons as the most or second most important reason for migrating, see figure 6.1 (UNHCR 2004c). Table 6.1 distinguishes between various security factors. The security situation was seemingly the same to all Pashtuns in the north. This implies that there was a combination of factors deciding whether one should subordinate or migrate, and that the possible strategies for coping with the new situation post-Taliban were considered differently in each family.

Reasons for escape

- Security
- Facilities
- Land/Farming
- Livelyhood/Job
- Other
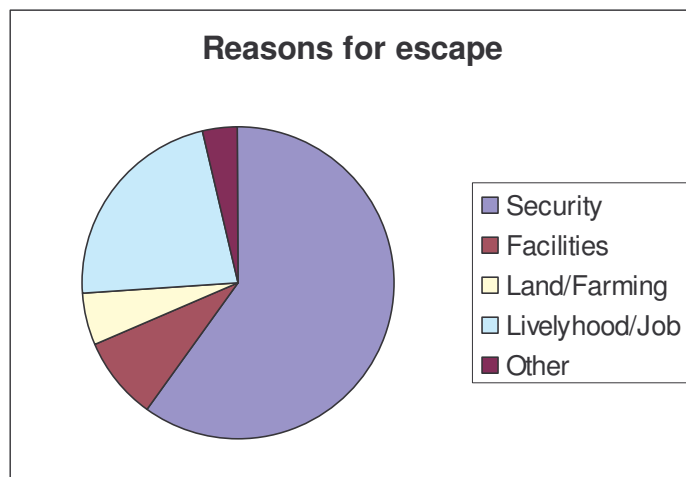
Based on IDP Profiling analysis (UNHCR 2004c)[49]

---

[49] The numbers in figure 6.1; 6.2 and Table 6.1; 6.2 are based on an IDP Profiling Survey published by the UNHCR in 2004. The categories security, facilities, land/farming, livelihood/job and other are established by the author, while the subcategories as showed in the tables are established in the UNCHR survey. Unfortunately, no methodological account on how the survey was conducted is available, see 3.2.4; UNHCR. 2004c. "South IDP Profiling Analysis." UNHCR.

Reasons for escape

Security	%	Facilities	%	Land/Farming	%	Livelihood/Job	%	Other	%
Armed conflict	24	No drinking water	7	Migration routes not accessible	<1	Job opportunities	1	Free food in camp	<1
Quam protection	1	No accommodation	1	Land confiscated	3	Lost animals[50]	18	Unknown	<1
Quam displaced	1	Social services destroyed or unavailable	1	Land not arable	1	Lost daily labour job	4	Blank value	2
Family member attacked or killed	12			No pastures	1	No access to market to sell goods	<1		
Illegal jailing	14								
Illegal taxation	1								
Mine/UXO's in PoO[51]	1								
Total	64		9		6		24		4

Based on IDP profiling analysis (UNHCR 2004c)

In addition to the harassment against Pashtuns described in the previous chapter, the overall consequences of decades of conflict also played a role in making the decision to leave. Many, not only Pashtuns, had difficulties making ends meet. The UNHCR IDP survey shows that 75 percent of the Pashtun IDPs from the north had been farmers before they migrated, out of which the majority had been livestock farmers while a minority were mainly agricultural farmers (UNHCR 2004c). Farming in Afghanistan can be unpredictable due to the climate. Most land in northern Afghanistan is dependent on irrigation to give good crops, however only small areas, mostly near district centres, are irrigated. The effect of the severe droughts the 1990s and in 2001 and 2002 was exacerbated by the fact that many irrigation canals had been destroyed through the many years of conflict, sometimes through neglect, sometimes as a direct result of war. The lack of water also influenced the fodder situation for the livestock farmers. In addition to

---

[50] 'Lost animals' is here categorized as livelihood/job, since livestock farming here is recognized as a job generating money. The categories 'land' and 'livelihood' are not mutually exclusive; rather they might be seen as overlapping. The category 'land' could have been a subcategory of 'livelihood', but livelihood could not have been a subcategory of 'land'. In this thesis, it seemed most fruitful to distinguish between 'land' and 'livelihood'.

[51] Place of Origin

lack of water, plant diseases and seeds with low quality had further diminished the production (Monsutti 2006: 23). Hence, food production was scarce, and to many of the Pashtuns the situation was only made worse by the fact that local commanders and armed civilians were occupying or expropriating their land and stealing their livestock (HRW 2002; NRC 2005). Livestock farming is more mobile than agricultural farming, since livestock farmers have the opportunity to take their livestock with them if they migrated. Thus one could presume that the livestock farmers were more likely to migrate than the agricultural farmers. This way, they could also prevent livestock from being stolen from them. Since agriculture and livestock were the main income sources, loosing the land they farmed or the animals they had, meant loosing their income, especially since other job opportunities were scarce (CPAU 2004; DIS 2002).[52] According to the UNHCR IDP profiling survey (UNHCR 2004c), 24 percent of the Pashtun IDPs responded that lost livelihood/job was the most or second most important reason for migrating. Of these 24 percent, 18 percent refer to having lost animals (see Table 6.1) implying that owning livestock is a widespread way of securing a source of income. Having lost this source of income, these Pashtuns became increasingly vulnerable and dependent on assistance, be it remittances or humanitarian aid. Yet, as discussed in chapter five, Pashtuns were often denied access to health clinics and other facilities, or denied their ration cards by the non-Pashtun local distributors. There were also reports of Pashtuns being looted for parts of their rations (CPAU 2004; HRW 2002). All of the factors mentioned above made the Pashtuns extremely vulnerable. Without the possibility to support themselves, the costs of subordination were considered higher than the costs of migration. If they migrated, they would be less exposed to harassments and threats and additionally, the chances of receiving humanitarian support would be better. The Pashtuns who lost most or all of their land and most or all of their livestock were hence more likely to migrate than the ones who still had land and/or their livelihood intact.

The Pashtuns who were able to keep their land or keep their animals, were in a better position to cope in their home village. Even though they were discriminated against and maybe forced to pay illegal tax, *zahkat* or *ushur*, they still had their sources of income,

---

[52] Interviewee # 7

and were assumingly in a better position to meet the claims of the new power-holders. Owning fixed property was a factor making migration less desirable, because by owning land, a certain amount of income or production was guaranteed. On the other hand, rich landowners were sometimes put under stronger pressure to pay *ushur* than their poorer fellows (CPAU 2004).

When writing about loyalty, Hirschman assumes that persons with considerable attachment to a product or an organization will search for ways to make oneself influential in order to avoid exit (Hirschman 1970: 70). Land may be understood as such an attachment. To the landowners, escaping meant leaving any real estate or land behind. The possibility to sell land was there, but selling would be difficult as there would be many sellers and few buyers (Harpviken 2006a: 154). Selling would also mean to cut some of the most important strings attaching a family to their place of origin, and upon a possible return to the place of origin, the family would not have a place to settle. Not only may it be assumed that the landless were more likely to migrate than landowners, it can also be assumed that they were more likely to stay in exile for a longer time than the landowners if they migrated (Harpviken 2006a). The IDP survey conducted by the UNHCR partly gives credit to such an assumption, showing that only 15 percent of the Pashtun IDPs owned land (UNHCR 2004c). Numbers regarding how many of the subordinated Pashtuns that owned land are unfortunately not available.

Forced migration research often mentions that people migrate in waves (Harpviken 2006a). The peaks and troughs may be explained by thresholds, as discussed in chapter two. Though not very evident in the IDP profiling survey, other data suggest that *quam* protection is of importance when deciding whether to migrate or not, and where to migrate (Stigter 2005: 7). If the majority of a group leaves, it may become more risky to stay behind, since they no longer will have the same *quam* protection as before (Harpviken 2006a: 144). Thus, if many of ones' *quam* leaves, the relative cost of staying subordinated will increase, whereas the relative cost of migration will diminish. If a certain number of a person's quam leaves thus reaching a threshold, a wave of migration may be set off.

Besides the motivation, migrating requires especially two additional aspects; the health to migrate and the ability to cover the costs in economical terms. The older were therefore less likely to migrate than younger Pashtuns. This point is supported by the fact that the assessment missions from HRW and CPAU on several occasions were met by old Pashtuns remaining in an otherwise abandoned village (CPAU 2004; HRW 2002). Regarding the costs, money may be the reason for diverging choices depending on what other factors are involved. A migrant must be able to pay for the costs, thus excluding the poorer ones, however, affluent persons might be more able to manage and provide for themselves in difficult political situations and thus chose to stay.

Thus, the Pashtuns who chose to migrate did so because they thought that they would have better living conditions in the camps than in the north at the present political situation, and because they regarded the relative costs of subordinating and mobilizing greater than the relative costs of migrating. The bad security situation can be seen as the primary reason for migrating, but socio-economic factors such as ability to support ones' family, security through *quam* protection and access to humanitarian aid in exile were decisive in choosing whether to migrate or not.

6.2 Where to go

The decision to escape was in many instances taken in a hurry. Many Pashtun villagers fled when they saw soldiers approaching their village. In the first place, they escaped to avoid assaults, some returning to the village the same night or after a few days. During the attacks, many Pashtuns escaped several times, each time they saw soldiers coming to the village to loot (HRW 2002). In this phase, many found refuge in the mountains, in a neighbouring village or in the district or province centre. There were also established IDP camps in Dawlatabad, Qaysar and Maimana where some of the Pashtuns found shelter (UNHCR 2002). But as the looting and the attacks persisted, increasingly more Pashtuns migrated to places further away, preferably to areas with a Pashtun majority as the south and Pakistan, but also to western Afghanistan. However, in February 2002 Pakistan again closed its borders, which had also been closed for much of the previous year, for Afghan

70

refugees. As many as 16 000 Pashtun IDPs were waiting on the border for registration and permission to enter Pakistan, basically living in no-man's land. Though accessible

Map of IDP and Refugee camps in Afghanistan
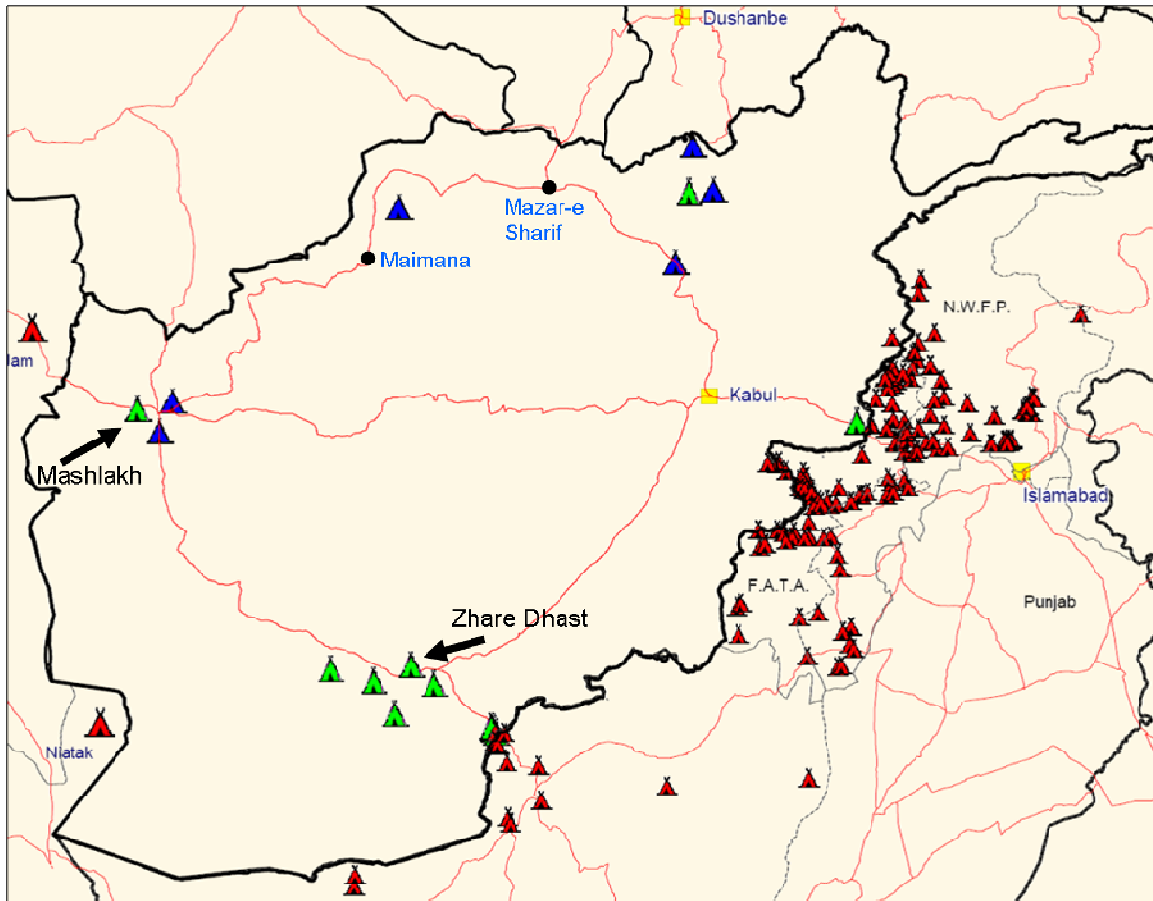
Map adapted from AIMS

from Afghanistan, this area was officially in Pakistani territory, meaning that any aid or assistance to the migrants depended on the permission of the Pakistani government (Turton and Marsden 2002: 31). Except for Medecins Sans Frontiers (MSF), which had a clinic in the waiting area, no further assistance to the IDPs was allowed. As a response to the growing numbers of IDPs waiting in the waiting area, the UNHCR opened a new IDP camp at Zhare Dasht in Kandahar Province in August 2002. Many of the Pashtuns resettled to this camp (Turton and Marsden 2002: 31). In total approximately 52 000 Pashtuns from the north had migrated to the south (IDMC 2006) out of which 14 498

settled in Zhare Dasht (UNHCR 2004c), some 6000[53] settled in Maslakh, an IDP camp close to Herat, and the rest went to other informal settlements in western Afghanistan (NRC 2005).

6.3 Remaining displaced?

"*Even if we build a house elsewhere, it's not home. But if I build a house in my hometown, I can live there forever and hopefully life will improve for us*" (Returnee from Zhare Dasht quoted in UNHCR 2006b). This quote is taken from a UNHCR news report, and exemplifies an IDP's wish to return to his hometown. The quote illustrates the conventional assumption regarding return to the place of origin as the ultimate solution for IDPs and refugees. However, this is not always the case. For several reasons, settling in the place of exile or resettlement in a third location may be a better solution for refugees and IDPs than returning to their place of origin (Hammond 1999; Lischer 2006). Both the migrated people and their places of origin may have changed considerably during the time in exile, making return less desirable. The assumption that most displaced persons want to return is faulty. Among the Pashtuns from Faryab Province living in Maslakh, 95 percent said that they were unwilling to return to their place of origin (NRC 2005). According to the UNHCR survey, only a minor majority (54 percent) of those Pashtuns living in the camps in southern Afghanistan, wished to return to the place of origin (UNHCR 2004c). Both the IDPs in Maslakh and Zhare Dasht had adapted well to life in displacement, and this was especially true for the livestock farmers who were living off their camels, sheep and goats. Reluctant to return, the IDPs proposed that they should be granted ownership of the land where they had settled. Not surprisingly, this proposition encountered strong opposition (Strand and Olesen 2005: 96).

Still, the international refugee regime[54] seems to emphasise repatriation as the best solution for displaced persons. This may be exemplified with all the resources spent on

---

[53] The number is based on numbers from NRC. In total some 14 300 migrants had settled in western regions, out of which a little less than half were Pashtuns, and a little more than half were Kuchis, a nomadic tribe, also of Pashtun ethnicity.

assisting migrants in returning to their place of origin. Since 2002, the UNHCR in Afghanistan have assisted more than half a million migrants to return to their places of origin (UNHCR 2006b). The emphasis on assisting migrants in return directs us to the myth that return will not take place unless the IDPs are assisted. Of the IDPs and refugees who return, Harpviken argues that most return with little or no assistance, and that even for those who do receive assistance, the repatriation packages are not likely to be the main factor in their decision to return (2006a: 199-202).

In order to assist the Pashtun migrants from the north in returning to their place of origin the 'Return Commission to the North' was established in the beginning of 2003. This commission consisted of representatives from AIHRC, UNHCR, UNAMA, Jombesh, Jamiat and Wahdat, the Minister of Refugees and Repatriation (MoRR) and shuras from the IDP camps in the south (IRIN 2003a). The aim of this commission was to assist the Pashtun IDPs in the south to return voluntarily to their places of origin. The commission led information campaigns to inform the migrants about the living conditions in their place of origin, and it organized "go-and see-visits" where the migrants could send their representatives to the place of origin to see for themselves how the situation in the north was. The representatives from the factions made sure that the returning IDPs should feel safe against harassments from the local commanders. In the first meetings, the heads of the three main local factions, Dostum, Ustad Atta Mohammed and Sardar Saidi[55] were taking part. This gave the commission the influence they needed to put pressure on local commanders. In addition to assurance of safety, the commission offered the returning migrants some material assistance. Most of the returnees were offered some equipment, food, shelter and an assisted travel back to the north,[56] and some of the landless migrants were offered small pieces of land[57] (IOM 2002; NRC 2005). However, because of the

---

[54] The international refugee regime refers to the international legal framework and conventions for refugee protection, and the international humanitarian organizations who work with refugee relief and policy.
[55] See appendix 3 for short introduction of Dostum, Ustad Atta and Sardar Saidi.
[56] Interviewee # 6 and interviewee # 11
[57] The land distribution was organized by DoRR (the district office of MoRR), and allegedly started June 2005. However, no written documentation on the land distribution schemes was available, and no criteria other than "landless" were specified. DoRR had neither informed the IDPs in Herat or Kandahar about the land distribution. NRC. 2005. "IDP Return Facilitation to Faryab. An Assessment by the Norwegian Refugee Council." Norwegian Refugee Council, Kabul.

relatively severe security conditions for the returned IDPs, the Return Commission soon concluded that as long as the security did not improve, the commission would not recommend any more returns. Shortly after, the UNHCR advised the migrated Pashtuns not to return to the north (Harpviken 2006a: 252-253).

One of my interviewees, who was a member of the Return Commission, said that he would still not recommend all Pashtuns to return to the north. He divided the Pashtuns into three groups; the rich landlords, the small farmers and the landless. Given that the area of origin was safe, rich landlords could return. They could re-establish their land upon return, and maybe even sell all or parts of it, and this way their livelihood was secured. He was more reluctant to the return of small farmers, as they would probably not be able to make ends meet only by farming. If they in addition to the farming had a small shop or another way to earn money, my informant was more positive towards a possible return. If the farmers did not have an extra source of income, he would not recommend them to return. Regarding the landless he said the following: "*The IDPs who are landless, and who do not have a business are not encouraged to return, to go back to their place of origin. The displacement has in such manners changed their lives. If they go back to Faryab, they must be farmers.*"[58]

The decision to return is, like the decision to migrate, taken against the background of a set of factors. The reasons to remain displaced are largely the same as for migrating, however, the constellation of the factors is different. In both occasions security is the key factor, and many migrants will be reluctant to return unless they are certain that the security situation is good enough for them to feel safe (UNHCR 2003). However, the security situation is given more emphasis upon escape than upon return. Lack of access to an adequate standard of living in the place of origin is a prevalent factor for remaining displaced (AIHRC 2007; NRC 2005: 13). This could be explained by the fact that the security situation was graver in the end of 2001 and the beginning of 2002, immediately after the fall of Taliban, than it was after some years. The security situation improved with the presidential elections in 2004 and the parliamentary elections in 2005, and

---

[58] Interviewee # 6

Pashtuns were no longer directly targeted because of their ethnicity (Spink 2004). That said, the security situation is still difficult for most Pashtuns in the northern areas.[59] There is a severe lack of rule of law, and Pashtuns still fear illegal taxation, forced recruitment and exploitation by local commanders (IDMC 2004).[60] This indicates that Pashtuns are willing to accept some security hazards, if other socio-economic factors are in place.[61] Socio-economic factors are thus given an essential role in making the decision of whether to remain in displacement or not.
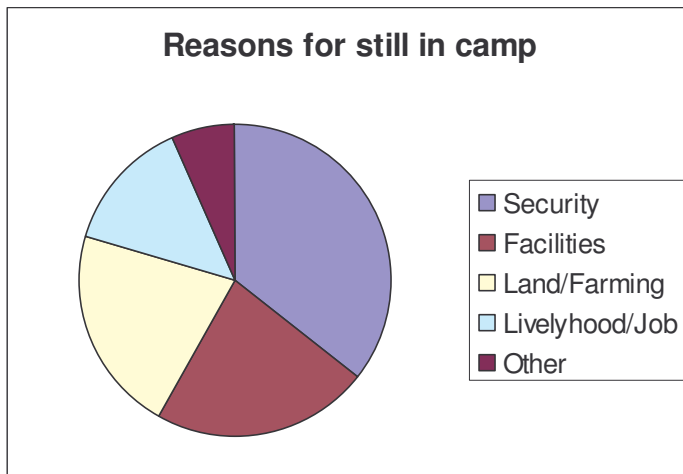
Based on IDP Profiling analysis, (UNHCR 2004c)

Drawing on the UNHCR IDP profiling survey (2004c) the figure above and table below show the factors that prevent the Pashtuns living in the IDP camps in southern Afghanistan from returning. The factors preventing the Pashtuns from returning are more differentiated than the factors leading to the escape. Still, concerns about the security were given as the main reason not to return. The displaced Pashtuns were reluctant to return as long as rule of law was not established, exemplified by the categories 'No justice for attack or murder' (17 percent), 'Fear of reprisal' (seven percent) and 'No clan protection' (seven percent). The concerns these factors express show that Pashtuns were still at unease regarding the local commanders and their power. That seven percent of the

---

[59] Interviewee # 6
[60] Interviewee # 4, 7, 11; Informal conversation # 3
[61] Interviewee # 6; see also UNHCR. 2006b. "Internally displaced Afghans reach home in the north." vol. 2008, edited by UNHCR. Mazar-i Sharif: UNHCR.

Pashtuns were unwilling to return to their place of origin because they lacked *qaum* protection implies the vulnerability of Pashtuns who did not subordinate to the new power-holders after the fall of Taliban.

Reasons for still in camp

Security	%	Facilities	%	Land/Farming	%	Livelihood/Job	%	Other	%
Family feud	3	Health clinic	4	Land confiscated	4	Demobilization (soldier with no job)	1	Debt	1
Fear of reprisal	7	No drinking water	15	Land no longer arable	<1	No animals	9	Life is better in camp	4
Illegal taxation	2	No irrigation	<1	Land not accessible	2	No jobs	3	Vulnerable family member	<1
Land mines/UXO	1	No school	3	Landless	11	Poor access to market	<1	Blank value	2
No quam protection	7	No veterinary services	<1	Migration routes not accessible	<1	Small business	<1		
No quam in PoO[62]	<1			No pastures for animals	<1				
Lack of rule of law	17			Waiting for land allocation	1				
				No water for animals	<1				
				Pasture not accessible	1				
Total	38		24		23		15		7

Numbers based on IDP profiling analysis (UNHCR 2004c)

Again, the threshold mechanism might be relevant. The more IDPs who return, the more protection the IDPs would get from each other. However, someone has to be the first, and unless someone is willing to return without *qaum* protection, no one will return. One way to handle the lack of *qaum* protection would therefore be to wait for or organize a return collective, consisting of a group of fellow IDPs. A flight collective could provide the same sense of security or protection as *qaum* protection. Obviously the size of the flight collective that offers protection is relevant. Smaller flight collectives would be able to offer less protection than bigger flight collectives (Harpviken 2006a: 50-51).

---

[62] Place of Origin

Armed conflicts where commanders loyal to Jombesh, Jamiat and Wahdat fought over control over areas and smuggler routes were the principal obstacle to a stable security situation. As mentioned in the previous chapter, commanders were competing to win the loyalty of the Pashtun population, as this was seen as a way to secure power over a larger area. In the extension of this, forced recruitment of Pashtuns by local power-holders have been reported, a fact that was met with much concern also by the central government, as recruitment would mean more power to the local power-holders also vis-à-vis the central government, which has relatively little support in the northern areas (Harpviken 2006a; HRW 2002).

When leaving, lack of facilities in the place of origin was among the two most important factors for 17 percent of the Pashtuns,[63] compared to 25 percent upon return.[64] One way to explain this is that the Pashtuns might have gotten used to facilities such as access to water, health clinics, employment and schooling in the IDP camps in the south, and were unwilling to return to a simpler life without these facilities. Though the food assistance to the migrants in the IDP camps was phased out by the end of August 2005, UNHCR, UNICEF, WHO, the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) and the Ministry of Education (MoE) continued to offer health services and primary education in the camps throughout 2006 (UNHCR 2005).

Of the families who had fled their homes just as the worst looting and harassment went on, many decided to return to their homes after a short time in exile. They were willing to accept some risk in order to stay in their village of origin. Some returned after a few days,[65] others waited a few weeks or months before returning. For some, subordination to the new power-holders was a good strategy, while others made the choice to migrate southwards after some time of subordination. Even though exploitation of and

---

[63] Facilities here include 'Lost daily labour job' 'No drinking water', 'No accommodation' and 'Social Services destroyed or not available'.

[64] Facilities here include 'Health clinic', 'No drinking water', 'No employments' and 'No school'. The category 'No accommodation' was unfortunately not an answer option in the question 'What prevents you from return?'

[65] Even though this kind of short time displacement may not always be seen as migration, I argue that as long as they upon escape did not know how long they had to be displaced, this short time displacement may be characterized as migration.

discrimination against Pashtuns took place in the north, some northern Pashtuns returned to their place of origin already in 2002 (UNHCR 2002). Most of the IDP returnees however, did not return until some years later, with the biggest waves of return taking place in 2005 and 2006. Nevertheless, some 38 650 IDPs still live in Zhare Dasht, and 4545 in Maslakh, out of which approximately half of the population are Pashtuns from the north, and the remaining are Kuchis from the same area (GIMU/PGDS 2007; IOM 2002; UNHCR 2006b). Of the IDP returnees, the ones who had owned land were most likely to return (NRC 2003). Owning land may be viewed as a security and a possible source of income. The ones who owned bigger pieces of land even had the opportunity to sell off some of their land and farm on the rest, and thus securing themselves both a monetary foundation and secure a provision of food. Upon migration and before return, the IDPs were aware of the risk of their land having been occupied by others while in displacement. Land conflicts were and still are widespread in northern Afghanistan (see e.g. NRC 2005; Wily 2004a; Wily 2004b).[66]

The information provided by Pashtuns who had either returned from exile or who never left was often critical for the IDPs' decisions on whether to stay in exile or to return. If the returned IDPs were content with their return, this had a positive effect on the IDPs, but if the IDP returnees faced discrimination and were unable to make a living in their place of origin, the news would reach the IDPs and have a negative impact on their decision to return. The returnees did in most cases experience discrimination, and many of the returnees were not able to find a job or to regain their land. Hence for many of the returned IDPs, the return to their place of origin was not at all the end of the migration-cycle. Instead, many young men escaped again, this time mostly to Iran, to get a job and earn money to provide for their families.

The IDPs living in camps in the Herat area in western Afghanistan had particularly good information links with their place of origin. Some had contact with family or friends in their places of origin from once every three months till even on a monthly basis. Personal contact was the most trusted source of information, and there was scepticism towards the

---

[66] Interviewee # 2, 4, 6 & 7, Informal conversation # 3

information provided by governmental institutions and NGOs. In addition to scepticism towards NGO and governmental information, the Pashtuns complained that the camp brokers[67] did not give them information. The camp brokers especially withheld information about return options. The camp brokers are not the same persons as the traditional leader of a village. Rather, the camp brokers are younger, educated men who speak English and who understand the language and the game of aid agencies, and are thus able to communicate with humanitarian organizations. The camp brokers' powerful position would not necessarily linger upon return, so as an attempt to prevent their power basis from withering away, the camp brokers withheld information about returning (NRC 2006). Centlivres and Centlivres-Demont (1987) were the first to emphasize the socio-political adjustments taking place in the Afghan refugee camps in Pakistan. There they observed that the traditional leaders were losing some of their influence to the camp brokers, who often were young, educated ex-commanders representing one of the Afghan political parties. After a potential return to place of origin, the traditional power balance might be restored, and the camp brokers would lose their power base.

Despite the uncertain security situation and the lack of facilities and job opportunities, many of the migrants returned to their place of origin. Emotional strings to their birth place, a sense of home being the place they were born, could be the reason for their wish to return. The quote at the beginning of this section is an expression of that. The returnee who wanted to build his house in his hometown, returned from Zhare Dasht with a group of other Pashtuns, assisted by the UNHCR. Other members of this group claimed to be tired of living in a camp as the reason for their return. They were, as they formulated it "*tired of living in an IDP camp. The longer we stay there, the later it is for us to rebuild our houses and work on our farms*" (quoted in UNHCR 2006b). They further stated that they did not want their children to grow up in an IDP camp and that they were concerned about the quality of the education in the camps. They wanted their children to get proper education.

---

[67] Camp brokers are the connection between the humanitarian organizations and the IDPs/refugees. They are responsible for handing out information and aid to the IDPs, and are also responsible for making the lists identifying the beneficiaries of the aid. The camp brokers represent the families living in the same block as himself.

It is important however to also take into consideration the pressure to return that the Pashtun IDPs were exposed to. As mentioned earlier, the IDPs both in Maslakh and Zhare Dasht were adapting well to life in displacement, and proposed alternative options to return as the final solution to their displacement (Strand and Olesen 2005). These propositions were countered by the respective provincial administrations, neighbouring villages, UNHCR and the government of Afghanistan (Strand and Olesen 2005).[68] Pashtun elders and local authorities in the south insisted that the Pashtun IDPs from the north should return to the north, and that the IDPs were in their right to live in their places of origin. The elders further warned against ethnic segregation in Afghanistan, which they meant the IDPs contributed to if they did not return to their places of origin.[69] Disregarding the security and socio-economic situation, the Pashtun IDPs were thus put under pressure from local authorities to return to the north. Upon returning however, the local authorities in the place of origin were not welcoming the returnees. Hence, the Pashtun IDPs were put under cross pressure between the local authorities at respectively the place of origin and the place of exile.

Worsened living conditions in the place of exile may contribute to the decision to return. In 2003 MSF temporarily suspended their activities in Zhare Dasht camp because of the many threats against and attacks on humanitarian aid workers in the region (IRIN 2003b). This meant the temporal end of medical aid, medicine and food supplies. The growing number of clashes between international forces and Taliban insurgents that took place in the southern provinces Kandahar and Helmand destabilized the whole region, and led to worsened security. Even if the IDP camps were not the direct targets for any of the opposing parts,[70] the humanitarian agencies working in the area were, and the increasing number of car bombs and kidnappings of both local and international aid workers had direct consequences for the aid provided to the IDPs. The general security situation in southern Afghanistan deteriorated, and may perhaps have lead to more Pashtuns deciding to return to their home village. Similarly, when the UN relief agencies, on the request of

---

[68] Interviewee # 6 and 11
[69] Informal conversation # 11
[70] However, it is likely to assume that the Taliban were trying to recruit IDPs living in the camps.

the Afghan government, ended their food distribution in the camps to all but the especially vulnerable by the end of August 2005, it might have provided displaced Pashtuns with a new incentive to return to the place of origin (UNHCR 2006a). A worsened security situation and deteriorating access to facilities in the place of exile can thus be reckoned as reasons for returning.

6.4 Conclusion

This chapter has explored why some Pashtuns chose to migrate as a response to the new political context in northern Afghanistan post-Taliban. Security factors must be held as the most important reasons to escape, however the security situation affected Pashtuns differently depending on their socio-economic situation. Thus, in line with the proposals of the theoretical framework, to call conflict induced migration forced migration would be an oversimplification, since the forcedness affects people differently according to for instance their socio-economic situation. To the affluent land owners who were able to support themselves in the place of origin, the relative costs of migrating and giving up their land were greater than the benefits of relative security in the south, west or in Pakistan. To most of the ordinary Pashtuns living off livestock and farming, the relative costs of staying subordinated to the new power-holders were greater than the relative costs of migrating. Furthermore, ordinary Pashtuns had fewer means to protect themselves against harassments and looting, and were thus more frequently victims of looting, of for instance livestock than more affluent Pashtuns. Hence, socio-economic factors interact with security factors, and the sum of these influence the relative costs of the various strategies. Regarding the question of whether to remain displaced or not, the main decisive factor was still security, such as protection, but increasingly the focus was turned to the right to an adequate standard of living i.e. access to facilities and job opportunities. Thus, the factors decisive for staying displaced are largely the same as the factors decisive for migration, but the interaction between these factors have changed, as the socio-economic factors have increased their influence.

7.0 Mobilization

Why do some mobilize while others do not? Does competition over the same resources, labour market and political positions foster mobilization? Since the end of 2001 till present there have been some attempts to mobilize by Pashtuns in the north. What type of mobilization? These are questions I aim to answer in this chapter.

Since the ousting of the Taliban in 2001, the Taliban have attempted to regain terrain. In the southern and eastern parts of Afghanistan, the Taliban are much stronger than in the north. There is no doubt that the Taliban is on the rebound, but estimates of how strong they are and how much of Afghanistan they control, vary from 54 percent (Senlis 2007) to NATO's 10 percent (Giustozzi 2007: 35-37). According to Senlis (2007: 8) Faryab, Jawzjan and Balkh have substantial Taliban presence, and Sari Pul and Samangan are areas with light Taliban presence. When trying to win support, the Taliban actively seek to remobilize former supporters, and especially those who have been marginalized after the fall of Taliban have been the prime targets of Taliban's mobilization campaigns, regardless of tribal or ethnic background. Since the Pashtuns live in pockets in an otherwise predominantly non-Pashtun area, support from outside actors to mobilize against the local power-holders may be a precondition for mobilization. Possible allies are the government and the Taliban.

One of the central points of political opportunity structure approach is that one must understand the political context in which mobilization takes place (della Porta and Diani 2006). Accordingly, I start the chapter by an analysis of the political situation in northern Afghanistan from 2001 till present time. Thereafter I turn to government supported mobilization before I turn to mobilization through the Taliban. Central questions in this chapter are what kind of mobilization took place, who participated in the mobilization and why did they mobilize?

7.1 Political situation in the north, 2001 till present

7.1.1 Local administration

Though the central government has the formal legislative power in northern Afghanistan, many actors are influencing the political situation in the north. Here, I will give a short overview of four aspects relevant for the political situation in the north; the local administration, political power in northern Afghanistan, the central government's role and the weakness of the government's political structure.

At province level, the government is represented through a provincial administration, and a provincial governor appointed by the president.[71] The governor has the highest formal power in the province, and appoints governors on district level, *wuluswals*, and a deputy governor. Formally, all the appointments are to be approved by the government in Kabul, but these formalities are not always followed (Rubin and Malikyar Unpublished, 2003 2003, 2003, 2003; Wily 2004a). In each province and district formal courts are established, yet approximately 95 per cent of all disputes, both civil and criminal, are settled in traditional bodies like *shuras* and *jirgas* (Bauck, Strand, Hakim, and Akbari 2007: 16). Even though the district or provincial court rules in favour of the weaker party in a conflict, the police and local government are far from always able to ensure that rule of law is established (NRC 2006).

7.1.2 Political power in northern Afghanistan

In addition to the governors and the *wuluswals* other powerful actors are prominent in the political landscape. After the fall of Taliban, the political movements Jombesh, Jamiat and Hezb-e Wahdat, which had collectively ousted Taliban, shifted focus to ensure control over as large an area as possible. The area was divided according to military power, making up a patchwork of different power factions. Most of Faryab, Jawzjan and Sari Pul were controlled by Jombesh (Dostum), Balkh and Samangan were for the most part held by Jamiat (Atta Mohammed). Enclaves of the provinces were also controlled by

---

[71] Late 2007, the Independent Directorate for Local Administration/Governance (IDLG) was set up. IDLG is responsible for finding potential candidates for the governor position. President Karzai then officially appoints one of the candidates as governor.

Hezb-e Wahdat, led by Sadir (Giustozzi 2002). Also, more local movements and militias have claimed the right to areas, such as the Uzbek and former Jombesh commander Abdul Malik with his movement Hezb-e Azadi-ye Afghanistan (Freedom party of Afghanistan). In clashes against Dostum, Malik was supported by Atta Mohammed. From the fall of the Taliban until the present, violent clashes between the movements, where control over areas and smuggling routes have been contested, have occurred at various intervals. On the local level, competing commanders loyal to the same faction have also had conflicts with each other.[72]

These movements and their commanders still have a strong influence over the political situation in the north. To ensure future power after 2001, the movements rapidly filled the power vacuum in the police and administrative posts with former militia fighters and commanders. By filling these posts, the movements managed to institutionalize their power, with the consequence that a significant share of the police and administrative staff in the north are first and foremost loyal to their respective movement, rather than the central government (Evans, Manning, Osmani, Tully, and Wilder 2004: 98-99; Wilder 2007: 3). Thus, local commanders and former militia fighters are in many instances responsible for ensuring law and order. Ironically, local commanders also constitute the greatest security threat (Senlis 2006; Simonsen 2004). Local commanders threaten the freedom of the press by for instance threatening journalists who report on the commanders' illegal activities.[73] Many of the commanders are feared by the civilians, and have little legitimate power. As a villager in Faryab expressed it "*We can talk of Rassoul*[74] *and what he did – he is dead but we can not talk of the present. These are armed people, we can do nothing*" (villager about local commanders, quoted in Pain 2004: 14, my footnote).

---

[72] Clark, Kate. 2005. "In the shadow of the gun." in *BBC News*, vol. 2007. Northern Afghanistan/London: BBC, Economist. 2006. "It's rough up north." vol. 2008. London: The Economist Newspaper Limited.
[73] Qadiry, Tahir. 2007c. "Reporters Put Life on Line." in *Afghanistan News Center*, vol. 2008. Mazar-e Sharif: IPS. Ibrahimi, Sayed Yaqub. 2004a. "Reporter bullied over alleged war crimes video." vol. 2007. Mazar-e-Sharif: ISN Security Watch.
[74] Rasul Pahlawan, feared commander, killed in 1996. See appendix 3 for short introduction

Thanks to the disarmament campaigns and the political campaigns ahead of *loya jirga*[75] and the elections[76], the anti-Pashtun atmosphere in the north diminished somewhat. Now, it rather became a point to include Pashtuns into the political factions as a way of showing the international actors the faction's inclusiveness and multi-ethnic values (Simonsen 2004: 718). Dostum on several occasions tried to recruit Pashtuns to Jombesh and running for presidency he even included a Pashtun woman as one of his vice-president candidates. The rest of Jombesh however were more sceptical towards Pashtuns (Giustozzi 2005: 9). Dostum's former hegemony as defender of Uzbek interests and as Uzbek leader in the north is no longer as strong as it was, even though he controls large areas and still is the most influential individual in the north. Though diminished, discrimination against Pashtuns is still a prevalent concern, and Pashtuns still feel marginalized in the north.

7.1.3 The role of the central government.

Historically, Afghanistan's central government has been weak. Its' representatives have been regarded as oppressive and have been largely disliked (Bauck, Strand, Hakim, and Akbari 2007: 8; USIP 2003). Today's governmental representatives are largely perceived the same way. The central government is responsible for appointing governors, and traditionally governors and *wuluswals* are not appointed to positions in their place of origin. This practice was introduced to ensure the administrators' loyalty to the central government, instead of local powerful persons. There are however exceptions to this practice. E.g. President Karzai appointed Ustad Atta Mohammed as the governor of Balkh. It is worth noting that the appointment came after the presidential elections, where Ustad Atta Mohammed had publicly announced his support to the president. The appointment was perceived by many as a move to curb Dostum, who also ran for presidency. Dostum was not given a position as governor; instead he was given the position of chief of staff to the commander in chief in 2005, a position considered to be mainly ceremonial.

---

[75] Grand Assembly or great council. It is the highest organ of state power. The Loya Jirga in 2003 met to ratify the new Afghan Constitution.
[76] 2004: Presidential elections; 2005: Parliamentary elections

7.1.4 The weakness of the governmental structure

The perception of the central government as a weak and oppressive instance has not changed much has not changed much over the last century. Corruption is still a major problem, both within the police and the administration at all levels, which also undermines the public confidence in the government (UNDP 2006).The weakness of the government in regard to implementation of rule and law and ability to provide security further undermines the government's legitimacy and prevents the mobilization of villages to support the government. The government's weak control combined with the fact that the movements have gained access to administrative and police positions, provide good opportunities for local commanders to operate relatively freely without the risk of being persecuted (USIP 2003). A recent example from February 2008 is the reaction of the Attorney General of Afghanistan, Abdul Jabar Sabit, to the kidnapping of his former campaign manager and now political opponent Akbar Bai, by general Dostum. The Attorney General stated that it would be difficult to persecute Dostum due to his current position as a powerful commander in the north, and the fear that persecution of Dostum would set off factional fighting in northern Afghanistan.[77] The signal effect of the incapability of persecuting Dostum is that powerful leaders are above the law, and indirectly that the government has accepted Dostum as the leader and provider of security in the north. This will again have implications for whether civilians in the north regard the central government as a partner for mobilization against local commanders in the north.

7.2 Government supported mobilization

Mobilization without support from an outside actor is unlikely. However, with support from the government there have been some attempts of mobilization.

---

[77] Bhadrakumar, M K. 2008. "Intrigue takes Afghanistan to the brink." vol. 2008. Hong Kong: Asian Times Online, Sengupta, Kim. 2008. "Warlord under siege after 'kidnap and torture' of former ally." vol. 2008. Mazar-e Sharif, London: The Independent, Synovitz, Ron. 2008. "Afghanistan: Prosecutor Suggests 'Some People' Cannot Be Tried." vol. 2008. Kabul: Radio Free Europe.

7.2.1 Mobilization as response to acute threat

The episode illustrating this point was set off by the governor of Faryab, Enayat Enayatullah, and the head of the Faryab military council, Hashim Habibi. Enayatullah is a wealthy Uzbek with links to Hezb-e Islami, and Hashim Habibi is an opportunistic Uzbek commander and former Taliban ally who after the fall of Taliban aligned with Dostum (see 5.3. on shifting allegiances). During their time as governor and head of Faryab military council, the two were growing increasingly unpopular with the Uzbek majority in the province. Despite being Uzbeks,[78] they were accused of being corrupt, inefficient, and of favouring Pashtuns in administrative positions (Giustozzi 2005: 9-10). And despite the fact that they were deeply unpopular among the Uzbek population in Faryab, the two had quite some acceptance among the Pashtun population. Some Pashtun returnees in Shirin Tagab district even claimed that had it not been for the fact that Hashim Habibi was commander, they would not have returned to Faryab (CPAU 2004: 14). Since the fall of Taliban, Habibi had been loyal to Dostum and Jombesh, but in April 2004 during the presidential campaigns, he publicly announced his support to Interim President Karzai and shifted his allegiance from Jombesh to Jamiat. Habibi's support to Karzai was understood as a great insult to Dostum. In response to the policy of Habibi and Enayat, set off by the shift of allegiance by the former, Dostum's followers took to the streets, demanding the removal of both Habibi and Enayat. The demonstrations, which lasted for days, involved an attack on the governor's offices and clashes between supporters and opponents of Dostum, attacking each other with stones.[79] Eventually, Enayat and Habibi fled the province.[80] During the demonstrations, a mob of Uzbeks marched on a Pashtun village. The Pashtuns who remained in northern Afghanistan in 2004 had at some point subordinated to the local power-holders, as this was a prerequisite for remaining in the area. The acute threat against the village created changes in the relative costs of staying subordinated. According to collective action approaches changes in the costs of one strategy, will change the relative costs of another strategy, and again influence the

---

[78] Enayat Enayatullah had a Pashtun mother. See appendix 3 for a short introduction of Hashim Habibi and Enayat Enayatullah

[79] Birch, Douglas. 2004. "Afghan governor escapes after warlord seizes city." in *The Baltimore Sun*. Kabul, BAAG. 2004. "Afghanistan: Monthly Review." vol. 2007: British Agencies Afghanistan Group.

[80] Birch, Douglas. 2004. "Afghan governor escapes after warlord seizes city." in *The Baltimore Sun*. Kabul, BAAG. 2004. "Afghanistan: Monthly Review." vol. 2007: British Agencies Afghanistan Group.

decision of which strategy to choose. Responding to the threat which represented changes in the costs of subordination, the villagers chose to mobilize, as the relative costs and benefits of mobilization had gone down compared to remaining subordinated. The Pashtun villagers, being disarmed, armed themselves with sticks and stones, which they used to threaten the demonstrators (Giustozzi 2005: 9-10). By mobilizing, the villagers were able to protect their village from what would probably have ended in looting, vandalizing and perhaps also violent clashes between Uzbeks and Pashtuns.

The episode illustrates that the choice of strategy is a dynamic process continuously under revision, and that changes in the costs of one strategy may lead actors to change their choice of strategy. Furthermore, the episode illustrates that mobilization in small scale was possible despite the strong influence of Uzbek power-holders in Faryab.

7.2.2 Changed political opportunity structure and mobilization

After the fall of Taliban, the political opportunity structure for Pashtuns in the north changed dramatically. Due to ethnic prejudice of both Taliban and the opposition, which was generally strong in the northern areas, the Taliban had a preference for alliances with Pashtuns in this area (Dorronsoro 2005: 268). Being the favoured alliance partners opened up for Pashtun mobilization under the Taliban. After the Taliban fell however, the central government was not able to establish strong control over northern Afghanistan, and local commanders and the alliance which had been active in ousting the Taliban became the *de facto* power-holders. Most Pashtuns were regarded as Taliban allies by the new power-holders and the non-Pashtun civilians, and were thus targets of severe harassments motivated by revenge as described earlier. Most Taliban commanders either migrated, subordinated or were assassinated. The Pashtun Taliban and former Hezb-e Islami commander, Juma Khan Hamdard was no exception; he managed to build an alliance and subordinated under Dostum for tactical reasons (see 5.4 Tactics of subordination). In Jombesh, he was made the leader of Jombesh 8th corps. Having an allegiance with Dostum, Hamdard seized the opportunity of mobilizing to promote Pashtun interests while still subordinated. In 2004 Hamdard was active in organizing Dostum's presidential campaign, and together with other Pashtun representatives,

Hamdard was able to convince Dostum to include a Pashtun woman as one of his vice-president candidates (Giustozzi 2005: 9-10). In the beginning of August 2004 however, Hamdard publicly declared his support for interim president Karzai, stating that Karzai was the most appropriate and fair person among the 18 candidates.[81] This must have been quite an insult to Dostum and Jombesh.However, Hamdard was rewarded well; August 15th Karzai appointed him governor of Baghlan province, and soon Hamdard denied ever having any political relationship with Dostum, while Jombesh announced that Hamdard no longer had a place in Jombesh.[82] Thus, by combining two strategies, Hamdard mobilized and was able to promote Pashtun interests while staying subordinated to Dostum. Hamdard never became a popular commander in Baghlan, rather to the contrary. After large demonstrations against him he was transferred to Jawzjan province, the stronghold of Dostum. One of his first actions as governor of Jawzjan taken by Hamdard was to recover and confiscate a large cache of arms belonging to Dostum. Holding the most powerful formal position in the province, Hamdard continued his work to promote Pashtun interests. He appointed *wuluswals* on the background of pro-Pashtun interests, drawing largely on his Hezb-e Islami network, and the policy he led turned increasingly Pashtun friendly while his rhetoric similarly turned increasingly Uzbek hostile.[83]

It can therefore be concluded that mobilization in the north was possible under the opportunity structure provided by the central government. As Hamdard appointed new Pashtun *wuluswals,* increasingly more of the formal power was controlled by Pashtuns in Jawzjan. However, as both Pashtuns and Uzbeks were able to exploit the niche of political influence, mobilization between the groups will emerge (Barth 1981). Despite the formal power held by Pashtuns, Jombesh' grip on power in the north is strong, and long term and large scale mobilization is difficult and costly.[84]

---

[81] AFP. 2004. "Afghan president gains backing of militia commanders ahead of polls." vol. 2008. Mazar-i-Sharif: Reliefweb/AFP, Ibrahimi, Yaqub. 2004b. "Commanders Line Up Behind Karzai." vol. 2008. Mazar-e Sharif: Institute for War & Peace Reporting.
[82] Ibrahimi, Yaqub. 2004c. "Commanders Line Up Behind Karzai." vol. 2008. Mazar-e Sharif: IWPR.
[83] Interviewee # 3
[84] This goes for other ethnic groups as well. In January 2007 Shura Turk-e-Tabar, a shura with the aim to promote the Turkmen interests in the north, was established in Jowzjan. The leader, Akbar Bai, a former advisor of and spokesman for Dostum, accused Dostum of murdering Afghans and contributing to the instable situation in the north. This provocation led to large demonstrations against the shura, and Dostum's supporters stole the shura symbol and set their office on fire. In February 2008, Dostum and around 50

7.3 Taliban on the rebound?

The Taliban are not, and have never been as strong in the north as they are in the south of Afghanistan. Yet by playing former allies up against each other, and by infiltrating Pashtuns pockets in the north, Taliban was able to take military control over the region in 1998, two years after they had captured Kabul (Marsden 2002; Rashid 2001: 55-ff). Thus, to establish themselves in the north, the Taliban do not need support of the majority, support from a few villages is sufficient for the Taliban to be present in the region and to spread fear.

7.3.1 Type of support

The Taliban have used the same tactic to win support in Afghanistan since 2003. Their prime targets for recruitment are former supporters who became marginalized after the fall of the Taliban, for instance the clergy and marginalized *quams*. One can identify various types of Taliban recruits; some offer accommodation, shelter and food, while others join the movement to solve either military or organizational tasks. The first group will be referred to as passive supporters, while the second group will be referred to as active supporters. Another dimension present among the supporters is the degree of willing- or unwillingness. Therefore four ideal types of supporters may be identified 1a) the willing passive supporter, 1b) the willing active supporter, and 2a) the unwilling passive supporter and finally 2b) the unwilling active supporter.

Type of Taliban support

	Passive	Active
Willing	Willing passive supporter	Willing active supporter
Unwilling	Unwilling passive supporter	Unwilling active supporter

---

armed men attacked and abducted Akbar Bai from his home in Kabul. Hence, not only Pashtun, but also non-Pashtun attempts to mobilize against the Jombesh network is attempted eliminated.

Of course there is immense difference between a willing active supporter and an unwilling passive supporter. Most supporters will be found some place between willing and unwilling on a continuum, and may be characterized as reluctant supporters. The use of force seems for the most part to have been limited to passive support, by imposing themselves in a village, and of the villagers to provide food and shelter. Force in relation to active support is less prevalent, most active supporters are willing or reluctant, but not unwilling to join the Taliban. If a whole *quam* has sided with the Taliban, yet are reluctant to provide any soldiers, the elders may force families to provide one son to the movement (Giustozzi 2007: 42). Regarding the use of force, the opportunity structure for the Taliban to exercise force is more confined in the north where they have less control and are generally weaker than the south. However, the Taliban have at least one mean of pressure to impose themselves in villages in the north, and that is to threaten to execute anyone who is cooperating with the government or the international forces.

Since the main tactic of Taliban is to remobilize former supporters, it might be relevant to identify the reasons for Pashtun support of Taliban the first time around. The Pashtun minorities were put under much pressure by their neighbours due to competition over land and other resources. Combined with the ethnicization of factions like Jombesh, many Pashtuns saw Taliban as their best option to secure their rights and avoid the pressure from their neighbours (Dorronsoro 2005: 268-269; Giustozzi 2005). In addition there are opportunistic reasons, such as personal gains. Several local Pashtuns strengthened their power considerably by cooperating with the Taliban (Harpviken forthcoming). That many local Pashtuns were pressured by the Taliban must also be taken into consideration. One group of men in particular were pressured to cooperate; the *mullahs* (Giustozzi 2007; Harpviken forthcoming). In the years after 2001 the clergy men have become increasingly important to the Taliban, as they can provide Taliban with detailed information on village level. There is a *mullah* in every village, and the *mullahs* know their fellow villagers, thus constituting a good intelligence service for the Taliban, giving them information about which village that has grievances against which commander, and which villages are in conflict with each other (Giustozzi 2007: 43-46). In the south, *mullahs* who have been loyal to the government have been put under

92

enormous pressure by the Taliban. The *mullahs* have three alternatives, they may either live under protection and refrain from preaching, they may continue to preach and to support the government with the risks that follows this alternative, or they may migrate. Between June and July 2003 three pro-government *mullahs* were killed in Kandahar. The signal sent to the remaining pro-governmental mullahs was clear (Giustozzi 2007: 46). Indeed, the pressure against the *mullahs* in the north is not as strong as in the south, however, also these *mullahs* are hit by the secularization processes, which make them more prone to support movements as the Taliban. By getting support by the *mullahs*, willingly or unwillingly, the Taliban ensured themselves better contact with the grassroot level in Afghanistan than the government. The present secularization processes in Afghanistan seems to contribute to an increasing support of Taliban by the increasingly marginalized *mullahs* (Giustozzi 2007: 43-46).

The grassroot supporters of the Taliban are however not only driven by the political or religious concerns or being forced. Economic incentives and grievances against the government are also prevalent factors. Being one of the poorest countries in the world, with a very high unemployment rate, the high salaries of the Taliban movement proves attractive for poor Pashtuns. Active Taliban soldiers earn up till thrice the amount of a Afghan National Army soldier, enough money to provide for a family (Senlis 2006: 11). The Taliban seek to spread their village influence as wide as possible, they try to remobilize former supporters, and they have increasingly attempted to mobilize educated and urban persons.

7.3.2 How the notion of a strong Taliban is used

An assessment of Taliban's strength is challenging given that there are many that would benefit from the assumption of a strong Taliban presence, and use the notion of a strong Taliban presence to defend their own legitimacy.

At least three groups use the idea of a strong Taliban tactically, to promote their own interests. The first are the Taliban themselves, second are local commanders and criminals, and third are civilians. The Taliban actively seek to portrait themselves as

strong as possible. The Taliban are quick in claiming the responsibility for successful attacks, be it suicide attacks, guerrilla attacks or improvised explosive devices (IEDs), against Afghan or international forces. To show efficiency is important to appear strong, and increases the impression of their advancement and ability to act and fight the foreign troops. By appearing strong, the Taliban increase the impression of themselves as potential winners of the ongoing conflict between government and international forces and the insurgents. If the Taliban manage to portray themselves as potential winners, this will have consequences for the large parts of the population who are now "sitting on the fence", waiting to take a stand in the conflict. To avoid potential reprisals if the Taliban should come to power, this group will at least refrain from support, work for or be associated with the present government. Some will also give their support to the Taliban. Thus, by portraying themselves stronger than they really are, the Taliban gets more support, and fulfil their own prophecy.

Local commanders and criminals do also have a short-time benefit from the assumption of a strong Taliban. In the north, local commanders use the threat of an increasingly stronger Taliban to legitimize their own power. To some extent drastic measures are employed to enhance the impression of Taliban presence. It is known that local commanders aligned with Jombesh do orchestrate disturbances they blame on the Taliban and local Pashtuns, in order to legitimize their own power and need for weapons. Additionally, they paint a threatening picture of the Taliban and local Pashtuns alarming locals that if they do not support their local Jombesh commander, the Taliban will return, and the civilian population will again suffer the same treatment as under the Taliban regime 1998-2001.[85] Their argument is that if the Taliban are on the rebound, an impression they themselves are contributing to, they must be able to have military forces and be able to defend themselves. Thus, they use the impression of a strong Taliban to increase their own power base.

The third group which use the Taliban to promote their interests are some groups of civilians. In some areas, civilians believe that a presumed Taliban presence is necessary

---

[85] Interviewee # 3

to attract support from international humanitarian agencies. This belief presumable emerged when several international organizations transferred their activities from the north to the south and east, where the Taliban presence is much stronger. As one villager in Faryab commented "*If necessary we are ready to have our local Taliban to get support*" (villager quoted in Bauck, Strand, Hakim, and Akbari 2007: 7). Therefore, in order to attract attention of aid agencies civilians build up under the notion of strong Taliban presence in their area. In light of the above, it can therefore be concluded that not only the Taliban, but also other groups may benefit from the notion of a strong Taliban presence in a certain area.

7.3.3 How strong are the Taliban?

How strong the Taliban actually are in the north is a complex matter which is difficult to assess. It is important to note that the Taliban have much less support in the north than in the south, and that Jombesh still has much power. However, there are indications suggesting a stronger presence of Taliban in the north now than previously. An increase in IEDs and other violent attacks aimed at the Afghan and international military presence and civilians confirm a more unstable security situation in the Northern provinces.[86] The killings of six Turkmen musicians in Jawzjan in 2005 were instantly attributed to the Taliban by local police officers.[87] The murder of an Afghan employee of the German NGO VUSAF (Verein zur Unterstützung von Schulen in Afghanistan) in Faryab in February 2007 and the killing of a German doctor in Sari Pul Province the following month are most probably ideologically and politically motivated acts that probably traceable to the Taliban.[88] Furthermore, the Taliban were partly successful in infiltrating southern parts of Faryab and Sari Pul from Badghis in 2007 (Giustozzi 2007: 66).

A premise for the Taliban to be able to spread their activity to the north is that they have some support among the inhabitants in the area. Without any support, willing or unwilling, Taliban activity would be extremely difficult, if not impossible. Based on the fact that Pashtuns are more vulnerable than other ethnic groups in the north, that Pashtuns

---

[86] Hammer, Anders Sømme. 2007. "Vil flytte soldater etter trusler." vol. 2008. Meymaneh: Dagsavisen.
[87] BBC. 2005. "Attackers kill Afghan musicians." vol. 2008: BBC.
[88] Interviewee # 3

are overrepresented in local conflicts, and on previous tactics where Taliban approached Pashtun enclaves in the north one can establish that the potential for Taliban mobilization in the north is present (Dorronsoro 2005).[89]

7.3.3 Mobilization – a two-way process

Why do Pashtuns in the north mobilize through the Taliban? Despite not being a Pashtun movement, the Taliban is often perceived as a Pashtun movement by others. And, in fact, most of Taliban's supporters are Pashtuns. Especially in the north, this seems to be the case (Dorronsoro 2005; Giustozzi 2007; Rashid 2001).[90] This does not mean that all Pashtuns in the north are Taliban supporters. Yet, the combination of the ethnicization of Jombesh, and the constant labelling as Taliban-supporters may actually push Pashtuns in the north to an alignment with the Taliban. From 1992 till 2002 Jombesh underwent an ethnicization process in order to increase their claim to legitimacy. According to Giustozzi (2005), the ethnicization came as a result of conflict, rather than being the cause of a conflict. The conflict in mind would be the civil war. However, the result of the ethnicization that took place during the civil war can have had a reinforcing effect on the ethnic relations in the north. The more Jombesh and other factions identify themselves along ethnic boundaries, the more marginalized do the Pashtuns living in these areas become. As discussed above, marginalized *quams* are among the prime targets for Taliban mobilization and as I will turn to next, marginalized Pashtuns are more likely to appeal to outside actors for mobilization. The central government's inability to provide security and rule of law leads increasingly more Pashtuns in conflict with local commanders to appeal to the Taliban for support.

Pashtun recruitment to Taliban is a two-way process, where Pashtuns approach the Taliban for assistance in local conflicts and the other way around, where the Taliban approach Pashtuns to get support.

---

[89] Interviewee # 1; 3; 7 & 9

[90] There are also some Uzbek and Tajik commanders loyal to the Taliban, Hashim Habibi is such an example. The non-Pashtun supporters of Taliban often have a background from *madrasas* in Pakistan. Interviewee # 1

Many Pashtun villages in the north have grievances against neighbouring villages and local commanders in the area. They feel politically and socially marginalized because they are kept out of local *shuras* and other decision making bodies; are denied access to water points and irrigation water; and are denied access to their land and pastures. According to Barth and resource competition theory, competition between ethnic groups will emerge when they have the same ecological niches (Barth 1969; Olzak and Nagel 1986). Both Pashtuns and non-Pashtuns mainly live off agriculture and livestock-farming. Restraining Pashtun access to resources necessary for farming is thus a way of securing own access to the same resources. In other words, what is at hand is competition over access to resources. By restraining Pashtun access to water and pastures, non-Pashtuns try to force Pashtuns to change their ecological niche. Pashtuns on the other hand may respond to these restrictions by mobilization.

However, to appeal to the *wuluswal* or provincial government in order to establish rule of law has often proved to be un- or even contra-productive (CPAU 2004). In a conflict over land between Uzbek and Pashtun villagers in Dawlatabad district in Faryab, both parties ended up bribing the *wuluswal*, after appealing to him to settle the conflict. The *wuluswal* hence received bribes from both parties, without solving the case (CPAU 2004: 33). Thus, to solve water, land and political conflicts with other villages and with commanders the Pashtuns now rather contact local *shuras* to mediate. For the same reasons, some Pashtun *shuras* in the north, when dealing with local conflicts with a local commander, the Taliban have become an appellant body (Bauck, Strand, Hakim, and Akbari 2007: 16). Taliban is seen as much more reliable than the government system. Hence, Pashtuns may mobilize through Taliban in local conflicts, because with the Taliban support in form of weapons, soldiers and moral support, they have a better chance of achieving their goal (Giustozzi 2007; Senlis 2006). Therefore one can say that the reasons for Pashtun support of the Taliban are rather opportunistic and of a practical sort. In order to achieve better living conditions, Pashtuns contact Taliban. If rule of law was provided by the governmental structures, the need for Taliban support in local conflicts would maybe not be as strong as it seems today.

On the other hand, Taliban has actively tried to recruit Pashtuns living in pockets in the north. By drawing on their intelligence, the Taliban tactically approach the villages they know have grievances against other commanders. By offering their support to villages and commanders that are involved in local conflicts, Taliban are perceived as an ally against the local commander or whoever is involved in the conflict. The Taliban have also been able to generate support in connection with the poppy eradication programmes. By giving affected poppy farmers both protection and a compensation for lost income, the Taliban win their support (Senlis 2006: 68). An informal survey of Taliban fighters in Kandahar found an overrepresentation of farmers affected by poppy eradication programmes.[91] Thus by actively targeting Pashtun villages with grievances against others and supporting them in local conflicts, the Taliban manage to depict themselves as providers of support and assistance, a role the governmental structures have been largely unable to perform. In exchange for the Taliban's support in the local conflict, the Pashtuns might let Taliban fighters reside in their village. In other words, by assisting Pashtuns in local conflicts, Taliban win over passive support. This way, the Taliban have been able to establish small enclaves among other in Almar, Dawlatabad and Kohistan in Faryab.[92]

Another aspect of Taliban's approaches of villages with grievances against and in conflict with local commanders is that these villages are extra vulnerable, and thus easier to exploit. By approaching these villages, the Taliban may more easily impose themselves, and demand passive support by the Pashtuns. Unwilling passive support in Pashtun villages in the north will be sufficient for the Taliban to establish small enclaves. But why do the Pashtuns accept this? The Pashtuns were disarmed after the fall of the Taliban, and thus became dependent on protection from a local commander to guard their village against bandits and other local commanders. Being in conflict with their local commander and knowing that the government is largely unable to protect them, coupled with threats by the Taliban, the villagers will in many cases unwillingly let the Taliban settle in their village.

---

[91] Smith, Graeme. 2008. "Talking to the Taliban - Air strikes and drug eradication." in *Talking to the Taliban*, vol. 2008, edited by G. Smith. Kabul/Toronto: Globe and Mail.
[92] Interviewee # 1; 2 & 3

Pashtuns from the north have not only been recruited while they have been in their place of origin. The Taliban have also been active recruiting in displacement camps. In 1999 the Taliban recruited Pashtuns living in camps in the Herat area, and in 2006 the Taliban even reported that the majority of their recruits came from displacement camps in the south (Giustozzi 2007: 69-70). The last statement is, as Giustozzi remarks, likely to contain a solid dose of propaganda. But where there is smoke, there is fire; even though there are no reports on Taliban recruitment in Zhare Dasht or Maslakh, some recruitment most likely took place. This assumption is based on previous tactics in IDP camps in the Herat area, where the Taliban, who were then power-holders, managed to administer the humanitarian aid donated by humanitarian organizations, while at the same time running an effective recruitment campaign in the camp. When the humanitarian organizations realized that IDP mobilization had taken place, they cut down their assistance to a minimum.[93] However, this is a topic most NGOs and UN bodies are reluctant to discuss. Still, the UNHCR advice against all repatriation from these camps gives some weight to this assumption, since this is advice in contradiction with one of the main policies of the UNHCR. Furthermore, both Save the Children and UNHCR representatives outside of Afghanistan report that recruitment in IDP camps is quite widespread (Achvarina and Reich 2006: 140). The insurgents trying to mobilize normally adopt two main tactics; propaganda and coercion – also known as "refugee manipulation" and "militarization" (Stedman and Tanner 2003). The tactic for IDP mobilization does in other words not differentiate much from the general mobilization tactics of the Taliban. In Afghanistan, even NATO officials admit that the Taliban are winning the propaganda war (Senlis 2006: 66). The Taliban are generally quicker to comment on and provide information about current attacks that have taken place. They fuel up under legitimate grievances the IDPs may have against the international forces and the Asfghan government, and depict themselves as a body to solve these kinds of grievances (Senlis 2006: 66). On the other hand, IDPs experience enormous coercion in addition to the propaganda, "*to the point that they resemble hostages whose power to decide their fate hinges disproportionately on the acts of others*" (Stedman and Tanner 2003: 4). Some studies regarding

---

[93] Personal communication with Kristian Berg Harpviken.

99

mobilization of refugees living in refugee camps, so called refugee warrior communities have been conducted (see e.g. Adelman 1998; Lischer 2006; Terry 2002; Zolberg, Suhrke, and Aguayo 1989). The IDP equivalent to the refugee warriors is less studied (but see Achvarina and Reich 2006; Muggah 2006). Taken into consideration that most displaced persons in the world today are IDPs, more studies exploring IDP mobilization would be of great importance for understanding why conflicts persist, again providing information that will be relevant for conflict resolution.

In sum, Pashtun recruitment to the Taliban in the north is a two-way process. Most supporters of the Taliban are passive and somewhat reluctant to the movement. Incentives for the Pashtuns to support the Taliban are grievances against the government or the local power-holders, or economical incentives. The use of force is less widespread when mobilizing in the north, than in the south, similarly, the Taliban use less force to recruit active supporters than passive supporters.

7.4 Conclusion

In northern Afghanistan, the political opportunity structure was dramatically changed with the fall of the Taliban. To the Pashtuns living in these areas, the ousting of the Taliban meant that the advantages they had had during the Taliban regime were turned into disadvantages. Ethnic mobilization which had been relatively easy during the Taliban rule was now associated with severe constraints. Most large-scale mobilization attempts have been met by counter-mobilization of Uzbeks and Turkmen, orchestrated by local commanders loyal to Jombesh. However, by aligning with outside actors, some mobilization was possible. Some low-scale mobilization without the support of outside actors was also possible, as when Pashtuns mobilized to protect their own village from pillaging. Pashtuns mobilized to protect their own resources when these were exposed to acute threat, or to win back resources that had been taken from them. These resources include their homes, land, access to natural resources, but also access to (personal) political power and prestige. Decades of armed conflict and an unstable security situation has aggravated the competition over resources, as resources have become scarce. This seems to have enhanced ethnic mobilization. However, not all Pashtuns mobilized

willingly. Knowing which villages which were vulnerable and would not have the means to resist coercion, the Taliban were able to impose themselves in Pashtun enclaves in the north. The Pashtuns in these villages were unwillingly made to passive supporters of the Taliban. On the other hand, Pashtuns in the north have also appealed to the Taliban, in order to get assistance in a local conflict. Yet, most Pashtuns mobilized by or through the Taliban may be characterized as reluctant supporters. To these Pashtuns, the Taliban are the best external supporters given the circumstances, the Pashtun support of the Taliban may thus be characterized as opportunistic.

Pashtun mobilization has taken on several forms, from demonstrations to infiltration of, and lobbying within the opponents organization. Furthermore, Pashtun mobilization has taken place through the opportunity structure of both the central government and the Taliban.

Immediately after the fall of the Taliban the costs of mobilizing were extremely high, and commanders who tried to mobilize, were killed or arrested. Most commanders either migrated or subordinated to the local power-holders first. Both options did provide the Pashtun commanders with a type of intermezzo before the strategy of mobilization could again be pursued. Thus mobilization is only found interacting with one or both of the other strategies, either simultaneously or in a sequential manner.

8.0 Conclusion

The preceding chapters have explored how and why Pashtuns in the north responded differently to the new political context after the fall of Taliban. The thesis has identified three strategies that were adopted by the Pashtuns; subordination, migration and mobilization. These strategies have been dealt with separately so far in the thesis, although it has been indicated that it is not uncommon to combine two or all three strategies. As the costs and benefits of the respective strategies are under constant assessment, changes of the costs in one of the strategies will lead to changes in the relative costs of the residual strategies. Even though the actual costs remain the same for alternative strategies, changes in the costs of the strategy adopted may result in a change of strategies. For example, when the costs of staying subordinated increased, some Pashtuns migrated, while others mobilized. Equal reassessments of the adopted strategy were found in the IDP camps both in the south and the west, when food distribution in the IDP camps came to a halt, whereas there was a more stable security situation in the north, some Pashtun families decided to return to their place of origin and subordinate rather than remaining in the camps. Here, an increase in the costs of remaining displaced was combined with a decrease in the costs of staying subordinated. Yet another combination of strategies was found in camps, when the Taliban was able to recruit IDPs to fight in their place of origin; an example of migration combined with mobilization. Thus, the choice of which strategy to adopt is dynamic where people are constantly reassessing and revising their alternatives, and adopt the strategy they perceive as the most beneficial. Security, however, is the overwhelming factor in influencing the decisions of which strategy to adopt. Yet, insecurity is virtually a constant threat, and this factor alone is not enough to explain Pashtuns' behaviour. Despite the seemingly similar security threat against Pashtuns, they perceive the threat differently, depending on protection, their social status, personal power and socio-economic factors.

In the academic literature regarding conflict induced migration or mobilization, there is surprisingly little attention to the fact that actors may be both migrants and fighters, that

strategies of action may be combined (however see Adelman 1998; Harpviken forthcoming; Haslie 2006; Lischer 2006; Stedman and Tanner 2003; Zolberg, Suhrke, and Aguayo 1989). Furthermore, a whole group of actors – those that stayed behind without engaging in resistance - tends to be ignored. Okamoto and Wilkes (2008; 2003) do recognize that some actors remain in the conflict area, but fail to recognize these actors as decision makers assessing the costs and benefits of subordinating, and rather portray them as passive actors, leaving their destiny in the hands of others, "*hop[ing] that improvements in their home country will eventually take place*" (Okamoto and Wilkes 2008: 347). In the thesis, I have demonstrated that people caught in armed conflict remain active; they evaluate the costs and benefits of subordinating, and compare this strategy with the costs and benefits of other strategies. Unlike the actors who decide to migrate or mobilize, the actors who remain in the area have concluded that the costs of the other strategies are higher, and that the benefits are less than the costs and benefits of subordination. However, they do not subordinate once and for all; rather this strategy, as other ones, is under constant revision and as conditions change, the response strategies are likely to be modified. Further research, analysing other cases and engaging with other types of data, is needed to shed more light on the process of subordination. Not only will greater knowledge of this strategy enhance insight in the situation of millions of individuals, it will also give us greater understanding of why actors migrate and mobilize. The three strategies must be seen in relation to each other, as complementary ways in which to respond to a context where the security situation represents a significant threat to everyday security and survival.

The Pashtuns who subordinated did so in order to diminish the harassments they were subjects to. By subordinating the number of assaults decreased, but were instead replaced with other types of harassment, such as exploitation. I argue that the relationship between a subordinated and a dominator can be understood as a contractual relationship as a contract, where both parties have certain expectations of the other. This does not however, imply that the parties are equals. To commanders the process of subordination was more complicated than to ordinary Pashtuns. The commanders did either merge to disarm or become loyal, or they built an alliance with the power-holding faction. In order

for the commanders to be allowed to subordinate, trustworthiness seems to be a key element. Some commanders viewed the time as subordinated as a necessary intermezzo in order to build alliances and reorganize for later mobilization.

The main factor for deciding whether to migrate or not was the security situation. The Pashtuns who remained in the north were partly protected by the commanders to which they had subordinated, but they also protected each other. As increasingly more of the Pashtuns migrated, the security situation for the ones who remained decreased, and a wave of migration was set off. However, the security factor interacts also with other socio-economic factors, and the sum of these influence the relative cost of migration. Factors decisive for migrating were the same as the factors decisive for remaining displaced. Yet, the interaction between these factors was varied. When deciding whether to return or remain displaced socio-economic factors such as access to employment and facilities were given a more prevailing role, and some Pashtuns were willing to accept less security in exchange for access to facilities.

With the fall of the Taliban the opportunity structure for mobilization changed dramatically for the Pashtuns in the north: the costs increased. However, by aligning with outside actors, Pashtuns were able to mobilize to promote their interests. Pashtuns mobilized to protect their resources, to win back resources which had been taken from them or to expand their access to resources. Other motivations to mobilize include maintaining or expanding personal power. Yet, most mobilization entailed a degree of compulsion, through the targeting vulnerable villages, often villages which were in conflict with a local commander or another village, the Taliban imposed themselves in enclaves in northern Afghanistan and Pashtuns were mobilized as unwilling, passive supporters of the Taliban.
Pashtun mobilization has taken on several forms, from demonstrations, infiltration and lobbying within an opponents faction to mobilizing through governmental structures.

Hence, an apparently equal security threat affect people differently, depending on social and economic factors. -The Pashtuns of the north coped with the altered security situation

by adopting the strategy or strategies they found most beneficial given their social status and economic background.

Appendices

Acronyms/Glossary

Acronyms

AIHRC	-	Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission
AIMS	-	Afghanistan Information Management Services
AJP	-	The Afghanistan Justice Project
ANA	-	Afghan National Army
ANP	-	Afghan National Police
AREU	-	Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit
BAAG	-	British Agencies Afghanistan Group
CHA	-	Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance
CPAU	-	Co-operation for Peace and Unity
DIS	-	Danish Immigration Service
HRW	-	Human Rights Watch
IDP	-	Internally Displaced Person
IDLG	-	Independent Directorate for Local Administration/Governance
IED	-	Improvised Explosive Devices
IRIN	-	Integrated Regional Information Networks, body under UN
MoE	-	Ministry of Education
MoI	-	Ministry of Interior
MoPH	-	Ministry of Public Health
MoRR	-	Minister of Refugees and Repatriation
MP	-	Member of Parliament
NA	-	The Northern Alliance (United Islamic Front for the Salvation of Afghanistan)
NRC	-	Norwegian Refugee Council
NUF	-	National United Front
PDPA	-	Peoples Democratic Party of Afghanistan
UN	-	United Nations
UNAMA	-	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNHCR	-	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
USIP	-	United States Institute of Peace
UXO	-	Unexploded ordnance
VUSAF	-	Verein zur Unterstützung von Schulen in Afghanistan
WHO	-	World Health Organization

Glossary

Amir	King
Arbab	Village leader or headman, recognized or appointed by the government
Bai	Equivalent to Khan. Most used in northern Afghanistan
Burqa	Outer garment for women worn over daily clothing to cover their body
Jirga	Council, consultative assembly. Pashtun equivalent to *shura*
Khan	A title given to leaders or important people, landowners and landlords
Loya Jirga	Grand assembly
Madrasa	Religious school
Mujahedin	Islamic resistance fighter, plural form. (*Mujahed*, in singular)
Mullah	A person with Islamic training
Pashtunwali	Pashtun code of honour
Quam	Solidarity group, based on various factors (extended family; village; tribe; ethnicity; professional group)
Sharia	Islamic law
Shura	Council, consultative assembly
Talib	Pupil undergoing religious education (also used to describe a member of Taliban)
Taliban	Plural of Talib (also refers to the movement Taliban)
Spin Geray	White beards, elderly
Ulama	Learned religious leaders within Sunni Islam
Ushur	Islamic obligatory tithe on land and produce
Wuluswal	District administrator
Wuluswali	District; also used in reference to administrative headquarter
Zahkat	Muslim obligatory alms tax/charity

List and assessment of interviewees

Interview	Position	Frankness	Cooperation	Disturbances	Language	Total
1	Researcher	1	1	1	1	4
2	MP	1	1	1	0	3
3	Diplomat	1	1	1	1	4
4	UNAMA	1	1	1	1	4
5	Afghan NGO	1	1	1	0	3
6	Afghan NGO	1	1	1	1	4
7	Afghan NGO	1	1	0	1	3
8	MoRR	0	1	1	0	2
9	International NGO	1	1	1	1	4
10	UNHCR	1	1	1	1	4
11	UNHCR	1	1	1	1	4
12	Afghan NGO	1	1	1	1	4

Frankness: 1: Frank
                0: Not Frank

Cooperation: 1: Cooperative
                0: Not cooperative

Disturbances: 1: No major disturbance
                0: Major disturbance

Language: 1: Shared Language
                0: Not shared language/use of interpreter

Who is who in Northern Afghanistan:
(in alphabetical order)

Persons

Abdul Malik Pahlawan – Uzbek commander, former ally of Dostum, now one of his fiercest enemies. Malik's betrayal of Dostum is said to be crucial for the Taliban capture of Mazar-e Sharif. Malik is the founder and leader of Hezb-e Azadi-ye Afghanistan, and is half brother of Rasul Pahlawan.

Abdul Rashid Dostum – Formerly a commander of a militia under the PDPA regime, Dostum contributed to Najibullah's fall in 1992 as he allied with Jamiat against his former leader. Founded Jombesh-e Melli Islami-ye Afghanistan in 1992, and is still seen as the father of the party. Being Uzbek, Dostum drew most of his support by his own ethnic group. His influence over northern Afghanistan is still very strong. He is currently holding the position of chief of staff to the commander in chief, but has since February 19th 2008 been suspended from the position.

Amir Abdur Rahman - Afghan king (reigned 1880-1901), often referred to as the Iron Amir. He initiated the internal colonization, through which he both expanding his territory and moved unruly Ghilzai Pashtuns from the south to the north.

Anwar-ul-Haq Ahadi – Afghan Minister of Finance. Founder of the Pashtun nationalist party Afghan Mellat.

Burhanuddin Rabbani – Leader and founder of Jamiat-e Islami, former president of Afghanistan (1992-1996). Islamist and modernist.

Enayatullah Enayat - Present governor in Samangan, former governor in Faryab. Together with Hashim Habibi he was ousted from Faryab, accused of favouring Pashtuns. Enayat is Uzbek, but had a Pashtun mother. He is wealthy.

Gulbuddin Hekmatyar – Pashtun radical Islamist, leader and founder of Hezb-e Islami (HIG). Prime minister in Rabbani's government.

Haji Fatullah Khan – Member of Parliament, and a feared Uzbek local commander from Qaisar district, Faryab province. He is affiliated with Jombesh, but has been criticized for 'behaving contrary to the party's will'. He contributes to instability in Faryab, and has allegedly established some contact with Taliban.

Haji Mohammad Mohaqiq – Hazara commander and Member of Parliament. Prominent leader in Hezb-e Wahdat in the north, and active in the 2001 ousting of Taliban from Mazar-e Sharif.

Hamid Karzai – President of Afghanistan. Supported the Taliban in their early days, but later broke with them. Served as interim President, and was elected in the Presidential election in 2004. Pashtun.

Hashim Habibi – Uzbek military commander. Known to be very opportunistic, has sided with Jombesh, Taliban, and in 2004 declared his support to president Karzai. Together with Enayat Enayatullah, he had to flea from his position as military commander in Faryab province.

Juma Khan Hamdard – former Pashtun governor in Baghlan and Jowzjan, present governor in Khost. He is loyal to Hezb-e Islami, but has had allegiances with Jombesh and Taliban. Presently he claims loyalty to president Karzai.

Latif Ibrahim – governor in Faryab 2004-2007. Is now the governor of Takhar. Uzbek.

Manzullah Khan - Uzbek commander. Disarmed Pashtun villages in northern Afghanistan after the fall of Taliban.

Muhammed Wali – Pashtun commander in Balkh province. He has shifted allegiance a number of times, he commanded the 70th Division, a PDPA militia, and sided with Jombesh, before he joined the Taliban. After the fall of Taliban he again sided with Jombesh.

Rasul Pahlawan – half brother of Abdul Malik. Rasul Pahlawan was a feared commander, causing many Pashtuns to migrate from Faryab, where he operated. He was killed in 1996, and Abdul Malik accuses Dostum to have organized the killing.

Sardar Saidi – Hazara. Commander of Hezb-e Wahdat in the north. Member of the return commission to the north.

Sayed Noorullah – Present leader of Jombesh. Uzbek.

Sebghatullha Mujaddidi – Former President of Afghanistan, leader of the *mujahedin* party Jabha-yi Milli Beraye Najat-i Afghanistan. Recognized the Taliban regime. Had a radical background, but was counted as moderate. Pashtun.

Ustad Atta Mohammed – present governor of Balkh. He is affiliated with Jamiat-e Islami. Tajik. Together with Dostum and Sardar Saidi he was active in ousting the Taliban from the north in 2001. One of Dostum's main rivals in the north. Loyal to president Karzai.

Military-political actors

Hezb-e Islami - *Hezb-e Islami-ye Afghanistan* (Islamic Party of Afghanistan, hereafter Hezb-e Islami) Islamist party. The majority of support comes from ethnic Pashtuns. More radical than Jamiat, from which it emerged.

Hezb-e Wahdat - *Hezb-e Wahdat-e Islami* (Islamic Unity Party) Split between an ethno-nationalist and a Shiite oriented faction. Predominantly Hazara.

Jamiat - *Jamiat-e Islami* (Islamic Society) Islamist party, based on political Islam, formed in the 1970s. Biggest party during *mujahedin* war. Is led by Burhanuddin Rabbani, and draws most of its support from the Tajik ethnic group. After a conflict within Jamiat in 1976, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar left Jamiat, and founded Hezb-e Islami.

Jombesh - *Jombesh-e Melli Islami-ye Afghanistan* (National Islamic Movement of Afghanistan) a military-political organization established in 1992 out of a former PDPA militia. Headed by the Uzbek general Abdul Rashid Dostum(Ruttig 2006). Present formal head is Sayed Noorullah, but Dostum still has major influence. Predominantly Uzbek support form northern Afghanistan.

PDPA - Peoples Democratic Party of Afghanistan. Communist party, split into two factions. Parcham (flag) and Khalq (the people). Came to power through a bloody coup in 1978. Invited the Soviet Union to help the government fight the *mujahedin* resistance. Formally lost power in 1992.

Taliban - Founded by Mullah Omar in Kandahar 1994, as a response to the ongoing civil war. Taliban started as a traditionalist organization, but went through a radicalization, and were influenced by Al-Qaida and Arabic Sufism. Neo-Taliban more orthodox than Islamist. Strongly opposes recruitment based on ethnicity, yet most support from Pashtuns.

Timeline

1884 Britain and Russia opens negotiations on northern boundary of Afghanistan.

1887 Northern frontier of Afghanistan established.

1883 → 1901

Internal colonization. Amir Abdur Rahaman Khan initiates the process of populating Afghan Turkestan and to colonize it.

1901 → 1919

Consolidation of ethnic tensions in the north. Rule of King Habibullah.

1931 University of Kabul opened

1965 PDPA formed

1970s Droughts and floods took occurred in Afghanistan. Iran opens up for labour migration.
Jamiat founded, conflicts between PDPA and Jamiat at the University of Kabul
Hezb-e Islami emerged from Jamiat

1973 Muhammad Daud ousts his cousin Amir Zahir Shah in a bloodless coup and forms the Afghan republic.

1975 Islamist attempt of uprising

1978 Saur Revolution, PDPA takes power, Daud is assassinated.
Countryside rise in rebellion against PDPA.
First mujahedin camps are set up in Pakistan.

1979 Mujahedin resistance against the PDPA government.
Afghan *mujahedin* are undergoing guerrilla training in Peshawar.
President Karmal states that the Soviet Union has agreed to supply Afghanistan
"urgent political, moral and economical aid, including military aid". Soviet has approx. 100 000 soldiers present in Afghanistan. Soviet invasion.

1980-9

Mujahedin resistance against the PDPA regime and the Soviet invasion.
U.S. begins to channel weapons to the *mujahedin* in Pakistan

1981 Pakistani officials estimate that 2 million Afghans seek refuge in Pakistan.
Fighting between *mujahedin* and Soviet troops

1988 Creation of *mujahedin* interim government in Pakistan.
Sar-i Pul province is created out of Jawzjan.
Soviet troops begin the withdrawal from Afghanistan. Soviet losses: 13 310 dead,
35 478 wounded and 311 missing. Afghan losses (according to Najibullah):
243 900 soldiers and civilians.

1989 Withdrawal of Soviet troops completed.
Dostum's Juzjani Militia fights for Najibuhllah against Hekmatyar and Hezb-e
Islami.
Mujahedin leaders elect Abdul Rasul Sayyaf as acting prime minister and
Sebghatullah Mujadidi as acting president of the interim government.
President Najibullah invites *mujahedin* to participate in *loya jirga*.
President Najibullah offers regional autonomy to *mujahedin* if they agree to stop
fighting.

1990 Beginning of UN assisted repatriation of refugees from Pakistan.

1991 Najibullah offers amnesty for all Afghanis living abroad.

1992 Dostum rebels against his former leader Najibullah, Jombesh is founded.
Mujahedin control northern Afghanistan
Najibullah steps down; *mujahedin* government takes over, first led by Mojadiddi,
then Rabbani.
Mujahedin resistance replaced by brutal civil war in which all parties commit
serious war crimes and human rights violations.

1994 Taliban, which soon expands its territory is founded by Mullah Omar in
Kandahar.

1995 Fighting continues.
Taliban captures more and more land.

1996 General Rasul Pahlawan,Abdul Maliks brother, is killed in an ambush. Dostum is
accused of being behind the killing, Abdul Malik splits with Jombesh, and founds
Hezb-e Azadi. Beginning of rivalry between Dostum and Malik.
Taliban captures Kabul in September.
Najibullah is hanged.
Mujahedin government retreats to the north.
Dostum, Masud and Kahlili meet and form Supreme Council for the Defence of
the Motherland, referred to as the Northern Alliance.
Jamiat soldiers flied in to Maimana to defend the north from Taliban.

1997 Economic crisis in northern Afghanistan. Dostum prints money to finance his campaigns.
Drought in northern Afghanistan
Fierce fighting between the Taliban and the Northern Alliance.
General Malik betrays Dostum and allies with Taliban. Dostum flees to Turkish exile. Malik hands over *mujahedin* leader Ismael Khan and 700 prisoners to the Taliban.
Massacre of the north, more than 2000 Taliban killed by Northern Alliance
Taliban, assisted by Hezb-e Islami take Mazar-e Sharif, Northern Alliance wins control back, and force Malik to flee.

1998 Drought in Afghanistan
The Taliban is accused of killing 600 Uzbek civilians in Faryab.
Fighting over Mazar-e Sharif, the Taliban takes control over the city and the rest of the north
Massacre of thousands of Hazaras and other non-Pashtuns.
Dostum flees.
NGOs pull out of Kabul

1999 Drought
Masud offensive in the north.
Heavy fighting in the north, Kabul and Bagram.
Refugee crisis, as 200 000 people flee the Shomali valley.
Heavy fighting in north and Kabul as both sides launches renewed offensives.
General Malik, coming from the US, rejoins Massoud's forces, and Dostum enters Afghanistan from Turkey.

2000 Drought
Dostum and Malik form joint front against Taliban.
Masud meets Dostum and Ismael Khan to open joint front against Taliban.

2001 Drought
Dostum resumes attacks against Taliban.
9. September: *mujahedin* leader Masud killed in the first suicide attack in Afghanistan.
11. September: terrorist attack in USA.
Operation Enduring Freedom ousts Taliban. Troops on the ground are Afghan.
Dostum, Atta Mohammed and Saidi controls northern Afghanistan.
Severe harassments against Pashtuns in the north, massacre in Chimtal, thousands of Pashtuns flee.
Hamid Karzai elected interim president of Afghanistan

2002 Drought
Loya Jirga begins its discussions. Hamid Karzai is elected head of provincial government.
Hekmatyar and Mullah Omar declare Jihad on American Forces.

2003 Battle between Taliban and government.
NATO takes over command of ISAF.

2004 Drought, loss of groundwater
Grand Loya Jirga adopts new constitution which provides strong presidency.
Presidential elections, Hamid Karzai is elected President. Atta Mohammed
appointed governor in Balkh, Hamdard appointed governor in Baghlan.
Hashim Habibi and Enayatullah Enayat ousted from Faryab Province.

2005 Drought and hard winter kill several hundred people.
Parliament elections, and later opening of the parliament.
Fighting between Taliban and ISAF troops in southern and eastern Afghanistan.

2006 NATO takes over responsibility for security in whole Afghanistan.
Taliban expanding.

2007 Former King Zahir Shah dies.
Taliban expanding
Suicide bomber kills six MPs and many school children in Baghlan province.

2008 Dostum kidnaps rival Akbar Bai
Taliban is expanding

Example of an Interview guide

For interviewing members of the Commission for Repatriation to the North.

- Composition of the commission
- Mandate – what was the problem you were set up to address?
- Where were the IDPs?
- What were the attitudes of the IDPs to return?
- Which ethnicity?
- What were the threats to their return?
- How were their needs addressed? (assistance?)
- How do they work – meetings, frequency.
- Main challenges?
- Were there different opinions among the members in the commission?
- Were there any political groups and/or government associates challenging the commission?
- Were there any security challenges towards the members of the commission?
- What did the commission achieve?
- Do they have any reports/paperwork I could get hold of?
- Statistics. Any numbers of increasing/decreasing repatriation?

- What were the challenges for IDPs and refugees who wanted to return?
- Areas where it was better/worse for returning IDPs?

- What is the most common reason why IDPs are returning?
- What is the most common reason why IDPs do not want to return?
- Are there any upcoming plans for encouraging repatriation to Faryab?
- Are the IDPs encouraged to repatriate to Faryab? In which way?
- How is repatriation to Faryab compared to repatriation to other provinces?
- Where in Faryab are most returnees resettling?
- How is repatriation to Faryab now compared to earlier times?

Bibliography

Achvarina, Vera and Simon F. Reich. 2006. "No Place to Hide. Refugees, Displaced Persons, and the Recruitment of Child Soldiers." *International Security* Vol 31:127-164.

Adamec, Ludwig W. 2003. *Historical Dictionary of Afghanistan*. Oxford: The Scarecrow Press, Inc. .

Adelman, Howard. 1998. "Why Refugee Warriors are Threats." *The Journal of Conflict Studies* Vol 18:49-69.

AFP. 2004. "Afghan president gains backing of militia commanders ahead of polls." vol. 2008. Mazar-i-Sharif: Reliefweb/AFP.

AIHRC. 2007. "Economic and Social Rights in Afghanistan II." AIHRC, Kabul.

AJP. 2005. "Casting Shadows: War Crimes and Crimes against Humanity 1978-2001." Afghanistan Justice Project, Kabul/Brussels.

Arksey, Hilary and Peter Knight. 1999. *Interviewing for Social Scientists*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Babak, Bashir and Sayed Yaqub Ibrahimi. 2005. "Afghanistan: When Cops Become Robbers." in *Afghanistan*, vol. 2007, edited by IWPR. Mazar-e-Sharif: IWPR.

Barth, Fredrik. 1969. *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*, Edited by F. Barth. Bergen: Universitetsforlaget.

—. 1981. *Features of Persons and Society in Swat*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd.

—. 1986. *Political Leadership among Swat Pathans*. London: The Athlone Press.

Bauck, Petter, Arne Strand, Mohammad Hakim, and Arghawan Akbari. 2007. "Afghanistan: An Assessment of Conflict and Actors in Faryab Province to Establish a Basis for increased Norwegian Civilian Involvement. ." Chr. Michelsen Institute, Bergen.

BBC. 2005. "Attackers kill Afghan musicians." vol. 2008: BBC.

Bhadrakumar, M K. 2008. "Intrigue takes Afghanistan to the brink." vol. 2008. Hong Kong: Asian Times Online.

Bikhchandani, Sushi, David Hirshleifer, and Ivo Welch. 1992. "A Theory of Fads, Fashion, Custom, and Cultural Change as Informational Cascades." *The Jounral of Political Economy* Vol. 100:992-1026.

Birch, Douglas. 2004. "Afghan governor escapes after warlord seizes city." in *The Baltimore Sun*. Kabul.

BAAG. 2004. "Afghanistan: Monthly Review." vol. 2007: British Agencies Afghanistan Group.

Centlivres, Pierre and Micheline Centlivres-Demont. 1987. "Sociopolitical Adjustment Among Afghan Refugees in Pakistan." *Migration World* Vol. XV:15-21.

CIA. 2007. "CIA World Factbook, Afghanistan." vol. 2008. Washington: CIA.

Clark, Kate. 2005. "In the shadow of the gun." in *BBC News*, vol. 2007. Northern Afghanistan/London: BBC.

Cott, Donna Lee Van. 2007. *From Movements to Parties in Latin America*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

CPAU. 2004. "Assesment Report Faryab Province." Co-operation for Peace and Unity (CPAU), Kabul.

della Porta, Donatella and Mario Diani. 2006. *Social Movements. An Introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

DIS. 2002. "The Political, Security and Human Rights Situation in Afghanistan. Report on fact-finding mission to Kabul and Mazar-i-Sharif, Afghanistan and Islamabad, Pakistan." Danish Immigration Service, Copenhagen.

Dorronsoro, Gilles. 2005. *Revolution Unending. Afghanistan: 1979 to the Present*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Dorronsoro, Gilles and Chantal Lobato. 1989. "The Militia in Afghanistan." *Central Asian Survey* Vol 8:95-108.

Dupree, Louis. 1978. *Afghanistan*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Economist. 2006. "It's rough up north." vol. 2008. London: The Economist Newspaper Limited.

Eidheim, Harald. 1969. "When Ethnic Identity is a Social Stigma." in *Ethnic Grouops and Boundaries*, edited by F. Barth. Bergen: Universitetsforlaget.

Emigh, Rebecca Jean. 1997. "The Power of Negative Thinking: The Use of Negative Case Methodology in the Development of Sociological Theory." *Theory and Society* Vol. 26:649-684.

Eriksen, Thomas Hylland. 2002. *Ethnicity and Nationalism. Anthropological Perspectives*. London: Pluto Press.

Evans, Anne, Nick Manning, Yasin Osmani, Anne Tully, and Andrew Wilder. 2004. *A Guide to Government in Afghanistan*. Kabul, Washington: AREU/World Bank.

Fenton, Steve. 2003. *Ethnicity*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Forbes, H.D. 2004. "Ethnic Conflict and the Contact Hypothesis." Pp. 69-88 in *The Psychology of Ethnic and Cultural Conlfict*, edited by Y.-T. Lee, C. McCauley, F. Moghaddam, and S. Worchel. Westport CT: Praeger Publishers.

GIMU/PGDS. 2007. "Afghanistan - IDPs Population Estimate (Individuals) by Camps and Settlements ", edited by UNHCR: UNHCR.

Giustozzi, Antonio. 2002. "Afghanistan: the Problems of Creating a New Afghan Army - and the critical dangers of failure!" *International Industrial Information Ltd*.

—. 2005. "The Ethnicisation of an Afghan Faction: Junbesh-i-Milli From Its Origins to the Presidential Elections." London School of Economics, LSE, London.

—. 2007. *Koran, Kalashnikov, and Laptop. The Neo-Taliban Insurgency in Afghanistan*. New York Columbia University Press.

Hammer, Anders Sømme. 2007. "Vil flytte soldater etter trusler." vol. 2008. Meymaneh: Dagsavisen.

Hammond, Laura. 1999. "Examining the Discourse of Repatriation: Towards a More Proactive Theory of Return Migration " Pp. 227-244 in *The End of the Refugee Cycle*, edited by R. Black and K. Koser. New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books.

Hannan, Michael T. 1979. "The Dynamics of Ethnic Boundaries in Modern States." Pp. 253-275 in *National Development and the World System. Education, Economic and Political Change 1950-1970*, edited by J. W. Meyer and M. T. Hannan. Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press.

Harbom, Lotta and Peter Wallensteen. 2007. "Armed Conflict, 1989-2006." *Journal of Peace Research* vol. 44:623-634.

Harpviken, Kristian Berg. 1995. "Political Mobilisation among the Hazara of Afghanistan: 1978-1992." Department of Sociology, University of Oslo, Oslo.

—. 2006a. "Networks in Transition. Wartime Migration in Afghanistan." Department of Sociology and Human Geography, University of Oslo, Oslo.

—. 2006b. "Theory of Collective Action as an Analytical Tool in Studies of Forced Migration." University of Oslo.

—. forthcoming. "The Return of the Refugee Warrior: Migration and Armed Resistance in Herat." Pp. 1-18 in *Understanding Afghans*, edited by A. Schlenkhoff and C. Oeppen.

Haslie, Anita. 2006. "Between Victim and Warrior. Political Mobilization among Sudanese Refugees in Uganda." Department of Sociology and Human Geography, University of Oslo, Oslo.

Hirschman, Albert O. 1970. *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty. Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States*. London: Oxford University Press.

HRW. 2002. "Afghanistan. Paying for the Taliban's Crimes: Abuses Against Ethnic Pashtuns in Northern Afghanistan." Human Rights Watch.

Hunt, William H, Wilder W Crane, and John C Wahlke. 1964. "Interviewing Political Elites in Cross-Cultural Comparative Research." *The American Journal of Sociology* Vol 70:59-68.

Ibrahimi, Sayed Yaqub. 2004a. "Reporter bullied over alleged war crimes video." vol. 2007. Mazar-e-Sharif: ISN Security Watch.

—. 2005. "Villagers Flee Intimidation." in *Afghanistan*, vol. 2007, edited by IWPR. Mazar-e-Sharif: IWPR.

Ibrahimi, Yaqub. 2004b. "Commanders Line Up Behind Karzai." vol. 2008. Mazar-e Sharif: Institute for War & Peace Reporting.

—. 2004c. "Commanders Line Up Behind Karzai." vol. 2008. Mazar-e Sharif: IWPR.

IDMC. 2004. "Weak national authority in the northwest and abusive commanders discourage return of displaced Pashtuns." in *Obstacles to return and resettlement*, edited by IDMC. Geneve: IDMC.

—. 2006. "Afghanistan: Fighting in the south sets off new wave of displacement. A profile on the internal displacement situation." Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, Geneve.

IOM. 2002. "IOM in Northern Afghanistan. Facts & Figures." Pp. 2, vol. 2008, edited by IOM. Geneva: International Organization for Migration.

IRIN. 2003a. "Afghanistan. UN High Commissioner for Refugees inaugurates Return Commission." vol. 2008, edited by IRIN. Kabul: IRIN.

—. 2003b. "Afghanistan: MSF suspends activities at southern IDP camp." vol. 2008, edited by IRIN. Kabul: IRIN.

—. 2004a. "Afghanistan: Regional commanders continue with illegal taxation." vol. 2007. Kabul: Integrated Regional Information Networks. UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

Liebl, Vern. 2007. "Pushtuns, Tribalism, Leadership, Islam and Taliban: A short View." *Small Wars and Insurgencies* Vol. 18:492-510.

XIV

Lischer, Sarah Kenyon. 2006. *Dangerous Sanctuaries. Refugee Camps, Civil War, and the Dilemmas of Humanitarian Aid*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.

Lofland, John and Lyn H. Lofland. 1995. *Analysing Social Settings. A Guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Lubkemann, Stephen C. 2004. "Situating Migration in Wartime and Post-war Mosamibique: A Critique of 'Forced Migration' Research." Pp. 371-400 in *Categories and Contexts: Anthropological and Historical Studies in Critical Demography*, edited by S. Szreter, H. Sholkamy, and A. Dharmalingam. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Luna, Alfons. 2002. "Tens of thousands flee ethnic persecution in northern Afghanistan." vol. 2008. Kabul: AFP/Relief Web.

Marsden, Peter. 2002. *The Taliban. War and Religion in Afghanistan*. London: Zed Books Ltd.

Marsden, Peter and David Turton. 2004. "Preliminary Study of Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons in Afghanistan." Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre/Danish International Development Assistance.

Misdaq, Nabi. 2006. *Afghanistan. Political Fraility and External Interference*. London, New York: Routledge.

Mohan, Geoffrey. 2002. "Vengeance Is Taking Its Toll in Wake of Taliban." vol. 2008. Bargah/Los Angeles: Los Angeles Times.

Monsutti, Alessandro. 2005. *War and Migration. Social Networks and Economic Strategies of the Hazaras of Afghanistan*. New York & London: Routledge.

—. 2006. "Afghan Transnational Networks: Looking Beyond Repatriation." AREU, Kabul.

Muggah, Robert. 2006. "No Refuge. The Crisis of Refugee Mobilization." London: Zed Books.

Naby, Eden. 1984. "The Uzbeks in Afghanistan." *Central Asian Survey* Vol 3:1-21.

Nagel, Joane and Susan Olzak. 1982. "Ethnic Mobilization in New and Old States: an Extension of Competition Model." *Social Problems* Vol. 30:127-143.

NRC. 2003. "Land Issues within the Repatriation Process of Afghan Refugees." Norwegian Refugee Council, Kabul.

—. 2005. "IDP Return Facilitation to Faryab. An Assessment by the Norwegian Refugee Council." Norwegian Refugee Council, Kabul.

—. 2006. "Land and Property Disputes in Northern Afghanistan." Norwegian Refugee Council, Oslo/Afghanistan.

Okamoto, Dina G. and Rima Wilkes. 2008. "The Opportunities and Costs of Voice and Exit: Modelling Ethnic Group Rebellion and Emigration." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* Vol 34:347-369.

Okamoto, Dina and Rima Wilkes. 2003. "Fight or Flight? Understanding Ethnic Group Rebellion and Migration." Pp. 1-34 in *International Studies Association Meetings*. Portland, Orlando.

Olson, Mancur. 1965. *The Logic of Collective Action*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Olzak, Susan. 1983. "Contemporary Ethnic Mobilization." *Annual Review of Sociology* Vol. 9:355-374.

Olzak, Susan and Joane Nagel. 1986. "Competitive Ethnic Relations." Pp. 252. London: Academin Press Inc.

Pain, Adam. 2004. "Understanding Village Institutions: Case Studies of Water Management from Fayrab and Saripul." AREU, Kabul.

Qadiry, Tahir. 2007c. "Reporters Put Life on Line." in *Afghanistan News Center*, vol. 2008. Mazar-e Sharif: IPS.

Rashid, Ahmed. 2001. *Taliban. Militant Islam, Oil & Fundamentalim in Central Asia*. U.K. : I.B. Tauris & Co., Ltd.

Rasuly-Paleczek, Gabriele. 1995. "Ethnic Identity versus Nationalism: The Uzbeks of Afghanistan and the Afghan state." in *Identity and Nation*. Wien/Copenhagen.

Richmond, Anthony H. 1988. "Sociological Theories of International Migration: The Case of Refugees." *Current Sociology* Vol 36:7-25.

Roy, Olivier. 1986. *Islam and Resistance in Afghanistan*. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press.

—. 1992. "Ethnic Identity and Political Expression in Northern Afghanistan." Pp. 73-86 in *Muslims in Central Asia. Expressions of Identity and Change*, edited by J.-A. Gross. Durham, London: Duke University Press.

Rubin, Barnett R. and Helena Malikyar. Unpublished, 2003. "The Politics of Center-Periphery Relations in Afghanistan." Center on International Cooperation, New York University.

Ruttig, Thomas. 2006. "Islamists, Leftist and a Void in the Center. Afghanistan's Political Parties and where they come from (1902-2006)." Konrad Adenauer Stiftung.

Sadowski, Yahya. 2006. "Political Islam: Asking the Wrong Questions?" *Annual Review of Political Science* Vol 9:215-240.

Schelling, Thomas C. 1978. *Micromotives and Macrobehavior*. New York: W. W. Norton.

Schmeidl, Susanne. 1996. "Causes of Forced Exodus: Five Principal Explanations in the Scholarly Literature and Six Findings from Empirical Research." Pp. 15-43 in *Whither Refugee? The Refugee Crisis: Problems and Solutions*, edited by A. P. Schmid. Leiden: Interdisciplinary Research Program on Root Causes of Human Violations.

Sengupta, Kim. 2008. "Warlord under siege after 'kidnap and torture' of former ally." vol. 2008. Mazar-e Sharif, London: The Independent.

Senlis. 2006. "Afghanistan Five Years Later: The Return of the Taliban." Senlis, London.

—. 2007. "Stumbling Into Chaos. Afghanistan on the Brink." Senlis Council, London.

Sharani, M. Nazif. 1984. "Introduction: Marxist "Revolution" and Islamic Resistance in Afghanistan." in *Revolution and Rebellions in Afghanistan. Anthropological Perspectives*, edited by M. N. Sharani and R. L. Canfield. Berkeley: University of California.

Silverman, David. 2001. *Interpreting Qualitative Data. Methods for Analysing Talk, Text and Interaction.* . London: Sage Publications.

Simonsen, Sven Gunnar. 2004. "Ethnicising Afghanistan?: inclusion and exclusion in post-Bonn institution building." *Third World Quarterly* Vol. 25:707-729.

Smith, Graeme. 2008. "Talking to the Taliban - Air strikes and drug eradication." in *Talking to the Taliban*, vol. 2008, edited by G. Smith. Kabul/Toronto: Globe and Mail.

Spink, Peter. 2004. "A closing window? Are Afghanistan's IDPs being forgotten?" *Forced Migration Review*:34-36.

Stedman, Stephen John and Fred Tanner. 2003. "Refugee Manipulation. War, Politics, and the Abuse of Human Suffering." Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.

Stigter, Elca. 2005. "Transnational Networks and Migration From Faryab to Iran." AREU, Kabul.

Strand, Arne and Gunnar Olesen. 2005. "Humanitarian and Reconstruction Assistance to Afghanistan 2001-05." Chr. Michelsen Institute, Bergen.

Synovitz, Ron. 2008. "Afghanistan: Prosecutor Suggests 'Some People' Cannot Be Tried." vol. 2008. Kabul: Radio Free Europe.

Tapper, Nancy. 1973. "The Advent of Pashtun "Maldars" in North-Western Afghanistan." *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London* Vol. 36:55-79.

—. 1991. *Bartered Brides. Politics, Gender and Marriage in an Afghan Tribal Society*. Cambrdige: Cambridge University Press.

Tapper, Richard. 1984. "Ethnicity and Class: Dimensions of Intergroup Conflict in North-Central Afghanistan." Pp. 230-246 in *Revolutions & Rebellions in Afghanistan*, edited by M. N. Shahrani and R. L. Canfield. Berkeley: University of California.

Tarrow, Sidney. 2006. *Power in Movement*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Terry, Fiona. 2002. *Condemned to Repeat? The Paradox of Humanitarian Action*. Ithacha and London: Cornell University Press.

Thagaard, Tove. 2003. *Systematikk og innlevelse. En innføring i kvalitativ metode*. Bergen: Fagbokforlaget.

Tilly, Charles. 1990. "Transplanted Networks." Pp. 79-95 in *Immigration Reconsidered: History, Sociology, and Politics*, edited by V. Yans-McLaughlin. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Turton, David and Peter Marsden. 2002. "Taking Refugees for a Ride? The Politics of Refugee Return to Afghanistan." AREU, Kabul.

UNDP. 2006. "UNDP Afghanistan Annual Report." UNDP, Kabul.

UNHCR. 2002. "District profiles, Faryab." UNHCR, Mazar-e-Sharif.

—. 2003. "Report of the Displaced Persons Council Meeting, 19-21 October 2003." UNHCR.

—. 2004c. "South IDP Profiling Analysis." UNHCR.

—. 2005. "Strategy for Support to Internally Displaced Persons in the Southern Region in 2005 and 2006." vol. 2008, edited by UNHCR: UNHCR.

—. 2006a. "Afghanistan Situation. Operational Update." vol. 2008, edited by UNHCR. Kabul: UNHCR.

—. 2006b. "Internally displaced Afghans reach home in the north." vol. 2008, edited by UNHCR. Mazar-i Sharif: UNHCR.

USIP. 2003. "Unfinished Business in Afghanistan. Warlordism, Reconstruction, and Ethnic Harmony." United States Institute of Peace, Washington DC.

Weekes, Richard V. 1984. "Muslim Peoples: A World Ethnographic Survey." Greenwood Press.

Widerberg, Karin. 2001. *Historien om et kvalitativt forskningsprosjekt*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.

Wilder, Andrew. 2007. "Cops or Robbers? The Struggle to Reform the Afghan National Police." AREU, Kabul.

Wily, Liz Alden. 2004a. "Land Relations in Faryab Province: Findings from a field study in 11 villages." Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU), Kabul.

—. 2004b. "Looking for Peace on the Pastures: Rural Land Relations in Afghanistan." Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit, Kabul.

Witt, April. 2003. "Karzai Powerless As Warlords Battle." in *The Washington Post*. Washington.

Yin, Robert K. 2003. *Case Study Research. Design and Methods*, vol. vol. 5. London: Sage Publications.

Zolberg, Aristide R., Astri Suhrke, and Sergio Aguayo. 1989. *Escape From Violence. Conflict and the Refugee Crisis in the Developing World*. New York: Oxford University Press.

All sources used in the thesis are included in this list.

Total amount of words: 34 539