The State of Democratisation in Afghanistan:

An examination of the state-citizen relationship in a fragile context

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Abstract

Since the 1990s, democratisation has been upheld by international institutions, donor governments and development agencies as a means to achieve stability and development in post-conflict contexts. Conceived of as a way in which to make 'fragile states' less 'fragile', through encouraging greater interaction between individual citizens and the state structure, democratisation has been integral to post-conflict statebuilding programmes. To date, however, little evidence has emerged to indicate whether or not these programmes have actually facilitated any change in the relationship between ruler and ruled.

Contemporary attempts to conceptualise, measure and practice democratisation commonly focus on the nature of the state-citizen relationship, and in doing so tend to portray the concepts of 'the state' and 'the citizen' as constant (or ideally constant) across contexts. In conflict-affected fragile states such as Afghanistan, however, standard conceptions of what the state should be or what role it should play, in the predominant Weberian legal-rational sense, are difficult to apply – primarily because these states have not emerged historically as did western European states. Expecting fragile states to fit the Weberian model, or produce a liberal brand of the state-citizen relationship, thus seems untenable. This thesis explores whether democratisation might occur in spaces other than that of this seemingly fundamental relationship.

Using Charles Tilly's 2007 framework as a basis for enquiry, the research examines the case of Afghanistan through compiling an historical narrative of ruler-ruled relationships and through analysing a new data set of local perspectives on the state collected from three provinces. The study concludes that alterations to this framework are needed if the nuances of change in the ruler-ruled relationship are to be captured adequately. Developing an alternative, the Comprehensive Democratisation Indicators (CDI) approach, the researcher argues that employing centre-community and state-citizen constructs in parallel provides a much more holistic picture of political change in contexts where the liberal institutions of 'state' and 'citizen' have not taken hold.

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Author's declaration

I hereby declare that I have read and understood the University of York's regulations on plagiarism and academic misconduct. I undertake that all of the material presented for examination within this thesis is my own work, and that it has not been written in whole or in part by any other person but myself. I also confirm that any references to other published or unpublished works by any other person or people have been acknowledged and dully credited within this study.

Anna Larson, July 2013

PREAMBLE: A THESIS IN BRIEF

General overview: Identifying the research problem

Since the 1990s, democratisation has been upheld by international institutions, donor governments and development agencies as a means to achieve stability and development in post-conflict contexts (Lake, 1994; UNDP, 2002: 1). Conceived of as a way in which to make 'fragile states' less 'fragile', through encouraging greater interaction between individual citizens and the state structure, democratisation has been integral to post-conflict statebuilding programmes. To date, however, little evidence has emerged to indicate whether or not these programmes have actually facilitated any change in the relationship between ruler and ruled in fragile contexts. This thesis argues that a central reason for this lack of evidence is the mismatch between an inflexible, liberal framework for conceptualising democratic change on the one hand, and fragile contexts that do not conform to the parameters of this framework, on the other.

In Afghanistan, since the beginning of the international intervention in 2001 the push to democratise has been donor-led – and in spite of considerable differences between donors in terms of what internationally-promoted democratisation should comprise or what its end-goal should be, several uniform assumptions have characterised their approaches. One of these assumptions has been that key tenets of liberal western democracy, such as individual voting, property and other citizenship rights, gender equality, the development of civil society and freedom of the press, for example, are universal values that can and should be promoted in the Afghan context (as demonstrated by the way in which these values pervade Afghanistan's Poverty Reduction Strategy Program, the Afghanistan National Development Strategy or ANDS). Another assumption, more fundamentally, which not only features in donor approaches in contexts like Afghanistan but is also reflected in the democratisation and statebuilding literatures in general (for example across works as diverse as those of Larry Diamond, Robert Dahl, Jean Grugel, and Sunil Bastian and Robin Luckham) is that the promotion and development of a more interactive relationship between individual citizens and the state relationship is central to democratisation. Within this,

discourses of democratisation tend to portray the concepts of 'the state' and 'the citizen' as constant across contexts. In the specific set of circumstances that characterise conflict-affected fragile states in particular, however, these concepts can exist or be interpreted in ways that do not always conform to western assumptions.

Indeed, particularly in conflict-affected fragile states such as Afghanistan, standard conceptions of what the state should be or what role it should play, in the predominant Weberian legal-rational sense, are difficult to apply – hence the 'fragile' label. Democratisation in these contexts – and especially following international military intervention – is often initiated by international actors according to a liberal agenda in spite of the way in which the role and authorities of the state do not comply with a western-European model, and regardless of the way in which the relationship between citizen and state is often not institutionalised in a uniform fashion across the country. These shortcomings are considered 'fixable': in many cases a blueprint for liberal democratisation is developed and operationalised by international actors on the assumption that this relationship can be established and rolled out, cultivated through external intervention. Yet, if states have not developed according to similar historical trajectories to those in which western European states emerged, it is possible to query this dominant notion that they could or should be moulded to fit the Weberian model, or expected to produce a liberal brand of the state-citizen relationship. This begs the question: is it conceivable that democratisation might occur in spaces other than that of this seemingly fundamental relationship? Evidently, the answer to this will depend very much on the way in which democratisation is conceptualised and defined in fragile contexts.

The primary aim of this research is to explore and examine the validity of the dominant assumption of the centrality of a state-citizen relationship as the basis for democratisation in conflict-affected fragile contexts. It does not seek to argue against liberal democracy in and of itself, but rather to question the ways in which it is interpreted and applied in the special circumstances that fragile states present. Focusing on three distinct areas of theory, measurement and practice, it asks: *is the state-citizen relationship necessarily central to the theoretical concept, measurement and practice of*

democratisation? If so, how can the theory, practice and measurement of democratisation be applied to fragile states, if at all?

Theory

The way in which democracy developed in Western Europe is often explained in the literature with reference to the historical, simultaneous development of democratic regimes and nation-states. Even at a basic conceptual level, then, democracy and the Western nation-state are strongly interconnected. This conceptual connection is further emphasised in the study of comparative politics wherein idealized legal-rational states provide convenient means of political analysis across differing contexts. As bounded entities with internationally recognized borders, they are portrayed as sovereign territories within which a governmental body holds both a monopoly of violence and the sole responsibility for macroeconomic decision-making and resource distribution.

While critiques of this conflagration of democracy with the nation-state have strengthened and developed in recent years, with the work of democracy theorists such as David Held (1999; 2006) questioning the nature of state sovereignty in a globalising twenty-first century, the majority of democracy and democratisation theorists still treat the Weberian ideal state as a constant. Questions concerning the nature of state sovereignty arise frequently in fragile states, which are often venues for intrusive international intervention in what might otherwise be considered domestic affairs, and yet the literature on statebuilding in these contexts sits uncomfortably with these questions. As Stephen D. Krasner has noted, "[a]dressing [a problematised notion of state sovereignty] requires altering basic ontological categories such as the state as the key actor in the international system" (Krasner, 2009:21). Krasner goes on to question the very utility of established theoretical approaches to the contexts of fragile states, asserting that "[i]f a state is not autonomous, conventional analytic approaches, whether realist or liberal, are of little value" (Krasner, 2009:21). Furthermore, recent trends in the democratisation literature have seen democratisation characterized as movement toward a more interactive, accountable and transparent relationship between state and individual citizen (Grugel, 2002; Bastian and Luckham, 2003; Tilly, 2007).

Statebuilding thus involves the strengthening of state institutions to facilitate this kind of relationship. This overlooks, however, the way in which in many fragile contexts, collective, community interests often take the place of or overlap with individual ones, leaving little space for individual interaction with the state. This highlights the inadequacy of existing approaches to conceptualizing democratisation in contexts in which the state does not conform to a Weberian model, and points to a considerable gap in the democratisation and statebuilding literatures.

Measurement

In an attempt to compare levels of democracy across different country contexts, a number of theorists have attempted to measure demcratisation according to their own sets of criteria. Some, such as the Polity Model (Jaggers and Gurr, 1995), Freedom House (2011) and Tatu Vanhanen (2000) offer quantitative comparisons based on democracy criteria that are assigned numerical scores. Others, such as Charles Tilly (2007), base analysis on qualitative accounts of historical processes. Common to all these approaches however, is the centrality of the state-citizen relationship in one form or another in determining how democratic a country is or is not. Whether portrayed in terms of how often elections are held, how competitive they are, how officials respond to citizen demands over time, or how 'free' civil society activism in opposition to a given government appears to be, for example, this construct is critical to contemporary means of measuring democracy. In general, the more interactive the state-citizen relationship, and the more established the social contract (and methods of renegotiating it) between them, the more democratic a given state.

Yet, in spite of the apparent simplicity of these approaches, there remains a paucity of information documenting if, how and how much democratisation has occurred in conflict-affected fragile states. Why is this the case?   In Afghanistan, as the international intervention comes to an end, after more than decade, there is no available information about how or to what extent, if at all, 'democratisation' has occurred in the country. This demonstrates, among other things, the inadequacy of current models of measuring democratisation to fit the characteristics of fragile states.

Practice

Developed as part of broader statebuilding programs, internationally-promoted democratisation in conflict-affected fragile contexts is necessarily state-centric: it is designed to increase the capacity of the state to respond to citizen needs and demands. Often promoted indirectly as 'governance' programmes by development agents such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and bi-lateral aid agencies, it often features a strong focus on the accountable and transparent delivery of state-provided services. This comes hand in hand with the expectation that state capacity can and will be strengthened over time – that the fragile state can be 'fixed' to conform more directly with western ideals of what a state is and does. Programmes are designed and implemented to *achieve* greater state capacity, autonomy and boundedness: the goal is a more Weberian model of statehood. One only need consider the titles of major works in the literature, such as "Fixing Failed States" (Ghani and Lockhart, 2008), to determine that assumptions made about what a state *should* be have significant effect on the ways in which programmes are designed. In this respect, working towards the increased interaction between individual citizen and state fits well with the international statebuilding project – and yet, it is arguable that this target is more valuable to international actors than it is to the citizens of the fragile state in question (Barakat and Larson, 2013). At the same time, imposing certain liberal democratic values and assumptions as to how a fragile state should democratise can in itself undermine state sovereignty.

This thesis seeks to examine the assumption of the centrality of the state-citizen relationship within current democratisation theory, measurement and practice. It examines whether alternative conceptualisations of how people interact with central authorities in fragile contexts could actual prove more insightful in terms of assessing democratic change.

Theoretical approach

This research is informed by and situated within three areas of academic scholarship: existing theoretical concepts of democratisation and the state; different models of

measuring democratisation; and the practice of internationally-promoted democratisation in fragile contexts as documented in the statebuilding literature. In addition, existing accounts of democratisation in Afghanistan are surveyed. These four bodies of literature – which, combined, present an interdisciplinary approach spanning comparative politics, international relations, and post-conflict statebuilding – are reviewed selectively in chapters 1 and 2.

Revealing the inadequacy of many contemporary attempts to conceptualise and measure democratisation when applied to fragile states, having compared three of these approaches in depth (those of the Polity model, Vanhanen and Tilly) the review highlights the importance of historical analysis to understanding how these states developed, and how the relationship between ruler and ruled within them has changed over time. An historical focus provides a necessary tool toward understanding why, historically and politically, fragile contexts are or have become fragile, rather than assuming the democratisation process to have begun simply with the establishment of a political settlement in the aftermath of conflict, or with the first roumd of national elections, or the introduction of universal suffrage. Tilly's approach is shown to be the most convincing of the three models compared in this respect.

As outlined and justified in depth in chapter 3, Tilly contributes a comprehensive model for conceptualising and measuring democratisation that is grounded in political and historical narrative. It assesses democratisation (and de-democratisation) by analysing changes in the state-citizen relationship over time. These changes are divided into four distinct but overlapping categories: breadth, equality, protection and mutually-binding consultation, which, combined, allow a comprehensive analysis of how changes in the relationship between ruler and ruled occur. Through this model, Tilly claims to be able to assess "the entire world and a great deal of human history", implying its applicability to any state, regardless of its capacity or democraticness (2007: 7). On testing this claim, in attempting to apply an adapted version of Tilly's model to the Afghan case, the researcher finds that in spite of its nuanced understandings of how states and citizens interact, Tilly's fundamental assumptions about what states and citizens are and do still prevent its useful application to fragile contexts. The researcher then further

modifies the model to allow for a broader focus on relationships beyond that of the state-citizen.

Central thesis

This research questions the extent to which a state-citizen relationship is a central condition of democratisation. It attempts to unpick basic assumptions about this relationship that are dominant within current theory, measurement and practice of democratisation, in an attempt to see whether it is possible to reformulate the discourse of democratisation in a manner that allows more accurate application to fragile states. In doing so it necessarily refutes the notion that fragile states are by default 'undemocratic' as a result of their fragility, and questions the criteria on which current standards of 'democraticness' are based. **This is important because democratisation may be taking place in fragile states in ways and spaces that are not captured by conventional means to measure it according to a state-citizen model.**

The three central hypotheses of this study are as follows:

- The state-citizen relationship is only central to *theoretical concepts* of democratisation to the extent that no alternative currently exists. Democracy theorists commonly assume a strengthening relationship between the state and its individual citizens as a necessary characteristic of movement toward democratisation – but this precludes application to fragile contexts. An alternative means of conceptualizing democratisation is needed, because there may be aspects of democratisation that are taking place in these contexts that exist outside the limitations of the state-citizen relationship.

- It is possible to *measure* levels of democratisation and how they change within fragile contexts. In order to do so, however, an historical and political narrative is imperative to understand the nature of the relationship between rulers and ruled over time, so as to establish how that relationship has changed, and how resource management has been affected as a result. Analyses based only around narrow interpretations of liberal democracy, such as the holding of elections,

party institutionalisation or civil society activism, will mean little in contexts in which these institutions are unfamiliar to much of the population.

- The state-citizen relationship is only central to the *practice* of internationally-promoted democratisation in fragile states to the extent that international actors such as the UN are unable to move away from a one-size-fits-all blueprint of democratisation that prioritises the building of state capacity.

Contribution of the thesis

At present, democratisation in fragile states is largely considered an elusive and/or non-existent phenomenon, because, for a number of different reasons, governments in these states do not have the capacity or political will to interact with all citizens in a uniform, predictable and accountable manner. Frameworks designed to measure democratic change rely on there being at least the potential for interaction between the state and individual citizens, whether it be in the form of tax collection (and subsequent expectations of service provision), recourse for unjust state intervention, elections, or the existence of opposition movements, for example – and yet   fragile states, by nature, do not always comply with these requirements, and thus are often dismissed as undemocratic or 'not free', to use Freedom House terminology.

One of the central contributions of this thesis is the way in which it demonstrates, however, that while democratisation must occur as change in the relationship between ruler and ruled, this change is not necessarily best captured through a state-citizen lens, due to the limiting liberal attributes of this construct. For example, it demonstrates how assumptions of the individuality and uniformity of citizenship over space and time, alongside assumptions of the state as a unified, coherent entity, simply do not translate into the conflict-affected context of Afghanistan. Thus, while the ways in which communities interact with central authorities may become more or less democratic in the aftermath of conflict, for instance, any shifts in this regard would be missed by existing methods of democratisation analysis.

In its adaptation of Tilly's model, the research consolidates this contribution in presenting an alternative framework for assessing levels of democratisation in fragile states. Instead of relying on a singular, central focus on the state-citizen relationship, this framework – the Comprehensive Democratisation Indicators or CDI approach – advocates the use of a 'centre-community' analysis in parallel to an assessment based on the state-citizen construct. The researcher argues that in combining two sets of indicators, analysts can assess the extent to which political change occurs in fragile states without having to wait for liberal democratic structures and institutions to emerge (should they ever do so). At the same time, the CDI approach does not preclude the possibility that a more liberal state-citizen relationship may be actively sought and to some extent experienced by some individuals and groups in society. Moreover, this is a reflexive approach: as change occurs within a given community or state, different combinations of the two sets of indicators can be used, reflecting the dynamic natures of fragility and democratisation.

In terms of the placement of its contribution to the academic literature, this thesis can be situated firmly within and between both the existing democratisation and statebuilding literatures. In bridging a gap between theory and practice, it combines the two in a way that engages with both fields of enquiry. Statebuilding in Afghanistan has been the focus of a growing critique within the academic and policy-oriented literature (see for example Cramer and Goodhand 2002; Rubin, 2004; Goodhand 2009; Suhrke 2011), as has the nature of the state itself and how it has developed historically (Edwards, 1996; Rubin, 2002; Barfield, 2010). However, little has been written academically on the subject of democratisation in Afghanistan. Although a number of technical reports, surveys and journalistic articles have been produced – respectively highlighting the successes of some technical intervention (NDI, 2011; Larson, 2011a) the percentage of Afghans who think the country is going in the 'right direction' (The Asia Foundation, 2012) or the perceived contradictions between Western and Afghan versions of 'democracy', (Rubin, 2004; Barry and Greene, 2009; Larson 2009b, 2011b) there has been little systematic assessment of how democratisation might occur.

There are reasons for this gap in the literature – including the paucity of reliable statistics in Afghanistan, the difficulty in collecting widespread and trustworthy qualitative data, and the growing donor fatigue with democratisation narratives in favour of stabilization and political settlement. Drawing on eight years of research conducted in Afghanistan, and 154 interviews conducted by the researcher and a team of Afghan analysts and researchers at the Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU), this study makes a significant contribution to the existing literature in drawing on a large source of qualitative data otherwise difficult to access in the Afghan context.

The research is aimed at two different audiences – the first, an academic one, in the exploration of potentially new means through which to conceptualise and measure democratisation in fragile environments. The second audience is that of policy-makers and practitioners working both directly in the field of democracy promotion, and also indirectly as development agents working in the field of governance. The latter of these may indeed be more receptive to the research findings, given the broader focus and definition of governance programmes as compared to the generally narrow list of activities to which democracy-promotion actors are normally confined. This is represented in Figure 1 below by the larger blue arrows linking CDI with development agents working in governance, as opposed to the smaller orange arrows linking CDI with democracy promotion agencies/analysis. Alongside these groups, particular emphasis is placed on addressing policy-makers within G7+ governments, a group of 17 self-described fragile states who propose a "New Deal for [donor] Engagement" in their countries (G7+, 2012). Findings from this research speak clearly in support of this new deal, specifically in terms of re-defining donor approaches to democratisation and correspond with the adoption of greater consideration of context-specific factors. As empirically-based research, solidly grounded within the Afghan context but also potentially applicable in other fragile environments, the thesis offers valuable lessons that could be applied to interventions in other contexts – and indeed to the continuing international involvement in Afghanistan.

Figure 1: Diagram of audiences addressed by the thesis[1]
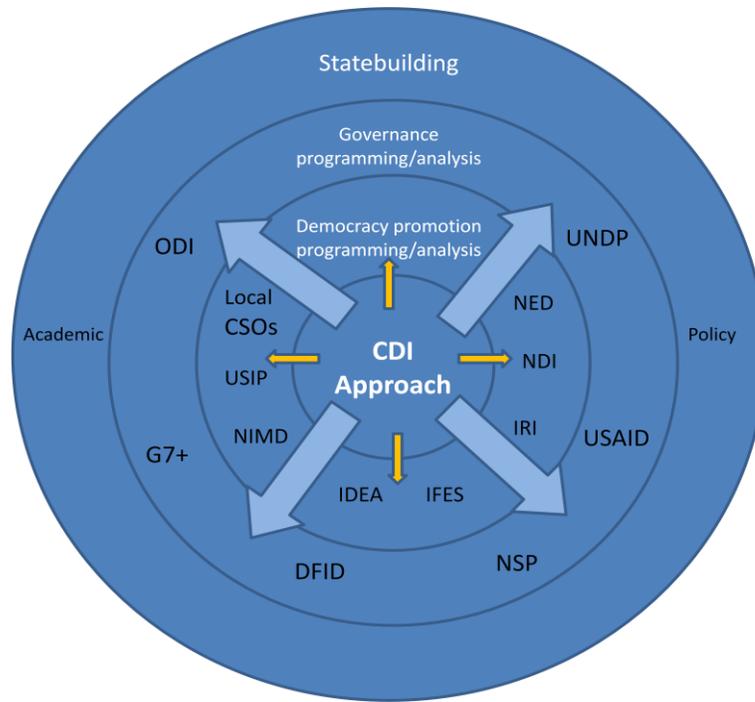
Study structure: How the thesis progresses

The thesis begins in chapter 1 with an in-depth review of the existing literature on democratisation and the state, examining historical and current conceptions of both and how they interact. This reflects how the researcher first approached the topic of democratisation, wanting to explore in more detail the conceptual links between democracy and the state, laying the foundations for an enquiry as to their application to fragile contexts. This is followed in chapter 2 with a further review of literature on three related topics: the measurement of democratisation; internationally-promoted

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[1] Acronyms represent the following agencies and organisations: UNDP (United Nations Development Programme); USAID (United States Agency for International Development); NSP (Afghanistan National Solidarity Program); DFID (UK Department for International Development); ODI (Overseas Development Institute); CSOs (Civil Society Organisations); USIP (United States Institute for Peace); NIMD (Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy); IDEA (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance); IFES (International Foundation for Electoral Systems); IRI (International Republican Institute); NDI (National Democratic Institute); NED (National Endowment for Democracy).

democratisation and statebuilding in fragile/post-war states; and democratisation in Afghanistan, the chosen case study for this research. These subjects in turn gradually narrow the field of enquiry from the initial, broad starting point of the literature review in chapter 1. At the end of chapter 2, considering all four topics surveyed throughout the literature review, the researcher reflects on gaps in existing scholarship that have emerged. In particular, the review reveals the way in which contemporary concepts of, means to measure and current international practice of democratisation rest on the dominant assumption of the centrality of the liberal state-citizen relationship. It notes how this relationship appears to function differently in fragile, conflict-affected contexts and yet how there remains no way of conceptualising democratisation in these circumstances without reliance on the state-citizen construct.

In spite of this observation, however, the review identifies one framework for measuring democratisation – Charles Tilly's (2007) – that emphasizes nuance and change in this relationship over and above the technicalities of elections and elite bargains, for example. While it remains wedded to the liberal notions of 'state' and 'citizen' it demonstrates a central concern for historical narrative and treats democratisation as a comprehensive set of political processes very much affected by the context in which they are situated.

For these reasons, in chapter 3, the researcher justifies her decision to use Tilly's framework as a basis for exploring the state-citizen relationship in a fragile context – Afghanistan. Based on the information gathered throughout the literature review, and the gaps identified, the researcher develops the theoretical outline of the thesis, formulates the central line of argument and presents three hypotheses related to Tilly's model. The chapter describes how the researcher then intends to apply Tilly's framework to the Afghan case. Chapter 4 presents the field methods used to collect primary data for the study, first outlining themes within the existing literature on conducting fieldwork in fragile contexts before expanding on how the researcher conducted data collection in Afghanistan. A sampling design is given and justified, followed by an explanation of the limitations faced and reflections on what could have

been done differently given greater flexibility in the process. The end of chapter 4 signifies the end of the thesis' opening material.

Chapter 5 presents the start of the researcher's application of Tilly's model to the Afghan case. Following Tilly's emphasis on historical events and processes and the way in which they affect the relationship between ruler and ruled in a given context, the chapter develops an historical narrative for Afghanistan, tracking the ways in which this relationship has changed over time. Then, having established the historical/political paths in Afghanistan that have contributed to the way in which Afghans currently relate to central government authorities, in chapter 6 the researcher begins to examine the primary data. In doing so she asks whether it would be possible to apply Tilly's conceptualisation of how democratisation occurs to the Afghan case, starting with his criteria of breadth and equality. Chapter 7 then continues this examination of primary data, moving on to the criteria of protection and mutually-binding consultation. It concludes with a summary of the problems that arose as a result of this attempted application, and points to the need for an amended model that might better suit the complexities of fragile contexts.

Chapter 8 takes this idea further and explores potential amendments to Tilly's model, asking whether there is a way to avoid central reliance on the state-citizen relationship, perhaps combining it with a parallel focus on 'centre-community' interaction. Based on the findings from the primary data analysis, the centre-community construct would appear a more appropriate construct for analysis in some (primarily but not exclusively rural) areas of Afghanistan, while looking at the changing relationship between individuals and state structures remains useful in some urban contexts. The researcher develops the Comprehensive Democratisation Indicators (CDI) approach, a flexible framework for analysing democratisation in fragile states that provides two sets of indicators than can be combined to assess how the relationship between ruler and ruled might be changing over time. The chapter assesses the benefits that the CDI approach could bring to current theory, measurement and practice of democratisation. Finally, chapter 9 summarises the findings of the research, broadening the scope from a specific Afghanistan focus to fragile states more generally. It concludes that there needs to be a

better way to conceptualise, measure and practice democratisation in fragile states, because current means to do so remain inadequate, and presents the CDI approach as a plausible alternative. Addressing donors and practitioners of democracy promotion in particular, it offers 10 principles for the further enhancement of democratisation in fragile states, and suggests areas for future research.

CHAPTER 1: DEMOCRATISATION, THE STATE AND THE CITIZEN: TRANSITION, SOVEREIGNTY, FRAGILITY

The literature review for this study surveys existing scholarship relating to post-conflict democratisation in conflict-affected fragile states. This literature is divided into four categories: first, the literature on the theory of democratisation, the state and the citizen in general; second, the literature on measuring democracy and democratisation; third, the available literature on the international practice of post-conflict democratisation; and fourth, existing studies of democratisation in Afghanistan. These four categories are split across two chapters (1 and 2). This chapter comprises the first category – theoretical concepts of democratisation, the state and the citizen, assigning more weight to this particular review of literature given its relative importance to the thesis.[2]

1.1 Theoretical concepts of democracy and democratisation

1.1.1 Democracy and liberal democracy

The body of literature on democracy as a theoretical and political concept is vast, and thus in order to focus discussion helpfully, the researcher has chosen to review literature that focuses primarily on democratisation – how democracy emerges and consolidates – particularly in post-conflict and conflict-affected contexts. It is necessary to begin however with a brief discussion of how democracy itself is defined in this body of work.

According to Larry Diamond, during the 1990s democracy became "a *global* phenomenon, the predominant form of government, and the only broadly legitimate form of government in the world" (Diamond, 2003, emphasis in original). Such a claim is ostensibly substantiated by the estimation that 117 of the world's 195 states are now electoral democracies (Freedom House, 2012a).

This assertion is nevertheless problematic: first, due to the contested definition of democracy itself. As observed by many scholars, democracy is not only practiced but

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[2] Brief background reviews of three further related topics – institutions, rational choice institutionalism, historical institutionalism and interpretivist views of social explanation are given in Appendix 1.

also defined in a variety of different ways (Esposito and Voll, 1996; Zakaria, 1997; Leftwich et al., 2002). Advocates for a minimalist definition of the term argue that a political system determined by free and fair elections, along with universal suffrage, constitutes the meaning of democracy (Schumpeter, 1942; Huntington, 1991/1992; Przeworski, 1999; Zakaria, 1997). Many further distinctions have been made, however, for example between 'formal (or electoral) democracy', 'participatory democracy' and 'social democracy' – a transition from the former to one or both of the latter two considered desirable in the consolidation and achievement of democratic outcomes (Huber et al., 1997). Formal democracy is a term used by Huber et al. to acknowledge the existence of democratic institutions (such as elections) but also to imply that few democratic outcomes (such as universal political and social rights) have materialized as a result. Luckham et al. (2003:18) contribute to this debate in their distinguishing the establishment of democratic *institutions* from the consolidation of democratic *politics*.

Perhaps the most commonly used definition of democracy is in fact 'liberal democracy', combining as it does the tenets of the election of government by the people (democracy in its most basic form) with aspects of liberal governance such as rule of law, free speech, freedom of religion, the separation of powers and property rights (Zakaria, 1997:1; Plattner, 1999). For Diamond, 'liberal' refers most specifically to the protection of citizens from arbitrary state action, or "a political system in which individual and group liberties are well protected and in which there exist autonomous spheres of civil society and private life, insulated from state control" (1999: 3). This perspective, specifically of individual liberty, stems originally from the liberal principles attributed to the works of John Locke (1960 [1689]) and John Stuart Mill (1963), which outlined arguments for the innate freedoms of individuals and the need for any restrictions on these freedoms (for example in the form of the actions of authoritative governments) to be justified. Many centuries earlier, Plato's *Republic* had discussed the nature of a political system in which individual men and (city-)states acted justly towards one another. In the 17th century, philosophers including Thomas Hobbes (1948 [1651]), Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1973 [1762]) and Immanuel Kant (1999 [1797]) would take this idea further in the development of thought around the social contract – or the way political systems should operate in a manner whereby governments interact with

individual citizens, but in which citizen interests and fundamental liberties are protected.

Liberalism as a school of thought has burgeoned from these origins into a vast and multi-faceted field, which lies beyond the scope of this thesis, but the central tenets of early liberal thought have persisted and maintain a direct influence on the work of current liberal democracy proponents, including Diamond, Robert Dahl, Marc F. Plattner, Kenneth A. Bollen among many others.[3] Translated into the characteristics of modern liberal democratic systems, these central values now correspond with regular, competitive elections, the separation and limitation of powers through constitutional provisions, and, perhaps most fundamentally, the protected rights of individual citizens.

As Zakaria (1997) and Plattner (1999) observe, however, while the characteristics of liberal democracy outlined above and in Diamond's liberal definition of a democratic political system have come to constitute a widely accepted definition of democracy in a given country, they represent an assumed merging of democracy with constitutional liberalism (Zakaria, 1997). Indeed, while democracy per se (as a means of electing government) may be widespread, it is not always accompanied by the aspects of constitutional liberalism that feature in a liberal democracy (Zakaria, 1997: 1).[4]

In spite of the debate concerning how democracy should be defined, however, and to what extent it does or should include aspects of constitutional liberalism, it has been noted by some scholars that the term is still used by academics and policy makers as a single, unambiguous concept, and one which should be promoted globally as the most equitable form of government (Esposito and Voll, 1996). Indeed, as Esposito and Voll contend, "[i]n the current global context, most who advocate democratisation still do not recognize it as an essentially contested concept" (1996:14). This is problematic for a number of reasons, not least that a 'one-size-fits-all' model of democratic governance is often prescribed irrespective of different contexts, and that values specific to liberal constitutionalism are presumed universal goods. Further, because certain assumptions

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[3] For more on the connections and distinctions between liberalism and liberal democracy, see Plattner (1999).
[4] For further discussion on Zakaria's arguments, see Larson 2009: 3-4 and Larson 2011:4.

are made about the widespread beneficial outcomes of democracy taking hold purely on the basis of elections taking place (Lindberg, 2009: 9).

Another distinction which remains unclear is the point at which a given state becomes a fully-fledged 'democracy'. As discussed above, the mere holding of elections does not guarantee the establishment of democratic politics, less still the constitutional liberalism central to liberal democracy. Furthermore, the advent of democracy in a given state brings with it a number of expectations, based on the way in which it is strongly associated with the enforced rule of law, social freedoms and economic successes often perceived as characteristic of western political systems. The comparison between these countries and those in which democracy is a recent phenomenon, however, is an inaccurate one, given the long and often conflict-ridden historical processes which have led to the consolidation of liberal democracy in the West (Garrard, 2004). Moreover, the practice of internationally-promoted democratisation often occurs within a short timeframe, with a limited budget, often in the aftermath of conflict, as will be discussed below – and as such can be based on a narrow interpretation of liberal democracy that rarely extends beyond the holding of elections and the drafting of a new constitution, for example.

Clearly, the word 'democracy' has come to signify both more and less than the political system it fundamentally describes. In one sense, it is not just a political system – being now widely associated with liberal constitutionalism and individual rights. In another, however, it is an empty word, devoid, in itself, of meaning: because of its common usage and application to a wide variety of social and political phenomena, it often requires qualification with one of a wide range of adjectives – electoral, liberal, monitory, deliberative, social – to name just a few. Indeed, Collier and Levitsky have identified 550 subtypes of democracy across 130 different studies (Collier and Levitsky, 1997; Diamond, 1999: 6). The definitions of democracy that arise from these qualifications are diverse.

In spite of these differences, however, there is a degree of common meaning assignable to the term democracy if the word is taken in its most basic form. Perhaps the most

famous rendition of a basic definition of democracy is that coined by Schumpeter, where it is simply 'a system in which rulers are selected by competitive elections' (Schumpeter, 1942, cited in Przeworski, 1999: 23). This minimalist definition allows a certain analytic clarity, because it removes many of the value-laden associations with which democracy is often qualified. Also, according to Adam Przeworski, even this most basic definition contains enough in terms of implication for the avoidance of conflict and public participation that it is worth defending purely in this form (1999). In order to include more general principles, such as participation in a broad sense, on which democratic governance might be based (rather than limiting public choice to the formal institution of elections, for example) and in order to specify further the primary role of publically-chosen leaders within a democratic system, the researcher contends that democracy is: *a political system in which individuals or groups of individuals within a given state, institution or political community have the right and ability to determine the ways in which they and their collective resources are governed and to whom decision-making power is assigned*. This definition, influenced strongly by the minimalist approach, but broadened to encompass a wider array of political processes than elections alone, will serve to inform this thesis and will allow a useful analytic separation of political system from liberal democratic values.

A simple definition such as that put forward by Schumpeter does not in itself account for the quality of a given democracy or the likelihood of its sustainability, however (Przeworski, 1999: 54). Laurence Whitehead contends that Schumpeter's definition is at once insufficient and too demanding, in that it does not encapsulate the teleological process of democracy, but at the same time puts forward minimal conditions that are ideal and not practically attainable in real democracies (2002: 10; Dahl, 1971). A further, related shortcoming is that it does not capture the means or processes through which democracy comes into being, changes over time or is affected by other social and political phenomena. If, for example, democracy is simply a way to ensure public limitation over executive decision-making, then democratisation primarily refers to the establishment of mechanisms to facilitate this limitation. It does not detail anything of the potential power struggles or processes which might occur in order to establish a democratic political order. In essence, it does not capture the changing nature of the

relationships between rulers and ruled in the move toward democracy. In this sense, then, the broadened definition given above allows greater application to the processes that surround democratic decision making – if people have the right and ability to determine the ways in which they and their collective resources are governed and to whom decision making power is assigned, there is an implication of public involvement in processes of governance that reach beyond the mere holding of competitive elections for leadership roles.

'Democracy' is a noun, and an ostensible end-state: a state, polity or institution is or is not 'a Democracy'; 'the people want democracy', 'in our village there is no democracy'. This implies that there is a categorical distinction between democracy and non-democracy that can be established, and that, once a state or political entity has become a democracy, there is no further progression toward the consolidation of a democratic politics. This does not accurately describe the experience of most countries, however, which, as Charles Tilly notes, over time experience periods of more or less democratic rule (Tilly, 2007: 34). Tilly argues that, rather than countries being or not being democratic, they move along a continuum toward or away from end-points of democracy and non-democracy, with no assurance or certainty of ever reaching either pole (2007:24). This concept of a continuum is more conducive to the explanation of change in political systems over time than the static notions of democracy and non-democracy, and is also particularly relevant to fragile states, where political transitions after war for example are complex and often do not take place according to a linear trajectory.

In summary, definitions of democracy are varied and contested across different schools of political thought, between theorists and practitioners of democracy promotion, and across different country contexts. The definition of democracy chosen for the purposes of this study – *a political system in which individuals or groups of individuals within a given state, institution or political community have the right and ability to determine the ways in which they and their collective resources are governed and to whom decision-making power is assigned* – has been selected to follow broadly the minimalist school, following Schumpeter and Przeworksi, allowing for greater analytical clarity. As Larry

Diamond asserts, this minimalist approach – focusing primarily on the political nature of the term – allows the greater analysis and separation of the political system itself from the social and economic effects it might engender (Diamond, 1999: 8). The specific definition here also implies, however, the following tenets: a broader focus than that of the state alone; a substantive notion of actual agency of individuals or groups in determining the way and by whom they are governed, rather than a focus only on their nominal right to do so; the inclusion of political processes that extend beyond the mere holding of elections; and the avoidance of reference to the principles of constitutional liberalism which could shift focus away from the key issue of governance. Further, it does not deviate from the simple fundamental principle that *democracy is concerned with the relationship between ruler and ruled*. These aspects of the chosen definition of democracy will now guide a more substantial discussion of the democratisation literature, and will be important to the later study and application of democratisation as it occurs in fragile states.

1.1.2 Democratisation and the recent focus on the state-citizen relationship

Alongside the broader study of democracy, the sub-field of democratisation has developed into a body of scholarly literature in its own right. In a succinct article summarising a number of key theoretical positions on democratisation, Matthjis Bogaards divides existing definitions of the term itself into two groups (Bogaards, 2010: 476). On the one hand, he argues, there exists a broad, all-encompassing interpretation, which uses the term to describe any kind of movement towards 'more democracy':

> Democratisation in the broadest sense can thus refer to a minimal improvement in an authoritarian regime, what others might refer to as "liberalization"...but also to the further democratisation of an existing democracy... (Bogaards, 2010: 476).

On the other hand, this can be compared with a more limited definition of the term which refers more specifically to the transition from authoritarian to democratic regimes (Bogaards, 2010: 476). Christian Welzel adds a third category – that of defining democratisation in terms of the endurance and/or survival or democracy (Welzel, 2009:

74-75). Of these three kinds of definitions, the second (transitions from autocracy to democracy) is most commonly found in the literature, probably as a result of the way in which much of the recent work on democratisation stems from the transitions literature of the mid-1980s (and most particularly O'Donnell et al., 1986). For this reason, the transitions approach will be discussed first. The review will then discuss democratisation as a broad movement toward 'more democracy' in any context, before assessing definitions of democratisation as the sustainability and endurance of democratic politics. Throughout this discussion, the centrality of the state-citizen relationship to recent scholarship on democratisation becomes clear.

Writing in 1986, Guillermo O'Donnell, Philippe C. Schmitter and Laurence Whitehead edited a four-volume study on processes of transition from authoritarian to democratic regimes, and the causes of reversion back to authoritarianism (O' Donnell et al., 1986). Focusing in particular on Latin American and Southern European transitions, as indeed much of the contemporary literature did (see for example Collier, 1975; Collier, 1979; Karl, 1986; Mainwaring, 1989) – the work provides a critical early contribution to the transitions literature, comprised of the essays of 22 contributing authors alongside the editors. The editors' treatment of democratisation remains limited, however, as a purely political transition between one regime type and another, with neither regime type defined substantively. Democratisation is considered a procedural enterprise, comprising the installation of open elections and oppositional rights only – and this kind of 'political democracy' preferable over socio-economic processes of transition, which are considered secondary (MacEwan, 1988: 118). Very little attention is paid throughout the work to external and international effects on democratisation processes, with the majority of analytical focus resting on the actions and interests of military elites internal to each country studied. This kind of focus on process or procedure in the transition from non-democracy to democracy was common at the time, when, as Jean Grugel states, "the meaning of democratisation was self-evident: it meant simply a transformation of the political system from non-democracy towards accountable and representative government." (Grugel, 2002: 3).

In his seminal work, 'The Third Wave: Democratisation in the Late Twentieth Century', Samuel Huntington also refers primarily to democratisation as a movement to democracy from autocracy, describing the process of this transition as occurring across different groups of countries in waves (and reverse waves) (Huntington, 1991). In this work Huntington makes the implicit assumption that the line between democracy and autocracy is relatively clear. Following Huntington, Diamond also implies a similar demarcation, distinguishing between electoral democracies (where formal democratic institutions are in place but lack the substance of a democratic politics) and liberal democracies (where democratic institutions ensure and protect liberal freedoms) – but nevertheless establishing a threshold between these and various forms of non-democracy or 'pseudo-democracy' (Diamond, 1999: 18).While others following in this trend (see for example Jaggers and Gurr, 1995; Dahl, 1998 (Chapter 5); Freedom House, 2011) establish different thresholds and definitions of one or the other regime type, there is nevertheless a common assumption that a distinguishable (and empirical) line exists between one and the other.

Some studies have sought to add more nuance to this perspective. While still firmly within the transitions approach, Barbara Geddes problematises the nature of transitions by questioning the homogenous treatment of autocracies across different contexts by earlier scholars in the field (Geddes, 1999). In identifying a typology of autocratic regimes, comprised of military rule, personalised rule and single-party rule, she examines in detail the differential nature of these regime types' approaches toward power and staying in power, concluding that a number of existing theories about transitions remain too simplistic or are simply not substantiated by the available evidence. She argues that most of the transitions literature is based on two fundamental assumptions about the behaviour of political elites: 1) that politicians want to be elected to office and stay there, and 2) that they consider the best way to do this as to meet the needs of constituents (1999: 125). However, these basic assumptions are based on rational elite behaviour in democratic societies, and do not necessarily apply to authoritarian regimes. As Geddes explains,

Although even very coercive regimes cannot survive without some support, in the absence of routine ways for citizens to remove authoritarian leaders from office, questions of who exactly their constituents are, how satisfied they have to be, and what factors besides satisfaction with regime performance affect their level of acquiescence require empirical investigation and cannot be answered in the abstract (1999: 125).

This analysis would seem also to have wider relevance than to the application of authoritarian regimes, also – any kind of non-democratic state undergoing transition, and particularly one emerging from war, is unlikely to provide a scenario in which these two assumptions are applicable. This implies that fundamental flaws exist in the transitions approach to analyzing regime change in general, but most particularly in fragile or conflict-affected states. While Geddes' approach marks a significant improvement from the simplistic version of transitions put forward by earlier scholars, however, it remains limited to the analysis of three kinds of autocratic regime and their differential movements toward regime change. In fragile states, regimes often do not comply with these types, comprising a mixture of two or more of these types, or simply a complex scenario in which numerous actors compete for control of state resources and none holds claim to a monopoly of force. The institutional structures implicit within Geddes' three types – military, single-party and personalized rule – often simply do not exist in fragile contexts and thus cannot be used as analytical frameworks.

In part as a means to explore the meaning of a transition from autocracy to democracy, clarifications were made in the mid-1990s – in particular by Linz and Stepan (1996) – to distinguish the transition to democracy from democracy's consolidation. This led to the use of the word democratisation broadening in its application by scholars, in order that it could be used not only to describe the transitions from authoritarian to democratic regimes, but also the deepening and further institutionalisation of democratic politics in existing electoral (and even well-established liberal) democracies. Larry Diamond (1999) focuses particularly on this consolidation in newly-formed electoral democracies. For Diamond, consolidation is "the process of achieving broad and deep legitimation, such that all significant political actors, at both the elite and mass levels, believe that the democratic regime is the most right and appropriate for their society, better than any other realistic alternative they can imagine" (1999: 65). Although

Diamond makes reference to the behaviour and norms of masses, however, following Robert Dahl (1971) it is the behaviour of elites that he considers the most critical to the consolidation of democracy, given their disproportionate influence over the way in which a given society is governed (1999: 66).

Contrary to this elite focus, more recent approaches, for example from the fields of deliberative democracy, civil society, feminism and cosmopolitanism have sought to highlight the state-citizen relationship, the social contract and the nature of citizenship as more important to the understanding of democratisation than elite bargains and behaviour. Indeed, much of the democratisation literature that opts for a broader, more complex view of democratisation than that put forward and developed by transitology has focused on this relationship (Dryzek and Holmes, 2002; Leftwich et al., 2002; Luckham et al., 2003; Diamond, 2003; Paris, 2004; Tilly, 2007; Keane, 2009). This has emphasised different aspects of state-citizen interactions, including the nature of democratic participation, accountability, inclusivity and transparency, both in terms of establishing the necessary institutions to promote greater interaction between citizen and state (Dryzek and Holmes, 2002; Paris, 2004; Keane, 2009) and facilitating the establishment of a substantive democratic politics or 'culture' (Luckham et al., 2003; Tilly, 2007). These concerns have been reflected more broadly in development policy through the use of the 'good governance' discourse (see for example UNDP, 2002; Gaventa, 2004). They incorporate a renewed focus on the meaning of citizenship, one the one hand defined in with an active sense of duty, in which citizens regularly come into contact with state (and global) institutions (Held, 1999; Dryzek and Holmes, 2002; Fung and Wright, 2003; Keane, 2009) and are able to hold the state to account through transparent processes (Goetz and Jenkins, 2004). This involves the guarantee of access to these institutions and processes to all citizens – ensuring that 'spaces for change' and representation of interests are available and inclusive (Goetz and Jenkins, 2004; Cornwall and Schatten Coelho, 2007).   On the other hand, corresponding with the concepts of individual liberties discussed in section 1.1.1 above, they focus on the rights of individual citizens, and the need for these to be uniform across all segments of society (Evans, 2001; Grugel, 2002; Tilly, 2007; Freedom House, 2011).

This stance is taken by Tilly in his most recent work on democracy (2007), where he adopts a broad definition of democratisation and focuses on state-citizen interactions. Tilly extends his analysis to all regimes within states as they change over time, either toward or away from democratisation (or de-democratisation), and regardless of when they supposedly made the transition from autocracy to democracy. These are at either end of Tilly's continuum, although he does not require states to reach either pole at any point in time. Thus, democratisation for Tilly is:

> net movement toward broader, more equal, more protected and more binding consultation [between the state and its citizens].

And by contrast:

> De-democratisation…then means net movement toward narrower, more unequal, less protected and less binding consultation. (Tilly, 2007: 14)

In this definition, then, democratisation is not merely 'consolidation' in term of the habituation of democratic norms and values among elites (Diamond, 1999: 65; Rustow, 1970) but rather any movement towards the greater coordination of state and citizen priorities.

Very much related to the idea of consolidation of democracy is that of its sustainability and endurance. Indeed, it could be argued that democratisation is not democratisation unless transition from non-democracy to a democratic politics lasts, and does not revert back to authoritarian rule (or whatever kind of regime existed previously) at a future point in time. One of the most cited contributions to the sustainability literature is an empirical study by Przeworski et al., who argue that various factors including: existing democracy in the previous year, levels of affluence, rapid economic growth combined with moderate inflation, gradually declining income inequality, a favourable international climate in which there are more democracies in both the world as a whole and the region, and a parliamentary system all have positive effects on the likelihood of democracy enduring (Przeworski et al., 1996). In this work, the authors were able to counter persuasively previously held assumptions concerning the ability of dictatorships to foster economic growth before transitioning to democracy, which had been used by western politicians during the Cold War to justify support or tolerance for dictatorial

regimes. Further, these authors argue, while predicting the likely emergence of democracy is notoriously difficult, assessing its potential to survive is an easier empirical task.

Although this approach offers clear criteria for the measurement of how long democracies last across different regime contexts, however, it does not account for the quality of democratisation as it is experienced by citizens, and whether this changes over time. In spite of their consideration of political, economic and institutional factors, and their inclusion of the influence of international and regional climates, Przeworski et al. remain focused on what Grugel terms "the formal and observable structures of government" (2002: 22), or the institutions considered necessary to create incentives for elite compromise. According to Grugel, however, the process of establishing democracy "means not only the elimination of authoritarian institutions and the establishment of formal institutions for the election of leaders and the creation of political parties but, just as important, legitimizing on-going struggles to eliminate authoritarian social practices" (2002: 31). This can be linked also to Diamond's focus on democratic norms and behaviours becoming 'habituated' (Diamond, 1999; following Rustow, 1970), as referred to above, but less exclusively at the hands of a political elite. Grugel's 'on-going struggles' very much take place within the citizenry at large and correspond both with Tilly's process-oriented approach and his focus on the state-citizen relationship.

A fourth and final consideration concerning the definition of democratisation regards the way in which the term, as an intransitive verb, requires the presence of an object: to democratise *someone* or *something*. While not discussed widely in the literature, this has allowed the blurring of terms between the process of democratisation, which might generally occur, and democratisation, which is the action of trying to democratise a given state or entity. A further blurring has then occurred between the would-be democratisers of own-states or their home countries, and those from western countries tasked with the support of democratisation in so-called developing nations – democracy promotion. In this sense, as Grugel points out, democratisation can become a patrimonial exercise, or a "highly prescriptive process in which the South is supposed to learn from the developed countries – it becomes the reproduction of the procedures of

government which have been developed in western Europe and the US" (2002: 21). This statement could perhaps be further clarified by adding the word 'attempted' before "reproduction of the procedures of government" – primarily because levels of 'success' in promoting democratisation from the outside have eluded measurement to this point, and cannot be directly ascribed to the agency of international actors. Nevertheless, democracy promotion has become an increasingly established component of US (and other nations') foreign policy since the Reagan administration, and has involved the establishment of numerous NGOs and quasi-government organisations whose role is to promote various aspects of democratic government – and in particular the encouragement of increased state-citizen interactions – overseas (Munck, 2009: 2-4).

Definitions of democratisation, then, are indeed just as complex and debated as those of democracy (Grugel, 2002: 4), and there is no real consensus in the literature as to whether it should be defined purely in terms of regime transition, in terms of consolidation or in terms of sustainability. It is argued above that the transitions approach, based largely out of the empirical school of democratic theory and focusing primarily on institutional processes and procedures at the elite level, is too simplistic for application to fragile states, whose existing regimes before democratisation often defy categorisation and whose levels of socio-economic inequality often require a broader conceptualisation of democratisation, situated in historical context, than those based on institutions and elite behaviour alone. This being the case, a broader, consolidation approach is considered here as a more appropriate definition to the contexts being studied, as this allows for incremental changes in either direction along a democratisation continuum to be noted, and for historical and social processes to be taken into account. If democracy concerns the relationship between ruler and ruled, then democratisation (and, following Tilly, de-democratisation) concerns *changes within this relationship*. This definition allows a broader conceptualisation of lasting change than that proposed by Przeworksi et al. (1996). It also facilitates the distinguishing of internationally-promoted democratisation as the foreign-assisted instalment of institutions and processes, such as the holding of elections and the drafting of constitutions, from the more substantive bottom-up democratisation that denotes the continual "elimination of authoritarian social practices" (Grugel, 2002: 31) by those

who had previously lived under them. While the existing democratisation literature that adopts a broad, consolidation approach tends to consider this consolidation in terms of state-citizen interaction, focusing instead for the time being on ruler-ruled relationship allows analytical separation from what are value-laden, liberal concepts.

1.1.3 Theories of how democratisation occurs and the conditions it requires

Numerous theorists have posited suggestions as to how and when democratisation occurs in different contexts. Evidently, their accounts depend on the ways in which they define the term, and as Grugel (2002: 4) notes, tend to be split between the early democracy theorists (such as Dahl, 1956; Lijphart, 1969; O'Donnell and Schmitter, 1986; Karl, 1990; Burton et al., 1992) focusing most particularly on the actions of elites and necessary institutional structures and later scholars who broadened the scope to include different socio-economic, institutional, cultural and political conditions (such as Leftwich et al., 2002; Grugel, 2003; Bastian and Luckham, 2003; Tilly, 2007). There are some exceptions to this rule, however, as will be discussed below.

In the transitions literature, some authors place emphasis on the frailty of an authoritarian regime necessary for democratisation to take place (O'Donnell and Schmitter, 1986) – indeed, this was a widely held assumption when these authors were writing (Geddes, 1999: 120). Others highlighted the need for the formation of elite pacts in the bringing about of a move to democracy (Karl, 1990; Burton et al., 1992). These pacts involve agreements and compromises among elites concerning the nature of the new regime, power rotations and decisions concerning the inclusion and exclusion of certain groups. However, as Geddes notes, this analysis has largely focused on Latin American transitions and does not appear to apply in other contexts (Geddes, 1999: 120). Broadly conceived first in terms of consociational democracy by Abend Ljiphart (1969), the model of compromise among elites concerned the agreement among those leaders representing different interest groups in fragmented societies to cooperate in order to avoid the greater costs of further fragmentation and likely warfare. Unlike in later transitions literature, however, that offered an alternative to structural and historical conditions for democratisation, successful consociational agreements, also required particular conditions within society concerning different sets of relations

between the different subcultures represented, and between the elites and their own interest groups (1969: 216). At this early stage, then, the inclusion of certain conditions for democratisation was being posited alongside considerations of institutional process and agency.

For Dahl, the emergence of polyarchic societies – states governed democratically – is based largely on the presence of political arrangements or institutions that form minimum criteria for democratic government (1956; 1998: 83-84). In 1988, Przeworski referred specifically to the institutional framework needed to ensure that elite interests are met in a sustainable manner. Indeed, according to this author, "[d]emocracy is possible when the relevant political forces can find institutions that would provide a reasonable guarantee that their interests would not be affected in a highly adverse manner in the course of democratic competition" (1988: 64). Przeworksi sets this scenario in direct contrast to the development of elite agreements over issues, such as taxation – which cannot convince elites of their longevity because of the nature of democratic politics – when new leaders are elected, they may change their stance on issues agreed upon previously. This being the case, a sound institutional framework is a fundamental condition to the agreement of elites to a democratic transition. This is particularly the case in the aftermath of conflict, to which Przeworski specifically refers in this work.

Since the early 1990s, there has been even greater consideration by scholars of the economic, social, political and institutional conditions necessary for democratisation to take place. Samuel Huntington emphasised the social and economic conditions *within* countries necessary to the uptake of democracy even in spite of 'waves' of democratisation taking place internationally or a snowballing effect in the region (1991: 7). Further, as other scholars would later concur, a mid-level of affluence and/or growth was also necessary to provide a 'political transition zone' within a given country (1991: 22). Huntington also highlights the need for leaders conducive to democratic change, joining the elite school of thought and decisively asserting that "[e]conomic development makes democracy possible; political leadership makes it real" (1991:24). This line of thought is also followed closely by Diamond, who claims that 'political

culture' is of paramount importance: that the democratic norms and values must be held by elites and masses (but particularly elites) in order for democratisation to take place (1999:66).

In a more recent study, Staffan Lindberg posits that the holding of elections, in and of itself, can bring about democratisation. According to Lindberg, "[e]lections are not only indicators but also a mode of transition themselves, whereby electoral processes and incentives under certain conditions play causal roles in furthering democratisation" (2009: xxi). This stems in part from the recent phenomenon of internationally-promoted elections in various countries in transition, and responds to the prevalent argument that the holding of elections and the installation of formal democratic institutions cannot in themselves bring about a substantive democratic politics (Karl, 1990; Carothers, 1997). Lindberg's central thesis runs as follows: "De jure competitive elections provide a set of institutions, rights and processes stacking up incentives and costs in ways that tend to further democratisation" (2009: 9). Conceding earlier, however, that elections can occur in 'undemocratic' countries and also that there are 'obvious facade elections meant for international display only' (2009:6), it is clear that not all elections comply with Lindberg's model and that there are a considerable number of exceptions to the rule. Furthermore, his lack of expansion on the meaning of 'competitive' begs further questions: what does it take to class an election as competitive, and according to whom is it considered so? In a number of fragile states elections take place, often at the encouragement (and funding) of international actors, and often with significant candidate: seat ratios. This does not mean however that the playing field is considered level by the candidates competing or the constituents whose votes they hope to win.

Alongside the existing literature on causes and conditions for democracy's emergence is an equally vast canon on democracy's demise. Considering this in terms of 'reverse waves of democratisation', Huntington considers a number of factors important to the reversion back to authoritarian rule, perhaps most importantly concluding that these reverses do not generally take place as a result of popular dissatisfaction with democracy, but instead through the machinations of elite control or military coups (1991: 9-10). Indeed, as Diamond also asserts, "publics have shown no appetite for a

return to authoritarian rule of any kind" (1999: 62) – implying that reversions that have occurred have done so for other reasons that need to be addressed by 'consolidation from within' (1999: 64). Following Lipset (1959), Przeworksi et al. (2000) argue that low per capita income levels are likely to accompany the fall of democratic regimes, with the corollary that democracy is more likely to survive, if not emerge, in already-developed countries.

This review demonstrates that a number of theorists consider conditions of some kind necessary for the onset of democratisation. This is problematic, however, when studying democratisation in conflict-affected fragile states, because in these countries very few if any of the conditions mentioned above exist. GDP per capita is normally very low, growth minimal, and inflation rates high. Further, the states in question often do not comply with the typologies outlined by transition theorists, without the capacity to be classified as any kind of authoritarian regime. These theorists also appear to present an ahistorical approach to democratic development, also – in which the onset of democracy in western Europe, for example, is not always considered in comparison to contemporary examples. Presumably the conditions of mid-range income levels and universal suffrage, for example, were not pre-requisites for the early stages of democratic development in Europe in the 19th century. For this and other reasons, Tilly differs from the above theorists by advocating a 'set of crucial variables' rather than a 'yes/no checklist' for what should come to define democratisation (2007:10) and its trajectory in different states. The basic acknowledgement in this approach that factors conducive (and unconducive) to the development of democracy *change* over time and are not static conditions that can be checked off to predict whether one country or another is likely to experience democratic (or de-democratic) transition – i.e., the reference to these factors as *variables* or *processes* as opposed to actual conditions or pre-requisites – makes for a more flexible approach that could potentially be applied to states whose characteristics do not match a particular list of criteria.

From the literature surveyed above, it is possible to argue that the transitions literature and associated agency approach to democratisation does not consider the potential structural, historical, economic and political factors in a given context that might hinder

or promote democratisation. These factors are critical to the understanding of political transitions in fragile states, because they do not conform to 'standard' models of statehood (as discussed below) and require contextualised analysis. This is not to say that the making of generalisations between and across fragile states is not possible, but that any cross-contextual comparison must be grounded in local political and historical realities. This being the case, then, a substantive definition of democratisation appears more appropriate, given its consideration of context and a broad range of contributing factors to political transition. However, as Jean Grugel highlights, recent substantive approaches (including those of civil society, feminism and cosmopolitanism) have brought about a renewed focus on citizenship and, implicitly, the state, as central to democratisation (2002: 31).

1.2 Democratisation and the state

Recent developments in the democratisation literature that focus primarily on the state-citizen relationship draw on a significant body of scholarly work on the underlying relationship between democratisation and the state. This subject has received particular attention from historicists and structuralists, due to the way in which, in western Europe at least, the development of the nation-state and democracy occurred simultaneously (Tilly, 1985; 1992; 2004). In reaction to the prominence of the behaviouralist school of thought in the 1950s and 1960s, which posited individualism and later pluralism as means of interpreting political and social phenomena, statist literature began the task of 'bringing the state back in' (Evans, Rueschemeyer and Skocpol, 1985) to consider in more depth the structural and historical factors influencing these phenomena.

Rather than assess all of this literature, the researcher will focus on three key areas relevant to the context of fragile states: democratisation theorists' definitions and perspectives of the state; the state in the international system and the sovereignty paradox; and fragile states.

1.2.1 Democratisation theorists' definitions and perspectives of the state

Underlying the majority of democracy theorists' conceptions of the modern state is Max Weber's definition of a bounded territory in which a monopoly of violence is held by

state actors: "the state is the form of human community that (successfully) lays claim to the *monopoly of legitimate physical violence* within a particular territory" (Weber, 1919 [2004]: 33). This definition has come to dominate most understandings of the state in the international system, combined with the so-called Westphalian notion of sovereignty (discussed below).   Thus, for pluralists such as Robert Dahl, for example, the state is "a very special type of association that is distinguishable by the extent to which it can secure compliance with its rules, among all those over whom it claims jurisdiction, by its superior means of coercion" (1998: 41); and for Tilly, whose theoretical stance on democratisation is somewhat different from that of Dahl, a state is also primarily "[a]n organization that controls the major concentration of coercion within a substantial territory, exercises priority in some regards over all other organizations operating within the same territory, and receives acknowledgement of that priority from other organizations, including states, outside the territory" (2007:11). In spite of their different approaches to democratisation, then, these theorists definitions of the state remain similar. In both accounts, the Weberian notion of the state is a broad, all-encompassing one – as Skocpol writes, "this Weberian view of the State does require us to see it as much more than a mere arena in which social groups make demands and engage in political struggles or compromises" (Skocpol, 1985: 8).

Where pluralists and structuralists differ, however, is in their conceptions of the role and position of the state vis-à-vis its citizens. For pluralists, this role is a neutral, facilitative one, in which multiple centres of power – organisations, associations or interest groups, for example – have the opportunity to influence the state system without the domination of any one group, and that conflicts can be resolved to the benefit of all groups in this manner (Dahl, 1967: 24). Thus, as Stephen D. Krasner describes, "the behaviour of the state is seen as the product of societal pressures" (2009: 25). This approach is also often connected closely to liberal views of the state (in which the state may be seen as one interest-group among many). Having dominated the field of social and political science in the 1950s and 1960s in particular (Skocpol, 1985: 4) this view nevertheless continues to hold significant influence over the study of political science in the United States in particular. For structuralists, however, such as Althusser (1971), whose position emanates from the Marxist school, the state is not in itself neutral but

serves the agenda of the capitalist ruling classes (for Marxists, to protect the capitalist economy), excluding certain other groups or classes from gaining positions of influence, for example, but determining its policy based on broader societal needs (Skocpol, 1985: 5). A separate perspective in its own right is the statist view, whose basic premise is that "[t]he state is autonomous...The state is not one interest group among many, or the servant of general societal needs; it is an institution with purposes and powers of its own" (Krasner, 2009: 35). Proponents of this approach (such as Tilly, 1985; Scott, 1998) analyse the state in terms of its ability to impose its own agenda on a given group of people (citizens) in order to achieve a specific goal. For Scott, this is embodied in the state-making process in which states themselves raze the proverbial forest of a territory's 'natural' environment, ordering, cataloguing and recording information in order to gain control over its inhabitants and extort taxes (Scott, 1998).

Thus, in spite of an underlying similarity across these perspectives in terms of what a state actually is in the current context, views of its role and purpose differ quite significantly. This is important in the study of democratisation because, particularly according to the most recent conceptions of democratisation as substantive and encompassing more than a single political transition, democratisation processes take place not only within the locus of the state, but consider the state as a necessary active participant in the development of an inclusive, democratic citizenship. As Jean Grugel asserts, "[d]emocratization means, above all, building a democratic state" (2002: 68). Questions of what kind of participant it will be, and how much capacity and willingness it has to undergo and take part in processes of regime change or democratisation more specifically, dominate the literature. For example, referring specifically to autocratic regimes in the southern cone of Latin America, Alfred Stepan discusses the relative power of states versus civil society, and "the way in which the character of the state affects the evolution of opposition politics" (Stepan, 1985: 338). He concludes that the nature of cleavages and unions within civil society, on the one hand, and those within the state (along with how it defines its own activities), on the other, are central to the understanding of the relationship between civil society and the state in any given context. This then promotes a contextual analysis but at the same time provides a series of questions that can be applied comparatively to assess the differential relationships

between states and civil societies in a variety of countries. Clear from Stepan's conclusions however is the way in which states interact differentially with citizens depending on the interests they consider to be at stake, which then in turn determine their actions and (by extension) the likelihood of regime change.

For many contemporary scholars of democratisation, particularly in newly-democratizing states, the issue of 'state capacity' is central to determining the likelihood of change. Indeed, from this perspective, while state capacity in itself does not foster democratisation, democratisation without state capacity is unlikely to occur substantively (Grugel, 2002: 83; Tilly, 2007: 175). This is due to the way in which the institutions of state must take on a variety of complex tasks in responding to citizen demands. Determining what is meant by 'state capacity' in the literature is not as straightforward as these assertions suggest, however. In one of the earliest mentions of the term, Skocpol and Finegold talk about capacity in terms of a given regime's administrative ability to implement interventionist policies (1982: 260-261). This capacity can vary across different governmental departments, however, and is thus not a descriptor of a given government but of the state capacity within certain administrative departments. These authors use the concept state capacity to explain why agricultural and industrial reform within FDR's New Deal in the USA in the 1930s succeeded and failed respectively. Geddes (1994) posits that state capacity to respond to public needs is linked to state autonomy from elite vested interests – and that the more autonomy a state has from these interests, the more likely it is to be able to implement policy in the public interest (1994:6). Within the field of economics, Besley and Persson (2007) argue that fiscal and legal state capacity, primarily to raise taxes and enforce contracts, are critical to a country's development and cannot be assumed to exist in developing states. This reflects Evelyn Huber's argument which defines state strength and by extension, capacity in terms of a state's extractive capabilities (1995: 166).

Scholars within the democratisation literature have used the term to refer to the way in which newly democratizing states are able (or unable) to reform the institutions of state to respond to public needs, or in other words, "to supervise democratic decision-making and put its results into practice" (Tilly, 2007:15). Tilly goes on to define state capacity

as: "the extent to which interventions of state agents in existing non-state resources, activities and interpersonal connections alter existing distributions of those resources, activities and interpersonal connections as well as relations among those distributions" (2007: 161). Thus for Tilly, state capacity is about the extent to which the interventions of state agents actually change existing patterns of resource distribution. Evidently, and especially according to this definition, states can have high capacity levels (otherwise termed 'strong states') but remain undemocratic. One of Tilly's central arguments remains however that the strengthening of state capacity is a first step among many in the path to democratisation, because "the process of state strengthening starts the processes of subjecting the state to public politics and increasing popular control over public politics" (2007: 162). Thus, it is easier for a strong state to democratise than a weak one. Having said this, however, some theorists have made distinctions between state strength, on the one hand, and state capacity, on the other - where states that are capable do not centralise decision-making but instead guide other agents within society to make decisions on the state's behalf (Rosenau, 1992: 14; Grugel, 2002: 83-84). This stage of devolved power-holding would presumably follow on from the 'strong state' stage in Tilly's process. Finally, state capacity appears not to be contained within a state, but to be significantly affected by the increasing globalisation of markets. As Mkandewire (1999) points out, international trade stipulations, among other global agreements and aid packages considerably limit the policy space in which some developing states can actively respond to their citizens. This point is expanded by David Held and Daniele Archibugi in their call for a cosmopolitan democracy, in which international institutions are also held accountable by their members and member states (Held and Archibugi, 1995).

It is clear from this review, then, that the state is almost without exception considered by democratisation scholars to be central to democratisation processes, and that few (perhaps with the exception of Held and Archibugi) would argue with Grugel's assertion that democratisation essentially equates to the democratisation of the state. As discussed in section 1.3 below, this approach essentially deems democratisation unlikely or slow to occur in fragile states, also often defined as 'weak states'. Without departing from the statement given above that democratisation principally concerns the

relationship between ruler and ruled, however, it may be possible to deviate from a focus on states per se and look beyond and between state structures to other spaces within a given territory, such as the way in which local communities interact with regional and or central authorities that may or may not be connected to the state infrastructure. This approach would suggest that fragile states can be defined in other ways, above and beyond negative comparisons with 'established' or institutionalized states in western Europe, for example.

1.2.2 The state in the international system and the 'sovereignty paradox'

Within the international relations literature there exist different approaches to the role of states within the international system. The researcher does not intend to approach her own research through an IR lens, instead choosing democratisation and post-conflict statebuilding as primary theoretical bases. Nevertheless, there is considerable overlap between these fields of study, and IR perspectives remain important to the understanding of how states and their behaviour are perceived and conceptualised by theorists in different ways. The researcher includes this brief review of the central theories in order to see whether IR perspectives can shed further light on political transitions in fragile states.

Three dominant theoretical perspectives can be identified through much of this literature – realist, liberal and constructivist stances. Of these, the first two – realism and liberalism – represent positivist approaches, in which states are the central units of analysis and in which actual political phenomena, including behaviour and its consequences, can be measured and observed. Realist conceptions involve the argument that interests, defined in terms of power, determine the actions of statesmen and politicians: these actors act according to prudence and with the political consequences of their actions in mind (Morgenthau, 1948). As Jackson explains, according to the realist perspective "states are human agencies which interact not in respect to international law or other norms but solely or at least primarily out of regard to their national interests – reasons of state" (1996: 8). Further, power relations between states are always going to be unequal and therefore outcomes in international politics will always reflect the interests of the most powerful states. By comparison, liberal (and

more specifically, liberal institutionalist) perspectives consider states' domestic concerns in particular the need to mitigate market failures as the fundamental determinant of state behaviour in the international system (Krasner, 2009: 12). These concerns however are very much connected to the way in which states are interdependent economically, and not isolated from one another. This has led to a situation of 'complex interdependence' within international society in which states are mutually dependent and interconnected in a web of different levels of interactions (Keohane and Nye, 1977). Further, for liberalists, states are not the only actors whose behaviour can influence political outcomes – a variety of non-state and transnational agents play increasingly significant roles (Kaarbo and Ray, 2011: 8). Within this perspective, the characteristics of states' behaviour can vary according to the kind of government they have, for example – a stance linked to the liberal claim (often called the Liberal or Democratic Peace Theory) that democracies never go to war with one another.

Constructivist perspectives offer a critique on realist and liberal schools of thought, questioning the ontological foundations on which they are based, and suggestions that rather than existing in the real world, international society is constructed on the basis of shared norms and values. For constructivists, these norms and values, alongside ideas and perceptions, constitute what Alexander Wendt terms "the social construction of power politics" and determine the behaviour of both states and non-state actors. (Wendt, 1992).

Closely relating to the position and role of states within the international system is the issue of state sovereignty. A considerable literature within the IR field exists on this subject, debating the nature of sovereignty within the current international system (see for example Lyons and Mastanduno, 1995; Jackson, 1996; Hansen and Stepputat, 2005; Krasner, 2009). Often linked to the Peace of Westphalia, compiled in 1648 to end the Thirty Years War, but more accurately assigned to Emmerich de Vattel and his writings in 1758 (Krasner, 2009: 16) the concept of national sovereignty involves at its most basic interpretation the principle of non-intervention, and the idea that states should not interfere in the domestic affairs of others – thus creating autonomous state entities.

While the notion of state sovereignty in this form has been assumed in much of the IR literature, students of which have "assumed that the object of their study is sovereign states" (Krasner, 2009:14), sovereignty remains highly contested both as a theoretical concept and in the practice of international relations.

First, problematising sovereignty as a concept, Krasner distinguishes between three core types of sovereignty: international legal sovereignty, in which states recognize one another as theoretically equal entities within the international system; second, Westphalian/Vatellian sovereignty, in which states have complete jurisdiction over their territories and populations, are not subject to any higher authority and thus are free to rule without external intervention; and domestic sovereignty, which refers to a state's capacity "to actually control activities both within and across its borders" (Krasner, 2009: 15). While the rules associated with these three types of sovereignty are frequently violated, the notion of sovereignty remains, in what Krasner calls the 'organization of hypocrisy'. Sovereignty persists because there is no better alternative to organizing the state system (2009: 17). Lyons and Mastanduno point out one of the central early contradictions with the sovereignty devised in Europe – it applied primarily to European states' dealings with one another, but was not expanded beyond this. As these authors describe,

> [o]riginally the concept of sovereignty was recognized as a guideline to be used by the European states in their relations with each other   but not necessarily in their contacts with non-European states as they expanded their political and economic influence to other parts of the world. In Africa and Asia, the European states reserved the 'right' to intervene, as the United States did in Latin America (Lyons and Mastanduno, 1995: 6).

While this was to change, gradually, as a result of the World Wars, the building of the League of Nations and the end of colonialism, it is evident that there is still a contradiction between the language of sovereign statehood and the practice of intervention by the global powers and 'international community' in weaker states.

Robert H. Jackson refers to this discrepancy as the difference between positive and negative sovereignty, where the former developed in western Europe alongside the nation-state, and the latter is an "international normative framework that upholds

sovereign statehood in the Third World" (1996:1). To this effect, negative sovereignty both helps to maintain the existence of so-called Third World states (for example through their entitlement to international aid), some of which Jackson later refers to as 'quasi-states', but also facilitates intervention by outside powers into their socio-economic development and treatment of citizens (1996:1). Taking the critique of an assumption of unquestioned state sovereignty even further, Hansen and Stepputat contend that sovereignty has been redefined in recent years, with the global war on terror embodying a significant shift in international approaches toward employing violence across national boundaries (2005: 1). Yet in the existing literature, they argue, "sovereignty cannot be imagined independently of the state" (2005: 2). Further, they critique the way in which the IR literature has homogenized statehood across states, by assuming "states to be both normal, that is, with *de facto* legitimate control of their population and territory, and identical, that is, with similar interests, strategies, and expected patterns of action" (2005: 3). This is critically important to the study of political transitions in fragile states, whose sovereignty comes into question through these authors' analysis. Applying conventional IR approaches to the sovereignty (and indeed statehood more generally) of these states evidently fails to capture the complex nature of the ways in which sovereignty is constructed and performed within them and by the international donors that support them.

Issues of sovereignty are critical to the study of political transition, particularly when that transition occurs in the form of internationally-promoted democratisation. Indeed, one of the most fundamental problems with democratisation being encouraged (or imposed) 'from outside' in this manner is its violation of recipient state sovereignty, particularly where calls for a democratic politics have not been made explicitly by citizen populations (such as in the Afghan case, as opposed to the Egyptian one, for example). In these scenarios, a new form of legitimacy is imposed (in theory) where the right to rule is determined by popular vote. Although this may be considered 'global best practice' or seen by international actors as the best form of government, as demonstrated by the way in which it has become an established component of many western countries' foreign policy (Munck, 2009: 2-4), in terms of its ability to potentially create networks of trust, stable institutions and a form of toppling unpopular

elites – it is nevertheless promoted through intervention that categorically contradicts principles of Westphalian sovereignty. Furthermore, it is often promoted in scenarios in which the recipient state is a great deal less powerful than its would-be democratisers, who consider political instability as a source of weakness and fragility. The lack of Westphalian (or positive) sovereignty in fragile states, alongside the potential for negative sovereignty to exist, contributes to the way in which democratisation is unlikely to occur in these states according to existing analyses that focus on state capacity. Again, however, this emphasises the need to consider other spaces in which political change might occur, outside of liberal conceptualisations of the state.

1.3 Fragile states

Having discussed in some depth contemporary theories of democratisation and the state, the researcher attempts now to apply some of these theories to the context of conflict-affected fragile states. She has chosen to focus specifically on these states due to the special circumstances they share, and due to the conviction that existing means to conceptualise statehood, citizenship and democratisation are not adequate to assess changes in the relationships between ruler and ruled as they might occur in these contexts. The common practice of defining a state in the Weberian sense, by its monopoly of violence and political power within a given geographical area and over a defined population living within it, is particularly problematic when applied to countries experiencing or having recently experienced civil conflict. This is due to the way in which, as a result of these circumstances, the state is often not the sole arbiter of violent force, nor does it have juridical control over actions of its populace. Tilly's contention that states "receive acknowledgement…from other organizations, including states, outside the territory" (2007: 11) implicitly implies not only a formal recognition of state sovereignty by external actors but also a substantive one. While lip service is certainly paid by external states and international bodies, for example, to the sovereignty of conflict-affected and post-conflict states in which international interventions have taken place, this is often not substantiated by the ways in which interventions are conducted. Decisions can be made (for example about troop placement and withdrawal in military interventions) without consultation with or permission of the head of the recipient state,

which again brings into question the earlier notion of monopolies of violence. Furthermore, the sheer reliance of many conflict-affected states such as Afghanistan on international aid funds as primary sources of revenue can render them rentier states, in effect (Rubin, 2002: 81; Barfield, 2010: 311-312; Barakat and Larson, 2013) – and very much at the mercy of bilateral donors and international financial institutions.

These discrepancies between theories of state sovereignty and equality, on the one hand, and the realities of intervention on the other, have seen the proliferation of alternative terms for states in conflict or post-conflict situations. 'Quasi-states', as put forward by Jackson, (1987; 1996) is one such example, alongside 'non-states', 'weak states' 'failed states', and 'fragile states'. These have all been used as ways in which to describe the incapacities of countries whose states do not fit the traditional Weberian model. As will be argued below, however, the acknowledgement of non-compliance in this case has not led to the development of a new framework through which to view and assess political transitions in these countries.

1.3.1 Defining state fragility

State fragility is a relatively new term that has evolved as a more nuanced version of earlier concepts of state failure and collapse discussed by scholars, politicians and practitioners in the early 1990s. Zartman (1995) defines states failure as when "the basic functions of the state are no longer performed" (cited in Francois and Sud, 2006: 142). This definition highlights clearly the ways in which notions of what the basic functions of the state *should* be are applied to all states equally, in spite of the vastly different characteristics of so-called failed states and 'functioning' ones.

Since this time, the term 'fragile state' has become more commonly used in current literature in the international development and security fields, but has also evaded concrete definition (Barakat and Larson, 2013). According to one paper produced by the UK's Department for International Development (DFID), state fragility is primarily about ineffectiveness, most usefully determined as a state's inability to provide for its' citizens' developmental and poverty-reduction needs (Torres and Anderson, 2004). For other international agencies, state fragility reflects more the inability of a given regime

to provide security for its citizens (USAID, 2005: 1; Stewart and Brown, 2009: 2) As Stewart and Brown. point out, however, there is often a gap between the way in which the term is described in theory and the way it is employed by aid agencies, which have different definitions among themselves for the term also (2009: 2; Barakat and Larson, 2013). Building on extensive research conducted at the CRISE centre at Oxford University, Stewart and Brown take a broad approach in defining fragile states, classing them as "states that are failing, or at risk of failing, with respect to authority, comprehensive service entitlements or legitimacy" (2009: 3). Thus, fragility and failure are part of the same continuum but are multi-faceted, incorporating all three elements of authority, service provision and state legitimacy (Barakat and Larson, 2013). Like definitions of failed or collapsed states, however, this conception of state fragility – while perhaps the most comprehensive of existing definitions – allocates and assumes certain basic standards (a certain degree of authority, service provision and legitimacy of rule) to the underlying notion of 'stateness' which is applied to all states in the international system.

This approach to fragile states – treating them as underperforming 'real' states – could be linked to the approach to international development critiqued by underdevelopment and dependency theorists, who criticize the way in which less developed countries are kept on the periphery of developed nations in a perpetual state of dependency, particularly in terms of their lack of ability to make autonomous technological advances and in terms of the unequal exchange between center and periphery within the same economic system (Frank, 1967; Emmanuel, 1972).

While much has changed in the discourse of international development since these theorists were most influential (in the 1960s and 1970s), and while the majority of the literature stems from the study of Latin American nations, notions of global class divisions between different groups of states appear to be present in the fragile states discourse also, under a different name and with less emphasis on the economic/wealth gap between them and their 'real' state counterparts. This is emphasised by the way in which the concept of fragile states appears to serve donor purposes above and beyond those of the recipient states in question, in that it is a useful means through which

donors can simplify and categorise otherwise complex political environments, and develop bureaucratic responses that coincide with their existing aid and development delivery infrastructure (Barakat and Larson, 2013). Recently, reflecting this issue, the distinction between fragile states and the OECD countries that deliver aid assistance to them has been emphasised by the formation of the G7+ group, a collaboration among 17 self-defined fragile states who have developed and promoted a 'New Deal for Engagement' that critiques the way in which donor assistance has been administered to them. This New Deal is very much about setting the terms of engagement from the perspective of fragile states themselves, rather than according to the agendas of donor states that tend to prioritise short-term goals over and above sustainability, as the following quotation indicates:

> International partners can often bypass national interests and actors, providing aid in overly technocratic ways that underestimate the importance of harmonizing with the national and local context, and support short-term results at the expense of medium- to long-term sustainable results brought about by building capacity and systems (G7+, 2011: 1).

This highlights the way in which the timescales for expected 'results' of development assistance (including statebuilding and democratisation) in fragile states can differ significantly between donors and recipient states, and how representatives of these states are now increasingly pushing to be able to define the terms and timeframes of change. Furthermore, the emphasis placed by the G7+ members on the importance of national and local context implies that fragile states can be defined in ways above and beyond negative comparisons with 'established' or institutionalized states.

1.3.2 Fragility and conflict

Narrowing the focus of this research from the potential study cases of all fragile states, to those that are 'conflict-affected' – i.e. have recently experienced or are currently experiencing violent conflict within and across state borders – the review now considers the relationship between fragility and war. There is a critical relationship between fragility and violent conflict that has been acknowledged by several OECD countries (see for example USAID, 2006: 3). This is linked once again to the idea that fragile states have limited capacity to control a monopoly of violent force within their own

territories, with non-state actors (or in Tilly's terms, 'autonomous power centres') proving a potential source of instability. As one World Bank report claims, "[t]hese countries…create negative spillovers such as conflict, instability, and refugee flows for their neighbors" and further "span IDA post-conflict situations, countries emerging from weak governance and internal strife, and situations of sharply deteriorating governance" (World Bank, 2007:3). While fragility and conflict are not synonymous, with conflict possible in strong as well as weak states, and fragility caused and/or exacerbated by other factors such as famine, weak institutions of governance, and poverty or poor resource management, fragility can perpetuate conflict through the incapacity of the state to contain violence and through the grievances that arise as a result of the state's inability to provide services for citizens, or lack of perceived public legitimacy. In spite of there being no agreed or fixed definition of fragile states, there is general consensus among donors, encouraged by an ongoing dialogue supported by the OECD DAC, that they share the common characteristics of weak governance and a vulnerability to conflict, but can experience four kinds of differentiated scenarios: "(i) prolonged crisis or impasse, (ii) post-conflict or political transition, (iii) gradual improvement, and (iv) deteriorating governance" (IDA, 2007: 2). Thus, while the relationship between conflict and fragility is not straightforward, there is nevertheless an overlap between the two.

The researcher has chosen to focus discussion specifically on conflict-affected fragile states, due to an interest in the way in which conflict affects the state-citizen relationship, and to the high incidence in these states of internationally-promoted statebuilding and democratisation programmes. These could include those highlighted in yellow in the list of 'failed states' represented in Table 1. [5]

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[5] Those states highlighted in bold comprise 10 of the 17 G7+ member states. The remaining seven states fall lower within the table, and are categorised in the 'warning' section of the continuum,

Table 1: Failed States Index (Foreign Policy and Fund For Peace, 2013)

Failed States Index 2013	Total	Demographic Pressures	Refugees and IDPs	Group Grievance	Human Flight	Uneven Development	Poverty and Economic Decline	Legitimacy of the State	Public Services	Human Rights	Security Apparatus	Factionalized Elites	External Intervention
Somalia	113.9	9.5	10.0	9.3	8.9	8.4	9.4	9.5	9.8	10.0	9.7	10.0	9.4
Congo (D. R.)	111.9	10.0	10.0	9.4	7.1	8.8	8.5	9.6	9.5	9.8	10.0	9.5	9.7
Sudan	111.0	8.8	10.0	10.0	8.4	8.5	7.8	9.6	8.8	9.3	9.8	10.0	10.0
South Sudan	110.6	8.9	10.0	10.0	6.5	8.9	8.6	9.1	9.8	9.3	9.6	9.8	10.0
Chad	109.0	9.5	9.7	8.8	8.0	8.9	8.0	9.7	9.9	9.8	9.4	9.5	7.9
Yemen	107.0	9.3	9.2	9.0	7.4	8.1	9.2	9.3	8.7	8.7	9.8	9.5	8.7
Afghanistan	106.7	9.3	9.2	9.2	7.2	7.8	8.2	9.4	8.8	8.4	9.9	9.4	10.0
Haiti	105.8	9.6	8.6	7.0	9.1	9.1	9.7	8.8	9.6	7.6	7.9	9.0	9.9
C. African Rep.	105.3	8.6	9.8	8.5	6.1	9.2	7.7	9.0	9.5	8.6	9.7	9.1	9.4
Zimbabwe	105.2	9.2	8.7	8.4	8.6	8.6	8.6	9.2	9.1	8.9	8.4	9.7	7.8
Iraq	103.9	8.3	8.8	10.0	8.3	8.4	7.3	8.6	7.6	8.6	10.0	9.6	8.5
Cote d'Ivoire	103.5	7.8	9.3	9.0	7.3	7.8	7.7	9.3	8.5	8.6	9.1	9.4	9.7
Pakistan	102.9	8.9	9.1	9.7	6.9	7.9	7.5	8.4	7.3	8.7	9.8	9.2	9.6
Guinea	101.3	8.4	8.2	7.6	7.7	8.2	9.2	9.8	8.9	8.4	9.1	8.9	7.0
Guinea Bissau	101.1	8.4	7.8	5.7	8.0	8.1	8.7	9.7	8.8	7.6	9.5	9.7	9.0
Nigeria	100.7	8.5	6.6	9.8	7.3	9.2	7.5	8.8	9.3	8.6	9.5	9.4	6.3
Kenya	99.6	9.1	8.7	9.0	7.8	8.3	7.6	8.3	8.1	7.1	8.1	9.0	8.5
Niger	99.0	9.8	7.9	7.8	6.3	7.9	8.4	8.1	9.5	7.6	8.3	8.9	8.5
Ethiopia	98.9	9.7	8.7	8.6	6.7	7.6	7.7	7.3	8.7	8.7	8.4	8.7	8.1
Burundi	97.6	8.9	8.8	8.1	6.2	7.6	9.1	8.4	8.3	7.9	7.7	7.9	8.7
Syria	97.4	5.6	9.5	9.3	6.2	7.2	6.4	9.6	7.0	9.5	9.8	9.2	8.1
Uganda	96.6	9.1	8.4	8.0	6.7	7.8	7.4	8.1	8.3	7.9	8.2	8.6	8.2
North Korea	95.1	8.0	5.0	6.6	4.4	8.3	9.3	9.8	9.5	9.7	8.4	7.7	8.4
Liberia	95.1	8.8	9.2	6.5	7.0	8.0	8.3	6.6	9.1	6.4	7.1	8.3	9.8
Eritrea	95.0	8.7	7.4	6.1	7.3	6.9	8.3	8.7	8.4	9.1	7.5	8.1	8.6
Myanmar	94.6	7.6	8.5	9.0	5.4	8.4	7.3	9.0	8.1	8.3	7.8	8.6	6.6
Cameroon	93.5	8.3	7.3	7.8	7.2	7.8	6.1	8.5	8.4	8.1	8.0	9.2	6.8
Sri Lanka	92.9	6.8	8.4	9.5	7.3	7.8	5.9	8.2	5.5	9.0	8.5	9.3	6.8
Bangladesh	92.5	8.1	7.3	8.6	7.5	7.8	7.3	8.3	8.0	7.3	7.7	8.9	5.8
Nepal	91.8	7.6	7.7	9.0	5.9	8.1	7.3	8.1	7.3	7.9	7.6	8.2	7.1
Mauritania	91.7	8.5	8.3	7.2	5.7	6.5	8.0	7.7	8.4	7.4	7.8	8.2	7.9
Timor-Leste	91.5	8.7	7.4	6.8	6.4	6.7	7.9	8.0	8.5	6.0	8.3	8.3	8.5
Sierra Leone	91.2	9.0	8.1	5.9	8.0	8.5	8.6	7.3	9.0	6.1	5.4	7.9	7.4
Egypt	90.6	7.2	6.5	8.5	5.4	7.1	8.2	8.9	5.6	9.6	7.3	8.7	7.7
Burkina Faso	90.2	9.4	7.4	5.3	6.3	8.4	7.7	7.7	8.7	6.8	7.2	7.3	8.0

Table 1 represents the states listed in the 'Alert' category on the Failed States Index continuum that runs from 'Alert' (indicating failed or highly volatile states) through 'Warning' to 'Stable' and 'Sustainable' (Foreign Policy and Fund For Peace, 2013). Determining whether or not a fragile state is 'conflict-affected' is not as straightforward as it might seem in this table, however. In general, the states highlighted in yellow (by the researcher) all have scores of 9.5 or above for 'security apparatus', for example, have consistently high scores for 'human flight', 'refugees and IDPs' and 'group grievance' – all of which are common characteristics of conflict-affected fragile states. They also constitute all the states for which the score of 10 is allocated for any variable. Nevertheless, this does not mean that other states in the list are not 'conflict-affected' simply because in 2013 the FSI indicators suggested their scores for these characteristics were lower than they might previously have been. Fragility is a dynamic phenomenon that changes over time and does not have a static connection to levels of conflict or other forms of upheaval. Still, the FSI data provides a basic framework for the rough distinguishing of fragile states in which conflict is a current and direct contributor to fragility, from those in which it may have more of an indirect effect.

Having attempted to separate conflict-affected fragile states from other fragile states, however it remains true that in any discussion of fragile states, all of which are vulnerable to conflict, it is important to understand the *potential* effects that conflict might have on the relationship between state and citizen, or between ruler and ruled – and by extension, the effect that it might have on democratisation, beyond an inherent connection between violence and state-making (Tilly, 1985). These effects are likely to be defined to some extent by the nature of the conflict in question. Skocpol argues, for example, that social revolutions present an entirely unique kind of conflict in terms of the results they can have on the structure of society. As she explains,

> Social revolutions are set apart from other sorts of conflicts and transformative processes above all by the combination of two coincidences: the coincidence of societal structural change with class upheaval; and the coincidence of political with social transformation. In contrast, rebellions, even when successful, may involve the revolt of the subordinate classes-but they do not eventuate in structural change. Political revolutions transform state structures but not social structures, and they are not necessarily accomplished through class

conflict...What is unique to social revolution is that basic changes in social structure and in political structure occur together in a mutually reinforcing fashion (1979: 4).

For Skocpol, then, the transformative effects of social revolutions on the way in which the state-society relationship is defined are particular to the simultaneous combinations of class conflict and the structure of society, of political and social change. Whereas, for example, recent conflict in Egypt might be defined as a political revolution, involving change at the highest levels, events prompting the start of the 'Arab Spring' in Tunisia (and particularly the self-immolation of Mohammed Bouazizi) might be classed as the beginnings of social revolution, redefining the relationship between ruler and ruled. In contrast to this, Olivier Roy talks about the way in which in guerrilla warfare, political objectives are paramount. According to Roy, "[t]he goal is to determine where the seat of power lies, which, when taken, will ensure victory" (1994: 148). This seat of power cannot be assumed to be the state, however – particularly in fragile states where other competing sources of authority exist. Roy goes on to argue that the role of violence in Afghan society differs again from classic guerilla warfare where political objectives are central. Violence in Afghanistan has traditionally occurred as a means to re-instate a balance of negotiated power between the state and different communities, and "is not an attempt to break off relations or destroy the adversary; rather, it aims to establish a complex system of priority" (1994: 148). In this way, he claims, violence follows "anthropological" norms rather than political ones, in which ethnicity, family ties, honour and loyalty define the rules of the game.

Guerilla warfare is different again from the concept of New Wars, as put forward by Mary Kaldor (1999). New Wars are distinct from 'traditional' warfare in that they, like guerrilla conflicts, tend to avoid battles and expansive military action, but at the same time are distinct from guerilla conflict in that they promote destabilization and alienation in an increasingly globalized context. As Kaldor writes,

> [t]he aim is to control the population by getting rid of everyone of a different identity…the strategic goal of these wars is population expulsion through various means such as mass killing, forcible resettlement, as well as a range of political, psychological and economic techniques of intimidation. This is why, in

all these wars, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of refugees and displaced persons, and why most violence is directed at civilians (1999: 8)

One of the principal characteristics of these wars is the way in which they blur the boundaries between the traditional distinctions of public and private, soldier and criminal, combatant and civilian (1999: 5). In a similar manner, they encapsulate the way in which 'legitimate' violence is no longer solely associated with the state and its representatives, but can extend to other groups also – and at the same time, the state can lose its claim to the use of legitimate violence. David Keen talks at length about the 'sobels' (solider-rebels) of Sierra Leone where the distinction between the two was blurred, and the objectives of both 'sides' in fact coincided rather than opposed one another (Keen, 2005: 107). As Keen explains, this was not coincidental but caused by very specific socio-political dynamics: "soldiers and rebels increasingly came from the same social base; and both the insurgency and the counterinsurgency were shaped by a weak, unrepresentative and corrupt state and an underdeveloped economy that starved its youth of opportunity" (2005: 107). This demonstrates how the state-citizen relationship can affect and exacerbate conflict, but at the same time how conflict can have a profound effect on the state-citizen relationship and the way in which the state is perceived by citizens. It can also affect the cohesiveness of the state structure as the fragmentation of groups within society impacts the way in which politics is played out at the national level, and the way in which the administration functions.

It is partly for this reason that a number of scholars within the field of post-conflict peace-building and reconstruction advocate the prioritization of the establishment of institutions that can re-establish an impartial, service-provider and/or administrative role for the state (Bastian and Luckham, 2003; Paris, 2004). Undermining the establishment of state processes and procedures that are knowable and accessible to all citizens, the fragmentation ensuing from new wars (alongside the much more limited capacity and reach of the state) can hinder basic service delivery and lead to humanitarian crises that linger for many years. Somalia provides a case in point.

As well as affecting the cohesiveness and capacity of the state, and the likelihood of citizens to trust the impartiality of its administrative processes, conflict (and especially

conflict as a component of the new wars) can cause disproportionate levels of community displacement, both internal to a conflict-affected state and across borders with neighbouring countries (Lischer, 2007). This can have a significant effect on the way in which these communities relate to the state as they no longer occupy fixed geographical positions and are often unaccounted for, particularly given the state's limited capacity as a result of civil conflict. Displacement and/or greater instability more generally can also exacerbate the fragmentation according to different kinds of identity groups that Kaldor discusses – as networks of trust contract to include progressively smaller groups of people, diversity within these groups dissipates. This can serve to strengthen community cohesion in the face of adversity, in some cases, or can have the opposite effect where family units become entities unto themselves and function as independent of previously tight-knit communities. The fragmentation of society caused by conflict has been documented at length by Nordstrom (1994).

The reason for assessing these effects of conflict in fragile states is that they are likely to have a significant impact on the way in which democratisation occurs or does not occur in a fragile context. Returning to a key statement made in section 1.1.1 above, democratisation primarily concerns changes in the relationship between ruler and ruled, and as has been shown here, different kinds of conflict also have very particular effects on this relationship. Apart from the basic assumption that conflict decreases the chance of democratisation occurring, however, as a result of its varied (negative) effects on the state-citizen relationship through either weakening state capacity or strengthening it to the extreme, there has been little systematic enquiry into whether and why the particular circumstances shared by some fragile states hinder the democratisation process and affect the nature of citizenship. Collier provides a cursory glance into the behaviour of political elites in war-torn environments in which elections in particular take place (2009), but does not expand discussion to the way in which society changes as a result of conflict, or indeed the way in which conflict becomes normalized into everyday life (Fetherston, 2000: 195), thus affecting daily decisions and lifestyle choices. At the same time, while conflict becomes embedded in people's day-to-day existence, it is not static: levels and experiences of fragility and conflict change over time, forcing new forms of adaptability, compromise and a necessarily short-term

perspective among inhabitants of conflict-affected areas. One of the aims of this study therefore is to assess the way in which the shifting characteristics of fragile environments can affect the state-citizen relationship and what this then means for democratisation processes within them.

1.4 Summary and conclusions

This section has reviewed a range of different bodies of literature on democratisation and the state, covering theoretical definitions and conceptions of democratisation and the state-citizen relationship. It has also reviewed theories of the state in the international system, state sovereignty, and the notion of fragile states – a concept that emerged in the early 2000s as a way to classify dysfunctional states and analyse reasons for that dysfunction.

From this review, it is possible to make several statements about the state of the theory on democratisation and the state. First, that the transitology approach to transitions from autocracy to democracy (and vice-versa) is insufficient to explain the complexities of political transition and also the nature of democratisation. While this approach allows a wider application of the theory of transition that expands beyond structural and historical factors linked to a specific context, they are unable to capture the dynamics of social change at the local level. This being the case, broader conceptions of both transition and democratisation are needed. Second, however, that the current source of these broader, more complex definitions – substantive approaches to democratisation – focus increasingly on state-citizen relationships, that in themselves are confined to limited definitions of what the state and the citizen are or should be in a given context. Third, that state sovereignty is a highly contested concept that is at once assumed and contradicted, with negative sovereignty a powerful concept to explain these contradictions in weak or fragile states – a factor likely influencing the ability of these states to develop or maintain state-citizen relationships. Finally, that the term 'fragile states' is a means for donor countries to categorise otherwise 'unruly' states which do not fit the standard model of what a state should be. Conflict-affected fragile states do present a certain set of special circumstances in which political processes take place, but

there is significant differentiation among them and fragility in any one is not a static phenomenon. Different types of conflict in particular have differential effects on society and its relationship to ruling powers, which in turn is likely to affect democratisation processes.

From the literature surveyed, a key problem emerges: democratisation and transition in general need to be described in substantive terms, but when applied to fragile states, they cannot rely on an analysis of state-citizen relationships because of the way that the circumstances presented by these states do not comply with the conventional model of statehood or citizenship. How does conflict impact the way in which people relate to ruling powers in fragile contexts? Is it possible to develop a means of conceptualising democratisation that avoids the assumption of this seemingly fundamental relationship? These questions do not appear to have been addressed to date in the available literature.

CHAPTER 2: DEMOCRATISATION: MEASUREMENT, PRACTICE AND THE AFGHAN CASE

This chapter surveys the second, third and fourth categories of the literature identified as relevant to the thesis: existing models to measure democratisation; the practice of internationally-promoted democratisation and statebuilding in fragile contexts; and democratisation in Afghanistan, the chosen case for this research. It then identifies gaps across all four categories of literature reviewed, and formulates the key research questions that will guide the choice of methodology.

2.1 Existing models to measure democratisation

The second component of this literature review looks at existing frameworks to measure levels of democratisation and the effects of democracy promotion. Building on the theories of democratisation assessed in chapter 1, this section will focus specifically on the way in which existing models for democracy measurement are tied to definitions of the state and the state-citizen relationship that are not necessarily applicable to conflict-affected or fragile contexts.

Considering democratisation as a phenomenon that can be measured and compared across contexts suggests a positivist ontological perspective, in which phenomena exist in the world to be observed by political scientists. Thus, a political party in Canada, for example, is the same fundamental entity as a political party in the Ukraine. An interpretivist approach, however, would see parties as institutions that derive meaning from their human constituents, who assign this meaning based on contextual and social influences (Winch, 1958; Taylor, 1985; Bevir and Rhodes, 2003: 18). From this perspective, while institutions like parties can be compared across contexts, they are likely to be vastly different from one another given the varying meanings assigned to them by those that participate within them, as a result of contextual difference.

The researcher finds the interpretivist position convincing, in that institutions, for example, are socially constructed entities, and that social phenomena such as democratisation will take place according to the specificities of historical and political

context. She also assumes, however, that to some degree, these pheonomena can be compared across small groups of contexts that share certain characteristics – for example, in the case of conflict-affected fragile states. To this extent, then, she considers the Historical Institutionalist (HI) position – key proponents of which include Theda Skocpol (1979; 1985); Kathleen Thelen, (1999; 2010) Charles Tilly (1975; 1978; 2003) and Sven Steinmo (2008; Steinmo and Ide, 2009) – which is grounded in the study of the structural change of society over time, to be the most appropriate for this research in its grounding of comparative analysis in historical and political context.[6] Scholars from the HI school often compare small groups of contexts, rather than making universalistic generalizations (Thelen, 1999: 373), and this approach would suit well the study of so-called fragile states. In essence, the researcher proposes to look at empirically grounded cases rather than search for overarching theories of democratisation.

This part of the literature review surveys the various attempts of democracy theorists to address an empirical question: assuming institutions and processes can be compared across different contexts, provided that history and power are taken into account – through what means is it possible to make this comparison? More specifically – if democratisation levels can be measured and compared from one country to another, what should be the indicators or proxies used to facilitate plausible comparisons? This question has been asked by many scholars who have applied varying criteria in assessing levels of democratisation, a detailed comparison of some of the more recent attempts at which is made by Bogaards (2010). As Bollen describes, however, the study of measuring democracy has been a concern (albeit wavering in prominence) of social and political scientists since the late 1950s, when the decline of colonialism led to the creation of numerous new independent states (Bollen, 1991: 3). In order to limit constructively the discussion for the purposes of this thesis, three have been selected for comparison: those of the Polity model (Gurr, 1974; Jaggers and Gurr, 1995), Tatu Vanhanen (1984; 1990; 2000) and Charles Tilly (2007). These are explored individually and compared in this section.

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[6] For more on the HI school and Interpretivist approaches to social explanation, see Appendix 1.

Over the last century, a number of political scientists have put forward schematics through which to assess levels of democracy or democratisation in and across given contexts. These have included those based on quantitative indicators of procedural and constitutional factors (for example the Polity Model expounded by Jaggers and Gurr, 1995; Vanhanen, 1984, 1990, 2000); those passed on judgements of political and civil rights (Freedom House, 2011), those based on ideological and/or socio-cultural distinctions (Huntington, 1991, 1993; Diamond, 1999), and those focusing on process-oriented criteria or variables (Dahl, 1998; Tilly, 2007). These inevitably vary depending on the author's definition of democracy, but most (with the exception of Tilly) include requirements for democratic procedures (such as elections), a level of freedom of expression (although exactly *what* level is rarely specified) and the facility for peaceful secession of power as determined by the will of the people. As one theorist has stated, "it has been easier for researchers to agree on the general characteristics of democracy than on how to measure it" (Vanhanen, 2000: 252). This section explores the validity of three alternative methods for measuring levels of democratisation that could potentially be applied to fragile states.

2.1.1 The Polity model/Freedom House

Since its inception as Polity I in the 1970s, the Polity model (Gurr, 1974) has been widely used and amended as a means to assess both regime stability and levels of democracy and autocracy in a wide range of countries over time. Gurr's 1974 usage of the Polity data was an attempt to build on existing theories about the nature of regime durability and stability, comparing data sets in three regions (Europe [including North America and Australia], Latin America and 'Afro-Asia') in both the 19th and 20th centuries. In this work, he states a critical objective that speaks to the ontological question discussed above: "my central concern is whether any of the prevailing scholarly and popular beliefs about the viability of particular kinds of national political arrangements have historical or cross-cultural validity" (1974: 1483). Through this and a variety of subsequent studies, Gurr attempts to show that this validity does in fact exist. An amended version of the data – Polity II – was later released with modifications allowing the annual categorization of 132 different polities over time (Lichbach, 1984;

Jaggers and Gurr, 1995: 470). Polity II became one of the most widely used data sets for the measurement of the democraticness of a broad spectrum of political systems. Amended again by Jaggers and Gurr in 1995 to become Polity III, which includes further democracy indicators, additional data (taking the number of countries studied to 161 – all independent countries between 1946 and 1994 with populations of over 500,000 at the end of the 20th century) and a re-coding of previous data to allow ease of comparison with other models (Jaggers and Gurr, 1995: 470), Polity remains influential as a seminal means through which to quantify regime type and regime change over time.

In its third and most recent format, this model is used to convert qualitative analysis into a quantitative scoring system, in which polities (used by these scholars as an alternative term for regimes) are assigned numerical values indicating their position along a continuum between autocracy and democracy. As the authors describe, "democratic and autocratic systems are assumed to occupy two ends of a single political continuum. In between these two 'ideal types', political systems can be defined by their degree of democraticness" (Jaggers and Gurr, 1995: 469). Based on an 11-point scale, polities are judged according to five sets of criteria: 1) competitiveness of political participation; 2) regulation of political participation; 3) competitiveness of executive recruitment; 4) openness of executive recruitment; and 5) constraints on the chief executive. These follow a definition of democracy that is purposefully institutional in focus. While the authors state that alongside "the presence of institutions and procedures through which citizens can express effective preferences about alternative political policies and leaders" and "the existence of institutionalized constraints on the exercise of executive power", a third indicator of the democraticness of states from a western liberal perspective is comprised of civil liberties – this is deemed too difficult to quantify given the general lack of contemporary or historical data on the subject and so institutional factors are prioritised (Jaggers and Gurr, 1995: 471). Justifying what might otherwise be seen as a narrow focus, the authors describe the way in which they see other facets of democracy as contained within their framework:

> [O]ur operational indicator of democracy is derived from subjective codings of the competitiveness of political participation, the openness and competitiveness of executive recruitment, and the level of constraints on the chief executive. Other aspects of plural democracy, such as the rule of law, systems of checks and balances, freedom of the press, and the like, are treated as means to, or manifestations of, these institutional structures (1995: 471).

In this way, the polity model maintains a certain simplicity which renders possible the comparison of polities across centuries, but which is limited in its inability to consider some of these 'aspects of plural democracy' in isolation. This links then to minimalist definitions of democracy (as opposed to the more recent substantive alternatives) discussed in chapter 1.

Whereas in Polity II, separate scales for autocracy and democracy were used, these are combined in Polity III to form a continuum of one to the other. A combined score is allocated to polities, in which a figure for levels of autocracy is subtracted from a score for democracy. The total figure calculated for each country is then entered into a typology in which distinctions are made between coherent autocracies, incoherent polities ('anocracies') and coherent democracies (Bogaards, 2010: 476-477; Jaggers and Gurr, 1995). A score of +7 to +10 indicates a coherent democracy, and correspondingly, a score of -7 to -10 indicates a coherent autocracy. The range in between these two extremes (+6 to -6) represent 'incoherent' polities:

> By definition, incoherent polities are unconsolidated polities. Incoherent polities denote those political systems which are neither fully autocratic nor democratic in institutional structure. Incoherent democracies denote those political systems with primarily democratic elements that also place substantial limits on participation, competition, and/or civil liberties. By contrast, incoherent autocracies denote those political systems with primarily autocratic structures that also allow some opportunity for political participation and competition and/or provide for the protection of civil rights (1995: 478).

Incoherency also poses more of a threat to regime stability, as Gurr earlier demonstrates (Gurr, 1974: 1502). According to his analysis, the more solidly autocratic or democratic a given polity, the more likely it is to have persisted over time. This presents a possible point of relevance to this thesis, as – as explored in chapter 1 (section 1.3), one of the key determinants of any fragile state is its propensity to be politically unstable. All

potential case study cases, then, to which the model developed in this thesis could be applied, would by definition be governed by 'incoherent polities', although they would occupy different positions along the continuum from incoherent autocracies to incoherent democracies.

Some point of distinction needs to be made, however, between Jaggers and Gurr's focus on 'polities', and the concept of the state. For Gurr, the 'polity' is simply a political system – or "the basic political arrangements by which national political communities govern their affairs." (1974: 1483). This is distinct from the (nation-) state in which a given polity is situated. Perhaps a less neutral term for this would be a 'regime'. As such, comparisons can be made over time between successive polities in a state, and studies conducted on the subject of polity change. In Polity I, for example, 336 different polities are studied across 91 'nominally different' states across the 19th and 20th centuries (Gurr, 1974: 1483). This presents another potential point of relevance to this thesis as one of its central concerns is the persistent reliance in attempts to measure democracy on the variable of 'the state'. Avoiding its usage by favouring a notion of 'polity' instead might present a more appropriate mechanism for the measurement of democracy in fragile states.

In its categorization of regime type as a result of quantitative scores, the Polity model is not dissimilar to the approach taken in the Freedom House schematic (Bogaards, 2010: 475). While Freedom House focuses on political rights and civil liberties instead of institutional concerns, in a sense it mirrors the Polity model in that for Freedom House, institutional factors are product of or are intimately connected to the institutions in place to protect them. The distinction and relationship between political rights and civil liberties in measuring democracy is not new, but draws on distinctions made by scholars in the late 1980s, who noted that both were important components of democracy: "political structures are important in their own right, but without significant opportunity to exercise…civil liberties there can be no effective exercise of the political rights generally placed at the core of any definition of democracy" (Inkeles, 1991: ix). As discussed in chapter 1, Zakaria expands on this point in his contention that regimes

where these political structures exist without civil rights or liberties (in his terms, constitutional liberalism) can be classed as 'illiberal democracies' (Zakaria, 1997).

Collating data from 1972 until 2010 on an annual basis – also similar to the Polity model – Freedom House categorises regimes as 'free', 'partly free' or 'not free' according to the scores generated for each country based on subjective, qualitative criteria (Freedom House, 2012a). A checklist of variables is applied to each country (Freedom House, 2011) and a final score allocated based on the judgment of researchers as to whether the country meets the standards outlined in the list. Countries are rated on a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 is the most free, and 7 the least. Categorisations are made through the combination of average score for political rights and civil liberties, with a total score of 1 to 2.5 equating a 'free' country; 3 to 5 constituting a 'partly free' country; and a score of 5.5 to 7 denoting a state that is 'not free'.

Table 2: Freedom House Country Status ratings (Freedom House, 2011)

Combined Average of the PR and CL Ratings	Country Status
1.0 to 2.5	Free
3.0 to 5.0	Partly Free
5.5 to 7.0	Not Free

The simplicity and consistency of the Freedom House approach is a strength allowing comparisons both between countries and within the same country over time. As such, it is possible to collate data for Afghanistan, for example, from 1972 – 2010 very simply by compiling annual scores:

Figure 2: Afghanistan combined PR and CL Freedom House score, 1972-2012 (compiled from data available at Freedom House, 2012b)
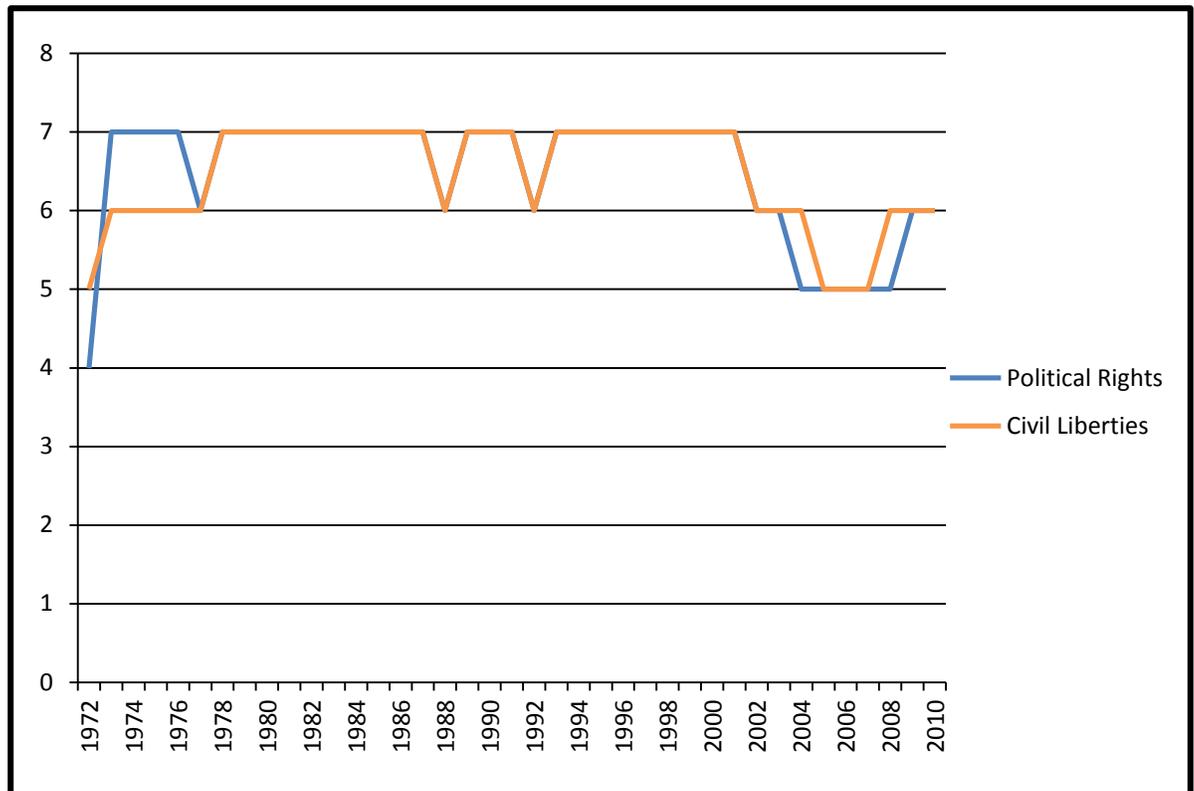
Table 3: Annual Scores for Afghanistan, post-intervention (Freedom House 2012b)

Year	Political Rights	Civil Liberties	Status
2001	7	7	Not Free
2002	6	6	Not Free
2003	6	6	Not Free
2004	5	6	Not Free
2005	5	5	Partly Free
2006	5	5	Partly Free
2007	5	5	Partly Free
2008	5	6	Not Free
2009	6	6	Not Free
2010	6	6	Not Free

Figure 2 clearly demonstrates the way in which Afghanistan has not been ranked as 'free' according to the Freedom House criteria over the last 40 years, and indeed has spent most of this time ranked as 'not free' during successive quasi-authoritarian regimes which have tended to quash opposition movements and dictate policy (an historical analysis of Afghanistan's democratic history will be given in chapter 5). The period from 2005-2007 (highlighted in blue in Table 3) marks an interesting progression and a category change, roughly around the time of the first post-intervention parliamentary elections in Afghanistan, which were declared by independent observer missions as 'free and fair' and in which participation levels were relatively high. The reversion back to the category of 'not free' marks a number of different events and trends, notably the increasing consolidation of executive power over legislative affairs, and fraudulent elections in 2009 and 2010.

At a glance, then, Freedom House assessments of Afghanistan's relationship with political rights and civil liberties over time seem to coincide with historical evidence, as will be detailed further in later chapters. Nevertheless, there remain problems with both this and the Polity models, most specifically in the ways in which judgments are simplified to events or situations in a given year rather than painting a picture of the larger historical and regional narratives at play. While trends emerge, demonstrating shifting levels of political rights and civil liberties, or democractiness versus autocraticness, over time, there is no indication of why this might be the case without an

accompanying narrative. Jaggers and Gurr also concede that "[u]nfortunately, the annualization format of the Polity II (and Polity III) data has made it difficult to precisely match regime type with event-based social behavior, such as international conflict" (Jaggers and Gurr, 1995: 470). As such, it is not possible to make generalisations about macro-level international policy decisions that different kinds of polities (autocracies, democracies or anocracies) make.

As demonstrated above, both Polity and Freedom House rely on a continuum along which countries or polities can move over time with relative fluidity in the sense that they can become more or less democratic/autocratic, or can assign more or less political rights and civil liberties to citizens. Indeed, the principal contributor to the Polity I and Polity II indices claims that "[n]o attempt is made to label a polity as a 'democracy' or an 'autocracy'. Rather, the indices make it possible to distinguish degrees of autocracy, democracy, and anocracy in any system" (Gurr, 1974: 1487). In Polity III, however, clear defining categories are outlined based on the numerical scores of polities, labelling quite clearly their status as democracies, autocracies or anocracies. This is even more pronounced in the Freedom House allocations of 'free, partly free and not free' to countries based on their combined scores for political rights and civil liberties. In applying these labels, both models risk functioning as somewhat subjective judges in the awarding of 'badges of honour' (Zakaria, 1997: 25) to polities or countries and collating these with 'democracy' or 'democraticness'. This proves to be a problem when scores for different aspects of democraticness are weighted equally and a combined average score derived, as occurs in both models – a country can attain 'free' status based on its proficiency in one category of civil liberties even though its performance in another area is significantly lower than would be expected in a free state. In 1993, for example, Italy was given a civil liberties score of 3 (below the 2.5 threshold for the 'free' category) and yet the average score was still enough to earn the country its 'free' status (Freedom House, 2012b). In other years Italy has consistently shown lower scores for civil liberties than for political rights, and yet since 1973 has managed to maintain its free status. Given the currency and weight now placed on Freedom House ratings, the political ramifications of Italy being awarded only a 'partly free' status would be considerable. Evidently, according to Freedom House measures

civil liberties in Italy are 'better' than they are in, say, Uganda – but again, their betterness depends in part on what are essentially subjective judgements.

This is not to say that 'subjective' is necessarily wrong – most if not all assessments of democracy and democraticness rely to varying degrees on some form of subjectively analysed data, which presents more of a problem for some scholars than for others. Jaggers and Gurr acknowledge the subjectivity present in their own data analysis but suggest that comparison with other models provides a means to test for and limit the effects of this:

> [T]he measures of institutional democracy and autocracy found in the Polity III dataset are based on the subjective interpretation of historical monographs and other source materials by the authors and their associates. Aware of the problems of' interpretation bias' associated with judgmental measures of democracy, we test the validity of our measures against those of other researchers (1995: 473).

As such, the stronger the correlation with others' findings, the less subjective the analysis – or the more it appears all researchers have the same bias in their approaches (1995: 476). This argument is supported by the compilation of studies represented in Alex Inkeles' edited volume, the product of a conference on measuring democracy in which the work of numerous scholars (including Gurr) using different indicators for measurement roughly correlated with each other in terms of results (Inkeles, 1991: x). However, relying on a methodology that prioritises cross-comparison with other studies would present a problem for the analysis of democracy in fragile states, about which there is very little information available and on which very few studies have been conducted. While Freedom House statistics exist for the country from 1972 onwards, Polity uses interregnum codes for Afghanistan in the 1990s (a score of -77) demonstrating the difficulty in assessing conflict-affected areas (Jaggers and Gurr, 1995: 481).

As such, while both Polity and Freedom House present valuable contributions to the ways in which the measurement of democracy might be approached, neither presents a method that would facilitate this measurement when applied to fragile or conflict states. While some aspects of these models, such as a focus on polities instead of states, may

yet prove useful in the model developed in this thesis – on the whole Polity and Freedom House remain insufficient. This is largely due to their tendency to award labels to polities or states, and the subjectivity of the judgements made. One model attempting to avoid this kind of subjectivity by focus purely on 'objective' brute data – electoral statistics – is that put forward by Vanhanen.

2.1.2 Vanhanen

Vanhanen's model (1984; 1990; 2000) measures democratisation using elections as its primary unit of analysis. In order to so this, it uses two key variables: the degree of electoral competition and the degree of electoral participation, and then multiplies scores from these variables to create an Index of Democratisation (ID) (2000: 251). The use of only two variables makes for a very simple model, which can be used easily by other researchers given its lack of reliance on subjective judgment, and can be easily adapted to other research projects with different parameters also. It is also a model which, according to Vanhanen has no need for a further indicator of civil rights and political liberties, because the assumption is that countries with competitive elections and high levels of participation must by default have a certain degree of these other characteristics. Thus, they are indirectly measured through participation and competition (2000: 256), according to a minimalist conception of democracy.

The Vanhanen model is an events-focused or procedural (Tilly, 2007:8) approach that assigns considerable weight to certain political structures such as political parties and their success or failure in elections. Electoral competition is measured through the subtraction of the percentage votes gained by the largest party in a given country from 100, with the remainder comprising the share of votes gained by the smaller parties (Vanhanen, 2000: 254). In cases where parties do not formally take part in elections, but are not prohibited from doing so, it is assumed that no party or government body controls more than 30 per cent of the vote, and thus this number is subtracted from the total 100. In cases where parties are not allowed to compete in elections, a score of zero is allocated.

Electoral participation is measured simply by comparing the number of voters in a given election with population figures, making use of two sets of data that are normally readily available for a given country. This allows the comparison of a broad range of countries over a significant time period (187 independent or former independent states over the period 1810-1998). Using entire population figures, due to their relative availability, rather than the percentage of adults eligible to vote, however, is also a shortcoming: as Vanhanen himself admits, this widens the discrepancy between developed and developing countries, the latter of which have very young populations and a much smaller proportion of adults (2000:255).

In spite of this kind of problem, relating to the reliance of this model on two, solely quantitative variables, Vanhanen contends that this approach is nevertheless more reliable than qualitative alternatives:

> it is better to use simple quantitative variables with certain weaknesses than turn to more complicated indicators loaded with weights and estimates based on subjective judgments (2000: 256).

This facilitates the production of empirically grounded results based on electoral statistics that are not as determined by 'subjective judgments' as are the models of Polity and Freedom House (2000: 262). However, there are evidently problems with this method. Applying this model to a conflict-affected context in which any statistics are both difficult to determine and usually politically contested, is problematic. Oftentimes election observers are few and far between, and the accuracy of electoral data can be called into question. Treating quantitative data such as electoral turnout and the percentage of votes gained by parties as empirical fact cannot only be an inaccurate reflection of results but also can serve to solidify the so-called 'gains' made by dominant parties that could otherwise be questioned. These data are not a-political: it is not possible to remove them objectively from the context from which they came. Further, it could be argued that the common frailty and/or informality of political parties in conflict-affected settings renders the assessment of their share of the electoral vote an inaccurate measure of competition. This dilemma reflects an epistemological debate

concerning the fundamental transferability of institutions and organizations across different contexts, without allowing for historical and political variables.

Moreover, as Vanhanen also admits, while fundamentally quantitative, his own model is not free of subjective judgments. Once an ID has been established for a given regime, Vanhanen then determines arbitrary thresholds to distinguish between autocracies and democracies (2000: 257). These are set at 30 per cent competition and 10 per cent participation – a regime must score above both of these levels, and reach an ID of +5, in order to be considered a democracy. Again, then, this is a model in which a clear dividing line is established between one regime type and another, implying that the difference between the two rests purely on the extent of voter participation and the number of parties who share the votes.

Comparing his results to those of the Polity dataset and Freedom House, Vanhanen finds rough correlation throughout and particularly close correlation since the end of the First World War, with some significant exceptions. For example, in 2000, Iran is classified by the ID model as a democracy, while according to Freedom House, it was considered 'not free' (Vanhanen, 2000: 261). This is because, according to Vanhanen, "one can interpret the nature of Iran's political institutions in various ways" (2000: 261). This being the case, however, the question remains: if Iran's political institutions can be interpreted in 'various ways', then surely this principle could apply to other regimes also? Earlier, Vanhanen clarifies his definition of democracy, which is: 'a political system in which ideologically and socially different groups are legally entitled to compete for political power, and in which institutional power-holders are elected by the people and responsible to the people'. Although its institutional focus is clear, this does not differ significantly from a number of other mainstream definitions, including those of Dahl, and Diamond, for example. Vanhanen continues, however, to state that "[w]e should apply the same criteria for democracy to all countries *because it is reasonable to assume that human nature basically is similar everywhere*" (2000: 252, emphasis added). This would seem to contradict his perspective on Iran, whose institutions are considered open to interpretation. By extension, it is possible to argue that political institutions in fragile conflict-affected states may also fall outside the standard

conception or interpretation of an institution, and thus evade accurate classification by this model. Essentially, the characteristics of political institutions require a more detailed analysis grounded in political and historical realities.

2.1.3 Tilly

Tilly's contribution to the social sciences is vast and difficult to categorise according to a specific discipline. In a broad sense, he is a political historian – having spent many years analysing the development of the nation state in Western Europe, (1975); the nature of revolutions (1978), state formation and violence (1985) collective violence (2003, 2006); regimes (2006) and, latterly, on democracy (2004, 2007). His work coincides most closely with the HI school, in that he focuses on macro-level structures and historical processes, and their contribution to the explanation of social phenomena. An influential scholar in the statist literature, he is in part responsible for the re-emergence of scholarly literature on the role of the state in the late 1970s and 1980s following a 20-year period of academic focus on behaviourism and the role of the individual. Less concerned with class than some of his contemporaries in this field, however, Tilly is not as driven by Marxist ideology as by a more general concern for the centrality of historical analysis. Tilly's perspective allows for cross-cultural comparisons as situated within highly specific historical processes. These characteristics of Tilly's work in general feature strongly in the model he presents for the measurement of democracy (2007), which is to a much greater extent than Polity, Freedom house or Vanhanen situated within historical narrative. While Polity and Freedom House draw on historical accounts in order to assess countries according to their respective criteria, Tilly grounds his entire model on historical narrative, placing very little emphasis on quantitative variables.

Tilly presents democratisation as a continuum on which states move to become more or less democratic – but do not reach an end-point or category in either direction. This allows the possibility for states to move toward or away from a more consolidated democratic politics over time. He plots the trajectories of many different states or regimes on an x axis of democracy against a y axis of state capacity, with values from 0 to 1 assigned for each variable at different points in a regime's history (2007: 71).

Diagrams thus assume a complex, overlapping trajectory moving backwards and forwards at different points in time, countering persuasively any developmental or modernisation-theory assumptions of democratisation as a uni-directional, teleological process (Figure 3).

Figure 3: "Trajectory of French National Regimes, 1600-2006" (Tilly, 2007: 35).

FIGURE 2-1. Trajectory of French National Regimes, 1600–2006
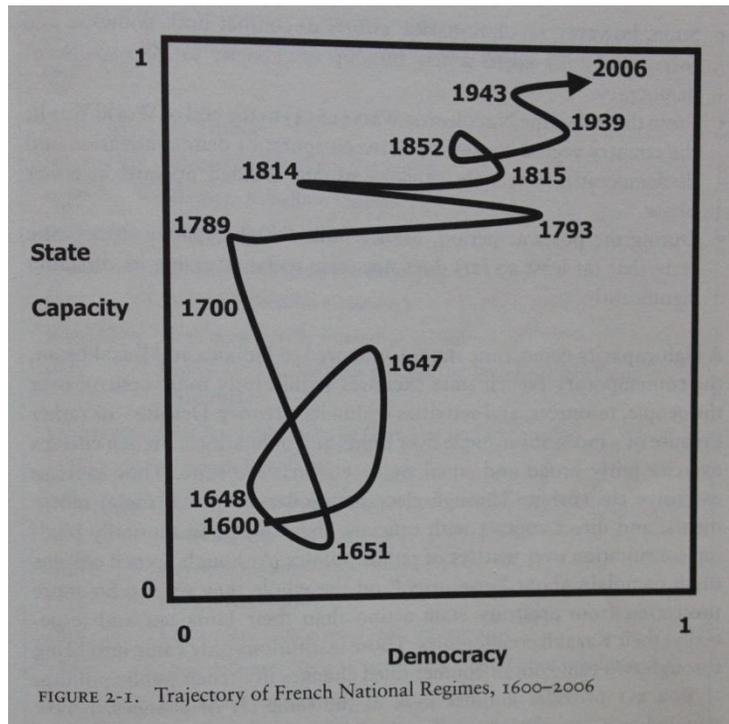
The model also presents a process-oriented approach to democracy within which a consultative relationship between citizen and state is central. For Tilly, "a regime is democratic to the degree that political relations between the state and its citizens feature broad, equal, protected and mutually binding consultation" (2007:14). The extent to which these four elements define a state-citizen relationship determine its democraticness at a given point in time. Thus, democratisation is "an average movement upward on the four dimensions", with "de-democratisation as an average movement downward on the four dimensions" (2007:15). Historical accounts are judged – subjectively – according to these four aspects of democracy for a given state and the ensuing graphs complemented with a corresponding historical narrative of events. Critical also to this approach is the way in which it rejects conventional notions of the importance of elite behaviour to regime change. Whereas for Diamond, for example, "elites matter most for the stability and consolidation of democracy" (1999: 66), Tilly centres his discussion firmly within the state-citizen struggle and focuses on the "citizenry at large" (2007: 12). This is particularly important to the kind of data that

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are considered useful in Tilly's compilation of historical narratives that chart the relationships between ruler and ruled over time.

Tilly's model differs significantly from those put forward by Polity, Freedom House or Vanhanen. First, it does not seek to categorise regime types. While similar to Polity/Freedom House in their initial measuring of democracy along a continuum, for Tilly the democraticness of a state is measured according to the four key determinants of breadth, equality, protection and mutually binding consultation (2007:14-15) – and placed on a bi-directional continuum between democracy and non-democracy, in which states can move toward or away from either pole. The model does not then attempt to label states according to seemingly arbitrary distinctions. A certain contradiction appears, it seems, between Tilly's claim to dismiss these distinctions, on the one hand, and his acknowledgment nonetheless that poles at each end of the spectrum exist (2007: 41). Throughout his argument, he also labels some states as democracies uncritically. Nevertheless, Tilly de-emphasises the need to categorise states into groups in preference of a more nuanced approach to analysis that allows for much greater fluidity of movement along the continuum and a central hypothesis that brings to the fore the potential for frequent change in state-citizen relationships. This is a fundamentally different kind of assessment of democratisation to those of Polity and Freedom House, which attempt first and foremost to distinguish regime types from one another. As Bogaards explains:

> Scholars who conceive of democracy as a matter of degree treat democracy and its absence as endpoints of a continuum, on which any thresholds or boundaries are arbitrary. Such "degreeism" (Sartori 1991) not only does away with the notion of a democratic transition, but it also negates the concept of regime and regime type (Bogaards, 2010: 476)

Whereas this has been seen as a negative characteristic in the pursuit of quantitative measurement by scholars such as Sartori (1970: 1036) – it is argued here that in fact this is a key strength of Tilly's approach. It avoids the need for arbitrary distinctions made between different kinds of regimes, as determined by west-centric theorists, and in doing so concentrates on what is considered here as a much more important factor – the extent to which citizens are able to participate in political processes without hindrance

from the state, and the extent to which the state responds to their demands. The move away from talk of 'transition' – from the progression between 'anocracy and democracy' or 'not free' to 'partly free' allows for a much more accurate conception of the ways in which countries democratise over centuries and with movements toward de-democratisation at various intervals. 'Transition' implicitly invokes a short period of time, particularly in the rhetoric of post-conflict statebuilding. The researcher considers any move away from this terminology as far as democratisation is concerned to be more analytically sound. Furthermore, this framework allows for the possibility of improvement or deterioration of a democratic politics in what might be considered 'established' or 'liberal' democracies – as Larry Diamond asserts, "liberal democracies, too, can either improve or decline in their levels of political accountability, accessibility, competitiveness, and responsiveness" (Diamond, 1999: 19). Again, this serves as a stark reminder – particularly when referring to the historical processes through which western 'established democracies' democratised – that conflict and contestation within states were often integral to the eventual stabilisation of democratic political systems (Tilly, 1985).

Moreover, Tilly's model is not events- (or procedures-) oriented but focuses on processes. According to Tilly, process-oriented approaches (unlike constitutional, substantive or procedural categorisations) "identify some minimum set of processes that must be continuously in motion for a situation to qualify as democratic" (Tilly, 2007: 9). This moves away from Vanhanen's (procedural) focus on electoral competition and participation, and Polity's emphasis on institutions, thus broadening the scope for the application of this model to contexts in which electoral statistics are disputed and misleading. As Tilly clearly demonstrates, a focus on elections alone does not allow for accurate historical analysis of the development of democratic systems in western states:

> Suppose…that we were examining all western regimes on which we could collect evidence between 1750 and 1800. In France, the Dutch Republic, Great Britain, the nascent United States, and elsewhere, comparisons based on national elections would get us nowhere….[A]ny scale treating characteristics of elections as the basic criteria for democratisation and de-democratisation would entirely distort the range, and therefore the comparisons, over the period from 1750 to 1800. We would have no choice but to fix on other sorts of rights, other

forms of political participation, and other varieties of protection from arbitrary state action (2007:62).

When focusing specifically on the question of how states democratise, and in the attempt to measure the ways in which they have done so historically, it is thus critical that a broader approach to the definition of key criteria is adopted and processes, as opposed to the incidences of electoral events alone, considered critical determinants. A process-oriented approach also allows greater contextual flexibility when considering the roles and activities of organizations, such as political parties, which in Afghanistan are not ideologically distinct, are not institutionalized internally as organizations and do not formally compete in elections under the current Single Non Transferable Vote system, for example (Ruttig, 2006; Larson, 2009a).

There are problems, however, with Tilly's model. One of its key limitations, common to all three approaches outlined above, is its focus on bounded, internationally recognized and sovereign states, countries, regimes or polities as their focus of enquiry. This is necessary across all models due first and foremost to the empirical requirement of consistency in the comparisons made. While these are all conceptually different from one another, they all nevertheless limit analysis to a fixed, bounded entity – and one which has a relationship of some sort or other with individual citizens.

The central hypothesis in this study speaks to the problem of applying these models to contexts, such as fragile states, in which the role of the state does not comply with notions of Westphalian statehood. Tilly states clearly that his argument brings "the entire world and a great deal of human history into its scope" (2007: 7) and in doing so **implies that any state, regardless of its capacity or strength, can be analysed through his model.** This contention is emphasised through his analysis of the historical paths of European states from early points in their development as states (see for example the case of France in Figure 3 above), and through his application of the model to a wide range of 'democratising' and 'de-democratising' states in the contemporary context. Strong, undemocratic states (such as Russia, 2007: 136) and weak, undemocratic states (such as Somalia and Congo-Kinshasa, 2007: 18) are all considered game for analysis, though they present examples 'alternative paths' along the

continuum (2007: 162-185). The claim Tilly makes here is that in any given state, the dynamics of the state-(individual)citizen relationship are central to democratisation and de-democratisation on a national scale. Whether or not this is in fact the case is the central concern of this thesis.

Another limitation of Tilly's model and its potential application to fragile states concerns his emphasis on the need for 'autonomous power centers' to be consumed within central state authority, if democratisation is to occur. While he presents the four processes of breadth, equality, protection and mutually binding consultation as the key determinants of democratisation, these derive from a focus on three more fundamental indicators – as he explains, "for democratisation to develop in any regime, changes must occur in three areas: trust networks, categorical inequality, and autonomous power centers" (2007: 74). These are explained in some detail, but in sum they dictate that democratisation comprise the integration of trust networks (such as differing social groups) into and within the state; the reduction of categorical or formally institutionalised inequalities between different social groups; and the reduction of the power or existence of autonomous power centres whose authority could compete with that of the central state. Of these, the first two indicators are relatively straightforward in application to fragile states such as Afghanistan, and could potentially be tracked through proxies such as investment trends, public-private partnerships, attitudes toward the police for levels of integration of trust networks; acquisition of key governmental seats and civil service positions for minority groups, and regional resource allocation for institutionalised inequality.

The third factor, however – the existence of autonomous power centres – poses a problem, as a result of its implicit distinction between state and non-state actors. In fragile, conflict-affected or post-conflict states, centres of authority are often multiple and shifting. Given chronic instability, and particularly in the case of the imposition of new state structures following conflict, there is often an uncertainty among political actors concerning the locus of 'real' power. It is not clear whether the state will be able to wield a monopoly over the distribution of patronage and resources, or whether these will remain in the hands of regional strongmen or opposition groups. As a result of this

uncertainty, actors may choose to maintain connections both with state institutions and with other sources of authority to spread the chances of losing resources and lower opportunity costs. Critically, the division between state and non-state actors is blurred: an individual can at once be a Member of Parliament and a significant player in the informal economy. Before his assassination in July 2011, Ahmad Wali Karzai, the brother of the Afghan President, was both the head of the Provincial Council in Kandahar and a well-known trader in the opium economy. In this way, alternative sources of power to the state exist and continue to maintain connections with the state but also cling to and demonstrate their autonomy whenever it is politically expedient to do so. This being the case, a prioritisation of different relationships and political identities occurs and is reshuffled on a regular basis, and a stark distinction between state and non-state actors does not necessarily apply (Barakat and Larson, 2013; Coburn and Larson, forthcoming 2013).

Tilly's conception of autonomous power centres is clear, in that if they remain separate from the political activities of state, they hinder democratisation: "To the extent that power centers, especially those controlling autonomous coercive means, remain detached from public politics, democratisation remains difficult or impossible" (2007: 76). What is not captured by this analysis, however, is the way in which these actors (whether regional strongmen, warlords or commanders) can benefit from an ambiguous or continually negotiated relationship with the central state. Olivier Roy describes the way in which the ideal scenario for Afghan warlords is the simultaneous autonomy from and connection to the state:

> All [warlords] want to be integrated into the central political game while retaining as much autonomy as they can afford at the local level. Almost none of them... has a direct and consistent source of revenue; warlords may benefit from the smuggling of drugs and other goods, but they are not the primary actors in the drug traffic. They need the central state for legitimacy, for protection against possible changes of fortune and for the institutionalisation of their power. Consequently there is a basis for negotiations between warlords and the central state, provided the warlords do not have access to alternative sources of direct support by bypassing the central state (Roy, 2003: 10).

In essence, Roy's analysis coincides with Tilly's framework, in that potentially autonomous political actors need to be connected both politically and economically with the state at least at some fundamental level in order that democratisation (Tilly) or the semblance of a 'modern state' (Roy) can emerge. Tilly, however, does not expand on the grey areas in between connectedness and non-connectedness to the state, which is problematic. If political actors maintain some degree of autonomous bargaining power, and do not comply fully with state or institutional methods for dispute resolution, for example, negotiations between these actors and the state are protracted and based on personal relationships as opposed to structured, institutional practices. This in turn reduces the likelihood for transparency and public accountability due to the ways in which deals are bi-laterally made behind closed doors. Negotiations are not process-oriented, and there is no mechanism for treating all negotiations in the same way because they are all highly personalised. In Tilly's somewhat straightforward portrayal of the relationships between 'state' and 'non-state' actors, the nuances of relationships that thrive on both accounts are lost.

2.1.4 Section summary

The comparative review above has demonstrated the extent to which three current models for measuring democratisation all focus strongly on indicators assessing the quality of the state-citizen relationship in some way – whether in terms of the presence of institutional democratic procedures (Polity), party performance and voter turnout in elections (Vanhanen), or the historical analysis of how states and citizens interact (Tilly). It is arguable that Tilly's model surpasses those put forward by Polity, Freedom House and Vanhanen in its prioritisation of historical and political narrative, and in its process-oriented approach. Having said this, however, the model would require reconsideration and amendment if applied to the contexts of fragile states, in light of the contextual challenges they pose in regard to conventional concepts of the state and state capacity. It remains to be seen whether or not it would be possible to adapt the model to the sphere of analysis of fragile states, and to overcome the limitation of its state-centric foundations.

2.2 The practice of internationally-promoted democratisation and statebuilding in fragile contexts

Following on from the reviews of existing theoretical concepts of and means to measure democratisation in scholarly work given above, this section reviews the available literature on the practice of democratisation and statebuilding in fragile contexts. This review reveals the fundamental assumption of the validity of a liberal state-citizen relationship underlying the donor-driven processes of democratisation in fragile states.

2.2.1 Why is democratisation in fragile states actively encouraged by external actors?

Enshrined in the so-called Liberal (or Democratic) Peace thesis is the notion that liberalisation (and by extension, liberal democracy) promotes peace and stability. Building on Kant's 1795 [1917] 'Perpetual Peace' argument, Michael W. Doyle has contended that a 'liberal peace' ensues when the three components of Republican representation, a commitment to international human rights and transnational interdependence occur simultaneously (Doyle, 1983; 2005: 463).[7]   While this idea is not new, in the late 1980s and 1990s, it become the subject of both a renewed scholarly interest. and, in the aftermath of the Cold War, of political rhetoric (Paris, 2004: 37). US President Bill Clinton and his then National Security Advisor Anthony Lake made very clear their support for this idea, championing the promotion of democracy abroad as a key part of America's foreign policy (Lake, 1994). Endorsed by United Nations Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali in his 'Agenda for Democratisation', the argument was made that democratisation itself would promote peace (Boutros-Ghali, 1996; Paris, 2004: 36). This was then further used to justify the inclusion of democratic statebuilding in post-conflict reconstruction programmes throughout the 1990s and beyond, in the Balkans, East Timor, Iraq and Afghanistan to name but a few examples.

This is not to say that the theoretical premise of the Liberal Peace thesis has not been questioned. Some scholars have queried the liberal explanation of democracy correlating with long-lasting peace in and between democratic countries, and have suggested instead that alternative factors, including shared values among NATO

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[7] For further comprehensive expositions of the concept, see Paris, 2004: 36-37; Mac Ginty, 2011: 19-46.

countries (Spiro, 1994), geopolitics and regional primacy (Thompson, 1996) could be more responsible for subsequent peace in certain regions:

> most of the states that became (and remained) democratic in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had created or found themselves in relatively cooperative niches that insulated them from extremely competitive, regional international politics. The various ways in which these niches were established had important and positive implications for the likelihood of domestic democratisation processes (Thompson, 1996:142).

Reasonable as these challenges to the liberal peace assumptions sound, however, they did little to affect the popularity of the idea among policy makers and politicians in the West in the 1990s. To this end, democratisation became global best practice in terms of post-conflict intervention in the post-Cold War era (UNDP, 2002:1), and would gain further traction as a means to promote international security in the aftermath of 9/11.

It is important to consider further what democratisation of this kind, promoted primarily by international actors, came to constitute. For the most part, initial concerns were with the installation of democratic institutions – elections, to be held as soon as possible after the 'end' of a given conflict, followed by the creation of the institutions of state (Carothers, 1997; Paris, 2004). The Dayton Agreement in Bosnia and Herzegovina, signed in November 1995, provides a clear example of one of the first attempts of the Clinton Administration to put the Liberal Peace Thesis into practice. This Agreement, alongside creating provisions for the division of territory, military force and a new Constitution, forced all parties of the conflict to agree to the creation of a unified state, multi-ethnic state of Bosnia-Herzegovina (Malik, 2000: 304). It set into place a new governmental structure that would provide the administrative framework for the new state. Given the ethnic nature of the conflict in the region, that had caused casualty rates of 230,000 and had displaced well over 2 million people so recently (Cox, 2003: 256), priority was placed by international actors on the creation of a state administration that was highly decentralised, assigning very little power to the central state institutions – and one which protected and isolated the three main ethnic groups from one another, rather than forming the basis of what might later assist greater unification. Malik argues that divisions became more, and not less, entrenched, as a result of this framework

(2000: 304). As Cox writes, while the Agreement was clearly designed to protect these three groups, it was "weak on creating the political and institutional ties to bind them together" (Cox, 2003: 263).

The way in which elections featured in the Dayton Agreement is also notable given the short time in which they were scheduled after the conflict. The Agreement itself specified that elections should be held 'as soon as possible', with the actual timing of the polls strongly influenced by the way in which the presence of American troops had only been committed for a period of one year following the conflict. Thus, elections, facilitated by the OSCE, took place only 9 months after the end of the war. These, and other early elections such as the municipal polls that were to follow, simply did not serve to alter the existing political environment: indeed, they "tended to replicate existing power structures" (Cox: 2003: 269), partly due to the failure of the international community to implement Annex 7, a critical clause ensuring freedom of movement (Malik, 2000: 306). To this point, then, the introduction of 'democracy' from outside had failed to set in place a new form of political system that would empower the people, as opposed to the nationalist leaders who had led the war effort. This calls into question Staffan I. Lindberg's contention, discussed above, that elections in themselves can promote democratisation (Lindberg, 2009). In the case of Bosnia and Herzogovina, the opposite appears to have been true.

As is evident from this example, the scenarios in which external would-be democratisers find themselves in post-conflict and conflict-affected contexts are highly complex, politically charged environments, with democratisation forming only a small component of a much larger international intervention. As a small part of broader statebuilding approaches, democracy promotion can be somewhat limited in scope also, comprising a finite list of activities that encompass preparations for elections, political party assistance, civic education, and support to new legislative bodies, for example. Wider in scope and mandate is the related focus on 'governance' that is adopted by a range of development actors, including bi-lateral aid agencies, United Nations organisations, and civil society groups. Interpreted in many different ways, 'governance programmes' can incorporate activities as diverse as the establishment of participatory

decision-making bodies, anti-corruption initiatives, and supporting women's political participation (Larson, 2011a: 3). This broad definition of 'governance' can be both useful and detrimental, however, since the meaning of the term has been clouded by donors attempting to avoid using the more politically-charged language of democratisation.

Ultimately, the often conflicting agendas held by different international actors, particularly concerning any troop commitments to the maintenance of post-conflict security, are critical determinants of the outcome of intervention agreements. As the interests of politicians in donor countries shift, so do plans for intervention, which are rarely long-term in nature or consistently articulated (Suhrke, 2011). This can be particularly problematic when stabilisation efforts (which, as in the case of Afghanistan and Iraq, can entail large scale counterinsurgency strategies) through an international military presence are ongoing and simultaneous with democratisation efforts. Stabilisation is often prioritised over and above these efforts, as has been the case in Afghanistan to the extent that political settlements between insurgent groups and the government have the potential to undermine democratic principles (Mac Ginty, 2011: 113). Through examining some of the pitfalls of cases in which liberal democratisation has been promoted, the researcher's intention is not to argue against liberal demoratisation per se, but to question the ways in which it is often interpreted and applied.

2.2.2 The practice of democracy promotion: differing approaches

Partly as a result of the obvious problems with externally-led democratisation in post-conflict states, a growing critical literature has developed, offering suggestions for the amelioration of democratic interventions. Within this literature, some scholars of what could be called the 'security first' school propose the postponement of democratisation efforts completely until a basic level of security has been achieved (Mansfield and Snyder, 1995; 2002; 2005; Etzioni, 2007). Others, focusing on an institutionalist perspective, argue that the problem lies with the simultaneous promotion of democratisation and liberalization, contending that institutions of democratic government should be prioritised (Paris, 2004); and yet others criticise the limited

nature of international democratisation efforts, calling for more attention to the substantive components of democracy building as opposed to the installation of formal democratic institutions alone (Bastian and Luckham, 2003; Ghani and Lockhart; 2008). These three approaches will be discussed in turn.

'Security first' is a relatively recent position developed largely in response to the failings of democratic statebuilding in the 1990s and early 21st century. Rather than see this failing as a result of the poor quality of international assistance, scholars of this persuasion consider the very attempt to democratise unstable or post-conflict regimes an exercise in futility. As Amitai Etzioni explains,

> We must face the fact that no matter how much money the United States and its allies expend, they cannot make...nations into liberal democracies. As we have seen time and time again, the West can easily topple Saddam or the Taliban, but it cannot easily found a liberal democratic regime in their place. Hence, there is little to be lost and much to be gained by providing security guarantees and other rewards in exchange for vigorous and verified deproliferation, and an end to harbouring, financing and equipping terrorists (Etzioni, 2007:14).

Rather than attach democratic conditionality to assistance, then, as was the norm during the early 2000s, both directly from donor government and indirectly through aid provisions from the IMF and World Bank tied to 'good governance' targets, outlined in countries' Poverty Reduction Strategy Plans (PRSPs) – this argument would instead allow regimes to remain sovereign in the Westphalian/Vattelian sense, without risk of intervention from outside, in return for cooperation in the elimination of terrorist activity within their borders. Left alone, the theory goes, these countries would be likely to liberalise eventually anyway, due to the inevitable realisation that a market economy works well to promote growth – and due to the declining influence of traditional leaders who were seen as unable to respond to the demands of a new generation. This libertarian perspective also fits with the idea that democratisation can only occur from the ground upwards, and cannot be imposed by external forces. To some extent, recent uprisings across the Arab World appear to support this claim.

Related to this is the earlier contention, put forward controversially in the mid-1990s by Edward D. Mansfield and Jack Snyder, that democratisation can in fact contribute to the

continuance and escalation of conflict, rather than serve as a panacea for it (Mansfield and Snyder, 1995). This argument centres on the nature of political transition, conceding that, while established, stable democracies may not go to war with one another, regime change is always likely to be fraught with difficulties and may exacerbate tension rather than relieve it. According to these authors, "[i]n this transitional phase of democratisation, countries become more aggressive and war-prone, not less, and they do fight wars with democratic states" (1995: 5). Evidence supporting this argument since it was first made seems to be prevalent, with continued violence occurring in a number of states where democratic transitions have been promoted by international actors (East Timor, Iraq and Afghanistan, for example). Other proponents of this argument include Frances Stewart and Meghan O'Sullivan who also argue that, while democratic nations may not fight each other as frequently as non-democratic ones, there is still no guarantee that they will not experience internal conflict (Stewart and O'Sullivan, 1998: 2). In comparing the cases of Uganda, Kenya and Sri Lanka, these authors find that existing ethnic divides can be emphasized to varying degrees by democratic institutions and apparatuses, such as political parties and particular electoral systems. Furthermore, that if economic trends follow ethnic fault lines, conflict between opposing groups can be emphasized in spite of (and even as a result of) the existence of these democratic institutions, as Malik suggests in relation to the Bosnian case discussed above (Malik, 2000).[8] They argue that "[w]here there are strong economic differences which are combined with ethnic ones, political parties may represent and use these differences in a way that can provoke violence…In such societies, widely shared economic and social development may be a necessary *precondition* for a democratic and peaceful society rather than the other way round" (Stewart and O'Sullivan, 1998: 17, emphasis in original). Clear from these arguments is the way in which democratisation in and of itself is unlikely to engender peace in a context of existing and continuing conflict. This approach implies that citizens' trust in the sustainability of peace – and the greater control of the state over a monopoly of violent force – must be developed before democratic institutions can contribute to the further entrenchment of that peace.

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[8] For more on the relationship between ethnicity and conflict, see Collier (1998).

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Related to this, for other scholars and democratisation practitioners of what might be termed the 'institutions first' school, of primary concern is the building of institutions that might facilitate a transition to a stable political system in the longer term. A key proponent of this approach is Roland Paris, who proposes 'Institutionalization before Liberalization', which is based on similar arguments to those reviewed above, in that "democratization and marketization are inherently tumultuous transformations that have the potential to undermine a fragile peace" (Paris, 2004: 7). To this end, Paris contends that democratisation should be delayed by international actors until political and economic institutions have been built to cope with political transition. This is linked also to the work of civil society proponents, who argue that the key to building democracy is the generation of 'social capital' through the existence and activities of sub-state interest groups and social networks, who create social ties and a certain behaviour that facilitates democratisation (Putnam, 1993). Thus, before democracy can be truly established, these social networks are needed in the creation of a democratic culture. Erring on the side of caution, however, Philip Nord warns that while "[c]ivic activism may well be the bedrock of democratic life...not all civil societies, however dense and vibrant, give birth to democratic politics" (Nord, 2000: xvi). In practice, international actors have tended to see the promotion of civil society as a key component of democratisation, to be promoted at the same time as formal democratic institutions. In some cases, however, this has involved the injection of huge amounts of donor funds into local civil society organisations (CSOs) that did not exist prior to the international intervention. This has the adverse effect of creating a superficial layer of donor-reliant CSOs whose agendas are determined entirely by the interests of donors, and who have very little influence over the actual coordination and organisation of issues-based, grass-roots movements (Larson, 2011a: 12).

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Finally, it is the kind of superficiality of donor-promoted democratisation highlighted above that has led to the call by some scholars and practitioners for more

democratisation, not less: for more substantive democratisation to be promoted, as directly opposed to the minimal approach proposed by the 'security first' school. This approach would have a greater connection made between democratic institutions, on the one hand, and democratic politics, on the other – the latter representing a much more substantive, sustainable system than the introduction of institutions alone. As Bastian and Luckham argue, the relationship between democratic institutions and politics is interdeterminate: "democratic institutions only flourish if they are supported by active and broadly based democratic politics. But conversely the design and structure of democratic institutions also make a difference, by creating spaces for democratic politics and shaping how elected governments deal with substantive issues of participation, socio-economic justice and conflict" (2003: 5). Thus, both are influenced by one another, and can be mutually reinforcing. Having said this, these authors also recognise the highly political nature of democratic institution building, which is as often based on realpolitik and expediency of actors with vested interests as it is on their rhetoric of democratic transition (2003: 307). This may not necessarily be a negative phenomenon, but it is often overlooked in what is considered by international actors as a primarily technical process. Clearly, every transition is different and must be considered within its own historical and political context.

2.2.3 Assumptions underlying the practice, and critiques of the practice, of democracy promotion

How, then, does the literature on the practice of democracy promotion surveyed above relate to the central question of this thesis – the question of whether the assumption of the centrality of a state-citizen relationship to democratisation is applicable in fragile states? Simply, in the way in which both current practice and critiques of current practice appear to make this assumption. These two categories are now addressed in turn.

Within current practice, democracy promotion is a multi-faceted phenomenon that takes a number of forms and is conducted by a wide range of actors, including donor countries' aid agencies, such as USAID and DFID; international NGOs, such as the Institute for Electoral Systems (IFES) or the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty

Democracy (NIMD); party-affiliated organizations, such as the US National Democratic Institute (NDI) and International Republican Institute (IRI), German Fredrich Engbert Stiftung (FES) and Heinrich Boll Stiftung (HBF); and multilateral donors, such as the UNDP, or United Nations Fund for Women. It can include a broad spectrum of activities that encompasses political party development and assistance, parliamentary development assistance, programmes to encourage the development of civil society, elections observation missions, programmes to support the establishment of sub-national governance structures and anti-corruption initiatives.

Across the board, however – while differences exist in terms of the kind of democracy these organizations envisage helping to establish, there is a common assumption that a relatively narrow interpretation of liberal democratic practices are desirable and appropriate for immediate application to and establishment within fragile or post-conflict states.

This assumption is evident, for example, in the way in which elections are often prioritised on the basis of the prejudgement that popular sentiment supports an interactive relationship with central government and sees this as a desirable outcome. Elections are hurriedly organized in the aftermath of war, for example in Bosnia-Herzegovina, on the assumption that people will choose to rid the country of its tyrannical wartime leaders simply because of their violent past. They are promoted as technical, one-off events (JEMB, 2005: 3) rather than part of a broader political landscape that have local as well as national ramifications (Coburn and Larson, forthcoming, 2013). Contentions about the establishment of democratic systems are made by international actors on the basis of elections having taken place, such as this statement from a UNDP report on Afghanistan in 2009: "The foundation for a viable, sustainable new democracy has been laid and a new constitution adopted. Presidential, parliamentary and provincial elections were successfully held in 2004-2005 and the next round of presidential and provincial elections will be held in August 2009" (UNDP, 2009: 2). Moreover, elections can comprise part of an ideological crusade to promote the liberal democratic freedom of individual citizens – to cast their own votes according to secret ballots, for instance. One elections observation report from the

Afghan presidential and provincial council polls in 2009 demonstrates how elections conducted did not match up to international standards in this regard, stating that "[p]ower politics and brokering set the stage for vigorous campaigning but also paved the way for Election Day vote maneuvering, which undermined one-person-one-vote principles based on individual voting preferences" (IRI, 2009: 10). This kind of value judgment does not take into account, however, the ways in which, as in Afghanistan, individual interests can be seen as secondary to the needs of a given community or group, and that secret ballots can generate more distrust and enmity that can the open show of hands in a village meeting where all preferences are clearly displayed.

Elections aside, there is also the assumption in more general programming that all citizens within and across fragile states can have, and want, a relationship with their own state's central apparatus that is uniform across time and place. To this end, a 'cookie cutter approach' is often rolled out, where similar programs across different countries or different parts of the same country are implemented regardless of demographic and or political differences. This was the case with the National Solidarity Programme (NSP) in Afghanistan, for example – a programme creating elected village councils that could apply for state funding for development projects in their area. According to the NSP's website, the programme, now in its third phase, "has led the new nation's 'reach' to rural communities and laid the foundations for inclusive and progressive local governance in almost 367 districts and every province of Afghanistan" (NSP, 2013). Indeed, the programme has served as an innovative and inclusive means of connecting otherwise disparate villages to local and national government. However, the programme has also inevitably worked better in some areas than others, precisely because of the differential nature of political connections to the central government from one areas to the next, differing uses of the official complaints procedure (Barakat et al., 2006: 10), varying political environments and local institutions with different structures of authority (Kakar, 2005: 1) and the availability of other (sometimes illicit) sources of income in some communities. As security has worsened in Afghanistan over the decade of international intervention, counterinsurgency (COIN) strategies have attempted to promote the legitimacy and authority of the government, to 'win hearts and minds' through aid distributed by international military forces. This has often had the

opposite effect to that intended, however, demonstrating the weakness and complicity of the state with civilian casualties, for example, and connection with corrupt, predatory state representatives, rather than promoting it as a service provider.

Another aspect of international programming that belies assumptions about the nature of the state and what it should be is the way in which assistance is often channeled disproportionately to the executive branch of government. This has been the case in Afghanistan, where a considerable emphasis has been placed on the capacity building of line ministries, for example, to the detriment of other, local forms of governance such as the provincial councils. This is related to the way in which the executive branch is currently seen by international actors as the central means through which to distribute goods and services, and thus create an image of legitimacy and a two-way relationship with citizens on this basis, and yet in Afghanistan in spite of the considerable funds that have been allocated to strengthening these central state institutions, the gains they have made in providing services have not served to promote the image of the state in the eyes of the population. As Suhrke describes, "[t]he liberal democratic vision initially promoted by international and Afghan reformers and supported through numerous governance projects was overshadowed by the daily realities of violence, inequality and corruption" (Suhrke, 2011: 153).

Finally, in their emphasis on the importance of 'civil society' to promoting democratisation, international actors often employ a narrow definition of the term that appears to signify 'apolitical' institutions that could interact with and monitor state activities.[9] In Afghanistan, again, donors have avoided the assistance of political parties in preference of agencies set up to combat corruption or promote women's rights, for example – overlooking the fact that both are highly political stances in the country, and that few if any organizations exist without ties to prominent ethnic groups or influential individuals. This has also led to the burgeoning of 'suitcase NGOs' – those set up only as a means to access international funds - and the creation of a superficial 'civil society'

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[9] This preoccupation has been noted by the researcher on several occasions during conversations with international donor representatives in Kabul, in which they have discussed the difficulties in finding civil society organizations to work with who have no apparent ethnic or political affiliation.

that is Kabul-based, donor-driven and disconnected from what might be considered 'society' at large (Larson, 2011a).

International programming in democracy promotion thus furthers the cause of a set of limited, liberal democratic values based on fundamental assumptions of what a state is and does vis-à-vis its citizens. This incorporates normative projections as to how democracy programming should take place and what its priorities should be. Very little evidence exists, however, to show that this approach does actually promote democratisation. It is the contention of this thesis that one of the key reasons for the lack of 'success' in international democracy promotion in fragile states is the underlying assumption that a state-citizen relationship should be central to the democratisation process in the immediate aftermath of conflict.

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Critiques of the practice of democracy promotion as it is currently attempted by international actors in fragile or post-conflict states are useful in pointing out the pitfalls of contemporary approaches, but their analysis also assumes that efforts to encourage the strengthening of the state-individual citizen relationship are central to democratisation occurring, The 'security first' approach, for example, implies that international priorities for intervention should be on building the capacity of central state institutions to control violent opposition within their own borders – or in Tilly's terms, to eliminate 'autonomous power centres'. Etzioni recommends the providing of incentives for fragile state governments to do this, over and above the (largely futile) attempt to install democratic regimes (2007:14). But this viewpoint assumes that greater state control over the means of violent force (Tilly's 'strong state path') will eventually result in democratisation from the ground upwards, when repression and persecution at the hands of the state prove too much for 'ordinary' citizens to bear. It assumes that state repression reaches a level so extreme that the opportunity cost of going to war against the state is less than that of enduring repression to prioritise security, livelihoods, communal unity. But is this necessarily the case? This seems to an argument too simple to be true in all circumstances. While uprisings have occurred in

Arab countries in recent years as a result of state oppression, these countries have also had long histories of state-citizen interaction and sufficiently urbanized populations that consider regular, individual interactions with state institutions to be desirable and free of corrupt activity, for example. Similar popular uprisings have not occurred against state authorities in Somalia or Afghanistan, where, in the latter, even when a strong state structure was in place in the late 19th century, only small groups rose up to resist its influence on the day-to-day lives of citizens (see chapter 5 for a more detailed discussion of this).

When arguing that the building of institutions should be prioritized over and above the international drive to encourage market liberalisation and democratisation, Paris demonstrates the assumption that institutions themselves can be neutral, facilitative entities that inspire popular trust. Even (or perhaps especially) when these institutions have been established for some time, however, this is not always the case, as Stewart and O'Sullivan argue in their exposition of the potential for party politics to exacerbate ethnic tensions (1998: 17). This approach assumes that state regulations, for example on the registration of political parties, or on the establishment of independent electoral commissions, or a national bank, can be seen by citizens and groups of citizens as separate to the interests of officials in central government, and represent a coherent state entity – again, that there is a relationship of some (even if not much) trust between ruler and ruled. Further, it assumes that a set of institutions that have been established with the help of international funds and expertise will also generate popular confidence, when again, the nature of outside assistance can be a source of public suspicion and conspiracy theory.

Finally, the 'more, not less, democracy promotion' school calls primarily for international actors to promote a more comprehensive relationship between citizen and state that incorporates the establishment of institutions, accountability mechanisms and checks and balances to limit state control over resources. Even more than the other two approaches discussed, this assumes once again the desirability of a closer, more interactive relationship between state and individual citizen and people's need to hold the state to account on a regular basis over matters of administration and resource

distribution. When the state has not traditionally taken on these roles, however, as is often the case in fragile states, the establishment of these mechanisms to connect more strongly people with state officials may be futile at best, and at worst, exacerbate violent conflict.

2.2.4 Section summary

The practice of internationally-promoted democratisation has become a standard component of statebuilding in post-conflict and fragile states. Justified initially in terms of the liberal peace thesis and through the contention that promoting democratisation would also engender peaceful political settlements, it became a central feature of political rhetoric and western countries' foreign policy in the early 1990s. Experiences in Bosnia and Herzegovina, East Timor, Iraq and Afghanistan since this time have demonstrated the complexity of 'democratisation from outside', however, and have become the subject of critique from a number of different perspectives. Some scholars and practitioners call for less democratisation and more security-related conditions in dealing with fragile or post-conflict states; others call for a focus on 'institutionalization before liberalization'; and a further group of academics suggest that more, and not less democratisation, in the form of tying democratic institutions to democratic politics, would be a better solution. In all cases, however, internationally-promoted democratisation as presented in the statebuilding literature is invariably tied to a state-centric perspective in which states themselves, along with the civil society institutions that exist within them, are considered the key targets for democratisation efforts.

2.3 Summary of literature on democratisation in Afghanistan[10]

The emerging need to look more closely at the way in which democratisation occurs in fragile contexts lends itself to the selection of a single case study for close analysis, followed by the potential application of findings to a broader group of conflict-affected fragile contexts. Afghanistan provides a key example of a 'fragile state' as labelled by international donors, given its weak capacity to maintain a monopoly of violence over a

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[10] A full review is given throughout the historical narrative developed in chapter 5.

growing insurgency, and to provide services for its citizens. It has also played host to an international intervention, which has included efforts toward statebuilding, over the last ten years. As such, the closer analysis of democratisation in Afghanistan and how (or indeed whether) it has taken place over time could provide valuable insights into democratisation in fragile states more generally. A full justification of this choice of case study is given in chapter 3. Here, it is first necessary to review existing literature on democratisation processes in the country.

A wealth of literature is currently available on Afghanistan, within the policy arena and, to a lesser extent, in academia. Within both, however, very few studies focus on democratisation per se, (with the exception of Larson, 2009b; 2011b; and Barry and Greene, 2009) but rather more analyse a variety of different aspects of state- or nation-building – whether historically at the hands of internal rulers (Edwards, 1996; Ewans, 2001; Barfield, 2010); as anthropological accounts of events and elite personalities, their methods of ruling and responses to citizens and foreign powers (Elphinstone, 1839; Dupree, 1980; Edwards, 1996); as commentary on internal mobilization during times of war (Roy, 1994; Barakat et al., 2008; Giustozzi, 2009); as an account of the existence and development of political parties, groupings and tribes (Roy, 2003; Ruttig, 2006; Larson, 2009a), or as a critique of international statebuilding efforts within Afghanistan, whether during the Soviet era or post-2001 (Rubin, 2002; Cramer and Goodhand, 2002; Goodhand, 2004; Goodhand, 2009; Suhrke, 2011; Fishstein and Wilder, 2012; Coburn and Larson, forthcoming, 2013).   From these sources, it is possible to build a brief synopsis of democratisation in Afghanistan during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, which will be expanded considerably (in both timeframe and content) as the historical narrative developed in chapter 5.

Afghanistan's experience of democratic government prior to the 2001 intervention was minimal, with a 'decade of democracy' initiated by then king Zahir Shah occurring between 1963-1973 but better described as an experiment in modern politics than an internal attempt to democratise. Although a parliament was elected by popular vote in 1965 and again in 1969, universal suffrage was not enforced and political parties denied the ability to register as formal organisations as a result of the King's refusal to sign a

political parties law (Ruttig, 2006: 6). Political activity was highly contained and monitored with an elite, monarchist oversight that left little room for opposition to the ruling classes (Rubin, 2002: 81). This curtailment of opposition (and particularly of Islamist groups) would be further enforced by Daoud Khan after the coup d'etat in 1973 (Rubin, 2002: 102; Ruttig, 2006: 9).

Perhaps even more significant, however, is the way in which over the course of the twentieth century Afghanistan did not develop along a consistent trajectory into a modern state, and by the early 1990s could be labeled a failed state, in terms of the way in which central authorities were unable to maintain a monopoly of violence within the country's borders or provide a centralized system of taxation, rule of law or service provision for citizens. Drawing on Krasner (2009), although at an earlier point, the Afghan state had had its international legal sovereignty confirmed in 1934 when it became a member of the League of Nations (Ewans, 2001: 143), its Westphalian sovereignty was questionable even at this point. As Thomas Barfield argues, while a sense of nationhood has emerged within, across and between the different people groups that define themselves as *Afghan,* to the point at which none of these groups has attempted to pursue an ethnically-based independence agenda, there has throughout Afghan history been a distinct lack of a centralised structure of government (Barfield, 2010: 278). Edwards refers to this as "the fundamental artificiality of the Afghan nation-state", a situation resulting from the way in which the state has never been able to imprint itself on the public imaginary (1996: 4). At certain points during the twentieth century state control of national resources and provision of services were apparent, perhaps most during Zahir Shah's reign (1933-1973) and then again under the Soviet occupation (1979-1989), but especially in the latter period, state presence and control in general was largely restricted to urban and semi-urban areas, with little influence across much of the countryside (Rubin, 2002: 145). Even during these times, the majority of state revenue was not collected through taxation of income but rather as aid from (competing) international sources. As Rubin describes, with the United States and the Soviet Union attempting to win the allegiance of the Afghan state through aid, "From [1956] until 1973, foreign grants and loans accounted for 80 percent of Afghan investment and development expenditure" (2002: 65). This reflected the way in which

the Government of Afghanistan had courted both Germany and the Allies for aid during the Second World War as a result of the country's 'neutral' foreign policy (Barfield, 2010: 311-312). This legacy of a rentier economy throughout the 20th century not only had the effect of keeping the majority of citizens from interacting with the state but also of precluding the possibility of state-citizen accountability.

Indeed, it would take widespread participation in the Mujahideen resistance movement, that would oppose the PDPA and eventually help to overthrow the (already struggling) Soviet occupation, to generate a greater sense of entitlement to participate in the political process – a process previously restricted to an elite ruling class in Kabul (Barfield, 2010: 242).

When the international military intervention began in 2001, few international actors at the time suspected that it would last a decade, and would involve not only a military campaign but one of statebuilding and later, stabilization. Indeed, the Bush administration made clear at the time that nation-building was not part of their agenda (Rumsfeld, 2003). In spite of this, however, plans were put in place for post-conflict elections to take place within two years, following the holding of Emergency and Constitutional *Loya Jirgas* or Grand Councils, in 2002 and 2003 respectively. Elections took place for the Presidency (2004) and parliament (2005), marking the end of the Bonn Process and the formation of new institutions of state, tasked with the re-building of a shattered nation.

A considerable critique of the nature of the international statebuilding agenda in Afghanistan as a whole has been made across the academic and policy literature (see for example Cramer and Goodhand, 2002; Kandiyoti, 2005 and 2007; Barfield, 2010; Suhrke, 2011; Mac Ginty, 2011; ICG, 2011; Fishstein and Wilder, 2012). First, a number of observers saw the elections in 2004 and 2005 as a rushed process, with the wrong electoral system, beset with problems for future implementation (Reynolds and Wilder, 2004; ICG, 2004; Rubin 2005). Others point to the nature of the system established through the Bonn Process – a strong presidential system, allocating significant powers to one individual at the top (Barfield, 2010: 302-304), resulting in

weak *de facto* powers of parliament to counter presidential decrees (Suhrke, 2011: 175). While great gains were made in the promotion of women's space in the political arena, through an internationally-promoted reserved seats system for parliament and provincial councils, the mere presence of women was not to result in a legislative bloc able to promote substantive policy gains for women across Afghanistan, due in part to the ethnic and linguistic between women legislators (Wordsworth, 2007; Larson, 2011c; Larson, 2012). As security levels began to decline, with the rise of insurgent activity in the south, statebuilding initiatives that had been in place began to take on a political dimension and were combined with military stabilisation agendas in an attempt to 'win hearts and minds' through counterinsurgency. (Fishstein and Wilder, 2012; Barakat and Larson, 2013). As Fishstein and Wilder note, this was essentially counterproductive in that it served to further distance Afghans from a government increasingly perceived as corrupt and illegitimate (Fishstein and Wilder, 2012),

Astri Suhrke has written at length on the internal contradictions and complexities of the 'international project' in Afghanistan, which she considers principal reasons for its failures (Suhrke, 2007; 2011). Within this, it is possible to determine that there has been no combined agenda shared by donor governments as to what democratisation is or should look like in the Afghanistan context, with several communiqués from international (pledging) conferences describing democracy in obscure terms with what Barry and Greene call a "laundry list of expectations" (2009: 8). This is combined with differential priorities among donors, most of whom have re-oriented their programmes in recent years toward security-driven and/or stabilisation goals and a 'whole-of-government' approach (Gordon, 2010; Barakat and Larson, 2013) but few of whom share a common idea of democratisation in Afghanistan.

The lack of coherence over democratisation agendas is not limited to international actors. Indeed, members of Afghan civil society organisations are also unaligned or in disagreement over the necessary components of democratisation in Afghanistan.[11] In

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[11] This is nowhere more evident than in disagreements over women's role in democratisation processes and how, if at all at the present time, this should be promoted. Women's claim to space in the public sphere in Afghanistan has generated conservative backlash at several points in the country's recent history (Kandiyoti, 2005: 31) and many civil society actors cite this fact as a means of cautioning

previous work on Afghan perceptions of democracy and democratisation in Afghanistan, the researcher has also noted that there is little consensus among Afghans themselves as to what the term 'democracy' means. In recent years, 'democracy' has acquired negative connotations in Afghanistan due to its association with the liberal, secular values of western societies (Larson, 2009b; 2011b). This association of democracy with secularism is not new in the post-2001 era, as it formed a component part of Mujahideen campaigns against the secular, socialist rule of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) in the 1980s. It has re-emerged, however, partly as a result of the increasing Islam-versus-West discourse that is commonly utilised by political and religious public figures in Afghanistan (Larson, 2012: 148-149). While at first the international intervention and (re-) introduction of formal democratic structures was welcomed by many Afghans, as indicated through high voter-turnout rates in early elections, disillusionment with the results of intervention accompanied by increasing insecurity have contributed to a growing willingness to associate 'democracy' with international troop presence, 'foreign occupation' and an alien value-set unwelcome in Afghanistan (Larson, 2009b; 2011b). This general sensitivity surrounding the term renders the work of those promoting democratisation programmes difficult in many cases: Afghans who would generally espouse a liberal-values-oriented agenda have been less likely to declare this openly for fear of conservative (and potentially violent) reactions. In field notes over the last three years the researcher has observed a general and increasing tendency for MPs to avoid speaking in public on what are considered 'sensitive' or 'western' issues (Larson, 2011c: 125; Larson, 2012: 149).

Of all the available literature, Barry and Greene's analysis of what democratisation might look like in Afghanistan is closest in subject matter to the questions posed in this thesis. They apply several contemporary definitions of democracy to the Afghan case,

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international would-be activists not to push this issue in a provocative manner that might result in recent gains for women being lost. While most representatives of civil society in Kabul – a small educated elite which has formed under the name 'civil society' only since 2001, largely in response to donor funding – share the view that women have a role to play in democratisation, they are starkly divided over the question of whether this role is central to the process or whether it is an issue that can be promoted at a later stage.

including that put forward by Freedom House, Polity IV and, in part, by Charles Tilly (focusing primarily on his concern with state capacity) (2009, 5-7). These frameworks are discussed briefly and uncritically, however, with the authors assuming that they are all adequate means of assessment for the Afghan case. Conclusions are made, somewhat ahistorically, to the effect that Afghanistan is currently not measuring up to even 'minimal democracy' standards, must model a democratic system on non-western examples such as Nicaragua and Mozambique, and needs a more decentralised democratic system with greater checks and balances over the powers of central authorities (2009: vii-x).

This thesis attempts to go beyond the analyses of democracy in Afghanistan that current exist, by questioning the very framework that all accounts of the international practice of democracy-promotiion in the country appear to be based upon. While much has been written on the nature of the Afghan state, statebuilding and state-society relations within Afghanistan both over time (Elphinstone, 1839; Edwards, 1996; Rubin 2002; Barfield, 2010) and in the contemporary context (Cramer and Goodhand, 2004; Kandiyoti, 2005; Suhrke, 2011; Giustozzi, 2009), none of these accounts have systematically addressed the problem of assessing and measuring democratisation in a state that does not comply with western norms. In applying the Afghan case to an existing framework for measuring democracy, the researcher proposes to demonstrate the inadequacy of such frameworks for application to fragile states. Her own previous accounts of Afghan perceptions of democracy (Larson 2009b; 2011b), based on an in-depth qualitative study, go some way toward unpacking local perceptions of democracy, but do not address broader issues of state-society relations or how democratisation in Afghanistan might be conceptualised, measured or practiced.

2.4 A gap in the literature: problems to be addressed

In chapters 1 and 2 the literature review has surveyed the existing literature on the theory, measurement and practice of democratisation in fragile states, along with the available literature on democratisation in Afghanistan.

As can be gauged from this review, while much of the existing literature on democratisation looks for social explanations for the way in which states democratise, and the causes of or contributors to democratisation, these are all fundamentally based on the assumption of a Weberian and/or Westphalian state either existing, or being an ideal 'state' to which fragile, weak or failed states should aspire. This is a critical characteristic dominant across current analysis: existing concepts of democracy and democratisation treat the state as an unproblematic unit of analysis and put a great deal of weight on the state-citizen relationship. This does not present an obstacle in the assessment of democracy in established or 'stable' states, which have developed according to the western European or Weberian model, but can be called into question when applied to fragile or conflict contexts in which statehood and state sovereignty are not as easily assumed.

It is clear that this basis for analysis is grounded in the western European experience: a unique historical path dissimilar to that of the development of newer states in other regional contexts. Currently missing is a model of analysis that would allow an assessment of democratisation in states that do not comply with the Weberian form and do not currently demonstrate or aspire towards a liberal, uniform connection between state and citizen. For many democracy theorists, evidently – and particularly those of the more recent school of substantive democratisation – this would in itself present a contradiction in terms, with the state-citizen relationship being inseparable from the democratisation process. Indeed, these theorists may well be right: it could be that democratisation is simply not occurring in these contexts. At present, however, there is no exploration of this question in the existing literature.

In terms of measuring democratisation, a similar problem arises. All existing models not only define democracy in terms of its presence or absence in a given state, but also measure the degree to which it exists with variables that assume the existence of a Weberian state in the regime studied. Of the three models discussed, Tilly's qualitative measures of democratisation are more convincing that those of Polity, Freedom House and Vanhanen because they include the recognition of historical and political context, which affects how and why states democratise in different ways. Nevertheless, Tilly's

model is still firmly based on central variables that reflect the state-citizen relationship, which are arguably not applicable to fragile states in spite of his claims to the contrary. Thus, alongside a gap in the theoretical literature on what democratisation is and how it occurs in fragile states, there is also a distinct lack of an available tool to measure it appropriately in these contexts.

Very little attention is paid within this literature to the ways in which democratisation processes are affected by and indeed form part of broader international interventions in conflict-affected states. This is covered to some degree within the statebuilding literature, which, however, does not cover the more general explanations about how and why and when states democratise. Thus, there is a distinct need for a theoretical framework that combines both of these important approaches in a manner that facilitates a specific focus on the practice of democracy promotion in conflict-affected fragile states.

2.5 Research questions

Following the literature review and identification of certain gaps in the existing scholarship on democratisation in fragile states, it is now possible to identify key questions that could guide this research in its attempt to fill these spaces.

Democratisation and the state:

1. Is the state-citizen relationship necessarily central to the theoretical concept, measurement and practice of democratisation?

2. If so, how can the theory, measurement and practice of democratisation be applied to fragile states, if at all?

3. If not, what could function as an alternative means of analysis in these cases? Can levels of democratisation in conflict-affected fragile states be effectively modeled without a central focus on the state-citizen relationship?

Measuring democratisation:

1. Can democratisation be measured in conflict-affected fragile states? If so, would it be possible to use Tilly's framework for measurement, or does this approach rely too heavily on the state-citizen relationship?

2. What are the factors contributing either to a greater consolidation of a democratic politics in fragile states or toward de-democratisation? Are these comparable across fragile states, or are they specific to a given country context?

Practicing democratisation:

1. How do international efforts to promote democratisation in conflict-affected fragile states coincide with or contradict theories about the onset and consolidation of democracy?

2. Is there a role for international actors in promoting democratisation in the aftermath of conflict? If so, what should this involve? If not, what are the alternatives?

In attempting to answer these questions, this research seeks to question basic assumptions about the state-citizen relationship that are dominant across the theory, current attempts to measure and the practice of democratisation, in an attempt to see whether it is possible to reformulate the discourse of democratisation in a manner that facilitates application to fragile states. In doing so it necessarily refutes the notion that fragile states are by default 'undemocratic' as a result of their fragility, and would question the criteria on which current standards of 'democraticness' are based.

2.6 Summary and conclusions

This chapter has presented reviews of the literature for three further topics relevant to this research – for existing models to measure democratisation, for the practice of democratisation, and for democratisation in Afghanistan. In the comparative review of measurement models, Tilly's approach most suits the application to fragile states given its historical, qualitative focus. The researcher suspects that considerable amendment would be needed, however, in testing this application, due to Tilly's uncritical

definitions of states and citizens. In the review of literature on the practice of internationally promoted democratisation, the complexity of attempting 'democratisation from the outside' in conflict-affected states has been brought to light, and three approaches to the role of international actors in these circumstances ('security first', 'institutions first' and 'more, not less, democratisation') have been identified. Across all three, a state-centric perspective prevails. Finally, in terms of literature surveyed on democratisation in Afghanistan, the researcher has ascertained that existing academic and policy-oriented studies of political change in the country are few and far between, and do not address in any systematic way the problem of how democratisation in Afghanistan might be conceptualised, measured or practiced. As such, across all three areas of literature surveyed in this chapter there remain significant gaps that will be addressed by this thesis, through an enquiry based on the research questions presented at the end of the chapter.

CHAPTER 3: FRAMING THE THESIS

3.1 Theoretical methodology: A justification of the research design

In order to answer the central research questions outlined at the end of chapter 2, this thesis will need to analyse democratisation in one or more fragile states, in which the impetus to democratise has been donor-led. Before embarking on this analysis, however, it is necessary to determine the kind of approach that will be taken.

3.1.1 Summary of findings on available models of democratisation discussed in the literature review

As discussed in the literature review in chapters 1 and 2, the study of democratisation is well-established within the field of political science, and numerous models exist for its measurement and comparison across different contexts. For the most part, these models, such as Polity (Gurr, 1974; Jaggers and Gurr, 1995). are quantitative and rely on fixed criteria against which countries or regimes at a given time are scored.

Part of the problem with this approach, however, as explored in chapter 2, is the way in which average scores for each indicator (all weighted equally) are combined to produce a label of 'autocratic', 'democratic' or 'anocratic'. This kind of labeling carries with it a series of value judgments that can be seen as a badge of honour (Zakaria, 1997), which can be highly political in nature (see for example the weight given to Freedom House's use of a similar technique, labeling states 'free', 'not Free' or partly free' based on scores for civil rights and political liberties) (Freedom House, 2011). The divisions between these categories appear arbitrary, also. While the authors justify their approach by comparing their own data to that of other models, this method of triangulation falls short for conflict-affected states, where very little information is available.

Tatu Vanhanen's model (1984, 1990, 2000) focuses on elections as its primary unit of analysis, using the variables of degree of electoral competition, degree of electoral participation and a combined index of democratisation (2000: 251). This is an events-focused or procedural (Tilly, 2007:8) approach that assigns considerable weight to certain political structures (such as political parties) and their success or failure in

elections, in an attempt to avoid subjective judgment. Applying this model to a fragile state context in which any statistics are both difficult to determine and usually politically contested, presents a problem, however – as does the characteristic frailty and informality of political parties in post-conflict states. This dilemma reflects key ontological and epistemological discussions concerning the existence and fundamental transferability of institutions and organisations across different contexts, without considering historical and political variables.

Given these problems with quantitative approaches to analysing and measuring democratisation in fragile states, the researcher argues that a qualitative research design is more appropriate when considering these contexts. While less common in the theory, due to the way in which generalisability is more difficult when using qualitative approaches, an holistic approach that can capture historical and political dynamics through the narratives of individual respondents and through historical sources could potentially provide a more accurate means of assessing democratisation in fragile states. This is partly due to the way in which qualitative approaches can be more flexible in terms of research design, with concepts, indicators and/or criteria developed from respondent interviews, for example, rather than prescribed beforehand in order to develop a uniform comparison across numerous contexts (Strauss and Corbin, 1998: 734-8; Bryman 2008: 373). Qualitative approaches reflect the researcher's own broadly interpretivist position, and follow that participants themselves ascribe meaning to social action, which can be interpreted, but which evades universal comparison (Bryman, 2008: 366).[12] The researcher focuses analysis on one chosen case study, before assessing whether it is possible to apply the criteria developed in this case to other fragile states – but does not look for universal generalisations across any context.

To this end, the work of the Historical Institutionalist (HI) school of political analysis fills some of the gaps outlined in the models above. The central premise of historical institutionalism holds institutions as important tools in the theory and practice of social explanation, but insists that they are not constructed or experienced within a vacuum:

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[12] See Appendix 1 for more on interpretivist approaches.

they are the product of given historical structures and processes.[13] This allows a clear theoretical divergence from the prospect of universal generalisations, and instead facilitates the comparison of small groups of cases, for example in a regional context or across states in which a particular political or social phenomenon has occurred (Thelen, 1999: 373). This then provides an appropriate approach for the consideration of democratisation in fragile states.

One problem with this approach, however, when applied to the central research question, is its focus on structural or state-centric explanations for gradual change over time. This research intends to find out whether it is possible to measure democratisation without such a central focus on the state, given the fluid and shifting nature of statehood in fragile states. As such, it will use the principles of HI approaches as a means to map change over time in terms of democratisation, emphasising the importance of historical narrative and political context, and yet will question the state-centricity common to the HI school. To this end, the research will attempt to develop its own approach as an alternative to the quantitative measures developed in Polity/Freedom House/Vanhanen, on the one hand, but also to the state-centric approaches of Historical Institutionalists, on the other.

3.1.2 Discussion of chosen methodological framework: Charles Tilly

Having established that HI provides the most appropriate of all approaches to follow, at least initially, in this exploration of democratisation in fragile states, it is necessary to identify a model within this approach that provides a methodological framework for analysis. One of the most recent models to come from this school is that put forward by Charles Tilly (2007), as discussed in chapter 2.

In this section, I seek to justify why an application of Charles Tilly's framework to a fragile state setting is important. It is the contention of this thesis that democratisation in fragile states is understudied and misunderstood because attempts to conceptualise, measure and practice it are based on a liberal conceptualisation of the state-citizen relationship. This is critically important because democratisation may be occurring in

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[13] See Appendix 1 for an in-depth exploration of HI approaches.

fragile contexts but in ways that are not captured by this concept. The researcher's rationale in choosing Tilly to help expose this misunderstanding is threefold: 1) A process-oriented approach to measuring democratisation, along a continuum without labeled categories, is theoretically sound; 2) Tilly's emphasis on the historical relationship between ruler and ruled is unique and sheds more light on democratisation processes than analysis of elite behaviour or elections; 3) Tilly's claim that his framework can be applied to all states should be problematised in fragile contexts where state-citizen relationships do not fit a liberal model. **In sum, Tilly's model presents the best possible means to measure democratisation processes generally because process, relationships and history matter just as much if not more in fragile states than in other contexts. States and citizens, however, are liberal concepts that need to be examined if they are to be applied to fragile environments.**

Following on from the outline of Tilly's approach to democratisation given previously, this section now discusses the way in which Tilly focuses on the need to explain how and why democracies form (2007: 6). His model is based on the premise that states consistently move toward or away from democratisation on a continuum, which has no necessary fixed end-point at either extreme. Following states' historical trajectories, he maps their movement back and forth along this continuum according to four key processes reflecting the nature of state-citizen relationships: breadth, equality, protection (from arbitrary state action) and mutually-binding consultation. For Tilly, "a regime is democratic to the degree that political relations between the state and its citizens feature broad, equal, protected and mutually binding consultation" (Tilly, 2007:14). This perspective thus facilitates a critical analysis of 'established democracies' – which, far from being 'wholly democratic' still experience considerable struggles within the state-citizen relationship. Tilly's central reliance on the state-citizen relationship is problematic as far as this thesis is concerned, but it does encapsulate the important notions of power struggles and negotiation between political actors at the centre and the public.

Tilly avoids referring to the need for preconditions for democratisation in preference for a 'process-oriented approach' (Tilly, 2007: 9). Although the distinction is subtle, it is

nonetheless critical in post-war (and or continuing-conflict) contexts, because it captures an element of movement toward or away from democratisation rather than assuming there are key milestones to be achieved before democratisation can begin, or that there is an end-state toward which countries must aspire. While others, such as Robert Dahl (1998), have also taken up this process-oriented model, as Tilly notes – the approach presented by Tilly is more sophisticated in its focus on 'crucial variables' instead of a 'yes/no checklist' (Tilly, 2007:10) for measuring the democraticness of a state at a given time – essentially measuring democratisation by degree instead of considering democracy as an end-state to be achieved. Indeed, according to Tilly, "[i]f we want insights into causes and effects of democratization or de-democratization, we have no choice but to recognize them as continuous processes rather than simple steps across a threshold in one direction or the other" (2007:10).

In spite of this emphasis on a continuum of democraticness, along which regimes move according to the nature of their state-citizen relationships, Tilly's perspective could be classed as positivist, in that for him, democracies are essentially different from other types of regimes (2007: 6), behaving in certain ways that differentiate them from authoritarian systems of government, for example. Thus, democracies exist as 'things' that can be observed and compared in the real world, across different contexts. This seems to contradict slightly his avoidance of a threshold, beyond which states are or are not democratic: he does not define where democratisation stops and 'democracy' begins, and yet still holds to the claim that there are such things as actual democracies that behave differently to non-democracies. There are end-points, theoretically speaking at least, at either end of his continuum. Tilly himself writes of this problem, allocating more emphasis and explanatory power to the continuum approach as opposed to the need to categorise regimes as democratic or otherwise. He contends that "[a]lthough from time to time I will flatly call a regime democratic or undemocratic, that device will not serve this book's explanatory purposes well" (2007:41). In de-emphasising this internal contradiction, Tilly draws more attention to the need to examine changes along the democracy continuum over time, which he considers more important that classifying regime types. This being the case, it could be argued that the contradiction does not

detract from the usefulness of his approach to democracy by degree, but it does call into question the possibility of holding a positivist stance simultaneously.

Tilly begins his discussion of democratisation with an exploration of the relationship between state capacity and democracy, where state capacity is: "[t]he extent to which interventions of state agents in existing non-state resources, activities and interpersonal connections alter existing distributions of those resources, activities and interpersonal connections as well as relations among those distributions" (2007: 16). Using a simple schematic, he posits that there are four general ways in which to describe states in terms of their capacity and democraticness: High-capacity undemocratic; low-capacity undemocratic; high-capacity democratic; and high-capacity undemocratic. Putting aside for the time being the issues with assumptions made about the state, which will be revisited below, one could roughly situate the chosen case study for this research – Afghanistan – in 2013 within the second category (low-capacity undemocratic). According to Tilly, this roughly equates to "warlords, ethnic blocs, and religious mobilization; frequent violent struggle including civil wars; multiple political actors including criminals deploying lethal force" (2007: 20).

Figure 4: Regime placement of Afghanistan in 2012 (following Tilly, 2007: 19-21)
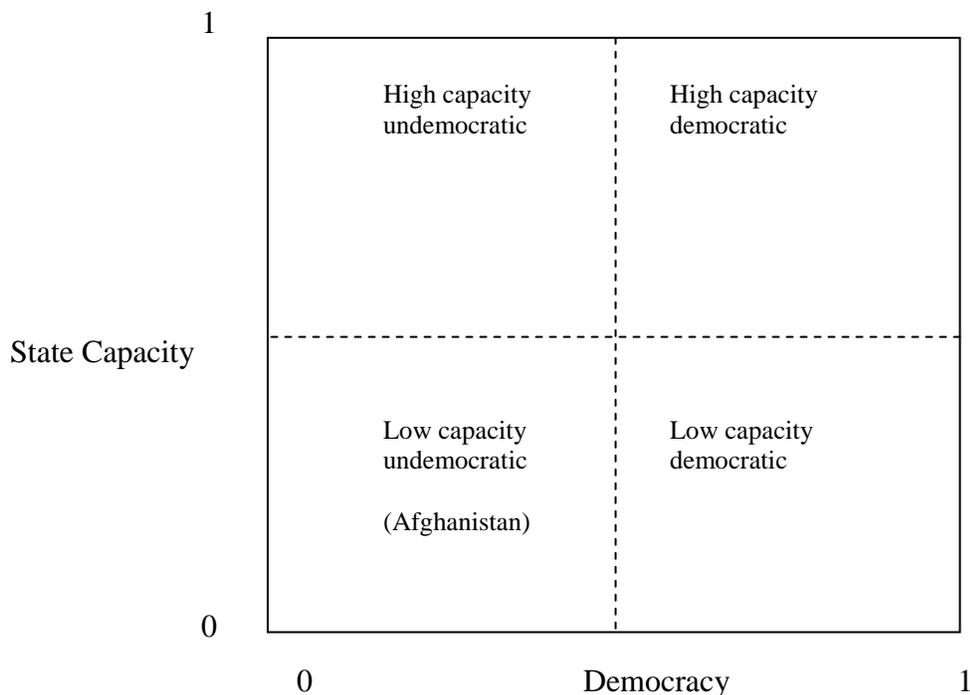
States can move positions both within and between quadrants over time and thus their positioning is more fluid than fixed. Other regional examples for 2013 might include Iran and Pakistan as high-capacity undemocratic, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan as low capacity undemocratic (although positioned higher than Afghanistan within the quadrant); and China at the top of the high-capacity undemocratic quadrant.

Further to the introduction of this somewhat simplistic model, Tilly focuses on the relationship between state capacity and democracy, specifically considering the nature of the state-citizen relationship in a given regime. He contends that the primary locus of that relationship, to the extent that it is observable and measurable, is public politics (2007: 12). For Tilly, this includes elections, voter registration, legislative activity, patenting, tax collection, military conscription, and collective contention/public action, amongst other examples – but purposefully excludes personal interactions between individuals and state officials (2007:12). Part of the task of attempting to apply Tilly's model to fragile contexts will therefore involve identifying and assessing the spaces in which public publics of these or other kinds takes place, and seeing whether it is possible to analyse the nature of the state-citizen relationship as a result.

Having identified public politics as his central focus of investigation, Tilly organizes explanations around three 'clusters of change':

1. levels of integration between 'interpersonal networks of trust' and public politics

2. levels of insulation of public politics from categorical inequalities

3. levels of autonomy of major power centres with respect to public politics (2007:23)

Within these, examples of 'interpersonal networks of trust' include kinship, religious membership and relationships within trades; categorical inequalities include widespread social exclusions based on gender, race, religion etc; and major power centres are defined as warlords, patron-client networks, armies and religious institutions (2007: 23). Changes in these three areas reflect for Tilly the principal means through which

democratisation and de-democratisation can be observed and measured. Again, how if at all these three clusters of change can be observed and measured in fragile contexts, and in Afghanistan specifically, will be a central focus of this enquiry.

3.1.3 Application of Tilly

In applying his own framework to case study examples (Kazakhstan and Jamaica, in chapter 1), Tilly asks critical questions concerning the movement or democratisation paths of the countries in question, with the aim "to build a general account of change and variation in regimes on the way to describing paths that lead toward and away from democracy" (2007: 22). Summarized versions of these questions are as follows, adapted to the Afghan case:

1. Considering Afghanistan's historical trajectory over the 19th and 20th centuries, in which no centralized state existed before Abdurrahman Khan's brutal attempt to forge tribal and regional warlord allegiance to his rule, even after which center-periphery relations have been strained and consistently re-negotiated – by what path and how did the current highly centralized system come into being and why has it not resulted in higher state capacity?

2. Under what conditions and how could Afghanistan 1) drop further in the low-capacity undemocratic quadrant; 2) move upwards into the high-capacity undemocratic quadrant, following neighbouring countries; or 3) move into the democratic quadrants?

In seeking to answer similar questions about his own case study countries, Tilly does not attempt to establish general laws or conditions for democratisation, but instead tries to locate 'causal mechanisms' which 'produce the same immediate effects over a wide range of circumstances' (2007: 22) – indicating his position within the historical institutionalist school. These coincide with the three 'clusters of changes' he identifies (trust networks, categorical inequalities and autonomous power centres). Maintaining initially a close following of Tilly's method, this thesis will first attempt to answer these questions using secondary data to build an historical narrative detailing Afghanistan's path to its current state (question 1) and then assessing whether it is possible to address

the second question above with an emphasis on local perspectives of the state-citizen relationship through the analysis of primary data collected by the researcher in Afghanistan.

However, it may not be possible to address Tilly's two key questions accurately in regard to so-called fragile states such as Afghanistan simply because the conception of the state that Tilly uses makes too many assumptions about its nature and capabilities in such a context. Once Tilly's framework has been applied to the Afghan case, and answers to the above questions either found or left unaddressed, possible amendments to the model will be considered to render analysis more accurate to the Afghan context and to the fragile states sphere of analysis more generally. These amendments in their most radical form would include a divergence away from Tilly's reliance on the state-citizen relationship.

3.1.4 Choosing a single case study and justification of Afghanistan as the case

The choice of one single theoretical-type case study for this research allows an exploratory approach, facilitating the testing of an idea (Hancké, 2009: 60-68; Gerring, 2004: 341) – the potential measurement of democratisation without central focus on the state-citizen relationship – in one case, before possibly being able to apply it to others within the conflict-affected fragile state category. While the outcome of this kind of analysis has the potential to be overly deterministic, every effort will be made to guard against this in the sense that the specific context of the chosen case will be emphasized and great care taken when making suggestions for the application of any amended model of Tilly's framework to other cases. Advantages of this approach include the way in which it is able to grasp the complexity of factors affecting democratisation in one context. Further, the focus on *process* facilitated by a case study approach works well with the researcher's chosen framework – Tilly's process-oriented conceptualisation of democratisation.

The choice of case study for this research might seem ill-informed on the basis that, at a glance, the odds of democratisation occurring or taking root in Afghanistan seem unlikely. Factors such as increasing insecurity, ethnic and sub-ethnic diversity in the

country, a largely illiterate rural population and general lack of educational resources as a result of many years of conflict, poor infrastructure and weak economy all contribute to the challenges facing would-be democratisers. Indeed, it could be argued that conditions in the context are and have been such that a transition to democracy was pre-determined to be perilous if not impossible within a short-time frame. The aim of this study, however, is not to assess whether or not Afghanistan has become democratic, which would evidently present a foregone conclusion – but to use the case as a basis for the critique of standard conceptions, measures and practice of democratisation that are primarily state-centric in their approach. Afghanistan presents a typical example of the 'fragile state', as defined by different donor governments and aid agencies, in which the authority, willingness and capacity of the state do not comply with a standard Westphalian model. This then implies that current means of measuring democratisation, which rely heavily on this model, are inappropriate, and call for amendment.

Academically, Afghanistan has been the subject of a growing body of scholarly material within the development, statebuilding and anthropological disciplines, as outlined in chapter 2, but has not featured regularly within the field of political science. Afghanistan is not featured as a case for Tilly's model on democratisation, for example (Tilly, 2007); neither has it featured prominently in the democratisation literature more broadly. This is primarily because at present there is a distinct lack of an academic framework through which to analyse fragile states within political science (Krasner, 2009: 21). This provides an opportunity not only to contribute to the literature available on Afghanistan within political science but also to build a multi-disciplinary approach.

Aside from assessing academic concepts of democratisation and frameworks with which to measure it, this thesis also focuses on the practical exercise of democratisation as part of statebuilding in fragile contexts. To this end, Afghanistan provides a good example of an externally-driven effort to promote democracy following an international military intervention, which in itself was to some extent justified by a human rights and democracy discourse. Since the initial invasion in 2001, Afghanistan has been the recipient of one of the longest statebuilding and stabilisation interventions since the end of the Cold War and thus lends itself to analysis for this reason. In November 2011, the

'Bonn 2' international conference took place in Bonn, Germany, mirroring the first Bonn Conference on Afghanistan in 2001 and reflecting a desire among international actors to measure progress following a 10-year intervention. An attempt to assess the means of assessing democratisation in Afghanistan is thus both timely and relevant to current debates in the policy-making arena.

Afghanistan has been the recipient of democracy assistance and the focus of statebuilding initiatives as a sub-narrative to that of stabilization within the fight against a growing insurgency. This lends a further aspect of interest to the country as a case for the study of democratisation: the potential assessment of the contribution of conflict, instability and a war economy to the development toward or away from a democratic politics. The relationship between democratisation and stability is complex and multidirectional, in that while the argument has often been made that democratic institutions contribute toward the development of stability, in that they potentially facilitate the resolution of disputes and competition for resources in a peaceful manner (Dobbins et al., 2007: xxxiv) – their formation and establishment can take many years and can involve an arduous, complex and essentially violent process (Mansfield and Snyder, 1995; 2002; 2005). Recent contestation over election results in Egypt clearly demonstrates the way in which democratic institutions such as elections can be subverted and manipulated to the benefit of the ruling party, creating resistance and civil unrest. While democracies may rarely go to war with one another (Diamond, 1999: 5), there is considerable evidence to suggest that the process of democratisation can contribute to greater, rather than less, instability – particularly if one or more actors or groups consider themselves to be excluded from the process (Stewart and O'Sullivan, 1998: Mansfield and Snyder, 2002; 2005).

Alongside the study of the relationship between democratisation and stability, Afghanistan also provides an interesting case in which to consider democratisation in an Islamic context. In a recent study of Afghan perceptions of democracy, many respondents called for an Islamic democracy as opposed to a western democracy, making a sharp distinction between the two, but basing that distinction in reaction to a concern about the influx of western cultural values rather than on the basis of a strong

conception of what exactly an Islamic democracy might look like in Afghanistan (Larson, 2009b: 11). While this thesis touches on this issue, an area it highlights for further research is the way in which the state-citizen relationship relates to Islamic social and political discourses.

A final reason for selecting Afghanistan as a case study relates to the researcher's familiarity with the context. Having worked in the country over eight years as a researcher in governance and democratisation issues for the Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU) and other organisations, she has developed a basic understanding of the Afghan political context on which to build a more substantive comprehension through further academic research. The researcher's own networks of a broad range of contacts within the Afghan government, civil society and international agencies were useful in establishing access to information and in facilitating fieldwork.

One apparent contradiction of the choice of Afghanistan for this research is that the chosen case study is itself a state, in that it is internationally recognised as such, and yet the centrality of the state is criticised throughout. However, this research does not argue that the concept of the state in itself is redundant or unhelpful in fragile contexts, but rather that the problem lies in the way in which democratisation theorists and practitioners assume a liberal conception of the state-citizen relationship to be central to democratisation. Also problematic is the way in which the state-citizen relationship is currently used as the *only* locus for measurement. It is the intention of this thesis to further problematise current conceptions of the state in fragile contexts, while acknowledging its persistent centrality as a unit for comparative politics.

3.2 Formulation of argument and hypotheses

Based on the literature review and careful consideration of Tilly's framework, the first aspect of the central argument of this thesis concerns the way in which existing academic concepts of democratisation do not facilitate application to fragile states. As explored in chapter 1, a vast body of literature on democratisation exists, in which scholars have defined the terms in different ways and with varying emphases. In spite of the size of this field of scholarship, however, most if not all theoretical conceptions of

democratisation – the move toward a more substantive democratic politics – rest on the assumption of an existing and increasingly interactive relationship between citizens and the state. Generally speaking, the more interaction, the more movement toward democratisation.

This relationship can take different forms – it can be seen to take place between individuals and the state directly (as the proponents of deliberative or direct democracy would advocate); between and within civil society and the state, building on notions of social capital (from a liberal perspective), primarily between elected representatives and the state (representative democracy), through different processes within the realm of public politics (Tilly), principally through the media (as proposed through concepts of 'monitory' democracy, for example, by scholars such as John Keane, 2009), or a combination of one or more of the above. These approaches all suggest that citizens should have a stake in national-level decision making. Some theorists, such as David Held and Danielle Archibugi (1995), look above and beyond the state in their arguments for a more substantive democratic order in the form of cosmopolitan democracy. Whereas this approach questions the authority and autonomy of the state in an ever-globalising context, and calls for a limitation on national sovereignty where new cosmopolitan institutions would override this, it nevertheless considers citizens' relationship with the state or 'democracy inside nations' to be the first of a series of necessary accountability mechanisms available to them (Archibugi, 1998: 209).

For some theorists, such as Gurr (1974), analysis should focus on a 'polity' or 'regime' rather than a state, which helps to overcome at least semantically the assumption of a bounded state entity. For Gurr, the 'polity' is simply a political system – or "the basic political arrangements by which national political communities govern their affairs" (1974: 1483). This is distinct from the (nation-) state in which a given polity is situated. For Gurr, this allows comparisons to be made over time between successive polities in a state, and studies conducted on the subject of polity change. In Polity I, for example, 336 different polities are studied across 91 'nominally different' states across the 19th and 20th centuries (Gurr, 1974: 1483). This potentially has the benefit of removing some of the issues tied to liberal notions of the state, but nevertheless Gurr's analysis places

considerable emphasis on the institutions that connect central governing authorities with individual citizens, and thus is still problematic in application to fragile contexts. As discussed in chapter 1, more recent, substantive or process-oriented theories and measurements of democratisation focus on the nature of the state-citizen relationship within a given polity or regime over time.

The recent prevalence of this centring of democratic theory on the state-citizen relationship implies that the assumption of this relationship is a reasonable basis for a definition of democracy. Few theorists tend to question the necessity of this connection. This is partly as a result of the simultaneous development of the nation-state and democratic government in western Europe (Tilly, 1985; 1992; 2004) and the way in which the state has become the default entity in control of the government of resources in the international system. Connecting citizens with the primary resource-allocating agent[14] in a bounded territorial entity makes sense, as it allows (in theory) the formation of accountability chains that ensure those in office controlling resource distribution are expendable, their positions subject to the will of the people. This functions as a check and balance against the potential for one individual or a group to consolidate control, but carries with it an underlying assumption as to what the state *is* and *does*. Again although diversity exists in abundance in academic writing on this subject, on the one hand approaches in the democratisation literature do not capture the complexities of what a state *is not* and what it *does not* do in conflict-affected fragile contexts. On the other hand, the statebuilding literature does not focus on what fragile states *are* or *do* except in contrast to what established, institutionalized states are and do.

These contexts are notoriously problematic subjects for analysis. First, they are not always territorially bounded, in that disputes over the placement of borders can be longstanding and unresolved at the time of a post-conflict international intervention, for example. Second, the state is not always recognised by citizens as being the only legitimate distributor of resources. This is particularly the case if a new state, government or head of state has been recently installed in the aftermath of conflict.

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[14] According to Hay and Lister, some modern welfare states are the responsible entities for over 50 per cent of GDP and 15 per cent of the workforce (2006:6)

Indeed, in this case, various parties to the conflict may not recognise or trust the new state and its infrastructure at all, fearing retribution for war crimes or systematic discrimination, perhaps. Third, due to poor infrastructure and limited capital, the reach of the state to provide services, should it be willing to do so, is generally poor. Finally, the state itself can be an entity with blurred boundaries – government officials working in the private sector to top up the meagre state salaries they receive, for example – or prominent warlords being elected to office while maintaining militias for the eventuality in which they should need them. It is difficult for citizens to determine whom the state is represented by, let alone what in fact it actually is, or its relevance to the lives of those its services rarely reach.

These and numerous other characteristics render the case of fragile states difficult to fit into the mould of statehood assumed by most theories of democratisation. Indeed, some might classify these polities as 'non-states', 'proto-states' or 'quasi-states', perhaps, going further than the 'fragile state' term by implying incompleteness or under-development – but even if so, there is no question that, once recognised in the international system, they are treated and analysed as states regardless, because one aspect of their sovereignty – their international legal sovereignty (Krasner, 2009: 15) – remains theoretically unquestioned.

They are also perhaps unlikely subjects for the study of democratisation – it would be easy to argue, for example, that these countries are necessarily undemocratic *because* the state has a limited relationship with its citizens, whether due to a lack of capacity or a lack of will (DFID, 2005). In a vicious cycle, they are then also fragile precisely because they are not democratic enough. This thesis will attempt to argue, however, that this cause-and-effect reasoning is too simplistic – that democratic practices, such as participatory decision making – may be found within these states at the local level, for example, or that the relationship between governing authorities at the centre and communities at the local level may change as levels of fragility shift. These nuances in the relationship between ruler and ruled are overlooked by current conceptualisations of democratisation.

The second aspect of the argument in the thesis concerns the measurement of democratisation in fragile states. Partly as a result of the way in which theoretical concepts have not yet been developed to apply to fragile states, as claimed in the first contention of the argument – assessing levels of democratisation in fragile states remains an elusive task, about which little has been systematically written and even less demonstrably concluded. In Afghanistan, this remains the case in spite of considerable international intervention, including statebuilding and democratisation initiatives, since the beginning of the Bonn Process in 2001. There is little evidence to indicate whether this investment has in fact had any bearing on democratisation. This is both a result of a paucity of information specific to democracy promotion in Afghanistan, but also a consequence of the lack of any mechanism to measure democratisation in conflict-affected contexts. This thesis will explore whether or not it is possible to apply a contemporary framework for measuring democratisation to a fragile state.

Political scientists have attempted in numerous ways to quantify or measure democratisation through a variety of different indicators. According to Tilly, approaches can be broadly categorised into constitutional, substantive, procedural and process-oriented types (Tilly, 2007: 7). These vary according to a greater or lesser focus on institutions, opportunities for public engagement in the affairs of state, or on attitudes of leadership, for example, but all hold the state-citizen relationship in some form or another to be a critical indicator of democratisation.

Another factor common to most of these categories of measuring democracy and democratisation is their emphasis on the importance of an elected head of state and, to a lesser degree, an elected legislature – in spite of attempts by substantive and process-oriented approaches to move away from these indicators. Although it is widely recognised that 'electoral democracies' or 'formal democracies' are lacking in substance, they are nevertheless categorised as democracies according to many formal systems of measurement. The weight of emphasis placed on elections is thus a critical shortcoming of these systems – if elections are held in these contexts, they are often highly flawed with results contested, and yet the very occurrence of elections raises the international standards on which these states are subsequently judged. One of the main

reasons for choosing Tilly's framework as model for this study is that he moves away from this focus on elections to measure democratisation in alternative ways.

What also becomes clear through the study of Tilly's approach is the way in which historical and political context are critical to the understanding of democratisation and how it occurs in a given state. While fragile states may be branded 'fragile' in 2013, according to donor assessments, for example – the trajectories that have led to the state becoming weak are rarely included in measures of democratisation. Tilly's model again marks a break from the norm in this regard, and while his emphasis on the state-citizen relationship may not be applicable to fragile contexts as they currently exist, the nature of the relationship between ruler and ruled, and the ways in which national resources have been managed and distributed historically, can provide critical insights into how democratisation and de-democratisation have occurred.

The third component of the argument concerns the nature of democratisation in practice in fragile states, which generally occurs as part of statebuilding initiatives by external actors. These initiatives are intended to strengthen state-citizen relationships, in order that a greater degree of both state control and accountability (for example in terms of service provision) might be developed. In theory, the more visible the services available to citizens, the more they are likely to be satisfied with the activities of their government and generally support government activities. This reasoning has been underlying the way in which, in Afghanistan, as discussed in chapter 2, a great deal of emphasis has been placed by donors on supporting the development of the state at the central level – particularly in terms of support to the executive branch and line ministries. Furthermore, it has been central to the 'winning hearts and minds' strategy of the counterinsurgency (COIN) effort, whereby coalition forces have presented themselves as 'on the government side' and have contributed to development efforts (building schools, dams, hospitals etc) to promote local support for the state. This approach makes the assumption however that citizens are likely to attribute services gained to the activities of a central state, or indeed that their conception of citizenship involves allegiance to that state. Any connection that is made by local people between service provision (by military or other means) and the state also carries with it a

corollary, however: mistakes made by implementing agents can be attributed to state actors also.

Democratisation led by external actors in contexts recently emerging from conflict has also followed a particular model or blueprint usually involving the development of a new constitution, in which the rights of all citizens as individuals are detailed (and are remarkably similar across different country contexts), followed quickly by the holding of elections in order to confirm the legitimacy of a new government (Dobbins et al., 2007). Models followed are also similar to one another, often based on a European or American version of a bi-cameral legislature with certain powers to oversee the activities of the executive. An advisory role for a country-specific body of the United Nations is also often established as a means of providing political and technical support.

These similarities have facilitated a relatively rapid statebuilding response to post-conflict scenarios. (Dobbins et al., 2007). In doing so they have created a 'democratisation industry' and a cadre of development professionals whose role has been to facilitate democratisation through similar programmatic initiatives in different countries, moving from one to the next once donor funding is reduced. What remains unclear, however, is the extent to which this model of democratisation is in fact 'effective': whether it does in fact contribute to the building of a democratic politics or whether in some senses, it may contribute to the opposite occurring as a result of its assigning of responsibility for the promotion of democratic processes to international actors as opposed to the citizenry of a given country. Either way, it is clear that there remains little space within the democratisation blueprint for the idiosyncracies and differential characteristics of different country contexts. This being the case, the third part of the argument questions the assumptions about state-citizen relationships underlying current approaches to post-conflict development and democratisation. The way in which democratisation comprises part and parcel of statebuilding efforts in itself is a case in point.

The researcher also contends that a central reason explaining the lack of a viable mechanism to measure democratisation in these contexts to date is the way in which

existing frameworks for democracy measurement rely on an assumed state-citizen relationship. Choosing one – Charles Tilly's model (2007) – the researcher attempts to make adaptations to explore whether it could be applied more effectively to the Afghan case, and to conflict-affected fragile states more generally. The thesis argues that an effort to find an alternative means of measuring democratisation is as yet unexplored, in theoretical or practical terms, and critical to the greater understanding of political relationships in fragile contexts.

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As developed in the formulation of the three components of the argument above, and based on the detailed study of Tilly's framework and its potential application to the problem of fragile states, the researcher intends to investigate the following central claim:

There are alternative means to conceptualise, measure and practice democratisation without central focus on the state-citizen relationship that could be applied theoretically with greater explanatory power, and in practice with better results for practitioners, than are currently realized in conflict-affected fragile contexts.

This contention can be split into three distinct but related hypotheses:

- The state-citizen relationship is only central to *theoretical concepts* of democratisation to the extent that no alternative currently exists. Democracy theorists commonly assume a strengthening relationship between the state and its individual citizens as a necessary characteristic of movement toward democratisation – but this precludes application to fragile contexts. An alternative means of conceptualizing democratisation is needed, because there may be aspects of democratisation that are taking place in these contexts that remain outside the limitations of the state-citizen relationship.

- It is possible to *measure* levels of democratisation and how they change within fragile contexts. In order to do so, however, an historical and political narrative is imperative to understand the nature of the relationship between rulers and

ruled over time, so as to establish how that relationship has changed, and how resource management has been affected as a result. Analyses based only around narrow interpretations of liberal democracy, such as the holding of elections, party institutionalisation or civil society activism, will mean little in contexts in which these institutions are unfamiliar to much of the population.

- The state-citizen relationship is only central to the *practice* of internationally-promoted democratisation in fragile states to the extent that international actors such as the UN are unable to move away from a one-size-fits all blueprint of democratisation that prioritises the building of state capacity.

3.3 Summary and conclusions

This chapter has outlined and justified the way in which the thesis will be framed theoretically. Explaining how Tilly's framework will be applied to the Afghan case, and providing reasons for the choice of this single case study, the chapter has consolidated the approach that will be taken as the researcher seeks to answer the questions set out at the end of chapter 2. The researcher has argued in this chapter that Tilly's model for measuring democratisation will provide a useful and enlightening test of the validity of the state-citizen relationship in conceptualizing and measuring democratisation in Afghanistan. Further to this, the chapter has formulated an argument based on the chosen theoretical framework that is threefold, corresponding to the themes of theory, measurement and practice of democratisation in fragile states. Finally, three hypotheses have been developed, also relating to the theoretical framework and to these three themes.

CHAPTER 4: FIELD METHODS: DESIGNING RESEARCH IN AFGHANISTAN

4.1 Introduction

Following the justification and outlining of the theoretical methodology in chapter 3 as a means of framing the thesis, this chapter presents the way in which field methods for the research were chosen and undertaken. It begins with a brief discussion on conducting fieldwork in conflict-affected areas, before detailing how the researcher designed the field methodology with the specific context of Afghanistan in mind, and conducted data collection. Justifying choices made at all junctures, including over the kinds of data collection techniques employed, the provinces and districts in which to conduct interviews, and the sampling design used, the chapter provides a detailed account of the field methods employed before considering the limitations of the approach chosen, and reflections on how the researcher might have conducted data collection differently given greater levels of flexibility during the research period.

4.2 Conducting fieldwork in conflict-affected areas

A growing literature exists on the practice of conducting fieldwork in conflict zones, speaking to the numerous methodological and ethical challenges faced by researchers attempting to do so in the specific circumstances that conflict-affected areas present (Lee-Treweek and Linkogle, 2000; Wood, 2006; Hobbs, 2006; Pottier, Hammond and Cramer, 2011). First, obvious difficulties in accessing respondents arise when conducting research in insecure areas, both in terms of physically travelling safely to the chosen research site and maintaining a basic level of security once there (McCosker, Barnard and Gerber, 2001), and in terms of gaining the opportunity to speak with a representative sample of selected community members, for example, access to whom may be controlled by gatekeepers (Kawulich, 2011) with vested interests in (or security-based reasons for) limiting community exposure to outside interference. This can be affected by perceptions of the researcher and what they are seen by the gatekeeper to represent: in some cases, a foreigner can appear less of a threat than can local researchers, due to assumptions of neutrality and naïveté. In other cases, the opposite is

true. Developing and managing relationships of trust can be more challenging in conflict environments when it is logistically more difficult to remain in the field for sustained periods of time.

Perhaps more critical than practical methodological concerns, however, are the ethics of working in conflict environments, where the ethical issues that would be considered in non-violent settings are heightened and exacerbated (Wood, 2006; Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). This applies to the nature of consent and how this is gained, emotional responses to the (often harrowing) information collected and the circumstances in which it is given, the anonymity and security of respondents and research staff, the presence of armed combatants, the nature of neutrality and what it means to be 'neutral' as a researcher, and the related need to 'do no harm'. Indeed, the dilemmas presented by some of these issues have led some scholars to argue that research should not be conducted in certain conflict settings, and that the ability of research procedures to address ethical concerns such as these is highly dependent on the nature of the conflict context in question (Wood, 2006: 374).

The serious concerns arising from this discussion suggest a number of key principles that should ground all research undertaken in conflict zones. First, that before research begins, questions should be asked about the ethical appropriateness of conducting fieldwork in the specific conflict scenario being considered. Second, that if it is deemed appropriate to go ahead, great care should be taken in selecting locations for data collection, to ensure as far as possibly the safety of all involved. Third, that the methodology designed remains flexible and amenable to sudden change should problems arise; and finally, that the 'do no harm' principle is upheld across every aspect of the research – from the preservation of participant anonymity to the consideration of the consequences of remunerating respondents, for example. As the researcher developed the field methodology for this research, these principles were revisited on a regular basis.

4.3 Designing the field methodology

4.3.1 Identifying the primary data needed

In order to ascertain the kinds of primary data needed for this thesis, it is necessary to return briefly to the adapted versions of Tilly's central questions that the researcher will attempt to apply to the Afghan context through the use of his analytical framework:

1. Considering Afghanistan's historical trajectory over the 19th and 20th centuries, in which no centralized state existed before Abdurrahman Khan's brutal attempt to forge tribal and regional warlord allegiance to his rule, even after which center-periphery relations have been strained and consistently re-negotiated – by what path and how did the current highly centralized system come into being and why has it not resulted in higher state capacity?

2. Under what conditions and how could Afghanistan 1) drop further in the low-capacity undemocratic quadrant (of state-capacity versus democracy); 2) move upwards into the high-capacity undemocratic quadrant, following neighbouring countries; or 3) move into the democratic quadrants?

The first question here is the least problematic of the two, in that it requires the development of an in-depth historical narrative that details the nature of the state-citizen relationship in Afghanistan over time. It will track how and why certain developments within this relationship led to others. Although the very existence of a state-citizen relationship in Afghanistan will be called into question, the application of this means of analysis to the Afghan case over time is nevertheless possible and traceable, particularly if alternative terms such as 'ruler and ruled' are used. The data needed to accomplish this will be secondary – comprised of historical accounts and sources such as Mountstuart Elphinstone (1839), Oliver Roy (1994), Martin Ewans (2001), Barnett R. Rubin (2002), Thomas Barfield (2010), and in particular the field reports of American anthropologist Louis Dupree (1959-1980; 1980). The historical narrative will be developed in chapter 5 and will form the basis of analysis in this thesis.

Answering the second question (or set of questions) in relation to Afghanistan and potentially to fragile states more generally will form the remainder of the thesis, and will require a more detailed examination of Tilly's contentions concerning the nature of the relationship between the state and individual citizens, through the analysis of new, primary data. The researcher will need to establish the character and nature of these relationships in Afghanistan. In order to follow Tilly's emphasis on democratisation from 'below' (as opposed to the focus on elite pact-making), the researcher will attempt to do so from a local standpoint, and will thus require the viewpoints and perspectives of Afghans themselves as to their relationship with the state. Tilly does not take this approach in his own methodology, largely relying on his own considerable knowledge of each of the contexts studied in detail, and due to his concern with comparisons over vastly different contexts – but the researcher considers this local dimension to the methodology critical to her own further understanding of democratisation both in Afghanistan and to conflict-affected countries in which similar dynamics between state and citizen might be visible. Further, Tilly's focus on actually-existing indicators – such as numbers of prisoners kept by the state without trial, for example (2007:66) – again render difficult the application of the framework to fragile states because this kind of information is rarely available or reliable. 'Hard data' such as this often remains undocumented or, if collated, unverifiable. For this reason also the researcher has chosen to focus on perspectives, and an interpretivist standpoint, instead of claiming to collate 'facts' that may be questionable. While the indicators used may be different, however, they do not deviate from Tilly's four fundamental variables or his three principles of change.

The researcher thus draws on a comprehensive sample of Afghan viewpoints, which are utilised in conjunction with secondary sources to answer a preliminary question: Is it in fact *possible* to position Afghanistan on the matrix between state capacity and democracy, both currently and in the past? The researcher uses qualitative analysis in examining interview transcripts to assess the meaning assigned to the state-citizenship relationship by respondents, and to compare this with the meaning of this relationship as assumed by Tilly.

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Further to answering this preliminary question, the researcher will explore any problems that arise in the application of Tilly's framework, assessing what might be lacking from this approach when applied to a fragile context. If problems do arise, she will attempt to construct an alternative model for measuring democratisation in this kind of environment that might be more appropriately and practically applied.

The researcher will then proceed to answer the second set of questions outlined above: essentially, under what circumstances and how could changes in democratisation be measured in Afghanistan? In order to answer this, she will consider Tilly's four processes of breadth, equality, protection and mutually binding consultation, alongside his three 'clusters of change' (in trust networks, categorical inequalities and autonomous power centres) and suggest alternative indicators that better match the context in question.

4.3.2 Data collection methods

After considering a variety of qualitative data collection methods, the researcher selected semi-structured individual interviews as the best means of gathering narrative-style responses from interviewees. These allow the respondent to determine their own priorities when answering broad, open-ended questions, and to talk at length if desired on subjects they deem important (Robson, 2002: 278). Guided only by a simple, flexible framework of questions, the respondent is generally free to express their own concerns and is not limited by a rigid interview questionnaire as would be the case with structured interviews, for example. The in-depth conversations that result facilitate the provision of contextual detail and the ability to situate the conversation within a specific political and locational environment. This being the case, the researcher developed an interview guide that only outlined broad categories (which were: Introductions and local context; Authority and decision making; Quality of life; Government representatives and elections; and international actors) to guide the interviewer, with some sample questions given under each heading.[15]

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[15] See Appendix 2 for the interview guide developed for data collection.

As Clough and Nutbrown contend, the value of this kind of interview depends heavily on the skills of the interviewer in being able to facilitate in-depth conversations in a personable manner to the extent that the respondent feels comfortable sharing information, and in being able to guide conversation around certain general themes, probing where appropriate, and without asking leading or closed questions (Clough and Nutbrown, 2007: 134; Richie and Lewis, 2003: 141). When designing this research methodology, the researcher knew that the team of Afghan researchers who would be conducting interviews (or taking notes while she facilitated them), based at AREU and at one of its partner agencies, the Organisation for Social Research and Development (OSDR), had a strong background in qualitative interviewing, having worked with them for over three years on other research projects for the AREU. Training specific to this research was however also given over a period of one week before data collection began, and feedback on transcripts provided throughout the data collection process.

The questions asked in the guide were intended to be broad and open-ended, in order that respondents might determine the content of their answers themselves, to a greater or lesser degree (Robson, 2002: 278). This then allowed the researcher to develop analytical indicators from the responses, rather than formulate indicators before data collection began in a prescriptive manner that might reflect more of the researcher's own assumptions about the state-citizen relationship than the perspectives of Afghans interviewed. Interviews were ideally designed to last at least an hour and a half, or as long as possible, to maximize the amount of data collected.

The researcher considered at length whether to conduct interviews only with individuals, or with a mixture of individuals and groups. As Gaskell notes, in the literature, there appears to be no consensus as to which is necessarily the most appropriate form of interviewing in a given context (Gaskell, 2000: 47). On the one hand, speaking with individuals rather than groups allows for respondents to feel more at liberty to discuss what might otherwise be sensitive issues, but does not dislocate an individual respondent from the community of which they are a part. On the other hand, speaking with groups of people seems to reflect a tendency within Afghan society to discuss issues at length with other community members, and the researcher team found

that oftentimes an individual interview would become a group interview simply by default; other interested parties would join and contribute. The researcher considers the combination of both individual and group interviews an asset to the quality of data rather than a hindrance, especially given that the topics being discussed in interviews were not generally of a sensitive nature (for which individual conversations would probably have been more appropriate).

Detailed field notes were taken and attached to each interview transcript to ensure that a clear picture of the respondent's position within a community was developed (see notes in italic script at the beginning of sample interviews in Appendix 3). Afghan researchers were also asked to provide notes throughout the interview transcript in italic script where they wanted to explain something happening during the conversation (for example a neighbour joining in the interview, or the respondent becoming more guarded after a particular question was asked). This allowed the author to get a clear sense of any interview in which she was not able to be present herself (usually due to security risks to the Afghan team).

These qualitative methodological considerations facilitated to a greater extent the ability of the research to see the state-citizen relationship as it is perceived by Afghans – a key aspect of this study and a critical component of a qualitative approach (Bryman, 2008: 385). As Gaskell writes,

> [u]sing qualitative interviewing to map and understand the respondents' life world is the entry point for the social scientist, who then introduces interpretive frameworks to understand the actors' accounts in more conceptual or abstract terms… The objective is a fine-textured understanding of beliefs, attitudes, values and motivations in relation to the behaviours of people in particular social contexts (Gaskell, 2000: 39).

This also added an ethnographic element to the research, given that emphasis was placed particularly on the Afghan context and on meaning ascribed to events and structures in that context by Afghans themselves. This in turn will also make generalizations to other fragile states more difficult, but it may still be possible to separate concerns that affect the Afghan context only – for example, specific references to multiple delays in the electoral process – from those which may be applicable to

conflict-affected fragile states more generally, such as the relationship between state-citizen interactions and security.

Primary data were collected in 2010 through 154 semi-structured interviews with respondents in Nangarhar, Ghazni, Balkh and Kabul provinces. Nangarhar, Ghazni and Balkh were selected as provinces for detailed study, with interviews in Kabul city conducted primarily as a means to compare provincial data with perspectives in Kabul (see section 4.5 below for further discussion and justification of this). These provinces reflected a mix of ethnic compositions and were selected partly for this reason. In Nangarhar and Ghazni, Pashtun respondents were largely prioritized due to their being the majority ethnic group in these provinces.[16] In Balkh and Kabul respondents were from mixed ethnic backgrounds but primarily non-Pashtun. Respondents were selected according to a sampling design (Table 4) that included local decision-makers, community members, Provincial Council members, taxi drivers and labourers (see Table 4 for a full list) in all three provinces. The sample included a broad range of different age-group representatives, and both men and women. Such a broad sample was important in order to gather a range of perspectives: while this research cannot be representative of the views of an entire community, it nevertheless allows insight into the opinions of a diverse cross-section of each community visited to allow for variation in perspective.

Individuals fitting the descriptions above were identified by the research team in each of the communities studied, and asked whether they would be willing to participate. The researcher conducted a number of interviews (particularly in urban areas) herself, speaking Dari in some cases and English in others depending on the preference of the respondent, with the assistance of a team of qualified Afghan researchers as referred to above who were able to help with analysis and translation. In some (particularly more rural areas, and in Ghazni province) a foreign woman travelling with the team would have put other members at risk. In these cases, the team of trained Afghan researchers

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[16] Ghazni province is roughly split between Pashtun and Hazara residents, but it was felt that the focus in this province should be on Pashtun respondents given the way in which they were the residents of rural and insecure areas (as compared to the numerous Hazara communities more secure areas includingthe district centre), which were under-represented in the other provinces.

conducted interviews themselves, providing the researcher with written transcripts. She was able to give feedback on all interviews conducted and suggest areas for clarification or improvement in interviewing techniques.

Table 4: Sampling design per province

S.No	Respondents	Number of Interviews Urban centre	Number of interviews Suburbs/Rural
1	Teachers	2	2
2	Students (high school and university)	3	3
3	Shura members	3	3
4	Shopkeepers/traders	3	2
5	(other) Illiterate people eg labourers, housewives	4	5
6	Taxi drivers	2	0
7	NSP Community Development Council (CDC) members	0	2
7	Candidates for the parliamentary election	1	2
8	Provincial Council members/District governors	2	1 (if any)
	(approximate) total:	20	20
	Of which women:	10	No less than 5

This sampling design was developed as a guide and was relatively flexible, given, for example, the difficulty in finding Provincial Council members in some rural areas. Nevertheless, it provided an ideal to word towards that allowed for a cross-section of social perspectives to be gained through the data collection. Each occupational description was selected for a reason. Teachers were a useful source of local information, and, not gender-specific. Indeed, particularly as women teachers were public figures with community roles, they were often willing, and able, in the relatively 'neutral' environment of an empty school classroom, to speak at length in interviews, as compared to women in the home who were less so. Students provided a youth perspective, and Shura members were able to comment at length on community decision-making processes. Shopkeepers and traders had an insight into the local economy – and more of these perspectives were sought in urban areas as they were

more representative of the occupations of the general public, many of whom had their own small businesses. Likewise, in rural areas, a slightly greater number of illiterate perspectives were sought, again to better represent rural literacy levels. Literacy was an important factor in the study as one assumption of the researcher at the beginning was that increased levels of literacy would increase levels of connectedness (or desired connectedness) to state structures. Taxi drivers are known in Afghanistan (as elsewhere) for their propensity to talk openly and their extensive local knowledge, although few worked in rural areas, hence the difference between 'urban centre' and 'suburb/rural' columns above. NSP CDC shura members were included in rural areas (where they primarily exist) as a means to compare perspectives with those of members of non-elected shuras pre-dating the World Bank's NSP programme. It was felt that candidates for the parliamentary election (due to be held approximately 4-6 months after data collection) would provide an interesting insight into perceptions of elections and their significance in different areas, and that Provincial Council members and/or district governors could provide a view from the perspective of elected or appointed authority respectively. Finally, as indicated at the bottom of the table, efforts were taken to ensure that numbers of women respondents equaled men in urban areas, and, in the more challenging rural settings, comprised at least a quarter of interviews conducted.

During the data collection period, the researcher and the team of Afghan analysts and researchers were working for the Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU). Together, they were conducting a study for AREU on Afghan perceptions of democracy (see Larson 2009b and 2011b for final reports from this work), at the same time as collecting data for this thesis. However, the researcher and team were careful to ensure that data for the AREU study and the PhD thesis conformed to the same high academic standards, and remained separate, with themes (and corresponding interview questions) divided between the two projects. The researcher had written permission from both AREU and the University of York to conduct data collection in this way. While the two subjects of study were related, the AREU paper focused only on what Afghans currently perceive democracy and democratisation to mean, whereas this thesis looks in much more depth at relationships between citizen and state in the country.

Taking on board the concerns regarding conducting research in conflict-affected areas as discussed in section 4.2 above, ethical practices were adopted at all times, especially to ensure the safety and anonymity of respondents. All interviews began with an explanation of how the data would be used, with the respondent always given the option to withhold their name if preferred (see Appendix 3 for an example interview guide including this explanation). No real names are used throughout the research and all names that were collected were carefully removed from transcripts. Every effort was made to make sure that respondents were not put into any danger in participating in interviews – in practice this meant that as a British woman, the researcher did not always attend interviews in more insecure areas (in case respondents might feel endangered by the presence of a foreigner) but instead remained at a central location and provided feedback on the Afghan team's interviews. Interviews were transcribed and not taped, in order to ensure to as great an extent possible that the respondent felt comfortable talking in interviews. While this meant that detailed notes were being taken during interviews, these were generally considered by respondents as a reasonable practice of recording what was said (providing adequate explanation had been given at the start as to how the data would be used) as opposed to tape recorders, which tended to be regarded with suspicion (as found by the researcher during previous research conducted in Afghanistan).

When analysing the data, acknowledgment of the researcher's own subjectivity in interpreting interview transcripts was made throughout. Evidently, it was not possible to escape the western mindset with which she approached the data, and thus while the research was ethnographic, it was nevertheless conceptualised through a western European lens. Certain measures have been taken to mitigate this, however – including the way in which codes and indicators for analysis were derived from the data itself, rather than predetermined. Furthermore, the researcher is familiar with the Afghan context and with one of the country's official languages, Dari – and during data collection emphasis was placed on using Dari words where these surpassed their English translation. In many cases, Dari terms (such as *qawm* or *shura*) or their literal translations were preferred over and above their English meanings.

4.3.3 Provincial descriptions

In choosing provinces for data collection, it was important to take on board a number of criteria that would allow for diversity across the sample of interviews. Ethnic diversity was particularly critical, given the number of ethnic groups represented in Afghanistan and their varying relationships to the central government. The provinces selected are home to different ethnic groups, but also to different kinds of ethnic composition also. Nangarhar is predominantly Pashtun, Ghazni is roughly divided between Pashtun and Hazara inhabitants, and Balkh has a majority of Tajik inhabitants but also is home to various other ethnic groups that tend to settle in broadly homogeneous areas. Perhaps more fundamental, however, was the need to ensure that urban and rural perspectives were adequately represented. To this end, the researcher chose provinces that included those both close to and further away from the centre, Kabul – and also those that had large urban centres of their own (Nangarhar and Balkh) as compared to those that did not (Ghazni).

Figure 5: Provinces chosen for data collection
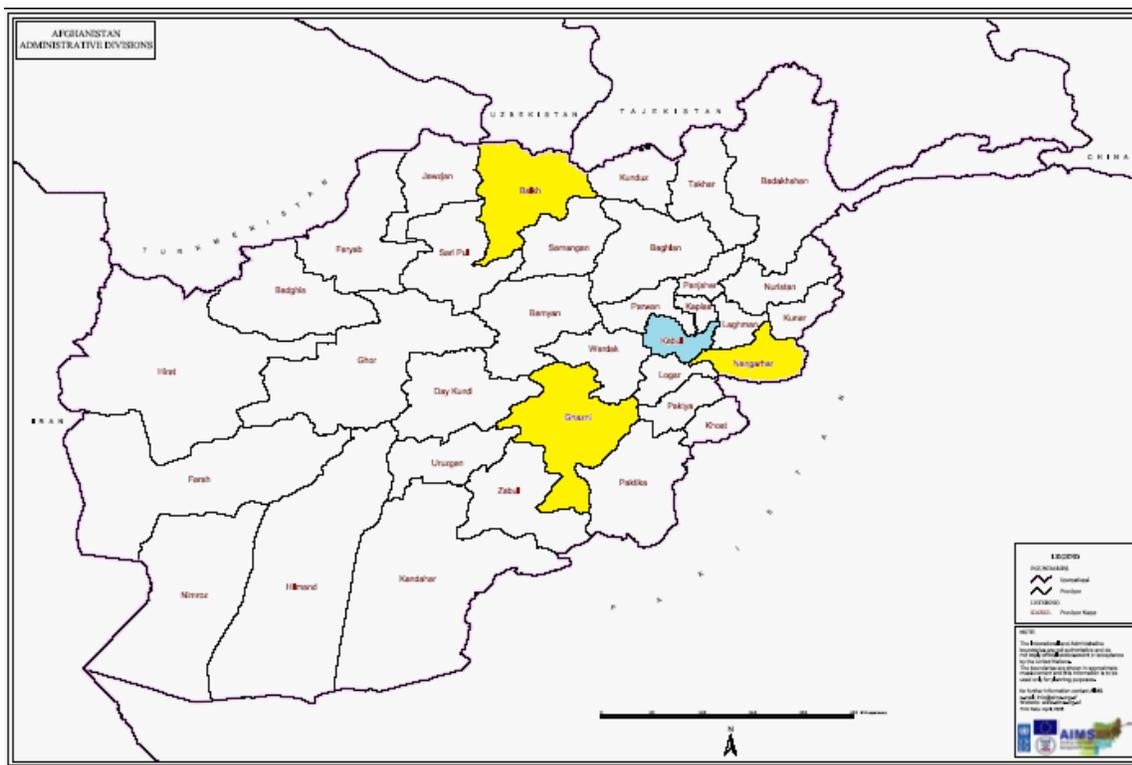
Nangarhar[17]

Nangarhar province is located in the far east of Afghanistan, bordering Pakistan on its eastern and southern edges, and sharing a provincial border with Kabul to the west, at Surobi. The province is known primarily for its favourable, warm climate and related agricultural productivity (Barfield, 2010: 52), with crops as diverse as maize, cotton, olives and mangos grown on a large scale. Jalalabad city is the provincial centre, home to approximately 205,000 people of an estimated provincial total of around 1.3 million inhabitants (Ministry for Rural Rehabilitation and Development, (MRRD), cited in World Food Programme (WFP), 2013a). Services available in the province are better than most other provinces, with nine hospitals, two universities and a number of key transport links connecting Jalabad to Kabul and to the Torkham border with Pakistan (Program for Culture and Conflict Studies, 2011: 1). Irrigation systems are generally well-maintained, allowing subsistence as well as commercial agriculture, although land is scarce in relation to the size of the population and land disputes are increasingly common.[18] The majority of the population are Pashtun, with Shinwar, Momand, Khogiani and Ghilzai forming the main tribal groups. Other ethnicities represented include Tajik, Pashai and Arab (Program for Culture and Conflict Studies, 2011: 1).

Historically, Nangarhar and other neighbouring eastern provinces have been the home of tribes close to the central administration – looking forward to the narrative in chapter 5, it was these groups, such as the Ghilzais, who enjoyed limited taxation under Ahmad Shah Durrani's rule, in return for compliance, and indeed for many generations to follow provided that the king could source revenue elsewhere (Barfield, 2010: 113). Indeed, even when these tribes did form rebellions against the monarchs in Kabul, once hostilities had ceased, relations between the Ghilzais and central rule returned to the negotiated compromise of before the uprisings – as Elphinstone remarks, following a rebellion in 1802, "[t]he severities of the government ceased with the campaign; and after tranquility was restored, the Ghiljies experienced exactly the same treatment as

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[17] See Appendix 5 for provincial and district maps.
[18] This was noted by members of the research team in a debrief session at the end of data collection, based on what they had heard from respondents.

before their rebellion" (Elphinstone, 1839: 331). Fifty years later, when Dost Mohammed attempted to enforce taxation and conscription in these areas, however, he was faced with sustained revolt – as were other rulers who tried to do the same (Barfield, 2010:113-114), until Abdur Rahman Khan subdued the Ghilzai resistance in 1885. Thus, the 'state-citizen' relationship in the Nangarhar area has a colourful history, and one which is important to the way in which contemporary Nangarharis interact with the central government today.

Nangarhar province has been governed by Gul Agha Sherzai since 2004, a leader who has generally been close to the President[19] and who is perceived to have reaped a number of rewards for his support to the premier, perhaps including his control of the customs revenue at the Torkham border which is not regulated by the state (field notes from interviews, Nangarhar). Sherzai is also married to a close female relative of the President, a strategic alliance which emphasises his connections to the centre (Program for Culture and Conflict Studies, 2011: 2).

Originally from Kandahar, however, and widely perceived to be corrupt with a monopoly on customs, land, construction and trade, Sherzai is not popular with many Nangahari residents (field notes from interviews, Nangarhar; Program for Culture and Conflict Studies, 2011: 2; Foschini, 2013). He maintains a cadre of elite businessmen close to him, through which many of his own business deals are conducted, and a number of key ex-military commanders as allies – strategically linking their own prospects for enrichment with the longevity of his rule (Foschini, 2011). Within the provincial council of Nangarhar province, in which there are 19 members in total, there are two groups – one supporting and supported by Sherzai, and one opposing him (field notes from interviews, Nangarhar). Nangarhar also has 14 elected representatives to the Wolesi Jirga. The province is split administratively into 22 districts.

Ghazni[20]

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[19] Perhaps with the exception of an initial candidacy for the presidential elections in 2009, challenging Karzai's re-election – until he was persuaded to step down by Karzai after a personal visit.
[20] See Appendix 5 for provincial and district maps.

Ghazni province is located in southern Afghanistan, and in spite of being over three times the size of Nangarhar province in terms of geographical area, its population is estimated to be quite similar, at 1 million inhabitants (MRRD, cited in WFP, 2013b). Ghazni is much more rural in terms of its population distribution, also, with 89 per cent of the population living in rural areas, and the provincial centre Ghazni city being home to only 150,000 people (MRRD, cited in WFP, 2013b). Agriculture is the principal source of income across the province but recent droughts have affected this severely, causing many residents to seek work in neighbouring countries and even as far away as the United Arab Emirates (field notes from interviews, Ghazni). Services are much more limited than in Nangarhar, with only five hospitals, no institutions of higher education and one major road (the Kabul to Kandahar highway) (Program for Culture and Conflict Studies, 2010a: 1). Electricity is scarce, and generally only available in the city. Ethnically, the province is divided almost equally between Pashtun and Hazara residents, with the Pashtuns divided into Ghilzai[21] and Kuchi tribes (MRRD, cited in WFP, 2013b). The province has a history of conflict between these groups – particularly over land, between the nomdic Kuchis and resident Hazara communities. In recent years, the province has grown increasingly insecure with considerable insurgent activity taking place.

As in Nangarhar, the Ghilzai tribe in particular in Ghazni has a history of revolt against the central government if and when its autonomy has come into question through state or foreign intervention. It was the Ghilzais who mounted opposition to the British in the first and second Anglo-Afghan wars (Barfield, 2010: 121-122), and this group has maintained a unique, almost aloof status in terms of its relationship to other Pashtun tribes (being the largest group among them) and to the state. Ghilzai Hotaki clan members also formed the core of the Taliban movement in its early incarnation (Program for Culture and Conflict Studies, 2010a: 6). Again, this is one of the reasons for selecting Ghazni as a province for data collection, as the history of its inhabitants' relationship to the centre is directly relevant to the nature of that relationship in the twenty-first century.

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[21] Of which sub divisions include Andar, Suleman Khail, Taraki, Kharoti, Niazi, Sulemanzi, Alikhail, Daptani, Durani, Miya Khail, Jalalzai, Khogiani, Musa Khail, Hotak and Wardak.

A number of key powerholders have particular influence over the political economy of the province. These include commanders Ismail[22] and Malang, neither of whom have any formal role in government but who are considered highly influential in terms of their ability to determine levels of security in the province (field notes from interviews, Ghazni). Both are considered by local people to have allegiances to both Taliban and government forces, generating their influence from this double alliance and directly contributing to security/insecurity as a result. One former governor of the province, Assadullah Khalid (2001-2005) – now head of the National Directorate of Security, but recently injured in a bomb blast at his home in Kabul (BBC, 2012) - has also been considered by local residents to wield significant influence in recent years. Currently the provincial governor is General Mohammed Musa Khan Ahamdzai, who was appointed in 2010 following the departure of his predecessor Osman Osmani on accounts of corrupt activity (Program for Culture and Conflict Studies, 2010a: 2).

In general, elected provincial councillors (19) and Wolesi Jirga members (11) have comparatively little influence over political and security issues in the province. In the 2010 Wolesi Jirga elections, some controversy occurred over the Ghazni results, in which all 11 seats were won by Hazara candidates. This is likely due to the way in which most Hazara communities live in the centre of the province and other areas where security is generally better and thus had more secure access to polling stations. However, in general power distribution in the province is highly localised and related to shuras at the local and district level, rather than at the centre.

Balkh[23]

Balkh province is one of Afghanistan's northernmost provinces, bordering Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. In a sense more like Nangarhar than Ghazni, Balkh has a provincial centre that is an established urban city – Mazar-i Sharif, whose population of 375,000 makes up over one third of the total provincial inhabitants (approximately 1.1 million) (MRRD, cited in WFP, 2013c) and plays a key role as a dominant city in the north (Barfield, 2010: 51). The provincial economy is largely reliant on trade, construction

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[22] Commander Ismail was reported to have been killed in Pakistan in 2012 (Shinwari, 2012),
[23] See Appendix 5 for provincial and district maps.

and agriculture, although with an extremely warm climate in summer crop production is heavily reliant on irrigation systems stemming from the Amu Darya. Services are mostly concentrated in Mazar city, which hosts one university and eight hospitals (Program for Culture and Conflict Studies, 2010b: 2). A good road network links the city to the southern provinces via the Salang Pass over the Hindu Kush mountains, and also to the northern border with Uzbekistan at Turmez. Electricity is readily available in the city but more scarce elsewhere in the province. Security is generally considered to be good in this area, although recently the number of insurgent-related incidents has risen in the north-east of the province in particular. Local feuds over irrigation are also common. Ethnically, the province is mixed, although with the exception of the city, most districts are defined roughly by a single ethnic population and remain for the most part segregated. Still, the provincial population includes ethnic Tajiks (in the majority), Uzbeks, Pashtuns, Hazaras, Turkmen and Arabs (MRRD, cited in WFP, 2013c).

Lying to the south of the Amu Darya, the area has been formally and consistently considered part of Afghanistan since Amir Dost Mohammed's reign, partly as a result of the natural border provided by the great river. Nevertheless, its relationship with the centre has been tenuous over the years, not least under Dost Mohammed, with local strongmen and/or relations of the king holding quasi-autonomous reigns in which tax revenues were rarely contributed to the state coffers (Barfield, 2010: 135). In recent history, the area has been dominated by rivalry between two key commanders – Ustad Atta Mohammed Noor, and Abdul Rashid Dostum – both of whom have laid claim to the city of Mazar-i Sharif at different points since the early 1990s. In 2003, however, Atta Mohammed was labeled the officially appointed governor of the province, and has held the position since – dominating the local economy in much the same way as Gul Agha Sherzai in Nangarhar.

This monopoly of force and influence has led to the fast economic and physical development of Mazar city, with its paved roads and high rise buildings rivaling those of Kabul (see Figures 6 and 7). This has resulted in a trade-off with political freedom, however, with Atta Mohammed's supporters (one branch of the Jamiyat-i Islami party) enjoying a great deal more access to construction deals, good jobs, places in reputable

schools and other favours (field notes from interviews, Balkh province). Balkh has a total of 19 provincial council seats and 11 Wolesi Jirga seats, representatives of which are largely considered to be under the influence of the governor, or of one the key Shia political parties in the area, Hezb-e Wahdat Islami-e Mardom (led by former commander in Mazar, Mohaqqeq). While these seats are held by a number of different ethnic group representatives, most have good relationships with the governor and secure patronage and security for their own areas in this manner.

Figure 6: Street in Mazar city, 2004 (photo credit: Anna Larson)
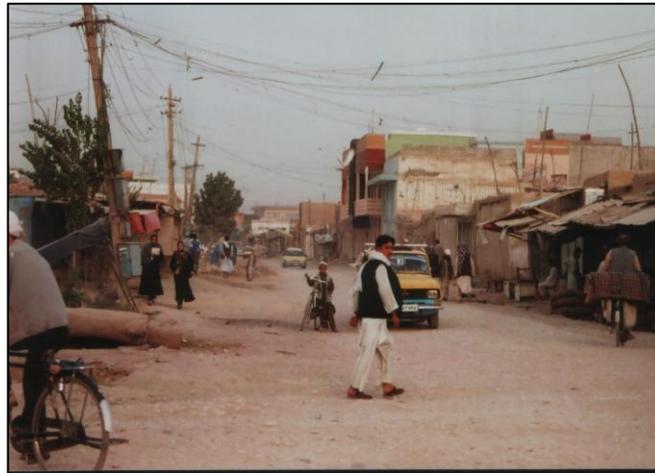
Figure 7: Street in Mazar city (in the same neighbourhood), 2012 (photo credit: Radio Azadi)

Kabul

Kabul is the most populous of all Afghanistan's 34 provinces, due to the location of the country's capital city at its centre. Most recent population estimates for the Kabul city and its suburbs stand at around 3.2 million, with the province as a whole totaling around 4 million (Central Statistics Organisation, 2012a; 2012b). The provincial economy is weighted heavily toward the capital, in which the majority of the province's inhabitants work either in government/civil service jobs, the NGO sector, business or trade.

Agriculture then comprises the main source of income in the rural districts surrounding the city (MRRD, cited in WFP, 2013d). Education, healthcare and other services are most highly concentrated in the capital, although 24-hour electricity and sanitation are not equally distributed across the city and some areas do not have these provisions available (field notes from interviews, Kabul).

Administratively, Kabul province is divided into districts, as are other provinces, with the Provincial Governor (currently Ahamdullah Alizai) as the highest governmental authority for the province. District governors are appointed as the administrative heads of each district within the province. The city is sub-divided into numbered urban districts or *nahiya* (CSO, 2012a)*,* each also with an appointed leader, and a mayor oversees the general administration of the city. In terms of elected bodies, Kabul province has a provincial council of 29 members, who serve a four-year term, and 33 elected representatives to the Lower House of parliament, the *Wolesi Jirga*. The number of representatives for both of these bodies is proportional to rough population figures, as elsewhere in the country.

Historically, since the time of Ahmad Shah Durrani Kabul has been the seat of central control - whether as the epicentre of a monarchy, republic, civil war or fledgling democracy. Its strategic position within the drainage basin of the Kabul river and as a city linking critical trade routes over the Hindu Kush and through the Khyber Pass have contributed to the value of its location over many centuries (Barfield, 2010: 52). Also, since the educational and social reforms of the kings in the early 20th century, has received significantly more in terms of central investment than other parts of the country (Rubin, 2002: 59). This has led commentators to remark on the vast differences that developed during the 20th century between the ruling urban elite of the capital, home to the country's highly centralized administration, and rural communities elsewhere (Barfield, 2010: 224). To some extent, this is changing with rapid urbanization and migration to Kabul in recent years leading to a rise in urban poverty, and also with the increase in wealth and status of some regional governors leading to investments in infrastructure in other regional centres (Mazar-i Sharif, in the north, Herat in the west and Jalalabad in the east). However, there is still a marked divide

between the services available, the mixture of people groups and the wide spectrum of political, social and religious viewpoints held by inhabitants of Kabul city compared with those in other parts of the country. This is reinforced by the perceptions of non-Kabul residents of Kabul life – considered by many to be one of westernized cultural norms and in some cases, immorality.

In general, Kabul residents have greater access to central government resources due to the increased likelihood of their knowing well or being related to a government employee, and thus being connected (in however marginal a fashion) to networks of patronage. Proximity to the institutions of state administration and generally higher levels of education also allow, to some extent, greater access of residents to government officials. For these reasons, Kabul is something of an anomaly. As the focus of this research is the nature of the state-citizen relationship in Afghanistan more broadly, Kabul is not considered one of the three provinces for data collection for this study because it is arguable that this relationship is notably different than in other parts of the country. 22 interviews were conducted here, however, as a means of comparison with data from other provinces, to see whether a marked difference could be noted between the responses of Kabul city and other provincial respondents.

4.3.4 Choosing districts within provinces

When deciding where to conduct interviews within the three key provinces, it was necessary to begin with a number of central criteria. Already, the provinces selected in themselves represented a diverse spread of ethnic group populations, a mixture of urban centres and rural areas, different geographical distances from Kabul city and different kinds of relationships with the central government. It was also necessary to ensure however that interviews within the provinces were conducted in a range of locations, in order that the data were not skewed toward reflecting opinions about central government, for example, in provincial centres where the connection between citizen and state was likely to be strongest.

This being the case, the most important consideration for the selection of locations for data collection was the need to gain both urban and rural perspectives. In each province,

ideally, approximately half of the interviews would be conducted in the provincial centre and half in rural areas (see Table 4). Two to three districts were selected in each province for rural data collection, based the following criteria: relative security and ease of access; distance from the provincial centre (ideally the further away, the better); likely to be home to a mixture of literate and illiterate people; likely to be home to people of different relative income levels; and not the home districts of the research team members. Of these criteria, however, security and ease of access became the principal concern due to the need to consider the safety of researchers (and their respondents) above all other factors.

In Nangarhar, for example, districts initially selected were Dara-e Noor and Khogiani, but security concerns were such that it was more feasible to conduct research in districts closer to the provincial centre. As such, Surkh Rod and Behsud districts were chosen instead, with the understanding that interviews would be conducted in villages that were as far away from the provincial centre as possible. Two villages were selected – one in each district. In Ghazni, similar problems with security were encountered, to an even greater extent, with security concerns escalating as the research progressed. This meant that for the more rural interviews, conducted only by the male team, notebooks and pens could not be taken to interviews for fear of arousing insurgent suspicion. Notes were written up and transcribed in the evenings following interviews. Only one district was selected – Qarabagh – as a second planned district, Nawur, was considered by the team (and NGO security advisors) to be too dangerous for research. Within Qarabagh district, however three villages were chosen in which to conduct interviews, one that was close to the main road to Kandahar, and two that were further away from the road. Proximity to the road made a significant difference to the kinds of data collected in terms of attitudes towards insurgents, NATO forces and trade opportunities. In Balkh, security was not as much of a problem as in Ghazni or rural Nangarhar, and thus all three districts selected were accessible for data collection. These were Balkh, Dehdadi and Kaldar, selected for their diverse majority ethnic group inhabitants (Pashtun, Tajik, and Turkmen respectively), and, in the case of the former and the latter, their distance from the provincial centre. In these districts, however, the district centres were all established market-villages or trade centres, which meant that they could not easily be

categorised as rural. Rural interviews were conducted in villages outside these centres, but interviews in the district centres were categorised as 'suburb/provincial town'.

4.3.5 Reflections and limitations

Reflecting on the data collection process, it is possible to identify a number of things that could have been done differently, given more time, resources, and most importantly, greater levels of security. First, the three provinces selected for data collection in this study are diverse in terms of ethnicity, urban/rural composition and proximity to the capital, but they evidently do not represent 'Afghanistan' as a whole. Decreasing security levels across the country and the culture of 'research fatigue' in more secure areas, where growing numbers of studies are conducted to the increasing chagrin of their respondents, are thus a limitation of the field methods selected. Deteriorating security in Ghazni province made it difficult for the women researchers in particular to travel to rural areas to interview women. It would have been excellent to have had the opportunity to interview more women in these areas, especially given the fascinating stories collected in the transcripts from the interviews that the team were able to conduct with urban women in Ghazni and rural women in the other two provinces. Nevertheless, every effort was taken to ensure that, within the selected provinces, a variety of viewpoints were collected.

Second, as a result of security concerns for the Afghan research team, it was not possible for the researcher to accompany the team to two of the chosen provinces for data collection (Nangarhar and Ghazni). She was able to compensate for this, however, by providing feedback on each of the interview transcripts by email, suggesting second interviews where necessary, and through close telephone correspondence with the team on a daily basis.

Finally, the political environment in Afghanistan is changing continually, partly as a result of internal instability and unrest but also in response to international uncertainty as to the length of military and civilian engagement, and global events more broadly (such as the 'Arab Spring', for example, and the death of Osama bin Laden). As such,

data collected is limited in the extent to which it captures only a small glimpse of Afghan perspectives in a very specific timeframe (end- 2009 – summer 2010).

4.4 Summary and conclusions

This chapter began by highlighting some of the key challenges and dilemmas that arise when conducting research in conflict-affected areas, as discussed in recent literature on qualitative research methods. Further to this, it outlined the chosen field methods for the study, detailing the data needed to answer Tilly's central questions, and the researcher's corresponding research design. This included a justification of the choice of semi-structured individual interviews as data to be collected, an explanation of the sampling design developed a description and justification of the provinces chosen for data collection, and reflections on the limitations of the methods selected. While there were indeed ways in which the research could have been conducted differently, given more favourable circumstances, when accounting for the deteriorating security situation the researcher is satisfied that data were gathered in an optimal manner.

CHAPTER 5: POLITICAL CHANGE IN AFGHANISTAN: AN HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

5.1 Introduction

As outlined in chapter 3, Tilly's approach to the overall assessment of democratisation in a given state comprises two core components. First, the development of an historical narrative of the state in question; and second, the identification of potential causes of change toward or away from democratisation according to four key processes (breadth, equality, protection against arbitrary state action and mutually-binding consultation), that in turn align with the three overarching 'clusters of change' of trust and distrust, equality and inequality and the existence of autonomous power centres.

This chapter addresses the first of these tasks in compiling an historical narrative for Afghanistan's political context, focusing in particular on the period from 1839 to the present with the primary and secondary data available. Following Tilly's approach to the analysis of democratisation and de-democratisation in Switzerland, the researcher finds that a qualitative narrative assessment is well-suited to the Afghan case, and to an analysis of fragile states in general. As Tilly states, this is due to the way in which "detailed analytical narratives...promise more [than quantitative measures] for general explanations of democratisation and de-democratisation...because they allow us to match detailed changes in relations among political actors to alterations in their presumed causes" (2007: 72).

Starting from this point, then, this chapter will use Tilly's approach as a guide, focusing for the time being primarily on ruler-ruled relationships, internal political dynamics, and in considering a theme critically missing from Tilly's analysis, regional/international relationships and interactions affecting Afghanistan's political trajectory.

5.2 Afghanistan: an historical narrative

5.2.1 Introduction and justification of 1839 as a critical juncture

Existing detailed historical accounts of political and social change in Afghanistan from 1747 to the present are numerous and provide a rich background of secondary material from which to base a narrative (including Barfield, 2010; Rubin, 2002; Ewans, 1999; Noelle, 1997; Dupree, 1959-1980 and 1980; Munshi, 1900; Lal, 1846; Elphinstone, 1815). The narrative that the researcher compiles in this chapter presents as broad an account as possible, drawing from these various sources – but is also guided by criteria that focus on the relationship between ruler and ruled, and Tilly's organising principles, described as follows:

> Start with state-citizen interactions [1]; concentrate on dynamics rather than static comparisons [2]; average the changes in breadth, equality, protection, and mutually binding consultation [3]; specify the range of cases within which you are working [4]; standardize the changes on that range [5]; and let deviations from close correlation among changes signal important explanatory problems [6].[24] (2007: 59)

Tilly presents these principles as ideals to which an analytical narrative following his model should attempt to conform, but is quick to admit that his own narratives do not reach these levels of measurement (2007: 59). Instead, he opts for an "informed narrative...keeping the [above] principles in mind but without setting out numbers or even precise comparisons with other regimes" (2007:61). To this end, he draws on Freedom House (FH) measures of political rights as a rough proxy for breadth, equality and mutually binding consultation, and FH measures of civil liberties to indicate protection. As Tilly himself concedes, "[t]hese measures fall far short of the precision it would take to verify – or falsify – this book's arguments. But they concretize my claims about particular regimes and thus open my analyses to confirmation, revision, or refutation by specialists" (2007:61). This being the case, the narrative compiled below for Afghanistan will attempt to apply Tilly's principles, for the time being omitting those referring to cross-contextual comparisons (4 and 5 as indicated in the citation above) and returning to this in chapter 9, when discussion is broadened to fragile states

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[24] Numbers not in original.

more generally. While it falls short also of the strict measurements outlined in Tilly's organising principles, it will aim to fulfil these as far as possible with the material available.

The question of where to begin this narrative deserves significant attention and justification in its own right. Tilly's own treatment of starting points in his narratives compiled for *Democracy* is somewhat minimal; he does not draw attention to the potentially subjective nature of his choices or spend time justifying them. This complaint reflects one of the criticisms of historical institutionalist approaches more generally, as the selection of 'critical junctures' can be perceived by critics as arbitrary or value-laden according to the intentions of the researcher. She attempts to address this critique regarding my own narrative by justifying my choice of starting point here.

In searching for a point in time at which to begin my historical analysis, the researcher has applied several criteria. In order to maintain a tight focus on Tilly's own organising principles, but also take into account the specificities of the Afghan context (such as its geopolitical position), the starting date must represent 1) a rupture or stark change in ruler-ruled (or to use Tilly's language, 'state-citizen') relations; 2) an event that can be argued to have affected later ruler-ruled relations in a sustained manner; and 3) one in which external actors were involved also. The final criterion reflects the contention that, largely as a result of its position between competing empires in the nineteenth century, Afghan politics has been defined in the modern period by its relationship to foreign powers. This being the case, any critical juncture must reflect not only the start of sustained change in ruler-ruled relations internal to Afghanistan but also the role of external actors in creating this change. Tilly himself focuses on factors internal to the state in question – perhaps one of the principal shortcomings of his model when applied to fragile states, which are often subject to the interventions of regional and international actors.

Having laid out the criteria used in searching for a critical juncture, it is possible to justify why 1839 fits the specifications well. This date marks the beginning of the first Anglo-Afghan War, and the first moment in Afghan history in which 'ordinary people'

– i-e those other than the Durrani elite or the heads of tribes – were involved in 'state' politics (Barfield, 2012).[25] This was the first time that popular revolt played a key role in influencing the outcome of political manoeuvres at the national level, and as such, represents a critical moment in the forging of new linkages between rulers and ruled.[26] As will be discussed below, before this time, politics was uniquely the preserve of an elite ruling class (from 1747, comprised of the Durrani tribe alone, and before this time, shifting between different Turko-Mongolian conquerors in different territories across the region (Barfield, 2010: 67). Furthermore, 1839 also marks a moment in which international actors (Britain and Russia) were inextricably involved in the changes that took place at the local level, prompting rural revolt and thus forging (albeit inadvertently) the beginnings of a new connection between the Durrani elites and the people they governed.

When analysing Afghanistan's historical trajectory through a ruler-ruled lens, then, it is possible to justify the choice of 1839 as a critical juncture, or to cite Thelen, as a "crucial founding moment of institutional foundation" (Thelen, 1999: 387). While brief reference will be made to pre-1839 events, the narrative will remain for the most part focused on the period from this date onwards. To make this time-period more manageable analytically, the researcher has divided it into four sections, following a brief summary of pre-1839 historical background: 1839-1880, ending with the rise to power of Abdur Rahman, the Iron Amir; 1880-1929, ending with the fall of Amanullah Khan and the power struggle that ensued; 1929-1978, ending with the 'Saur Revolution' or 'Communist Coup'; and 1978-2014, ending with the departure of Allied forces from Afghanistan. At the end of each of these periods, significantly, is a succession struggle involving, to a greater or lesser degree, the political incorporation of ordinary Afghans.[27]

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[25] Thomas Barfield, Anthony Hyman Memorial Lecture, 'Problems in Establishing Political Legitimacy in Afghanistan: 1500-2012', School of Oriental and African Studies, 7 March 2012.

[26] This is not to say that tribal revolt had not occurred by this point, however – as Ewans notes, in 1707 Mir Wais Hotaki had led the Ghilzais against the ruling Safavids in Kandahar (Ewans, 2002: 30). This, however, was not an example of popular revolt by local insurgents but rather a movement led by a power-hungry member of the political eilte, who had previously lived at the Persian court (Ewans, 2002: 30).

[27] Barfield divides the twentieth century into three distinct periods: 1901-1929, coinciding with a failed experiment in modernisation of Afghan politics; 1929-1978, coinciding with the peaceful regime of the

5.2.2 Summary of pre-1839 historical background

Most accounts of modern Afghanistan begin in 1747, the year in which Ahmad Shah Durrani, formerly the head of the former Safavid ruler Nadir Shah's bodyguard, was appointed leader of the Abdali Pashtuns and began a series of military campaigns to control of most of what is now modern Afghanistan, and eventually an area almost twice the size, stretching from Karachi on the Arabian Sea in the south, beyond Mashad in the West, to Balkh in the North and almost as far as Delhi in the East (Ewans, 2002: 34). He would begin a dynasty of Abdali Pashtun rulers that survived for over two centuries. Beginning Afghanistan's modern history at this point is in itself is a political statement, however, as Barfield notes: the select choice of starting point (common among narrative accounts within Afghanistan) reinforces the idea that Pashtuns have always ruled Afghanistan, a notion playing in to current discourses of power and one that is false when considering the *long durée* perspective (Barfield, 2010: 67). Indeed, the area was ruled both in part and in totality at different points in time by Turks, Greeks, Persians, Mongols, and a variety of others ending in a sustained period of rule by the Moguls (south-east and centre) and Safavids (west) before Ahmad Shah claimed the territory as his own (Ewans, 2002: 29). Nevertheless, as a result of his extensive expansionist campaigns, he is seen as the first ruler of Afghanistan in its totality. His successors would lose control of the territories at the peripheries, but maintain a core territory that would come to be distinguished permanently from its neighbours on all sides.

Mountstuart Elphinstone, a British diplomat residing and writing in Kabul in the early 19th century provides the most comprehensive accounts of Afghanistan under the 'old order', describing the patterns of monarchic rule that the Durrani shahs had established by this point, and the characteristics of the Afghan landscape and its people (Elphinstone, 1839). Interestingly, in comparison to other contemporary regimes in the

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Musahiban dynasty; and 1978-2001, a period of 'war and anarchy' (2010:169-170). My own divisions draw on those of Barfield but differ in that Abdur Rahman Khan's reign is combined with that of his successors in the 20th century (1880-1929), in order to end the period on a point of succession struggle in which ordinary Afghans were involved, and in the extension of the last period to incorporate the US invasion in 2001 and its aftermath until 2014, again for the same reason.

region, he describes the kingdom's rulers as relatively peaceable in their attitudes towards their subjects:

> In most Asiatic governments there are no limits to the power of the crown but those of the endurance of the people; and the King's will is never opposed unless by a general insurrection. Among the Afghans, however, the power of the Dooraunee aristocracy and the organisation of the other tribes afford permanent means for the control of the royal authority, and for the peaceable maintenance of the privileges of the nation (Elphinstone, 1839 : 243).

Compared to the Persians in particular, the Afghan rulers were described by Elphinstone as lenient towards their subjects, as punishments for rebellions were rare, and when they were ordered, they were enacted against chiefs and not ordinary people. Torture was used sparingly as a means to extort money from the rich (Elphinstone, 1839: 248).

This was not to suggest that Ahmad Shah and his descendants were peace-loving and non-aggressive in their attitudes to rule – they had fought many a brutal battle for the conquest of territory by the point at which Elphinstone was writing. Beginning with the approach of Ahmed Shah in wooing his fellow Pashtun tribes with the prospect of loot from other conquests, however, and ruling them as 'the first among equals', creating an Abdali council (albeit lacking in *de facto* influence) as one of his first activities as leader, this dynasty (now labelled Durrani) had developed a claim to legitimacy that centred on compromise, not terror (Ewans, 2002: 33; Barfield, 2010: 105), at the very least in its treatment of other Pashtun tribes. In a later example of this trend continuing, Elphinstone writes of the Durranis as subjugated by the King (Shah Shuja) but still favoured over all other tribes, creating a trade-off for the Durrani tribal leaders that often weighed in the monarch's favour (Elphinstone, 1839: 247). In a sense, then, an unwritten contract between ruler and ruled was formed here, in the compromise deemed necessary for sustained rule – although it was a contract established between a king and community leaders, and not directly between the king and his subjects. Indeed, Ewans describes the product of Ahmed Shah's rule as "more a tribal confederacy than anything approaching a nation-state" (Ewans, 2002: 36). This was not to alter significantly over time. Reflecting on circumstances in Afghanistan in the late 20th century, Edwards

makes a similar observation, stating that "although most Afghans hold to some notion of shared identity with one another, that identity is articulated horizontally between individuals, tribes and regions rather than vertically between the state and its citizens" (1996: 4). This will become a central theme throughout the narrative.

One component of the unwritten contract effectively developed by Ahmad Shah concerned what were perceived to be the legitimate sources of state revenue – a critical aspect of the relationship between ruler and ruled that remains problematic in twenty-first century Afghanistan, and will emerge as a consistent theme throughout this narrative. The first Abdali king had agreed a minimal settlement for land revenue that successive rulers would not be able to increase without causing significant unrest, leaving them dependent on fines and other insubstantial sources of income such as tribal payments in place of military service (Elphinstone, 1839: 245). While later rulers would re-negotiate the terms of extortion, at times through the use of violent force, the resentment this created often led to uprisings and unrest that would persuade their successors to avoid the issue and seek substitute revenue sources outside the country (Barfield 2012[28]; 2010: 112). Indeed, Elphinstone attributes the king's maintenance and consolidation of internal control primarily to the gaining of resources and prestige from outside Afghanistan: "For the consolidation of his power at home [the king] relied, in a great measure, on the effects of his foreign wars. If these were successful, his victories would raise his reputation, and his conquests would supply him with the means of maintaining an army" (Elphinstone, 1839: 283). For the extent of resource extraction that could be undertaken in these wars, there appeared to be no internal substitute.

To this end, then, a notable feature of the early Durrani rulers, all of the Sadozai sub-tribe, as described by Elphinstone is the extent of the limits on their authority. Not only was a certain code of conduct followed in terms of revenue extraction, but also in terms of succession, which was hereditary but not fixed to the eldest son, with the dying King's wish only one of several considerations taken into account by a jirga of elite sirdars (Elphinstone, 1839: 243-44); with the appointment of provincial governors, in

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[28] Lecture given at SOAS, 7 March 2012. 'Problems in Establishing Political Legitimacy in Afghanistan: 1500-2012'. Anthony Hyman Memorial Lecture.

some areas beyond the King's control (Elphinstone, 1839: 256); and with the King's inability to curb the corruption in court, due to his need to keep the royal elite loyal to the crown (Elphinstone, 1839: 250). In a striking example of the scale of this problem, when Elphinstone was writing he estimated that a third of the then king Shah Shuja's entire revenue during the time of his reign was spent paying off princes (Elphinstone, 1839: 258). Finally, in terms of maintaining law and order at the local level, the King's authority was also limited: while the position of *qazi* (judge) was assigned by royal appointment, the authority that a judge was able to wield was entirely dependent on the support of the tribal chief in the area (Elphinstone, 1839: 256-7). Reiterating the way in which this had been the case long before Elphinstone was observing Afghan culture and customs, Ewans cites an account of a British East India Company employee, George Forster, who visited Afghanistan in 1783:

> ...the different chieftains usually reside in fortified villages, where they excerise an acknowledged, though a moderate, sway over their vassals, and yield a careless obedience to the orders of government. Rarely any appeal is made to the head of state, except in cases which may involve a common danger; when I have seen the authority of the Shah interposed with success (Forster, cited in Ewans, 2002: 39).

Thus, the relationship between central rule and community ruled was not in any way given, but even at this stage was the product of a negotiated balance of power between the Shah and semi-autonomous community leaders.

Figure 8: Rulers of Afghanistan, 1747-1880[29]

1747- 1772: Ahmad Shah Durrani	Key:
1772 – 1793: Timor Shah Durrani (son)	Red text: Durrani Sadozai
1793- 1800: Zaman Mirza (fifth son)	Black text: Barakzai Mohammedzai
1800 – 1803: Mahmud Khan (brother)	Relationship in parentheses indicates relationship to immediate predecessor
1803 – 1809: Shah Shuja (brother)	

1747- 1772: Ahmad Shah Durrani

1772 – 1793: Timor Shah Durrani (son)

1793- 1800: Zaman Mirza (fifth son)

1800 – 1803: Mahmud Khan (brother)

1803 – 1809: Shah Shuja (brother)

1809 – 1829: Mahmud Khan (same brother)

1820-1842: Kamran Mirza (son) in Herat, 1826- 1840: Dost Mohammad (Barakzai) in Kabul

1840-1842: Shah Shuja (re-installed by British, overlap with Dost Mohammad)

1842 – 1863: Dost Mohammed

1863 – 1866: Sher Ali (son)

1866-1867: Mohammed Afzal (brother)

1867-1868: Mohammed Azam (brother)

1869-1879: Sher Ali (same brother)

1879-1880: Yakub Khan (son)

1880: Direct British rule

1880: Abdur Rahman Khan (cousin)

The struggles for leadership that characterised the first half of the 19th century in Afghanistan were aptly named by the Afghans experiencing them as 'Padshahgardi' – literally, 'king-moving' (Ewans, 2002: 39). Until 1800, Ahmed Shah Durrani's direct line had ruled without interruption – his son, Timur Shah, had ruled for over twenty years by the time of his death, and was succeeded by one of his sons, Zaman Mirza, who held control until the turn of the century. At this point, however, while control remained within the Sadozai house and indeed within the direct descendents of Ahmad Shah, a contest between Zaman's brothers was to determine the struggle for power for

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[29] Sources: Barfield, 2010; Ewans, 2002;

forty years. While these struggles periodically called on the resources of local tribes, in terms of the provision of fighting men, negotiations as to the support of these tribes took place exclusively between the tribal chiefs and the ruling elite. At this point, political agency rested solely with these two groups of actors: politics at the centre was a game only for the elite royal circle who occasionally interacted with community leaders in the regions. As far as Tilly's principles are concerned, then – starting with the first, to begin with state-citizen interactions – there is very little to analyse at this stage.

External intervention would provide the catalyst for change in this regard. During the first reign of Dost Mohammed in Kabul (which began in 1826), Russia strengthened its control over neighbouring Iran in the 1830s, encouraging the Iranian Shah to invade Herat and Kandahar. As a result, British interest in protecting the empire in India from Russian advance was heightened. A British threat to invade Iran appeared successful in halting any such intervention, but its articulation was a thinly veiled statement of territorial ownership over Afghanistan, which provided a buffer-zone protecting India's western borders. This arousal of British interest in intervention would culminate in full scale war by the end of the decade.

5.2.3 1839-1880

By 1839, Dost Mohammed – the first of the Barakzai line to make claim to the Afghan throne – had been the ruling monarch of the kingdom of Kabul for 13 years.[30] These had not been easy years, however, and had mostly been spent trying to hold on to power. His initial claim had been weakened by his lack of Sadozai heritage, inconstant support from within the Barakzai clan, the Qizilbash and other tribal groups whose backing he needed, and his resulting choice of the title 'Amir' instead of 'Shah' (Noelle, 1997: 14-15; Barfield, 2010: 111). This breaking with previous tradition was not only reflected in his unconventional lineage, however, but also in his approach to leadership. As Noelle describes, using a quotation from letters between British civil servants in the

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[30] Since the time of Ahmad Shah Durrani, much of the geographical area attached to the Afghan throne had been lost, leaving a much smaller area around Kabul as the territory governed by Dost Mohammad when he came to power. (Barfield, 2010:112).

(unpublished) Elphinstone Collection, he undertook a populist mandate, styling himself as a king for the common man after his coronation in 1835:[31]

> [Dost Mohammed] protested to his friends, that he would not become a king after the manner of the Suddoo Zyes, to be secluded in his Haram and take no cognizance of public affairs – that he should take the same concern in the affairs of the country as formerly, and that all classes of people should have access to him (Masson to Wilson, 4 January 1835, cited in Noelle, 1997: 19)

This entirely different approach to the relationship between ruler and ruled foreshadowed further changes to this relationship that would come about during his 37-year reign.

However, this apparently benign approach toward his subjects was not to manifest itself in popular support for the monarch, at least initially. Having to tax his subjects heavily as a means to raise revenue previously gained from outlying territories that had now been lost, the Amir had created animosity among his subjects, particularly among those who had previously enjoyed tax exemption as a result of former monarchs sourcing revenue in the Indian territories, for example (Barfield, 2010:113-114). This, however, could be seen as a form of early 'public politics', in Tilly's terms – although his extractive policies generated resistance, they were nevertheless beginning to forge relationships between the monarch and previously ungoverned or autonomous areas.

Having intervened to defend the western province of Herat from Persian invasion two years earlier, in 1837, the British interest in Afghanistan had heightened with the perceived threat of Russian interference, to the point at which a plan to invade and reinstall Shah Shuja, the former monarch, in the place of Dost Mohammed, was devised (Hyman, 2002: 303). Equipped only with weak forces, Dost Mohammed was quickly defeated militarily in 1839 and voluntarily gave up his claim to the throne, accepting exile in India in return for British subsidies. Shah Shuja was reinstated to his former position as monarch, although as Barfield describes in some detail, his new reign under the auspices of British rule was fundamentally different to his previous years in power: due to the widespread administrative reforms introduced by the occupying forces, he

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[31] Dost Mohammed did not pronounce himself Amir until 9 years after he had gained control of Kabul, largely due to the political consequences he might have faced in doing so earlier (Noelle, 1997: 15).

was unable to extend patronage to the tribes and regions that had previously enjoyed it (Barfield, 2010: 118-119). To some extent, his legitimacy as monarch had decreased as a result, in spite of his lineage. While Dost Mohammed had not been popular during his early reign, the British (with the exception of Alexander Burnes, London's agent in Kabul) grossly underestimated the extent to which tribes – disgruntled by the phony rule they now saw in Kabul, and the disruption that the British forces were bringing (Barfield, 2010: 120) – would rally around him and support his re-instatement.

Barfield describes two key differences to the nature of the uprisings in 1841-42 as compared with previous rebellions that Afghan shahs had had to deal with in the past: the way in which religion was being used to justify a rebellion against an infidel invasion and its puppet leader *within* Afghanistan, and the way in which the uprisings were not elite-inspired but in fact began among ordinary citizens whose anger at the behaviour of British troops and economic effects of their presence prompted widespread willingness to fight (2010:122). Indeed, this anger was to have critical consequences for the British, who were massacred in huge numbers on their retreat to India in early 1842 (Hyman, 2002: 303-304). This series of events, brought about by foreign intervention, marked a sea-change in the nature of the relationships between rulers and the ruled in Afghanistan: for the first time, ordinary Afghans were participating in public politics, reacting to unwanted imposters and bringing about their departure, unwittingly promoting a national agenda (Barfield, 2010: 130-131; 2012[32]).

Once the British had left and Dost Mohammed had been reinstalled as leader, the following 20 years of his reign were to solidify, slowly, the Barakzai claim to legitimate rule, largely through the expansion of the areas under his control. As Ewans describes, he was gradually able to expand his territory and influence (2002: 76-77) – although at first, on regaining the throne, the extent of both had been weaker than before the British invasion (Noelle, 1997: 56). Allocating provinces to the governorship of his sons, he allowed regional autonomy to flourish under their stewardship, (Ewans, 2002: 77), to the point at which any revenue collected largely remained in the pockets of the sons in

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[32] Lecture given at SOAS, 7 March 2012. 'Problems in Establishing Political Legitimacy in Afghanistan: 1500-2012'. Anthony Hyman Memorial Lecture.

question, and was not transferred to the central coffers (Ewans, 2002: 78; Barfield, 2010: 135). Extraction continued to be the Dost's primary source of income, in spite of the tension this caused among Afghans little able to afford heavy taxation – and very little of the revenue collected was spent on infrastructure or services, but on improving the army instead (Noelle, 1997: 252; Ewans, 2002:78). Nevertheless, before his death in 1863, Dost Mohammed had won the support of the majority of the key tribes, and had expanded his territory to include most northern areas, Kandahar, and finally, Herat. These tribes and their peoples were still very much subjects, however, and in spite of their participation in expelling the British, and in spite of the Amir's progressive statements after his coronation, they played no part in the affairs of state (Barfield, 2010: 134).

After the Dost's death in 1863, as one observer working for the British crown had predicted many years earlier, there was a considerable struggle for succession (Lal, 1846: 229). *Padshahgardi* was again in play, and would last for the next five years until Sher Ali, one of Dost Mohammed's 27 sons, was able to defeat his brothers in their claims to the throne. During his 10-year reign, Sher Ali would build on his father's achievements in strengthening the army but also move beyond the Dost's meagre progress in building the state administration and tax system (Barfield, 2010: 137). However, the reach of Sher Ali's new policies was still limited to urban areas and military outposts – beyond this, tribal areas continued to administer themselves (2010:138).

Also during Sher Ali's reign, Britain and Russia began to re-kindle interests in Afghanistan after a long period of seeming disinterest. In 1873, an agreement was reached concerning the limits of Russia's influence, and the northern border of Afghanistan – the Amu Darya, the river south of which would mark Afghan territory in which British interests were contained (Barfield, 2010: 139). This agreement, however, would not prevent intrigues and interventions from both powers at different points during the next seven years, partly as a result of Britain's 'forward policy' in promoting the expansion of its empire. At Sher Ali's death in 1879, his son Yacub came to power, signing the Treaty of Gandamak that would concede considerable powers to the British

in return for annual subsidies. Even this, however, was not to satisfy the colonial power, which - seeming to have forgotten the travesty that had been its former escapades in the country forty years earlier – invaded once again in 1880. Local unease at this move in the first instance was bolstered by a riot among soldiers over a lack of British subsidies owed to them, and once again, it was ordinary Afghans that led the fight to resist colonial rule (Barfield, 2010: 141).

In sum, the period 1839-1880 represented a critical shift in the relationship between ruler and ruled. While tribal regions remained for the most part autonomous from state interference, and the control of the affairs of state remained firmly within the hands of the monarch and his family (until Sher Ali's changes toward the end of the period), a space for public politics had nevertheless been created, if only in the form of a role resisting the advances of foreign powers. Still, as Barfield summarises, during the 19th century "[the Afghan people] became more involved in struggles to defend the nation against foreign invaders and yet found themselves more oppressed by their own governments in the aftermath" (Barfield, 2010: 110). This trend would continue throughout the twenty-year reign of the nation's most infamous monarch, Abdur Rahman Khan.

5.2.4 1880-1929

If Dost Mohammed had begun the transformation of the relationship between ruler and ruled in Afghanistan, then the rule of Abdur Rahman Khan altered this relationship dramatically. Credited with transforming a disparate group of fiefdoms into a single state under a centralized administration, he reduced the autonomy of local centres of power but also in many instances took away the middlemen of the tribal chiefs who had previously served as interlocutors between central government and community, shielding the latter from the former (Barfield, 2010: 159). It was during this regime that the state came into direct contact with ordinary people, more often than not to inflict stringent taxes and punishments. As Barfield notes, future Afghan rulers would come to see central government and military rule as the key to maintaining control, often overlooking the price paid by Abdur Rahman to achieve this – over 100,000 Afghans were killed during his twenty-year rule in the internal wars he promoted to centralise

control (Barfield, 2012[33]; 2010: 147). These, then, were the cumulative effects of Abdur Rahman's reign, but it is critical to look in more depth at the events, actions, approaches and decisions that contributed to them. The researcher argues that five key elements of Abdur Rahman's reign are particularly significant as regards Tilly's criteria: religion; the personalization of power; his approach toward previously autonomous loci of power; his approach toward foreign powers; and his approach toward internal development and statebuilding.

The first of these, religion, is a theme that surfaces from this point onward as a critical component of Afghan politics. Before Abdur Rahman, religion had been used as a tool by various leaders to garner tribal support for foreign wars, such as those waged against the Sikhs in India in the 18th century (Barfield, 2010: 122). More importantly, however, it was primarily a feature of *local* politics. It had been considered by rulers as the preserve of the clergy, whose influence at the community level was considerable. If war against an infidel population abroad was imminent, it would be a question of inciting the support of mullahs to advocate for the cause and convince their local communities of the divine legitimacy of the proposed conflict. This approach endowed the religious elite with a power base from which to negotiate with rulers, and a certain level of autonomy from the centre.

Abdur Rahman would radically alter the status quo in this regard. From the beginning of his rule, he would justify his claim to the throne with reference to religion. As Ewans describes, "[t]o establish his authority, Abdur Rahman did what no previous Afghan Amir had done except marginally: he claimed that his rule was based on divine sanction rather than derived from the consensus of the tribal jirga" (Ewans, 2002: 101). At the same time as establishing himself as defender of the faith, however, he dramatically undermined the power of the religious clergy, enforcing them to take examinations (leading to performance-based pay) and publically humiliating popular religious leaders.[34] The *waqf* (charitable endowments) at local mosques was confiscated (or

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[33] Lecture given at SOAS, 7 March 2012. 'Problems in Establishing Political Legitimacy in Afghanistan: 1500-2012'. Anthony Hyman Memorial Lecture.

[34] In one case, he re-named the respected Mullah, popularly known as 'Mushk-e Alam' (Perfume of the Universe) as 'Mush-e Alam' (Mouse of the Universe). Ewans, 2002: 101-2.

'nationalised') to contribute to state funds (Ewans, 2002: 101-2), in a blatant ploy to create for the Amir an image as supreme religious leader as well as head of state. This was religion used as a tool to consolidate power, above and beyond a commitment to upholding the faith.

Indeed, Abdur Rahman's position shifted between the outright undermining of religious rules (Barfield, 2010: 146) to the upholding of Islam as a cause for internal war and as a means to rally troops. Labelling the Shia Hazara population in the central highlands as infidels legitimised the looting of their lands and their being captured as slaves by the Pashtun tribes fighting for the king (as a reward for their having been heavily taxed the previous year). Conquering Kafiristan in 1896, the only remaining province whose inhabitants had not converted to Islam by the late 19th century, Abdur Rahman again cited religious fervour as a reason for attack, but forbade looting and the taking of slaves, a practice forbidden in Islam in the case of war against fellow Muslims (Barfield, 2010: 180). This facilitated a relatively easy conquest and a less volatile situation after the war had ended. The region was renamed 'Nooristan' (Land of Light) and Abdur Rahman given the title 'Light of the Nation and Religion' (Ewans, 2002: 102).

The effect of Abdur Rahman's rebranding of himself would not only solidify his hold on power and his claim to legitimate rule – it actively forged a closer relationship between ruler and ruled. In Tilly's terms, the relationship between the state and its 'citizens' was forming during this period. In spite of waging several internal wars, he succeeded in persuading the population that the real threat came from infidel outsiders, and thus a common enemy could unite Afghans under his rule and protection (Barfield, 2010: 158). In nationalizing the *waqf*, in particular, he had forced a connection between people's duty as Muslims within a local community, and the needs of an expanding Islamic state. To all intents and purposes, however, the state created by Abdur Rahman was not Islamic at all, based fundamentally in a secular model of administration (Barfield, 2010: 159). As Barfield writes, "Abdur Rahman made himself the arbiter of domestic religious and national ideology in a way that championed his primacy while

hiding his compromises". This political balancing act would be the envy of many a future leader.

The second key theme linking Abdur Rahman's rule to Tilly's criteria is that of the personalization of power that the Amir developed during his reign. Whereas the legitimacy of previous rulers since Ahmad Shah Durrani had been based largely on their dynastic lineage and tribal identity as Durrani Sadozais, since the reign of Dost Mohammed and the rise of power of the Barakzai Mohammedzais, that automatic right to rule had been removed and thus prompted subsequent rulers to find different sources of legitimacy (Barfield, 2010: 111-127). Alongside his claim to be the defender of the faith, Abdur Rahman also persuaded the British that he was the only individual capable of controlling the unruly masses (Barfield, 2012), allowing them to withdraw from the country in the faith that their interests in India would be safeguarded by a strong ruler nevertheless highly dependent on British funds.

The Amir's individual stamp on rule was solidified not only by the persona he created but also by his direct personal involvement in matters of state. He was well-known for inflicting brutal punishments on dissenting citizens himself, and for ordering punishments on the basis of insult to his person (and not, by contrast, to the government or state). Indeed, again as Barfield notes, "[b]y the end of his reign, he had created a powerful police state in which even subversive talk that might offend the amir could land a person in jail or worse" (Barfield, 2010: 147).While he was able to create a unitary administrative system with considerable reach, however, in order to govern most of what is considered Afghanistan today, the depth and substance of the administrative structure was lacking. Very few mechanisms existed for the management of state coffers, with accounts only providing vague estimates of total income and expenditure per annum (Barfield, 2010: 152).

The third aspect of Abdur Rahman's reign that further solidified his rule was his approach towards autonomous power centres – the tribal regions that former monarchs, wary of causing insurrection, had left untaxed and ungoverned. New tactics involved moving beyond the nepotistic trend of allocating the governorship of provinces to

relatives, instead appointing unrelated administrators who could be replaced whenever necessary; playing on the existing divisions between different, uncoordinated groups in Afghan society, making these divisions wider and groups more fractured than previously; creating smaller provinces to this effect; and directly taxing populations themselves, rather than tribal leaders (Barfield, 2010:151).

Abdur Rahman himself had a clear vision of his task in leading Afghanistan. As Munshi cites, he is said to have described his role as:

> ...to put in order all the hundreds of petty chiefs, plunderers, robbers and cut-throats...This necessitated breaking down the feudal and tribal system and substituting one grand community under one law and one rule. (Munshi, 1900: 176-77).

While initially he began to undertake this project by means of persuasion, this quickly reverted to force (Barfield, 2010: 147). Barfield identifies three groups of potential rebels that Abdur Rahman brought under his control by force – the easten Pashtun tribes, his rival cousins ruling the Turkestan region, and non-sunni ethnic groups (such as the Hazara) (2010:147). These autonomous power centres, to use Tilly's terms, had to be brought under central control, and through a series of bloody civil wars. This, however, was Abdur Rahman's state-making in process – clearing (or re-ordering) the political forest to make room for absolute authority (Barfield, 2010: 160; Scott, 1998: Chapter 1), and beginning a 'strong state trajectory' for the first time (Tilly, 2007: 161), he was increasing the capacity of the state through violent means. At this point in time, from 1879-1900, and from a position of very low values for both state capacity and democracy, Afghanistan would have been moving directly upwards in Tilly's matrix (Figure 9)[35].

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[35] The application of the Afghan case to this model will be probematized later in the chapter.

Figure 9: Approximate positions on Tilly's state capacity/democracy matrix for Afghanistan 1747-1900
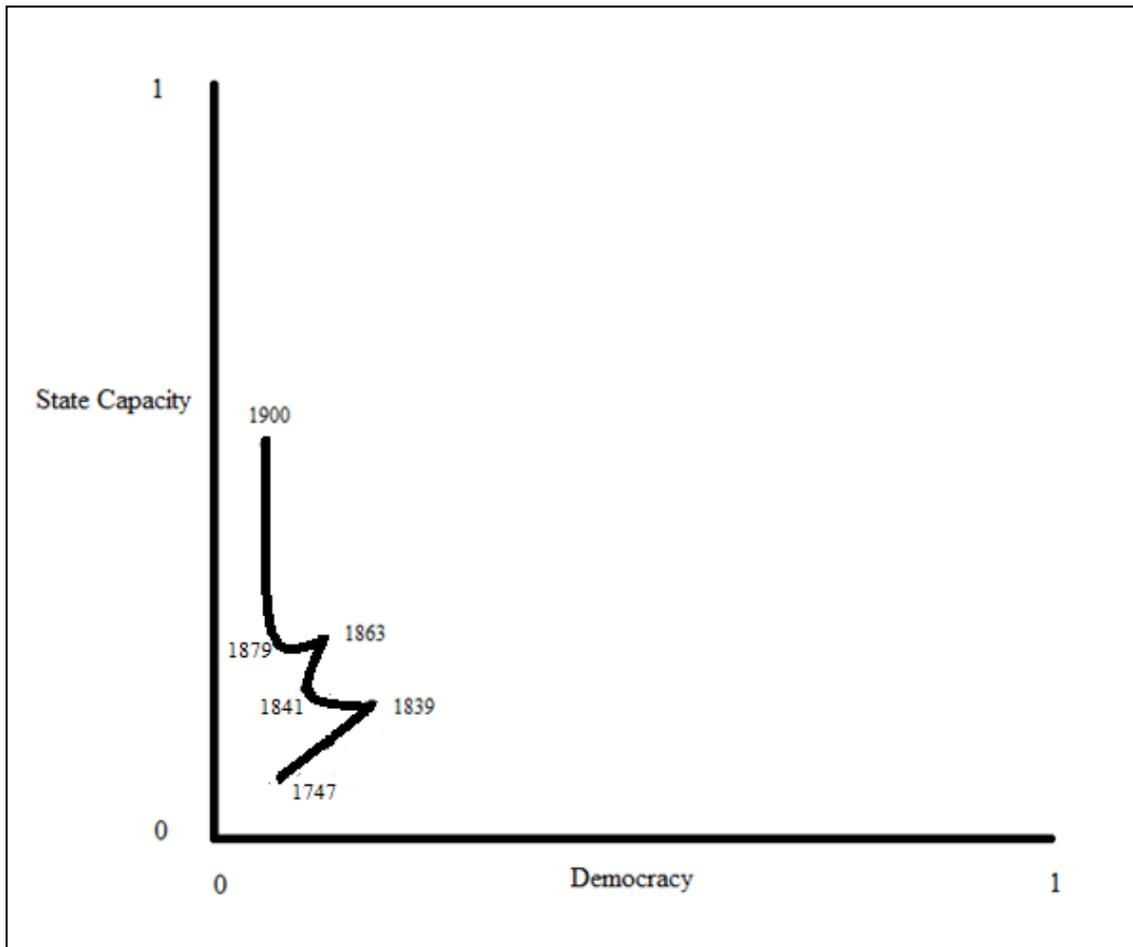
One of Abdur Rahman's most effective policies was that of isolating communities from one another and thus preventing coordinated attacks. Removing khans and elders from positions of authority, he was able to make impotent these communities and remove their potential to mobilise collectively (Barfield, 2010: 160). This was bolstered by his policy of forbidding subjects to move around the country, apart from at times when he enforced movement himself (Ewans, 2002: 103). This could be seen to contribute to an increasing sense of internal zenophobia that would work to his political advantage also. Adding to the breaking down of horizontal linkages between communities, Abdur Rahman mastered the art of tokenism, creating what seemed to be an inclusory body of advisors in the capital in the form of a *loya jirga*. This, however, was a council designed to rubber-stamp his decisions, having no authority or influence of its own – and succeeded in separating regional powerholders from their support bases in the regions (Ewans, 2002: 103). *Loya jirgas* would become a regular feature of the Afghan administration over time, retaining their propensity to act as forums for facilitating a monarch's (or President's) wishes. Their origin, as a mechanism to create distance as opposed to representation, is highly significant.

Abdur Rahman's approach to foreign powers was also significant in affecting the development of the state-citizen relationship. The remnants of decisions made before his assent to power were also important in this regard – as Hyman states, "[a]greement by Russian and British administrators to preserve a buffer state of Afghanistan between their own territories was crucial to the statebuilding process undertaken from the 1880s by Emir Abdur Rahman" (2002: 303). After the war in 1880, and Britain's humiliating defeat, British policy appeared to be to buy Abdur Rahman's assent rather than threaten the use of force (Ewans, 2002: 99). Essentially, then, he was able to finance the modernisation of the army and all internal wars, while making (and concealing) significant compromises in terms of national sovereignty. This was the case with his agreement to the British demarcation of the Durrand Line separating off tribal territories on the Indian border, which was bought with a promise of easy importation of weapons and an increase in his annual stipend from 1.2 million to 1.8 million rupees (Ewans, 2002: 108).

In this way, then, just as his predecessors had done before him, and many successors would continue to do afterwards, Abdur Rahman was able to bargain with the foreign powers to bolster internal campaigns. His concessions on the Durand Line, however, would be a source of great consternation and debate for years to come. Still, the campaign against the British in the second Anglo-Afghan war, and Abdur Rahman's ability to convince them that he could provide a strong defense against Russia, provided that weapons and funding were liberally supplied, would change the nature of the Afghan state almost indefinitely. As Rubin concludes, Abdur Rahman "used these coercive resources to establish the basic state structure that endured until the fall of Najibullah in 1992: A Pashtun ruler using external resources to reign over an ethnically heterogeneous society while manipulating that social segmentation to weaken society's resistance" (2002: 19).

Finally, worthy of note in Abdur Rahman's rule was his lack of attention to the needs of his subjects. Having taxed them to the point of destitution, he followed the model set by Dost Mohammed, in that he focused on the development of the army rather than the provision of public services. Afghans gained no entitlements, no infrastructure, and no services as recompense for their payment of taxes. Wary of ulterior motives, he even rejected the offers of international powers to build transport links between Afghanistan and neighbouring states (Barfield, 2010: 152). In neglecting this critical aspect of statebuilding, Abdur Rahman contributed to the country's future decline – as Barfield writes, he "...thus laid the foundation for the country's long-term economic stagnation and poverty, even though in terms of population density and available resources it had a stronger potential for growth than many of its neighbours" (2010: 153). British subsidies played a key role in enabling Abdur Rahman to ignore the needs of his subjects.

By the time of his death in 1901, Abdur Rahman had established himself as one of the great (if ruthless) rulers of Afghanistan. Indeed, "[f]or better or worse, Afghanistan became a unitary state under [his] rule, and its inhabitants came to see it as such" (2010:

160). In theory, then, he was following Tilly's 'strong state' trajectory towards democratisation (where state capacity increases significantly before any democratisation occurs [2007: 161]) – initially increasing state capacity through the domination of autonomous power centres and using force to ensure the compliance and obedience of subjects. As Tilly goes on to explain, this kind of exertion of force by a ruthless leader is necessary to the provocation of citizens into uprising and revolt, and thus the forging of new relationships of compromise and negotiation between states and citizens – the re-formation of the social contract. This had been the case in France a century earlier, and was also taking place in Iran at the same time as Abdur Rahman's reign in Afghanistan. As Gheissari and Nasr describe, the tobacco rebellion at the end of the 19th century was a response to the Qajar dynasty's foreign trade policy on tobacco (2006: 24). Why, then, did revolt against the ruler not occur in Afghanistan?

Potential reasons include the extent to which Abdur Rahman had isolated communities from one another, and that his reign was simply not long enough to allow collective mobilisation to occur in spite of this. Further, as Barfield describes, there was no national impetus to rise up against the leader, in spite of the way in which a national cause had been present when the British had invaded: "a national identity did not bubble up from below. It was the amir's standardized taxes, laws, currency, conscription, and administrative structure that put all Afghans into a single system" (2010: 159). Although Abdur Rahman is often attributed with the creation of the nation-state in Afghanistan, Edwards nonetheless concludes that in spite of his reforms, a 'myth of the state' was never imprinted onto the public imaginary, and any semblance of a state remained purely artificial (1996: 4). Abdur Rahman's extractive rule was personalized, not state-based, and ended with his death.

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Highly significant as a result of Abdur Rahman's solidification of rule and suppression of all opposition was the way in which the legitimacy of his Barakzai line was no longer in question. Moreover, non-Pashtun groups had also come to recognise the existence and legitimacy of a Pashtun-led state: "[i]n the eyes of most non-Pashtuns, the Afghan

government was now viewed as a Pashtun government and not just a Durrani dynasty"
(Barfield, 2010:157). In contrast to the ends of previous rulers' reigns, after Abdur
Rahman, there was no succession struggle: the named heir was Habibullah Khan, Abdur
Rahman's eldest son (Ewans, 2002: 110).

The reigns of leaders that immediately followed Abdur Rahman marked another
dramatic shift in the way Afghanistan was governed. Rather than pursue the brutally
extractive policies of their father, Abdur Rahman's sons and successors chose instead to
appease the population, and thus, in Tilly's terms, ended the strong state trajectory that
their father had begun. The beginning of Habibullah's reign marked the start of a more
inclusive politics in Afghanistan, with the re-instatement to the royal court of several
previously exiled families who brought with them influences and experience from
across the Ottoman empire (Barfield, 2010: 175-176). Alongside other events both
within Afghanistan and in the region, this act of bringing back to the political centre
families that had been previously excluded under Abdur Rahman's singular,
authoritarian regime represented a critical creation of political space for those other than
the King himself. Furthermore, by this point, as a result of the wars waged by previous
rulers (Abdur Rahman in particular) and the involvement of colonial Britain,
Afghanistan could now be identified as a 'bounded territory', at least, if not a nation-
state.

Three distinct but related points can be made concerning the nature of Habibullah's
reign (1901-1919). The first of these concerns his approach toward the opening of
political space to elites in Kabul. Having invited back families in exile, he proceeded to
create a court of advisors, some of whom were able to wield significant influence. This
was particularly evident in reactions to the way in which the British and Russians
signed a treaty in 1907 on their relations in Afghanistan, excluding Habibullah. This
prompted the formation of the 'War Party', led by Mahmud Tarzi, which channelled
anti-imperialist thought among the Kabul elites at court (Ewans, 2002: 115) and led to
the development of 'palace intrigue' that would characterize his reign (Dupree, 1980:
430). Interestingly, the sentiments behind the formation of this group were not
dissimilar to those prompting the tobacco rebellion in Iran, with the key difference of

being contained within a small elite circle rather than escalating into a nationwide grievance. This was about power, not trade – and did not affect ordinary people.

The second related factor worthy of mention is Habibullah's approach to foreign policy. As the War Party continued to promote an anti-imperialist stance, the Amir was equally convinced of the merits of remaining neutral (rather than waging war against the Allies) in the First World War, largely to wait and see which side would win (Dupree, 1980: 434). Although he had convened a Loya Jirga to discuss the issue, and had heard the delegates promote an anti-British jihad, he decided to pursue his own agenda (Ewans, 2002:115). Using the Loya Jirga in much the same way as his father had done, he shunned elite opinion at his peril – Habibullah would later be assassinated, while waiting for the British to grant full independence to the Afghans, likely by a War Party member dissatisfied with his stance on foreign policy (although as Dupree (1980: 435-7) documents, numerous other possible culprits have been blamed). In the meantime, the Amir would continue to balance his assurance to the British of his support for them against his need to placate Tarzi's group (Ewans, 2002: 116).

Finally, Habibullah began to reverse the policies of his father as far as the provision of services was concerned. Managing to maintain peace throughout his reign, he built a high school, a military academy, a teacher training college and a hospital in Kabul. Having visited India and having been convinced there of the value of these institutions, largely under the modernizing influence of Tarzi, he started the long process toward modernising Afghanistan (Ewans, 2002114-116; Dupree, 1980: 437). Alongside providing much needed services in the capital, these developments "also marked the beginning of Afghanistan's critical social divide, between the traditional Afghan society of the tribe and the countryside, and that of an increasingly westernized, urban elite" (Ewans, 2002: 116). This divide would be further exacerbated under the rule of his son, Amanullah, who was also strongly influenced by Tarzi.

King Amanullah is best known in Afghanistan for his rejection of conservative social norms and his radical reforms, which caused severe reactions from religious and tribal leaders, and which Dupree rates at 20 years too soon (1980: 441). Having been a part of

the modernist nationalist movement that had contended against his father, and being the son-in-law of Mahmud Tarzi, he had the support of this group when claiming the throne against his uncle and brothers in 1919 (Barfield, 2010: 181). Declaring a war of independence immediately after gaining power, Amanullah began the third Anglo-Afghan war, which, in spite of military losses for the Afghans, ended with a declaration of independence. While this gained him support from the conservative anti-British mullahs, however, this support was to be short-lived: in announcing a series of radical reforms, a backlash from the conservatives was not long in the coming, in the form of the Khost Rebellion (Dupree, 1980: 449; Barfield, 2010: 183).

Part of the problem concerned Amanullah's constitution (1923), the first of its kind in the country. Able to please neither the conservatives nor the modernists, however, it fell short of the radical document it could have been (Ewans, 2002: 128). Further, because the British had stopped their subsidies to the Amir on the pronunciation of independence, and his general anti-British attitude (Dupree: 1980: 449), he had little funds with which to promote his radical reforms thoroughly (Rubin, 2002: 19). For the most part, reactions against the reforms could be attributed to the reduction in power of mullahs and regional strongmen – again, a challenge to the autonomy of formerly self-governed areas – and a perceived threat to Islam, largely in the form of changes to women's status and code of conduct. (Ewans, 2002: 129) Evidently, the latter proved a convenient tool through which to counter the former, with conservative mullahs calling people to arms on the basis of an affront to Islam but at the same time, defending their right to authority in rural areas. Without having invested in provisions for the army (Ewans, 2002: 135, Barfield, 2010: 187), and without British support, having had to raise unpopular taxes astronomically to fund his regime (Barfield, 2010: 190), Amanullah was poorly equipped to deal with the opposition he faced in the civil war of 1929, and was forced to flee and abdicate.

The period from 1880 -1929 saw cataclysmic shifts in Afghanistan's political history, in which over a relatively short space of time, the country's leadership shifted from an authoritarian monarchy with no room for public politics, to a monarchy considerably weakened in its power vis-à-vis increasingly active and ideologically-motivated elites.

While the role of ordinary people in the affairs of state was still minimal, changes to this status quo had already begun.

5.2.5 1929 – 1978

A succession struggle between contenders was again to ensue following Amanullah's deposition, but the battles it comprised would this time embody a fundamental change in the way in which legitimacy of rule was defined. First, an opportunistic Tajik rebel, Habibullah Kalakani, laid claim to the throne, in a startlingly display of bravado that contradicted the now conventional norm that government was a Pashtun affair. Perhaps more surprising was the way in which Kalakani managed to hold on to power for nine months, and even managed to garner some support, while Pashtun tribes organised themselves into an opposition to depose him (Dupree, 1980: 458). Although for most he was not considered a 'legitimate' claimant to the throne, his attempt and initial success nevertheless questioned the existing rules of the game. Second, instead of inviting the return of Amanullah on Kalakani's death, a loya jirga of elders and local strongmen selected Nadir Khan, a distant cousin of Amanullah from a different line of descent, as the next monarch. Nadir, who had returned to Afghanistan to assist Amanullah in the fight against Kalakani, had himself suggested the calling of a loya jirga as a 'traditional' means to select the next king. As Barfield notes, however, this was hardly a traditional practice when it came to choosing monarchs, which had since Ahmad Shah Durrani been an issue of hereditary claims and conquests (2010:195). Thus, not only was this a new means of conferring legitimacy to leader, it was also a means to de-legitimise a former dynasty, the descendents of Abdur Rahman. This was to be solidified in late 1929 through British support to Nadir in the form of funding and weaponry (Barfield, 2010: 197). A new royal line, the Musahibans, had been established (Barfield, 2010: 195), and with it, was to come almost 45 years of peace.

Nadir named himself Shah and began to implement changes. While distancing himself from the radical reforms of his predecessor, in order to maintain the support of the conservative clerics, he nevertheless continued to implement some of Amanullah's plans. His constitution of 1931 was largely based on the former Amir's constitution of 1923, including plans for a bi-cameral parliament as a consolatory body, and a national

council, to be composed of 105 members from the parliament (Ewans, 2002: 140). While these bodies had little in the way of formal influence over executive decision-making, they were nevertheless institutions that served to increase the space in which some form of public politics could take place. Further to the changes made to the political system, Nadir Shah and his successor, son Zahir Shah, would make several decisions concerning the economy, foreign relations, autonomous regions and political freedoms that would significantly affect, once again, the nature of the ruler-ruled (or state-citizen) relationship.

Figure 10: Rulers in Afghanistan 1880-1978

1880 – 1901: Abdur Rahman Khan

1901 – 1919: Habibullah Khan (son)

1919 – 1929: Amanullah Khan (son)

1929 - 1929: Habibullah Kalakani (unrelated imposter)

1929 – 1933: Nadir Shah (distant cousin of Amanullah)

1933 – 1973: Zahir Shah (son)

First, in terms of the economy, Nadir began to build the extent to which revenue could be extracted from imports and exports, preferring this over the levying of further taxes over potentially rebellious subjects (Ewans, 2002: 142). After his father's death in 1933, Zahir (under the stewardship of his uncles) continued to adopt the same approach. This would be an indicator of an attitude that would last for the next forty years, and would see the consistent prioritisation of stability over any other concern (Barfield, 2010: 198-199). Trade was a fairly weak source of revenue, however, which was only supported later with the influx of aid from competing superpowers during the Cold War (Rubin, 2002: 20). While allowing the development of infrastructure, this significant source of additional income would further facilitate the avoidance of taxing citizens, preserving stability but at the same time stalling any progress along the strong-state trajectory (with heightened, enforced taxes promoting rebellion) that Abdur Rahman had started. Indeed, between the start of the Cold War and the end of the 1970s, the USSR had

furnished Afghanistan with approximately USD 2.5 billion, roughly split between economic and military aid, the USA contributing USD 533 million (Rubin, 2002:20).

Relatedly, Afghanistan's relationship with the outside world altered considerably during Musahiban rule. Joining the League of Nations in 1934 (Ewans, 2002: 143)[36], the country had established itself on the global stage, with its political decisions having some (if limited) consequences. 'Neutrality', both in World War 2 and afterwards, was a strategic position that would characterise Afghan foreign policy throughout the Musahiban period, facilitating the bargaining between the USSR and United States that would bolster (and indeed comprise the majority of) the Afghan economy through aid (Barfield, 2010: 311-312). As Barfield writes, "[t]he Musahiban plan was to warm Afghanistan with the heat generated by the great power conflicts without getting drawn into them directly" (2010: 206). This reflected Abdur Rahman's foreign policy challenge toward Britain and Russia, which he described as that of a goat between two lions, or a grain of wheat between two millstones, trying to exist in between superpowers without being consumed or crushed (cited in Arnold, 1985: 2). The answer to this was to play them off one another. For the Musahibans, the aid that was to come from both powers would facilitate the expansion of the Afghan army, the building of infrastructure, and the exponential increase of educational services across the country (Barfield, 2010:210).

Similar to their reasons for avoidance of taxation in semi-autonomous areas, Nadir and later Zahir Shah attempted to avoid conflict of any kind by appeasing, rather than provoking, religious leaders and tribal elders. As Rubin writes, "[e]ach solidarity group...remained isolated, linked to the nation-state only through personal ties to individuals in the government; the qaum did not need to form nationwide alliances to capture and exercise power" (2002: 20). Without national institutions that could have formed bridges between these personal, patron-client connections and the state (Rubin, 2002: 20-21), there was no question of linkages being created between Tilly's 'networks of trust' and the state apparatus. Indeed, the advantages of maintaining this

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[36] Hyman (2002:304) has this occurring in 1921.

autonomy from the state were numerous for the tribes in question. As one British representative described, at the beginning of Nadir Shah's reign,

> Throughout the country the advantages of anarchy seem to have been better appreciated than its drawbacks, and the tribes were asking themselves why they should resign the freedom which they had enjoyed for the past year [1929] and submit again to a central authority which would inevitably demand payment of land revenue, customs duties and bribes for its officials, and possibly the restoration of the arms looted from government posts and arsenals. (Richard Maconachie, cited in Ewans, 2002: 139).

Thus, in order to avoid the resistance that might materialise if this return to a former existence (that had been disrupted by Amanullah's taxation) was disturbed, Nadir Shah opted to turn a blind eye to these areas, rather than enforcing their compliance toward a public politics through taxation, for example. His policy of maintaining only personal (and not public) links with various semi-autonomous regions developed into what Olivier Roy would later term a relationship of 'externality and compromise' (Roy, 1994: 148) between the central government and these regions.

At the same time as appeasing the tribal elders and mullahs by allowing their hold on regional power and religious authority to thrive, Zahir Shah continued throughout his reign to make small concessions to modernists through a superficial commitment to political reform (Ewans, 2002: 143). Instrumental to the political uprisings of later years would be the founding of Kabul University in 1932 (Ewans, 2002: 144).[37] The University would provide in the 1960s a forum for the development of radical communist and Islamist ideologies that would both shape the political landscape in the country dramatically. A number of new schools were also built in the capital, contributing to the rise of the educated class in Kabul (but not outside of the city). Before this time, however, in the early days of Zahir Shah's rule, modernists were beginning to hold more of an influence in parliament, pushing for change. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Shah Mahmud (1946-1953), brother of the king, several reforms were put in place including the release of political prisoners, an increase in the freedom of the press, and the inclusion of 50 members parliament whose stance was in opposition to the government (Ewans, 2002:145). These reforms would be short-lived,

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[37] Barfield states that the University was founded in 1946. (2010:201).

however: as a result of a combination of factors, including the creation of Pakistan and increasing animosity over the possession of border areas, an economic decline and lack of support from the United States, and the increasing fervour of the opposition – measures were taken to rescind the liberal changes that had been made in order to preserve stability (Ruttig, 2006: 5). Mahmud resigned and was replaced by Daoud Khan, the king's cousin.

Daoud had little tolerance for opposition, as would become evident in later years, and it was not until the end of his term as prime minister that new political reforms would be brought in. The king himself signed a new constitution in 1964, which made provisions for an elected bi-cameral parliament (the first of its kind in the country) and an increase in political freedoms. A political parties' law was drafted, and passed by parliament in 1965, although the king deliberated over this for many years and never formally ratified it (Ruttig, 2006: 5). Parliamentary elections were held in 1965 and 1969, for seats that represented constituencies throughout Afghanistan. While there was still a fair degree of royal influence over candidacy (Dupree, 1971: 1), and parliament itself was an unruly and disorganised collection of individuals with no ideological groupings (Weinbaum, 1972), the last ten years of Zahir Shah's reign, often labelled 'the Decade of Democracy' represented a considerable step toward the *de jure* expansion of public politics, and the re-adjustment of the state-citizen relationship. This would be brought to an abrupt end however in 1973, when Daoud staged a bloodless coup to oust the King, and relabelled Afghanistan a Republic overnight.

Figure 11: Approximate positions on Tilly's state capacity/democracy matrix for Afghanistan 1900-2014
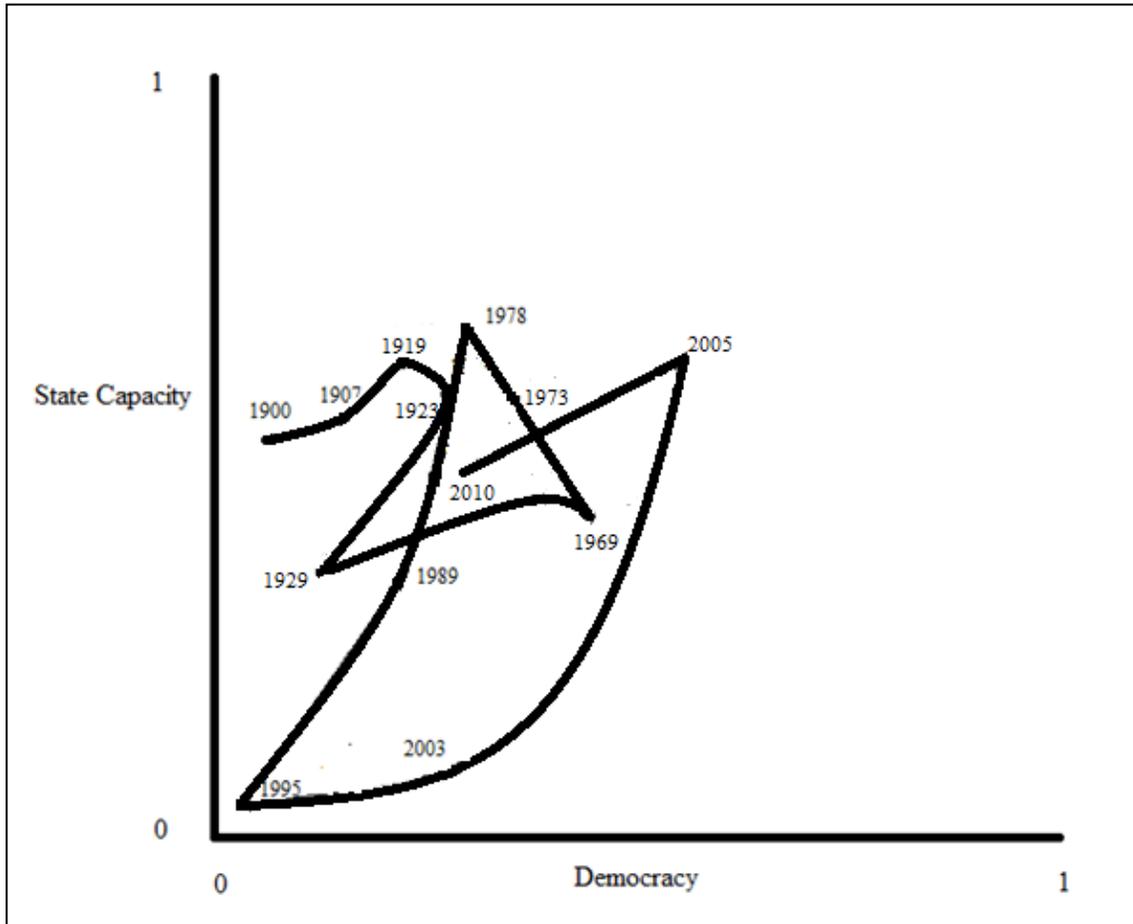
What is clear about this period in Afghan history, however, is the way in which, while superficial reforms were being made to the structure of government, and ordinary Afghans across the country were beginning to participate in selecting individuals who would act as their connections to Kabul – this did not equate to the *de facto* molding and development of the state-citizen relationship into one in which Afghans themselves could hold their government to account. Public connections that would have linked all citizens to the state structure (such as taxation) remained all but absent – as was clearly evidenced by the way in which Daoud's coup was not challenged by popular uprising. As Rubin concludes, "[r]ather than incorporating the various sectors of the population

into a common national political system, the political elite acted as an ethnically stratified hierarchy of intermediaries between the foreign powers providing the resources and the groups receiving the largesse of patronage" [2002:20]. In spite of its beginning the course of a strong state trajectory a century earlier, Afghanistan had by this point reverted to a place in which the capacity of the central government, which varied but was mainly limited to urban areas, was not really linked to democracy at all. Tilly's model does not capture adequately the nuances of this situation, because while state capacity existed in some sense, in some parts of the country and over some people groups, it was not felt on a country-wide scale. This could then be considered as limited state capacity, but again this does not fit the way in which Daoud was a fairly tyrannical (and effective) leader at certain points during his reign and again, in certain areas. This makes constructing a diagram on Tilly's state capacity/democracy schematic very difficult – in fact, most of the positions of the dots placed in Figure 11 could be called into question. The period of Soviet occupation, for example, is marked as a distinct decline in state capacity but also a step backwards in democracy due to the atrocities committed by the occupying forces in villages across the country, and the conflict that ensued in the countryside over the decade. At the same time, however, reforms were being implemented in urban areas that gave women the freedom to attend school, remove the veil and claim equal inheritance to their brothers. This then already points to flaws in the model when applied to the Afghan case, and the need for the model to somehow incorporate the differential impact of the state in different areas – particularly marking the urban/rural divide, and perhaps moving away from the uniform construction of the state-citizen relationship and toward a more fluid conceptualisation of the relationship between ruler and ruled. As Edwards writes, "other notions of community have persisted on an equal level with that of the state" (1996: 4), which implies that any analysis of the interactions between ruler and ruled need to look beyond a state-citizen binary.

5.2.6 1978-2014

A great deal has been written about this period in Afghanistan's history. With Tilly's criteria in mind, this select narrative, as above, will focus on events that significantly

changed the state-citizen relationship through the expansion of public politics – looking particularly at the integration of trust networks, the nature of the state's relationship to autonomous power centres, and categorical inequalities.

Daoud's reign had lasted only five years, during which time he consolidated executive power and marginalised all forms of opposition, particularly within Islamist circles. Even those with leftist tendencies, not dissimilar to Daoud's own persuasions, were marginalised to the sidelines of the political arena (Ewans, 2002: 180). Only the President's party, Hezb-e Inqilab-e Milli, was permitted to exist. All newspapers were banned, and, in calling a typically symbolic loya jirga in 1977, Daoud ratified a new constitution (without provision for elections) and was himself 'elected' president for a further six years (Ewans, 2002: 181).   Partly as a result of his exclusionary politics, Daoud was assassinated in 1978, as part of the Saur Revolution.

This revolution was something of a misnomer, in that it did not comply with contemporary definitions of the term (see for example Tilly, 1978; Skocpol, 1979). Much in the same way as the 'Afghan Revolution' of 1929, this was about elite competition for power and involved very few of the population at large. This was partly due the impatience of those who wanted to overturn Daoud – cognisant that the collective, communist mobilisation of the working class in Afghanistan would take a very long time, members of both Khalq and Parcham branches of the (secretly active) People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) were convinced that they could skip this step and impose a communist regime from the top down (Ewans, 2002: 186). This is a critical indicator of the disjunct between state and society that existed and the way in which politics was still very much in the hands of an elite, educated minority. The toppling of Daoud essentially occurred as a PDPA-orchestrated military coup at the hands of a few army generals, at a point at which the party had only an estimated 11,000 members (Ewans, 2002: 188).

As an initially joint Khalq-Parcham cabinet increasingly became a Khalq-only set-up, this fundamental gap between rulers and ruled continued and expanded as a result of a government blinded by ideological principles. As Ewans writes, "the actions of the

Khalq leadership showed that they retained few connections with, and almost no understanding of, the 'workers and peasants' in whose name they were theoretically acting" (2002: 192), largely as a result of the void between educated elites in Kabul and the masses in the provinces. As the Khalq regime become increasingly brutal in its imposition of reforms (in land distribution and the rights of women, for example) that would anger Afghans across the country, however, it provoked resistance in the form of guerrilla warfare that spread rapidly. This inadvertently fuelled the changing of the state-citizen relationship, because the regime had pushed its inhabitants to a point at which they were angry enough to get involved in public politics, at first through elite level demonstrations in the Kabul but then gradually through armed resistance at all levels of society. As Roy explains, these wars of resistance, taking place between 1978-1980, were not an attempt by local commanders to take over the state – but were launched to prevent its expansion into regions that had previously enjoyed relative autonomy (1994: 157).

Deeply concerned by the PDPA Taraki (and later Amin) administration's loss of control within Afghanistan, the USSR invaded in December 1979, installing Babrak Karmal as president. Their occupation of Afghanistan would last a decade, during which time the Islamist resistance, having developed in strength and capacity while in exile in Pakistan, would continue to plague the regime in rural areas. Attempting to subdue the Islamists by force involved the carpet bombing of large areas of the countryside, killing approximately one million Afghans over the ten-year period. Soviet forces were unable to overwhelm the rebels, largely because these were ordinary Afghans once again fuelled by the conviction of a religious *and* nationalist agenda against a common foreign enemy. In this sense, their motivations and characteristics were not dissimilar to those of the uprisings against the British in 1841, 1880 and 1919. Ordinary Afghans were once again involved in the political upheavals that were shaping their country. Roy contends that these wars of resistance in particular, during 1978-1988, were to fundamentally alter the nature of Afghan society:

> ...the war profoundly changed the society. The intermixing and displacement of segments of the population, as well as the rise in power of a new elite, changed the sociology of the country and led highly insular populations to assume new

identities (ethnic, linguistic) beyond their connection to local solidarity groups. But rather than a return to the traditional society, it is more apt to speak of a transference of the solidarity networks and power of a traditional society into a modern and international context (Roy, 1994: 150).

Here, then, we see the beginnings of an expansion of Tilly's 'trust networks' – while still remaining unconnected to the state, these networks were expanding in terms of the categories within which ordinary people would place themselves. The new-found ability to redefine these groups would later be used to the advantage of ethnic leaders, who would capitalise on their own definitions of self and other-ness, to generate support blocs for their own personal agendas.

Thanks to an influx of US and Saudi funding to the Islamist resistance (Barfield, 2010: 243), provided (along with anti-aircraft stinger missiles and other weaponry) through the intermediary of the Pakistani ISI (Rubin, 2002: 100-101; 181-183; 196), and the added pressure mounting as the imminent collapse of the USSR became more and more apparent, the Soviet forces were compelled to leave in 1989. While a seeming victory for Afghanistan and its peoples, however, the removal of a common enemy had devastating consequences in the ensuing competition for power. President Najibullah, who had been installed to replace Karmal as leader (once again with the acquiescence of a compliant loya jirga) in 1987, was able to maintain a semblance of order until 1991, when Soviet aid ended following the collapse of the USSR (Barfield, 2010: 248). At this point, however, without any foreign aid – the USA having promptly abandoned the Afghans following the defeat of the Soviet forces – the Afghan state descended into civil war between rival Islamist factions, who were now divided by the power struggles between leaders and ethnic fragmentation (Rubin, 2002: 247; Barfield, 2010: 249). A brief attempt to share power between groups led to all-out civil war when one particular leader, Burhanuddin Rabbani, refused to concede power at the appointed time. The violence that was to follow was to destroy the capital, Kabul, and shock Afghans across all social strata with the extent of its brutality.

For the next 10 years, Afghanistan remained a 'failed state', although to all intents and purposes it had never truly been a state in the first place. Until 1995, no central control was exercised over warring factions during the civil war, and while ordinary Afghans

had played a role in ousting the Russians, the fighting that now took place was once again an elite competition. Replaced by the semblance of order by the Taliban in the mid-1990s, the individual leaders of the civil war factions were gradually defeated – but a new state was not developed as a result. Instead, a brutal, fundamentalist regime inflicted their own version of Sharia law on the Afghan population, but did not possess the administrative capacity nor the resources to fulfil the functions of state in any sense. Implementing and solidifying the categorical inequalities against women that had been promoted by the Mujahideen leaders in the civil war, the Taliban possessed a semblance of control in their ideological prescriptions and punishments but in fact were little equipped to run a government. This was reflected in the way in which only Pakistan and Saudi Arabia recognised the 'Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan' as a sovereign power.

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The events of September 11th, 2001, were to have a profound effect on Afghanistan, prompting as they did a US invasion of the country in retaliation to the Taliban's refusal to comply with demands for the handover of Osama bin Laden (Rubin, 2002; Rashid, 2008). Following the speedy removal of Talib forces, international plans were put in place for the rebuilding of the Afghan state, following a conference in Bonn, Germany, in 2001 – to which all political players, with the exception of the Taliban, were invited. The so-called Bonn Process would involve the re-creation of the institutions of state designed to facilitate the basis for a new democratic government.

What is particularly striking here, however, is the similarity between this attempt to install, in the space of a very short time, a functioning democratic system on the basis of western liberal ideology, from the top down without widespread popular demand – and the attempt to install a communist society in 1978 without first having had a communist revolution of workers and peasants. Both, in essence, were attempts to leap-frog over the most fundamental component of each: the inclusion of the Afghan people. Of course, in the aftermath of state collapse and the urgent need to fill a power vacuum after the US invasion, some form of administration was needed, fast, and given the trend indicating that liberal democracy was seen as the only form of government that

could prevail in the 21st century, as demonstrated in chapters 1 and 2, it was unlikely that any other kind of regime would be promoted by international actors. Nevertheless, in a country that had never before elected its leader, nor experienced universal suffrage, the system brought in at Bonn was seen by many as the beginning of a new era for Afghanistan.

Figure 12: Afghanistan combined PR and CL score, 1972-2010 (Freedom House, 2012b)
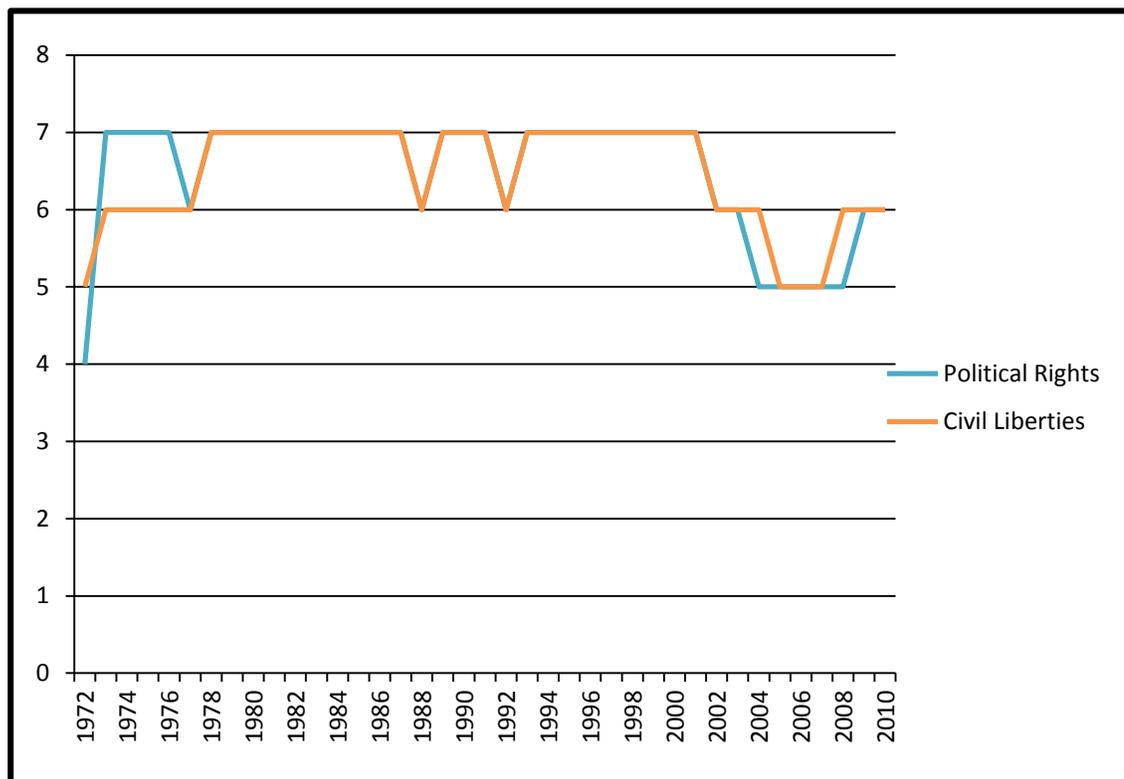
Referring back to the Freedom House scores for Afghanistan over this period (Figure 12), it is possible to determine how, following a long period of minimal rights and liberties, effective lasting from Daoud's coup and later assassination right through to the fall of the Taliban, the country was considered to be improving on both counts with the beginning of the Bonn Process. It is possible to argue, however, especially with the benefit of hindsight, that in fact the 2001-2014 period has seen fewer changes to Afghan

society and the state-citizen relationship than had the decade of resistance to the Russians.

Before elections were organised in 2004 and 2005, two successive Loya Jirgas were held in an attempt to 'legitimise' the Bonn process through Afghan 'tradition' (Dobbins et al., 2007: 197). As has been apparent throughout this narrative, however, Loya Jirgas had never really served any purpose other than to rubber-stamp decisions already made by a ruling power (Coburn and Larson, forthcoming, 2013). This was no different in 2002 and 2003 (ICG, 2002; 2003). Elections themselves, while drawing a significant turnout (almost 80 per cent and 50 per cent for the presidential and parliamentary elections respectively) achieved their purpose in identifying a leader and legislature that western powers could label legitimate, but in fact were poorly conducted, with significant fraud overlooked, to the point at which many Afghans suspected the joint international-Afghan organising body (the Joint Electoral Management Body, or JEMB) of playing a role in manipulating the results (Wilder, 2005: 35-38). In the rush to establish a functioning executive and central government, and in the overwhelming prioritisation of security over justice, the reform of the judiciary was overlooked and sidelined, in spite of the way in which, of all the institutions of state, this was the one that was likely to have a positive impact on the lives of ordinary Afghans. Afghan expectations of what the international community could do for Afghanistan, in terms of improving the economy and generating stability, were vastly over-optimistic, and were quickly disappointed as the uncoordinated agendas of international actors became visible (Suhrke, 2011). As the British had done during Abdur Rahman's regime, the international tendency was to throw money at any problems encountered, pledged at successive donor conferences, thus contributing to the entrenchment of the patronage networks of regional strongmen and government officials. These factors could help explain why, according to the relatively crude measures of Freedom House, in 2008-2010, scores for both political rights and civil liberties were once again worsening.

In a manner similar to that of Zahir Shah's reforms, then, while the space for public politics had theoretically increased, in fact the connections between citizen and state were no more established than they had been in the reign of the former King. In 2009-

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10, 49.5 per cent of Afghanistan's GDP (excluding the shadow economy, primarily comprised of the narcotics trade) was comprised of foreign aid, which, as Suhrke describes, "created extreme dependence, weak local ownership and corruption" (Suhrke, 2011: 119). Indeed, the extent of the proportion of aid to licit internal revenue in itself precluded the need and urgency for comprehensive tax reforms. Elections in 2009 and 2010 served to increase the gap between Afghans and the centres of power, through widespread fraud and the entrenchment of existing power networks that precluded ordinary citizens from substantive participation (Coburn and Larson, forthcoming 2013). President Karzai was unwilling (and later unable) to debilitate autonomous power centres, preferring instead to appease and include regional warlords; to fully integrate trust networks into institutions of state, facilitating a degree of autonomy for example in terms of allowing Shia courts to practice their own, separate jurisdiction and resisting the assimilation of customary law into the state justice system; and to eliminate the categorical inequalities that still significantly hindered women's advancement by signing the discriminatory Shia Personal Status Law, for example, and being unwilling to challenge the conservative social norms that restricted women's role in the public sphere. These factors, combined with his inability to combat a growing insurgency, led the country to be categorised unilaterally by donors as a fragile state.

5.3 Summary and conclusions: Returning to Tilly

The picture of the development of ruler-ruled or state-citizen relationships, then, that emerges from this narrative, is not straightforward and does not comply with the simplified trajectories put forward by Tilly (2007: Chapter 7). Although during Abdur Rahman's reign, the beginnings of a strong state trajectory were visible through his authoritarian rule and imposition of harsh taxation policies, this was to revert back to a more lenient approach by his successors who would adopt a laissez faire attitude toward the governance of autonomous regions. While some attempts would be made in the 20th century to enforce social reformation from the top down, particularly by Amanullah Khan and later by the PDPA in the late 1970s, the more commonly chosen path by successive leaders was that of least resistance – of prioritising stability over and above the task of comprehensive statebuilding, especially if revenue could be collected

through other means, such as the accumulation of aid funds. According to Barfield, this was inevitable due to Afghanistan's 'natural state': "[t]he stable climax state in the 'political ecology' of Afghanistan was characterised by a center (wherever it was) dominating distinct regions which had their own political elites" (2010: 162). He implies that Afghanistan will always return to this model[38], in which the relationship between the center and regions is characterised by 'externality and compromise' (Roy, 1994: 148), and has throughout history resisted the total imposition of a comprehensive statebuilding model. Barfield terms this the 'American cheese' approach to statebuilding – in its rolling out of a unilateral program for state governance to affect all areas equally, as opposed to the 'Swiss cheese' model, in which certain 'holes' are left to their own devices (Barfield, 2010: 67).

While this analysis allows for a greater degree of flexibility than does the Tilly framework, however, which is fundamentally based on American cheese assumptions, it is nonetheless flawed in that it does not take into account the transitions that did occur in the political landscape and to the nature of local participation in politics.[39] Evidently, some changes have taken place in the nature of the state-citizen relationships at different points in history, even if their effects seem to have been limited. Tilly's emphasis on these historical processes sheds considerable light on the way in which democratisation and de-democratisation occur.

What is also clear from this narrative, however, is the way in which the Afghan state does not seem to comply with either the standard conceptualisation of the state as put forward in democratisation measures, nor with the definition of a 'fragile state' that is put forward by international donor agencies. While on the one hand, Afghanistan certainly does not match the criteria for Krasner's four aspects of sovereignty (2009:21) or the Weberian notion of a monopoly of violence; on the other hand, the reasons for its 'fragility' are not limited to current insurgencies and a *lack* of statehood, as current donor models for measuring fragility would suggest (DFID, 2005; USAID, 2006). Instead, the narrative appears to demonstrate a fundamentally different kind of

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[38] Also as confirmed in personal communication with the researcher (7 March 2012).

[39] Barfield himself writes of these changes, but arguably does not lend them enough significance in his model.

statehood, and a different kind of citizenship. This will be explored and tested in the following chapter, which provides a detailed analysis of the nature of the state-citizen relationship in Afghanistan through the examination of interviews with Afghan respondents at the local level. This will address the question of whether or not it is possible to apply Tilly's framework to the Afghan context without amendment.

CHAPTER 6: APPLYING TILLY TO AFGHANISTAN: BREADTH AND EQUALITY IN THE DATA

6.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the primary data collected in order to provide a detailed analysis of the nature of the state-citizen relationship in Afghanistan, with reference to the first two of Tilly's themes – breadth and equality. Through the narrative compiled in chapter 5, it is possible to detect a common theme occurring at different points in Afghanistan's political history: the way in which rulers or elite groups attempted to install new systems of government from the top down, with varying degrees of success and different reactions from different communities at the local level within Afghanistan. As explored in chapter 3, Tilly's approach to measuring democratisation highlights the importance of local politics and the nature of its interaction with the state. In this chapter, the researcher explores this emphasis through the examination of primary data collected at the local level.

This examination will begin to address the question of whether or not it is possible to apply Tilly's framework to the Afghan context. First, the chapter outlines a detailed framework through which the primary data will be analysed. Second, it provides an analysis of the data according to the first two of Tilly's four processes – breadth and equality - examining how (if at all) these themes are discernible through respondents' descriptions (or lack thereof) of the ways in which their lives are affected by the state.

6.2 Detailed framework

The following section outlines the framework through which the researcher will examine the primary data collected and use it to examine the state-citizen relationship in Afghanistan. It begins with the development of a matrix of analysis criteria, before the presentation and discussion of the data set.

6.2.1 Matrix of indicators

Before attempting to assess the data based on Tilly's four processes of breadth, equality, protection and mutually binding consultation, it is necessary to revisit briefly the criteria he uses to analyse changes in the state-citizen relationship of a given country.

Common to most of Tilly's suggested indicators across the four processes is their actual existence in the real world – for example, the actual number of arbitrarily held prisoners increasing or decreasing, or a decline (or increase) in the number of laws applying only to one group in society (2007: 66). This is also true of Freedom House indictors for political rights and civil liberties, which Tilly draws upon in his analysis – and reflects Tilly's positivist ontological perspective. However, he also alludes to other forms of potential measures, for example in his suggestion that one means of measurement of change in the state-citizen relationship could be to "analyze correspondence and meetings between officials and ordinary citizens" (2007: 60). This implies that above and beyond statistical evidence, indicators based on written dialogue between state representatives and citizens could also provide insights into the nature of their relationship.

The researcher has decided to take a different approach, however, given the way in which official statistics are both difficult to obtain and also often unreliable in the Afghan context, as in other fragile contexts also, and given that high levels of illiteracy persist and prevent a large part of the population making written correspondence with the state. While earlier chapters have to some extent drawn upon the statistical data that do exist, for example in the historical narrative in chapter 5, and also in using the available Freedom House measures for Afghanistan – the thesis now focuses primarily on local perceptions of state functions, representative bodies and interactions with citizens. This skews the data towards a local understanding of the role and activities of the state, but the researcher argues that this bias is beneficial: it is often overlooked in contemporary analyses, and is arguably more appropriate to fragile contexts where statistics can be unreliable. This also allows a shift in ontological perspective, also, in that – while not dismissing the existence of 'real' facts that could influence the state-

citizen relationship, it is important to consider how that relationship is constructed and perceived by citizens themselves.

Breadth:

According to Tilly's definition, breadth primarily concerns political inclusion: the extent to which all groups of citizens have access to public politics and have the same rights under the state's jurisdiction (2007:14). As Tilly explains, "at one extreme, every household has its own distinctive relation to the state, but only a few households have full rights of citizenship; at the other, all adult citizens belong to the same category of citizenship" (2007:14).

In terms of suggested indicators to measure changes in breadth, one example Tilly provides is the "[i]ncrease (decrease) in the share of the population having legally enforceable rights to communicate complaints about governmental performance to high officials" (2007:66). He accepts that this kind of data is not widely available for many regimes, however, and thus opts instead to use Freedom House criteria for political rights, along with his own judgments of political histories, to compensate, using the earlier suggestion as an ideal measure (2007:66). Evidently, this problem applies to the Afghan case also – there is no statistical data available that could indicate the extent to which citizens have legally enforceable rights to communicate these kinds of complaints. While according to the constitution, all citizens share equal status under the law (Government of Afghanistan, 2004: Article 22), their de facto ability to make complaints about government performance to high officials is a different matter altogether, and likely to differ along gendered, ethnic, tribal and patronage lines, among others. The key phrase here then, is 'legally enforceable'.

Nevertheless, although no 'hard data' exist as to the proportion of the population able to access high officials to make these kinds of complaints, it is possible to discern from qualitative interviews with a sample of respondents from different social backgrounds in different parts of the country the extent to which they perceive they have the ability to do so. This is a different kind of evidence, but it nonetheless provides indications of the way citizens themselves consider their positions vis-à-vis the state. The indicators

used here to measure breadth (and potential changes in breadth, as discussed in chapter 7), then, will focus on the theme of **perceptions of legally-enforceable access to state officials across different social groups**. These are detailed more specifically in Table 5 below.

Equality:

For Tilly, equality is closely connected to breadth. It ranges from "great inequality among and within categories of citizens to extensive equality in both regards" (2007: 14). Thus, the rights and duties of people in different ethnic groups and genders, for example, are either clearly ranked according to those groupings, as in highly unequal societies, or undifferentiated according to these categories, at the other end of the spectrum (2007: 14). Tilly considers breadth and equality together to be the critical components of citizenship: "instead of a mosaic of variable relations to the state depending on particular group memberships, all citizens fall into a limited number of categories – at the limit, just one – whose members maintain similar rights and obligations in their interactions with the state" (2007:14). Of particular note here is the way in which Tilly considers variability in relationships to the state to be synonymous with inequality in these relationships, and thus portrays that variability as a negative phenomenon. This demonstrates his conviction of the need for a liberal, uniform citizenship for all individuals under state jurisdiction – a theme which will be discussed in relationship to the nature of citizenship in Afghanistan throughout the following chapters. Also, however, it is possible to differentiate between equality in de jure constitutional rights and duties, and de facto equality in terms of the actual lived experiences of citizens across different social groups.

This poses a problem when considering Tilly's suggested means of measuring equality. He posits that one ideal measurement for change in this regard would constitute a "[d]ecline (rise) in the number of distinct legal categories defining rights and obligations of different population segments vis-à-vis the state" (2007:66). However, this does not take into account either the extent to which these categories might exist in spite of de jure constitutional frameworks to protect citizen equality, or the extent to

which legal categories might exist on paper but in reality have little impact due to the lack of their being effectively enforced. In Afghanistan, examples of both cases exist: in the first instance, through inequalities experienced by female citizens in terms of their access to justice, for example, in spite of women's constitutionally guaranteed equality as citizens – and in the second instance, through the unenforced Shia Personal Status Law, which promotes the establishment of separate jurisdiction for Shia citizens, who on religious grounds have different approaches to some legal issues to the Sunni majority (see Oates, 2009). Thus, while the theme of equality is of critical significance to the examination of the state-citizen relationship in the Afghan case, it is arguably more appropriate to use perceptions-based evidence through which to make judgements about how equal notions of 'citizenship' actually are considered to be from a local perspective. I will focus in this area on **perceptions of de facto equality between social groups**, indicators for which will be outlined and justified below in Table 5.

Protection:

This theme concerns the extent to which 'due process' is extended to all citizens, whereby citizens are protected from the arbitrary actions of the state. As Tilly writes, "at one extreme, state agents constantly use their power to punish enemies and reward their friends; at the other, all citizens enjoy publicly visible due process" (2007:15). Critical here is the notion that 'due process' be 'publicly visible' – this is linked to Tilly's focus on *public* politics, and the way in which process and procedure are not only the same for all citizens but visible, knowable and thus accountable to these citizens also.

In order to measure changes in protection, Tilly suggests the analysis of the "[d]ecrease (increase) in the proportion of the population imprisoned without legal sentencing or legal recourse" (2007:66). Statistics for this kind of data are notoriously difficult to access, as Tilly himself freely admits, particularly due to the way in which, if prisoners are denied legal recourse the state is unlikely to publish this kind of information. As a retrospective measure, however, this works well, due to the way in which it is much easier to find data for this as occurring in previous regimes whose interest in protecting

state officials has ended. Looking back over Afghanistan's 20th century history, it is possible to compare for example the large numbers of political prisoners taken during Daoud's Republic (1973-78) and Taraki-Amin government that immediately followed (1978-79) (Dupree, 1980: 770-773), with the relatively few taken without trial under the King's rule (1933-1973)[40]. While exact numbers may still be unavailable, comparisons are possible nonetheless with the data that does exist. Measuring protection in current circumstances is more difficult when focusing on illegal imprisonment, particularly when distinctions between state and extra-state actors are blurred. Thus, again, it is useful to draw on local perspectives to establish how citizens themselves consider the 'due process' of state jurisdiction. A general theme here for consideration will be **perceptions of the visibility and accountability of the legal process**, with indicators specified below in Table 5.

Mutually binding consultation:

The fourth of Tilly's processes concerns the extent to which citizens are able to claim state assistance, should they need to: "at one extreme, seekers of state benefits must bribe, cajole, threaten, or use third-party influence to get anything at all; at the other, state agents have clear, enforceable obligations to deliver benefits by category of recipient" (2007: 15). This, then concerns the social contract between citizens and the state, and the extent to which access to services (such as healthcare provisions and access to state schools) can be expected by citizens.

To measure changes in mutually binding consultation, Tilly suggests an analysis of the outcomes of citizen complaints regarding their limited access to state services. As he explains, this could take the form of an "[i]ncrease (decrease) in the share of all citizens' complaints regarding the denial of legally mandated benefits that result in the delivery of those benefits" (2007:66). To access this kind of information, ideally the records of case outcomes from a Citizens' Complaints Bureau or similar institution could be collated and analysed. However, as Tilly concedes, this is an ideal measure, data for which is not readily available for many countries, especially those with weaker

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[40] Although this depended somewhat on which Prime Minister was in charge at the time.

state institutions. Indeed, the likelihood of such an institution existing, or providing publically-accessible information of this kind in a fragile context is minimal due to the general weakness of institutional capacity and/or suspicion of making information public. This being the case, Tilly makes use of Freedom House figures for civil liberties and again combines these with his own judgments based on historical narratives.

It is also possible to extend this measure to look more broadly at the nature of citizen complaints. Asking where and to which bodies people actually take their grievances, and what kinds of grievances these comprise, can shed light on the way in which the social contract between citizen and state is constructed. If for example, people bring complaints concerning the closure of a state-run health facility first to a non-state council or body, to then be referred up to a larger, state-representing institution, this in itself provides information about how people expect problems and complaints to be dealt with (through local interlocutors rather than through state procedures directly). Furthermore, the perceived outcomes of these complaints as related by local respondents can indicate how the state and its role is perceived in the local community. In this way, **local perspectives on service provision and complaints procedures** can function as a useful theme for investigation under this category.

Table 5: Specific indicators

Tilly's process	Corresponding qualitative theme to explore	Indicators

A. Breadth	**Perceptions of legally-enforceable access to state officials across different social groups**.	1) Respondents from a variety of ethnic and social backgrounds perceive their access to state officials to be unhindered and give examples
		Looking for:
		  a) similarities across different case study provinces
		  b) similarities across urban and rural respondents
		  c) similarities across male and female responses

		2) Respondents refer to legal procedures for recourse should their access to officials be hindered

B. Equality	**Perceptions of de facto equality between social groups**	1) Respondents consider their own status vis-à-vis the state to be equal to that of others, for example in terms of access to services
		Looking for:
		  a) Female respondents consider themselves to have similar rights and duties vis-à-vis the state as their male counterparts
		  b) Little difference between different ethnic responses concerning their perceived status vis-à-vis the state

		2) Respondents consider their votes in elections to carry as much weight as those of other citizens
C. Protection	**Perceptions of the visibility and accountability of the legal process**	1) Respondents refer to common procedures through which arbitrary state action can be

		countered and give examples of when this has been done
		2) Respondents express confidence in the judicial system
		3) Respondents compare current legal processes more accountable /knowable than in past regimes
D. Mutually binding consultation	**Local perspectives on service provision and complaints procedures**	1) Respondents express expectations concerning state-provided services and indicate that these are generally met
		2) Respondents express confidence in the continuity of the provision of state services
		3) Respondents express familiarity with state institutions and recount examples of taking complaints about service provision to them

(Table 5 cont.)

Discussion of indicators

The indicators specified above in Table 5 are purposefully broad in nature, allowing for a degree of variation between transcripts collected from respondents in very different areas of Afghanistan, which have different kinds of connections to the state. This also allows comparison between different regional contexts, and also between urban and rural sites within the same case study province. The indicators also require some disaggregation of the data, particularly by gender, religious sect, geographical location and urban/rural divides. They are all phrased in a positive sense, primarily for consistency's sake – and as such they make the assumption that respondents will talk about their relationship to the state in some form or another. This assumption could be proven wrong, in which case none of the criteria for the indicators will be met when data is analysed.

Rather than assign a numerical score to these indicators, results will be discussed analytically. This avoids any risk of arbitrary judgments being made when the data

being drawn upon must be interpreted[41], to some degree, and thus must be subject to the subconscious decisions made by the interpreter. This is in part a factor of the qualitative nature of the data but also the result of the way in which the researcher is very much aware, as interpreter of the data, of the potential biases she might bring to her own interpretations. While she attempts to mitigate this through constant cross-referencing to secondary historical and contemporary sources, this is nevertheless a limitation.

Tilly weights all four categories evenly, given his conviction that all four contribute equally to democratisation (2007:15). The researcher attempts to do the same here, noting if the data meet the indicators in one category more than in others and exploring the reasons for this.

A final point to mention is the question of change in each of the four categories. This will be discussed later in the chapter and in chapter 7 in more detail, but it is worth mentioning here that the indicators above (with the exception of C3) do not account for change over time, and rather focus on current experiences and perceptions of citizens. This is again due to a concern for consistency, in that many of the respondents had migrated to Pakistan and Iran during previous regimes, and others were often too young to remember former regimes. While the researcher will note examples in which respondents do make comparisons with past regimes of their own accord, for the most part the indicators focus on present circumstances. Change over time could be measured through repeated studies conducted at regular intervals using the same set of indicators. The researcher will draw upon secondary data to make some judgments about change from previous regimes. In chapter 7, she will explore in detail factors that might cause change in the future in each of the four areas, either toward or away from democratisation.

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[41] Here I refer to the analytical interpretation of data, rather than the literal translation of interview transcripts from Dari or Pashtu into English. Nevertheless, the translation of data adds a further layer of interpretation that is not insignificant. For a note on translation, see Appendix 3..

6.2.2 Data set: tables of interviews and discussion

Table 6: Nangarhar interviews[42]

Location	Income	Men	Women	Total
City	Elite	2	3	**5**
	Mid income	5	1	**6**
	Low income	2	0	**2**
Total:		**9**	**4**	**13**
Suburb	Elite	1	1	**2**
	Mid income	6	2	**8**
	Low income	3	1	**4**
Total:		**10**	**4**	**14**
Rural	Elite	3	1	**4**
	Mid income	3	4	**7**
	Low income	4	4	**8**
Total:		**10**	**9**	**19**
Total men and women		**29**	**17**	**46**

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[42] For a full list of interviews for all provinces, see Appendix 4.

Table 7: Ghazni interviews

Location	Income	Men	Women	Total
City	Elite	2	2	**4**
	Mid income	4	2	**6**
	Low income	2	2	**4**
Total:		**8**	**6**	**14**
Suburb	Elite	0	1	**1**
	Mid income	2	5	**7**
	Low income	0	2	**2**
Total:		**2**	**8**	**10**
Rural	Elite	3	0	**3**
	Mid income	9	0	**9**
	Low income	3	1	**4**
Total:		**15**	**1**	**16**
Total men and women		**25**	**15**	**40**

Table 8: Balkh interviews

Location	Income	Men	Women	Total
City	Elite	2	3	**5**
	Mid income	3	2	**5**
	Low income	0	2	**2**
Total:		**5**	**7**	**12**
Suburb	Elite	6	1	**7**
	Mid income	6	7	**13**
	Low income	1	0	**1**
Total:		**13**	**8**	**21**
Rural	Elite	2	0	**2**
	Mid income	1	0	**1**
	Low income	5	5	**10**
Total:		**8**	**5**	**13**
Total men and women		**26**	**20**	**46**

Table 9: Kabul interviews

Location	Income	Men	Women	Total
City	Elite	2	2	**4**
	Mid income	7	2	**9**
	Low income	0	0	**0**
Total:		**9**	**4**	**13**
Suburb	Elite	1	3	**4**
	Mid income	2	2	**4**
	Low income	1	0	**1**
Total:		**4**	**5**	**9**
Total men and women		**13**	**9**	**22**

Actual data collected reflects, for the most part, the specifications set forward in chapter 4. These include the need for respondents to reflect a broad sample of society in a given province, in terms of ethnicity, age, position or role in society and gender, for example. A full breakdown of interviews detailing this specific information is given in Appendix 4. In total, 154 interviews were conducted, meeting the requirement of approximately 35-45 per province and including an additional 22 interviews conducted in Kabul as a means to compare responses from Kabul city with those of elsewhere in the country. When referring to the three provinces in which the majority of data were collected, the researcher avoids using the term 'case study province' because not enough interviews per province were conducted to merit a full case study of each, nor were interviews in each province conducted in one single geographical location. This was a purposeful methodological choice which allowed a broader sample of interviews to be conducted across a range of different people groups.

In the above tables, alongside the indication of the respondents' sex, the researcher has divided respondents into six simple categories, however, in order to demonstrate an overall picture of the spread of the sample. These include the location-specific categories of 'city', 'suburb/provincial town' and 'rural'; and the social position-specific categories of 'elite', 'mid-income' and 'low-income'. These require further explanation, as given below.

Location-specific categories relate to the place in which the respondent was currently residing, if they had been resident in the same place for over five years. Thus, a person who had moved from a rural village to the city for work four years previously would be categorised as 'rural', largely due to the way in which Afghans themselves refer to their home as the place in which they and their ancestors grew up. Similarly, a student living in the city in order to study but visiting family on a regular basis in a rural area would also be classified as 'rural'. The researcher distinguishes between the three categories by identifying those respondents living in or on the outskirts (1-3km) of a provincial centre as 'city' respondents. A 'suburb' is characterised by its distance from the provincial centre - 3-5km, and also by the existence of a sub-centre in which shops and services can be found locally. In Kabul this works slightly differently due to the

sprawling nature of the city – in this instance, Kart-e Se, an urban district to the south-west, for example, with its own shops and services, is still considered part of the city, but Dasht-e Barchi, an area connected to Kart-e Se but 3km further away and more contained as a unit separate to the city, is considered a suburb. 'Provincial town' is also included in this category, as, for example in Balkh province, interviews were conducted in Dehdadi, Hairaton (Kaldar district) and Balkh which are all district centres in their own right, with shops and services, and are further than 5km from the provincial centre but still do not count as 'rural'. The 'rural' category is reserved for villages and farms located more than 5km from the provincial centre and with few immediate shops or services available for residents. It should be noted here that a key limitation of data collection was the inability to conduct interviews in very remote areas – the furthest rural village in which data was collected was approximately 25 kilometres from the nearest district or provincial centre. This was due to security concerns and the need to protect the safety of the research team.

Social position-specific categories relate to the nature of the respondent's role and approximate, relative levels of income or material wealth. These factors are individually problematic because a person's status in local society may be determined by more than just material wealth, although the two are no doubt related in some cases, particularly where for example a good deal of wealth is needed to ensure one's social position (for example in terms of standing for election for parliament, which requires capital or at least access to credit to pay for extensive campaigning). As such, the researcher has attempted to combine the two. Conscious of the ambiguity surrounding the term 'elite', she has used it to incorporate both status and wealth, taking into account the role of the respondent in society first, before considering their material possessions. A qaryadar (village head), provincial council member or head of a women's shura (council) are all considered elites, as are those in positions of high office (heads of departments) in government ministries or their provincial branches. Further to this, other examples of respondents categorised as 'elite' include the owners of large companies, former military commanders, political party leaders and university lecturers.

The 'mid-income' category is used to refer to respondents who work (or whose spouses work) as professionals, and whose household includes at least one regular salary or steady source of income. Indicators for a 'mid-income' respondent also include whether or not the respondent owns their own house or car, has expensive and/or imported furnishings in their home, owns a television or computer, and has family members living in Europe, North America or Australia.[43] This provides some indication of wealth and stability due to the expense and/or patronage ties needed to obtain a passport and documentation for overseas travel, and also the likelihood of remittances being sent back to Afghanistan from the family member working overseas. By comparison, respondents in the 'low income' category are so classified if they have no steady source of income, relying for example on subsistence agriculture or sales of vegetables on a mobile cart (*karachi*); if they rent, rather than own their house; have simple furnishings, provide only tea and chickpeas for the research team during the interview (as opposed to more expensive snacks such as raisins, sweets or almonds); if they are dressed simply; or if their household is female-headed (with no male breadwinner due to the death of a husband or father).

Looking at the data as a whole, it is possible to see clearly that there are fewer women respondents than men. This was expected before data collection began, due to the way in which women in Afghanistan have far less of a role in the public sphere than men. While some women in urban areas work in government offices, for NGOs, as nurses for women in female-only clinics and as teachers, other roles – including all public shopkeeping or selling, taxi-driving, urban maintenance, and banking, for example – are almost exclusively for men only. This limits access to women, simply because it is more difficult to find women and build their trust to the extent that (female) researchers are invited to enter the family home for an interview. As might also be expected, accessing women for interviews was more difficult in rural areas. Also related to this is the lack of women categorised as 'elite' in rural areas – this again was due to the fact that very few women work outside the home in highly conservative parts of the country, such as rural Ghazni – and even fewer have public roles that would increase their status in the

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[43] These are all factors noted by the research team in their observations, compiled for each interview.

community. As a result, we were only able to conduct one interview with a 'rural' woman in this province – a significant limitation of the data. Also notable in Ghazni province is the way in which very few 'suburb' interviews were conducted with men. This is because the male research team divided their time between the interviews in the city, and those in the Qarabagh district, about 20km from the provincial centre. The female research team were unable to conduct interviews in this district due to security concerns.[44]

As explained above, data for Kabul province was collected for purposes of comparison with the other provinces, and was not treated as a separate case for analysis in its own right, hence the fewer interviews conducted. Of the 22 interviews that were conducted, very few were with 'low-income' respondents, partly due to the difficulty in finding respondents fitting this category with space and time to talk in the city. While in other provincial centres, low-income families are able to rent property in the city, this is increasingly difficult for Kabul residents due to the high rental prices, in part affected by the high concentration of international agencies renting office space and living accommodation in the city. Interviews were not conducted in the rural districts of Kabul province due to the way in which Kabul was treated differently to Nangarhar, Ghazni and Balkh – data collection was limited to the city and suburban areas as the researcher did not anticipate using Kabul as another province for full investigation. This could be attempted in further research, but there was not time to add further interviews to this project.

6.3 Data analysis: Breadth in the state-citizen relationship in Afghanistan

Having presented the available data in table format, and having also outlined the criteria through which the state-citizen relationship in Afghanistan will be analysed, this chapter will now focus on data analysis, assessing the applicability to the Afghan case of the first of Tilly's four processes: breadth.

Table 10: Recap of breadth indicators

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[44] These affected the male team also but in different ways – women travelling alone with no male relative and no reason for travelling to Qarabagh, other than for work, would present a significant target for insurgent interrogation, whereas men were more free to travel alone in this manner.

Tilly's process	Corresponding qualitative theme to explore	Indicators
A. Breadth	**Perceptions of legally-enforceable access to state officials across different social groups**.	1) Respondents from a variety of ethnic and social backgrounds perceive their access to state officials to be unhindered and give examples. Looking for: a) similarities across different case study provinces b) similarities across urban and rural respondents c) similarities across male and female responses
		2) Respondents refer to legal procedures for recourse should their access to officials be hindered

6.3.1 Indicator 1) Respondents from a variety of ethnic and social backgrounds perceive their access to state officials to be unhindered and give examples

Data collected for this indictor covered a broad range of sub-topics concerning perceptions of access to state officials. Across all respondents in the three key provinces, a clear preference for avoiding contact with state officials altogether was noted, and instead a tendency to attempt to solve disputes and issues at the local level. Reasons for this included tradition and custom, a widespread concern about issues escalating into greater problems, bribes being considered necessary to access state officials and obtain assistance, and the way in which even when state officials were sought, they were perceived as inaccessible, particularly to those without connections or money. In rural Ghazni, the option of soliciting Taliban assistance as opposed to that of the state was discussed by respondents also. These issues will be discussed in turn. Across the entire data set from the three key provinces, only two examples of positive interactions with state officials were given, and possible reasons for this will then be explored.

6.3.1.1 <u>Preference for avoiding contact with state officials altogether</u>

In compliance with the research methodology, which justified a qualitative, conversation-style interview technique with open-ended rather than leading questions, respondents were asked to describe in general how they would go about solving a problem or dispute – rather than questioned specifically about their perceived access to state officials. Correspondingly, answers were not limited to a description of due process involving different branches of state institutions but covered a much broader set of arrangements for dispute resolution. Across the board, respondents discussed a preference for solving issues at the local level at least initially, before attempting to access state officials. The following quotations are representative of responses from all three study provinces, across all social levels and both men and women:

> **Question:** How do you deal with problems and disputes, if you have them?
> **Answer:** Problems are different in nature, for example if there is a conflict over land between two sides, then it is referred to the municipality. But in the case of some problems, without informing the government, we try to solve them through the tribal leaders, elders, local chiefs and local council. It is much better this way, because it shows respect to the elders and their agreement on a single decision is an indication of unity among the people (Nang 3 W)

> **Question:** If you have a problem and want to solve it, how do you do this?
> **Answer:** First, if there is any problem, we refer it to the Malik of the village. If he can solve it, then everything is ok. if he cannot, then Maliks from other villages are gathered to help solve the problem...
> **Question:** Can you give some examples?
> **Answer:** Common problems, such as a fight breaking out between two people, are referred to the local elders, but issues of death and injuries are referred to the district administration for a solution. If necessary, we take serious issues to the court as well. But, first we try to solve any kind of problem without referring it to the government. (Nang 21 M)

> **Question**: If you have a problem and want to solve it, to whom you refer it?
> **Answer:** We try to solve the problem ourselves first. There is a proverb in Pashto that says ***Pushto hagha ghota che pa las khlasige no Khula ta ye sa hajat de.*** It means if the problem is solved at home then it is not necessary to share it with others. If it is not solved at home then it is taken to the whitebeards (*Speen Zharee*) of the village, and they are unable to solve it then it is taken to the tribal elders (*Mashran)* and the regional *Mashran*. Finally if there is no other solution it is referred to the government. (Ghaz 7 M)

Question: If you have a problem, how do you solve it?
Answer. If there is a problem, the first thing we do is discuss it with the elders of our household. If they cannot solve it themselves, then we refer it to the Mullah and the community elders, and then finally parliament members.
Question: Could you give any examples of when a problem was solved?
Answer. Yes, it is a good question. To answer it I will tell you a story from my own experience. A few years ago my sister-in-law's husband [respondent's brother] was killed. After her husband's death, the elders, malik and the elders of her family gathered together to decide what to do. They decided that she should choose herself whether she wanted to continue to live in her husband's house, and if she did not she would be free to return to her father's house, or take another husband. There was no pressure on her. (Ghaz 1 W)

Question: If you have a problem, how would you solve it?
Answer respondent 1: Through the shura.
Answer respondent 2: This shura was established five years ago. We have another shura called the Shora-e-Okhowat Islami (Council of brotherhood) and most of the members of the two shuras are the same people. This shura solves most of the problems and disputes people face. However, the shura was not able to solve a recent dispute about water between the villages. We asked the MPs of Balkh province for help, but they didn't help us to solve this problem. (Balkh 15 M)

Question: In this area when people have a problem or dispute with one another, how do you find a solution?
Answer: We have the *Shura-e Hambastagi* [a local council in which anyone can participate to help solve disputes through consultation]. If the shura is unable to solve the problem we take it to the *Wolswali* (district governorship) for a solution, and finally if the *Woliswal* (district governor) is also unable to solve the problem or dispute we go to the *Wolayat* (the city court) in Mazar (Balkh 25 M).

These quotations demonstrate the extent to which local communities – whether in urban or rural areas – across the country have their own mechanisms for dispute resolution that rarely include state officials, or see consultation with the state as a last resort. The names and types of informal groups and individuals vary between Pashtun and non-Pashtun areas, and between urban and rural communities. Across all three provinces, 'whitebeards' are community elders to whom local residents are primarily accountable. These are informal positions to which older members of the community are selected by the community itself. In Pashtun, rural areas, key members of the local political landscape also include a village *Malik* (religious elder), tribal and/or regional *Mashran.*

In larger communities across all ethnicities, a *shura* is a regular gathering of elders charged with the responsibility of decision-making and problem-solving, and potentially representing villagers at the district level. This would be lead by the *kalantar* or *qarydar*, the head of the community. In urban areas, a *wakil-e guzar* functions as representative of the immediate community, such as the street or block of housing. This position is semi-formal and oftentimes *wakil-e guzars* are registered with the municipality and are given stamps of authority through which to approve documentation. All of these individuals hold different relationships to state officials depending on personal connections, location and levels of influence in the community.

As reflected in the quotations above, respondents differentiate between different kinds of problems and their appropriate methods of resolution. Thus, family quarrels, disputes between neighbours and issues relating to local services and resources are often taken to local elders or shuras, while state authorities could be called upon to deal with criminal cases, for example.[45] The division of labour allocated to local and state officials is made differently by different respondents, however, with those living in more rural areas less likely to involve state officials even for criminal cases. At the opposite extreme, respondents in Balkh province appeared more likely to include state officials in problem-solving – while they still referred to local elders as their first and preferred option, they were much more likely to suggest the district and provincial governorships as the next stages in the process. This was not to say that they always received resolutions to problems from these sources, however, and many had examples of disappointing experiences when approaching officials at the district and provincial levels, as reflected in the quotation from interview Balkh 17 M cited above. Likely reasons for this difference include the way in which respondents in Balkh were largely from surburban areas or provincial towns, meaning that their awareness of and connection to state authorities was likely to be greater than that of respondents in rural Ghazni or Nangarhar, purely due to proximity to administrative centres and availability of information through a range of different available media sources, for example. Also, the provincial governor, Ustad Atta Noor, has established a network of district

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[45] For a comprehensive review of dispute resolution mechanisms in Afghanistan, see Coburn and Dempsey, 2010; and Coburn, 2011).

governors of varying ethnicities that are largely loyal to him and who function very much within the infrastructure he has created. This has facilitated stronger ties between the different people groups living in the various districts of Balkh province and the provincial administration at the centre.

Reasons given by respondents for their preferences to solve disputes outside of state institutions were varied. A common response referred to tradition and local customs, whereby people chose to approach local leaders first due to the way in which this had traditionally been a method of dispute-resolution in the area. This is not to say that all local institutions were necessarily well-established and/or trusted, however – as one of the respondents from Balkh province mentions above, some shuras have only been formed recently, particularly those that were established as part of the National Solidarity Programme.[46] Often, more than one shura can exist in a given area, but it is common for members to overlap. This can be a problem when, as reported by a number of suburban respondents in Balkh province, members of the shura are considered to work for their own interests above and beyond those of community members. Nevertheless, 'tradition' and 'custom' feature regularly in respondents' explanations as to why issues are solved at the local level.

Another reason cited by many respondents is that of the fear of problems escalating, should they involve state officials. One young woman from a suburb of Jalalabad city in Nangarhar referred to the way in which consulting government institutions could make a family problem worse:

> **Question:** How do people deal with problems and disputes if they have them?
> **Answer:** If it is a legal or social problem; for example, conflict over credit or between relatives, we try to solve it by consulting with the local council. And if it is a criminal issue; such as when someone is injured by another person, or theft of property; then it is referred to the district government.

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[46] The National Solidarity Programme was established in 2003 as a collaboration between the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) and the World Bank. Under the direction of Ashraf Ghani, a former Afghan minister and World Bank Official, the programme combined democracy promotion with service provision on a national level by requiring villages to form elected councils that would put together requests for the use of development funds, choosing between a number of options (such as a water pump, generator, irrigation system etc). These funds would then be delivered with the help of 'facilitating partners' – usually local or international NGOs working in the area. For more, see Kakar, 2005.

> **Question:** Why do people tend to solve legal and social issues through local councils and leaders?
> **Answer:** If the problem is between two members of a family and they refer the problem to the government, the government decides between them on the basis of the law, and after that point one of them will be known as a criminal and will be punished, exacerbating the issue and widening the gap between the two family members and also causing tension within the whole family. Rather than face such consequences, people prefer to find solutions to different problems through the local council and elders. (Nang 6 W)

In this way, the likelihood of state intervention contributing to the problem rather than serving to provide a solution acts as a principal deterrent to contacting district or provincial officials with a case. This reflects the way in which for many, the lack of access to state officials is not necessarily considered a significant problem for individual respondents.

Related to this is the way in which many respondents saw state officials as predatory and corrupt, charging unofficial tariffs for their services which many were unable to afford. Although some urban respondents made the same complaint about leaders in less formal positions of authority, such as wakil-e guzars and kalantars, for the most part bribery was associated unilaterally with institutions of state. Overall, an official stamp or seal of approval (possessed by wakil-e guzars and kalantars as well as formally appointed state officials) was seen by respondents as a means of extortion:

> **Question:** How do you think problems should be solved within society?
> **Answer:** I think that if people in a society face a problem, it should be referred to the local council or the provincial council, and the provincial council will form a commission for the solution to the problem, but it should be mentioned that the commission will also cheat people, because all the officials including the governor are cheating people. As people apply to the officials for help and these officials do not take any action to assist them, people become hopeless and even commit suicide. (Nang 7 W)

> **Question:** How do people solve problems in your community, if they face them?
> **Answer:** We try to solve any problems through our council, because there is huge corruption in the government network. It is a big headache to refer to the government for your difficulties. The government is corrupt and creates

additional problems for the applicants, so it is better not to refer to government. (Nang 6 M)

Question: What do you think about the way in which decisions are made in the community?
Answer: In my view it is good because most of the whitebeards and elders make decisions and prevent problems from occurring. Nowadays there is a lot of bribery in the government administration, it is impossible to refer anything to them without paying a bribe. (Ghaz 9 M)

Question: How are decision-makers selected in your village?
Answer: Decision-makers are selected by the people from the village, by the tribal elders and the regional elders. And then these people are performing their duties.
Question: What do you think about this?
Answer: It is good. The problems of the people are solved in an easy and helpful way and their problems are resolved. Most the people in our village are daily wage earners and they are poor – governmental officials take money from them [to solve problems] and they can't afford it (Ghaz 10 M).

Question: Tell me about the system of authority in this area.
Answer: ...One time I wanted to get an ID card (*Tazkirah*) for each of my sons. In order to do this I needed [the Kalantar's] stamp and he asked me to pay the fee of 500afs (USD 10) for this. I paid this amount but it was useless, because the system is corrupt in this area. Here for a small administrative task in the government you have pay lot [extra] to get the job done. (Balkh 19 M)

These examples, representative of many more respondents' accounts across the data set, demonstrate the extent to which institutions of state – and the individuals employed within them – are considered unaccountable, and provide another reason for the preference for avoiding state mediation in dispute resolution altogether. While one respondent from Balkh province considered the bribes of government officials a deterrent to those considering criminal activity, and thus an indirectly positive phenomenon, it was nevertheless for most a disappointing characteristic of state institutions, from which greater transparency was expected.

In cases where state officials are sought to provide authorisation or mediate in disputes, they are often perceived to be inaccessible, particularly to those without connections or money. This inaccessibility was reported by respondents from all provinces, indicating that people from all ethnic groups had similar experiences – although it was more

common among low-income respondents, and mid-income respondents without personal connections to the individuals working in state institutions:

> **Question:** What do you think of the Provincial Council?
> **Answer:** The Provincial Council has been seized by warlords. They do not care about public problems. The members have problems among themselves. It is their responsibility to serve their people, but instead they are struggling for their own salaries and benefits...Last month we faced some problems regarding the cleaning of the streams and brooks in our area. I went to the Provincial Council with some other members of our local *shura* to solve the problem. We waited until the evening, but no-one came to ask about our problem or to offer assistance. Finally, the watchman asked us, "what have you come for?". We explained our problem to him. He asked again, "do you know anyone in the Council?" We told him that we did not know anybody there. He looked at us jeeringly and said "Go home. Even if you wait here for days, no-one will take any notice of you. It is our Council." (Nang 5 M)

> **Question:** If the local leader and elders are also unable to help you, then how do you solve problems?
> **Answer:** Then we apply to the district administration to help us solve our problems. But, the district government solves only the problems of those people who have a connection there or who have money, or both. The problems of people who don't have these are not solved at the district level and are referred back to the village's local council for solutions." (Nang 13 M)

> **Question:** Tell us about your relationship with the local officials?
> **Answer:** Unfortunately they do not have good relationships with ordinary people and they want to get everything just for themselves, not for the poor people. No-one worries about poor people and that is very shameful for us as Muslims...If the son of a rich and important person does something unlawful then you will see him walking free in the city after one week of committing a crime, and there is no rule of law for them. (Balkh 14 M)

In terms of the indicators of breadth identified above, these quotations highlight the way in which access to state officials is not perceived to be universal but instead limited to the rich and influential in society. Data from men and women, old and young people across all three provinces indicates the same finding. Interestingly, fewer examples of this complaint occur in the interviews conducted in Ghazni province, but this is possibly due to the way in which respondents in Ghazni were less likely to approach state officials in general than respondents in Nangarhar or Balkh, due to the more rural location of the province, and also had a further alternative to seeking state jurisdiction – that of the authorities of the 'shadow government' or Taliban in the area.

Found across most of the interview transcripts from respondents in rural Ghazni (13 out of 16 total interviews in rural areas, all of which were Pashtun villages) was the statement that, should local maliks and tribal elders be unable to solve a particular problem in the community, members of the Taliban could be drawn upon to intervene:

> **Question.** If you have a problem and want to solve it, how would you do this?
> **Answer.** In our village there is a tradition that if a person has a problem then first of all they try to solve it by themselves, and if they don't find a solution then they refer to the elders for help.
> **Question.** If they could not solve your problem then to whom would you refer?
> **Answer.** If the problem is not solved within the household, then we have tribal elders to help, and if they also could not solve it then we have respected whitebeards in the village. If they also cannot solve the problem then we enlist the help of the Taliban who are a political group. We refer to them, and if in some villages there is no Taliban then they refer to the government officials (Ghaz 12 M).
>
> **Question:** Are there political groups or parties active in this area?
> **Answer:** No, there is no political group here, but there are two governments: one is Hamid Karzai's government and the other one is the Taliban government. And no political parties (Ghaz 21 M).
>
> **Question:** If you have a problem, how do you go about solving it?
> **Answer:** If we have problem in our family we first refer to the elder of our family, such as a father or elder brother, and they solve the problem. If the problem is in the village then the villagers refer to the elders of the village for a solution. If they cannot solve it, then we refer to the Taliban and they solve our problem in the space of a single day – even if it is a difficult problem they can do this (Ghaz 23 M).

In contrast to respondents' accounts of government officials, statements about the Taliban as local interlocutors do not refer to any incidences of bribery or unavailability, assigning a comparative moral high ground to the so-called shadow authorities as compared to representatives of the state. Indeed, as one rural mid-income male respondent described, Taliban authorities were readily available to help and did not put a fee on their services: "there are Taliban here and they are always around, so we go to them and then they come up with a solution [to a problem] without charging anything" (interview Ghaz 21 M). In interviews the Taliban are referred to variously as a 'political group', some kind of political party or even as 'the government' itself. Perhaps

contributing to the frequency with which Taliban intervention was mentioned was the way in which, even in urban Ghazni, many respondents were hesitant to talk about government officials, expressing unwillingness to go into detail about state systems and institutions, as if concerned about the ramifications of speaking to the research team about the government. By contrast, in general respondents were comfortable giving information about shadow authorities. This is itself demonstrates the limits of government influence in the area, and the way in which the control of violent force is not held by the state in this region. In spite of people's willingness to talk about the Taliban, however, and the seeming availability of Talib officials to intervene in dispute resolution, they are nevertheless still considered by respondents to be a last resort in problem solving, playing a similar (if more morally accountable) role to that of the state in other provinces. Regardless of the accessibility of these actors, the preferred means of problem solving and dispute resolution remains within the local community through the assistance of family and/or village elders.

6.3.1.2 <u>Possible reasons for lack of positive examples of interactions with state officials given</u>

The first indicator for breadth was specified as a way to measure access to government officials across different social groups, looking in particular at whether people of different ethnicities, social backgrounds, ages and residential areas (whether rural or urban) considered their access to these officials to be adequate. Instead, it was found that few respondents sought access to state officials unless this access was considered the only means of solving a given issue, due to fear of the problem escalating and creating opportunities for extortion – and that when they did require access this was oftentimes unavailable to those without connections or money.

Factors affecting the data in this regard could include the way in which, given the time and opportunity to complain about government services and officials in interviews, people are likely to do so. However, as can be seen from the example quotations given above, respondents referred in their own right to problems with representatives of state, without provocation or leading questions. Care was taken to ensure that respondents

were selected according to a broad sample, including those who might be close to the state infrastructure and those who likely had little connection with it. Another factor contributing to the abundance of negative stories of access to state officials and bribery could be the timing of interviews, which took place in between presidential and parliamentary elections in Afghanistan in 2009 and 2010 respectively, and which were both marred by widespread fraud and were a talking point for many respondents.

Across the data set, two examples were given about times when state intervention had been useful to the solving of a particular issue – one concerning the provision of materials for a school, and the other regarding a forced marriage that was overturned:

> **Question:** Can you give us an example of a recent problem that has been solved in your village?
> **Answer:** Yes, why not. There was a problem regarding the school. On behalf of the people, I took the problem to the Provincial Council. The Council paid a great deal of attention to the issue and provided books and other learning materials for the students. (Nang 10 W [women's shura leader]).

> **Question:** What kind of problems do you refer to the local elders?
> **Answer:** There are some problems that even the local elders cannot solve, and they consult with the peoples' shura to find a solution. For example here in our village a 14-year old girl was given by her family in marriage to an 80 year-old man, as compensation for the murder of his brother (for which their son was accused, but found innocent). The girl shared her problem with the elders but the 80-year old was also an elder of the village, and due to this the people insisted she should go ahead with the marriage. The girl was obliged to refer the Department of Women's Affairs [the regional branch of a government line ministry] to solve her problem. When she referred to the Department her problem was solved. (Ghaz 12 W).

In the second example here, the story given is unusual given the generally negative reputation held by the Ministry of Women's Affairs and its perceived inability to solve problems such as this one. Indeed, two other accounts were given by women respondents relating to the way in which this ministry had either ignored a similar situation, or made it worse. Nevertheless, also interesting is the way in which both stories of positive interaction with and access to the state come from women

respondents. While there is not enough evidence here to suggest a trend, it is possible to suggest that access to state officials might be more significant to women than to men, due to their lack of access to and influence within alterative, local institutions of decision-making and dispute resolution.

In sum, findings for this indicator highlight and call into question some of the assumptions inherent in Tilly's model – first and foremost, that citizens of a given state actually desire access to state officials for assistance, and that the institutions of state are seen to provide a neutral facility for administrative affairs and dispute resolution. In an environment in which elite capture of these institutions thrives, particularly in rural areas, partly due to a lack of regulation and influence of central government over regional centres, and to endemic corruption throughout the state infrastructure, this is clearly not the case. In some urban areas, a greater degree of desired access to state institutions – should they become less corrupt – for communities and individuals was noted. Even within urban areas, however, different 'categories of citizenship' (Tilly, 2007: 14) exist, some being more equal than others in terms of their access to the state, and would appear to contribute to a position on the lower end of the spectrum for breadth for Afghanistan in 2010.

6.3.2 Indicator 2) Respondents refer to legal procedures for recourse should their access to officials be hindered

Following on from indicator 1 is the secondary assumption that, should respondents refer to the way in which their access to state officials has been hindered, they describe means through which they have been able to seek legal recourse for this. This is a critical component of Tilly's criteria under the breadth category – it is fundamental that access to state officials is legally enforceable, in order that all citizens are entitled by law to the same access to state administration and services. This also links to Tilly's notion of public politics – in situating people's right to access the state within a legal framework, he essentially excludes deals and bargains that could be made between individual state officials and members of the public (2007: 12-13).

Very clear from the data, however, is that respondents perceived themselves to have little or no legal recourse available to them if their access to state officials had been hindered. The following quotations demonstrate this:

> **Question:** What are the main issues that people in this area face?
> **Answer:** Our most fundamental problem is that our homes are near to the river, and when there is heavy rain, the floods wash our homes away. We have written applications and petitions to the government in this regard so many times, but still no solution has been found. We even took this problem to the ministry level [in Kabul], but unfortunately there has been no outcome. It is a very serious problem, because peoples' lives are at risk (Nang 11 W).

> **Question:** What are the main issues that people in this area face?
> **Answer:** One of the main problems is the lack of electricity. My father and other elders of the area have frequently applied to the province about it, but the issue has not been solved yet (Nang 13 W).

> **Question:** To whom do you refer if there is a problem in the area?
> **Answer:** Previously, we would refer to the village elders, but since hearing a recent story, our hearts don't want to refer to anyone at all. The story is that three months ago in Khogyani, there were three sisters who didn't have a father or a brother. One of them was married to her cousin by force by her uncle, and he wanted to marry the other two also to his sons. When the two sisters understood this, they took their case to the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission – which they were able to find with some difficulty. This office kept the girls for some time but then they submitted them back to their uncle. They didn't pay any attention to their situation. Is this justice that they were submitted back to their uncle and all the people were informed about their situation? The Human Rights authorities didn't make any good decision. ...Now, we won't share our problems with anyone; we will trust only in Allah (Nang 15 W).

> You know that nowadays people are only thinking about money...The Qaryadar in our area was given USD 60,000 from an NGO for providing electricity to villages in our district, and the same amount was given for two other districts as well. He took the money for himself and so we still don't have electricity, but the others districts do have it...It is a really tough and unbearable situation in our area, but there is no entity to receive our complaints. We went to raise this issue with governor – with great difficulty after four days I succeeded to meet him, but nothing happened as a result. Therefore I can conclude that the Qaryadar and the Governor have links to each other (Balkh 18 M).

These stories of a distinct lack of available legal recourse for those unable to access state officials reflect a variety of circumstances, from complaints concerning lack of

service provision, to the inability of women to access reliable assistance when faced with the prospect of forced marriage. None of the respondents above mention any attempt to take the matter further or to seek legal support or compensation. This is not to say that the judicial system does not function, but in a similar manner to other institutions of government, it is perceived with some suspicion and the prospect of penalties for those who cannot afford or refuse to bribe officials. Again, this appears to be a case of unequal citizenship, in which the richer or better connected party would always win a case.

In many cases, women are more likely to be affected by this lack of legal recourse than men, particularly when problems involve so-called 'family issues'. Here, social norms of non-intervention come into play, both in terms of a woman's reluctance to approach non-family members for assistance and in terms of institutions of state considering 'family issues' to be beyond their remit. As the following example demonstrates, this can have tragic consequences:

> **Question:** Sister, are there any problems in your area that are still unresolved?
> **Answer:** Yes. We had a terrible problem that wasn't solved and had negative results. All the people of the area knew about it and were very nervous about it.
> **Question:** What kind of problem was that?
> **Answer:** It was a family problem. There was a girl who was newly married, and who tried to please her husband but could not succeed, the husband argued a lot with her and behaved badly towards her. The bride couldn't talk about the issue to anyone due to shame. So she poured oil on herself and set herself on fire. It was a family problem and so neither the Human Rights Commission, nor the Women's Shura, nor the Provincial Council paid any attention to it." (Nang 10 W)

This provides an example of one of the most fundamental functions of state – that of protecting citizens – often being inaccessible to a significant proportion of women, particularly in rural and conservative areas. As such, it indicates that breadth of access to state protection remains minimal.

6.3.3 Kabul data on breadth indicators

In contrast to the findings from the three key provinces on indicator 1, data from Kabul indicated that respondents were much more likely to solicit assistance in administrative matters from state institutions, partly due to the way in which the authority of the state as compared to that of any other form of local governance was much stronger. As one respondent described,

> Usually people refer to the [urban] district authorities and police for small problems and disputes. But if people have big problems, they demonstrate peacefully in the city. But parliament is the main place in which our interests are represented (Kabul 2 M).

This is not to say that Kabul respondents unilaterally supported the parliament or trusted its members – most were critical of the way in which it functioned and the partiality of MPs within it. Rather, this refers to the increased level of access to state officials enjoyed by Kabul residents. It is not uncommon for people to visit MPs in their Kabul homes, for example, as described by the parliamentarians interviewed for this study (interviews Kabul 3 W and 4 W). Further, the connection between local level officials and the broader institutions of state appears stronger also, as a local malik described:

> As I am the Malik of the area, I am the representative of the people to the government, and it is my responsibility to raise the people's problems – such as sanitation, electricity and any other problems – with the government. From the government's side, I am responsible to approve and sign people's application forms when needed. For example, when a person wants to get an ID card (*tazkirah*), I can confirm that the applicant is from the area and that he is Afghan and so on. (Kabul 5 M)

This is similar to the system established in urban Balkh province also, in which stamps of governmental authority are allocated to local leaders such as maliks or other leaders of urban communities. Thus, in spite of the way in which bribery was still perceived to exist within governmental institutions, Kabul respondents seemed to have fewer concerns about taking problems to these institutions than their provincial counterparts, and generally had greater degrees of access to them even in the case of having few personal connections or a lack of financial resources. These factors were still important, but were not considered the only means through which to access government services.

As compared to the way in which Ghazni respondents referred to their solicitation of Talib officials for assistance in dispute resolution, Kabul respondents perceived the authority of the government to be increasing over autonomous power centres, such as (former jihadi) political parties. As one man described,

> Once the government gets stronger, people will not go to parties, but instead they will go to the government to solve their problems. Even now people go to the government rather than to their party, but in the past every party was a government in itself. In the past, parties used to solve disputes and other problems in the community in which they were functioning (Kabul M 5).

Here, the respondent refers to the civil war period (1991-4) in which Kabul was divided between warring factions. The perspective that the government was increasing in authority over and above these groups was reflected across the data from Kabul, although this could have been linked to the timing of the interviews, which took place after Karzai had been re-elected.

Few Kabul respondents indicated that they had had difficulty accessing state officials, and thus it is difficult to assess whether or not a legal process for recourse in the event of hindered access existed or was known about. Interestingly, however, respondents from the suburb of Dasht-e Barchi talked about the way in which people still voted according to the *qawm* or wider family group, in order to ensure access to state officials. As one local barber indicated,

> As you know, Afghan people are traditional, so everyone wants to vote for their own relatives. For example my cousin is a candidate. Although he is not educated and not able to do the job, I will vote for him. Because when he wins the election he will have to be accountable to me. I will have access all the time to see him (Kabul 12 M).

Thus, it appears that – especially in areas like Dasht-e Barchi where a strong sense of community exists among residents who have emigrated from particular parts of the central highlands – an insurance against the potential for systems of accountability to fail is to attempt to rely on relatives and close connections in state institutions. In this sense, then, there appears to be little difference between the perspectives of provincial and Kabuli respondents in terms of the lack of trust in knowable, legal processes for recourse should their access to officials be hindered.

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6.4 Data analysis: Equality in the state-citizen relationship in Afghanistan

Table 11: Recap of equality indicators

Tilly's process	Corresponding qualitative theme to explore	Indicators
B. Equality	**Perceptions of de facto equality between social groups**	1) Respondents consider their own status vis-à-vis the state to be equal to that of others, for example in terms of access to services Looking for: a) Female respondents consider themselves to have similar rights and duties vis-à-vis the state as their male counterparts b) Little difference between different ethnic responses concerning their perceived status vis-à-vis the state
		2) Respondents consider their votes in elections to carry as much weight as those of other citizens

6.4.1 Indicator 1) Respondents consider their own status vis-à-vis the state to be equal to that of others, for example in terms of access to services

Data collected for this indicator highlighted a variety of underlying grievances of respondents concerning their perceived (in)equality as citizens vis-à-vis the state. Across all three provinces, respondents referred to the way in which poorer members of society were not provided with the same level of state service as those who were able to pay bribes to government officials. Related to this is the way in which having connections (such as relatives) within the government was considered critical to obtaining services and thus those without these sorts of connections considered themselves excluded from benefits that were perceived to be universal 'rights' (such as access to electricity). Ethnicity did not feature as a divisive issue in interviews with respondents in Balkh and Nangarhar, but was prominent in Ghazni transcripts due to the

discrepancies between services available in Hazara and Pashtun areas. Finally, women in rural areas considered their own status in the public sphere to be minimal in comparison to that of their male family members, as a result of cultural norms limiting their access to public sources of information and the government's inability (and unwillingness) to enforce constitutional provisions that outline (in theory) their equal status as Afghan citizens.

6.4.1.1 Levels of income affecting equality

Running throughout interview transcripts from low and mid-income respondents was the complaint that the availability and quality of government services (such as healthcare, education, access to mechanisms for complaint or recourse, and particularly the judicial system) was dependent on a person's ability to pay bribes to the state service provider (or NGO equivalent). As the following selection of quotations demonstrates, this issue was a theme that re-occurred across transcripts from all provinces:

> There are two boys from our village. One is Said Nasir and the other is Kamal. Kamal is a very poor boy but he is currently at the top of his class at (state) school. The teachers told him that if he wants to keep his position at the top of the class, he should pay them $300, otherwise, forget about first position. Said Nasir was rich, and he was able to get to the top of his class through the power of money. All the people in our village know about this. There is no law and everyone acts according to his own wish. Those sons of poor men who have talent and ability as a gift from Allah but don't have money, they are pushed back. Those who have dollars go forward, because they have dollars.
>
> **Question:** What should be done, according to your point of view?
> **Answer:** First, our people are illiterate, and they are not aware of Islamic law. The main issue is that there is no government...The government is asleep and doesn't see anything. (Nang 17 W)

> **Question:** If the local elders are unable to help you solve the problem, who do you refer to then?
> **Answer:** Then we refer to the district administration, but unfortunately, the government has employed there people like the district governor [name], who hasn't even seen the door of school [has not studied at all himself], but keeps three pens in his pocket. Such officials think that governmental seats are like

money-printing machines. If you give them the amount of money they want, you will have no problem, but if you refuse to pay money, then they won't listen to your problem.

Question: What kind of problems do you refer to?

Answer: Brother, life is full of problems. I think if you have money and you have any kind of problem, it will be easily solved by the government. (Nang 11 M)

Question: What do you think about the elections?

Answer: I think our elections are business elections.

Question: What do you mean exactly?

Answer: In Afghanistan if the people have a small problem, it cannot be solved without money – we must spend money to achieve that goal. And it is very clear to us that without money people's tasks cannot be undertaken in the governmental administration. It is like that in the elections, if someone has money than he or she will win the elections, but if they don't have money then for sure they cannot win. (Ghaz 7 W, Failed PC candidate).

Question: How is the security situation in your village and in your province?

Answer: The security situation in our area is very good from the Taliban side but not from government side and *alhamdulallah* (thanks to Allah) the Taliban has put an end to the activities of all thieves and bad people. But the government itself is a complete thief. I needed a new *taskirah* (identity card) and the price of it is normally 300 Afs ($6), but in fact I spent more than 2000 Afs ($40) because of having to give bribes to each one of the government officials, and to make sure that my card would be processed without having to wait for other people who paid more to go first (Ghaz 21 M).

Question: Tell us about the local authorities in this area

Answer: High-level people prefer to listen to what the Kalantar says rather than what we ordinary people say, and we do not have access to very high-level people. In this area the rich people are powerful and they can do anything. If the government provides land for the people then they will take it first, and if some NGOs bring some assistance for us then they will take it for themselves first. No-one pays any attention to the poor people's lives. (Balkh 19 M)

These quotations are representative of the majority of low-income and mid-income respondent interviews, and carry significance beyond that of respondents comparing their own financial circumstances with those of other people. More specifically, they reflect the way in which the state itself is seen by respondents to be complicit in broadening the gap between rich and poor, through accepting bribes for services from those who can afford to pay them, or through endorsing the successful candidacy of fraudulent competitors in an election. This demonstrates the way in which the state is

not seen as a neutral arbiter able and willing to protect the rights of all citizens, but instead an institution characterised by individual patron-client relationships that are often dependent on the former's provision of financial resources to the latter.

A previous study on Afghan perceptions of democracy found that a number of Afghans linked the 'freedom' associated with (what was usually termed 'western') democracy to perceptions of a free market economy that favoured the rich and widened the gap between rich and poor (Larson, 2009b: 14-18). Suggestions for appropriate means to address the problems associated with this widening gap most predominantly included additional state regulations, reminiscent of those that had been installed by the PDPA government under Soviet influence in the 1980s. This call for increased state intervention is particularly interesting given the sceptical views of the state expressed by respondents for this research, conducted only a year later – perhaps indicating that in spite of negative views of state institutions there is nevertheless a common desire for a stronger state with greater capacity to enforce more interventionist policy in some sectors. Thus, for many the ideal of what a state *should* be as an institution to which all citizens have access should they choose to seek it, and the prospect of equal treatment regardless of their financial circumstances. This also reflects notions of social justice within Islamic scholarship and texts, which point to members of the broader Muslim community holding equal status under God's sovereignty (or *Tawhid*, see El Fadl, 2004: 9 for further discussion on this concept). As the woman speaking in the first quotation above implies, part of the problem is perceived to be the lack of knowledge among Afghans about Islamic principles (or an unwillingness to apply these) on the distribution of wealth and against bribery. These are considered to constitute a significant source of inequality among and between Afghans.

6.4.1.2 The importance of having connections in government

A second factor considered by respondents to affect levels of equality between citizens was the question of whether or not they had connections – relations or 'supporters' – in government offices or ministries, for example. A high value was placed on knowing someone in these institutions, as a means to avoid bribery and/or long delays in gaining

access to services, completing administrative tasks, winning an election or even speaking freely against an official, as the following quotations demonstrate:

> **Question:** How is the general living situation here?
> **Answer:** It is average; neither good nor bad. We have shelter, water and electricity. Electricity is sometimes available but sometimes not. Those people who work for the government enjoy electricity, but our children die of heat." (Nang 5 W)

> Unfortunately the Provincial Council election was also determined by discrimination according to language, religion and tribal differences. The people participated in the election with a lot of interest but the organisations in charge committed fraud. For example the candidates who didn't have relationships with high-ranking people and the IEC did not succeed, and this is how results were decided. (Ghaz 6 W)[47]

> **Respondent 1:** There is freedom of speech here but not for all: if you don't have a supporter you cannot express your ideas freely...If you don't have some kind of support you cannot express your ideas or complain about someone in the government.
> **Respondent 2:** To be able to criticize is a very good thing, but [in Afghanistan] people [in higher levels of office] don't accept criticism. The people always feel afraid to criticise them. Democracy may not be practical here until there is no sense of fear among the people. (Balkh 18 M)[48]

This theme cuts across indicators for breadth and equality, seen by respondents to determine their access to state officials, as described in the previous section, and also their access to state services, their ability to speak freely in public, and their likelihood of getting elected to public office. In this sense, then, having a contact, relative or supporter in a position of authority within state institutions marks a considerable advantage and separates some citizens from others in terms of the facilities and freedoms available to them.

Again, however, this is likely the case due to the authority associated with official stamps held by those in state office, and the weight attached to bureaucratic processes particularly in urban areas. This is likely a remnant of Zahir Shah's government, in

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[47] The interviewer's question is not included here simply because the respondent talked for some time and had by this point moved away from the subject of the question asked.
[48] Ibid.

which the state's control of administrative affairs in urban areas was very much issued from the top down; and also of the expanded bureaucratic processes that were prominent during the Soviet era. In spite of its lasting legacy, the authority associated with the stamps of public office and the importance of having contacts to those who control them is likely to be contingent on these processes continuing to be seen as the only way in which to achieve administrative tasks or acquire documentation. Nevertheless, at present, even in rural Ghazni, some emphasis was placed by respondents on the need to complete these kinds of tasks through government channels, in spite of much of the de facto authority (particularly concerning judicial decisions and maintaining order) belonging to Taliban groups. As demonstrated in interview 21, cited above, a man from a rural area talks both about the way in which the Taliban are a government in their own right, but also (begrudgingly) about the way in which he must obtain an identity card from the Karzai administration.

In addition to this, expectations concerning the ideal role of the government in Ghazni province centre primarily around maintaining security and providing justice and accountability. While some respondents mentioned the way in which health and education services were limited in their area, their principal concern in terms of government responsibility was that of maintaining the peace and holding criminals accountable:

> **Question:** How is the security situation in your region?
>
> **Answer**: It is not good. One day at 10:00am a person was killed in the bazaar but nothing was asked about him and no one asked why he was killed. In the village whoever has a gun can do anything. (Ghaz 11 M)
>
> In the provinces the government is just symbolic. It has not brought peace because people are getting shot. (Ghaz 21 M)

In this way, while a number of people considered the government to have a role in the province in maintaining security, and implied that a stronger state would be desirable in this regard, they appeared not as concerned with its role as a service provider. Furthermore, knowing a person in government did not function as so much of an advantage in rural Ghazni as in Nangarhar or Balkh due to the risks associated with

government work (with NGO and government staff frequent targets of Taliban assassinations). It was common for rural Ghazni respondents to state clearly at the beginning of an interview that they did not know anyone in government, largely for this reason. This was also due to the limited reach of the state and its minimal capacity in rural areas, affecting the likely utility of a patron in state office. As the first respondent cited above implies, the possession of arms appears to be a more obvious source of inequality than whether or not one has connections in government.

6.4.1.3 Ethnicity in Ghazni province

In Nangarhar and Balkh, the issue of ethnicity did not appear to be considered by respondents as a source of considerable inequality, as compared to wealth and/or having connections in government. This has been reflected in the majority of interviews that the researcher has conducted over eight years of conducting qualitative research in Afghanistan: while indeed ethnic faultlines exist and are used as tools for political mobilisation by tribal leaders and political/religious fundamentalist groups, particularly in times of insecurity, there appears to be little animosity at the local level between people of different ethnicities.

This being the case, it is perhaps unsurprising that in the relatively secure provinces of Nangarhar and Balkh, respondents did not talk about ethnicity as a source of perceived inequality. The two provinces differ in terms of ethnic composition, the former being largely Pashtun (and while divided along tribal lines, generally maintaining good relationships between tribes with some key exceptions). The latter is highly diverse in its representation of different ethnicities, which are generally segregated into different districts but have little history of ethnic conflict. Governor Atta has selected representatives from all ethnicities to hold different positions of power and generally speaking, residents are satisfied with this arrangement in spite of the fact that the dominant minority is Tajik. As one (Hazara) respondent explained,

> Overall in the country there is an imbalance of power at the highest levels according to ethnicity, especially in terms of the military and government positions, but in Balkh the situation is better because every ethnicity has a role and is represented. For example, Hazara people currently hold the positions of

> Deputy [Provincial] Governor, deputy chair of the Provincial Council and the governorship of three districts. (Balkh 6 M)

The respondent here refers to the way in which Karzai's administration had few Hazara cabinet members at the time of interviewing, a source of contention for many given the promises made by the President when seeking Hazara support for his election for a second term in office in 2009. Still, on a local level and in terms of access to government services this perceived discrimination at the highest levels of government appears to have little effect in Balkh. More a cause for concern among respondents is the inequality promoted by the Governor in terms of his favouring close friends and allies in lucrative business deals.

Another feature of the diverse but segregated model of ethnic composition in Balkh is that different communities in ethnically homogeneous districts have their 'own' representatives in government bodies. One respondent talked about a perceived disparity between the services provided by a Turkman MP to his community, and the lack of services provided to the respondent's community by their local representative:

> **Question:** [in repose to the respondent stating that there were no MPs representing him in Balkh] Have you heard of Roz Guldi, the Turkmen MP for Balkh? Could you approach him with your problems?
>
> **Answer:** I was not aware that Ruz Guldi was an MP. I think he represents Turkmen people and they are very lucky to have such an MP. If we had an MP like Ruz Guldi, no one could misuse our money like Zaman Khan [a local leader in the respondent's area].
>
> **Question:** What would prevent you from meeting with Ruz Guldi to discuss your problems?
>
> **Answer:** It would be impossible for us to meet him, because we don't have his phone number and the Turkmen people do have his phone number, so whenever they face problems they can call him. He is a good representative for Turkmen people but not for all people. (Balkh 18 M)

In this sense, then, the respondent considers his own community at a disadvantage through the lack of having a responsive representative in a position of authority, but he attributes this to luck more than a strategic policy on the part of the government to

marginalise his ethnic group. Indeed, the respondent here is Tajik, the most powerful ethnic group in Balkh province, and the MP he refers to represents a small Turkmen minority. This demonstrates the way in which issues of exclusion and inequality do not follow ethnic lines in Balkh, but are more strongly demarcated according to the patronage networks of the Governor and his allies.

In Ghazni, however, divisions according to ethnicity were more apparent throughout transcripts. This is partly due to the way in which the province is divided roughly equally between Hazara and Pashtun residents, with a considerable proportion of the Hazara population living close to the provincial centre and in rural districts where government influence is strongest, and Pashtuns living more predominantly in rural areas where there is limited government reach. This has led to an increased and disproportionate number of Hazaras gaining positions of public office, probably due to the ways in which the areas in which they live have greater levels of security and so more opportunities for voting in a safe environment during elections. In 2010, three months after this research was conducted, parliamentary elections resulted in all eleven allocated seats for Ghazni province being won by Hazara candidates. In the rural areas where Hazaras are in the majority, in the north and west of the province bordering the Hazarajat and Central Highlands, security is generally better than in majority Pashtun districts. Here, however, there has been a longstanding history of conflict between the resident Hazaras and nomadic Kuchi population (a Pashtun sub-tribe), whose annual migrations pass through the area and frequently cause significant violent clashes over land and grazing rights. Nevertheless, as one Pashtun respondent described, there is a significant discrepancy between the facilities available to Hazara and Pashtun residents of Ghazni:

> **Question:** How are the security conditions in your region?
>
> **Answer:** In general the conditions here are very poor in comparison with other provinces, but then it depends on the area. In some areas the security, health and education situations are really awful, but in other areas these circumstances are not too bad.
>
> **Question:** Can you specify these places?

Answer: Yes, I should tell you in short, that the entire Hazara people's districts are calm and lots of rebuilding work is being done there, but in Pashtun areas the conditions are quite the opposite. (Ghaz 2 M)

Here, in comparison to sentiments expressed by Nangarhar and Balkh respondents, the inequality in terms of access to service is attributed to a government agenda for discrimination, in which Pashtun areas are deprived of services available to Hazara residents. Again, this local perception counters what appears to be a Pashtun-dominant government on the national level, and also a recent history of the marginalization of the Hazara ethnic group. This demonstrates the discrepancy (and distance) between politics at the centre and politics as it is perceived and experienced by citizens in provinces. It would be difficult to argue on a national level and in terms of de jure constitutional rights that Afghanistan's current regime was one with a strategic agenda to marginalise certain ethnic groups, but this does not equate to all citizens *considering themselves* equal in terms of their access to services and vis-à-vis the state.

6.4.1.4 <u>The government's inability (or unwillingness) to enforce equality for women</u>

Afghanistan is often associated by the international media, UN reports, human rights associations and donor governments with the systematic subjugation of women. Indeed, many of the provisions included in the Bonn process and in the formation of the new constitution of Afghanistan were included as an attempt to redress the systematic inequalities enforced by previous regimes (namely, the Taliban and Mujahideen) – including a recognition of the equal rights of all citizens, male or female (Article 22), a commitment to improving women's education (Article 44), and a reserved seats system for women in the lower house of parliament and allocated seats in the upper house (Articles 83 and 84). From the words of the constitution, then, it would be possible to assume that the state's approach toward upholding the equality of men and women citizens was a considerable improvement on the active persecution and discrimination of women by the Taliban and Mujahideen regimes.

While this is no doubt true, the existence of constitutional provisions and the general absence of state-sanctioned, systematic discrimination does not equate to women considering themselves to be equal to men in terms of their rights and duties as citizens.

Neither does it correspond with the state's ability and willingness to enforce constitutional provisions to uphold equality. In a context in which, as a result of cultural, historical and to some extent religious norms, the demarcation between public and private is rarely renegotiated without considerable backlash, there is little incentive for the state to intervene in 'family matters' that often include domestic violence, confinement, lack of access to medical services and breaches of inheritance laws, for example. The following quotation from a low-income woman respondent in Ghazni demonstrates the extent to which some women perceive their status as citizens to be lesser than that of men:

> **Question:** Dear sister, can you tell us about the members of the provincial council?
>
> **Answer:** Dear sister, I don't know anything about the provincial council, and I don't know anyone who works there. Dear sisters, I am a housewife: I only know about housework and children and family members. In the village that we live in, the women don't have the right to fight for their rights, so then what would they know about the provincial council? If we need clothes or anything we have to ask our menfolk to take us to the bazaar, or if we are sick, they tell us that 'women are only for the home' and that we don't have the right to go the bazaar, or even to a doctor.... Whatever it is good or bad we have to accept it. (Ghaz 14 W).

This quotation comes from a woman living in the suburbs of Ghazni city, and its contents were reflected in urban interviews with women also, indicating that these kinds of perspectives are not restricted to rural women. Similar findings were also found among different respondents in Ghazni in a simultaneous study conducted for AREU on Afghan perspectives on democracy (Larson, 2011: 27). The apparent prevalence of this kind of data coming from female respondents highlights the way in which women can have very limited access to the public sphere – even in terms of their parental home, the local bazaar or doctor's surgery – let alone a workplace, governmental ministry, court of law or representative body. The widespread exclusion of women from public politics, and from any interaction with the state or state-provided services, suggests the kind of categorical inequality that Tilly speaks to, even if it is not officially endorsed by the state.

While this kind of marginalisation of women appears to be widespread, however, it is not static and is affected by several variables. One of these is the level of security in a given area, with insecurity providing a justification for men to insist that their wives and daughters remain inside the home, particularly when elections occur, for example:

> **Question:** Why didn't you vote? [in the elections in 2009, after the respondent had been talking about voting in 2004 and 2005]
> **Answer:** The [security] situation was not suitable and our menfolk didn't allow us to go out to cast our votes. We were also worried about security incidents; therefore we didn't leave home (Nang 17 W).

> **Question:** Did you vote for the provincial council representatives?
> **Answer:** No I didn't, because our men were saying that we didn't have the right to leave the house, because the security situation was not good (Ghaz 13 W).

Both of these women had talked about voting in previous elections, and while they also talked about being told who to vote for by their male relatives, they were nevertheless permitted to take part in the elections. Security has worsened across the country since the first round of elections took place in 2004/2005, but it has worsened for all citizens, not only for women, and thus it is interesting that this deterioration is considered to affect women more (or to provide a narrative to support an increasing conservatism that could also be construed in terms of family safety, maintaining an appearance of strict conformity to conservative Islamic norms that would satisfy potential Taliban informants). In the generally more secure province of Balkh, by comparison, women of all income levels and across rural, suburban and urban communities were more commonly able to leave the home to vote, although some were still given directions as to who to cast votes for:

> **Question:** Did you participate in the recent election?
>
> **Answer:** Yes, we participated in the election.
>
> **Question:** How did you decide who to vote for?
>
> **Answer:** Our men decided who we should all vote for, and so we voted for the person they selected.
>
> **Question:** How did you know how to find that person on the list [ballot]?

Answer: The men brought us a picture and showed us, then we voted for that person (Balkh 8 W).

Although there are many (overlapping) variables contributing to this discrepancy between provinces, including levels of education, levels of religious conservatism, literacy rates and proximity to an urban centre, it appears that there is still some correlation between equality and levels of security also.

This coincides with the way in which women in urban areas – generally more heavily guarded by government and international forces – tend to have a greater degree of freedom within the public sphere (and by extension, to interact with public politics) than do women in more remote areas. While for many women interviewed in urban areas, men were still the primary decision-makers in a household (for example as expressed in interview Nang 17 W, as included in Appendix 3) – factors such as their living in close proximity to schools, women-only hospitals and polling centres by default allowed them greater access to state-provided services and facilities than women living further away from district or provincial centres.

Perhaps the narrative that runs most clearly through the interviews across the data set, with men and women respondents, however is the way in which 'equality' as defined in terms of the rights and duties of *individual* citizens does not sit comfortably with the way in which society in Afghanistan is for the most part based on cohesion amongst a given community. Collective decision-making, compromise and keeping the communal peace are all given higher priority than individual rights, as indicated in the quotation above from women in Balkh (interview 8 W). This is a theme that occurs consistently throughout the data, with women's equality being only one manifestation of many (others including the way in which people refer to the communal practice of voting, as in, "we voted", and general use the first person plural over and above the first person singular in every day speech). It comprises one of the key problems in applying a model of democratisation such as Tilly's to the Afghan context, where individual citizens do not always consider themselves as single, rational actors to be central to the way in which their community relates to the central government.

6.4.2 Indicator 2) Respondents consider their votes in elections to carry as much weight as those of other citizens

This indicator was included as a way in which to use a concrete example and recent occurrence to assess whether respondents considered their status as citizens vis-à-vis the state to be equal to that of others. Results were surprising in that no respondents across the data set questioned the weight of their vote as compared to, for example, people of another ethnic group or gender, and those in rural areas did not consider their vote any less valid than urban citizens.[49] Instead, respondents across all provinces (but most notably in Nangarhar and Ghazni) were concerned about the validity of *any* vote in the face of widespread fraud and the buying of votes by powerful individuals. The following quotations from a male student in Ghazni and an elite woman respondent from urban Nangarhar is representative of these concerns:

> **Question:** (In response to the respondent referring to injustice in the elections) In what way was there injustice in the election?
> **Answer:** Each candidate had their own representatives at the polling centre and they manipulated people into voting for their candidate. I went to a polling centre and wanted to vote. There was an election official there who took my card and wrote down my vote for a candidate, and then I was sent to another person and he also did the same, and then I went to a third person who asked for my card I and he was the only one who made a hole in my card [to show the vote had been cast]. When I came out I quarrelled with them because they used my card three times for one candidate. When I understood the situation I became unhappy and tried to talk to an armed guard about it but then I realised that he was also a supporter of the same candidate. Every candidate had supporters and everyone tried to work for a candidate in order to get money or privileges in return (Ghaz 4 M).

> **Question:** Do you think existing parliamentarians will campaign for the next elections?
> **Answer:** They will be candidates, but if there is no fraud in election then the present parliament members will not be successful because no-one will vote for them due to their disloyalty and cheating. If there is fraud in the election process they will succeed again, by the power of their money and their political parties. Generally we should tell the people to elect those candidates who love their country, love their nation [meaning ethnic group here], know about human rights, know Islamic rules and regulations, and who are kind hearted. Still, it

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[49] Another study has shown that, by contrast, urban respondents expressed concerns about the way in which they considered rural, poor, illiterate voters easy prey for commanders and warlords who would seek to manipulate the election by buying votes. In this sense, they appeared to imply that the equalizing nature of elections was problematic. (Larson, 2009: 15)

would be better if candidates were selected through shuras and by the elders of the villages (Nang 2 W).

In the second quotation, it is ambiguous here as to whether the respondent recommends a replacing of elections altogether with the decisions of shuras and elders, or whether she refers to the selection of candidates for elections by these means (rather than any Afghan over the age of 25 being able to put themselves forward). Either way, however, it is interesting that she considers the collective decision-making of a local shura a better safeguard for the legitimacy of elections (and the choice of candidates therein) than the way they currently function.

One of the principal concerns of the Karzai administration and the international organisations involved in supporting elections in the run-up to the polls in 2009 and 2010 was that the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) would not be able to establish polling centres in insecure areas, thus by default disenfranchising a significant proportion of the population. This was a particular worry for the Karzai campaign given that the majority of the incumbent's support base inhabited areas of the country in the south and east where insecurity was highest. Interviews for this study were conducted in between the elections of 2009 and 2010, and thus elections were a key talking point for many respondents. The researcher expected that respondents in Ghazni in particular, and possibly in some parts of rural Nangarhar, would make complaints about the way in which they had not been able to access polling stations and thus felt unfairly under-represented. As demonstrated by the following quotations from Ghazni, however, while respondents did talk about the lack of access to polling centres in rural areas, they did not seem overly concerned about the *result* of not having been able to get to the polls:

> **Question:** What do you think about parliamentary elections in Afghanistan?
> **Answer:** I think the parliamentary government should be selected by the people. And there should be no fraud in the election. In the first election people went to the ballot boxes with a lot of interest because it was first time a president had been selected by the people. But in the second election there was a lot of fraud, even at the hands of foreigners, and ballot boxes were filled only with the votes of election officials. This was especially the case in Ghazni province because security was not good in the districts, so the people didn't vote there, and yet the ballot boxes got filled somehow (Ghaz 8 W).

Question: What do you think about the first elections, and last year's elections?
Answer: The first elections were very good and most of the people went to vote with a lot of interest to elect their president, and there was less fraud in the first elections. But unfortunately during the second elections we witnessed that there was more fraud, the conditions were insecure and most of the people didn't vote. I didn't even vote myself in the second elections because my family didn't permit me to go to the polling centre (Ghaz 10 W).

Question: Did you vote in the parliamentary elections?
Answer: We did not vote in the first or the second elections.
Question: Why you didn't vote?
Answer: Because we heard people say that if anyone voted the Taliban would cut off their fingers. That is why we didn't vote (Ghaz 11 W).

Question: Dear sister, tell me a story about the first and second elections?
Answer: At the time of the first election we had just come back from Iran, and it seemed to go well. The security conditions were better than they are now. When the second elections took place the security conditions were not good, and also the people were not interested because they were saying that the president did not perform well so we will not vote. Some people did not go in order to protect the security of their families, and some other people were not interested in the elections and were saying that whether or not they voted, this president will succeed anyway because foreign countries are supporting him (Ghaz 15 W).

Question: How did last year's provincial council elections take place?
Answer: Last year's elections passed by but the people took little part in them. People did not take part because they were scared of Taliban. The cities were closed, most of the shops were closed, the baker's stalls were closed – I could not find bread so I had to have cookies and tea for dinner that night. The security was not good, and there were lots of fake cards that filled the boxes. In most areas of the province elections did not take place at all because the security was bad and people were scared (Ghaz 8 M).

Question: How did last year's provincial council election go?
Answer: Most of the people didn't take part because they were afraid, and also the Taliban announced threats to participants. On the day of the election there was a fight between the Taliban and government in which a car was bombed. People were very afraid (Ghaz 25 M).

None of these respondents continued to talk about how the lack of access to polling centres in insecure areas had made them feel unequally treated or represented – instead, the focus was rather on the way in which people had become disinterested in elections anyway due to the lack of tangible services provided by those elected to office. This was a common theme throughout interviews, reflecting a certain resignation to the way

in which elections would be fraudulent, with pre-determined outcomes, and would not result in greater service provision to local residents.

6.4.3 Kabul data on equality indictors

Data for Kabul on indicator 1 highlighted less underlying grievances perceived between people of different social groups than data collected in the three key provinces. None of the 22 respondents from Kabul mentioned bribery as proving a significant hindrance to the access to services of poorer people, although this could reflect the way in which fewer respondents from the low-income category were interviewed in Kabul province. The need to have connections in government institutions in order to access services was assumed, as in provincial interviews – and yet did not appear to prove too much of a problem given the way in which a number of respondents talked about having these connections. Still, the relative importance of knowing someone in government was clear, as one candidate for the Kabul provincial council implied when discussed her plans if she were successful in her campaign:

> I will do my best to do my job properly. First I will try to have a good relationship with the mayor of Kabul, and then through the mayor I will be able to find out about the government's development projects. I will have meetings with the mayor at least once a week (Kabul 7 W).

Evidently, not unlike their provincial counterparts, Kabuli respondents assigned a certain value to having good relationships with government officials.

While ethnic divisions did not feature in terms of most Kabul respondents' descriptions of their access to services, a certain narrative of exclusion was prominent among the predominantly Hazara residents of the suburb of Dasht-e Barchi, as one provincial council member explained:

> There are many Hazara people are many in Kabul, but we have just one urban district, and the other 17 belong to other ethnicities. Hazara people should have a few districts. This area is not given any attention, for example the people don't have electricity, the alleys are not concreted, the people don't have proper drinking water and the candidates for elections try to get all these services for the people (Kabul 6 W).

The way in which urban districts are perceived as 'belonging' to different ethnicities highlights the extent of the way in which many parts of Kabul are segregated into different areas for different ethnic groups, although this is in no way forced by governmental authorities. Further, the level of services provided in different parts of the city varies greatly, with a lack of electricity and drinking water experienced in several areas. Dasht-e Barchi is particularly densely populated, however, and thus the problems are likely to be considered by residents more acute in this area. Respondents from other parts of the city also expressed concerns that ethnic groups be treated equally by the government, but overall did not suggest that systematic discrimination was taking place on account of ethnicity. In general there was a sense that an ideal government would consider the interests of all groups. As one Pashtun student described,

> There should be a government in Afghanistan that can give all the minorities and ethnicities their rights... There should be a comprehensive government which provides all citizens their rights (Kabul 7 M).

Interestingly, while this respondent talks in terms of 'citizens' rights', he also refers to these in the collective sense, in terms of the rights of different groups of people in society. It appears that in spite of living in the city, group as opposed to individual interests still very much determine the ways in which many people consider their needs and expectations from the state.

As might be expected, women in Kabul expressed a greater degree of freedom and equal treatment than did provincial respondents, as the following statement from one female Provincial Council candidate indicates:

> After three decades of war and after the Taliban regime it was a surprise for the people that women were able to take part in political life for example through the Provincial Council and the Wolesi Jirga, and all the people voted for them...You know that under the Taliban regime women couldn't come out and work in society, but now we are very happy that women can leave their homes and work in the same way as a man. This new equality is a big achievement (Kabul 7 W).

On some issues, such as the need for women to vote and campaign in elections, male respondents in Kabul were also very much in favour of equality, even those within conservative religious groups. On other issues, such as wearing the hijab and women's

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behaviour in public, a broader spectrum of opinion existed. Nevertheless, the data from Kabul appears to indicated that the state is more able and willing to protect women's role in society in Kabul than in other provincial contexts.

Data collected for indicator 2 demonstrates that in general, Kabul respondents considered their votes to count for the same as those of others, and that – like in the provinces, if people were worried about their votes not being useful, they were worried about all votes being useless as a result of fraud or international interference:

> People are don't care about the election, because they think someone will be elected as president, regardless of votes: that the decision has already been made, so their participation in the election will not have any effect...People think this election is a show and that someone has already been chosen by the foreigners (Kabul 5 M).

This perspective was not commonly held across the Kabul data collected for this study, with most respondents still keen to participate in elections and seeing this as a national duty, in contrast to some of the more sceptical perspectives heard across the provinces (and in Ghazni in particular). Nevertheless, it speaks to a suspicion of outside or elite interference in Afghan politics that was as pervasive in urban as in rural areas. This sentiment appeared to increase after the 2010 elections, in which a great deal of fraud was reported to have occurred (Coburn and Larson, 2013, forthcoming).

Section 6.4 has attempted to assess the space Afghanistan might occupy on the spectrum between "great inequality among and within categories of citizens to extensive inequality in both regards" (Tilly: 2007: 14), by considering respondents' own perceptions of their equality to one another vis-à-vis the state. In terms of access to services, in the three key provinces inequality was perceived to exist along the lines of income levels, connections in government, security levels and gender – with ethnicity playing a lesser role in Nangarhar and Balkh than in Ghazni. Equality was not widely measured in terms of the weight of people's votes in elections: people were not so much concerned about their votes counting the same as other people's votes, but instead considered most votes to be equally insignificant in the face of fraud. Respondents in all three provinces also often talked about elections in terms of the benefits that could be

gained from any potentially successful candidate. In Kabul, these grievances were less pronounced, with less perceived inequality existed between different social groups. Respondents were not generally concerned with their votes counting less due to categorical inequalities, but in some cases due to a perceived notion that the outcome of the election had already been predetermined.

6.5 Summary and conclusions

In this chapter the researcher has outlined the framework used for data analysis and has presented the data set. She has analysed the data according to the first two of Tilly's key themes – breadth and equality – and in doing so has found that certain assumptions underlie Tilly's conceptualisation of the state-citizen relationship that make it difficult to apply his framework to Afghanistan. These assumptions include the way in which all citizens of a given state do in fact desire access to state officials for assistance, and the way in which institutions of state (such as courts of justice and line ministries) are seen to provide a cohesive neutral facility for administrative affairs and dispute resolution – both of which can be questioned in light of the data analysis in this chapter. The ways in which collective interests are articulated much more prominently than individual ones by respondents also brings to light problems with applying the liberal notion of individual citizenship to the Afghan case. The data presented in this chapter has also however clearly highlighted discrepancies between respondents in urban and rural areas, and between men and women respondents, in terms of the desirability of individual access and interaction with state officials. Thus while it appears that assumptions cannot be made about the uniformity of perceptions of the meaning and importance of individual citizenship across Afghanistan, it seems that the prospect of (greater) interaction between individual citizens and the state is desirable to some and so cannot be dismissed entirely from an analysis of democratisation.

What is also clear, however, as highlighted by the quotation from interview Kabul M 5 in section 6.3.3, is that change has occurred, and is perceived likely to continue to occur in the relationship between ruler and ruled in Afghanistan – with more people going to the government with problems rather than to parties, as this man described. Clear also is

the way in which people in Ghazni increasingly solicit the Taliban for assistance instead of the state – change perhaps in the opposite direction. These changes, however, would likely be missed by existing democratisation measures because they often reflect community, and not individual, responses, to changing levels of fragility.

CHAPTER 7: APPLYING TILLY TO AFGHANISTAN: PROTECTION AND MUTUALLY BINDING CONSULTATION IN THE DATA

7.1 Introduction

Continuing the application of Tilly's four themes to the primary data collected, this chapter explores the themes of protection and mutually binding consultation and how they relate to the Afghan case. Further to this, it directly considers the question of whether Tilly's state capacity/democracy matrix is applicable to the Afghan case, and then asks whether it would also be possible to identify potential causes of change in the state-citizen relationship that could allow movement toward or away from democratisation to be noted and measured. This final question will link the discussion back to Tilly's three clusters of change: in integrating trust networks, in eliminating categorical inequalities and in eradicating autonomous power centres – asking what would need to be noted in these three areas, if anything, to indicate change.

7.2 Data analysis: Protection in the state-citizen relationship in Afghanistan

Of all the four themes, protection indicators were those that least corresponded with the accounts of respondents. This could be linked to the way in which there is little precedent in Afghanistan for protection of citizens against the arbitrary actions of the state, and as such little expectation of this being provided. It is also related to the way which, as observed in the breadth indicators, people tend to avoid the state apparatus if possible, dealing with judicial issues within the local community. Finally, it concerns once again the lack of formal procedures in place through which citizens can, as individuals, make complaints or hold the state accountable.

Table 12: Recap of protection indicators

C. Protection	**Perceptions of the visibility and accountability of the legal process**	1) Respondents refer to common procedures through which arbitrary state action can be countered and give examples of when this has been done
		2) Respondents express confidence in the judicial system
		3) Respondents compare current legal processes more accountable /knowable than in past regimes

7.2.1 Indicator 1) Respondents refer to common procedures through which arbitrary state action can be countered and give examples of when this has been done

Again due to the methodological stipulations described in chapter 4, respondents were not asked directly what procedures they would follow if the state were to take arbitrary action against them. This could have provoked suspicion as to the reasons for asking, and as such might have had an impact on the answers given. Instead, more general questions about respondents' opinions of the different branches of state were asked, and their response analysed for stories about arbitrary state action. A number of respondents in Nangarhar talked about occasions in which the state (or representatives thereof) had taken what they considered to be arbitrary action against either themselves or someone they had heard about. The following quotations provide some examples of this:

> **Question:** What do you think about the members of parliament from your province?
> **Answer:** Candidates who were successful in the parliamentary elections at first pretended to be servants of the nation, to gain votes, but as soon as they won their seats they began struggling for their own ends. For example, Hazrat Ali, who is a former commander, and now an MP, seized the Gambehre desert area which is about 12 kilometres to the north of Jalalabad city. He distributed this land among his brothers and built homes there, and all residents have been bothered by them. The people of the district demonstrated against him to try to force him to leave the district, but Hazrat Ali and Commander Gul Karim came along with their Mujahideen and opened fire on the people. And yet I am sure Hazrat Ali will succeed once again in the upcoming election (Nang 1 M).

There is no democracy in Afghanistan, because government officials themselves don't care about the law. They seize public land and there is no one to stop them. (Nang 6 M)

Question: If the local elders cannot solve your problem, to whom do you refer next?
Answer: After them we go to the police station.
Question: What happens there?
Answer: If you know someone there, your problem will be solved, otherwise you will be jailed in a toilet (Nang 20 M).

I remember a story about the elections for the Nangarhar Provincial Council. There were many candidates and the results of the elections were delayed for quite a long time. This is itself a question of governance. I would look at any candidate and their lips were dry and they were going out of their minds, but they couldn't do anything about it. (Nang 28 M)

Interestingly, these kinds of stories did not occur in the Balkh or Ghazni data. In the case of Ghazni, this could be due to the way in which the reach and influence of state actors is relatively limited. In Balkh, the researcher expected there to be more stories of how officials – and particularly those connected to the governor – had taken predatory action. The lack of these stories could indicate a generally more accountable system in Balkh than elsewhere, possibly due to the way in which district governors are often selected by Ustad Atta to be of the same ethnic group as the majority of district residents, and thus perhaps slightly more accountable or beholden to them. It could also indicate however a fault with the data collection and the way in which questions were asked (by different research team members) in Balkh as compared to Nangarhar. Nevertheless, these examples from Nangarhar appear to suggest that when arbitrary state action does occur in the province – at the hands of MPs, government officials more generally, the police or the Independent Electoral Commission (widely perceived to be working for the government in spite of its formally independent status), there is very little that citizens can do to protest or complain about it, let alone standard procedures to follow through which they could claim compensation.

This is partly the result of the way in which the state in itself is not a unified entity in Afghanistan, and that the actions of individuals who in one role represent the state are not held to account by state bodies or an independent judiciary. In the case of land

seizure by a member of parliament reported above, the otherwise assumed line of demarcation between state and non-state actors becomes blurred, with the individual in question drawing on both his military authority as a former commander and the political authority he claims as an elected member of parliament. Thus, this does not really provide an example of arbitrary *state* action, but instead arbitrary action committed by an individual linked to the state system in some way. In terms of combating this kind of action, this example also implies that the personalities involved, and the patronage networks they command, are more likely to determine the outcome of a given situation than any official procedures that might be put in place. The state's inability or unwillingness to reprimand individuals acting in this manner in a systematic way implicitly condones a system in which these individuals may function according to their own rules, without concern for whether or how their actions reflect the image of the state as it is seen by citizens. This runs contrary to the principles outlined in Tilly's model of protection, and also highlights the ways in which the Afghan case is difficult to apply to the state-citizen model more generally because of the ambiguity surrounding what the state actually is, and what affiliation to it means in real terms.

The disunity between different arms of state is clear in the following example of a stand-off between the provincial council and governor in Ghazni, as one urban woman respondent described:

> Recently a decision made by the provincial council was rejected by the governor of Ghazni. As a result, problems were created between the provincial council members the governor, which led to the provincial council being closed down for a year. Some of the council members went to Kabul city to complain, after which a delegation was sent from Kabul to solve the problem. In the end the council started working again. (Ghaz 6 W).

Again notable in this case is the lack of formal procedure for dispute resolution between different arms of the state, with the result being that an ad-hoc delegation was formed and sent from Kabul to try to resolve the issue. Although trying to combat arbitrary state action (in this case on the part of the governor closing down the provincial shura) by referring to (other) state officials in Kabul seems counterintuitive, it is not as illogical as it sounds when considering the way in which state officials have no binding

accountability towards one another on the basis of their being state officials, but rather instead on the basis of personal connections and relationships. In a sense then it is possible that citizens could find recourse for arbitrary state action even from within the state itself, but this would be dependent on their connections and their ability to pay for such a service rather than on a set of standard procedures. This, then, veers away from Tilly's definition of public politics, and more toward a complex web of interactions between individuals and state representatives.

7.2.2 Indicator 2) Respondents express confidence in the judicial system

This indicator overlaps with the first finding under the breadth category – in that for many, the prospect of interacting with the state judiciary was considered a last resort, depending on the incident in question. Most statements made by respondents about the courts and local policing recounted associations of bribery and extortion rather than confidence in its impartiality, as the following representative example demonstrates:

> **Question:** How is the security situation in the province?
> **Answer:** At the present the security situation is better than in other provinces in our country. But there is no justice in the government organizations.
> **Question:** Can you tell us more about justice in the government organizations?
> **Answer:** If you have a criminal or land ownership problem that you take to court, it is very difficult to solve it without giving bribes to the judge (Nang 4 M).

Evidently, the way in which most respondents across all three provinces refer to the existence of a state judicial system and include it as a way in which to solve problems, even as a last resort, demonstrates some level of commonality and standardisation in the system in terms of its availability across the country. Part of the problem, however, is that the state judiciary forms only one of a number of possible avenues for seeking justice, with Sharia and customary law providing alternatives. Different combinations of these forms of justice, often under the term 'informal justice system' have been discussed at length elsewhere, (Coburn and Dempsey, 2010; Suhrke and Borchgrevink, 2009), and was reflected in this study through the lengthy discussions held with respondents over their preferences for solving disputes on a local level before approaching the state system for assistance.

Most obvious across the transcripts was a general concern about the lack of state enforcement of the rule of law and justice system, as described somewhat bitterly by the following respondent from Balkh province:

> I am sure that [MPs] are aware about all the problems that we have in the country but they do not worry about poor people... We will be witnesses of a time when family members kill each other for money, and if the current situation continues we will see that MPs are killed by poor people and farmers because there is no rule of law and justice (Balkh 14 M).

Again, then, this implies that in spite of concerns about the quality of the judicial system, a stronger state structure was considered desirable by this respondent – a mid-income Pashtun shoemaker living in the provincial town of Balkh. This is perhaps unsurprising given the respondent's ethnicity, and the fact that the powerful governor of the province (an ethnic Tajik) was widely seen by respondents as partial toward the support of close friends and business associates from within his own branch of the Tajik-dominated Jamiyat-e Islami party. Indeed, the governor's control over the organs of state in Balkh province appear to leave little room for the development of a transparent and knowable legal process, as the following respondents – both opponents and supporters of the governor – testify:

> We are not satisfied with our governor...As Woliswal [district governor] of [X] district I have not received any share for my district of the reconstruction, infrastructure and business projects planned in the province. I have only received small development projects, which are not enough to meet the needs of this district [which is] located far from Mazar city... The Governor does not like the people of our district because of the conflict between the Jumbesh and Jamyat parties. The Governor is from the Jamiat Party and he doesn't like our district because its people are connected to the Junbesh Party, led by [Abdul Rashid] Dostum...
> **Question:** Do the MPs help you in acquiring projects for the district?
> **Answer:** The MPs of Balkh province are friends of the Governor. Out of 19 representatives in the provincial council, 12 were selected by the governor. Mr. Atta does not care about the rules of government and no one can stand against him. (Balkh 7 M District Governor)

> Although I don't have a good relationship with the Governor, if there is any problem, I call him. I have a good relationship with the Woliswal [district governor]. The Governor doesn't care about the government, he does what he wants. It is a big problem that a commander [such as the governor or another

former military strongman] can do what he wants but an MP cannot. For example, I have received calls telling me that the police has arrested someone, and when I have called the police to ask about this, they tell me that they found him with hashish, and that he is guilty. But a commander can get him released easily, by giving 80,000 Afs [$1600] to the Woliswal. For an area commander anything is easy to do...

Question: Is the role of an MP different to that of local government?

Answer: A person called me and told me that an innocent person had been put in prison. I called the commander to tell him that the man was not guilty, and that he was a poor man who was just selling melons for a living, but the commander said that he was guilty. After some time, I saw the melon-seller and I asked him what had happened, and he told me that a commander had released him. The government is put into effect by war commanders, and only an MP who is also a war commander can achieve anything. (Balkh 20 W MP)

Question: How were you appointed to this position?

Answer: I was associated with Atta and I had work experience under the Najib government. So, Atta appointed me to this position in this district. All the district governors are appointed by him in this province and he appoints people on the basis of his political and social knowledge of the area, and on the ability of individuals (Balkh 3 M District Governor).

I think it would be good if the district governor and district security commanders were appointed by election. For example, the security commander of this district is Atta's man and he will be in this position as long as Atta remains governor of Balkh province, even though people are not happy with the commander. Atta is a very powerful governor. He has used lots of governmental lands to build tall buildings in Mazar city. He appoints all the key positions such as district governors, security commanders and other positions (Balkh 13 M, shopkeeper).

As the story from the female MP from Balkh about the release of prisoners implies, the judicial system in the province appears to be beholden to the whims of powerful individuals, such as commanders and the provincial governor, rather than to a set of transparent rules that are knowable to citizens. Trying to judge whether or not people have confidence in the system thus seems a misplaced or inappropriate question, in a context where court decisions could be either influenced by these individuals or overturned by them at a later date.

7.2.3 Indicator 3) Respondents compare current legal processes more accountable/knowable than in past regimes

In comparison to the way in which respondents viewed the current judicial system and the enforcement of rule of law more generally, some talked at length about the characteristics of previous regimes. As could be expected, their perspectives varied greatly depending on a number of factors – which regime they were making comparison with, their perspective of the current security situation in their own province, and their own political affiliations. While some do not specify which regimes they are referring to, differ in opinion as to whether they consider the present or former regimes to be more effective, and do not all speak to legal processes specifically, the following quotations help to give a sense of what respondents value in a state system:

> Life under the former regime was better than the current one. The reason was that the government then had an effect and an influence on people; the laws of the government were clear and were enforced on everyone, whether they were a Khan or a poor person. For example, a soldier would come with a stick, not a gun, and would be able to take a criminal to the government. This was due to having a formal and disciplined government. Now there is a government that doesn't have sovereignty over its regulations and is unfamiliar with regularity and discipline (Nang 17 M)

> . It was only Najib and his government who worked very well. During Najib's government people were very happy because there was no corruption, no party issues, and no poverty. Since he himself was a very good person, his government was also very good. But now everyone is looting everyone else for their own pocket. I am a truck driver, and now I have to pay bribes at every security checkpoint between Mazar and Kabul (Balkh 17 M).

> Some work has been done by the current government in different sectors, especially regarding security. For example, during the rule of Mujahideen we were told that everyone was responsible for his own security, but we feel a little more secure now. Schools are open, and roads, hospitals and irrigation canals are being constructed. But bribery still exists... During the kingdom of Zahir Shah, there was a good democracy in Afghanistan. People would call him *Zahire kal* which means "bald Zahir" without any fear. They could protest freely. For the first time, political parties were established during his kingdom. But when Daoud Khan became the president, there was only his party that was active, and other parties were not permitted to interfere in government affairs. It was the same during the government of Peoples' Democratic Party. It is not the principle of democracy to apply sanctions on political parties. Now, Karzai has given full freedom to parties and anyone who has at least 600 supporters can get

official permission from the Ministry of Justice to establish his own political party (Nang 6 M)

For governance, the system of Zahir Shah was very good. I don't remember it, but my mother says that it was a time of peace and stability. There were no suicide attacks or bomb blasts. My father's job was in Kabul, he would come home late without any fears or concerns (Nang 8 W).

Evident from these statements is the way in which a knowable, dependable set of rules and regulations enforced by the state is considered ideal: a state which has popular sovereignty (to the extent that criminals can be reprimanded without excessive force), can control corruption and can provide security for citizens. As the third quotation implies, however, the extent of state control should be tempered with an acceptance of democratic competition, in which political parties are permitted to exist and to exert influence on government. These statements all comply with Tilly's model for increased democratisation, in that the state needs to have capacity enough to exert a monopoly of violence and yet respond to citizen demands for civil liberties and political rights (2007: 16). However, they all come from urban respondents whose connections to the state have already been established and systematised. In this way, they are similar to the perspectives from Kabul discussed below. By comparison, responses given in rural Ghazni were much more concerned with the provision of basic security and service provision, and did not generally see a role for the state beyond this. What is interesting then from this comparison of urban and rural responses, is the way in which there appears to be a marked difference between the former, in which context a number of respondents appear to desire greater connection and interaction with state institutions, provided that they become more transparent/less corrupt – and the latter, in which there is a distinct sense of respondents valuing a certain distance from these institutions, for example as shown through the overwhelming data on preferences for local-level dispute resolution in rural areas (as documented in chapter 6).

7.2.4 Kabul data on protection indictors

Data collected for Kabul on indicator 1 for protection was quite different from provincial data in terms of the examples of arbitrary state action given by respondents.

Rather than focus on cases where actors related to the state (such as powerful ex-warlord parliamentarians) had used their positions to facilitate land grabbing, for example, they instead talked about the way in which there were few procedures in place to hold the government to account, should they be deemed to have too much control. A number of respondents complained about the lack of a formal opposition that could monitor governmental activities. Others, including the following two male shopkeepers from the centre of the city (interviewed separately), gave examples of how they considered governmental powers to be unchecked:

> Sometimes you don't know who the most powerful people playing key roles in Kabul are. For example, many powerful people tried to force [Dadfar] Spanta the Minster of Foreign Affairs to resign from his position – and a majority in parliament backed the demand for his resignation, but no-one could make him resign. Only Karzai supported Spanta and no-one could oppose his decision. (Kabul 1 M)

> You may remember that parliament tried very hard to replace Spanta, the Foreign Minister, but no-one could do anything about it. This means that the government is the most powerful entity in Kabul (Kabul 2 M).

In this case, the first respondent talks about the power of the President, rather than the government more generally (although often 'government supporter' and 'Karzai supporter' are used interchangeably by respondents, as in the second quotation) – again because 'the government', like the state more generally in Afghanistan, is not a unified entity. Afghanistan's presidential system allocates significant powers to the President and, while these are countered to some degree by parliamentary votes (a two-thirds majority can overturn a decree) there are a number of examples, such as the one given above, in which Karzai has overridden the outcome of these votes. Respondents concede that there is little that can be done in this case, and no procedures that could be followed to counter the arbitrary action of the President.

For indicator 2, concerning people's confidence in the judicial system, Kabul respondents were almost as skeptical as their provincial counterparts, particularly when describing the way in which powerful individuals were not held accountable for their actions. As one man working for an NGO explained,

There are gangs who are committing crimes and kidnapping people. But when they are caught by the police and security forces, they are able to get out of jail. But it is difficult to know how they get out and who is supporting them...Gangs and the mafia can come in different shapes and forms. They have occupied different positions in the government and they have been involved in torturing, killing and looting the people in the past, but they are still in power and influential... They misuse their government positions and commit corruption (Kabul 4 M).

Further to this, a number of respondents also expressed a lack of confidence in the independence of institutions such as the Supreme Court and Independent Electoral Commission. These two bodies in particular were widely considered to be untrustworthy, serving the interests of the government or of powerful individuals.

Finally, in terms of Kabul respondents' comparisons of legal processes across different regimes, perspectives of current processes were generally positive. In spite of criticising the lack of independence in the judiciary and the way in which powerful individuals were able to manipulate the system, nevertheless there had been improvements made:

I remember during Dr. Najib's government, [1987-1992] several groups of people were tortured and disturbed by the government. But now all the former pro-Russian parties, like Khalq and Parcham, are in the parliament. It is the achievement of democracy that all these different types of people have come together in the parliament. (Kabul M 2).

In the past people were oppressed and people had no choice to elect a person or criticize the government...Now our life has improved and we have a better life than in the past. Now we can work and travel to all the provinces, but in the past there was no such opportunity for us (Kabul M 5).

While these respondents do not speak specifically to the transparency of legal processes, they indicate a greater level of poltical and social freedom than was experienced in the past. Thus, while these Kabul respondents shared the scepticism of other urban respondents across the country concerning the achievements of the Karzai administration, and while their expectations concerning what the government should provide were equally high, there was nevertheless a greater sense of relative change, and also a stronger appreciation of some political gains that had been made (in terms of greater plurality, for example) rather than a focus only on rule of law and service

provision. Indeed, they appeared to be reflecting on how the social contract between ruler and ruled had been shufting. Like many other urban respondents, a call for a stronger state structure with greater levels of intervention was common. In this sense, then, it is possible to detect more of a sense of the desire for liberal statehood in Kabul (and to some extent in other urban areas) than elsewhere in the country.

To summarise findings on protection, then, it is possible to conclude first that no real systems that are knowable and public are perceived to exist for the protection of citizens against arbitrary state action, and that instead this protection is sought from powerful individuals with whom citizens might have connections or relationships. These individuals could also play a role within the state, a factor blurring the boundaries between 'state' and 'non-state' actors – in itself a dichotomy that assumes some kind of bond between state actors on account of their being connected to state structures. This assumption evidently does not stand in Afghanistan, and provides a problem for the application of Tilly's model. Even in Kabul, respondents considered powerful individuals to be above the law, and to be able to manipulate processes for their own ends. Second, that respondents' confidence in the judicial system is lacking, both in the key provinces and in Kabul, again due to the often arbitrary intervention of powerful individuals. Finally, that in comparison to previous regimes urban respondents in the provinces largely consider the current state system to be lacking in its ability to exercise sovereignty, combat corruption and provide security and services, but that this differs from rural perspectives whose expectations of (and aspirations for) the role of the state are more limited. In Kabul, respondents appear to share the same high expectations of the state as their provincial urban counterparts, but also consider the relative political gains that have been made since previous regimes were in power.

7.3 Data analysis: Mutually binding consultation in the state-citizen relationship in Afghanistan

This theme concerns the extent to which citizens are able to claim state assistance, and hold the government to account to ensure provision of this. Again, as a reminder of Tilly's own definition, "at one extreme, seekers of state benefits must bribe, cajole,

threaten, or use third-party influence to get anything at all; at the other, state agents have clear, enforceable obligations to deliver benefits by category of recipient" (2007: 15). The following three indicators are discussed in turn to assess expectations of citizens in terms of the contract they consider themselves to hold (or not to hold) with the state in this regard.

Table 13: Recap of mutually-binding consultation indicators

D. Mutually binding consultation	**Local perspectives on service provision and complaints procedures**	1) Respondents express expectations concerning state-provided services and indicate that these are generally met and likely to continue
		2) Respondents express familiarity with state institutions and recount examples of taking complaints about service provision to them

7.3.1 Indicator 1) Respondents express expectations concerning state-provided services, and indicate that these are generally met and are likely to continue

This indicator overlaps with the discussion above on breadth and the access to services that people consider themselves to have towards one another. Here, the subject is viewed from a slightly different angle, however, focusing on the social contract that people perceive themselves to have with the state. As these representative statements demonstrate, most respondents felt that levels of government service provision did not meet their expectations, and had little hope that this situation would improve:

> **Question:** If you have a problem, how do you go about trying to solve it?
> **Answer:** No one solves our problems. Sometimes we meet with our district governor but he doesn't help us. For example, we don't have water pipelines and we are drinking water from a canal which is not safe, and we told our district governor about this but he didn't help us. A private organisation came and told that us that they would make water pipelines for us, and they took our money and we bought pipelines, but we haven't seen any water yet (Balkh 12 W).

Our [provincial] council hasn't done anything yet. Electricity cables and wires have been laid from Daronta to Jalalabad, but there is no electricity in Surkhrod and we have very hot weather here. What should we do with the council or the governor, Sherzai? (Nang 26 M)

The situation in society is not good... For example there is a school in our area that doesn't have any chairs and the students are studying in the yard. And the hospital in our area can't make decisions about giving medicines or beds to the patients – whether you are poor or wealthy you have to buy your medicines yourself... there is no education, and there is a high cost of living in the province. There is no decision made by the government about how to solve this, and everyone just does whatever they want (Ghaz 8 W).

The government and parliament haven't done anything positive in the past five years. If you come to our village, you will see people's lives. We don't have drinking water, a clinic, a school or electricity. We have a small muddy pool from which people of the village and animals such as dogs and livestock are drinking. The water in the pool is not clean but we have to drink it because we don't have a well or a spring. When someone gets sick, we don't have cars to take our patients to the centre of the district and it is has happened a lot that critically ill patients died on the way. Most of our children get sick with diarrhea because of the water... There is no government, it is just a government by name (Balkh 16 M).

The data here is skewed toward a negative perspective, largely due to the way in which in interviewing people at length about their views on the government the research team members were giving them a chance to voice their frustrations. Nevertheless, these statements were not responses to direct questions about whether or not the government met their needs in terms of service provision, but were rather impromptu examples given as part of the conversation as a whole. While one respondent mentioned the way in which the state had provided land for her father, who was wounded during the war years (Nang 13 W), and some respondents talked generally about services being more readily available than in previous regimes (see above), the majority of accounts detailed a negative perception of the government's commitment to providing for its citizens.

This can be compared with extremely high expectations of the role of the Karzai government in the aftermath of the war years. These were fuelled by promises were made by officials running for office (particularly in the presidential and parliamentary elections in 2005) and by international actors involved in reconstruction concerning

levels of service provision for citizens that have not materialised. Further, expectations of what the state should provide for citizens were in many cases reminiscent of the systems that had been put in place in urban areas during the Soviet era, which emphasised an expanded bureaucracy and state provision of food coupons for civil servants, a systematised curriculum, a number of state-owned industrial factories providing jobs, healthcare and other services. Given this precedent, it is unsurprising that many urban respondents in particular were disappointed by the lack of similar provisions available to citizens under the Karzai administration.

One factor notable in its absence is the lack of connection made by citizens between service provision and taxation. When analysing the data for perspectives on a social contract between citizens and state, for *mutually*-binding consultation, the researcher was expecting that – particularly in urban areas, with more respondents holding salaried positions (and thus paying income tax of at least ten per cent on their earnings if more than 12,500 Afs [$250] per month) more people would link the lack of services available to their tax contributions and would complain that the money they paid to the government was not being spent on public goods (Afghan Income Tax Law, 2009).While many of the complaints about lack of services come from rural areas, a number also come from urban areas also. However, across the entire data set, no mention of taxation was made by any respondent, in relation to government service or any other subject, demonstrating the lack of consistent historical precedent of taxation in the country and also a distinct emphasis on the rights as opposed to the duties of citizens. Respondents spoke very much in the language of entitlement from government as opposed to that of a two-way relationship.

7.3.2 Indicator 2) Respondents express familiarity with state institutions and recount examples of taking complaints about service provision to them

The final indicator here refers to the way in which, should citizens not be provided with expected services, they were familiar with procedures for addressing this. Again overlapping with previous discussions on complaints processes, this highlighted similar findings: people were willing and able to take complaints to a representative of local government, such as a district governor or member of the provincial council, but none

of the examples given had ended in services actually being provided. In most cases, the officials concerned had not been able to address the problem, as the following respondent from Balkh province explained:

> You might have heard people talk about the way that the [Amu] river is eroding the soil on the Afghan side. Lots of people have lost their land and their homes. Thousands of *jiribs* of land have been destroyed by this river, which is the formal border between Uzbekistan and Afghanistan. The government has not done any work to stop the water and save the land and the homes of the people. There is one MP and one PC member from this area, but they cannot do anything. People have raised the issue to them but they cannot do anything. The government should work on this problem, but there is no government and the people there are only working for themselves (Balkh 17 M).

As this statement (and others used throughout this chapter) imply, it is to individuals and their offices – and not institutions – that people address their problems and concerns. This theme has appeared throughout the data analysis, and reflects the way in which while institutions of state exist and hold significant authority in terms of formal procedures (such as the need to acquire government stamps and the correct paperwork), it is the individuals within those institutions who determine whether or not a complaint is processed or a problem addressed. Local communities themselves do not approach institutions directly but instead would lobby a locally-known contact within government, such as a provincial council member, to draw on their own contacts in government offices to achieve a certain task. Even with these contacts, however, there is no guarantee that a problem will be solved or a service provided: as can be seen in the example above, in spite of the locally-popular MP being consulted on the issue of erosion, no solution has yet been found to the problem. This again then relates to and contrasts with Tilly's concept of public politics, where processes are systematic and knowable within the public sphere rather than dealt with on a one-to-one basis. However, it is unclear in Tilly's definition of public politics whether entire communities addressing powerful individuals with complaints about service provision constitutes public politics, or whether – due to the lack of institutional procedure – this kind of public action still falls outside of the category. Perhaps falling somewhere in between

the two, this provides another example of the way in which the Afghan case does not quite fit with the parameters that Tilly sets out.

7.3.3 Kabul data on mutually binding consultation indictors

Kabul respondents talked at some length about the lack of governmental services provided by the Karzai administration, indicating that, like provincial respondents, their expectations had not been met. Also again as with the provincial data, responses tended to reflect expectations concerning individual officials' provision of services for their local area, rather than institutionalised governmental projects. One student living in a suburb described her expectation of the outcome of the 2010 parliamentary election, for example, in terms of service provision:

> The winning candidate from this area should bring electricity to our area, he should work for good security, and he should consider what our people need (Kabul 5 W).

This was emphasised also by the accounts of Provincial Council and Wolesi Jirga members interviewed, who talked about the services they themselves had provided for their constituents:

> I supported a juice-making project in this area. I also constructed three small power stations and I gravelled 5 kilometres of alleyways. I also built 500 water pumps and I helped the people by providing them with buses (PC member, Kabul 6 W).

While the mayor of Kabul is officially responsible for providing these kinds of services, these are not regularly delivered, and rarely to suburbs that lie beyond the city centre. One Kabul respondent also expressed disappointment with the services that had been delivered on a macro scale, and their lack of perceived sustainability:

> Unfortunately, so far no important changes have been made to address people's needs. For example, no attention has been paid to our agricultural sector and we are still importing everything we need into the country. In the past 7 years it would have been possible to build two big dams to generate electricity and use the water for agriculture, but nothing happened in this regard. Electricity is bought from Tajikistan and they can stop the supply whenever they want. There is no guarantee that we will have sustainable electricity in Afghanistan (Kabul 2 M).

Whether through relying on individuals or considering governmental development projects, then, Kabul respondents had little more faith in the ability of the government to provide services sustainably than provincial respondents. Further, there was still no connection made at all by respondents between service provision and taxation, indicating again a disjunct between perceptions of the role of the state and duties of citizens. While a person's duty to vote was discussed much more frequently in Kabul than elsewhere, the lack of association made between a person's paid taxes and the corresponding expectation of services, even in the city where more respondents were earning enough each month to pay taxes, was indicative of a broader trend in which there is little imperative to hold the government to account for missing or unreliable services.

Kabul data addressing indicator 2 showed, as might be expected, a greater familiarity with institutions of state than the provincial data. A number of respondents talked about parliamentarians representing their interests, and parliament itself providing a useful forum for the expression of public concerns. As a local malik explained,

> Our interests are mainly in security and economic issues. We first want security so that we can improve our lives. When there is no security, there won't be any investment, jobs or economic improvement. These interests are represented by the MPs in parliament. It is the parliamentarians who are raising the people's problems to the government in parliament (Kabul 5 M).

While this respondent speaks to broader issues of security and economic growth, others talked about taking smaller problems to the urban district authorities, and few referred to local informal councils as preferential sources of assistance.[50] Respondents did not give specific details about the procedures they would follow to relate complaints to these bodies, but responses across the Kabul data were similar in terms of their familiarity with the district authorities. Not only do Kabul residents have more direct contact with state institutions at the local level, they are also much more likely to own televisions, through which parliamentary sessions are often broadcast. As such, their connection to and interaction with these institutions is much greater than their rural counterparts. When this data was collected, however, parliamentary elections in 2010

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[50] With the exception of two suburban respondents.

had not yet occurred, and since these problematic elections the new parliament has experienced a series of internal disputes ending in deadlock (Coburn and Larson, 2013, forthcoming). Whether or not these events have affected people's perception of the parliament's ability to raise their interests is not shown in the data.

Under the theme of mutually-binding consultation, then, it is possible to summarise that citizen expectations of state service provision are not generally met in the provinces or in Kabul, and that oftentimes people talk more about individuals providing services than the state as an institution instigating development projects. It is also clear that a mutually-binding relationship between citizen and state is not talked about in terms of rights and duties, but primarily in terms of rights and entitlements only. While in Kabul it was often considered a respondent's duty to vote, taxes were not discussed as a means through which to hold government to account. Again when needing to complain about the lack of services provided, respondents in the provinces studied generally refer to individuals with personal connections in government institutions rather than rely on any institutionalised procedures that might exist. In Kabul, however, complaints are more often referred to urban district authorities, with broader interests expected to be represented in parliament. Thus, significant differences do appear to exist between provincial and Kabuli respondents, in terms of their relationship with state institutions – but this relationship is still not consistent with the mutually-binding stipulations of Tilly's fourth theme.

7.4 Is it possible to locate Afghanistan within Tilly's state capacity/democracy framework?

Before attempting to answer this question, it would be helpful to summarise briefly the findings from all four of Tilly's themes. First, when applying breadth indicators to the data, it became clear on the one hand that accessing state officials for assistance (interpreted in a broad sense) was not seen by all respondents as a desirable or useful facility. This was particularly the case among rural respondents. Reasons for this included the preference for locally autonomous decision-making, and the predatory light in which state officials were often perceived, with institutions of state not

considered to provide a neutral mediation tool for administrative affairs and dispute resolution. On the other hand, among respondents who saw access to state officials as potentially desirable, largely in urban areas – there was a general sense that this was only available to certain groups of society – those with money, or those with personal connections to officials. This then created what were perceived as different 'categories of citizenship' (Tilly, 2007: 14), some with more access to the state than others. This was experienced by respondents to a lesser degree in Kabul than elsewhere.

Second, when applying equality indicators to the data, it became evident that respondents perceived inequality – for example in terms of access to services – to exist and be dependent on levels of income, personal connections or relations in government, security levels and gender. While divisions along these lines could be found in an analysis of citizen perceptions in almost any state, in terms of people with more money/connections to find accessing services *easier* than those without, in this case the researcher is concerned with people having any access *at all* to the most basic of services, such as water provision, healthcare, or the procurement of a national identity card, access to all of which also seem to be dependent in provincial Afghanistan on whether or not someone has money or connections. Contrary to popular generalisations about Afghan society, few inequalities were perceived to exist along ethnic lines, particularly in Nangarhar, Balkh and Kabul (possibly with the exception of a lingering narrative of exclusion among Hazaras in Kabul) – but were a significant factor in the responses of people from Ghazni. In general, people considered their votes in elections to hold equal weight as those of people from other social groups, meaning that all votes were largely assigned little value due to widespread fraud. In Kabul a sense that the outcome of elections was already pre-determined by foreign powers was notable in some transcripts, but in general there was a willingness and perceived necessity to vote regardless of fraud or outside interference.

Third, protection indicators demonstrated the distinct lack of knowable, publically accountable systems existing to protect citizens against arbitrary state action. This is partly a result of the powers assigned to the executive in Afghanistan's constitution, and the lack of checks and balances that exist to counter this. Instead of making cases

through transparent systems, protection is sought from powerful individuals, such as local commanders, MPs or religious elites with whom citizens have relationships, and who can at any one time play roles within and outside of state structures. Paradoxically, this reliance on powerful individuals further exacerbates people's lack of confidence in the judicial system, which is seen to bend to the whim of any influential interlocutor. This mistrust of institutions was also expressed by Kabul respondents, but to a lesser degree – with people demonstrating a greater sense of familiarity with state institutions and a propensity to approach state authorities with problems and disputes.

Finally, when applying indicators for the mutually-binding consultation theme, it was apparent that respondents' expectations concerning state service provision had not been met, although these expectations differed according to urban/rural perspectives and also between provinces. Across the data set, however, it was clear that citizens themselves do not refer to what might be labelled a 'mutually-binding relationship' featuring both rights and duties, but instead only with a sense of entitlement to services. While Kabul respondents talked about a duty to vote, none at all referred to taxation as a means to hold the government to account on service provision – a surprising finding given the percentage of Kabul residents that pay income tax as compared to other parts of the country. The definition of citizenship in Afghanistan, then, needs to be considered in more depth in terms of its compatibility (or lack thereof) with Tilly's assumptions about the term.

These findings point to a series of further questions about the applicability of Tilly's model to the Afghan case. They imply that it is not possible to locate Afghanistan on the state capacity/democracy matrix – not because the data are not available in such an insecure environment, not because Afghanistan as a 'fragile state' is by default undemocratic, or because there is no state/citizen relationship at all, but rather because Tilly makes fundamental assumptions about this relationship that simply do not hold as general rules in the context. Evident from the data collected is that changes do occur in the nature of interactions between ruler and ruled: there are expectations among the Afghan people about what the central government should provide and negotiations do take place accordingly – but often informally between communities and central

authorities. It is also clear that stark differences exist, for example, between perspectives in Kabul and those in other provinces – and further differences between urban and rural viewpoints within those provinces. These assumptions can be divided into four broad categories: notions of the individuality of citizenship; the notions of the constancy of citizenship across urban and rural areas; notions about the constancy of citizenship over time, and notions about the cohesiveness of the state structure. These will now be discussed in turn.

7.4.1 Assumptions of the individuality of citizenship

Clear throughout Tilly's work, and indeed through most western scholarship on democracy and democratisation, is the assumption that the foundation of (liberal) democracy lies in the relationship between the individual citizen and the state. This is often discussed in terms of constitutional liberalism – which encompasses property rights, freedom of expression, freedom of the press, and freedom of religion, among other provisions for individual citizens. As explored in chapter 1, this is very much focused on the way in which an individual interacts with the state, and the safeguards that are put in place to protect any given individual citizen from the threat of arbitrary state action.

As discussed in chapter 1, constitutional liberalism of this kind has become the backbone of western liberal democracy over time – largely due to the events of the twentieth century in the United States and Europe, which brought about monumental shifts in society. The suffragette movement, the two World Wars, increasing urbanization and the rise to popularity of the behaviouralist school of thought all contributed to the ways in which the (rational) individual and nuclear family unit replaced the community-centred social fabric of the 19th century and earlier. Even before these events, the democratic systems that developed in these countries were influenced considerably by factors specific to their own historical trajectories – such as the war of independence, development of the constitution and the civil war in the United States; the Treaty of Westphalia, Reformation and French Revolution in Europe. In this sense, as Tilly would argue, the role played by these historical trajectories is

inseparable from the development of a democratic politics in a given state and/or region.

Critical in the Afghan case is the way in which the relationship between ruler and ruled did not change dramatically during the twentieth century. As examined in chapter 5, Abdur Rahman Khan had made significant alterations to the way in which Afghans interacted with their king during his reign, including the impositions of conscription and taxes on areas previously autonomous from central control, but this had come to an end with the death of the 'Iron Amir', whose sons, by and large, had preferred to appease subjects in order to avoid resistance. This tendency continued into the twentieth century, exacerbated by the reliance of successive monarchs on outside sources of revenue, such as politically-aligned aid during the Cold War. Without a systematic campaign on the behalf of the state to regulate all parts of the country in the same way, a number of rural areas retained a great deal of the autonomy they had held for many years, maintaining their cohesiveness as community units and avoiding regular (potentially combative) interactions with the state, coming into contact with the centre only through tribal leaders who would periodically renegotiate their autonomy from the central government as and when necessary. Following Edwards, the state never managed to make a 'myth' of itself in the public imaginary (1996: 4).

In this sense, then, it is unsurprising that the evolution of the state-citizen relationship did not occur in a similar fashion to the way it had done in western democracies. Instead, communities remained intact and autonomous for the most part, and although not immune from the transformative effects of civil warfare, did not develop a closer relationship with the central government under any of its 20th century leaders. For this reason, as demonstrated throughout the data, appealing to state institutions for assistance in local governance issues, such as dispute resolution or land conflict, remains a last resort for many communities in rural Ghazni, for example. Furthermore, talking to people in these areas about their interactions with the state almost invariably involved a response articulated in the collective sense – 'we voted' or 'we took our concerns to the district governor'. There is little sense of the way in which an individual might alone seek to interact with the state to solve a problem or voice a concern.

This then makes the application of Tilly's framework difficult, because in these rural areas there are few mechanisms through which an individual, without the assistance of her community, could access state assistance. Transparent processes do not exist, for the most part. This has a particularly isolating effect on women; whose access to the state is more restricted than men's, and whose livelihoods are dependent to an even greater degree on support from the wider family and community.

Whereas this would be categorised in Tilly's model as an inherent weakness of the system, however, compromising democratisation through its apparent contradiction of the principles of breadth and equality, it is not always seen in this manner by women themselves, some of whom find security and support through the collective organisation of the community. State intervention, in for example a case of domestic violence, could be seen as highly negative and detrimental to family honour as opposed to the seeking of assistance from community elders. This is particularly the case given that state officials are often considered predatory and are not trusted by the communities they are intended to serve. The most obvious drawback of this approach however is that there are no formal standards to which local communities must comply in their treatment of women, the end result being that many communities – who would also rarely intervene in a case of domestic violence, unless very extreme – would not provide support to women in what might be considered in western terms an 'equal' or 'fair' manner. Without state-enforced punishments for the maltreatment of women, there is very little incentive to insist on new rules that would protect them inside the home. However, what is clear from the data is that women's sense of their own needs for justice and fair treatment overlap with a concern for community cohesion, the maintenance of their local support networks and the need to maintain family honour. These kinds of concerns are lost within Tilly's model, which would seek to focus only on a citizen's individual needs.

This issue serves as an example that links to all three of Tilly's three clusters of change. In terms of integrating trust networks into public politics, it emphasises how communities (one form of trust network) can be insulated from public politics and can function very much apart from institutions and systems of state. To this extent, then,

according to Tilly's model – the more connected these networks become to state systems – for example in the way in which urban districts often have maliks in charge of state stamps of approval – the greater the change toward democratisation. This also connects with his stance on the need to eradicate autonomous power centres – or areas that exist and function outside of state jurisdiction. But as is clear from the data, these changes have been in place in some urban areas for many years, but have not occurred in rural communities. Furthermore, Tilly's assumption presumes that the convergence of state and trust network serves in the overall interest of the population of individual citizens, when women (for example) can often see their interests defined in terms of collective family or community concerns that would be negatively affected by closer coordination with what is often seen as a predatory state. While over time, the argument runs, this would then provoke conflict and compromise, this would only be the case if a regime lasted long enough to inflict similar policies on the same communities consistently – an unlikely scenario, perhaps, in a fragile state.

The example also speaks to the need in Tilly's model for a reduction in categorical inequalities if democratisation is to occur. Women are certainly treated in some parts of Afghanistan as second-class citizens, and as such often have less access to state services and to justice than men. However, this is not a result of state policy against women, but rather state inability and/or unwillingness to intervene in 'family' and/or community affairs. Arguably, as has been seen throughout Afghanistan's history, the more the state attempts to intervene in these issues, the greater the likelihood of conservative backlash and the worsening of the situation for women. Thus, this is more a case of changing norms and values over time than about the forceful intervention of the state. Again, the difference between urban and rural perspectives on this issue is often stark and thus does not lend itself to country-wide generalisation.

7.4.2 Assumptions of the constancy of citizenship across the urban/rural divide

Related to the question of individual citizenship is the kind of citizenship that is experienced by or available to citizens in a given state. In its suggestion that the more constant the nature of citizenship across different social groups, the more democratic a country necessarily becomes, Tilly's model by extension suggests that in states where

citizenship can be differentiated across these groups, democratisation is lacking. This requirement for constancy in citizenship comes with a concern for equality and breadth of access to state services, in an attempt to ensure that countries in which categorical inequalities occur, for example on the grounds of race, ethnicity or gender, are sufficiently penalised for this in terms of their progression along the democratisation continuum.

While this serves a necessary purpose, however, it also rests on the assumption that uniform citizenship – again based on a relationship between the individual and the state – is a pre-requisite for democratisation, when, as evident from the data analysed in this study, people living in different parts of a given country can have different kinds of democratic relationships with the central government.

Voting in elections provides a useful example. Whereas respondents in urban areas and in Kabul in particular generally appeared to have more contact with state institutions, a greater understanding of how these institutions and processes within them functioned, and higher expectations as to what they should provide for citizens, than their rural counterparts – many rural respondents still talked about the necessity of voting in elections and talked about how they would vote in forthcoming polls. This tendency to talk about participating in elections decreased with security levels, but not all rural areas are necessarily insecure. Respondents in rural Nangarhar and Balkh in particular talked about the importance of voting, albeit often as a community – collectively choosing a candidate in the village council meetings, for example – indicating that in spite of widespread fraud and a suspicion of central government, there are occasions in which residents of rural areas actively seek interaction with the state and participation in democratic processes. For this reason, in spite of the differences between urban and rural citizens of Afghanistan, in terms of access to services and the extent of their interaction with the state, there are still grounds to argue that democratisation – especially in terms of increased interaction and negotiation – occurs, albeit in different ways, across the urban/rural divide. In other words, differential citizenship can co-exist with democratisation, and does not necessarily indicate the existence of categorical inequalities.

7.4.3 Assumptions of the constancy of citizenship over time

Implied in the section above is the way in which there may be certain times at which the relationship between citizen/communities and the central state are more interactive than others – meaning, that this relationship is not constant over time. Returning to Olivier Roy's observation of the negotiated relationship between communities and the centre in Afghanistan as being one of 'externality and compromise' (Roy, 1994: 148), and drawing on the data gathered, it is possible to see how the relationship between citizen and state can vary over time. Evidently, this is central to Tilly's theory, hence his taking an historical approach to the analysis of democratisation – and critical to his thesis is the way in which this variation rarely moves according to an upwards linear trajectory toward greater democratisation. Nevertheless, his assumption of movement taking place over time rests on the possibility of generalising across an entire population at any given moment in time, when it is plausible that different groups in society could move toward and away from greater interaction with the state simultaneously.

As an example, former military commanders might at once retain local strongholds on power and influence but also hold positions of public office. This is the case in many provinces in Afghanistan, where former warlords are currently members of parliament. Given that formal disarmament was not completely successful when it was undertaken in the early years during the Bonn Process, many still control armed groups that can solidify their influence in a given area. These, then, are presumably examples of Tilly's autonomous power centres. However, these individuals are not wholly determined to remain entirely autonomous from the state, given the benefits they can generate from holding a position of public office. These include access to patronage networks that the downwards provision of public services can provide. Thus, they do not fully comply with Tilly's definition of autonomous power centres, maintaining as they do a certain interaction with the state which is at any given time negotiated and re-defined. A former parliamentarian and warlord in Paktia province, Pacha Khan Zadran, for example, threatened to gather armed forces and storm the capital if he was not re-instated as a winning candidate in elections in 2010, after having been disqualified for fraud – and yet after talks with the President did not carry out these threats (Coburn and Larson,

2013, forthcoming, chapter 7).   In a different kind of negotiation, the governor of Balkh province, Atta Mohammad Noor, refused to align himself with Karzai's re-election campaign in the presidential poll of 2009, supporting the opposition candidate, Abdullah Abdullah, instead. When Karzai attempted to replace him, Atta was simply able to send his replacement back to Kabul in a taxi given the extent of his local power and influence in the area. Nevertheless, Atta still maintains a negotiated – if distanced – relationship with central government, upon which he is reliant for some resources, and for political support against his long-time rival, Abdul Rashid Dostum. These examples, alongside those mentioned by respondents in cases of land-grabbing by MPs and other 'state officials', demonstrate the blurred boundary between 'state' and 'non-state' actors that exists, and that does not sit comfortably with western attempts to 'statebuild' or to measure democratisation. These actors can emphasise their connection to the state as and when it behoves their political and economic interests to do so, meaning that there is very little in the way of transparent, knowable due process that could bind them to a particular code of conduct, for example.

7.4.4 Assumptions of the cohesiveness of the state structure

The fourth assumption made by Tilly is very much related to the issue of constancy of state-citizen relations over time, and concerns the nature of the state as a coherent institution within which members play defined, internally-coordinated roles and hold a specific agenda. This speaks to different theoretical conceptions of the state, as discussed in chapter 1, such as those of the structuralist school which holds that a state system has a clearly defined, non-neutral agenda of its own, as opposed to the pluralist view which contends that the state is made up of individuals pursuing their own interests through state structures. In either argument, however, there is a fundamental assumption that some form of incentives to maintain a cohesive state structure exist for the officials employed within it. Even if no stated or perceived agenda is held, it is nevertheless in the interests of individual officials to function as part of a coherent set of institutions.

This is not always the case, however, in Afghanistan. Within line ministries, there is often a sense of institutional memory through the continued employment of staff who had worked in the same position under former regimes, which generates a sense of hierarchy and process (albeit cumbersome and bureaucratic). This is counteracted, however, by the reforms introduced since the international intervention in 2001, which have included Priority Reform and Restructuring (PRR) as part of conditions imposed through the country's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) in order to access aid funds. These have seen new staff brought in and an attempt to introduce meritocratic hiring procedures, such as the holding of examinations and interviews for staff to reapply for their jobs. This has been less than successful due to the patronage networks that exist in ministries, with officials overriding examination results for example in order to ensure the hiring of relatives and friends. Still, what has also occurred has been the formation of 'parallel institutional cultures' (Kandiyoti, 2007; Larson, 2008: 54) where different sets of rules (and salary scales) exist for different staff members.

Even within line ministries, then, there is little sense of a cohesive civil service – but this lack of coherence is even more apparent between ministries, due to the way in which hiring usually occurs on the basis of a new minister's family connections. Whenever a minister is replaced, there is often a significant staff turnover also. As one woman MP for Kabul explained, "I think it would be better if the government did not introduce new ministers as frequently as they do – all of them come to office and fill their pockets with state funds, and they select all their family members to work as employees in the ministry" (Kabul 3 W). Coordination between different line ministries is rarely systematised and often dependent on the personalities involved in a given project.

Parliamentarians in a given province also have little incentive to work together as a legislative body for the purposes of enhancing the local perspective of the state. In spite of their mandate to represent the official constituency of their province, as all parliamentarians are de facto elected from highly localised areas, such as a district or even village, the extent to which they represent the province as a whole is highly limited. This can take on an ethnic dimension also, given the way in which in many

parts of the country, different ethnic groups or *qawms* live in specific, homogenous geographical areas. As respondents in Balkh and Ghazni discussed, there was very little overlap between the areas of the province that different MPs served. Not elected on a party platform but as individuals, there is very little that holds individual officials together as a unified group of state representatives. This is perhaps most apparent in the lower house of parliament, where, in 1972 an observer remarked on the way in which "[t]he Wolesi Jirgah, in effect, houses 216 distinct parties: one for each member" (Weinbaum, 1972: 61).

This causes a problem when attempting to use Tilly's framework to measure democratisation – not because individual MPs are not necessarily committed to providing services to their constituents, but because the 'state' that citizens are assumed to have a relationship with is not a coherent entity in its own right, either in reality or in the public imaginary. Rather, it is a mechanism through which individuals can seek to further their own individual interests through the connection it provides to the central locus of decision making, itself exacerbated by the presidential system that has concentrated power at the centre. This then brings into question the assumption that trust networks can be 'integrated' – integrated into what, when the state does not exist as a cohesive institutional body? Further, it blurs boundaries once again between so-called autonomous power centres and the state, when it is unclear what exactly these power centres are supposedly autonomous *from.*

7.5 Is it possible to identify causes of change in these areas?

Having looked at whether or not it is possible to locate Afghanistan on Tilly's state capacity/democracy matrix, and having proposed that it is not, it is now relevant to ask whether it would be possible to map changes in democratisation according to Tilly's model. The conclusions above render this second question somewhat problematic, however – the four key assumptions on which Tilly's conceptualisation of democratisation and its relationship to state capacity rest can be challenged significantly when applied to a fragile context such as Afghanistan. In a similar manner, problems occur when trying to map shifts in the state-citizen relationship. These will be discussed

in turn below in relationship to Tilly's four themes of breadth, equality, protection and mutually-binding consultation, and discussion of change further expanded in chapter 8.

7.5.1 Changes in breadth

In order to map changes in breadth, Tilly suggests a focus on the "[i]ncrease (decrease) in the share of the population having legally enforceable rights to communicate complaints about governmental performance to high officials' (2007: 66). As discussed at length above (chapter 6), simply assessing the number of people with these enforceable rights is difficult in a context in which the difference between de jure 'rights' and de facto ability to pursue these is significant. For this reason, this study looked instead at the breadth of perceptions of access to high officials for the purposes of communicating complaints, but again this did not provide an insight into the number or proportion of people considering themselves to have this access due to the way in which rural responses were very different from urban ones, often considering access to state officials to be unnecessary or a last resort. Plotting change according to this measure, then, is difficult – even if more formal measures were put in place by the state to ensure that a greater number of citizens were able to complain to state officials, the (voluntarily) limited interaction that rural respondents had with state structures would mean that they would be very unlikely to call upon the judicial system to assist them in a case of this sort, should they find their access to government officials denied. Simply assessing a change to the formal mechanisms in place would not then provide a useful proxy indicator for any actual change toward greater or lesser democratisation.

7.5.2 Changes in equality

Returning to Tilly's suggested indicator of change in equality – a "[d]ecline (rise) in the number of distinct legal categories defining rights and obligations of different population segments vis-à-vis the state" (2007: 66) – it is possible to see how movement in this area might be difficult to trace meaningfully in that Afghan context. The existence of more rather than less legal categories of citizens indicates for Tilly an implication of de-democratisation, and yet as the data analyses in chapters 6 and 7 show, the formal existence or absence of formal categories may not necessarily coincide

with the extent to which people *perceive* themselves to be in different categories in terms of their relationship with the state. The Afghan constitution makes it quite clear that men and women hold equal rights before the law and a citizenship that is equally valid, and yet there are still many instances in which women consider themselves to be 'second-class' citizens, or at a distinct disadvantage as compared to men when needing to access state services. This is due to the fact that the constitution is only one of a number of different sources of legitimate rule-systems, with Sharia providing perhaps the most powerful in many areas, and customary law also holding a significant degree of value among citizens (Coburn and Dempsey, 2010; Coburn, 2011). The interplay between these different systems allows for a certain fluidity in interpretation of all three, but most notably of the interpretations of the constitution, being the most recently introduced.

This also ties in to the discussion about the constancy or uniformity of citizenship for individuals that Tilly assumes a necessary tenet of democracy, when in Afghanistan for example equality is often measured in terms of equal representation of groups or communities rather than individuals.

To measure change in equality, then, in the Afghan context, is to move beyond the mere existence of legal categories and look at the way in which relationships between different segments of the society interact with the central government on a regular basis. A new set of questions needs to be developed to encapsulate this. Basic initial queries could include: Are these segments represented in the central and local branches of of government, for example, if so, how? What does representation constitute, and has it changed over time? What are the factors that would allow people to consider themselves equal to other Afghans? Taking these questions forward, a detailed examination of indicators that might assess changing levels of perceived equality (alongside Tilly's other three themes) is given in chapter 8.

7.5.3 Changes in protection

As a means to measure change in levels of protection for citizens against arbitrary state action, Tilly suggests as an example focusing on the "[d]ecrease (increase) in the

proportion of the population imprisoned without legal sentencing or legal recourse"
(2007: 66). Due to the difficulty in gaining these kinds of figures in Afghanistan for the
current regime, when analysing protection levels in the data the researcher has looked
instead at perceptions of the visibility and accountability of the legal process as a
broader theme instead. Measuring change in these perceptions, as is the case with all
four themes, is difficult, partly because it would need to rely on respondents'
retrospective comparisons of previous regimes. Controlling for ethnicity, region, and
urban/rural differences, however, it may be possible to build a comprehensive picture of
the extent to which the current regime has instituted an improvement or decline in the
transparency of legal processes as compared to its predecessors. Combining this data
with any available statistics on past regimes would serve to strengthen this approach. It
may also be possible to measure change in perceived levels of protection as it has
occurred within the current regime, if at all, although these changes are likely to be less
dramatic (in terms of the time it takes for legislation to pass through parliament, become
enforced country-wide and have an impact on the lives of 'ordinary' citizens.
Nevertheless, combining these perspectives with any incidences of changed legislation
could be another means of strengthening this form of comparison.

7.5.4 Changes in mutually-binding consultation

In order to measure change in Tilly's final theme, mutually-binding consultation, he
suggests mapping the "[i]ncrease (decrease) in the share of all citizens' complaints
regarding denial of legally mandated benefits that result in the delivery of those
benefits" (2007:66). Again as a result of lack of data in this field, and the need to focus
on perspectives rather than 'hard data', the researcher analysed local perspectives on
service provision and complaints procedures more generally. Measuring change in these
perspectives again would be problematic due to the differences in service availability
across urban and rural areas, and across different parts of the country. Further, and
perhaps more importantly, procedures for complaints appear to be available in highly
institutionalised state bureaucracies and not so much in those existing in fragile states,
which often require significant post-war rebuilding and re-structuring. Very few
procedures for citizen complaints exist in Afghanistan, meaning that when complaints

are made they are made through local interlocutors to a regional patron, or in person to a member of parliament though visiting their private residences in Kabul. This renders the question of measuring how and to what extent these processes have changed somewhat difficult to answer due to the fluidity of complaints practices and the lack of formal structure available. This does not mean necessarily that people are unable to complain – but simply that they do so in a manner that does not comply with Tilly's form of measurement.

7.6 Summary and conclusions

This chapter has analysed the data set as regards to the themes of protection and mutually-binding consultation, attempting to apply Tilly's framework to the qualitative data collected. Several problems were encountered, as in the first two themes of breadth and equality discussed in chapter 6. Across all four themes, assumptions underlying Tilly's model became clear, concerning specifically the individuality of citizenship, the constancy of citizenship across urban/rural populations, the constancy of citizenship over time and the cohesiveness of the state structure. These assumptions simply do not hold in the fragile context of Afghanistan, as the data shows. This being the case, it is possible to assert that it is not possible to locate Afghanistan on Tilly's state capacity/democracy matrix, as the model currently exists. However, change nonetheless occurs in the ruler/ruled relationship, as the data has also shown. While measuring change in each of Tilly's four areas remains difficult, it may not be impossible if a new set of questions and indicators could be developed. This task is attempted in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 8: ADAPTING TILLY TO FIT A FRAGILE CONTEXT: INTRODUCING 'COMPREHENSIVE DEMOCRATIC INDICTORS'

8.1 Introduction

Tilly's model makes several key assumptions about the nature of the state and its relationship to citizens that are difficult to apply to Afghanistan, and potentially to other fragile contexts. At the same time, however, these contexts cannot be discounted from attempts to measure democratisation, due to some aspects of Tilly's model applying to some parts of the population at certain times, and to changes that do occur in the relationship between ruler and ruled. It is thus necessary to ask whether or not amendments could be made to the model to render it more appropriate to these cases. This chapter explores whether such amendments might be possible. First, it summarises the problems found with Tilly's model so far. Following this, it focuses on the state-citizen (or SC) relationship and asks whether the concept of a 'centre-community' (CC) relationship might serve as a more appropriate construct for the analysis of democratisation in fragile states. The application of this alternative however proves in itself problematic due to the nature of the differences between urban and rural populations in Afghanistan. This is discussed before the possibility of combing both state-citizen (SC) and centre-community (CC) constructs in the same model is considered. Finally, the chapter discusses the way in which this new approach might affect the theory, measurement and practice of democratisation in fragile states.

8.2 Summary so far

This thesis has attempted to apply Tilly's model for measuring levels of democratisation to the Afghan case. Before the researcher attempted to do so, however, she made certain amendments to the model – such as shifting the focus of Tilly's suggested indicators of democratisation from one of 'hard data' to one of respondent perspectives, applying an interpretivist approach to data analysis instead of a positivist one. She argued that this change in methodological approach does not alter the principles on which Tilly's model rests, but is a change fundamental to the application of the model to fragile contexts in

which 'hard data' is difficult to attain and questionable in reliability. Evidently, this makes the 'measurement' of democratisation more difficult because perceptions shift depending on the context in which interviews are conducted. However, it does not preclude analysis of Tilly's four themes of breadth, equality, protection and mutually binding consultation.

When applying the data collected to the model in chapters 6 and 7, the researcher found that there were also several key problems concerning the underlying principles on which it rests. These problems – more fundamental than the kinds of indicators used for measurement – related not to the way in which Afghanistan was simply an unsuitable case for analysis, because some aspects of Tilly's model (such as the levels of interaction between individual citizens and state institutions) clearly applied usefully to the exploration of how democratisation levels were changing in some (largely urban) parts of the country. Rather, the problems related to the way in which assumptions were made about the all-encompassing nature of citizenship in the country, and the lack of space for variability in the kinds of relationships held between different citizens and different aspects of the state system – a variability that was not necessarily negative or 'undemocratic'.

The first of these assumptions concerns a presumed individuality of citizenship as present or desirable across the entirety of a given state, which does not hold in the Afghan case in many places where decisions are made and interests pursued collectively, either as part of a family, wider family or larger community group. This means that greater value is often placed by respondents on a state official's ability to meet community needs, for example, rather than those of individual citizens. The second assumption concerns the presumed constancy of citizenship across the urban/rural divide – the notion that all communities across all parts of the state hold or should be able to hold a similar relationship and form of interaction with the state system. This is problematic in Afghanistan where, historically, rural and urban communities have interacted with the state in very different ways. The third assumption concerns the constancy of citizenship over time, in its presumption that at any given moment, a citizen is likely to consider their relationship to the state in the same way.

This is not always the case in Afghanistan where a person can simultaneously run for (and attain) political office and comply with the official demands of such a position, but also maintain resource supplies of their own should they consider their personal influence to be under threat of state cooption. The final assumption concerns the cohesiveness of the state structure, in presuming that all representatives of the state apparatus present a unified body of official administration, when in fact for many in Afghanistan a position within the state structure provides simply a means of furthering personal gains and patronage networks rather than the signing up to a cohesive political or administrative agenda.

These assumptions render problematic the application of Tilly's model to Afghanistan, and thus the question remains – would it be possible to alter the model further, to the point at which it becomes more appropriate for application to these cases, so that changes in the ruler-ruled relationship might be measured even if they do not match up with standard definitions of democraticness? Or would this change, necessarily to fundamental principles of Tilly's approach, render the model so different from its original form that it could no longer be considered part of the same process of analysis? This will be discussed further in the following sections.

8.3 State/citizen: centre/community?

Discussed above are some of the problems with the emphasis that Tilly (along with other recent scholars) has put on the state/citizen relationship. While Tilly himself does not come from the liberal school explicitly, this focus nevertheless plays into liberal ideas about the nature of democracy and how it should affect the relationship between individuals in a given country and the state apparatus. It focuses on the individual, on the authority and cohesiveness of the state, on protection from arbitrary state action, and on political rights and civil liberties. While these are no doubt desirable characteristics of a political system, they do not take into account the variability described above in terms of the fluidity of relationships between state and citizenry in Afghanistan. There are problems with the applicability of liberal notions of both the 'state' and the 'citizen'.

Whether it would be possible to replace these terms, then, seems a valid route of enquiry. This would not purely be a semantic change, but a move toward a construct that could provide a more appropriate framework through which to view the relationship between rulers and ruled in Afghanistan.

Clear from the analysis of the data collected for this study have been the ways in which the community has taken precedence over individual interests for many within Afghan society. Looking back once again to the historical analysis of Olivier Roy, and his description of a typical relationship of 'externality and compromise' between rulers and ruled, he is referring to the ways in which communities – under the stewardship of elders and leaders acting as interlocutors – maintained a negotiated relationship with the ruling powers that was fluid and subject to change at different points (Roy, 1994: 148). Barfield discusses this relationship in some depth also, referring to the ways in which leaders would often seek to avoid violent uprising through compromising with communities differentially (i.e., with different communities and different ways, depending on their location, potential threat to central rule, and historical relationship with the King) over issues of taxation and conscription, for example (2010:198).

The term 'community' appears to work well as a potential alternative to a focus on the 'citizen'. First, it moves focus away from the individual, and allows for a sense of collective identity that is much more prevalent in Afghanistan than that of individual interests and needs. Second, it can be used to refer to a number of different kinds of people group – whether a tribe, qawm, village, ethnic group or district – all of which are communities within which citizens can be included at any one point in time, depending on how they choose to define themselves at a given moment. Also, it allows for regional differentiation – whereas for example tribes are more commonly found among Pashtun groups in the south, ethnic groups and qawms provide a more common means of collective mobilisation in the north and west of the country. The term 'community' could be applied differentially and not fixed to a certain group – but at the same time still denote a kind of relationship with the ruling powers that could be compared across the country.

The attempt to apply Tilly's model to the Afghan case has also demonstrated problems with the way in which 'the state' is portrayed. As mentioned above, Tilly makes assumptions about the cohesiveness of the state structure. While he allows for differences in state capacity, and measures the effect of changing levels of state capacity on democratisation processes – he considers even states with low capacity to be unified entities of some sort, with some agency, surviving at this point in time more than ever in history as a result of the protection provided by international institutions (2007:164). Further, it is implied that the reach of the state is (or should be) uniform across different parts of a given country; that the 'state' is perceived in the same way by citizens across urban and rural populations.

As a potential alternative, the term 'centre' appears more appropriate to describe the ruling powers that govern Afghanistan. This is for several reasons. First, that 'centre' implies a nucleus of political activity, surrounding which concentric circles of state influence might emanate but which decrease with distance – the further away from the centre a given region, the weaker the influence of central state structures (although in urban areas regional state institutions may generate their own circles of influence). As demonstrated by the data analysed in chapters 6 and 7, Kabul represents an entirely different political entity to any other part of Afghanistan, facilitating a different kind of connection with state structures for its population that do other urban areas. Second, the term 'centre' allows for the possibility of satellite centres of authority to exist on the periphery of state influence – which are connected to the state but also maintain a certain degree of autonomy in that they exist as urban areas in regions where state influence is weak. Third, 'centre' does not imply a necessarily cohesive political or administrative agenda, held by any member of the state administration, but instead denotes a space from which patronage networks and top-down decision-making emanate. The difference here is that other sites of political authority – for example, governorships in provinces – can maintain their allegiance to the state structure when it comes to claiming resources, but at the same time are not committed to maintaining that allegiance when it comes to promoting state policy, for example. The use of the alternative term 'centre' would not preclude the existence of the state administration, but would recognise the way in which its reach was not as universal as the term 'state'

has come to suggest. It would account for the manner in which provincial governorships are at once connected to and distanced from the state administration.

There has been considerable use of the term 'centre/periphery' in the literature on statebuilding, used to describe the relationships between central governments and border regions in fragile contexts, which are often weak and unstructured (Perkman and Sum, 2002; Cramer and Goodhand, 2002; Maroya, 2003; Goodhand, 2009). In particular, the political economy of border regions has come under scrutiny and analysts have pointed to the way in which these areas often govern themselves and are able to extract rents from lucrative cross-border trade deals without having to rely on central state authority (Goodhand, 2009). This conceptualisation is certainly appropriate to the Afghan case, where for example in Nangarhar province the control of the border economy is very much in the hands of Governor Sherzai. However, the centre-periphery model is also too limited to describe the relationship that Sherzai continues to maintain with the state, which is very much negotiated and not as static as the term suggests: he is at once part of the centre *and* the periphery.

The problems with this term are perhaps evident in the example of electoral fraud, which was in actuality and perceived by Afghans and international observers to be widespread in the 2009 and 2010 elections (NDI, 2011; Coburn and Larson, 2013, forthcoming). When responding to the allegations of fraud, election officials were quick to assign incidences of irregularities to peripheral areas, assigning district and provincial election officers to undergo investigation (Filkins, 2009).This may well have been the case − indeed, according to maps produced by the National Democratic Institute, the most numerically significant incidences of fraud did indeed occur in some of the most remote areas in the south and east of Afghanistan (NDI, 2010). However, fraud did not *only* occur in these areas, and was (as demonstrated in NDI's maps, and according to several accounts of researchers working for the AREU at the time) prevalent across Kabul province also, in terms of vote numbers being changed at local polling stations and then changed again before initial results were published by the IEC headquarters in Kabul (Coburn and Larson, 2013, forthcoming). This indicates that while centre-periphery dynamics are an important means of analysing the relationship between the

state and remote areas within the country, they cannot encompass the way in which 'periphery'-type behaviour occurs in spaces that are not 'peripheral' at all. In this sense, centre/community seems to provide a more appropriate framework through which to assess the relationship between rulers and the ruled in Afghanistan, because communities exist both at the centre and at the periphery and their behaviour in relation to the state is not determined necessarily by geographical location.

If, then, this new construct of centre-community could be used to replace that of the state-citizen, it is necessary to ask whether it would still be applicable to measures and conceptualisations of democratisation. The danger is that while this may be an entirely more appropriate term to describe the relationship between ruler and ruled in fragile contexts, it describes only what exists, and not any form of democratic political rule. In this sense, it would function as a descriptive tool only and not as a means of making normative judgements as to the 'value' or merit of the political system. Could the centre-community construct be used as a basis for the measurement of democratisation? If so, how? What characteristics of this relationship would need to be evident before a regime could be classified as a democracy? What space, if any, would exist within such a framework for the guarantee of individual freedoms? How and to whom would communities be held accountable? Essentially: do Tilly's indicators still apply?

To answer these questions, it is necessary to return briefly to definitions of democracy, as used and justified in the opening chapters of this thesis. If democracy is to be defined as: *a political system in which individuals or groups of individuals within a given state, institution or political community have the right and ability to determine the ways in which they and their collective resources are governed and to whom decision-making power is assigned* – as was suggested in chapter 1, then it is arguable that a centre-community framework would be compatible with democracy. In this definition, individuals are included but they comprise a political community of sorts – whether as part of a state, or as part of a more localised collective body. The definition here refers primarily to the allocation of resources and decision-making powers, rather than to the liberal concepts of individual property rights and freedom of speech – and in doing so follows Adam Przeworski's observation that, in a minimalist definition such as this one,

it can be assumed that liberal characteristics of governance could be included here should people choose rulers for whom these would be a priority (Przeworski, 1999). This definition of democracy emphasises public agency, and the opportunity to participate in decisions concerning how and through what means their resources are distributed – neither of which are necessarily excluded by a focus on the centre-community instead of the state-citizen.

In terms of Tilly's framework, the four themes of breadth, equality, protection and mutually-binding consultation are also still applicable, if in a modified sense. Breadth and equality would refer to the way in which communities of all ethnic backgrounds, religions and classes could interact with processes of decision-making at the centre in the same manner – ensuring that no group was systematically excluded from these central decision-making processes, particularly in terms of resource allocation. Afghanistan might be considered relatively progressive when considering ethnic divisions, here, in that most ethnic groups do have access to central decision-making under the Karzai administration (and certainly as compared to the Taliban regime, which excluded Hazara and Shia groups) – but would 'score' negatively in terms of its unwillingness or inability to combat the systematic marginalisation of women in society, perhaps. Protection would refer to the way in which communities were able to take collective action against the central authorities should they consider their livelihoods or resources under threat as a result of arbitrary state activity. This could still involve a focus on knowable legal process and would not need to detract in any significant way from Tilly's own stipulations for measurement, but could include the option for processes to be community-driven as well as available to individuals. Mutually-binding consultation would apply to the way in which communities could expect central authorities to provide services in return for taxation and the performance of other civic duties, perhaps – but could also stipulate fixed processes through which communities could hold central authorities to account should they not deliver mutually-agreed services. In this sense, any new framework based on a centre-community construct would not bend to fit the fluid manner in which communities bargain differentially with the centre, depending on past histories of preferential treatment or the extent of the threat they could pose to central authorities, and thus would impose some

level of uniformity in terms of the agreed relationship or social contract between communities and the state administration. However, it would move away from the assumption of this uniformity, and allow space for different kinds of communities to make a case against the centre.

8.4 The problematic urban elite

In replacing a focus on the state-citizen with that of the centre-community, however, a critical problem occurs, relating to the way in which Kabul respondents and some of the urban respondents in Nangarhar and Balkh talked about their expectations of the state. In these responses, differentiating from those in rural areas, it was clear that greater, more transparent interaction with the state was desired and not only through collective representation, but for individuals also. Greater accountability for services was expressed as a potentially positive change. Respondents in Kabul and in urban areas in the provinces were also more likely to describe a desire for greater state control over so-called 'autonomous power centres' – influential party and ex-Jihadi leaders, for example, and to enforce the rule of law. In short, these responses appeared to uphold Tilly's assumptions about the necessity for a focus on the state-citizen relationship when considering change toward democratisation.

This could be partly a result of the way in which 'the state' is a very much more prevalent aspect of daily life in the city of Kabul than it is elsewhere in the country. Line ministries tend to employ a considerable staff base, in spite of poor levels of pay, and this results in the proportion of Kabul residents who know someone working in a government ministry significantly high. Many residents of Kabul have access to television and radio stations, through which parliamentary sessions, presidential speeches and state messages are broadcast on a regular basis. Knowledge of governmental affairs is widespread as a result. While state representatives may still not act as a cohesive whole, they, as 'the government', are nevertheless the subject of considerable scrutiny among residents.

Evidently, there were some aspects of Kabul respondents' responses that did not differ greatly from their provincial counterparts – such as the lack of emphasis on taxation,

and the propensity for some urban communities to function very much as communities, rather than groups of individual families, particularly in the suburbs. By and large, however, Kabul respondents were likely to express perspectives on their relationship to state institutions that coincided more accurately with Tilly's state-citizen emphasis than with the centre-community model suggested above. This is not to suggest that urban responses were in some way 'better' or 'more democratic' than rural ones, but simply implies that urban communities may have come to expect and perhaps rely on more regular interaction with central authorities. Likewise, it does not signify that rural communities are any 'less democratic' than their urban counterparts. However, it should be stated also that further research would be needed to substantiate this finding, given that Kabul in particular was not considered as a case study in this research in its own right but simply used as a means of comparison with three other provinces in which more detailed research was carried out.

This being the case, it is problematic to simply discard the state-citizen construct when it appears to provide a framework adequate to describe the aspirations of some urban citizens, if not their rural counterparts, for their relationship to central authorities. Although residents of Kabul city make up only approximately one tenth of the country's population, (Central Statistics Organisation, 2012a), this is still significant. In some parts of the capital, communities remain as cohesive, if not more so, as they do in rural areas – and yet in other parts, individual families function very much more autonomously from their broader collective identity groups. The term 'community', then, does not always apply. Comprising part of the centre themselves, they are not as separate and/or autonomous from power structures in the capital as people in rural areas. In sum, the variation that exists throughout the country in terms of its citizens' relationship with central authorities – the fact that makes it difficult to apply Tilly's model – is also the problem preventing a complete application of the centre-community model.

8.5 Possibility of combining both: The CDI approach

As a result of this complexity, then, it necessary to ask whether a model combining both approaches would be feasible, or theoretically sound. Would it be possible to promote a model for the conceptualisation, measurement and even practice of democratisation in fragile states that included alternatives: a means to focus on the state/citizen but also on the centre/community in areas where the latter would prove more appropriate? This would evidently make for a more complicated analysis, but would avoid the over-simplification of presuming all relationships between ruler and ruled do and should take the format of a liberal democratic framework. It would still hold to principles of participation and accountability, but would combine these with the acknowledgement of the realities of community mobilisation in many non-western contexts. The critical motivation again refers to the central hypothesis that fragile contexts cannot be excluded from democratisation measures simply because they are fragile. Measuring democratisation should still be conceived of in terms of the changing relationship between ruler and ruled in these contexts, but a more nuanced approach is necessary to capture these changes. The following chart demonstrates the comparative advantages of applying the centre-community framework to fragile contexts, emphasising also where and when a state-citizen approach still may remain valid and useful.

Table 14: Comparative advantages of the centre-community framework

Tilly	Description	Indicators	Advantages of Centre/community	When/where does centre/community *not apply*?
Breadth	"From only a small segment of the population enjoying extensive rights, the rest being largely excluded from public politics, to very wide inclusion of people under the state's jurisdiction'" (2007: 13)	1) Respondents from a variety of ethnic and social backgrounds perceive their access to state officials to be unhindered and give examples Looking for: a) similarities across different case study provinces b) similarities across urban and rural respondents c) similarities across male and female responses 2) Respondents refer to legal procedures for recourse should their access to officials be hindered	• Public politics in Afghanistan often takes place in the relationships between centre and community, not between the state and individual citizens • Facilitates the analysis of how different kinds of communities relate to the centre differentially • 'Community' is broad enough to encompass different kinds of local communities and processes • 'Inclusion' often defined by respondents in terms of ethnic group, not individuals • Emphasis on 'centre' still implies that contacting government not autonomous groups. • Women's interests – often bound up in community ones, not always separate. • Key assumption: COMMUNITIES WANT some access to centre but in form of negotiation/consensus • Takes the focus off individuals actually knowing about legal procedures but at the same time allows for communities to have systems in place for accessing state officials (and for seeking redress should their access be hindered). • Still talking about transparent processes but doesn't assume that each individual citizen knows the mechanisms involved – trust community leaders	• When a 'community' is not the primary means through which individuals seek to address problems/disputes (eg in some parts of urban Kabul) • In areas where 'the state' has a recognised administrative and regulatory role, and interacts with citizens on a regular basis through processes of public politics e.g. in urban Kabul • When key assumption is wrong: INDIVIDUALS WANT access to the state on an individual basis • When community leaders are not trusted with the interests of the community as a unit • When legal processes are a widely familiar aspect of public life
Equality	"From great inequality among and within categories of citizens to extensive equality in both regards" (2007: 13)	1) Respondents consider their own status vis-a-vis the state to be equal to that of others, for example in terms of access to services Looking for: a) Female respondents consider themselves to have similar rights and duties vis-à-vis the state as their male counterparts b) Little difference between different ethnic responses concerning their perceived status vis-à-vis the state 2) Respondents consider their votes in elections to carry as much weight as those of other citizens	• 'Community' fits well with notions of collective identity or 'categories of citizens'. Communities can be overlapping in that members can be part of more than one at any one time. • Still need emphasis on standardised procedures somehow, which is a problem for fragile states. But would there be easier to monitor/enforce if accountable to whole communities not just individuals? • Community much more appropriate than individual when bloc voting occurs – provides a better sense of whether people feel equally treated by the state	• Equality *within* categories of citizens: times in which communities and their leaders are perceived by members not to serve their interests adequately • Again, when communities are less cohesive, for example in some urban settings • In some urban areas where individuals do cast votes irrespective of how their community or wider family aligns itself politically, although the data indicates that this is rare

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Tilly	Description	Indicators	Advantages of centre/community	When/where does centre/community *not* apply?
Protection	"From little to much protection against the state's arbitrary action" (2007:14)	1) Respondents refer to common procedures through which arbitrary state action can be countered and give examples of when this has been done	• Means of countering arbitrary state action could extend to other forms of action eg group/community protests not legal procedures. More flexible • Using the term 'centre' could also extend to responses to arbitrary action by powerholders acting in their non-state capacity (eg local warlords, who may also be state officials, using force. More flexible than 'state' because these individuals would not be acting in the name of the state but would still hold powerful connections to the centre.	• Again, when community leaders or representatives are viewed with suspicion by some members
		2) Respondents express confidence in the judicial system	• The state judiciary may not be the most common means through which people seek to solve disputes: but this doesn't mean they are altogether separate from the state. A focus on centre/community would allow greater nuance here, for example in determining the occasions when contact with centre is made/why	• Perhaps if more transparent, some people in urban areas would utilise judicial system more often. Could be a factor of mistrust rather than the existence of other, more reliable community mechanisms for dispute resolution.
		3) Respondents consider current legal processes more accountable /knowable than in past regimes	• In fragile contexts 'the state' may not have existed as a formal institution in previous regimes, thus allowing a focus on the centre instead gives greater flexibility and comparability • Can talk in terms of centre/community contact rather than individuals' access to legal processes – again adds to the potential for comparison across regimes.	• If legal processes have existed and functioned in past regimes, can provide a very specific and helpful point of comparison.
Mutually binding consultation	"From non-binding and/or extremely asymmetrical to mutually binding" (2007:14)	1) Respondents express expectations concerning state-provided services and indicate that these are generally met and likely to continue	• Services may be provided by powerholders in their non-state capacity even if gained through connection to the state. Respondents may not attribute service provision to 'the state' even though it may be conducted through state administration at the centre. Indirect connections to the state may be missed if used state/citizen approach • In fragile contexts, continuity/certainty is often lacking and respondents may be unlikely to know or unwilling to comment on how long they expect services to be provided for. Again, they may not be seen as coming directly from the state.	• It may be the case in some urban areas that processes exist through which individuals can complain about a lack of state service provision, for example in the form of a Citizen Complaints Bureau. Within the system, however, there may still be ways and means to expedite complaints, for example through family members working in the institution. • In urban areas respondents may have a clear understanding of how long services are due to be provided for due to greater and more consistent contact with state institutions.
		2) Respondents express familiarity with state institutions and recount examples of taking complaints about service provision to them	• Unlikely to be the case that individuals in rural areas are familiar with state institutions, but community leaders could be, acting as interlocutors for the community as a whole.	• Again those living in closer proximity to state institutions are more likely to encounter them on a regular basis as individuals.

(Table 14 cont.)

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Table 14 demonstrates ways in which using the community/centre model might help to capture changes in the dynamics between ruler and ruled in fragile contexts – in suggesting that this relationship may change but that changes that do occur may be missed through standard conceptualisations of the state-citizen relationship. For example, under mutually-binding consultation, one of the indicators used in this study was that respondents would express familiarity with institutions of state and recount examples of taking complaints to them. However, in rural areas in fragile states it is unlikely that individuals themselves go through the processes of taking complaints to the state, due to the resources required to make the often significant journeys to these institutions which are often located in a district or provincial centre. Instead, it would be much more common for community leaders to act as interlocutors for the community as a whole. This does not preclude the potential for changes to take place in the relationship between community and state, however – visits to state institutions may become more frequent, for example, as more is invested by the central government in rural development; or interactions may become more fraught over time given the lack of delivery of expected services. Either way, these changes are likely to be missed with a focus purely on the relationship between individual citizens and the state. At the same time, there are still occasions when a state-citizen approach might yet be more appropriate in fragile contexts, particularly in urban areas where, continuing with this example, respondents living in close proximity to state institutions may interact with them on a regular basis and become more familiar with processes of filing complaints about services individually.

8.5.1 Operationalising the Comprehensive Democratisation Indicators (CDI) approach

Clearly, there are some advantages in combining these two approaches in a single model. Overall, this model could allow a more comprehensive analysis of democratisation in fragile states, and thus for the time being will be referred to as the Comprehensive Democratisation Indicators (CDI) approach. Critically, however, it is necessary to consider *how* this model might be put into use by analysts or practitioners of democratisation, and what it could be used for.

First, following Tilly, before attempting to assess any kind of democratisation change in a given community or area, researchers would need to develop a detailed historical narrative of the area in terms of its relationship to central authorities and in terms of the nature of public politics therein over time. Within this, several questions would need to be asked about the subjects and location of enquiry in order to determine whether to use primarily centre-community indicators,, primarily state-citizen indicators or a thorough combination of both. Answers to these questions could be determined through an analysis of proximity to the centre (whether to a capital city or provincial centre, as in either case, institutions of central government exist) and the historical relationship of communities in the area to institutions of state. Furthermore, questions could be asked of respondents about the ways in which they identified themselves, combined with existing secondary information on the types of communities living in the area (tribes, qawms, single ethnic groups, or a mixture of different people groups living together in an urban setting). Some locations may be too complex to fit into one of the two approaches. In the Dasht-e Barchi area of western Kabul, for example (classed as a suburb for the purposes of this research), the population is largely from the Hazara ethnicity but within this, residents tend to live in blocs of streets grouped according to their places of origin. Most have migrated to the city from different parts of the central highlands, and so some streets are comprised entirely of residents originating from Behsud district in Wardak province, some from central Bamiyan province, and some from Jaghori district in Ghazni province. These communities remain strongly cohesive in spite of their urban setting, and thus in this case, a completely mixed approach combining both centre-community and state-citizen would be most appropriate.

Given that the suggested approach remains perceptions-based – although does not preclude comparison with 'hard data' such as that suggested by Tilly, or Freedom House measures, should these happen to be available in the context in question – research would need to take place over a series of intervals, possibly each year for five years, in the same communities, for example, in order to note change. This evidently brings with it limitations in terms of practicality and access, one of the key problems with this approach (see section 8.6 below for a further discussion on the limitations of CDI). Nevertheless, the following table outlines some tentative suggestions for potential

indicators that could be used for a combined state/citizen and centre/community methodology.

Table 15: Suggestions for operationalising the joint model

Theme	Tilly- change	S/C indicators	Change?	C/C indicators	Change?
Breadth	"[i]ncrease (decrease) in the share of the population having legally enforceable rights to communicate complaints about governmental performance to high officials" (2007: 66).	1) Respondents from a variety of ethnic and social backgrounds perceive their access to state officials to be unhindered and give examples Looking for: a) similarities across different case study provinces b) similarities across urban and rural respondents c) similarities across male and female responses	Increase/decrease in the number of respondents across different social groups *who expressly desire access to state institutions and officials* who perceive this access to be unhindered	Respondents from a variety of ethnic/social groups perceive their community to have access to central services and government officials	Increase/decrease in the number of respondents across different social groups who consider their communities to have access to central services and government officials, and give examples of this as a regular occurrence
		2) Respondents refer to legal procedures for recourse should their access to officials be hindered	Increase/decrease in the number of respondents expressing knowledge about legal procedures for complaint	Respondents discuss how they would notify central authorities should they have problems accessing officials	Increase/decrease in the number of community leaders expressing interactions with the centre as a means to lodge a complaint
Equality	"[d]ecline (rise) in the number of distinct legal categories defining rights and obligations of different population segments vis-à-vis the state" (2007: 66)	1)Respondents consider their own status vis-à-vis the state to be equal to that of others, for example in terms of access to services Looking for: a) Female respondents consider themselves to have similar rights and duties vis-à-vis the state as their male counterparts b) Little difference between different ethnic responses concerning their perceived status vis-à-vis the state	Increase/decrease in the number of complaints made by respondents about different social groups perceived as being treated differentially in terms of state service provision	Respondents consider their community's status vis-à-vis central authorities to be equal to that of others, for example in terms of access to services.	Increase/decrease in the number of complaints made by respondents about different social groups perceived as being treated differentially in terms of state (or central) service provision
		2)Respondents consider their votes in elections to carry as much weight as those of other citizens	Increase/decrease in respondents' stated confidence in the impartiality of the electoral system	Respondents consider their community votes to be valid and to potentially impact future connections with the centre	Increase/decrease in the number of respondents referring to the process of national elections as a community event
Protection	"[d]ecrease (increase) in the proportion of the population imprisoned without legal sentencing or legal recourse"	1) Respondents refer to common procedures through which arbitrary state action can be countered and give examples of when this has been done	Increase/decrease in number of respondents demonstrating knowledge of procedures for countering state action	Respondents refer to community resistance against arbitrary state action	Increase/decrease in the number of incidences of peaceful community resistance to the state that have had results.

	(2007: 66)	2) Respondents express confidence in the judicial system	Increase/decrease in levels of confidence in the judicial system eg through examples of positive interactions with district courts	Respondents express familiarity with the judicial system	Increase/decrease in the number of respondents referring to any interaction of their community with central judicial system
		3) Respondents consider current legal processes more accountable /knowable than in past regimes	Increase/decrease in positive comparisons of legal processes in past regimes with present ones	Respondents consider current legal processes more accountable /knowable than in past regimes	Increase/decrease in the number of community leaders expressing awareness of current legal processes and comparing them favourably to those of past regimes
Mutually binding consultation	"[i]ncrease (decrease) in the share of all citizens' complaints regarding denial of legally mandated benefits that result in the delivery of those benefits" (2007:66).	1) Respondents express expectations concerning state-provided services and indicate that these are generally met and likely to continue	Increase/decrease in positive examples given concerning respondents' experiences of state service provision	Respondents express expectations concerning centrally-provided services and confidence in their sustainability	Increase/decrease in respondents attributing development projects to central (as opposed to individual-patron) sources
		2) Respondents express familiarity with state institutions and recount examples of taking complaints about service provision to them	Greater/lesser proportion of respondents give examples of taking complaints to state institutions and refer to a process for doing so	Community leaders recount examples of taking complaints about service provision to central institutions, rather than to individuals	Increase/decrease in the number of incidences reported by respondents of community leaders taking complaints to central institutions

(Table 15 cont.)

Indicators and potential determinants of change specified in the centre/community column in this table attempt to address some of the problems with measuring change in democratisation in fragile states according to the state/citizen model, as outlined at the end of chapter 6. These relate largely but not exclusively to rural areas. In some cases, only slight alterations have been made in the wording between state/citizen and centre/community indicators. As will be explained below, however, even this seemingly insignificant change can expand analytical capacity significantly. In two cases, marked in red, indicators are the same across both categories – implying that they would apply equally in either case.

8.5.2 Suggested indicators for changes in breadth

- S/C change in breadth 1: Increase/decrease in the number of respondents across different social groups *who expressly desire access to state institutions and officials* who perceive this access to be unhindered

- S/C change in breadth 2: Increase/decrease in the number of respondents expressing knowledge about legal procedures for complaint

When looking at potential means to measure change in breadth in chapter 7, one of the key problems that emerged was the way in which rural respondents did not expressly desire access to state officials, hence the difficulty in assessing whether or not this access had been hindered for certain groups. Thus, a slight change was required in terms of the way in which the state/citizen indicator of change was worded – specifying its relevance only to respondents "who expressly desire access to state institutions and officials" – and new indicators of change included under the centre/community column:

- C/C change in breadth 1: Increase/decrease in the number of respondents across different social groups who consider their communities to have access to central services and government officials, and give examples of this as a regular occurrence

- C/C change in breadth 2: Increase/decrease in the number of community leaders expressing interactions with the centre as a means to lodge a complaint

These allow greater flexibility of measurement when assessing rural (and possibly some semi-urban) communities, as they focus on communities rather than individuals and on the agency of community leaders in their roles of interaction with the centre on behalf of local populations. Through these measures, it could be possible to gauge increasing or decreasing levels of interaction between communities and the centre, and also the nature of these interactions when dealing with complaints.

8.5.3 Suggested indicators for changes in equality

- S/C change in equality 1: Increase/decrease in the number of complaints made by respondents about different social groups perceived as being treated differentially in terms of state service provision

- S/C change in equality 2: Increase/decrease in respondents' stated confidence in the impartiality of the electoral system

When considering the potential to measure change in equality according to state/citizen indicators in chapter 7, one of the problems encountered was the way in which the formal existence or absence of categories of citizens, for example as written in a state constitution, may not necessarily coincide with the extent to which people *perceive* themselves to be categorised by the state. Furthermore, these indicators in their original form tended to assume individual grievances as opposed to collective ones, whereas in Afghanistan for example equality is often measured in terms of the equal representation of groups or communities rather than that of individuals. As such, the researcher has amended the S/C indicators to cover a broader spectrum of individual and collective identities, which now refer to the impartiality of the electoral system as a whole rather than whether an individual considers their vote to hold the same weight as others. To capture the dynamics of rural communities' sense of equal treatment by the state, the researcher has also suggested further indicators for the centre/community approach to measuring change. The first is the same as for the S/C approach, given that it focuses on social groups and can be applied to the community context. The second, however, differs slightly:

- C/C change in equality 1: Increase/decrease in the number of complaints made by respondents about different social groups perceived as being treated differentially in terms of state (or central) service provision
- C/C change in equality 2: Increase/decrease in the number of respondents referring to the process of national elections as a community event

This second indicator looks at the way in which respondents in rural (or semi-urban) communities perceive elections on a national level and the extent to which they consider their own community's involvement in those elections to be worthwhile. This has the potential to indicate changing levels of community interaction with state processes and as such provide an important means of documenting the dynamics of democratic change in rural areas.

8.5.4 Suggested indicators for changes in protection

- S/C change in protection 1: Increase/decrease in number of respondents demonstrating knowledge of procedures for countering state action

- S/C change in protection 2: Increase/decrease in levels of confidence in the judicial system e.g. through examples of positive interactions with district courts

- S/C change in protection 3: Increase/decrease in positive comparisons of legal processes in past regimes with present ones

When considering how to measure change in levels of protection in chapter 7, according to the state/citizen approach, the researcher found some potential for useful comparisons of protection from arbitrary state action between different regimes (indicator 3). Problems with the first two indicators however, when applied to respondents in rural communities, included their focus on the individual knowledge of legal procedures when community leaders were more likely to have information about processes for interacting with state. Further, the assumption that community members had any interactions at all with the state judicial system was found to be flawed. This being the case, she has included the following suggestions as indicators of change in protection under the centre/community approach:

- C/C change in protection 1: Increase/decrease in the number of incidences of peaceful community resistance to the state that have had results

- C/C change in protection 2: Increase/decrease in the number of respondents referring to any interaction of their community with central judicial system

- C/C change in protection 3: Increase/decrease in the number of community leaders expressing awareness of current legal processes and comparing them favourably to those of past regimes

These supplementary indicators move focus away from the individual knowledge of legal processes and instead focus on the ways in which communities have resisted arbitrary state action through their own means. They also move away from the *assumption* that respondents will necessarily have had some experience of interacting with the judicial system, and instead note whether or not they have done so. They retain emphasis on comparisons with previous regimes, seeing as this proved a useful indicator under the state/citizen approach – although again move focus to the knowledge of community leaders of these processes rather than assume the familiarity with state processes of individual community members.

8.5.5 Suggested indicators for changes in mutually-binding consultation

- S/C change in mutually binding consultation 1: Increase/decrease in positive examples given concerning respondents' experiences of state service provision

- S/C change in mutually binding consultation 2: Greater/lesser proportion of respondents give examples of taking complaints to state institutions and refer to a process for doing so

Assessing measures of change in mutually binding consultation according to the S/C approach, the researcher again found problems in assuming respondents' knowledge and experience of formal processes in rural areas, where more often than not complaints were taken by community leaders to influential individuals rather than to state institutions. This did not equate to respondents not being able or willing to complain about poor or inconsistent services, but rather indicated that they did so in a way that was not compatible with Tilly's form of measurement. This being the case, the following suggestions were put forward as supplementary indicators under the centre/community approach:

- C/C change in mutually binding consultation 1: Increase/decrease in respondents attributing development projects to central (as opposed to individual-patron) sources

- C/C change in mutually binding consultation 2: Increase/decrease in the number of incidences reported by respondents of community leaders taking complaints to central institutions

These alternative measures offer a means to capture the way in which communities might relate to central institutions providing services, and to changes in their attribution of those services to central institutions as opposed to powerful individuals. They also focus once again on the agency of community leaders in communicating complaints to the centre, as opposed to individuals themselves addressing concerns to state officials in person.

In sum, these measures when combined with indicators of change for the state/citizen model offer a more holistic approach – the CDI approach – to the measurement of democratic change that could potentially capture the dynamics of this change as it occurs (differentially) in different areas of a given state.

8.6 What would this actually do (if anything) for the analysis of democratisation in fragile states? What would it not do?

This section now looks back at the problems highlighted with current means to conceptualise, measure and practice democratisation in fragile contexts as discussed in chapters 1 and 2, and argues that a combined approach using indicators from both the state/citizen and centre/community models would address some of these problems, providing a more appropriate framework for analysis in these contexts. Gaps that this model could fill in terms of the theory, measurement and practice of democratisation are discussed sequentially, alongside limitations and potential problems with the CDI approach.

8.6.1 Theory

The discussion of current trends in the literature on the theory of democratisation (chapter 1) focused specifically on existing means to conceptualise the relationship between democracy and the state. Throughout this discussion, three key observations were made about gaps in the current literature. These will be revisited in turn, with suggestions as to how the combined approach suggested above might help to fill these gaps.

The first observation made was that the literature on transitions from autocracy to democracy (and vice-versa) is insufficient to explain the complexities of political transition and also the nature of democratisation, especially as it occurs in fragile contexts. This, along with much of the literature on measuring democratisation, assumes a clear dividing line between regime types, or a threshold over which a regime becomes democratic. Further, as Geddes points out, this literature imposes western democratic norms and values onto authoritarian regimes and their leaders whose rationale and methods for staying in power may differ significantly from a programme of meeting the needs of the electorate (1999: 125). This could apply to other kinds of contexts also, including those that are not technically labelled 'autocratic' but perhaps are already in the process of democratic transition. Another problem with much of the literature on transitions and democratisation more generally is its focus on elite behaviour as a mean to explain transition and democratic consolidation (Diamond, 1999), and yet this also is insufficient to explain the 'grass roots' mobilisation and interaction with central powers of government central to many transitions. It also excludes the agency of international actors who may assign conditions to democratic progression in return for aid allocations. Finally, much of the literature also takes an ahistorical approach and talks in terms of conditions or pre-requisites that must be in place before democratisation can either begin or take hold – without considering the way in which these conditions were not often present as democracies emerged in western Europe, for example. Yet again, these conditions often exclude fragile contexts from analysis. These conceptualisations of transition are thus too narrow for application to fragile contexts.

Having said this, broader conceptualisations that do situate democratic transitions within historical contexts specific to the state in question are also problematic in that they focus very specifically on the state-citizen relationship (Grugel, 2002: 31; Tilly, 2007). As discussed in chapter 1, however, so-called fragile states do not fit into Weberian or Westphalian models of statehood – hence the 'fragile' label – and thus again, are excluded from analyses of democratisation, because these essentially focus on the building of a democratic state (Grugel, 2002: 68). These approaches make a strong connection between state capacity and democratisation, following the logic that the stronger the state, the easier the transition to democracy simply due to the extent of the state's interaction with its citizens.

Throughout this thesis, the researcher has not attempted to argue that contemporary conceptions of the state and their relationship to democratisation are not important – nor that the ultimate goal in democratisation should not be the building of a democratic state. What she has argued, however, is that it may not be possible to apply these conceptions and goals to the measurement of democratisation (at the very least in its early stages) in fragile contexts, where states did not form in the same manner as they did in western Europe. The tendency for analysts would be to exclude fragile states from analysis of democratisation entirely, simply because their statehood does not comply with Weberian/Westphalian norms. And yet, clear from the data gathered for this study is that democratisation – in terms of changes toward a more interactive relationship between centre and community – may occur in other spaces, outside of the state-citizen relationship but still within the bounds of linking people to the places and means through which their collective resources are governed.

This being the case, it is possible to see how a centre-community-based approach might shed more light into the ways in which fragile states democratise and de-democratise. It allows for greater flexibility, not necessarily relying on the existence of transparent procedures and an emphasis on individual citizenship, but instead focusing on 'a political landscape of best fit' – assessing how communities relate to central government and whether or not there are changes within this relationship that can be measured over time. It allows for the conceptualisation of a different pace of change,

perhaps, in different parts of a given country, that is not necessarily directly proportional to the increase of state capacity. This would be combined with an analysis of state capacity, ensuring that the importance of this to democratisation was not overlooked – but would allow for change to be noted outside of this somewhat limiting framework. As such, the CDI model could contribute significantly to the understanding and conceptualisation of democratisation in fragile contexts.

A second area of theory explored through the literature review for this thesis was that relating to state sovereignty and states in the international system. From this review it was possible to gauge that state sovereignty is a contested concept that is often simultaneously assumed and contradicted, when states are both considered theoretically sovereign entities but nevertheless subject to potential international intervention when seen to behave in a manner contrary to international principles such as the universal declaration of human rights. Within this, 'negative sovereignty' is a powerful concept to explain these contradictions in weak or fragile states. It is the contention of this study that this idea can also help to explain these states' inability to foster liberal relationships between state and citizen. In the case of Afghanistan, as discussed in chapter 5, a history of international intervention in state affairs and of reliance on international funding as an alternative to widespread taxation policies and domestic industry, alongside significant periods of conflict toward the end of the twentieth century, has hindered the development of a systematic relationship between state and citizen, meaning that rather more fluid relationships between the centre and different communities across the country have flourished instead. This framework for assessing relationships, in conjunction with the negative sovereignty concept, holds greater explanatory capacity when assessing democratisation trajectories than does a more straightforward assumption of state sovereignty, which lies at the heart of most approaches to democratisation and also to the study of the behaviour of states in the international system within conventional IR approaches.

Finally, the term 'fragile states' is in itself problematic, because it serves only as a means to categorise states that do not fit the 'standard' model of what a state should be in Weberian or Westphalian terms – thus, it remains a term to describe what these

regimes are *not*, rather than what they actually are. Other, similar terms include 'quasi-states' (Jackson, 1987; 1996), 'non-states', 'weak states' and even 'failed states'. Defining them in these terms automatically calls into question the application of state-centric theories about the way in which countries democratise. While these concepts are relevant in that they bring to light the differences between fragile contexts and state systems in developed countries, for example, the acknowledgement of non-compliance with the 'standard' state model has not led to the creation of a new framework through which to conceptualise political transitions in these countries.

Evidently there remain issues with conceptualising democracy in a manner that moves away from (or at least dilutes focus on) the ability of individual citizens to hold the state to account. There is an inherent risk of CDI being used to romanticise the role of community representatives who may not always act in the interests of those they supposedly represent, and may have developed impunity from public scrutiny through coercion or threatened violence. However, if the CDI method was used in a manner that combined both SC and CC indicators, it would be possible to detect if and where communities and their leaders were in fact failing individual citizens who wanted greater representation *as* individuals. In theory, then, this approach would not minimise or overlook the necessity of democratic accountability; rather, it would allow for this accountability to be found in different sets of relationships *including* that of the state-citizen, rather than that of the state-citizen alone.

While the CDI approach developed through this thesis – a combined analysis of centre-community and state-citizen relationships – does not claim to provide a simple alternative to the concept of fragile states, or to the application of a state-citizen assessment of democratisation within them, it nevertheless sheds light on the failings of these concepts and the ways in which they mask fundamental details about the nature of fragile contexts that inform discussions about how they might democratise. The researcher does not advocate the rejection of the term 'fragile state' altogether – although 'fragile context' may be more appropriate – but instead argues that its implicit focus on the ways in which countries lack conventional characteristics of statehood is simply inadequate, on its own, to contribute usefully to the analysis of democratisation

in these countries. A supplementary approach is needed, and this can be provided by the CDI framework. This allows an exploration into the nature of the relationship between ruler and ruled that does not need to be confined by the limiting parameters of the state-citizen construct, and the ways in which fragile contexts do not meet standard definitions. It allows the simultaneous analysis of what this relationship is, *and* what it is not – rather than a singular focus on the latter. In this way, then, the approach contributes helpfully to the available theoretical conceptualisations of how democratisation might occur in these contexts.

8.6.2 Measurement

Related to the way in which the CDI approach could contribute to the existing theoretical conceptualisations of democratisation in fragile states is the way in which it can allow a more holistic approach to measuring levels of democratisation.

As discussed in chapter 2, existing models for measuring democratisation vary in terms of their chosen focus, with the Polity model and Freedom House assigning scores to certain qualitative attributes of states and in particular looking at institutions and political rights and civil liberties (essentially, a focus on the state-citizen relationship). Vanhanen, by contrast, assesses electoral data alone – taking a quantitative approach to measurement that uses voter turnout figures in combination with the percentage of votes gained by each political party. Both of these approaches, however, assign judgements as to the threshold after which a country becomes 'a democracy', or 'free'. These thresholds appear to be somewhat arbitrarily determined and also are very much based on the assumption that state and non-state institutions, such as electoral politics and political parties, function in a similar manner to the ways in which they function in western democracies. Regimes in which these institutions might function differently are thus either not analysed due to a lack of data, or categorised simply as 'not free' or 'non-democracies'. Tilly's model for measuring democratisation surpasses those put forward by Polity, Freedom House and Vanhanen in its consideration of an historical and political narrative, and in its process-oriented approach using variables rather than a 'yes/no checklist'. However, it still very much relies on conventional concepts of the state and state capacity which are problematic when applied to fragile contexts.

The researcher argues that the CDI approach could provide an alternative means of measurement that allows greater flexibility and inclusivity. It comprises qualitative indictors with which to measure change in the relationship between ruler and ruled that do not necessarily rely, again, on the limited construct of the state-citizen relationship but instead allow a broader conceptualisation of this relationship. Much more research needs to be undertaken in order to verify the validity of these indictors, as at the current time they provide only a suggestion for how best to measure change, and are only based on data from three provinces within one case study country (Afghanistan). It remains to be seen whether they could be applied more generally across a range of different fragile contexts. Nevertheless, they demonstrate that it is possible to allow for greater diversity in the types of regimes that could be included in the comparative analysis of democratisation.

Further, this approach indicates that it is possible to *combine* an attempt to measure changes in the state-citizen relationship with a simultaneous attempt to measure changes in the more broad relationship between ruler and ruled. It shows that at any one time, fragile contexts may contain within them parts of society, often in urban areas, in which progression (or regression) along the democratisation continuum is notable and measurable in terms of state-citizen relationships – but at the same time contain areas – largely those less connected to the state infrastructure – which require a less limited form of analysis and measurement. Combining the two allows for a significantly more holistic approach to measuring democratisation and one which is able to capture more accurately the differential nature of change in the relationship between ruler and ruled in different parts of a given regime. As such, this approach can contribute a new form of measurement to the existing approaches.

As indicated above, however, one of the key limitations of CDI is the relatively long-term nature of the qualitative observations required. Communities would need to be studied over a number of years, with a significant amount of qualitative data collected within these communities on an annual basis, perhaps, to measure change. The practicalities of operationalising this approach in fragile contexts are thus questionable, although not impossible particularly for independent research organisations with a

history of working in a given context, for example. Another problem with CDI in terms of its capacity to measure democratisation in a given state is the potential difficulty in comparing results across case study communities. Part of the model's strength is its ability to capture the differential nature of different communities' relationship to central authorities, and yet this is also a weakness in that without insisting on absolutely uniformity across communities, comparing the rate of change between them could pose a problem. This, and the extent to which it poses a barrier to useful comparison, could be explored in further research and testing of the CDI model.

8.6.3 Practice

As explored in chapter 2, the practice of internationally-promoted democratisation has become integral to the exercise of statebuilding in post-conflict and fragile states. Experiences in countries as diverse as Iraq and East Timor, however, have demonstrated the difficulties in attempting to encourage democratisation 'from the outside' – an approach which can stand in direct contradiction to the principles of state sovereignty and also to the notion of democratisation comprising more than simply an altered motivation among political elites. Some critics of international statebuilding call for less focus on democratisation and more on promoting security in post-conflict states (Etzioni, 2007); others call for a focus on 'institutionalisation before liberalisation', suggesting that it is the infrastructure of state that needs strengthening before a liberal agenda can be imposed or encouraged (Paris, 2004); and a further group of academics suggest that a better approach would be to ensure that democratic institutions are accompanied by democratic politics (Bastian and Luckham, 2003).

Tilly implies that a top-down approach to democratisation – i.e., one that is imposed from above – does not take into account the essence of what democratisation actually is, in that it fails to recognise the importance of changes within interactions between the citizen and the state. This is not to say that he condemns the entire exercise of internationally-promoted democratisation, but that he considers its current emphasis on the building of formal institutions misguided. Indeed, according to Tilly,

If this book's arguments are correct, those of us who hope to see democracy's benefits spread across the undemocratic world will not waste our time focusing on preaching democratic virtues, designing constitutions, forming non-governmental organizations, and identifying pockets of democratic sentiment within undemocratic regimes. We will, in contrast, spend a great deal of effort promoting the integration of trust networks into public politics, helping to shield public politics from categorical inequality, and working against the autonomy of coercive power centers...The democratizing experiences of South Africa, Spain and some post-socialist regimes show that such changes always pass through struggle but remain susceptible to external influence (2007:205).

While 'preaching democratic virtues', creating constitutions, forming NGOs and identifying where within a regime democratic sentiment may form part of the international project to democratise, for Tilly these should contribute to the larger goals of integrating trust networks, eradicating categorical inequality and consolidating state power over autonomous centres, and should not be undertaken for their own sake (2007: 205). This emphasises his concern with building the capacity of the state in order to allow processes of democratisation – namely, through the principles of breadth, equality, protection and mutually-binding consultation – to take place. Clearly, however, he sees a role for international actors within this project, to the extent that, after speaking directly to would-be international democracy promoters he states that "[h]opeful democrats need not sit on their hands, waiting" (2007: 205). Yet he is careful to maintain emphasis on the way in which democratisation must be an holistic change involving the active participation of citizens themselves.

Clear from Tilly's concluding statements, however, are the ways in which he assumes that building state capacity is essential to any form of democratisation. In this sense, my own conclusions about the ways in which democratisation can occur in other spaces than that of the state-citizen relationship differ significantly from Tilly's perspective. They suggest that the state-citizen construct is not the only potential lens through which to view changes in the relationship between ruler and ruled in fragile contexts, particularly where institutions of state have not been formalised or 'rolled out' to a point at which they are accessible to all inhabitants of a given country. How, then, might this contribute to the practice of internationally-promoted democratisation?

Arguably, this approach is not merely a case of "identifying pockets of democratic sentiment within undemocratic regimes" (Tilly, 2007: 205) but rather about **measuring changes in the relationship between ruler and ruled in fragile contexts that would otherwise be missed by an analysis of the state-citizen relationship alone.** This could potentially inform the practices of democratisation as imposed from 'outside' by highlighting the ways in which change occurs differentially in different areas of a given state, and through different media. For example, rather than rolling out a civic education programme that insists on promoting the need for individuals to vote independently of one another, amendments could be made that take into account the possibility of (and rationale behind) bloc voting in rural communities. While it would be necessary to ensure that awareness about the possibilities of voting as an individual was raised, voters would not be lectured through campaigns preaching the necessity of this approach.

An historical component could be included in all programming, to ensure that the nature of a particular community's relationship with the central government over time was documented and taken into account before democratisation programming began. The importance of conducting the historical analysis here, however, before programming began, cannot be underestimated. In Afghanistan there have been a number assumptions made by international actors – such as the assumed legitimacy attached to Loya Jirgas in spite of hand-picked attendees and pre-determined outcomes – that have alienated the Afghan public from democratic processes (Coburn and Larson, 2013, forthcoming). Provided that a comprehensive historical analysis formed the bedrock of any democratisation programming, however, the contribution of the CDI approach would be to provide an alternative means of helping to strengthen the relationship between ruler and ruled – possibly one which may at some point become one that could be defined categorically in terms of state and citizen – but which would cater more appropriately to the political context of the fragile state in question.

This relates to a final important characteristic of the CDI approach that could help improve current forms of democracy promotion in practice: the flexibility and reflexivity of the model. First, the combination of CC and SC indicators used in an

assessment can be varied according to the context in question, allowing for more or less of one than the other based on early inital analyses as to which would be more appropriate. This could then be altered over time, however, to mirror changes in the ruler-ruled relationship as levels of fragility and state capacity change, for example. In an iterative process, repeated annual studies in a given community could inform democracy and governance programming designed to strengthen the state-citizen relationship, ensuring optimum applicability of these programmes to the particular community in question.

Limitations of the approach in its usage in the practice of democracy promotion could include lack of time and resources on the part of international democracy promotion agencies, particularly when these actors are often constrained by the narrow parameters imposed by donors. In partnership with national civil society organisations, however, whose expertise and understanding of local political histories would be highly valuable in a CDI approach, some of these limitations could be overcome. Relationships of trust could be built within given communities over time and could facilitate annual analyses of change in their relationship to central authorities. This could help to promote national ownership of democratisation monitoring and practice – a key demand of fragile state governments as articulated by the G7+, discussed further in chapter 9.

Perhaps more importantly, however, using CDI in practice might be limited by the need for democracy promoters to strike a balance between helping to empower community representatives, on the one hand, and ensuring that the needs of individuals were adequately addressed, on the other. Again, this returns to the question of ensuring that accountability mechanisms were in place to ensure that community leaders were in fact beholden to the interests of their community members, and that individual interests could be expressed, should they differ from those of the community as a whole. As mentioned above, however, the combination of CC and SC indicators, used in research undertaken on an annual basis, could help monitor discrepancies between the views of leaders and members in terms of the extent to which representation occurs. This could then feed in to democracy programming – for example, by shifting emphasis on to the creation of a youth council if young people felt that their voices were not being heard in

shura meetings. Findings from CDI studies may uncover issues that are not easily or tidily addressed by existing donor democracy programmes, but then, this is entirely the point: a new approach is needed.

8.7 Summary and conclusions

This chapter has explored possible amendments to Tilly's model for conceptualising and measuring democratisation, which would serve to allow more accurate application to the context of fragile states. Further to summarising the problems with the application of Tilly's model as found throughout chapters 6 and 7, it has suggested the replacing of a sole focus on the state-citizen relationship with a combined CDI approach that would broaden analysis beyond the limits of this construct, including a potentially complementary focus on centre-community relationships. This still focuses on the interaction between ruler and ruled but moves away from the limitations that the liberal notions of 'state' and 'citizen' impose on the analysis of how democratisation occurs. Alongside providing a prototype model, combining both approaches, this chapter has also assessed the ways in which these amendments might affect and assist the theory, measurement and practice of democratisation in fragile states. It suggests that there are several ways in which gaps in the literature might be filled by this new approach, in particular by continuing to adopt an holistic view of democratisation as a process of greater interaction between ruler and ruled, but by moving beyond the narrow focus of scholars in this field who concentrate solely on the state-citizen relationship as the locus for this change. While still in the early stages of development and requiring much further study to test the indicators suggested, and to apply them to cases beyond that of Afghanistan, there is nevertheless potential for the CDI to contribute significantly to contemporary scholarship on democratisation in fragile states and also to the way in which internationally-promoted democratisation is currently practiced in these contexts.

CHAPTER 9: CONCLUSIONS

This final chapter of the thesis summarises the way in which this work has developed throughout the research process, from initial inception to data collection, analysis and the formation of the CDI approach. It documents the lessons learnt throughout this process, and reiterates the contribution that the research makes to existing theory, measurement and practice of democratisation in fragile states. It then states explicitly how the research findings address the three central hypotheses made at the beginning of the thesis, and points to ways in which they were unable to respond to issues that these hypotheses raised. It puts forward 10 principles for the improvement of the practice of democratisation in fragile states, aimed specifically at international donors, practitioner agencies and G7+ governments. It points to the potential for broader application of the 10 principles beyond the Afghan context, and finally makes suggestions for ways in which research in this field could be extended.

9.1 Summarising the journey: lessons learnt and contribution of the thesis

Inspiration for this study began in 2006 with the answer to a casual question about the previous year's parliamentary elections, given by a good friend in Mazar-i Sharif, Balkh province over an evening meal. "Why would we vote? There are no candidates we can trust, and we never see them after they get elected. We have no connection to the government". Laden with the normative assumptions of a western visitor to Afghanistan, the question, which had assumed the friend had voted, as an individual, was entirely misplaced and demonstrated a marked ignorance about the significance of elections and their likely impact in the country.

Even at that point, with a central state apparatus newly established with international backing, it was possible to detect a sense of detachment, distrust and disinterest in elected parliamentarians among a number of Afghans that the researcher spoke to across the country, unless a member of their family or immediate community had been successful in the polls. In the wake of presidential elections in which almost 80 per cent of registered voters had come to participate, this was interesting and perhaps betrayed

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much more of the real story behind people's sense of connection to the central government. Further research in a range of governance- and democracy-related issues for AREU would increase this suspicion over time and inspired the reseacrher to investigate further and in a more structured manner the relationship between ruler and ruled in the country.

A thorough survey of the literature on democratisation and the state revealed a number of issues. First, that there appeared to be no deviation at all in academic discussions on the theory, measurement and practice of democratisation away from the centrality of the relationship between the state and the individual citizen. Indeed, this focus was becoming more prevalent in most recent scholarship, moving away from the elite-led transitions approaches of the 1980s. Democratisation is almost always discussed in relationship to the nation state, and the way in which it can be held accountable by individuals or groups within it. This being the case, it was also clear that there were reasons for this uniform theoretical underpinning to the study of democratisation, first, that the development of the nation-state and of democratic political systems occurred alongside one another in western Europe, and second, that in spite of the work of a few scholars focused more intently on the importance of democracy at the international or 'cosmopolitan' level, states remain the most prevalent loci of the study of international comparative politics. However, scholarship on the nature of the state pointed to a number of liberal assumptions commonly held within the democratisation literature about what a state is (or should be) and what it does, and what citizens are (or should be) and what they do. These included an assumed individuality of citizenship, an assumed uniformity of citizenship across space (particularly the urban/rural divide) and time, and an assumed cohesive central authority. Here was the problem when trying to apply democratisation measures to fragile contexts: the states and citizens in question simply didn't fit these assumptions. There appeared to be only one response to this mismatch across existing theory, measurement and practice of democratisation: that fragile states needed to be 'fixed' to fit these assumptions more closely, to democratise. More often than not, these contexts are disregarded as categorically 'undemocratising', because they do not comply with standard liberal notions of statehood and citizenship.

This realisation of a certain uniformity across the literature led to a number of questions. First, was this really the case? Given that many fragile states had developed in very different circumstances to those in which European democracies emerged, was it even realistic to suppose that they could be 'fixed' to be made more western, or more liberal? At this point, the researcher began to question whether the normative constructs of 'state' and 'citizen' were in fact applicable to fragile states. Undoubtedly, democratisation was a question of the changing relationship between ruler and ruled, but was it necessarily a question of the changing relationship between state and citizen? One of the key lessons learnt throughout this research has been the realisation of the difference between these two phenomena. Further, that if this difference was significant, key changes in the relationship between ruler and ruled that might indicate change toward or away from democratisation, could be missed by attempts to chart them according to a state-citizen approach.

In order to investigate this further, the researcher decided to focus on the Afghan case, building on several years of experience working in the country, and developed a methodology based on Charles Tilly's approach situating historical analysis at the forefront. In the comprehensive study of historical connections between ruler and ruled in Afghanistan, she learnt that there was a considerable precedent set for a constantly negotiated, but distant relationship between the central Kabul administration and communities across the country, and that the understanding of this was vital to any study of democratisation processes in Afghanistan. Further to this, she developed a set of indicators, again based on Tilly's own model but substituting 'hard' data – not readily available in Afghanistan – for qualitative narratives.

This is important for application to other fragile states also, again in which hard or quantitative data is difficult to find, unreliable or non-existent. In developing the methodology for this research the researcher found that if 'measurement' can be broadly interpreted as the systematic assessment of a given phenomenon, and qualitative values assigned to a framework for analysis, then the measurement of democratic change becomes more feasible in fragile contexts. This is because *perceptions of change* can signify greater meaning in terms of the differences felt by ordinary citizens than can the

tracking of the establishment of formal institutions which in themselves do not constitute substantive movement toward democratisation, for example. Critical here, however, is the emphasis on a systematic approach: one limited study on perceptions of change such as that presented by this thesis cannot in itself measure democratisation, but repeated in the same geographical areas over a number of years, would be able to provide significant insight into the nature of the changing relationship between communities and central authorities, or between citizens and the state. This is not to say that changes would necessarily occur in a unidirectional trajectory, but as conceived by Tilly, may fluctuate back and forth on a continuum toward and away from greater democratisation.

With access to an Afghan research team and logistical support to visit three provinces in which to conduct fieldwork, provided by the AREU, the researcher was able to conduct 154 interviews, across which several trends became apparent in data analysis. First, that it was difficult to apply a number of Tilly's criteria for measuring change in the state-citizen relationship. For example, Tilly's suggested measure for breadth is an "[i]ncrease (decrease) in the share of the population having legally enforceable rights to communicate complaints about governmental performance to high officials" (2007:66). In theory, there is no constitutional or other provision preventing any Afghan from communicating a complaint to a high official. Yet, even if it were possible to determine the meaning of 'legally enforceable', when legal processes are not widely familiar to the population at large, due to the limited reach of state institutions – few of the respondents interviewed in rural areas expressed any *desire* to approach high officials themselves with problems of any kind. Indeed, among the majority of interviews from respondents in rural and semi-rural contexts a sincere distrust of state officials existed, due to the perceived predatory nature of these officials and the likelihood of being forced to pay a bribe. This being the case, it is difficult to see how the application of this indicator could result in the generation of data that could imply a move toward greater or lesser breadth in the state-citizen relationship: people tend to deal with their complaints about governmental performance in other ways, for example through sending a community leader to complain to an official on behalf of the community as a whole.

One alternative to the state-citizen construct that has emerged from this research is the notion of centre-community interaction. This does not move away from the central tenet that democratisation comprises changes within the relationship between ruler and ruled, but it deviates from the narrow focus on liberal notions of statehood and citizenship. In doing so, it allocates greater flexibility for application to contexts where the state does not conform to Weberian or Westphalian notions of authority, boundedness and sovereignty, and where citizens do not necessarily consider themselves as individual agents whose interests are defined purely on the basis of their being individuals. For example, in the Afghan case interactions between citizens and the central government tend to take place, most particularly in rural areas, at the community level, where local interlocutors such as elders or maliks represent community interests, Elections take place as a collective local exercise in which communities decide, collectively, in advance which candidate they consider to present the best prospects for future interactions with the central government, and vote in a bloc accordingly. This is a particularly strategic tactic given the nature of the electoral system in Afghanistan, which determines that in some constituencies only a few thousand votes are needed to secure a parliamentary seat.

Also important with this alternative construct is its lack of emphasis on the state per se and its focus instead on 'the centre'. This term does not exclude state institutions, but it acknowledges that central decision making may occur outside of them, or in the spaces between state officials and other influential actors. It allows for the way in which 'the state' may not be a unified entity with a combined political or administrative agenda, and that some state officials command other sources of authority and legitimacy also which may not coincide with their role within the state. Having promoted the centre-community construct as an alternative means of conceptualising the relationship between ruler and ruled, the researcher realised through the data analysis process however that there are areas within Afghanistan – in Kabul and in some provincial urban centres, such as Mazar-i Sharif (Balkh) and Jalalabad (Nangarhar) – in which liberal notions of the state-citizen relationship do appear more relevant and also in some way part of the aspirations of respondents concerning their desired interaction with the state. This suggests that, contrary to liberal notions of citizenship, uniform measures of

what the state-citizen relationship should look like do not adequately capture the differential nature of this relationship as it occurs across different parts of a given state. This is not necessarily to say that 'equality' between citizens is necessarily lacking, but rather that different groups in society interact with the central authorities in different ways. This being the case, the researcher found that it would be possible to suggest that state-citizen approaches could be usefully applied to some, urban areas within fragile states, where interaction with state institutions is strongest, alongside a centre-community analysis. She then developed the idea of a combined centre-community/state-citizen model for analysis into the Comprehensive Democratisation Indicators or CDI approach, putting together a prototype model to guide future research in democratising fragile states.

This, then, comprises the main contribution of the research: a means through which to conceptualise, measure and practice democratisation in fragile contexts without the exclusive focus on the state-citizen relationship that is dominant in existing approaches. Developed from the analysis of a substantial sample of not-ordinarily-accessible primary data, and addressing a clear knowledge gap, CDI challenges the validity of the liberal state-citizen construct when applied unquestioningly to fragile states and in doing so pushes the subject forward. It provides the basis for an holistic analysis of democratisation, through which to capture change in the relationship between ruler and ruled that might otherwise go undocumented in assessments of democratisation in these contexts. This research also points to an alternative approach to the practice of building state capacity, advocating a move away from the imposition of western liberal norms and instead focusing more broadly on encouraging greater interaction between centre and community.

9.2 How the findings address the hypotheses

In chapter 2, the researcher outlined three central hypotheses:

1) The state-citizen relationship is only central to *theoretical concepts* of democratisation to the extent that no alternative currently exists. Democracy theorists commonly assume a strengthening relationship between the state and

its individual citizens as a necessary characteristic of movement toward democratisation – but this precludes application to fragile contexts. An alternative means of conceptualizing democratisation is needed, because there may be aspects of democratisation that are taking place in these contexts that remain outside the limitations of the state-citizen relationship.

This contention makes the bold claim that notions of the state-citizen relationship are only necessary to conceptualisation of democratisation because no alternative to this approach exists. Having attempted to apply an alternative model – that of the centre-community – to the Afghan case, however, I have found that even in a fragile context there are spaces in which a state-centric model of democratisation (that is to say, one which focuses on the state-citizen relationship) can be applied, namely in urban areas where perceptions of statehood and citizenship comply more accurately with liberal notions. Also, to claim that the only reason for the state's centrality within the democratisation literature is due to lack of alternative approaches is perhaps unfounded given the extent of scholarly research that has been undertaken in this field.

Furthermore, while democratisation scholars have presumed a strengthening relationship between the citizen and state to be critical to democratisation, this does not preclude application to all areas within fragile states and can be usefully employed to measure change in urban areas, where interaction with state structures is strongest. What this thesis proves inaccurate, however, is the notion that the state-citizen relationship must be uniform across all parts of a given regime for democratisation to occur. If this is a non-negotiable component of democratisation theories, then they cannot be applied to the Afghan case and possibly not to other example of fragile contexts either, with any other result than one of negative conclusions about the likelihood of democratisation taking place.

Finally, it is clear that an alternative conceptualisation of the way democratisation occurs in fragile states is indeed necessary, as can be concluded following the researcher's attempt to apply Tilly's framework to the data gathered in Afghanistan for this study. This is because the limitations of a state-citizen construct as determined by

liberal democratic theory cannot be imposed on to areas within a state that have a characteristically different relationship with central government structures than this formulaic relationship presumes. As stated above, a combination of both state-citizen and centre-community models provides the most holistic approach and one which is most likely to capture the nuances of democratic change across different areas of a fragile context.

2) It is possible to *measure* levels of democratisation and how they change within fragile contexts. In order to do so, however, an historical and political narrative is imperative to understand the nature of the relationship between rulers and ruled over time, so as to establish how that relationship has changed, and how resource management has been affected as a result. Analyses based only around narrow interpretations of liberal democracy, such as elections, party performance or civil society activism, will mean little in contexts in which these institutions are unfamiliar to much of the population.

The research conducted for this study has shown hypothesis 2 to be true. Measures of democratisation that do not include a detailed historical and political analysis specific to the context in question cannot grasp the nature of the way in which, in fragile contexts, the relationship between ruler and ruled has changed over time. An understanding of these changes is fundamental to the assessment of the ways in which that relationship functions in different ways in different parts of a given country at present, and is instrumental to the determination of whether a state-citizen or a centre-community model – or mixture of both – might be best appropriate to measure democratisation.

3) The state-citizen relationship is only central to the *practice* of internationally-promoted democratisation in fragile states to the extent that international actors such as the UN are unable to move away from a one-size-fits all blueprint of democratisation that prioritises the building of state capacity.

Whereas in regards to hypothesis 1, the claim that a lack of alternatives in the theory of democratisation was the only reason for state-centrality was deemed inaccurate, in this case, the claim that a lack of alternative approaches is the only reason for a

homogeneous approach to international efforts to promoting democratisation holds to be true. As became apparent through the literature review in chapter 2 and the compilation of the historical narrative in chapter 5, this is because promoting state capacity has been central to the practice of democratic statebuilding since the intervention began in 2001. Discourses of democratisation in Afghanistan have been donor-led, and have been based on the assumption that a liberal democratic state is both appropriate and necessary to combat fragility. In this way, fragile states are defined and categorised according to the ways in which they fall short of western notions of statehood, rather than by characteristics that are specific to individual country contexts or to fragile states more generally. This is evident in the way in which elections are promoted as part and parcel of statebuilding efforts and yet are largely seen as a technical exercise, without regard for the way in which they impact local political landscapes (Coburn and Larson, forthcoming, 2013). The data from this study clearly demonstrates a sense of detachment from the so-called democratic processes of elections that are nevertheless considered by international actors to carry heavy weight when it comes to assessing levels of democratisation. There is no space within current international approaches to democratisation for an alternative vision of statehood or citizenship, that might in fact facilitate programmes that are able to better encourage a more interactive relationship between citizens, communities and central authorities.

9.3 A role for international actors?

Given that it is possible to make strong criticisms of international approaches to democratisation in Afghanistan, and given that most of the evidence collected in this thesis (both historical and empirical) suggests that democratisation must occur as a process of changing relationships between central authorities and their own populations, it is possible to question whether there is a role for international actors at all in promoting democratisation in the aftermath of conflict.

Still, Tilly's contention that "[h]opeful democrats need not sit on their hands, waiting" (2007: 205) refers to the way in which he does see a role for international actors in promoting democratisation, provided that this role concentrates primarily on the

encouragement of further integration of trust networks, the dissolution of categorical inequalities and the eradication of autonomous power centres. In comparison to these three areas of focus, he considered technical exercises such as the building of civil society organisations, and "preaching democratic virtues" (2007: 205) to have limited impact.

Based on findings from this research, the researcher would also concur that there may be a role for international actors in assisting to promote democratisation, but with the caveat that this role must first be detached from liberal notions of what the state and what citizenship should be.

On the subject of elections, clear throughout the transcripts of interviews conducted for this study was a mistrust of the electoral process. This was not to say that respondents were not keen to vote – in many cases, across both rural and urban communities and spanning income categories respondents expressed a keen interest in participating in elections in spite of perceived problems with the polling process. However, many also referred to the way in which elections had contributed to existing conflicts in local communities, or had exacerbated tensions between local strongmen. In this sense, as has been documented elsewhere, the insistence on holding elections as part of liberal statebuilding initiatives can contribute to instability rather than promote democratisation (Coburn and Larson, forthcoming, 2013).

However, if international approaches could be separated from a liberal statebuilding model, and could replace top-down prescriptions for western-style democracy with a focus on encouraging greater interaction between centre and community, for example, they might helpfully contribute to democratisation processes. The National Solidarity Program provides one example of a hybrid model of development assistance that increased interaction between centre and community by way of intermediary 'facilitating partners' (often locally-based NGOs). Although there were a number of problems with this programme, not least the unreliable and lengthy process for accessing government funds for development projects in the program's later years – it was nevertheless based on a principle of encouraging communities to interact with

central authorities. International actors' insistence on village councils being formally elected rather than simply chosen by consensus through community meetings appears to have been irrelevant to the overall success of the programme, when members of these new councils were oftentimes simply members of existing local *shuras*. 'Success' was largely determinant on the personalities represented in the CDCs, the speed with which projects were delivered and the quality/sustainability of the deliverables, rather than the method through which CDC members were selected. Nevertheless, this serves as an example of the ways in which international intervention can prove helpful and non-prescriptive but at the same time encourage an increasingly interactive relationship between communities and the centre.

Also critical to the way in which NSP worked in Afghanistan was the input of a prominent Afghan statesman (and former World Bank official) in the design of the programme. Contributing a deep understanding of local political landscapes, Ashraf Ghani was able to combine his knowledge of the country with an understanding of what international donors would be likely to fund. To this end, it is critical that if international actors are to play a part in assisting democratisation processes, they do so under the guidance of fragile state governments themselves. The recent emergence of the G7+ and its New Deal for Engagement (G7+, 2011) demonstrates a call for greater international accountability to G7+ governments in assistance programming, and greater ownership over the kind of programming that is developed. This is perhaps nowhere more critical than in helping to encourage democratic processes. This research speaks directly to G7+ governments, in that it supports their convictions of the need to define democratisation processes on their own terms. However, it also clearly demonstrates that these terms need to come from dialogue and consultation at the local level, and not merely be dictated by elites in government.

While this thesis does not claim to provide specific technical suggestions as to how different international and national actors might contribute more helpfully to the consolidation of democratisation in fragile states, based on the findings of this study it can suggest certain guiding principles for engagement in democratisation processes that de-emphasise the need for liberal statebuilding and instead focus on more fundamental

spaces for change that do not assume compliance (or potential compliance) on liberal models of statehood or citizenship.

9.4 Recommendations: 10 Principles for Improving Practice

Critical to the overall contribution of this research is its potential to inform and improve the practice of democratisation in fragile contexts. Throughout, the researcher has not argued against democracy promotion in fragile states, but instead she has looked at how democratisation might occur under the certain set of circumstances existing in these states. This section addresses international bi-lateral and multi-lateral donors; the 17 G7+ group governments of self-declared fragile states; international democracy promotion agencies such as the National Democratic Institute (NDI), International Republican Institute (IRI) and International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES); and Afghan democracy promotion agencies (and their equivalent agencies in other states) such as the Free and Fair Election Foundation of Afghanistan (FEFA) and Integrity Watch Afghanistan (IWA). It suggests 10 principles for improving the practice of democracy promotion in fragile contexts based on the findings of this study, without losing sight of strong democratic practices that can solidify the connection between citizens, communities and governments.

1) Question the validity of internationally-promoted democratisation in the given moment

Rather than assume that programmes of post-conflict democratisation will by definition work towards statebuilding goals, before planning and implementing these programmes international policy-makers and practitioners should consider carefully the appropriateness and potential consequences of promoting democracy in fragile states. The underlying principle of 'do no harm' should be upheld at all costs.

2) If deemed appropriate in the context, any international democratisation assistance that is provided should not be ideologically driven

All too often over the decade of intervention in Afghanistan, the language of democracy promotion has been used (albeit unintentionally in most cases) by international actors

with a fervour that has been interpreted by many Afghans as a disregard for their own culture and customs and an imposition of alien values. Yet, it is possible to be strongly committed to the cause of promoting democratisation without giving the impression that a blank slate and a complete commitment to liberal western agendas are necessary conditions. This principle calls for an attitude of humility to permeate international approaches, in which stronger state-citizen or centre-community relations may be encouraged to develop 'from the inside'. This does not presume that fragile states are in some way 'not ready' for liberal democracy, nor that a liberal democratic model is not appropriate for all parts of a given state. Rather, this approach seeks to divert attention to more fundamental principles of change which might have a much greater effect on the quality of citizens' lives – for example in terms of better access to and greater accountability over service provision – than the insistence on the holding of liberal democratic elections simply because these are valuable institutions from a western perspective.

3) Move beyond a narrow interpretation of liberal democracy

Related to 2), this principle calls for international actors to widen current interpretations of what democracy assistance might look like beyond the support for elections and insistence on one-person-one-vote methods of assessing popular support for candidates. Again, drawing on the findings of this thesis, and the basis of the CDI model, it suggests a broader, more creative approach to the practice of democratisation that starts with the simple goal of helping to better connect communities and individuals to central government authorities. This principle also calls for G7+ governments to begin a series of public dialogues as to what people consider the most important facets of democratic development in their home countries, and to contribute this information to discussions with donors about the kind of assistance required. The data in this study demonstrates that democratisation cannot be imposed from the top-down, whether the 'top' in question signifies international donors or G7+ governments.

4) Allow time for reflection and reassessment

Due to limitations of time and financial resources, many donors and democracy promotion agencies struggle to follow up on one-off events – such as civic education seminars or political party training sessions – organised to assist local actors in democratisation efforts. Clear from the historical analysis conducted in this study, however, is the way in which democratisation does not occur through the provision of quick-fix approaches or top-down impositions. In contrast to this, CDI advocates continual communication with communities and the recipients of democracy assistance, and an iterative process of feedback and change, in order that any alteration in responses, attitudes and actions at the community or indeed state-level as fragility levels shift might be documented and incorporated into democracy programming.

5) Always ground practice in detailed historical analysis

Before any kind of democracy assistance is provided, a detailed historical analysis should be undertaken, in coordination with the community receiving assistance, to acknowledge and document ways in which that community has interacted with state officials and administrative bodies in recent years. This is critical to understanding how communities are likely to respond to democratisation assistance differentially, and to ensure that assistance is tailored to specific needs and requests. For example, a community may feel isolated from their provincial representatives because they come from distant parts of the province and have never visited, or may be from a different ethnic background. This could prevent or limit participation in schemes designed to generate support for provincial council activities, for instance – whereas a more constructive use of resources would be to persuade representatives to visit the community in person.

6) Situate all intervention within local political landscapes, mapping consequences

Viewing democracy assistance as a technical, rather than political, exercise has been a requirement of some donors during the Afghan intervention as a means to avoid unnecessary involvement in Afghan affairs, and yet this attitude obscures the highly political nature of this assistance and of the ways in which it is received by local communities. All intervention must be situated within the local political landscape,

ensuring that the agendas and motivations of all actors involved are considered before assistance programmes are implemented. This is particularly important in Afghanistan, where influence and status are often generated by patronage connections and thus the inclusion or exclusion of certain influential figures within a local community could determine the overall impact of an assistance programme.

7) Allow space for differentiation between and within communities

This thesis has demonstrated that there is considerable differentiation between the ways in which different communities across Afghanistan relate to and interact with central authorities – and yet many democracy promotion programmes are based on liberal assumptions of uniformity of citizenship across space and time. To this end, programmes are often 'rolled out' or 'scaled up' in cookie-cutter fashion, without space to adapt to different political landscapes and different kinds of relationships to the state, and generate very mixed results as a consequence (as for example with the NSP programme in Afghanistan, in spite of its 'success' in some areas). While some degree of uniformity is necessary to ensure that all recipients of assistance have access to the same opportunities and resources, differences between communities should be factored in to programme planning and expectations for outcomes adjusted accordingly.

8) Develop relationships of trust with communities

This principle should underpin all development assistance but is particularly important when it comes to democracy and governance programming. Whether the implementers of democracy programmes are international or national, it is critical that their assistance is perceived by local communities as a means to achieve better connections to resource flows and political opportunity, not as an imposition of alien western values that can be associated with the term 'democracy'. Working with communities on a medium to long-term basis and developing relationships of trust is critical to ensuring that democracy assistance is received as assistance and not imposition.

9) Prioritise substantive local capacity building

While commonly cited as a goal within development programmes, local capacity building appears to have become something of a buzzword that is used to check boxes and attain funds rather than a means to ensure the sustainability of successful programme outcomes. Given the nature of democratisation as a continual political process that must be forged internally, rather than imposed from outside, substantive capacity building of local civil society organisations and democracy promotion agencies is paramount.

10) Commit to a consistency of position and commit for the long term

Related to developing relationships of trust with local recipient communities, but moving to the macro level, is the need for donors themselves to commit to a consistent position regarding their stance on democracy assistance. In Afghanistan much lip service has been paid by donors to democratic aims and objectives, but this has been undermined by military strategy and the conflicting interests of different international donors. In accordance with the Paris Declaration, donors need to re-commit to principles of mutual accountability if their stance on democratisation assistance is to be received as credible by recipient country populations. Further, the nature of democratisation as a lengthy historical and political process demands that any attempts to support it must be designed in the long durée: commitments of 20 years or more must be considered by international would-be democracy promoters. Evidently, this is an impractical suggestion, given that many democracy-promoting agencies are funded by government aid agencies, whose budgets are determined politically by home governments. Perhaps, then, this is a radical call for these agencies to re-consider where all or part of their funding is sourced, in order that more sustainable, and possibly more 'successful', programmes, might be developed.

9.5 Broader application of the 10 principles

This research has focused exclusively on the case of Afghanistan, and while this has allowed a detailed focus on the historical and political relationships between ruler and ruled in one context, it is necessary to ask now whether the lessons learnt, the CDI approach and the principles discussed above could apply to other fragile contexts. This

would not be a question of 'carbon-copying' an approach to democratisation from one country to the next, but applying the underlying principles to democracy promotion efforts.

Would it be possible, then, to extend applicability to fragile states more generally? In order to answer this question it is first necessary to return briefly to the discussion in chapter 2 concerning key characteristics of (so-called) fragile states. In that discussion, and further in the justification of choice of case study in chapter 3, the researcher argued that Afghanistan is a prime example of a fragile state as defined by international actors such as the OECD, USAID and DFID, due to a lack of political legitimacy across the country, an inability or unwillingness to provide services to citizens, and an inability to maintain a monopoly of violent force. While this thesis has questioned these characteristics, alongside the concept of 'fragile states' more generally, it is possible to use them to group together a number of states recently self-classified as fragile under the G7+ group (including countries as diverse as Afghanistan, Burundi, the Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Liberia, Papua New Guinea, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Solomon Islands, South Sudan, Timor Leste and Togo). The researcher argues that in theory, the CDI approach and the 10 principles discussed above could be applied to democracy promotion across the G7+ and specifically in conflict-affected fragile states.

First, the validity of an historical approach to assessing the relationship between ruler and ruled has been highlighted through this thesis, and, as shown by Charles Tilly, this approach can be applied to any context regardless of levels of fragility. This would contribute significantly to better democracy promotion in practice, as it would the understanding of how this relationship has changed over time in any one of the countries mentioned above. Most specifically in conflict-affcted states, it would highlight how, in particular during times of civil unrest, the relationship between ruler and ruled has shifted. From this analysis conclusions could be drawn about the nature of the connection between the centre and communities of citizens in different parts of a given fragile state, and democracy programmes designed with some flexibility to

accommodate differences in this connection. This speaks to the applicability of principles 4, 5 and 6.

Second, that as a combined approach, CDI offers scope for variation that could incorporate the differences between states. It allows for liberal constructs of the state-citizen relationship to be applied alongside a centre-community focus, proportionately to the context in question. It could be, for example, that the reach of the state and level of interaction it maintains with citizens (either as individuals or communities) across the board is stronger in Sierra Leone than in Papua New Guinea, where more variation in this relationship might exist, and thus a combination weighted more heavily toward the state/citizen model be used for the former. Either way, the flexibility of this approach is one of its key strengths. CDI would potentially allow comparisons to be made across starkly different contexts, through its insistence on a central focus on the relationship between ruler and ruled and because of its consistent emphasis on interactions between central and local forms of governance – but also because of its ability to conceive of these relationships and interactions in different ways. No longer confined to the liberal notions of the state and the citizen, it offers the potential to measure changes that exist in spaces between and beyond these limiting concepts. This speaks to principles 2, 3 and 6 specifically.

Finally, principles 1, 2, 7, 8, 9 and 10 all address the underlying need to ensure that the message communicated by democracy promotion programmes is one that is considered acceptable and credible by recipients of assistance, whether at the local or national level. Although in Afghanistan in particular there have been problems with the interpretation of the term 'democracy' and its association with western liberal values, this is not limited to the Afghan context. As the emergence of the New Deal for Engagement demonstrates, a number of fragile state governments have complaints about how assistance is provided in ways that "underestimate the importance of harmonizing with the national and local context" (G7+, 2011: 1). As such, developing an approach to democratisation assistance that does not impose assumptions of liberal statehood and citizenship, but accommodates a more flexible framework through which to work, corresponds directly and accountably with the stated interests of G7+

governments over the long term. This indicates that CDI and the principles discussed above could be applied more broadly across fragile states, building on the lessons learnt from the Afghan case.

9.6 Suggestions for further research

The conclusions that the researcher has developed as a result of this study have a number of implications for further research. Although limited time and resources have prevented a thorough testing and broader application of the CDI prototype in this thesis, there is certainly room for expansion and further analysis. Alongside the further exploration and refinement of the CDI framework, and testing in other conflict-affected fragile state contexts, a number of other, related issues that have emerged during this study would merit greater attention.

First, more detailed work needs to be undertaken on how exactly mechanisms of accountability are or could be incorporated into a centre-community approach to democratisation that assumes individual interests to be secondary to those of the community as a whole. How, in these circumstances, are the needs of individuals ensured? This thesis touches on ways in which individuals can hold their community leaders to account in Afghanistan, but also highlights cases in which this does not occur. Further research could shed light on specific mechanisms (such as rotating leadership perhaps) that could be encouraged at the community level to ensure that systems exist for occasions when individual and community interests do not coincide.

Second, having undertaken this research with a primary focus on the perspectives of Afghan communities and individuals, it would be helpful to explore the viewpoints of democracy promotion and governance agencies, to ascertain whether a CDI approach would provide a feasible alternative to current practice. Focusing on agency representatives' perspectives on the 'success' and 'failure' of past projects could indicate how success and failure are determined by these actors, and in turn provide insight into whether this coincides with the viewpoints of programme recipients. This further research could then shed light on ways in which the practical application of CDI might impact international democratisation programming. Detailed examination of how

agencies such as NDI or IFES might change their current practice and what these changes might cost, in terms of time and resources, would help test the validity of this approach. Going beyond the application of principles, this would focus rather on detailed programming and policy.

Third, further research into the ways in which democratisation might be measured in Islamic (and not necessarily fragile or conflict-affected) states could provide a useful comparison with the work conducted here on Afghanistan. The prevalence of Islamic community values in these countries may for example, render CDI a useful alternative to the liberal state-citizen model, although the stark differences between Islamic states such as Iran and Bangladesh, for example, and the ways in which they formed as states, might prevent useful comparison.

Finally, as the military intervention in Afghanistan comes to a close and a new government is elected in 2014, it will be important to monitor how the relationships between central government and Afghan communities and individuals changes. Existing democracy promotion programmes may evolve and change as donor funding wanes, and the extent and reach of governance and broader development programmes will depend on how levels of security shift. Comparing the research conducted in this thesis with perspectives of Afghans and international agencies in the coming years could bring to light important differences that are indicative of critical shifts in the state-citizen relationship and their connection to fragility and conflict.

APPENDIX 1: FURTHER LITERATURE ON INSTITUTIONS, HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONALISM AND INTERPRETIVIST VIEWS OF SOCIAL EXPLANATION

One of the underlying questions of this research runs as follows: is it in fact possible to measure levels of democratisation in a given context, and in such a way that allows like for like comparisons with other contexts? This is a relevant subject of enquiry for two reasons. First, as mentioned briefly above, democracy and levels of democraticness are generally judged according to normative standards, in spite of the efforts of a number of theorists and institutions to define empirical, universal standards of measurement. There exist no universally accepted standards, with theorists differing according to approaches based on events, procedures, substantive outcomes, liberal constitutionalism and other features of some democratic polities. Second, given the way in which democracies differ significantly according to context, with socio-political and historical factors often defining the specific characteristics of one democracy as compared to another, it is questionable whether the democratic institutions across any two democracies can be compared and levels of democraticness measured according to the same criteria.

This problem will be explored here, with reference to three theoretical approaches to social explanation: a rational choice institutionalist perspective, which often focuses on comparable institutions and argues that useful, like for like comparisons can be made across differing contexts; an historical institutionalist perspective, which takes a similar stance on institutions but grounds them in historical and political context, often comparing smaller groups of cases rather than adopting a universalist approach; and an interpretivist stance, which contends that all institutions are a product of the social meanings assigned to them by the self-interpreting agents acting within them, and are thus specific to a very particular context. According to this viewpoint, social norms and expectations are ideographic, to the extent that they are singular to a given community or individual influenced by that community. Key proponents of RCI include Douglass North (1990; 1993), Mancur Olson (1965) and Shepsle; (2006); prominent Historical

Institutionalist theorists include Thelen (1999; 2010); Orren and Skowronek (1999); Sanders (2006); and Steinmo (2008) – and those promoting an interpretive stance include Peter Winch (1958), Charles Taylor (1985), Alasdair MacIntyre and D.R. Bell (1967) and Mark Bevir and R.A.W. Rhodes (2003). Finding flaws with all three approaches, the discussion concludes with a detailed examination of whether a useful compromise can be made spanning the strengths of HI and interpretivist stances and comprising a more appropriate theoretical framework through which to address these issues in the Afghan context.

What are institutions?

The term 'institution' has been used and critiqued by scholars frequently and also demands clarification in this context. The word is used in this thesis broadly to denote a set of rules or norms that determine and regulate social behaviour, a definition drawing primarily from the institutionalist perspective put forward by Douglass North:

> Institutions are the rules of the game of a society or more formally are the humanly-devised constraints that structure human interaction. They are composed of formal rules (statute law, common law, regulations), informal constraints (conventions, norms of behavior, and self imposed codes of conduct), and the enforcement characteristics of both (North, 1993: 5)

North makes the distinction between institutions as sets of rules, from organisations as the actors or individuals following those rules. Organisations, according to North,

> are the players: groups of individuals bound by a common purpose to achieve objectives. They include political bodies (political parties, the senate, a city council, a regulatory agency); economic bodies (firms, trade unions, family farms, cooperatives); social bodies (churches, clubs, athletic associations); and educational bodies (schools, colleges, vocational training centers). (North, 1993: 5)

Elections, then, are institutions – sets of formal rules determining interaction between voters and candidates in order that new leaders might be selected. Parliaments, line ministries, the family, or the *shura* are all examples of organisations within which

institutions exist to determine and regulate the interactions 'players' (or actors, or agents) within them. This definition draws on the language of institutionalism and game theory, in which social interactions (or transactions) are considered to take place according to a complex set of rules or institutions. According to North, "[i]nstitutions are formed to reduce uncertainty in human exchange" North, 1993: 2) and act as constraints on human behaviour. This can be compared with the perspective of others within the rational choice institutionalist or 'new institutionalist' school, such as Calvert, who instead describes institutions as a means of maintaining equilibrium (Calvert, cited in Shepsle, 2006: 26) Whereas a number of authors in the statebuilding and post-conflict literature use the term to denote a more specifically defined category – the administrative organs of state, or government institutions (see Roland Paris, 2004: 187), this thesis considers their focus too narrow. Elections in themselves must be considered one of the many institutions constituting the democratisation process as a whole.

Institutionalist views: Rational Choice

Institutionalist approaches, in their most basic definition, contend that the occurrence of social events can be explained most effectively through the existence, persistence and relevance of institutions, structures or motivations which determine the decisions and actions of human agents as groups or individuals in a given context, and which can be empirically measured. For North, institutions are constraints (North, 1990). Stephen Krasner describes an institutional approach in structural terms, stating that "[a]n institutionalist perspective regards enduring institutional structures as the building blocks of social and political life" (Krasner, 2009: 90). For some theorists, a focus on institutions can be used as a method of predicting future occurrences (Weber and Van Bouwel, 2002: 259-275, Little, 1991: ch. 3). A further key component of institutional approaches is the way in which institutions are considered to reduce the transaction costs of human interaction.

Rational Choice Theory has contributed a great deal to the way in which the field of social explanation has expanded and evolved since the 1950s, when it was first

introduced. According to Kenneth Shepsle, "[c]anonical rational choice theory has been a staple in political science for decades" and "has become an engine of social scientific research" in spite of the way in which many developments have been made to improve levels of analytic sophistication since the original versions of RCT emerged (Shepsle, 2006: 23-24). Having developed alongside the behaviourist movement, its central premise is that individuals, or agents, in any given context will choose rationally between the choices they perceive to be open to them. As Little explains, within RCT, "[a]gents act rationally insofar as they choose their actions from the range of available *options* that best suit their *ends*, given their beliefs about available options and their probable consequences" (Little, 1991: 45). This in turn facilitates a model which can be scaled up or aggregated – large scale social movements becoming the combined effect of individual agents acting rationally. Furthermore, it allows a universal mechanism for comparison: agents act rationally in any given context, and thus their actions can be explained comparatively across contexts also.

This, then, provides a stark example of a school of thought which considers it not only possible but imperative to identify universalist principles that allow parallels to be drawn between social and political events occurring in what would appear to be vastly different contextual settings. It is precisely here, however, that early versions of RCT are limited in scope, as they presume all agents to be utility-maximising individuals whose concept of rationality and subsequent rational decision-making is knowable and predictable as a universal truth, and not defined or influenced by the specificities of individual cultures, contexts or institutional settings. As Little concedes, "Rational Choice analysis is often guilty of schematism regarding agency and structure" (Little, 1991: 151).

Another problem lies with the concept of accumulation, which has been contested in the study of collective action. In a seminal work, Mancur Olson clearly demonstrated the way in which individuals might not choose a seemingly 'rational' course of action to achieve a given outcome when embedded within a group setting, given the cost of the action and the perception of a shared outcome which might result from other members of the group bearing the cost, whether or not an individual decides to act (Olson, 1965).

Termed the 'free-rider' effect, this theoretical revelation has contributed significantly to the considerable academic interest in collective action (for example Tilly, 1978; 2003; Skocpol, 1979). More relevant for the purposes of this study, however, is the way in which institutions have been theorized using an RCT framework, comprising another body of literature often referred to as the New Institutionalism or Rational Choice Institutionalism (RCI).

RCI is one example of the way in which RCT has evolved to encompass more sophisticated tools with which to analyse the contexts within which social and political phenomena take place. Shepsle, one of RCI's principal proponents, describes a focus on institutions as a means to provide a contextual script according to which social and political action occurs in indicating the ways in which RCI has developed from an RCT base:

> We…have more nuanced views about the contexts in which political activity unfolds, the way these contexts channel behaviour, and the way behaviour, in turn, maintains or alters contexts. These contexts are inhabited by political actors and organizations to be sure, but it is the institutions that arise and persist there that provide scripts for political processes (Shepsle, 2006: 23-24).

This focus provides a framework for cross-cultural comparisons but also allows for the ways in which institutions influence and are influenced by the contexts in which they emerge. North assigns institutions a general, broad definition of "humanly devised constraints that shape human interaction" (North, 1990: 3), implying a set of rules within a game that agents choose to adhere to. North then makes the distinction between institutions and organisations, which are the bodies or groups of actors or agents within which institutions exist to regulate the interactions. For others within the RCI school, institutions are rather a means of maintaining equilibrium, and a way in which to lower the costs of social interaction (Calvert, as cited in Shepsle, 2006: 26). If all actors adhere to a set of principles or rules, social balance is maintained and is threatened only by those individuals who adhere to different principles or rules (Shepsle, 2006: 26).

In his outline of RCI perspectives, Shepsle makes his own distinctions between two different types of institutions – those which are structured, and those which are unstructured. Those institutions listed in the former category comprise what might be termed formal entities – such as courts, Congress, central banks, political parties, armies. The latter group by contrast include norms, collective action cooperative arrangements – those sets of practices which do not necessarily translate into formal rules and are "more amorphous" (Shepsle 2006: 27). Whereas unstructured institutions can be ill-defined, informal and, while maintaining varying degrees of institutional tenacity, difficult to classify or categorize, structured institutions by definition carry characteristics amenable to comparison. As Shepsle explains, while not excluding the likelihood of variation between different versions of structured institutions, "there are also powerful central tendencies...[which] is what induces us to group them together and to think it sensible to compare them" (Shepsle, 2006: 27).

Applying this approach to the central concern of this thesis, in the search for social explanations of democratisation and why it occurs differently in fragile states, it is possible to identify potentially useful concepts. It could be argued, for example, that the process of democratisation ideally comprises the creation, establishment and development of both structured and unstructured institutions – the former including legislative bodies, a functioning judiciary, independent electoral bodies, for example, and the latter, certain aspects of civil society – demonstrative collective action, relationships of trust between MPs and individuals or communities, or between citizens and the state. Of these two forms of institutions, it would seem that while unstructured institutions present something of a conundrum in terms of measurement and comparison, depending on how they are defined – structured institutions such as legislative bodies and elections provide a more solid base for comparison across different contexts.

Even these comparisons, however, can be problematised. From an RCI perspective, institutions or sets of rules are a means to overcome costly differences in levels of information between actors – to level the playing field, perhaps, and enable a consistent and effective game to take place in which the rules are known to all parties.

This makes the assumption, however, that there is sufficient incentive for all parties to play by the rules – or sufficient disincentive not to. It rests on the premise that all parties are aware of and accept the benefits that playing by the rules will generate. Evidently, this is the case for example, in elections taking place in established western democracies, for example – but not necessarily so in democracies emerging in post-conflict or continuing conflict societies. The assumption often made by theorists is that elections level the political playing field through the simple mechanism of subjecting all candidates to the public vote, thus institutionalizing a healthy, intended uncertainty with the outcomes unknowable (Przeworski, 1988: 63). In the immediate aftermath of civil conflict, however – there is no guarantee that losers in an elections will accept their loss according to these new, democratic rules of the game – or that candidates in general are prepared to take the risk of playing fairly when so much is at stake, and when there is too much to lose. Although often dubbed a 'post-conflict' context, a country undergoing post-war reconstruction or democratisation processes can be one in which war systems remain intact, in the form of complex webs of incentive structures that can keep low-level conflict continuing for many years after the official 'end' of a war. These contribute to the ways in which actors who stood to gain significantly from their positions of advantage during conflict have often little motivation to de-arm and submit to the public vote.

Another example can be given in the way in which political actors in unstable environments may choose to keep information about themselves and their political affiliations ambiguous, in order that they might secure greater advantage within the political game by affiliating themselves with different sides depending on which appears to be strongest at a given moment. This is precisely the case in the lower house of the Afghan parliament, in which very few MPs choose to declare political affiliations outright in order that they can reserve the opportunity to change these should the need

arise. This 'political ambiguity' prevents the playing of an efficient game because the incentives to play by the rules and declare political positions do not exist (Larson, 2010: 1). As such, it would appear that institutions differ across social, political, historical and cultural contexts, because rules are interpreted and assigned meaning differently.

Indeed, one of the most fundamental critiques of the RCI perspective is its inability to conceptualise unstable or transitional politics. As Bates et al. note, "[t]he greatest achievement of rational choice theory has been to provide tools for studying political outcomes in stable institutional settings. Political transitions seem to defy rational forms of analysis" (1998: 604-5, cited in Thelen, 1999: 381). This forms a critical stumbling block for the potential application RCI approaches to the Afghan context and to the empirical cases of other fragile environments also.

Historical Institutionalism

Historical Institutionalism developed at a time when theories of the state and the state's role vis-à-vis society were re-entering the debate in the social science literature in the 1960s and 70s after a period of widespread unpopularity (Sanders, 2006: 42). This strand of institutionalism does not differ from RCI perspectives in its definition of institutions, with HI scholars largely holding to North's (1990) definition of institutions as "humanly devised constraints" (Sanders, 2006: 42). Beyond this, however, there is no formal agreement as to the extent of the differences between the two, with some scholars insisting on a clear divergence (Sanders, 2006) and others highlighting more subtle analyses of overlaps and points of distinction (Thelen, 1999). Key contrasts are outlined here, followed by a discussion of the potential relevance of HI theory to this thesis.

RCI and HI approaches traditionally differ from one another in that, for HI, history and power within a given context matter: historical and political factors and cultural norms inform why individuals feel they should (or should not) comply with certain institutions, and in doing so shape institutions themselves. Kathleen Thelen describes

what have come to signify the most commonly cited differences between historical and rational approaches, outlining "historical institutionalism's characteristic focus on specific contextual conditions" compared with "rational choice's characteristic search for generalizable features of political behavior rooted in the incentive structures that individuals face". (Thelen, 1999: 370). While RCI offers a micro-analysis of the behaviour of individuals, HI considers this behaviour within the broader, macro-perspective of historical (and often structural) patterns. The central premise of historical institutionalism holds institutions as important tools in the theory and practice of social explanation, but insists that they are not constructed or experienced within a vacuum: they are the product of given historical structures and processes. This allows a clear theoretical divergence from the prospect of universal generalizations, and instead facilitates the comparison of small groups of cases, for example in a regional context or across states in which a particular political or social phenomenon has occurred (Thelen, 1999: 373).

One example of a social phenomenon which has been subject to considerable scrutiny by historical instituionalists and structuralists in particular, among others, is that of revolution. Theda Skocpol makes the case that social revolutions in France, Russia and China may be explained through the structural explanation of the behaviour of states, resulting in the reshuffling of class politics (Skocpol, 1979; Dunn, 1982: 301). In doing so, Skocpol considers the agency of individuals as having minimal explanatory power in determining the reasons for and circumstances under which revolutions take place. In general, the extent to which structuralist or historical institutionalist theorists include or reject the role of the individual varies. As Dunn highlights, Charles Tilly has a different approach to revolutions, describing the collective will of demonstrators (or 'insurgents') as 'purposive movement' (Dunn, 1982:302) and thus assigning a considerable degree of agency to the insurgents themselves (rather than relying purely on the character of the state at any given time) in his explanation of revolutions. As discussed throughout the thesis, this also plays a key role in his model for assessing levels of democratisation, where a state-citizen relationship is central as opposed to a focus primarily on the actions of government elites (Tilly, 2007: 12). Still, clear from this example is the way in which in general, an HI perspective facilitates a comparison across a small group of

contexts which are firmly situated within historical processes, considered critical to the explanation of the occurrence of social phenomena – in contrast to the tendency toward identifying universal trends, as found in RCI approaches (Thelen, 1999: 373). In this sense, an HI perspective could be usefully applied to the central concerns of this thesis, in that the sphere of analysis – fragile states – would provide an appropriate locus for the comparative study of the emergence and differential experience of democratisation processes that could be linked strongly to the historical and political contexts of the different states studied. It is clear that the historical trajectories, for example, of Afghanistan and Iraq, throughout the 20th century are vastly different and thus could provide significant explanatory power in terms of measuring the difference outcomes of democratisation 'from outside'.

In contrast to RCI, HI analysis does not only focus on the regularities and patterns within institutions but also in their change and evolution over time. While this is ostensibly conducive to the study of the way in which democratisation takes place, and thus an asset to its utility as a theoretical framework for this thesis, it presents a problem also in that it can facilitate parallels being made between HI analysis and the notion of path dependency. Path dependency encapsulates a deterministic view of historical processes, in that small events occurring at a given point in time trigger a series of increasingly greater consequences which occur teleologically and explain an historical path from event A to event B. This can be linked to modernization theory in terms of the way countries develop and change on a macro level, moving sequentially from one stage of development to another in a seemingly irreversible process (Rostow, 1960). Evidently, this kind of deterministic prescription is problematic, particularly when linked to the way in which countries democratise. As Tilly points out, processes of democratisation can just as easily involve 'de-democratisation' as they can the progression towards a more democratic state of being (Tilly, 2007: 14).

Both Tilly and Thelen avoid deterministic accounts of historical processes, however, and have more nuanced perspectives on the ways in which institutions develop over time, which are not prescriptive. Thelen talks about institutions as "the product of concrete temporal processes" (1999: 371), referring to the way in which historical

processes are analysed in retrospect to explain how and why social phenomena (such as the development of institutions, or the occurrence of revolution) take place. One event taking place historically – a 'critical juncture' - might trigger a series of further events that follow as a result of that particular first event, the "crucial founding moment of institutional foundation" (Thelen, 1999: 387). As critical junctures vary across countries, they stimulate different paths of development. But at any given time, institutions shape and are shaped by the very specific political and social contexts of which they are a part, and from which they cannot be extracted (1999:384). In this sense, path dependency for Thelen is about both institutional stability and evolution, and as such "involves elements of both continuity and (structured) change." (1999: 384). Change occurs but is limited by past events and processes, as "institutions continue to evolve in response to changing environmental conditions and ongoing political maneuvering but in ways that are constrained by past trajectories." (1999: 387). Within institutions, HI theorists warn against the RCI approach of assuming the interests of groups of actors to be solely and disconnectedly utility-maximising, and instead to look at how groups were initially formed and how the construction and articulation of their interests developed as a result of this. (1999: 395). Viewing group interest as socially constructed thus overlaps (uncoincidentally) with Marxist and/or structuralist perspectives, and often draws on the character of the state in doing so (Skocpol, 1979; Tilly, 1985).

While allowing a nuanced analysis of the construction, articulation and performance of group interests, however, in its focus on historical analysis HI appears to assume that a 'starting point' can be identified. When talking about the ways in which groups formed 'in the first place', it is necessary to identifying when that 'first place' in fact was, and to draw distinguishing lines based on the – perhaps normative – identification and justification of critical junctures. When looking at the case for democratisation in Afghanistan, does one begin with a) the international intervention in 2001; b) the reasons for which the intervention came to pass, looking back to the anarchy of civil war in the 1990s and Taliban impositions of brutal order and rudimentary forms of 'justice' in response to this; c) the series of historical reactions toward modernizing monarchs beginning perhaps with the rule of Amanullah Shah in the 1920s; d), even

further back, to the centralizing efforts of the fearsome 19th century reign of Abdurrahman Khan, the Iron Amir; or e) to the first Pashtun Ruler Ahmad Shah Durrani in the mid-18th century? Looking outside of Afghanistan, it would also be necessary to link the international effort to promote democratisation to broader global trends in this regard and to patterns of statebuilding that had emerged through post-conflict interventions in Kosovo, East Timor and Iraq at the very least, if not a much wider range of historical cases. While Thelen freely states that institutional development is the result of changes that can occur across and affect many different processes simultaneously in different ways (1999: 383), there is nevertheless still a need to define and justify a point from which one's focus of analysis begins – a point which will almost inevitably remain contestable.

A further issue is the way in which institutional change and political development more generally, for an historical institutionalist, must always be a structured process involving states and classes. While the ability to analyse institutional change at all is an improvement on the limitations of RCI approaches requiring stability, this is still a problem when applied to periods of rapid or enforced transition. Some HI scholars have problematised the notion of institutional change it that it happens on different institutional timelines simultaneously, and change in one affects the structures in another (Orren and Skowronek, 1994: 321). This acknowledgement of the complexity of institutional change however still does not account for the often rapid and unpredictable nature of change in fragile states. A context of increasing instability in Afghanistan throughout the last 10 years has heightened the unpredictability with which events occur, which might counter the efforts of HI theorists to estimate the nature of the paths along which institutional change might take place in future. In these ways, while HI provides a more appropriate framework for application to the study of democratisation than that offered by RCI approaches, primarily in its solid grounding in historical and political processes, it is nevertheless hindered by its reliance on a normatively determined start-point, by its inability to explain rapid institutional change and also in its insistence on the structured nature of change through the formulation of macro-level group (and state) interests. The latter two hindrances pose particular problems to the application of HI frameworks to a post-conflict or fragile state in which

institutional change is often enforced from the outside (and thus is not a state-versus-class issue), in which the instability of the context may preclude predictable processes of change, and where the existence of a cohesive state may itself be called into question.

Given that both rational choice and historical institutionalism – in their very conceptions of institutional formation and change at the micro and macro levels respectively – pose problems for application in post-conflict environments, it is necessary to ask whether a focus on more contextually and culturally specific analysis might provide more insight into the explanation of democratisation processes. Discarding the notion of structures or institutions that can be compared, like for like, across contexts, an interpretative perspective provides a stark contrast to the different institutionalisms discussed above.

Interpretivist views of institutional comparison

Interpretivist theorists, such as Peter Winch (1958), Charles Taylor (1985) and Mark Bevir and R.A.W. Rhodes (2003), have a starkly different ontological perspective on the analysis of social phenomeona. Accounts of causal relationships, whether realist or nomological, are considered inapplicable to the study of human society (Winch, 1958 [2008]: 67-8)[51].

Relatedly, interpretivists also have a different perspective on institutions and their construction than their institutionalist counterparts. They contend that institutions cannot make the same sense to individuals across cultural and social boundaries because their interpretation of the rules of the game will depend on what makes sense to them at a given point in time. As such, truths held by individuals can only be understood through the study of their own interpretations of their actions within a certain context – there is no universally experienced truth (for example in the meaning of an institution or set of rules) that can be empirically measured. As Charles Taylor explains, "[w]e make sense of action when there is a coherence between the actions of the agent and the meaning of his situation for him" (Taylor, 1985: 24). The key is thus to understand how

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[51] The complete dismissal of causal relationships in social science is however refuted by Alasdair MacIntyre and D.R. Bell (1967:102-105).

human action and interaction is meaningful but only from the perspective of self-interpreting human agents (Bevir and Rhodes, 2003: 18, Taylor, 1985: 26).

This is particularly helpful in the study of particular social contexts as units of enquiry in their own right. As Little describes, interpretation is focused primarily on understanding, as opposed to explanation, as "an approach that emphasizes…the importance of the particulars of different cultures and holds that the central goal of social enquiry is the *interpretation* of meaningful human practices" (Little, 1991: 68). In applying an interpretivist stance to the research questions explored in this thesis, then, would involve the search to understand why and how democratisation takes place differentially in one context as opposed to another through the study of what aspects of democratisation might mean to those involved in this process in a given society, rather than the attempt to identity root causes of democratisation that could be similar across a number of different contexts.

This approach would allow the detailed consideration of the specificities of the Afghan context, the uniqueness of which could be well-argued based on historical, geo-political, socio-economic and religious grounds, and which would benefit significantly from the 'thick' descriptions common to interpretative accounts. Clifford Geertz's influential account of a Balinese cock fight demonstrates clearly the weight and descriptive capacities of interpretative stances and their ability to situate analysis within a complex and changing environment (Geertz, 1979: 181-223). Unlike RCI, limited to the analysis of stable institutions, interpretation would thus well facilitate the understanding of a post-conflict context or fragile state. It would also allow for variety within Afghanistan and for a nuanced analysis to be made of the ways in which democratisation takes place in different sectors of society. In its central premise that no society can be 'explained' by a set of analytical tools (Little, 1991: 80), the approach would also posit that no two societies would assign meaning to democratic practices or processes in the same way. By extension, it would not be possible to measure democratisation in different contexts according to one set of criteria or benchmarks.

Another strength of the interpretivist approach is its focus on humans as social beings, embedded within and constructing social practices to which they assign meaning based on a collective understanding. Humans are "social beings who cannot be understood apart from our social context" (Trigg, 2001: 66). While interpretivists state this to be the case regardless of how apparently collective or individually-oriented a given society, it is nevertheless possible to see clearly how any attempt to understand Afghanistan must be rooted within efforts to understand social norms and practices given the strength and tenacity of the collective lifestyle in the country. Efforts to introduce a policy of 'one man, one vote' in elections post-2001 provide a key example of the ways in which apparently 'universal' democratic principles conflict with existing social norms and practices in Afghanistan: while on polling days, Afghans have queued to vote in lines as individuals, decisions taken on who to vote for were often communal affairs in which an entire village may have decided in advance of the election which candidate would secure the best connection to central patronage and prosperity for the community (Coburn and Larson, 2009).

Indeed, in contrast to the RCI attempt to construct the individual as a sole unit for analysis, or the HI insistence on the role of macro-level structures and interest groups, "[a]n interpretive approach moves back and forth between aggregate concepts and the beliefs of particular individuals" (Bevir and Rhodes, 2003: 2), shifting between the individual and the society of which it is a part in an hermeneutic spiral. Charles Taylor expands on this point in his statement that "[w]hat the ontology of mainstream social science lacks is the notion of meaning as not simply for an individual subject; of a subject who can be a 'we' as well as an 'I' (Taylor, 1985: 40). The existence of socially shared meanings or facts contributes great explanatory power to the interpretive approach, as it demonstrates the interconnectedness between individuals and the environments through which meaning is developed and assigned to various social phenomena and behaviour. One example of this kind of analysis as applied to Afghan society would be in the action of a dinner guest finishing the entire portion of food he is given during a meal – interpreted by his hosts as a clear statement that his hunger has not yet been satiated and he would like a further portion. Quite a different meaning,

then, to that ascribed to an empty plate by the researcher's own family – where this would symbolize a satisfied appetite and the end of a meal.

Having discussed the strengths of this approach, there are problems also with the interpretivist stance. To reject outright the notion of universal institutions is significant in itself in that it denies any kind of political comparison across cultures – precluding the prospect of any generalization at all. As Little asserts, "If each social phenomenon is sui generis – that it, if each society works according to forces that are unique to it – then generalizations are impossible in social science" (Little, 1991: 155). The researcher contends that there are some institutions that can transcend cultural boundaries – and that to assume otherwise is highly problematic in the context of increasing globalisation. While 'international human rights' for example are notoriously vague and controversial, there are nevertheless some that would generate shared meaning in more than one culture or community. While 'democracy' is a value-laden term that is certainly interpreted differently across different contexts, and democratic practices, such as the holding of elections, ascribed different meaning from one community within Afghanistan to the next – the experience of participating in an election is nonetheless comparable, if not identical, across the provincial border. There may be similarities in the assigned meaning of institutions or rules between villages, districts, provinces, nations or within entire regions – and the interpretivist approach does not specify the extent to which 'community' can be expanded.

Another principal problem with the approach is that it assigns a level of authoritative objectivity to the observer, who presumably also is subject to his own interpretations which are culturally conditioned. The idea that a researcher's own interpretation of the meaning of an agent's actions is somehow more plausible than that of the agent themselves is also problematic (MacIntyre and Bell, 1967: 95-97). Additionally, there is no means of empirically testing an observer's interpretation of an action, other than through the (interpreted) meanings assigned to action by the actors themselves.

RCI, HI and Interpretative: A compromise?

There are problems with RCI, HI and interpretivist approaches, none of which present a perfect theoretical approach for the analysis of democratisation. Elements of all three, however, would facilitate an in-depth understanding of social norms and practices in Afghanistan *and* a causal analysis which could be compared across contexts. Rational choice offers a micro-level analysis that focuses on individual choice and agency – arguably fundamental to liberal constructions of democracy as promoted by international actors, and a means to thus explain the motivations and perhaps outcomes of international engagement in state-building practices. An historical institutionalist perspective would then situate this within broader historical and political processes, examine the role of the state and different interest groups in determining a democratisation trajectory. An interpretative stance would ultimately ground any tendency to make universal statements in the deep understanding of the Afghan context.

A theoretical model combining these highly variant and often opposing stances would appear to be, if it existed, incoherent and contradictory – partly due to the ways in which some of the key proponents of all three insist that their own method is the only means through which human society can be usefully examined. There have been attempts, however, to build such a combined framework, most notably in the form of the recent Analytic Narratives (AN) literature (Bates et al., 1998, 2000; Levi, 2003). Proponents of this approach dismiss the dichotomy between ideographic and nomothetical stances (Levi, 2003: 1), in favour of a type of social enquiry that combines both interpretive and institutionalist perspectives. Essentially, theirs is an attempt to apply rational choice theory to a deep understanding of a specific cultural context. As Levi explains, "our version of analytic narrative is clearly informed by theory, specifically rational choice theory, and by the conjoined methodologies of historical analysis and in-depth case studies" (Levi, 2003:4). While some scholars have dismissed analytic narratives as unoriginal and lacking in its contribution of a 'new' methodology to social scientific enquiry (Dessler, 2000), this is nonetheless a significant attempt to address the inadequacies of rational choice accounts by situating them specifically and carefully within given contemporary and historical contexts (Thelen, 1999: 375-6). For

the purposes of this study, an AN framework remains overly concerned with game theory and its application to historical contexts so that it appears to be, as rational choice critics more generally have noted, an attempt to bend events and contexts to fit the theory (Green and Shapiro, 1994). Nevertheless, its emergence and defense by prominent scholars indicates the need for a combined approach and the limitations of RCI, HI and interpretive perspectives as individual methods of enquiry.

This exploration of different approaches to the basic ontological question of whether social structures exist as objects to be examined, or whether they are constituted purely by means of their interpretation and assigned meaning in specific social contexts, has proven fruitful in its shedding light on the strengths and limitations of each perspective. Alongside the HI school, the researcher concurs that institutions may be compared across limited groups of contexts, allowing for the possibility, at least, for meaning to be shared across different cultural and political environments. This is not to say that shared meaning *necessarily* exists, however, and the researcher would also argue that if it does, it does not exist a) in a vacuum, unaffected by current political dynamics in a given context; or b) for an indeterminate length of time, irrespective of historical changes. This contributes to the way in which democratisation – as implemented by external actors according to a one-size-fits-all blueprint for political change – is invariably problematic.

APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW GUIDE[52]

Introductions and local context

Introduction to the research team and to the study. Explanation of terms of consent – explain how data will be used and how all names (if given) will be removed from transcripts. Ensure respondent is fully aware of these issues and happy to continue with the interview before beginning the conversation. Thank the respondent for their time before beginning.

- Please introduce yourself (probe: what is your occupation, role in the village/area?)

- How long have you lived in this area? Could you tell us a bit about your family background?

Authority and decision-making

- Tell us about who holds authority in your area – who makes decisions in the community? How do they do this? How are these decision-makers selected? (Probe: what do you think about this way of selecting them?)

- If you have a problem to solve, who do you go to first? If that person cannot solve it, what happens then? What kinds of problems do you take to which people?

Quality of life

- What do you think about living in this area? (Probe: what are the benefits and drawbacks? What kinds of services are available? What do you think about these?)

- What is the security situation like here?

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[52] This was used as a rough guide for the researchers rather than a questionnaire, with the main purpose to prompt conversation around a few key topics. This being the case, the questions here do not always correspond precisely with the ones asked in actual interview transcripts. Probes are given as a means to prompt further conversation, should initial answers be short. The guide was translated into Dari and Pashtu for Afghan researchers to use (although some were more comfortable using the English guide). All translations of questions were checked and cross-checked by two translators for each language.

Government representatives and elections

- What do you think about the Wolesi Jirga members for your province? (probe: who are they? Do any of them come from your area? What do they do? What should they do/what is their role, in your opinion?)

- What do you think about the parliament in general? Did you vote in the first parliamentary elections? Are you planning to vote again? (Probe: If yes, how will you decide who to vote for? Do you think the current members will be candidates again? Why/why not?)

- What do you think about elections in Afghanistan in general? (Probe: can you tell us some stories from the first elections and last year's elections? Have there been any changes?)

- Tell us about the provincial council. What do you think about it? (Probe: do you know any PC members? What do they do (what is their role)? Can you tell us about how the provincial council elections went last year? Were there any candidates from your district? What happened?

International actors

- Is the international community working in your province? (Probe: Who are they? What do they do? What are your opinions about their work?)

Possibly finish interview with questions regarding other people who might be available for interview in the area (following the guide in the sampling design), and request an introduction.

<p align="center">Thank you for your time.</p>

APPENDIX 3: NOTE ON TRANSLATION AND SAMPLE INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS

Note on translation

Throughout the data collection, interviews were conducted in the first language of the respondent wherever possible. Detailed handwritten notes were taken by one of the two researchers conducting each interview, with the other facilitating discussion (and with this role alternating between them for alternate interviews). These were then typed up as English transcripts by the researchers, with translation checked by other members of the research team. The author of the study (so called in this instance to differentiate her from the Afghan researchers involved in data collection) was able to verify the quality of English translation in the interviews conducted in Dari that she attended herself, as she was able to understand approximately 80 per cent of the answers given and check her own notes against the transcripts produced.

Sample interview transcripts[53]

NANG 17 W (Nangarhar women's interview no. 17: rural/mid-income/Tajik)

Interview type:	Individual Interview
Interview No.	017
Date:	02 June 2010
Time:	08:00am – 10.00am
Province:	Nangarhar
Location:	AA village, Surkhrod district
Respondent name, title and job:	XX, housewife
Respondent ethnicity/tribe:	Tajik
Respondent age:	35 years
Respondent language:	Dari
Facilitator name:	Dewa Mohsin
Note-taker:	Rahat Gul Sadat

Observations:

We had made an arrangement the day before to meet the respondent at this time, and we left to get to her house at about 7.30am on Wednesday. We waited on the main road for a taxi for a while. After finding a taxi, we started the journey toward Surkhrod district. We passed the [government-run] Public Health Hospital, the police headquarters and Jenderma Bridge and there were carts selling cucumbers and other shops. We also passed a mixed high school of boys and girls in Surkhrod district and there were some other primary schools we saw in the Charbagh-e Safa and other areas. We saw a number of people reaping wheat and some of them were selling fresh fruits like apricots, mangos, cucumbers and some others. The area was green all around and the weather was good, because it was morning and a very nice breeze was blowing, but by the time our interview had finished, the weather had become very hot. We were wearing veils, therefore we were feeling very hot. When we approached to the home of the respondent, her other neighbours were there too. All the women were happy to meet us and paid their respects us and brought us cold yogurt. They had a cow. It was a big family and they had a big house. There was a garden in front of the house. The house had five rooms, a kitchen, a bathroom, an oven and also a big barn outside. The room where we were sitting had four red toshaks *[floor cushions] and six red* balesht *[wall pillows]. There were red curtains and the respondent's clothes were blue. Her native language was Dari, but she could speak Pashto correctly and clearly. The respondent had a nice voice, neither loud nor too soft. During the interview, the respondent*

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[53] In these documents, font in italic script represents the interviewer's thoughts and observations. Text in square paratheses denotes the author's clarifications. Village names have been removed to protect the anonymity of respondents.

brought us some cucumbers. She was listening to our questions carefully and answering our questions properly, but she didn't have information about some of the issues.

Introduction:

The facilitator gave an introduction to ourselves, our organization and to the research and explained the reasons why we wanted to have an interview with her. She talked about AREU and OSDR being research organizations without any political agenda. She also explained that we would not use any names in any reports and would not write down her name if she did not want to give it to us.

(The respondent then asked why, if your organization is non-political, are you going to ask us about politics? We explained that we were interested in collecting her opinion about some political issues. Before starting the interview, she asked to read the interview questions, which we gave to her). Some of the neighbours stayed in the room for the interview, and although XX was the main respondent, they contributed at times also (as noted below).

Question: OK dear sister, please introduce yourself?
Answer: My name is XX and my father's name is YY. I have nine sisters and the villagers call my mother "Mother of ten daughters".
Question: What is your occupation or role?
Answer: I don't have any official job, because I haven't studied at school and my father doesn't have any official job, but he does different kinds of [agricultural] labouring. Now as it is the time for gathering crops he reaps wheat with people and when reaping is finished, then he does other work in the field.
Question: What activities do you do around your home/village?
Answer: My job is to bake bread at home, milk the cow, and sew clothes. I also train girls and women to cut and stitch clothes, and when the sewing machine is broken down, I fix it by myself.
Question: Dear sister, tell us about your relationships with the neighbors and villagers?
Answer: All of my neighbours are happy and when they buy new clothes, they bring them to me for sewing or when their sewing machine is broken down, I fix it. I don't know about anything else.
Question: When you sew clothes or fix sewing machines, are you paid or it is free of charge?
Answer: No, this is our village, there is no money. We don't leave our homes, because we are not allowed. So when people want to sew their clothes or fix their sewing machines, they come to me.
Question: Sister, how long have you been living in this village?
Answer: We have been living in this village for a long time, because it is the homeland of my grandfathers; they have lived and died in this village and have been buried here, because it is our homeland.
Question: Sister, can you give us any information about your family?

Answer: We are not a wealthy family and we live in this village. My mother also lives in this village, my parents are also from this village and our other relatives also live here. We are a religious and Muslim family and our relatives come to our home and we go to their homes.

Question: Tell us about who has authority here in the village.

Answer: The biggest power is the power of Allah (SWA), and no other power can match it. Otherwise, anyone who has money can make themselves powerful. Powerful people commit cruelties on poor people, because they can. There will never be power and authority for poor people in Afghanistan.

Question: Dear sister, tell us about who makes decisions in your community?

Answer: Decision-making in our village is our men's work. In our family, the decisions are made by my parents, because they are elders.

Question: What kinds of decisions are made?

Answer: Decisions are made about important issues.

Answer of XX's neighbour: Sister, the decisions of poor people are all made for money. For example the reason that people are killing other people, destroying schools and destroying buildings is just because they are paid. These are people who are not aware of the way of Allah (SWA) and The Prophet (SWA), but under the holy name of Islam they commit inhuman activities and don't know the difference between friends and enemies. Due to ignorance, they destroy their homes, their country and kill their brothers. They even risk their own life for money and kill themselves so that people may say that they were martyred in the name of Allah (SWA).

(According to my point of view, the respondent didn't have much education, but she was still against ignorant and illiterate people and was dissatisfied by their activities).

Question: Sister, what are your opinions on this?

Answer (XX): I hate the Taliban and insurgents because they do many wrong things and don't work for Islam in its real sense. They use and benefit from the name of Islam for their personal interests.

Question: Sister, if you have a problem, how do you solve it?

Answer: In my opinion, there are lots of problems that people are facing, especially in the current situation. Our life is full of problems and the 30-year war faced people with many difficulties. Therefore, people are facing lots of problems. For example, the problems of homelessness, lack of electricity, economic problems, ignorance, family problems, legal issues and problems of injustice in families, as well as the problems of insecurity.

Question: What kinds of problems are family problems, in your opinion?

Answer: For instance, it is the custom in our village that a girl is engaged to someone by force, or for money, or exchanging a sister for the crime of her brother. These and other cruelties towards women are family problems. And also there are some ethnic problems, when there are conflicts between two ethnicities.

(According to our point of view, some families in the village don't know about the rights of the women and women are faced with many problems in their husbands' families)

Question: If you have any security problems, so how do you solve them?

Answer: Sister, security problems and ethnic problems are all related to men; we women cannot do anything regards this, but our men know better about these matters.

(According to our point of view, women do know about which kind of problems to take to whom, but unfortunately they are not given any chance or opportunity and authority. There are some women that are wise, but they still don't have any authority to convey their problems in a public place).

Question: Sister, how is the security situation in your village; what is your opinion in this regard?

Answer: Sister, currently, security is good, but sometimes there is gunfire on the police check points during the night, and people living in the homes which are close to the check point are really bothered by this and sometimes they are injured.

Question: Sister, what about security in the province as a whole?

Answer: Sister, we are housewives and we don't have radio or television and cannot lie. Also we don't know about anything.

Question: Sister, how is your life passing in this village?

Answer: It is sometimes good and sometimes bad. Sometimes sad and sometimes happy; sometimes it is hot and sometimes cold. Sister, the life of humans passes like wind; no one knows how it is passing.

Question: Sister, is there any candidate from your district or province and do you know him/her?

Answer: No sister. No one has entered to parliament *(she means there is no candidate from their district)*. If there are any candidates from the district or province, I don't know them, but our men may know about them.

Question: Dear sister, did you participate in the first elections and cast your vote?

Answer: Yes, the women of our village went to the home of Mowlana Abdur Rahman [a local religious figure] and there we cast our votes. Other people were voting for Karzai and they also told us to vote for him, so we cast our votes in his box. And for provincial council, we voted for Muhtarama.

Question: Sister, if the elections are conducted again, will your cast vote?

Answer: We will never vote for anyone again.

Question: Why will you not cast a vote?

Answer: Because anyone who gets to a higher position works for himself and his personal interests; no one works for poor people and the country. Therefore, may Allah (SWA) not spoil my intention, I will not leave my home to vote for anyone. This is my final decision and intention.

Question: Was there any difference between the two elections [meaning, between 2004/5 and 2009]?

Answer: I should say that the first elections that were held at home of Mowlana Sahib in our village. They started in the morning and went on until 4 o'clock in the afternoon, and they passed really well.

Question: Sister, according to your point of view, will the former MPs be candidates again in the coming elections or do you think there will be some new candidates?

Answer: Dear sister, there is a proverb that says "Easy come easy go." But while Allah (SWA) has given them these positions freely, they will never leave their seats.

Question: Will the people vote for them again, according to your point of view?

Answer: Hey dear sister, personal relationships and money are enough for them; they don't need the votes of the people. There will be new some new candidates too, but if

you don't pay bribes you will never succeed in getting a seat. Bribery and betrayal is normal in Afghanistan.

Question: Sister, according to your point of view what was the difference between the first elections, and the elections of last year?

Answer: The first elections were a little better.

Question: How were they better?

Answer: There was not much war at that time. The American forces in the country were limited, but now they have captured all of Afghanistan and security is also not good, people are killed by the foreigners. There is no enquiry into their deaths. But, if any one of them [Americans] is killed, then they kill guilty and innocent people in response. There is no law or court for them, the law and the courts are only for the poor people. And the fact is that I did not leave home in those second elections and I didn't vote for anyone.

Question: Why didn't you vote?

Answer: The [security] situation was not suitable and our menfolk didn't allow us to go out to cast our votes. We were also worried about security incidents; therefore we didn't leave home.

Question: Sister, are there any shuras [councils] in your province?

Answer: I don't know anything else, but when there is an important issue, the elders of the nation gather together with the maliks. But I don't know anything else.

Question: Sister, what do you think about the provincial council?

Answer: I don't know about it *(the respondent didn't understand even the name of the provincial council and didn't have any information in this regard. She also didn't know whether there were any candidates from their area or not).*

Question: Are there any university students in your village?

Answer: Yes, there are two boys from our village. One is Said Nasir and the other is Kamal. Kamal is holding first position and he is very poor boy. The lecturers told him that if he wants to keep his position, he should pay them $300, otherwise, forget about first position. And the other boy that was rich, held the first position by the power of dollars and this has happened in our village that all people know about it and these misfortunes are going on in our village, because there is no law and everyone acts according to his wish. Especially, that who doesn't have money, car and that student who is son of a poor man, but doesn't have money and recommendation, but Allah (SWA) has gifted him talent and ability, but still he is pushed back. Those who have dollars go forward, because they have dollars.

Question: What should be done, according to your point of view?

Answer: First, our people are illiterate, and they are not aware of Islamic law. The main issue is that there is no government. I also said before that there is no law, and the robber is not known. The government is asleep and doesn't see anything. The lecturers take bribes and it is also said to students at schools that if anyone wants to hold first, second, third or fourth position, they should pay $200 and submit it to the administrator.

Facilitator: Sister, thank you so much for answering our questions and letting us take your valuable time. Thanks once again and God willing, we will meet again.

GHAZ 21 M (Ghazni men's interview no. 21: rural/mid income/Pashtun)

Interview type:	Individual interview
Date:	19-05-2010
Time:	12:05pm till 1:35pm
Province:	Ghazni
Place:	BB village, Qarabagh district
Interview no:	21
Respondent name, title and job:	XX Student
Respondent ethnicity	Pashtun
Respondent age	21
Facilitator:	Mohammad Akbar
Note-taker:	Najibullah

Observations:

As per our plan, first we went to the village and then to the respondent's house and we knocked the door and he opened the door and greeted us. We went through to the main room, where there was a window and one door, and 4 toshaks *also with white* baleshtA. *The walls were coloured brown. For some time he was busy doing other things in the house, but after a while he was ready and he brought a glass of tea for us. There was a plastic carpet on the ground. While drinking the tea we started the interview.*

Introduction:

My colleague introduced the research and how the respondent could trust us not to write down his name. He talked about who we were and the organization we work for. After this introduction we started the questions.

Question: Please introduce yourself?
Answer: I am XX, son of YY, resident of the BB area.
Question: What is your occupation?
Answer: I am a student at the Shahid-e Abdul Salam school in Qara Bagh district, Ghazni province, and also I work around the home.
Question: How long have you lived here?
Answer: We have lived here since my birth.
Question: Can you tell us a bit about your family background?
Answer: Previously our family was proud to be considered the malikan [leaders] of the village, and referred to themselves as this.
Question: Why do they not do so now?

Answer: Because previously, the malikan had a lot of respect but nowadays no-one cares about them.

Question: How are decisions made in your community?

Answer: In our society decisions are made by the elders of the village and white-bearded people.

Question: How do they make decisions?

Answer: These elders and white-bearded people of the village get together and make decisions about various things and then they put these into practice.

Question: Who selects these decision makers?

Answer: These decision makers are the malikan and they are selected by normal village people.

Question: What do you think about this way of selecting the decision makers?

Answer: This is a good way to elect a person and it solves a number of problems for everyone.

Question: Are there any shuras?

Answer: No, there is no shura, because there are not that many people in the village.

Question: If you have a problem, to whom would you go first to solve your problem?

Answer: It depends upon the kinds of problems that people have. If it is within a family, they discuss it with the father or elder brother, and if it is a village problem, they go to the village leaders, and if it is a tribal problem such as murder or enmity, they go to the tribal leaders to solve the problem.

Question: If these people cannot solve your problem, then to whom would you take it?

Answer: We are in the villages and there are Taliban here and they are always around, so we go to them and then they come up with a solution [to a problem] without charging anything.

Question: How is reconstruction progressing here?

Answer: It is done by government, and I also think some organizations are involved.

Question: Which kinds of organizations are these?

Answer: Construction is being carried out by the government mainly.

Question: Where exactly has reconstruction been taking place?

Answer: It has been only in the cities and not in villages or remote provinces.

Question: What do you think about the situation in the area?

Answer: The situation in the area is very unstable; it gets worse everyday through fights and people are dying for no reason.

Question: How is your life going here?

Answer: Our life is like being in a jail, because from both sides people are opposing us. We are especially very tired of the government.

Question: How is the security situation in your village and in your province?

Answer: The security situation in our area is very good from the Taliban side but not from government side and *alhamdulallah* [thanks to Allah] the Taliban has put an end to the activities of all thieves and bad people. But the government itself is a complete thief. I needed a new *taskirah* [identity card] and the price of it is normally 300 Afs [$6], but in fact I spent more than 2000 Afs [$40] because of having to give bribes to each one of the government officials, and to make sure that my card would be processed without having to wait for other people who paid more to go first. In the provinces the

government is just symbolic, they have not brought peace because people are getting shot.

Question: What do you think about the parliament members in your province?

Answer: From my point of view parliament is good, but the people who elected themselves to parliament are not useful people and they are not working for our people.

Question: Did anyone get elected from your area in the parliamentary elections?
Answer: No, from our area nobody won in the elections.
Question: Generally in Afghanistan what do you think about parliament?
Answer: Generally in Afghanistan parliament should do good work and each candidate should not forget his responsibilities and if he can't do his work then he should leave his position and should resign.
Question: Have you voted before?
Answer: Yes I voted in the first round of elections but I didn't vote in last year's elections.
Question: Why not?
Answer: Because of problems, security was not good and also in advance we received the news that we should not vote. In the first election we didn't know much about elections and we didn't know what voting was, and if anyone wanted us to vote for someone and showed us a picture, we would just vote for that person. And I myself voted for President Hamid Karzai.
Question: Will you vote in the coming elections?
Answer: Yes, if there is security, and if there is Shariee [religious justice system]. And if the election is trustworthy then we will vote.
Question: How you will make a decision about who to vote for?
Answer: First we should ask about each candidate and we should know who they are and what they do. And then we will vote for a person who is very loyal to Allah.
Question: Do you think these parliament members will be candidates themselves again?
Answer: Yes, if the situation is good they will stand again for election.
Question: Are there political groups active in this area?
Answer: No, there is no political group here, but there are two governments: one is Hamid Karzai's government and the other one is the Taliban government. And no political parties.

Many thanks for giving us your valuable time for this interview.

End

APPENDIX 4: INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED

NANGARHAR					
Women					
No.	**Role/profession**	**Ethnicity**	**Elite/mid/low**	**City/suburb/rural**	**Age**
1	Teacher	Pashtun	Elite	City	35
2	Shopkeeper	Pashtun	Elite	City	30
3	Teacher	Pashtun	Mid	Suburb	38
4	PC member	Pashtun	Elite	City	45
5	NGO + unsuccessful PC candidate	Pashtun	Mid	Suburb	48
6	Student (university)	Pashtun	Elite	Suburb	25
7	Carpet weaver	Arab	Mid	City	44
8	Student (school)	Pashtun	Low	Suburb	20
9	Local council representative	Tajik	Mid	Rural	52
10	NSP Shura member	Pashaee	Low	Rural	25
11	Housewife	Pashtun	Low	Rural	51
12	NSP Shura member	Pashtun	Low	Rural	30
13	Beauty parlor owner	Pashtun	Mid	Rural	25
14	Housewife	Pashtun	Low	Rural	30
15	Housewife	Pashtun	Mid	Rural	40
16	Teacher	Tajik	Elite	Rural	38
17	Housewife	Tajik	Mid	Rural	35

NANGARHAR					
Men					
No.	**Role/profession**	**Ethnicity**	**Elite/mid/low**	**City/suburb/rural**	**Age**
1	Teacher	Pashtun	Mid	City	63
2	Tailor (former police chief)	Pashtun	Mid	City	56
3	Member of PC	Pashtun	Elite	City	40
4	Sewing machine mechanic	Pashtun	Low	City	60
5	Chief of local shura	Pashtun	Elite	City	65-67
6	Teacher	Pashtun	Mid	City	55
7	School student	Pashtun	Low	City	22
8	Driver	Pashtun	Mid	City	35
9	Computer repairman	Pashtun	Mid	City	43
10	Unemployed, local council head	Pashtun	Elite	Suburb	51
11	Teacher	Pashtun	Mid	Suburb	48
12	Farmer	Pashtun	Low	Suburb	55
13	Unemployed, former gov worker	Pashtun	Mid	Suburb	57
14	Student (high school)	Pashtun	Mid	Suburb	21
15	Unemployed, villager	Pashtun	Mid	Suburb	60
16	Shopkeeper	Pashtun	Low	Suburb	57
17	Student (university)	Pashtun	Mid	Rural	25
18	Villager and former malik	Pashtun	Mid	Suburb	35
19	Elder of village/former gov worker	Pashtun	Mid	Suburb	58
20	Unemployed/former driver	Pashtun	Low	Suburb	59
21	Government officer	Pashtun	Elite	Rural	58
22	Labourer	Pashtun	Low	Rural	53
23	Malik	Pashtun	Elite	Rural	35-40
24	Owner of cart market stall	Pashaee	Low	Rural	38
25	Head of NSP shura	Pashtun	Elite	Rural	53
26	Farmer	Pashtun	Low	Rural	49
27	Mirab (manages water of the village)	Pashtun	Mid	Rural	53
28	Candidate for parliament	Pashtun	Mid	Rural	40
29	Unemployed	Pashtun	Low	Rural	51

GHAZNI					
Women					
No.	**Role/profession**	**Ethnicity**	**Elite/mid/low**	**City/suburb/rural**	**Age**
1	Teacher	Tajik	Mid	Suburb	34
2	Teacher	Tajik	Mid	Suburb	37
3	Student	Pashtun	Low	City	19
4	Student	Tajik	Mid	City	18
5	PC member	Tajik	Elite	City	37
6	Student	Pashtun	Low	Rural	20
7	Law dept. manager, DOWA	Pashtun	Elite	City	?
8	Beautician	Pashtun	Elite	Suburb	33
9	Housewife	Pashtun	Mid	Suburb	28
10	Tailoring trainer	Tajik	Mid	Suburb	?
11	Housewife	Tajik	Low	Suburb	45
12	Housewife	Tajik	Mid	Suburb	?
13	Housewife	Tajik	Low	City	?
14	Housewife	Tajik	Low	Suburb	35
15	Carpet weaver	Tajik	Mid	City	?

No.	Role/Profession	Ethnicity	Elite/mid/low	City/suburb/rural	Age
	GHAZNI				
	Men				
1	Student	Pashtun	Mid	Rural	27
2	Teacher (university)	Pashtun	Elite	City	32
3	Teacher (high school)	Pashtun	Mid	Rural	39
4	Student	Pashtun	Mid	City	?
5	Driver	Pashtun	Mid	City	33
6	Farmer	Pashtun	Low	Rural	47
7	Shopkeeper	Pashtun	Mid	City	45
8	Village elder/PC candidate	Pashtun	Elite	City	48
9	Village elder/landowner	Pashtun	Elite	Rural	45
10	Shopkeeper	Pashtun	Mid	Suburb	46
11	Driver	Pashtun	Mid	Rural	34
12	Nurse	Pashtun	Mid	Suburb	38
13	Shop worker	Pashtun	Mid	Rural	28
14	Vaccinator	Pashtun	Mid	Rural	30
15	Driver	Pashtun	Low	City	34
16	Unemployed	Pashtun	Mid	Rural	23
17	Barber	Tajik	Mid	City	38
18	Rickshaw driver	Pashtun	Low	City	32
19	Student	Pashtun	Mid	Rural	23
20	Day labourer	Pashtun	Low	Rural	33
21	Student (university)	Pashtun	Mid	Rural	21
22	Student (high school)	Pashtun	Mid	Rural	19
23	Farmer	Pashtun	Low	Rural	45
24	Day labourer	Pashtun	Elite	Rural	36
25	Shopkeeper	Pashtun	Elite	Rural	42

No.	Role/profession	Ethnicity	Elite/mid/low	City/suburb/rural	Age
	BALKH				
	Women				
1	Teachers (high school, 5)	Tajik	Mid	Suburb/prov town	25-50
2	Students/teachers (high school, 16)	Tajik	Mid	Suburb/prov town	16-50
3	Street seller	Arab	Low	Rural	40
4	Students (high school, 8)	Mixed	Mid	Suburb/prov town	20-22
5	Housewives (4)	Pashtun	Low	Rural	20-35
6	Fortune teller	Tajik/Tajikistan origin	Low	Rural	40
7	Housewife	Turkmen	Low	Rural	?
8	Gardener	Tajik/Tajikistan origin	Low	Rural	40
9	Housewife	?	Low	City	?
10	Teacher (high school)	Tajik	Mid	Suburb/prov town	30
11	Teacher (high school)	Uzbek	Mid	Suburb/prov town	35
12	Teacher (high school)	Tajik	Mid	Suburb/prov town	?
13	Head of women's shura	Tajik	Elite	Suburb/prov town	45
14	Beautician and 2 clients	Tajik	Mid	Suburb/prov town	?
15	Radio station presenter	Tajik	Elite	City	34
16	Teachers (high school, 6)	Tajik	Mid	City	30-50
17	Students (high school, 7)	Tajik	Mid	City	16-19
18	Teachers (high school, 6)	Mixed	Low	City	30-50
19	Parliamentarian	Pashtun	Elite	City	35
20	Parliamentarian	Pashtun	Elite	City	45

No.	Role/profession	Ethnicity	Elite/mid/low	City/suburb/rural	Age
	BALKH				
	Men				
1	Head of Balkh PC	Tajik	Elite	City	50
2	District governor	Tajik	Elite	Suburb/prov town	45
3	District governor	Pashtun	Elite	Suburb	47
4	Qaryadars	Mixed	Elite	Rural	45-65
5	District governor	Pashtun	Elite	Suburb/prov town	52
6	PC member (deputy head)	Hazara	Elite	City	48
7	District governor	Tajik	Elite	Suburb/prov town	56
8	Teacher and failed WJ candidate	Tajik	Mid	City	40
9	Student (university)	Tajik	Mid	City	19
10	Shopkeeper	?	Mid	Suburb/prov town	50+
11	Farmer	?	Low	Rural	50+
12	Farmers (2)	?	Low	Rural	?
13	Shopkeeper (groceries)	Hazara	Mid	Suburb/prov town	30+
14	Shoemaker	Pashtun	Mid	Suburb/prov town	40
15	Shura members (4)	Pashtun, Tajik. Hazara	Elite	Rural	40+
16	Villagers	Pashtun	Low	Rural	40+
17	Villagers	Tajik. Uzbek and Turkmen	Low	Suburb/prov town	35-45
18	Villager	?	Mid	Suburb/prov town	40+
19	Villager	Tajik	Mid	City	20
20	Watermelon seller	Tajik	Low	Rural	33
21	Shura member	Tajik	Elite	Suburb/prov town	50
22	2 Students, mullah, shura member	?	Mid	Rural	Mixed
23	Member of youth shura and English teacher	Tajik	Mid	Suburb/prov town	25
24	Villagers	Tajik and Uzbek	Low	Rural	Mixed
25	Doctor	Pashtun	Mid	Suburb	40+
26	PC member for Balkh	Turkmen	Elite	Suburb/prov town	50

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Kabul					
Women					
No.	**Role/Profession**	**Ethnicity**	**Elite/mid/low**	**City/suburb/rural**	**Age**
1	Religious teacher	Hazara	Mid	City	30
2	New parliamentary candidate	Ismaili	Mid	City	25
3	MP for Kabul	Pashtun	Elite	City	50
4	MP for Kabul	Hazara	Elite	City	40
5	Elections observer	Tajik	Mid	Suburb	16
6	PC member + candidate	Hazara	Elite	Suburb	45
7	PC candidate	Bayat	Mid	Suburb	?
8	PC candidate	Hazara	Elite	Suburb	32
9	PC member + candidate	Hazara	Elite	Suburb	40

| Kabul					
Men					
No.	**Role/Profession**	**Ethnicity**	**Elite/mid/low**	**City/suburb/rural**	**Age**
1	Fruit shop owner and teacher	Tajik	Mid	City	50
2	Shopkeeper	Tajik	Mid	City	40
3	Religious teacher	Hazara	Mid	City	43
4	NGO worker	Bayat	Mid	City	30
5	Fruit seller	?	Low	City	50
6	Mullahs (3)	Mixed	Mid	Suburb	38-50
7	Market trader	Pashtun	Mid	City	30
8	Students	Pashtun	Mid	City	25
9	New parliamentary candidate	Pashtun	Mid	City	45
10	MP for Kabul	Hazara	Elite	Suburb	45
11	New parliamentary candidate	Pashtun	Elite	City	60
12	Barber	Hazara	Mid	Suburb	30
13	Tea shop worker	Hazara	Low	Suburb	40-50

APPENDIX 5: MAPS OF THREE PROVINCES

Nangarhar province[54]

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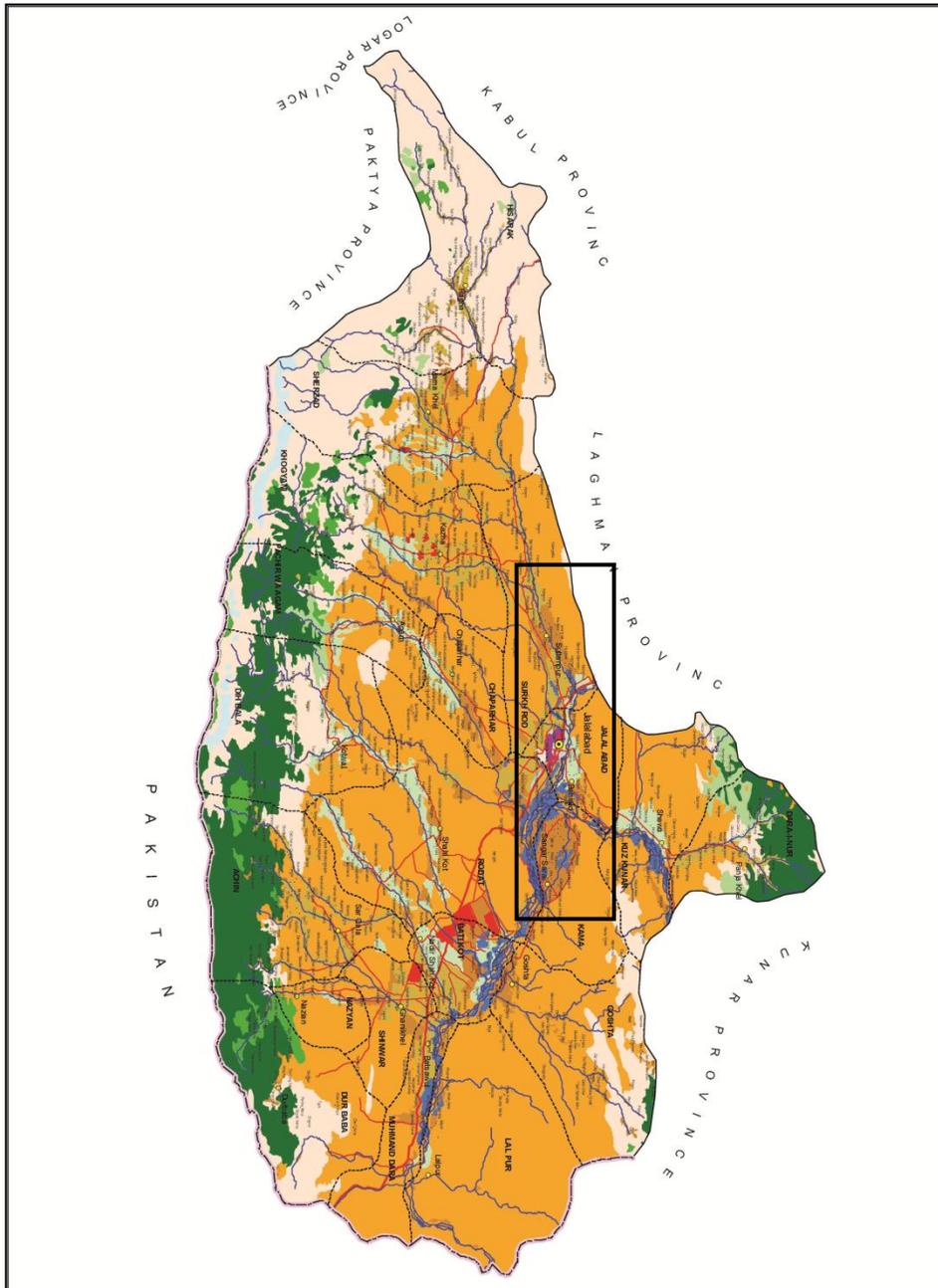
[54] All maps available from the Afghanistan Information Management Service (AIMS) online at: http://www.aims.org.af/services/sectoral/agriculture/landcover/Nangarhar.pdf [Accessed 20 July 2013].

Nangarhar districts (Surkh Rod and Behsud)

Ghazni province[55]

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[55]Available at: http://www.aims.org.af/services/sectoral/agriculture/landcover/Ghazni.pdf
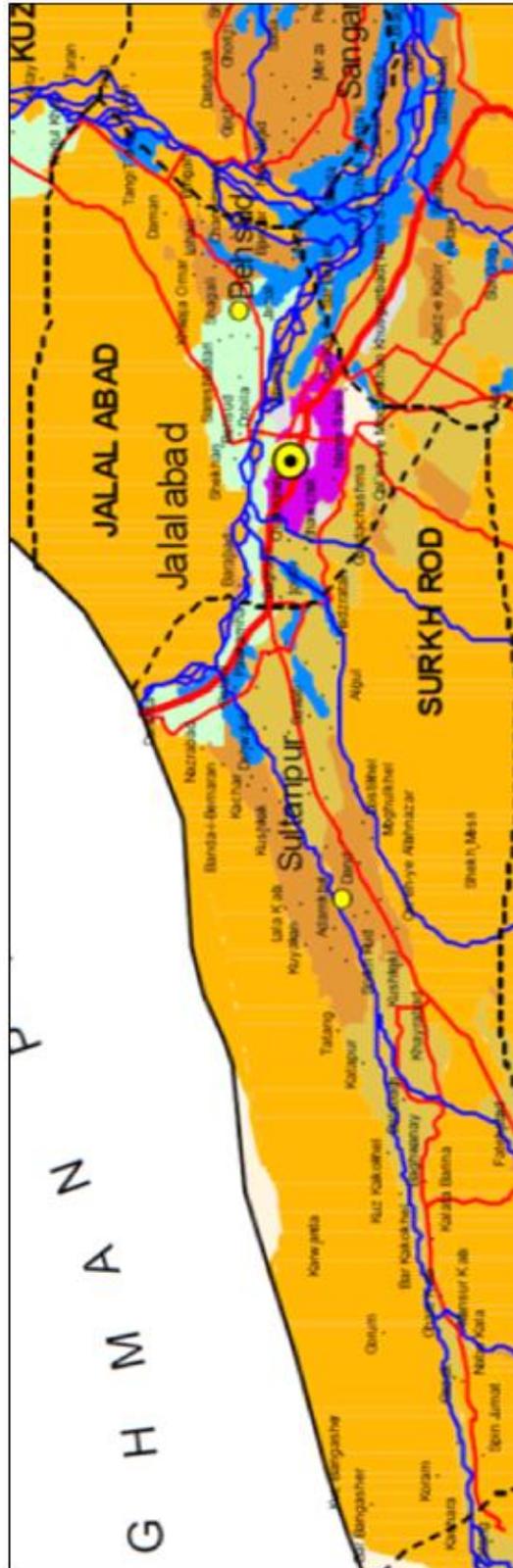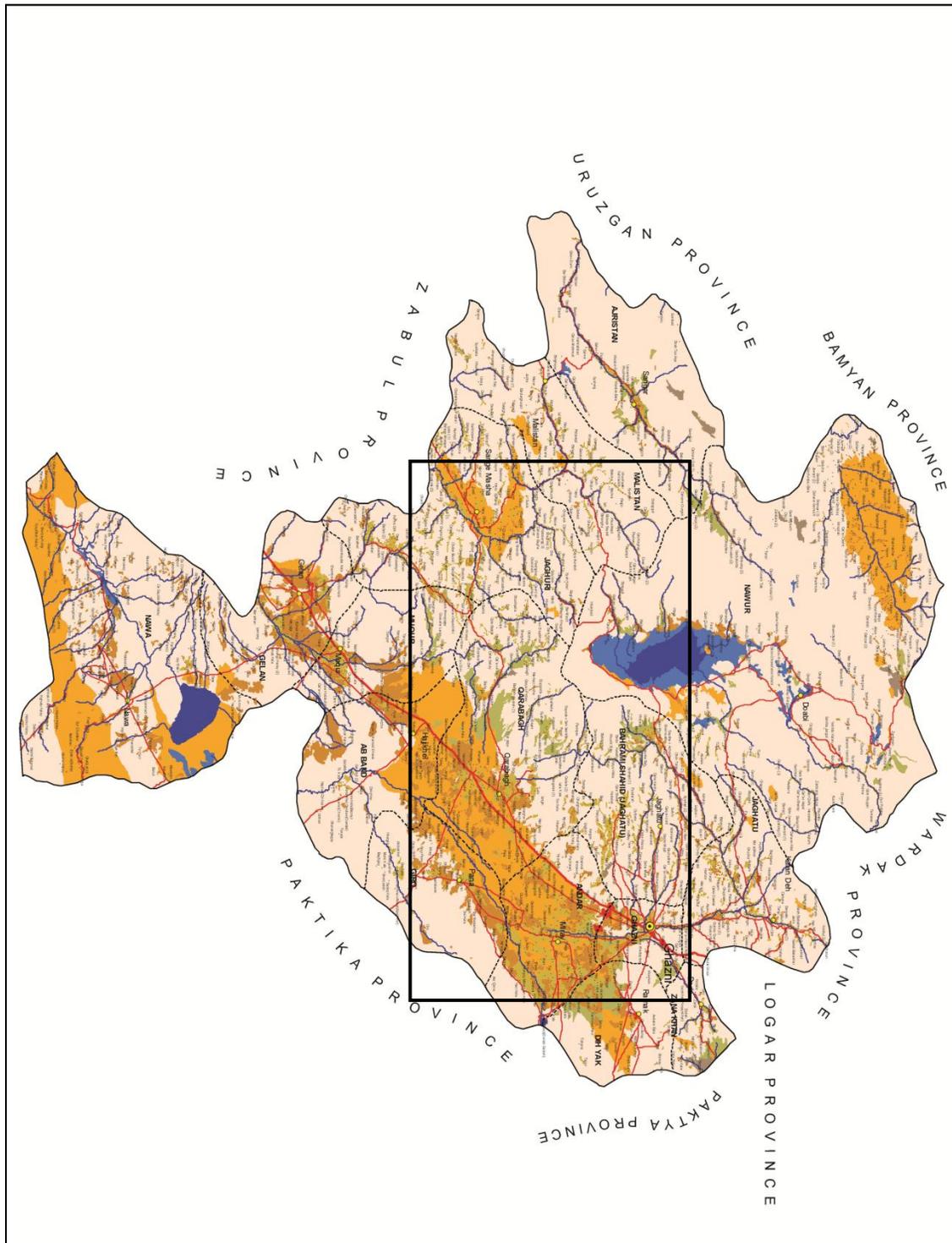
Ghazni district (Qarabagh)
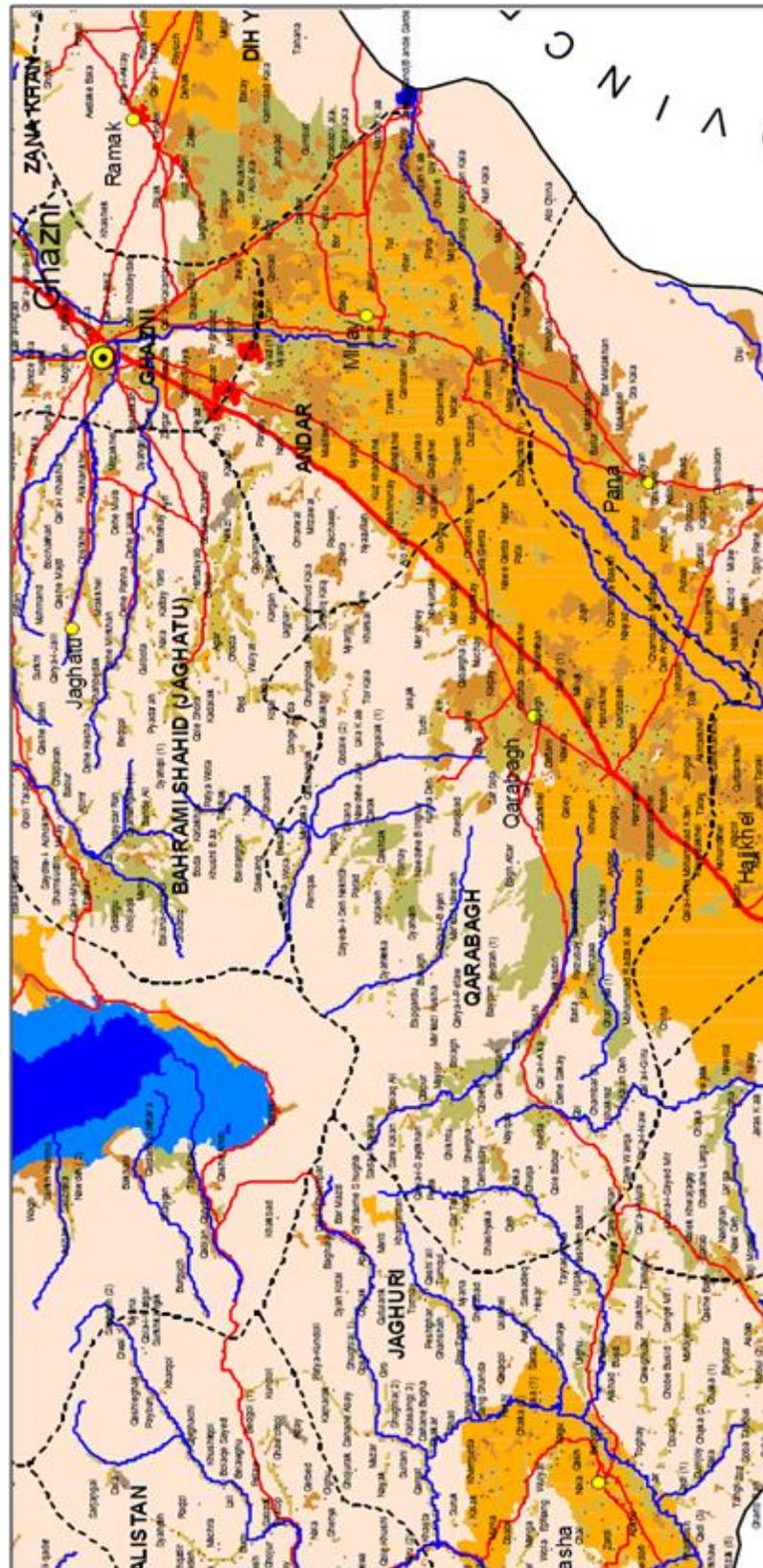
Balkh province[56]


[56]Available at: http://www.aims.org.af/services/sectoral/agriculture/landcover/Balkh.pdf
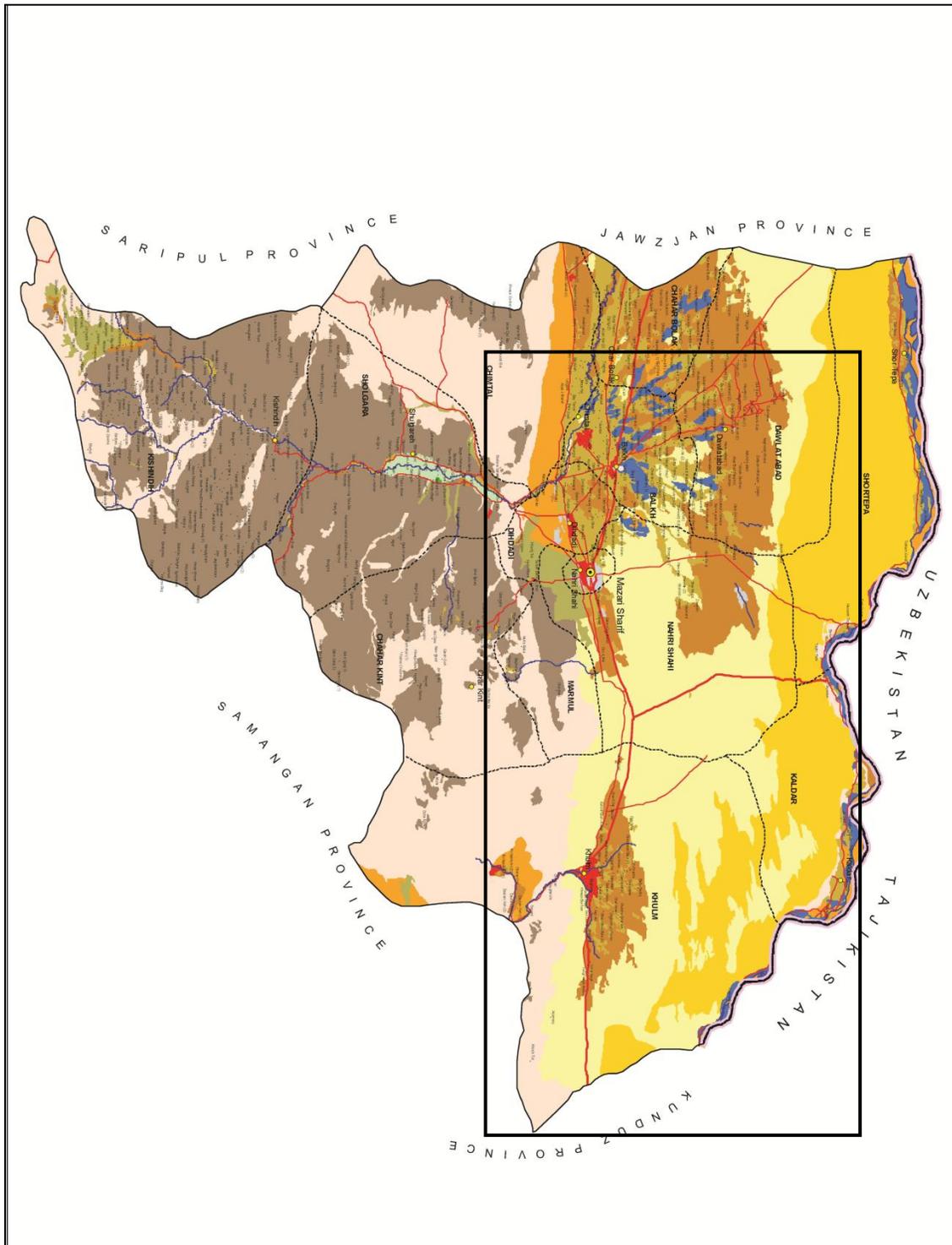
Balkh districts (Balkh, Dedadi [Dihdadi], Kaldar)
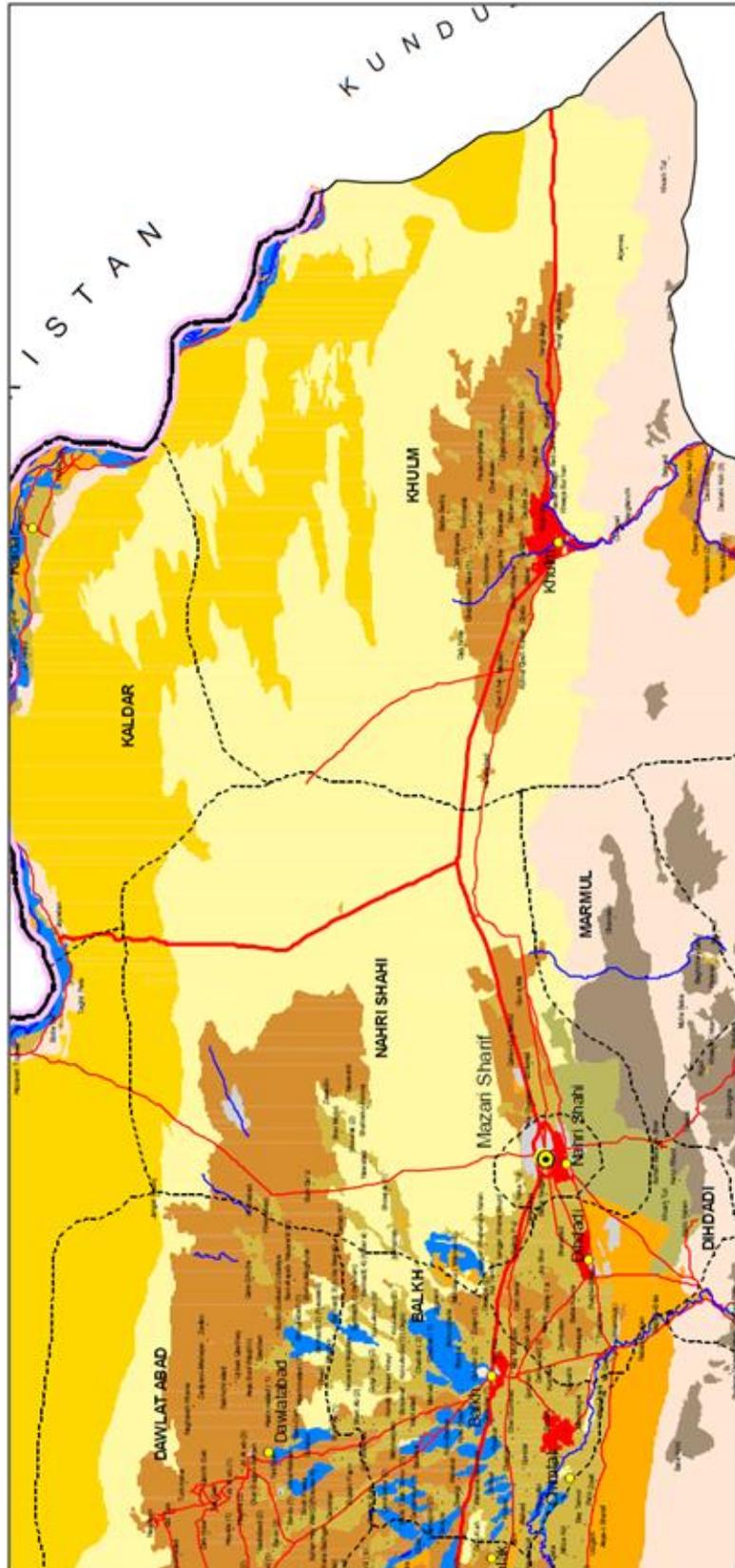
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