



**Liberal World Order and Global Security Governance:
Analyzing Its Impact On the Global South Through a Case Study of Afghanistan**

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Abstract:

This article attempts to understand the nature of global security governance in the context of relations between the West and the global South under the liberal world order. To do this, it asks a simple question: what does global security governance seek to secure and from whom? Focusing on this question, it critically engages with the theory and practice of liberal internationalism. Theoretically, it builds on insights from the critical theory of Robert W. Cox, the post-structural theory of Markus Kienscherf, and the postcolonial theory of Alexander D. Barder. It is a theoretical and empirical critique. Besides secondary sources such as books, research reports, and articles, primary sources such as declassified documents of the United States government available online, as well as various reports by international organizations and interviews have been used for this study. Using the US-led twenty-year war in Afghanistan, this article shows that global security governance under the liberal world order engenders insecurity and social exclusion in the global South through excessive reliance on force rather than rules.

Keywords: Afghanistan, West, global South, global governance, security, world order

INTRODUCTION

This article attempts to understand the nature of global security governance in the context of relations between West and non-West under liberal world order. To do this, it asks a simple question: who or what global security governance seeks to secure and from whom and what? Addressing the question, this article develops a critique of theory and practice of liberal internationalism. This critique is based on insights from critical theory of Rober W. Cox, poststructural and postcolonial IR theory. Cox work on civilizations has been merged with Markus Kienscherf's take on global pacification and Alexander Badar's idea of politics of difference for framing violence used by the liberal West against the global South.

Security governance may broadly be understood as "an international system of rules... which through regulatory mechanisms (both formal and informal), governs activities across a range of security and security-related issue areas" (Webber 2002, 44). Or more in tune with global governance literature, the concept of security governance may be defined as, the "coordinated management and regulation of [security] issues by multiple and separate authorities, the

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interventions of both public and private actors (depending upon the issue), formal and informal arrangements, in turn structured by discourse and norms, and purposefully directed towards policy outcomes” (Webber et al. 2004, 3).

This article argues that security governance under liberal world order is a system consisting of rules, norms, institutions, and practices designed and carried out by a constellation of liberal states and non-state actors below and above the level of state. This system of rules is consequential in “the consolidation of a collective definition of interest and threat” as well as ways and means to deal with threats (Sperling 2010, 7). Orthodox global governance literature sees security as no more an exclusive domain of state. Arguing state’s privileged position, it points to a multiplicity of actors below and above state as security actors (Sperling & Webber, 2019). This study concedes role of multiple actors in global security governance, however, taking world order approach to global security governance, it argues that hegemonic US—with her Western allies—has shaped and aligned security preferences of other states and non-state actors with its own ideological, cultural, and material preferences. Moreover, it argues that liberal ideology propagates consolidation of Western liberal states and non-state actors’ perceptions of security threats and articulation of policy responses.

Historically liberal internationalism has predicated not only security of the liberal West but also the security and peace of the entire world by protecting and extending the frontiers of the liberal core. This is the case at least since Woodrow Wilson’s vision of world (History Matters, n.d.; Smith, 1999). Even the discipline of IR took its birth as part of this liberal internationalist agenda which at the end of the First World War was presented by the US president Woodrow Wilson in his fourteen points. Since then, liberal internationalist IR has been concerned with making the world a secure and peaceful place. A century later this trend is well captured by an American scholar of liberal internationalism, G. John Ikenberry, in his book *A World Safe for Democracy* (2020). From this perspective, prior to global security governance is security of Western liberal life against threats emanating from illiberal way of life that liberals generally posit as belonging to the global South.

The argument here is that under US-led liberal world order, global security governance is synonymous with pursuing liberal security. The aim of this article is to analyze how this liberal global governance of security impacts states and people in the global South in terms of social inclusion/exclusion and human security. To undertake this task, US-led war in Afghanistan (2001-2021) is taken as a case with two interrelated objectives: (a). understanding how (in)security is perceived and policy responses are framed; and (b). how these policy responses are translated into strategies of global security governance through institutions both formal and informal, rules, norms, and practices through a constellation of state and non-state actors.

Rest of the article proceeds in three sections. Section one presents a brief survey of literature followed by a theoretical critique of liberal world order/liberal internationalism. Section two outlines the theory and methodology of this article. Final section encompasses empirical critique of global security governance under liberal world order.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Liberal theory of international relations takes world order as a system of rules, norms and institutions that facilitate cooperation and peaceful coexistence among states and other actors in

the international system. World order, according to liberal IR scholars, is not only determined by material factors such as power and interests, but also by ideas, values and identities that shape actors' preferences and behavior. They argue that this is because of liberal identity and ideas of core liberal states that this order is uniquely open, rules based and inclusive (Ikenberry, 2011; 2014; 2020). They also contend that world order and global governance are closely related as global governance refers to mechanisms and processes that facilitate cooperation and coordination among diverse actors for addressing shared problems and challenges (Nye & Donahue, 2000; Koenig-Archibugi, 2003). These scholars also emphasize role of international institutions, rules and norms and civil society in facilitating global governance by providing fora for dialogue, negotiation and cooperation as well as mechanisms for monitoring, enforcement and accountability (Nye & Donahue, 2002; Scholte, 2000; 2012).

But a critical reading of liberal international IR theory reveals that it serves as an ideology to secure and promote hegemony of the powerful Western liberal states and classes (Cox, 1996; 2000; 2003; Gill, 2015). By presenting world order and global governance as open, rules-based, cooperative, addressing collective problems and providing public goods for entire humanity, it actually masks the biased nature of institutions, rules, norms, and practices of the liberal world order and global governance (Cox, 2003; Gill; 2015). It also mystifies the unequal power relations between the West and the global south that are already written into the institutions, norms, and practices around which the US and its liberal allies have built the current world order. The goal of liberal world order and global governance is homogenization of the entire world along the European enlightenment ideals. Any alternative visions of life must in relation of subordination to these ideals and be gradually transformed along these ideals (Cox, 2000; 2003) else they are declared as dangerous Other—security threats—necessitating the use of brute force (Kienscherf; 2013; Barder, 2021).

In the realm of security, liberal international theory emphasizes cooperative and collective security governance. Liberal states, because of their structural characteristics, tend to form security communities where there is a considerable level of policy harmonization among these states (Dorussen et al., 2010, Chapter 13, 287-289). This is how security governance takes place within the community of liberal states. But what happens when Western liberal states perceive and pursue security in relation to the global South? Alternative political, economic, social, and cultural values are securitized and the sole aim of global security governance becomes securing the Western liberal way of life—western civilization based on European enlightenment ideals. Although the notion of human security has replaced state-centric conception of security since the end of the Cold War, however, what is being secured and reproduced continues to be the same western liberal way of life or western civilization. In the global imaginary of liberal human security discourses majority of the global south becomes a threatening Other (Kienscherf, 2013; Barder, 2019; 2021).

Global security governance under liberal world order can best be understood as pursuit of liberal security. It does not comprise attempts to provide security across the globe, rather it is conceptualized and implemented to secure the West against the non-West that often involves structural and cultural violence against the global south. This violence against the third world becomes understandable when world order is approached from the “ontology of race, racial hierarchy, and racial difference” which underpins the current liberal global politics (Barder 2019, 207). Historically Western interaction with non-Western races has been constituted by the ideas of

“scientific racism and social Darwinism.” These ideas have served as key elements of Western knowledge discourse that has shaped and legitimated politics of difference and violence (Barder 2019, 207; Barder 2021, 1-22).

Over the past two centuries Western intellectuals and policy makers have used what Barder calls a “global racial imaginary” to construe the world as “profoundly hierarchical” where races have been seen as “intrinsically incommensurable” and “subject to an inevitable and enduring struggle”. Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (and even in the twenty first century) this racial imaginary of global politics underlies Western fear of a rising East and the resultant “degeneracy and decline of white supremacy.” Such a casting of global politics has provoked extraordinary measures for racial safeguarding. With this background, Western security policies and their dehumanizing implications vis-à-vis the non-West become intelligible (Barder 2019, 208-10, and 219; Barder 2021, 47-70).

There are two faces of the West when it comes to abiding by or flouting international humanitarian law and human rights. The apparent contradiction between strict adherence to international law in some cases and a routine flouting of it in others becomes reconcilable “if only we draw a distinction between wars fought against “civilized” and “uncivilized” enemies” (Ringmar 2013, 264-65).

THEORY

This article—combining insights from three distinct, however, interrelated strands of critical international relations theory—argues that security governance under liberal world order is cooperative, peaceful, and inclusive only within the liberal core of this order. And as we move from liberal core to what has been called the third world or more recently the global South, we see that consensus and compromise give way to domination and use of brute force. This theoretical framework begins with Robert W. Cox analysis of relevance of civilizations for understanding world politics and his interpretation of Gramscian notion of hegemony. Liberal world order, argues Cox, is an attempt to universalize ideals of western civilization through establishing global hegemony. Resistance from the non-west is often met with brute military force (1996; 2003).

Postcolonial IR theory extends this argument and adds that since colonial times West has been dealing not only with civilizational but also racial differences between the West and the non-West. These differences are read and projected as security threats which have resulted into the politics of difference and violence (Barder, 2019; 2021). Markus Kienscherf (2013) in his poststructural account of global security governance under liberal world order implicitly concedes to what Cox and postcolonial IR theorists visualize. He argues that Western (US-led) interventions into the global South may be seen as global pacification campaign whereby the US and its liberal allies attempt to (re)-produce liberal world order through liberal state building and eliminating recalcitrant elements having alternative political visions.

METHODOLOGY

Methodologically this is a qualitative study. Primary sources used for this study include declassified documents of United States government available online. Similarly, various reports by international organizations (both IGOs and INGOs) having direct access to Afghan people and international actors during US-led invasion of Afghanistan have been used. Moreover, interviews have also been

conducted with Afghan students studying in Pakistani universities. Secondary sources are mainly academic works by critical IR scholars. Method of analysis is critique which is based on theoretical framework explained above to deconstruct US-led war in Afghanistan by juxtaposing stated aims of liberal intervention and what happened on the ground. Critical international relations theory's normative goal of justice, equity or emancipation for masses guides this critique.

GLOBAL SECURITY GOVERNANCE AND VIOLENCE AGAINST AFGHANISTAN

This section offers an empirical critique of global security governance under the liberal world order. To critically engage with liberal claim that global governance under the US-led liberal world order is rules-based which not only respects human dignity and human rights but also promotes human security, Afghanistan is an ideal case study. This is because two decades of Western intervention in this country offers to analyze how the stated aims of the Western intervention were put into practice on the ground and with what consequences for the Afghan people. To put it another way, it enquires into both the aspects of intervention's impacts on Afghans life—improvement of their lives and security or it has resulted in its opposite. To do this, it analyses how the stated aims of this intervention were put on ground in the form of policies.

Conduct of Liberal West During Twenty Years War in Afghanistan

“The primary and defining characteristic of the armed conflict in Afghanistan over the last two decades has been harm to civilians caused by massive human rights abuses and war crimes by all sides” (Gossman, 2021).

Eliminating al Qaeda and Taliban was the stated aim of this intervention. However, how exactly to go about it was never clear. As the report by Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (Sopko, 2021, p.1) shows the definition of the purpose of intervention evolved over time. At various points, the U.S. government hoped to eliminate al-Qaeda, decimate the Taliban movement that hosted it, deny all terrorist groups a haven in Afghanistan, build Afghan security forces so they could deny terrorists a safe haven in the future, and help the civilian government become legitimate and capable enough to win the trust of Afghans.

What can be deduced from this report is that the US pursued two objectives in Afghanistan; first, eliminating the recalcitrant bad elements (al Qaeda and Taliban) which Michael Cox (2022, 4) terms as “cleansing the Augean stables,” and second, integrating Afghanistan into the liberal world order by transforming it into an open society, liberal democracy, and market economy. The strategy put on ground to achieve these objectives was counterinsurgency. As Kienscherf shows through his analysis of US counterinsurgency strategy, it was first conceived and deployed by the US president John F. Kennedy to enable the US fight against guerilla warfare in parts of the Third World which he believed that it was backed by USSR as Third World liberation movements. The idea was to combine military and civilian tactics to pacify populations in the global south. This counterinsurgency was a blend of civil and military capabilities and actions requiring cooperation from various civil and military agencies whereby “security and development were supposed to be fused into a coherent pacification strategy” (Kienscherf 2013, 43-44). This counterinsurgency strategy was employed in Vietnam War, however, it failed and went into oblivion since then.

It was brought back on agenda during 2004/2005 as the US-led Western forces faced difficulties in pacifying post-invasion Iraq and Afghanistan. In this regard the US Department of Defense published *Counterinsurgency Field Manual* in 2006. It defines insurgency as “an organized and protracted politico-military struggle designed to weaken control and legitimacy of an established government, occupying power or other political authority while increasing insurgent control”. In turn, it defines counterinsurgency as “military, paramilitary, political, economic, psychological and civic actions taken by a government to defeat insurgency” (*Counterinsurgency Field Manual*, 2006, 2).

The US policy makers and academics touted their global counterinsurgency strategy both as an effective response to global threats emanating from failed and failing states of the global south and also as panacea for fighting global terrorism. As pacification effort counterinsurgency “hinges on providing security to the local population while (re)building the politico-economic infrastructure that would ultimately enable the so-called host nation to govern itself” (Kienscherf 2013, 39-40). Given this last point, counterinsurgency may appear to be a form of benign global security governance because it combines discourses of human rights and human security that seem to be aimed at enabling local populations to determine their own life circumstances. But Kaldor and Beebe (2010, 73) rightly contend that the end goal was not security of the Afghans or Iraqis, rather it was defeating America’s enemies.

Thus, the seemingly benevolent attempts of counterinsurgency inevitably entail effective establishment of quasi-imperial rule over southern populations. However, this is publicly denied “for the sake of political legitimacy of both the intervention itself and the host-nation government on whose behalf intervention is said to occur”. Within this context this article approaches the US-led war in Afghanistan as counterinsurgency. The argument is that counterinsurgency as a strategy of global liberal security governance had its primary goal of eliminating al Qaeda and Taliban. Whatever was offered along the way in the name of development and human security was to lull the Afghans into not only accepting the intervention as legitimate but also supporting the interventionists against al-Qaeda and Taliban. Nevertheless, the level of violence and social exclusion that ensued stipulates the imperial character of this war. The next section details the extent of violence, insecurity, and social exclusion that this war visited on Afghans.

Violence, Insecurity, and Exclusion of Afghans

An analysis of the US Department of Defense’s *Counterinsurgency Field Manual* along with related documents and reports of international organizations on human rights and human security situation during US-led intervention in Afghanistan reveals that counterinsurgency’s apparent focus on restraint was the use of force and emphasis on development projects and a deeper understanding of local culture might signal an empathetic/people-centered approach towards Afghanistan. However, in practice counterinsurgency always involved high-impact war-fighting or what in US military terminology is called *kinetic* war-fighting. As Jonathan Gilmore (2011) argues that not only because of its kinetic element but also because of being embedded in a broader narrative of the War on Terror, counterinsurgency led to the disempowerment of local population and proved to be an unsuitable tool for the development of a long-term positive peace in Afghanistan.

Afghans increasingly faced multiple forms of violence because the strategy to liberate Afghans from the oppressive rule of Taliban subsumed high-impact war-fighting within its wider agenda of reconstruction and state-building which give it the appearance of “human security-like agenda.” According to *Counterinsurgency Field Manual* the first phase of counterinsurgency (“clear phase”) required the use of “overwhelming force” to “remove all enemy forces and eliminate organized resistance in an assigned area” (Gilmore 2011, 28). This use of force often turned into indiscriminate direct violence against civilians having no association with insurgents. The US-led forces often did not attempt to identify combatants and non-combatants. In several cases civilians were shot dead even when they had no weapons with them and who raised their hands to show their peaceful intention.² According to the most conservative estimates during the 20-year US-led war in Afghanistan at least 48,000 Afghan civilians were killed and 75,000 were injured (Sopko, 2021, vii). Some other estimates note that over two decades of US-led war 200,000 people were killed including 70,000 civilians. In addition to direct human costs in terms of civilians killed being unmeasurable because of being unknown, indirect costs that followed in the form of poverty, starvation, mental illness and life-long impacts on well-being are even harder to measure (Cox 2022, 3).

If the US role in producing social exclusion and marginalization in Afghanistan is put in proper context, it goes well beyond 9/11 when it fought a proxy war (1979-1991) as a part of its global security agenda of eliminating communist threat. In this regard it shares with other countries a greater part of direct killings and indirect cost that Afghans suffered during the Soviet invasion. By maintaining a system of arbitrary arrests and detentions and using excessive force, United States has grossly violated international human rights law and international humanitarian law. It, not only endangered lives of Afghan civilians but also undermined efforts towards rule of law and well-being of civilians (Jackson, 2009). A Human Rights Watch Report (2004, 2) notes: “U.S. military forces repeatedly used deadly force from helicopter gunships and small and heavy arms fire, including undirected suppressing fire, during what are essentially law-enforcement operations to arrest persons in uncontested locales. The use of these tactics has resulted in avoidable civilian deaths and injuries.”

Alongside the use of this deadly munitions the US military and CIA not only detained thousands of Afghans (Watson Institute, 2022) as suspects but also encouraged local Afghan authorities to detain hundreds of Afghans. These people were detained without charges, kept in poor conditions and subjected to torture and other mistreatment. Some of the detainees died because of excessive use of force and inhuman treatment (Human Rights Watch, 2004, p.3). The United States and its allies have indulged in serious human rights violations against 9/11 suspects as well civilians held without any charges. These violations include indefinite detentions in inhumane conditions, executions following flawed trials, “waterboarding,” “walling,” “rectal feeding,” and other tactics of

² This became evident during authors multiple interviews with Afghan undergraduate students studying at a federally chartered Pakistani university. Over the period 2018- October 2023 these interviews were conducted with individual students as unstructured interviews as well in the form of group discussions with two to five students including both male and female and from both ethnic Pashtuns and non-Pashtuns (Tajik, Uzbek, and Hazara).

torture that fall under clear violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law (Tayler & Epstein 2022, 3-5).

Not only these detainees were denied legal help, US officials also rejected requests by Human Rights Watch, international non-governmental organizations, journalists, family members and lawyers to have access to these detainees. Similarly, requests of Pakistani and Afghan governments to release detainees who had no charges against them were rejected (Human Rights Watch 2004, 5 and 3). This physical violence has been accompanied by a parallel campaign of cultural violence wherein the goal has been to show to the general audience that direct violence works.

Human (In)-Security and Social Inclusion/Exclusion

Throughout the twenty-year war in Afghanistan the primary goal of the US has been to eliminate al Qaeda and Taliban by using direct force. However, it also pursued the long-term goal of delegitimizing the very ideology and political vision of al Qaeda and Taliban by transforming Afghanistan into an open society and liberal polity and economy. This social engineering is the universal tool of liberal internationalist theory and practice through which it seeks to pacify the states and populations of the global south. For the US-led West, state building along liberal lines is the only way to not only ensure intra- state and inter-state peace but also the only viable solution to promote human dignity and human security and thus achieve inclusive societies and states. As elsewhere the US counterinsurgency in Afghanistan was designed to this end. This section analyzes the impact of US-led reconstruction and state building efforts on human security and inclusion/exclusion of Afghans.

Liberal internationalist IR generally portrays liberal intervention into the global south as welfare-enhancing and inclusivity oriented. One of the core premises of liberal international theory is that liberal way of organizing domestic and international politics is the only game in the town to ensure peace and progress. This belief leads many Americans to think that “their interventions are generous, benign, and widely appreciated” (“Regime Change in the Middle East,” 2020). It is this vein of reasoning that several academic and policy works celebrate achievements of the US-led intervention in Afghanistan. These works have a common thread running through them: absent some faults and missed opportunities, the US and its allies could have done much better to transform Afghanistan into a liberal capitalist polity. For example, Michael Cox notes ‘bright spots’ of US-led intervention that include increased per capita GDP and literacy rates, lowering of child mortality rates, significant improvement in female education, women’s life expectancy and their mortality during childbirth (Cox 2022, 4-5).

Special Inspector General for Afghanistan delves into details of US efforts aimed at promoting human security and inclusive development in Afghanistan. Quoting Ambassador Ryan Crocker, who opened US embassy in Afghanistan in early 2002, SIGAR notes that when the US entered Afghanistan after the fall of Taliban in November 2001 “there was almost literally nothing there.” Its state institutions were almost nonexistent, its economy was in a state of collapse with GDP per capita fourth worst in the world, its infrastructure was destroyed and social indicators were the worst in the world. It further notes that Afghans had no experience of elections, there was no independent media and civil society was too weak. 83 percent people had lower life expectancy (56 years) rate, child mortality rate under the age of five was among the bottom 15 percent of

countries, children enrollment in primary school was only 21 percent, 64 percent males and 82 percent females were illiterate, and females were officially banned from schools and workforce (Sopko, 2021, 2-3).

In addressing these issues, it is claimed that the US spent two decades and \$145 billion (excluding \$837 billion spent on warfighting) “to rebuild Afghanistan, its security forces, civilian government institutions, economy, and civil society” (Sopko 2021, 1).” Though the report admits several failures and missed opportunities, it does claim “that the lives of millions of Afghans have been improved by U.S. government interventions.” By 2017-2019 there was a visible improvement in several indicators relating to human security and welfare. Life expectancy increased from 56 to 65, child mortality rate under the age of five dropped by more than 50 percent, overall human development index improved 45 percent. Similarly, overall GDP tripled while GDP per capita doubled and literacy rate for 15-24-year-olds increased by 28 percent among males and 19 percent among females (Sopko 2021, 6).

These improvements in indicators related to human security and inclusion are also noted by IMF as early as 2003 (Bennet, 2003). IMF report concedes that the Afghanistan economy was to be based on liberal market principles with minimum state intervention. This is also clear from the presence of the US, EU, and Japan at the Steering Group created in late 2001 for the purpose of coordinating international assistance for reconstruction of Afghanistan. In early 2002 an Implementation Group was established to facilitate coordination of foreign assistance with interim Afghanistan government as its chair and Asian Development Bank, United Nations Development Program, Islamic Development Bank and the World Bank as its vice-chairs (Bennet 2003, 6-9). The IMF’s claim that within early two years the leadership and ownership of the Afghanistan reconstruction process was transferred to Afghan government becomes untenable when one looks at the constitution of Steering Group and Implementation Group and imagine power relations between the Afghan government and other actors in these two groups. Thus, reports like this may be seen, as Markus Kienscherf would have argued, as part of legitimating discourse that conceals the exclusion of Afghans by concealing power relations between Afghan government and foreign interveners.

The material development in the form of infrastructure like roads, hospitals, educational institutions etc. and institutions of state and market did happen, and it did improve human development indicators.³ However, personal security and security of property progressively deteriorated and reached its peak during the final years of US-led war (Sopko 2021, 4-5). Besides the use of direct violence by regular military US-led intervention undermined human security of Afghans by incorporating Private Security Companies (PSCs) and other private actors into its security strategy. Krahnann and Friesendorf (2014, 1, 3-4) call these PSCs and other private armed actors as “force multipliers” because they were employed to increase the capabilities of international forces by supporting them in security functions. Other considerations were also involved. For example, this decision enabled US and its allies to avoid deployment of significant

³ All Afghans studying at a federally chartered Pakistani University who were interviewed for this study accept this fact.

numbers of active military service personnel and police force on the ground in Afghanistan. This decision also enabled them to operate outside parliamentary and public scrutiny regarding number of troops sent to Afghanistan as sending PSCs did not follow the formal public procedure. And finally, in the absence of regular Afghan army and police force using private armed actors was considered cost-effective.

However, juxtaposing the decision of using force multipliers with (human) security of Afghans, its negative consequences become manifest. PSCs, Afghan Public Protection Force (APPF), militias, and auxiliary police forces were the four types of private armed actors used by the US and its allies as well as by the EU and UN in their operations in Afghanistan. The connections of national PSCs with prominent Afghan clans as well as with militias and auxiliary police forces made them problematic actors pursuing parochial interests. They became instruments of various families, power brokers, and tribes in the political struggles. Even though these connections were well-known, however, their international contractors paid little attention to them. The Afghanistan president Hamid Karzai often complained that he was helpless about who his international partners were employing, arming or empowering (Krahmann & Friesendorf 2014, 10). Another problem was the links between force multipliers and illegal armed groups. Even as late as 2010 there were 2500 illegal armed groups in Afghanistan. Many of them were able to register themselves as PSCs or auxiliary police forces and continue to operate under the influence of their former warlords. In their new attire these formerly illegal armed groups became involved in harassing their foes and avenging old disputes. In several cases reliance of international PSCs on local PSCs, militias and warlords eroded any distinctions between the two (Krahmann & Friesendorf 2014, 10-12).

In case of auxiliary police, it undermined security of Afghans because its personnel often (because of being lightly armed) tried to hide among local population to avoid being attacked by Taliban. But this became counterproductive as the areas where auxiliary police took refuge would come under Taliban attacks. Similarly, PSCs protecting military convoys also endangered villagers' lives by hiding among them or attacking them believing that the villagers were in fact insurgents. International organizations have documented several types of violence and human rights abuses of civilians by these so-called force multipliers. These include direct killings by trigger-happy private security guards; sexual violence against women, girls, men, and boys; illegal detention and torture; extortion and theft in the form of robbery and imposition of illegal taxes on local populations. Even these local PSCs and other private actors themselves were exploited by their international contractors as they were not only more exposed to physical harm/death as protectors of international forces and personnel but were also underpaid (Krahmann & Friesendorf 2014).

As Human Rights Watch associate director for Asia argues, these abuses may be called "US-Funded abuses" not only because the overall campaign was US-led but also because of active involvement of the US and allied military forces in some cases (Gossman, 2021). The local non-Pashtun militias used by the US against Taliban and later as force multipliers "carried out systematic attacks on Pashtun villages, raping women, summarily executing civilians, and stealing livestock and land" (Gossman, 2021). One well-known case is that of Abdul Rashid Dostum- a former warlord and later military chief of staff under Hamid Karzai and vice president of Afghanistan under Ashraf Ghani. In November 2001 his forces massacred 2000 Taliban prisoners of war who surrendered in Dasht-e-Laili outside Kunduz. This massacre took place in the presence of the US military personnel who

were conducting a joint operation along with Dostum's forces. Since 2002, all requests by the Physicians for Human Rights (PHR) to secure the site, protect the witnesses, and conduct a full investigation were discouraged by the US and also the site was tampered with and witnesses were tortured, disappeared and killed ("The truth about," 2009; WikiLeaks, 2009).

Similarly, elsewhere the Taliban offer to surrender and recognize the new government were rejected by the US. Instead, they were responded with torture, detentions and killings. The US was not ready to accept any reconciliation with Taliban because they were considered irreconcilable ideological enemies (Fisher, 2021). Taliban prisoners of war were often subjected to brute force through local non-Pashtun militia commanders. This aggravated already existing ethnic hostilities between Taliban and non-Pashtuns and complicated future reconciliation process among various Afghan ethnic groups. Thus, the US and NATO forces sought to build Afghan peace but destroyed its foundations by fueling ethnic rivalries. As two and a half year of Taliban rule after the US withdrawal indicates, these aggravated ethnic rivalries, along with other factors, have seriously undermined any possibility of an inclusive Afghan government that represents all ethnic groups.

Returning to the argument of inclusive development and human security it is argued that whatever was achieved was almost entirely dependent on the continuous flow of foreign assistance. Sustainability was a big issue. The material and institutional infrastructure that the US and its allies built was unsustainable in the sense that ownership and capacity to sustain it could not be transferred to Afghans often because of focus on showing short term progress (Sopko 2021, 39-45).

In short, this case study demonstrates that human security and welfare related "gains were fragile, limited and achieved with violence and abuse" in the background (Gossman, 2021). In terms of inclusive and sustainable development US-led reconstruction achieved nothing if Watson Institute's statistics are any guide. Before US-led war 62 percent of Afghans faced food insecurity, 9 percent of children under the age of five faced acute malnutrition, 80 percent lived in poverty, and women rights were heavily restricted. In 2022 after the US withdrawal, 92 percent of Afghans faced food insecurity, 50 percent of children under five faced acute malnutrition, 97 percent Afghans lived in poverty and women rights were heavily restricted. In addition, 1.5 million Afghans lived with physical disabilities and there were 2 million Afghan widows in 2022 (Watson Institute, 2022). The US-led intervention has produced several pathologies that surpass these measurable consequences. As a recent study by the Watson Institute shows, 9/11 wars have produced patterns of indirect deaths and social exclusion that are likely to continue long into the future (Savell, 2023).

CONCLUSION

Combining three distinct but interrelated strands of critical theory of IR, this article has argued that global security governance under liberal world order can better be understood as formal and informal mechanisms involving both states and non-state actors under the US-led Western hegemony to secure and reproduce the US-led liberal world order by identifying and eliminating threats on a global scale. It has further argued that non-White races and their alternative visions of life and civilizational consciousness are securitized as posing existential threat to Western liberal way of life generally called the western civilization. To secure this civilization west intervenes in the global South. These interventions have three main goals: exporting liberal cultural values; transforming target states into liberal democracies and free market economies; and taming or

eliminating recalcitrant elements in these states and societies. This is called civilizational homogenization by Robert W. Cox and global pacification by Markus Kienscherf. Postcolonial theorist Alexander D. Barder extends this argument and contends that along civilizational differences racial differences between the White liberal West and non-White global South give rise to increasing levels of violence by the West against the global South.

The Afghan experience reveals that when it comes to the global south liberal world order is anything but not rule-based. Liberal world order places higher premium on western liberal life and dehumanizes the non-western/illiberal life. When state building and reconstruction is carried out under the umbrella of counterinsurgency it becomes war by other means where all obstacles and all real or perceived enemies are dealt through with brute force. In short, securing itself through counterinsurgencies, West plunges the non-Western populations into violence, insecurity, underdevelopment and long cycles of social exclusion.

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