The Perception of Victory

Comparing the G.W. Bush Administration’s Official Rhetoric of Victory in the Years of the Global War on Terror

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Abstract

This thesis is set out with the purpose to investigate the potential shifts in how victory is presented in the duration of contemporary conflicts. The argumentation is focused on how democratic states, involved in wars, seem to announce different statements regarding victory in its outreach to its inhabitants. This paper will study the case of the American administration of George W. Bush, who initiated and ruled during the first years in the Global War on Terror. By investigating the seven annual State of the Union speeches in a combined quantitative–qualitative method, with Martel’s theoretical framework on victory, the analysis searched after such potential shifts or static usage of the linguistics approach to victory. The answer to the stated research question according to the study conducted by this author is that the publicly announced implications of victory have been subjected to an ongoing shift during the examined time period.

Keywords: Victory, Rhetoric, George W. Bush, State of the Union, the Global War on Terror, contemporary conflicts, William C. Martel, Strategy
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1 Introduction

“In war there is no substitute for victory” – Gen. MacArthur

All the previous violent conflicts in human history have been intensively scrutinized in order to determine and assess the relationship between the actors involved. The traditional perspective holds true that every war has a winner which can reign in its triumph over the defeated opponent after the instruments of war have battled between them, characterized by violent exchange in the balance of power and influence, until the parties either reach a negotiated peace or one actor annihilate the opposing army and denies the continuation of its resistance. The obvious human appeal of victory and its potential consequences is illustrated by the mere existence of the extensive historical portfolio of war and destruction.

The experiences gathered in contemporary conflicts are rather different. Violent conflicts are no longer determined by decisive battles, unconditional surrenders nor peace negotiations. It has become an increasing challenge to evaluate the end state in wars and formulate the victorious condition of one actor. Perplexingly, the development in modern democratic societies emphasizes the importance of the relationships between engaging in military endeavors and achieving certain objectives due to pressure from the domestic audience. The development of a western way of warfare may be exaggerated, but experiences gathered during the Vietnam War and ever since points to the importance of maintaining and continuously enforce society’s belief in the fashion of which the war currently being waged by chanting that victory is being achieved.

The emotional endemics of defeat are argued to be the worst enemy to democratic societies engaged in warfare. In an attempt to limit the exposure to this defeatism, politicians construct empty illusions of victory that possess no direct meaning. An illustration of this is the repeated American rhetoric claiming a constant state of success and victory in the Global War on Terror based on the enemy forces casualty figures, while the main objective was formulated as to

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3 An argumentation brought forward by scholars such as Martin Shawn in his book The new western way of warfare, 2008 and others such as Buley, Benjamin, The New American Way of War: Military culture and the political utility of force, Routledge, New York, 2008.
defeat the extremist ideology and rebuild democratic societies. The shift of variables by which one evaluate the progress of war creates an environment where the true purpose of fighting becomes hard to isolate from temporary events and small scale achievements which can delude the results in such an assessment.

1.1 Statement of Purpose

The main difficulty banishing the fog of victory in contemporary conflicts has to do with the ambiguity and fluctuating formulations of goals and desirable end state objectives. The political paradox of democracies waging wars without losing the support of the civil society requires a constant progress of success, but a stated goal is also fragile to failure. Maximum flexibility can be achieved when there is no fixation on certain objectives but the activity is an open ended process where one can define the progress by whatever achievement one obtains. On the other hand, it certainly generates difficulties for both the public and the military to understand to what end their society is fighting for, and for scholars to assess any actual progress in the conflicts.

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate the potential shifts in how victory is presented in the duration of contemporary conflicts. By investigating utilized public rhetoric during the initial phase of the Global War on Terror and onwards by the former reign of the American President George W. Bush, this study seek to examine how victory is presented to the public during the conflict.

This purpose serves the broader search for knowledge in order to better understand how politicians use their definitions of these concepts and formulate their desirable goals and achievements in order to frame the progress within conflicts. The insights gained from such investigations could be used by both public and scholars to better be able to detect when politicians are arguing for politically important achievements or significant successes in critical activities even if nothing of importance actually has been achieved.

7 The fog of victory consists of the uncertain essence of the phenomenon such as what the fundamental meanings and implications of the term are and if these hold universal values and notions etc.
9 This thesis will only talk about George W. Bush, and the reference to President Bush shall therefore not be understood as a reference to George W. Bush father and the former American President George H.W. Bush.
The potential shifts in perception and presentation of victory could also be an indicator of a systematic deception: overestimation of the utility of (one’s) means and intentions; misconceived reality; or the underestimation of the difficult tasks at hand. The values of these important notions are hard to measure due to the strategic significance of understanding the difference between a rational desire and a utopia. A shift in the rhetoric of victory could therefore be an indicator of a change in the perception of reality and a consequence of the politicians realizing of being in war. A good example of such a shift is the exchange from the search for WMDs in Iraq to the focus on implementing a democratic electoral system.11

The author of this paper desires to initiate a complex exercise regarding the reader’s notion and comprehension of the essential meaning of the term victory and its consequences for how one perceive the contemporary world.

1.2 Research Questions

The following research question has been raised in order to examine if the motivations and significant implications of victory has been subjected to transformation or not over the duration of time. The answer to this question shall be unveiled through investigating the two underlying sub questions. These are defined in details in order to find potential shifts in what factors and on what level12 victory has been attached in the duration of the Global War on Terror.

Can the publicly presented implications of victory in the Global War on Terror be understood as statically or dynamically expressed in the public speeches delivered by President George W. Bush during the period 2002-2008?

- Are the three levels of victory being presented in an invariable proportion throughout the series of speeches, or does the ratio of expressed levels of victory fluctuate?
- What differences and similarities can be identified in the distribution of the different victory-arguments and its contents within the speeches?

A statical utilization of rhetoric would take the shape of a continuous pattern of arguments and a proportionate distribution of arguments, while a dynamically expressed motivation would be illustrated by the changed emphasized level of victory within the series of speeches.


12 Further explanation and discussion regarding the importance of factors and levels of victory is to be found in Chapter 3 Theory on victory on page 16.
1.3 Rationale of the Study

With the usage of William C. Martel’s thoughts and writings about victory in contemporary conflicts, this study seek to find answers to the given research question, by conducting a quantitative research design which focuses on finding relevant content in the empirical data, to structure it and optimize it in relation to the theory and thereby making an analysis possible. This shall be complemented by a qualitative approach which shall seek to find the specific and detailed insights in the empiric material. By examining a selection of annual speeches delivered by the former President himself; this author believes that some general conclusions could be made regarding the contemporary comprehension of the term victory and highlight possible changes of this during modern time. This thesis will describe how the speeches deviate or recurrently use the rhetoric of victory.

1.4 Limitations

This section shall explain for the reader what this paper will not seek to explore or to answer. As the field of studies around victory and war in general makes it tempting to answer big questions and coming up with broad insights and generalizations, this subchapter has the important task of setting up within what limits this thesis will take shape. The subchapter shall in some degree connect with the last chapter as it will call upon further interesting research questions and areas within this field of study.

In the investigation of ‘victory’, probably the most important phenomenon within the field of studies of peace and war, the author must restrain himself lest his ambitions will tempt him to try unveiling the secrets of victory and warfare which has been sought for ever since Sun Tzu’s writings. The need for limitations is therefore great and the well-used, but often loosely defined, concepts which will be treated in this paper needs to be attended to.

The intention of this study is neither to assess the utility of different means in dealing with the difficult commitment mandated in the Global War on Terror, nor to discover a universal answer to how actors actually can achieve victory in such violent conflicts. Since the how-questions to victory has already been investigated

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at great length by earlier scholars and thinkers\textsuperscript{14} this paper shall focus on serving the purpose of asking the question of what victory is in order to initiate a further debate and new thinking about the meaning of the term.

This paper will focus on the presentations of the American achievements in the Global War on Terror within some official statements, and how the arguments- and rhetoric of victory are utilized in order to establish an entrenched believe among the American people of victory. \textsuperscript{15} One assumption of this thesis is that an author is emphasizing a certain level of victory in his/hers announcements in order to gain further support from the audience to seek further success by continuing the actions taken, which are deemed necessary in order to achieve final victory. \textsuperscript{16} In order to make any measuring practical, some limitations are needed to actually say that there are concrete goals connected to the involvement of force. This study will therefore be focusing on the rhetoric used to describe the progress of events during the conflicts of Afghanistan and Iraq. This limitation is made in order to visualize the engagement within a strategy of action and not just reactions. Illustrated, as by Foucault, by a ship on stormy seas, a strategy of action is a situation where the ship is heading towards a safe harbor, here illustrating a desirable end state. The other type of strategy is one of reaction, where one is defending the status quo and reacts by avoiding dangers and takes measures to limit the consequences of certain events, like sailing the rough sea without a final destination. \textsuperscript{17} This could be expressed by the increased budget to strengthen the border security or certain routine, standard operational procedure, actions. But these defensive actions will not be explicitly included in this thesis as they are reactions, or as described in the words of President Bush himself: ‘the war on terrorism cannot be won on the defensive, we must take the battle to the enemy’. \textsuperscript{18}

The main debate regarding the usability of the words war, limited war or insurgency etc. in the context of Afghanistan and Iraq will be left out in this paper but the discussion will appear in a minor scale in one thread of discussion in the final chapter, but this is not to be associated with the main purpose of the thesis.

1.5 Disposition

The thesis is divided into five additional chapters which constitutes the whole paper. The following chapter presents the methodological choices and structures


\textsuperscript{15} Further discussion regarding the selection of empirical data is to be found in Chapter 2 Methods, on page 9.

\textsuperscript{16} This will be discussed at great length in chapter 3 Theory on victory, on page 16.


of the study such as the character of the investigation and its point of departure. The selection of case shall be discussed and some thoughts on the empirical material, which will be utilized in this study, shall be provided. The third chapter concerns the theoretical framework and the construction of the analytical tool for this examination. Earlier research on victory and a selection of thoughts shall here be elaborated and discussed, and this will lead to the presentation of the specific theoretical framework which will be utilized in this paper. This presentation shall both describe the fundamental parts of the theory and provide some thoughts on its strengths and weaknesses. Chapter four deals with the analytical section of this thesis. This chapter consists of seven different subchapters, where each annual speech will be analyzed separately in an organized chronological order. These subchapters shall include informative sections which serve to feature illustrations of examples of how the quantitative-qualitative indicators have been used. The fifth chapter shall summarize the results obtained in the analysis and present the findings in an illustrated manner of two figures which make the results easy to comprehend. The final chapter in this thesis shall conclude the findings, answer the stated research question and bring forth further discussions and provide recommendations for continuous studies. The final chapter will be divided into two subchapters of different characters. The first shall serve the purpose of initiating and igniting thoughts regarding victory and its implications in the mind of the reader. The last subchapter shall spend some last words concluding the mission of this thesis and bring forth a closure to the paper.
2 Method

This chapter consists of the methodological considerations and decisions which will shape this thesis. The chapter is divided into four subchapters that will discuss the fundamental parts of this study. The issues that will be touched upon are: the point of departure for the search of understanding the concepts of victory and how this study will relate to the basic concepts within the academic field; how this study is to be characterized in its methodological identity and a discussion regarding case selection, presentation of the chosen empirics and some brief comments on their impact of this thesis.

2.1 Point of Departure

This thesis originates from a position within the constructivist’s perspective of international security studies as it regards the discursive conceptions of security as not only existing but also as influencing the subjective feelings and estimations of reality. In a combination of a poststructuralist’s understanding of discourses and security as a political process, together with some of the conceptual belief within the Copenhagen School with its roots in speech act theory etc., this author understands security, and therefore also the meaning of the terminology of victory, as something dynamic and uncommitted to one single defined ontological truth. The discussion regarding the traditional approach of stated objective conceptions of concrete threats and security as connected to the assigned materialistic measuring and comparison is not relevant for this paper. It focuses on how certain actors, who are in position to take decisions on the mandate of his/her population, can with certain language and linguistics structure and affect how the ‘reality’ is understood and articulate which means are the most proper for the given situation. This outlook highlights the importance of investigating

public announcements and speeches as these can work as instruments by actors who are trying to mediate their opinion regarding how the collective capacities of the society shall be used in order to deal with a foreign threat.

This reasoning has great consequences for how to approach the meaning of victory, which in this paper is understood to be dependent on how one measures security, threats, war and peace. In the perspective of the traditionalists, every war throughout history has a winner and a loser. These scholars read the outcome in conflicts by comparing losses and gains in material terms and try to determine which of the contestants benefits the most by the achieved end state in the conflict. Much criticism has been appointed to this perspective since it suffers severe limitations in explaining contemporary conflicts where the decisive events in conflicts appear to have diminished and some actors may seek victory by avoiding defeat, equating the ability to survive with the indicator of success over its opponent. The criticism aimed at the traditional view of victory as insufficient can be used to question any attempt to evaluate progresses and end states in conflicts due to the ever-changing character of the international order. It is impossible to state what the universal definition of victory would include since it is, according to this author, up to the individual decision maker to define his/her desirable objectives and goals, but the broad spectrum of argumentation reaches from the quantitative number of losses in military strength to an incalculable indicator of social trust and justice within a society. The victory could also be assessed in a broader time frame where it would be exposed to further challenges than just the pure military phase of battle or a short lived period of peace.

As with security, the basic underline in this paper is that there is no objective measurement of victory, but the meaning of ‘victory’ has to be understood in the subjective and discursive environment surrounding it and in the logic of the specific actor discussing it. This position is shared by the sociologist Max Weber who argues the importance of understanding the actors and social conventions constructing the phenomenon. The implications are therefore that the finding from this study might be of less importance per se due to its inability to be generalized, but it can contribute to a better understanding of the examined actor’s behavior and its beliefs which could explain similar behavior in some similar cases.

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2.2 A Theory Consuming Case Study with a Combined Quantitative & Qualitative Method

In the pursuit of an answer to the stated research question, this study will implement an unintentional theoretical elaborative approach in a quantitative-qualitative case study. The inevitability to escape developing the theoretical framework which will be utilized in this thesis stems from the pre-theoretical character as such. Martel admits in his opening pages that his work is yet to be incorporated as a theory since it lacks clarity and precision in its definitions and serves more, in the words of Clausewitz, as an instrument to educate the mind of the reader.\textsuperscript{27} This paper will not emphasize on such an elaborate focus but should primarily be characterized and recognized as a theory consuming study. Some particular positioning that shall be conducted, as the theoretical framework will be operationalized, could be seen as an unintentional elaboration of the theory.\textsuperscript{28} The author promotes the reader to regard the difference between making a proper contribution within the goal to further develop an existing theory on the one hand, and the less ambitious (but still challenging) attempt to formulate a tool of analysis throughout an existing but not finally conclusive body of theory.

The ambition of this thesis is not to explain certain \textit{causal mechanisms} or indicate specific relationships between different variables and factors providing universal effects.\textsuperscript{29} This study shall instead describe how the language and rhetoric of victory has been used in public during the reign period of an American President in order to endeavor and provoke to initiate further debate of this issue. The combination of a quantitative and a qualitative methodology provides the strengths of both methodological approaches. The quantitative research method has been chosen to be the main method to be employed due to its advantage over the qualitative approach in the investigation and comparison of potential changing or static phenomenon and its ability to find patterns in continuous empirical material.\textsuperscript{30} While the qualitative approach has some distinct advantages in order to find specific detailed information regarding the specific phenomenon in a specific period of time, this trait does not convince or qualify to better investigate potential patterns or diversity in the empiric material than the quantitative method. But the qualitative method will be utilized in combination to illustrate the content of each speech in depth in order to contribute and assist the findings of the quantitative study.\textsuperscript{31} The combined approach do extend some daunting challenges and

\textsuperscript{28} More on this in the section of \textit{Operationalization} on page 22.
difficulties as it will be conducted together with a loosely defined theoretical framework based on words with ambiguous meanings, implemented on a dynamic material. The combination of methods could jeopardize the level of analysis as this thesis is restricted by some crucial limitations, but by combining the quantitative and qualitative method, one might find a better overview and be able to answer the stated question in broader terms.

This thesis will utilize the practice of *ideal types* which enables an analysis on the content and the ability to measure and structure the arguments located within the empirical data. This paper finds once again inspiration from Weber, who is associated through his studies with this approach and have provide guidelines for how to utilize the analytic tool of ideal types and argued for its strength in finding patterns and potential changes as such. The intention is to provide a scale of measurement, which can illustrate the findings and formulated into results. It provides some more clarity than *dimensional analysis* due to the selected time period and its typologies can be formulated in greater detail. Ideal types do suffer from the risk of either be defined in to general terms and become excessively inclusive, or to detailed and specific making it to limited in order to be a sufficient tool to serve the purpose of this study. These issues will be debated in further depths and details by the following chapter.

The information that will be possible to gather from such a study could be seen as thin and all to general, but the ambition of this paper is not to provide universal answers. This thesis seeks to initiate further debate and provoke continuous research within this area of studies. The quantitative results shall be illustrated in a plotted diagram to present the analytical findings. The potential patterns or rhetoric shifts shall be apparent to the reader in this section and these results shall be used to draw some concluding remarks and provide questions and agendas for further studies of the phenomenon of victory.

### 2.3 Case Selection

The approach of a case study with a chronological structure will be applied due to its ability to function in according to the stated purpose, choice of material and

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certainly to the specific research question. By comparing specific regular and reappearing speeches over time, concerning a specific case, one can argue that the ability to find potential patterns or lack of such maximizes. 37

The importance of the specific selection of case to study is of outmost importance to discuss since this decision identifies the universe the case is an instance of and since it could explain any potential division of the findings by which some could be generalized while others could not. 38

This thesis will investigate the case of the Bush administration’s view on victory and, more specifically, how it has been formulated in its annual speeches directed to the American public. This case is of outmost significance since this administration got involved in a complex situation declaring a Global War on Terror after the events of 9/11 and initialized two lengthy campaigns within this context. 39 This case is of importance as it is contemporary, stretches over an extended period of time and is an example of how a ‘politically smart’ administration elaborates with arguments and techniques to extracts the maximum amount of freedom and legitimacy to act from its domestic population. 40

The selected time could be heavily criticized as some would argue that the war on terror had, to some extent, always existed. Others would be more specific and say that the crucial and violent opposition between Al-Qaida and the U.S. was initiated as early as 1992 if not earlier. 41 But as this paper holds true as a point of departure that a threat must be politicized in order to actively be an issue of security and there was no large scale initiative to deal with this issue before 9/11.

There are certainly a range of alternative case selections to study, 42 but this author argues that no other could provide a better example of how important the notion of victory is as the mere diversity of challenges that the Bush administration had to face during its reign forced it to continuously take a stand in how to achieve victory and what victory it pursue in its actions. Due to the length of the military engagements and their dynamic balancing between success and failure, this case may illustrate that states rarely finish wars for the same reason they intend to start them due to the unfolding of the fog of war. 43

42 Further discussed in the last chapter in this paper.
There is another logic behind this selection as the case is made up of a complex combination of two small wars/campaigns, and unites them under the broader label ‘the Global War on Terror’. These conflicts do not possess an existential threat to the American nation and the use of military action is therefore a subject to the political legitimacy to fight such a war. The political importance of gaining the peoples trust and blessing is described by the words of Army Chief of Staff General Fred C. Weyand who said:

“The American army really is a people’s army in the sense that it belongs to the American people who takes a jealous and proprietary interest in its involvement. When the army is committed the American people are committed”

2.4 Empirical Materials

The empirical base for this study will primarily consist of the published U.S. President’s State of the Union during the reign period of G.W. Bush. These annual statements are mandated by the United States Constitution which states:

"[The President] shall from time to time give to the Congress information of the State of the Union, and recommend to their consideration such measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient". This author argues that these statements are to be understood as an instrument to be used by the current sitting President to enhance his/her discursive believes and strengthening these positions legitimacy in relation to the audience or defend it against other competing discourses propagated within the significant media sources in order to sustain the support of the population and maintain a coherent legitimacy of the government. The significance in the knowledge that these speeches are written and edited to the extremes before they are being announced and does not include the reality but only one view of reality cannot be underestimated. The decision to devote this paper to examine politics through

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44 Meron, Gil, How Democracies Lose Small Wars; State, Society, and the Failures of France in Algeria, Israel in Lebanon, and the United States in Vietnam, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2003, pp. 4-14 & Buzan, Berry, Weaver, Ole, & de Wilde, Jaap, Security; A New Framework For Analysis, Lynne Rienner, Boulder, Colo., 1998, pp. 50-1 & 64-5. Further discussions regarding these threats are to be found on page 23 in this paper.


46 These printed versions of the State of the Unions disregard any rhetorical tactics since the variation of sound and accent disappear in the plain text. This could be seen both as an advantage and disadvantage.

47 For this quotation and further information about this mandate on State of the Union Addresses and Messages: research notes by Gerhard Peters, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/sou.php#ixzz2DOyYWFIP.


49 Yin, Robert K., Case study research: design and methods, 4. ed., SAGE, London, 2009, pp. 101-5. For further readings on the internal dissonance in how to apprehend the situation during this time see Caldwell, Dan, Vortex
the primary sources of speeches in public media and statements are common in studies partly based on the poststructuralist’s beliefs of research.\footnote{As discussed earlier but also in great length in Buzan, Berry & Hansen, Lene, \textit{The Evolution of International Security Studies}, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2009, p. 221 & Buzan, Berry, Weaver, Ole, & de Wilde, Jaap, \textit{Security: A New Framework For Analysis}, Lynne Rienner, Boulder, Colo., 1998, pp. 177-8.}

This selection of materials clearly does not deserve to escape without any criticism. These statements are far from optimal while investigating one single issue and find conclusions regard the comprehend the discourses behind such. One could argue that these are but one aspect of the administration and that further insight could be gathered by investigating a number of different types of speeches or a different type of audience. It could perhaps be better to focus on statements delivered at military academies or other organized events which would be more focused on certain issue such as foreign- and international affairs etc. instead of studying a general statement regarding multiple issues in multiple sectors. An investigation based on such material might instead risk missing factors which are not essentially the military’s concerns since these factors hardly would occur in such material. Studies have been made on doctrinarian documents and the findings indicate that this argument contains some level of truth.\footnote{This is not to say that such studies are not important. On the contrary, these findings indicate a strong believes in the utility of the armed forces and this do have implications for how the actors behaves. This is further discussed in Caldwell, Dan, \textit{Vortex of Conflict: U.S. policy towards Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iraq}, Stanford Security Studies, Stanford, Calif., 2011, pp. 103-8.}

The main advantages of studying these annual speeches are founded in their fundamental function between the ruling President and the American people and their continuity in time.\footnote{Any discussion regarding the connection between the Congress and the people will not be included within this paper, but it should be noted that due to the democratic form of government, this should be of no concern. Hadenius, Axel, \textit{Demokrati: en jämförande analys}, (2., [rev.] uppl.) Liber, Malmö, 2006, p. 112.}

The major importance is the ability to compare the content in statements, which are comparable in both its purpose and the targeted audience.\footnote{The importance of the audience is discussed at greater length in Buzan, Berry, Weaver, Ole, & de Wilde, Jaap, \textit{Security: A New Framework For Analysis}, Lynne Rienner, Boulder, Colo., 1998, pp. 41-2.} The risks of being accused of having a biased selectivity cannot be avoided without including all documented statements and proposals, which this author deemed this thesis unable to do due to its limitations.\footnote{Yin, Robert K., \textit{Case study research: design and methods}, 4. ed., SAGE, London, 2009, pp. 105.}

Other advantages of investigating these selected statements are the fact that the annual State of the Union speeches are well-known and simple to find, making any attempts to reappraise and challenge the findings of this specific study uncomplicated.

Some secondary material will be used in order to add minor additional content in order to present the historical context or previous happenings which are not described in the speeches per se. The additional information will not be affecting the result in any way as the analysis focuses solely on the State of the Unions, but the information will be called upon in the finishing discussion in order to provide further interesting topics and issues to research and investigate.
3 Theory on Victory

This chapter will state and discuss the theories that shall be conducted in this thesis. It shall present some of the deficits that exists within this field of studies and call upon some areas which are still defined by great uncertainty. The chapter shall include argumentations regarding the choice of theoretical framework and detailed presentations of the operationalization and construction of the analytical tool which will be utilized within this study.

3.1 The Ambiguous Essence of Victory

Understanding the reasoning surrounding the terminology of victory is crucial in order to grasp the apprehensions and utilities of different strategies and its’ means. It is the content one include in the term victory that will create the basic scale for how to measure progress or setback. Ones definition of victory constitute the framework through which ones strategies must be understood in order to make sense, and reflects upon all actions conducted in the process to realize the strategy from vision into the realms of reality.

Historically, the term has been intimately connected with military campaigns and achievements in violent conflicts whereas the decisive victory represents the defeat of the enemy and preserving the maximum amount freedom of action as possible. This connection appears to have been partly dissolved as the end state in conflicts became harder to determine, and fewer wars ends with the clear triumph of one actor who is dominating over its opponent(s). As the utility of strategy has been debated since ancient times, a widespread opinion among western thinkers is to view strategy as a bridge between the political dimensions of the civil society and the more objective based tactical view of the military organizations. Continuing on Clausewitz’s reasoning, the political aim of waging war is not restricted to defeating the opposing armies by force, but the consequences of such action combined with other types of actions and the succeeding type of peace that will follow the actor's behavior.

As the interpretation of success and failure in the modern era constitutes the fundamental framework for how to apprehend current conflicts and actions, it experiences a close relationship to politics. Expressed by Johnson & Tierney:

“[The] perception of victory not only affect[s] the account book of history but also shape the fate of leaders, democratic processes, support for foreign policies and the lessons used to guide decisions in the future.”

Thus a clear challenge arises in democratic societies as politicians become prone to establish their interpretation on these crucial terms in order to guard and sustain the support of the opinion of their population and, to some extent, the international audience. One can easily observe a trend in most democratic societies involved in violent contemporary conflicts; that there is a constant progress in the wars towards a utopian end state that never is clearly defined. The importance of mediating a notion of a constant success the domestic audience has proven to be essential for democratic leaders in contemporary conflicts. Safeguarding the political backing on the home front reduces exposure of the risks of a vanishing legitimizing support during the actual fighting, making further operations extremely politically sensitive and costly.

3.1.1 Earlier Research on Victory

As mentioned above, the earlier research on the phenomenon of victory has been ongoing since the notion of the possibility to plan and manipulate the outcome of future processes became visible. Due to the centrality of victory as an outcome in conflicts and armed interactions, it touches upon many different questions such as the utility of force, the priority of ambitions, rational thinking and political behavior. Many thoughts have been invested in the subject, but little of concrete result has been produced in order to answer what the essential meaning of victory is really about. Similar to terms such as democracy, peace and security, victory constitutes a principle used in a great amount of literature, but the absence of a meticulous explanation of it in detail generates an impossibility to formulate and define an universal meaning of this fundamental phenomenon.

One must of course, in a study like this, mention the great mind of Clausewitz and his contributions in his own work *On War*. He formulated a great proportion of the fundamental ideas and perceptions in the early 19th century that are still valid in the modern era and rules the study of strategy, victory and warfare. A detailed description of the debate regarding the arguments originating from his thoughts deserves to be read in its length in literature that covers these discussions. In this study, the author will limit the argumentation regarding the validity or obsolete character of thoughts brought up in *On War* by only mention the fact that much of the thoughts presented in this thesis, like the majority of works within this field, are based upon the ‘clausewitizian’ thoughts such as the military being subordinated to the political agenda of actors etc.

The field of research regarding victory in a more detailed fashion is certainly limited when focused on the less practical, but more philosophical question of *what* victory essentially is and consists of. Some have tried to find universal principles of victory which could be true throughout history, but the concept of victory is still contested as these thinkers failed to generate anything but abundant maxims. The victories that could be measured in a more universal way was the direct confrontations in battle where the physical instruments of power and arms could compete against each other on the basis of a zero sum game. Those battles would only produce a certain degree of change in the relation between the two actors in the contemporary world. This became a valuable lesson illustrated by the failure of powerful states, equipped with great military capacity, to produce and obtain any victory against greatly marginalized enemies. This issue has been devoted much attention and thought, but the absence of a general answer generates a void and any practical solution has yet to be found. Some even argued that victory achieved by the utility of force became an utopian illusion in the nuclear age, but this statement could be argued to have been proved wrong as revolutionary conflicts reshaped the political landscape by force in a number of cases, proving force still to be useful in the contemporary age.

William C. Martel and Robert Mandel have, among others, realized that conflicts with political ambitions had to be understood on different levels of victories and achievements since the actual warfare could not always assure the

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64 For more on the discussion regarding Clausewitz validity in the modern era, see Hammarlund, Martin, *The Remnants of Political and Trinitarian Structures in the Post-Cold War Era: Clausewitz revisited in the contemporary Middle East*, Lund University, 2011.
realization of the national objectives. Mandel separated victory into the processes of a war winning- and a peace/strategic winning phase due to the inability possessed by military battles to enforce a durable peace alone. These interconnected phases were defined as two distinct time phases, separating the ambition to defeat the enemy with the political process of winning the peace. This approach makes it difficult to apply the theory on contemporary conflicts where fighting and political processes are applied in parallel actions. Martel shared Mandel’s vision of separate levels of victories but divided the victory concept into three divisions; tactical-, strategic- & grand strategic victory, which could be at work simultaneously within a conflict. This is the division that will be utilized in this study as this theoretical approach serves the purpose of investigating different achievements and how they are interconnected in a dynamic relationship.

3.2 Martel’s Levels of Victory

The Associated Professor of International Security Studies, William C. Martel, conducts a comprehensive and theoretical analysis of the meaning of victory in military and political thinking in his work in order to produce a more precise and systematic language which could be utilized in the debate regarding victory. Martel applies some fundamental assumptions which are crucial to understand in order to be able to comprehend his theoretical framework which could be seen as rather radical and critical in comparison to earlier thoughts of victory. One of them is the assumption that there is no granted truth to the statement that every victory has a winner and a loser. Victory and defeat are not to be seen as each other’s dichotomies but rather connected in a relationship as two ends of a continuum of possible outcomes.

What Martel says next is what is really radical: he argues that there is redundant fixation on identifying and selecting proper measuring indicators for victory. He believes the meaning of victory varies between different groups of people and is therefore too intimately connected to normative standards, and

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74 William C Martel is an Associated Professor of International Security Studies at Tufts University and former employed at Naval War College and have served as an advisor to the Defence Advanced Research Projects Agency, U.S. Air Force Scientific Advisory board and the National Security Council.
cannot be an identified as value-neutral concepts. This statement could have been used to reject and disapprove any useful mean of the concept of victory, but Martel constructs and distinguishes three distinct levels of analysis in which different desirable objectives and goals can be organized in a system which relates to what kind of change they intend to create or attempt to preserve.

Figure 1. Level of Victory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tactical</th>
<th>Strategic</th>
<th>Grand Strategic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

The figure illustrates the continuum of the tree levels of analysis.

3.2.1 Tactical Victory

The first level represents the equivalent to the traditional and historical thinking of victory, focusing on the interaction and engagements of military forces. The broader political ambitions are absent within this level of analysis as the primary objective is to achieve a military dominance gained through tactical-levels of successes over the opposing army. This is a narrow limitation due to its primary focus on the course of events played out on the battlefield alone, but this level of victory can stretch from single to multiple military engagements, until one actor has obtained a distinguished advantage or total dominance over its adversary. History has proven that the reduction, or even the ultimate elimination, of hostile powers can provide a (sometimes the) desired outcome in a war as this can lead to increased operating freedom compared to the adversary, and this analysis still represents a predominant view of how to assess victory and defeat in conflicts.

There is an ambiguity regarding the importance of tactical victory and its relationship to the higher levels of analysis which reveals the nature of the political and ideological base in victory which also touches upon the great question of the utility of force as a political mean. The relationship between the tactical victories (actual or perceived) has often been crucial in order to generate strategic effects and inflict a change of behavior of the enemy, while some experiences from numerous contemporary conflicts tells to differ. The nature of the tactical level of victory is surrounded by the fogs of war. It is therefore difficult to assess the actual impact of one’s actions and initiatives due to limitation of knowledge and intelligence of the opponent’s condition and potential capacity to continue his/her resistance before the end state has been reached.

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3.2.2 Strategic Victory

In the second level of analysis, the political aims and desires grants a greater role since this intermediate level include the psychological and political impact where the war translates into political terms. The effects could alter a single state or a region as this analysis level provides the broadest spectrum of achievements, both the change of a specific national policy to restructure a regional balance of force or political context. These strategic effects can in some cases be a result of threats and coercion while other can be a result of direct brutal force to inflict additional costs for a further resistance or, in extreme cases by an occupation of territory and disarmament of the vanquished actor’s ability to continue combat operations.⁸⁰

This second level needs further division in order to be useful, due to its broad application from the shorter-term tactical or limited political consequences to significant implications of governing and to the survival of states. In theory, there shall be a separation between limited strategic-, total strategic- and existential strategic victory as these divisions describe distinct different objectives and goals. Limited strategic victories encompass the ambition to change or preserve certain national policies as initiate disarmament of nuclear weapons programs etc. Total strategic victories cover objectives such as to recreate the political structure within a nation according to ones desire or to alter the balance of power in a region. This often includes a greater application of threats or use of force due to the political impact one desires. The existential strategic victory regards the unlimited war-aims to ensure the nations own survival by defeating its enemy by all means necessary.⁸¹

3.2.3 Grand Strategic Victory

The most comprehensive but also the rarest of victories is the grand strategic victory which describes a process which goes beyond the concept of certain policies, total war and regional balances. Illustrated by the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, a grand strategic victory affects the completeness within the international system and modifies the way actors behave. The third level shares one characteristic with the intermediate level of analysis: it can only be obtained as a consequence of actions. One do not achieve a grand


strategic victory by the usage or threat of direct force on the international community, but only the political consequence of one’s behavior can grant such.\textsuperscript{82}

This highest form of victory encompasses not the practical changes of war but an \textit{ideological} shift or survival as an outcome from the actual war. Due to its great significance on the international community, the historical portfolio of wars has only a modest number of examples of war which explicitly leads to the grand strategic victory. These examples are all connected to the motivation of hegemonic wars between great nations, initiated by the ambitions of a challenging actor to questioning and reshape the current international order to enhance the victor’s national interests.\textsuperscript{83}

3.2.4 \textbf{Strengths and Weaknesses}

This theoretical framework will be applied in this thesis due to its ability to estimate and systematize different levels of victories which serves the purpose of this paper. By organizing the different objectives and achievements in three distinct levels of analysis, one can see how the different factors in each level can interact with other levels simultaneously as a specific successful operation in the battlefield results in certain changes in the opposing actor’s strategic behavior without any further negotiations being conducted between the two sides. This is a great advantage compared to Mandel’s separation which includes two distinct time phases, where the victory in battle precedes the strategic victory in peace.\textsuperscript{84}

The author to this paper argue that such limited view suffers a severe deficit as most post-conflict political processes are characterized by some form of violence and coercion due to the reforms on a strategic level, and these situations could easily deteriorate back into a war-like condition.\textsuperscript{85}

The relationship between the levels of analysis shall however not be regarded as simple and self-evident: the historical portfolio of violent conflicts provides a divided and ambiguous relationship between tactical victories and strategic victory. The most recent grand strategic victory was achieved without an explicit exchange of destruction between the US and the USSR, while a prior example, the Second World War, was brought to an end by a great amount of force and tactical

\begin{itemize}
\end{itemize}
victories, providing the possibility for further strategic implications and the criteria of the future grand strategic consequences. This discussion brings forth questions of the utility of force and how to understand non-violent behavior, but such debate is excluded from this thesis.

In his book, except for what has been written above, Martel’s pre-theory also includes three following organizing principles which are used in order to indicate different levels of commitments and ambitions in wars. These principles main function is to create the ability to determinate how comprehensive or limited the actors aims are in their desire of the strategic victory ranging from limited regime change to the existential fight for survival. The principles shall not be exclusively discussed in this paper as this study does not interest itself in the different subdivisions within the levels of analysis as the purpose of this examination and its restriction to the selected case makes such an ambition redundant. To illustrate this decision, this author questions the rationality to consider the threats coming out from either Iraq or Afghanistan as an existential threat to the nation of the United States of America. This is not to say that the challenges they compose are not real or severe to the individual U.S. citizen, but they do not pose a direct threat to neither extinguish the American people, state and government nor nation.

3.3 Operationalization of the Theories

This thesis will use the theoretical framework to structure and organize the rhetoric and arguments which are forwarded by former American President Bush in his speeches concerning the American progress and strategy in the contemporary conflicts. Martel’s division of levels of analysis will be applied and utilized in order to arrange three specific ideal types of rhetoric which will be exposed to a combined analytical method in order to investigate and identify potential changes or patterns in what kind of levels of victory are being the one most emphasized and addressed in the arguments and motivations of the President.

87 Ibid, pp. 44-54.
3.3.1 Interpretation and Construction of Ideal Types

The interpretation of the theory and the re-construction of it into the instrumental tool of ideal types shall here be made in order to maximize its utility in the presented challenge possessed in this study. Since this paper is examining the rhetorical arguments used to express the American perspectives on the offensive initiatives which have been taken in the Global War on Terror, the theoretical interpretation has been focused in order to make it is possible to separate different arguments and organize them into different constructs of ideal types. These have the function to identify the different levels of analysis within the empirical material. The combination of the Weberian analytical tool of ideal types and the selected theory has a great strength combined together as it is possible to construct relatively precise definitions of the contents within each category which can prove to be fruitful in its application to the empirics.

The following process is done in order to create an efficient set of indicators. The levels of analysis have to experience a process where the essential content can be extracted, summarized and become more detailed in its explanation: ⁹⁰

- The tactical level deals primarily with the exchange in battle and relates to concrete numbers one can measure, as numbers of causalities inflicted upon the enemy or territorial gains, without emphasizing on its political impact in detail. These are the most classic indicator of success as the traditional approach appreciate success as inflicting sever damage on the adversary and seizing territory which creates abilities to conduct further operations, maneuvers and conduct more military actions, but are not, as mentioned above, guarantees for any political consequence. ⁹¹ Examples of rhetorical usages are the presenting of numbers: the quantity of captured or liquidated terrorists, number of cities liberated etc. Examples of arguments of tactical victories could mention the resent military achievements or the increasing difficulties for the enemy to initiate further opposition etc.

- The strategic level involves the actual political change or survival of existing policies or political balances. This broad level contains a range of various conditions, but these changes are profound in a society as a regime change or the implementation of human rights and rule of law do have an actual effect on the subject. The actual ability to measure these effects can be harder since one can only lay out the framework for certain political effects like creating national capacities and initiate reforms which create pre-requisites for political changes within the other nation. More limited political changes like certain policy changes as abandoning a nuclear

weapon program etc. could be perceived more easily to achieve since these changes would not require the same complex solution to be found sustainable. Indications of a strategic argument could be the presentation of numbers of political changes, how much human or economic capability one has been able to generate in the topical society etc. Other arguments referring to actual policy change or the implementation and fulfilling of an election are also good indicators of the strategic level.

- The grand strategic level of analysis focuses on the ideology within the international system and is certainly not referred to in the ordinary politics of all nations. Changes within this level are not practically measurable since it could involve changes in certain relationships or universal shifts in the norms of political activity, variables which first could be observable after some time. The American process of fighting the Global War on Terror could be seen as an attempt to arrive at a grand strategic victory as a failure could set the premises for the further oppression of the current international order of freedom by a growing number of non-state actors, even though the final success in this kind of conflict is hard to envisage. In this study, the discussions of American leadership and responsibility for the free world and the ideology of the good, or the mentioning the values of liberty in the world, humanity and freedom are all arguments indicating an emphasis on the importance and value of the grand strategic victory.

Figure 2. Interpreting the level of analysis as ideal types.

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<tr>
<th>Tactical</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nonpolitical</td>
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<tr>
<td>Numbers:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Captures</td>
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<td>Territorial</td>
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<td>Body count</td>
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<td>Operations</td>
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<td>Arguments:</td>
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<td>Maneuvers</td>
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<td>Fighting</td>
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<td>Military actions</td>
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<th>Strategic</th>
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<td>Political:</td>
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<td>Numbers:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reforms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elections</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capacity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arguments:</td>
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<td>Policy change</td>
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<tr>
<td>Political change</td>
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<tr>
<td>Societal change</td>
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<tr>
<td>Democratization</td>
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<th>Grand Strategic</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ideological:</td>
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<td>Numbers:</td>
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<tr>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arguments:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Freedom</td>
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<td>Humanity</td>
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<td>Commitments</td>
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<td>Global leadership</td>
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<td>International - responsibility</td>
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The figure illustrates the indicators which will be utilized in the study of the American rhetorical concepts and their connection to the three levels of analysis gathered from the theoretical framework presented by William C. Martel.

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Figure 2 helps to illustrate how this paper will measure the occurrence of the different levels of victory within the examined empirical data by utilizing both quantitative and qualitative methods. It is crucial to understand that this operationalization has a specific relationship to the specific case which has been selected for this study: these indicators of the different levels of analysis are all related to the American position as the construction of these indicators has been conducted in a relation to the empiric material and has not been raised in isolation. This means that this operationalization has been used in trials in order to prove its sustainability in its mission and ability to generate findings from the raw data. This is a crucial but not particularly surprising insight as this thesis examines the American rhetoric and is set out to measure the existence of patterns or variations in which level of victory is being addressed in the communication between the American President and the inhabitants of the United States of America. In order to be able to conduct such a study, one must be able to develop an analytical tool which can actually be applied and generate results. Taking another actors perspective would call for a change of rhetorical concepts as these selected could run the risk of no longer be valid or used for that specific case.

Note that ideal types do not necessarily explain the reality of which the empiric material was manufactured in, but the approach creates a possibility to systematic judge and polarize the different arguments into categories which are constructed through the implemented theory.

The presented indicators above have been deliberately shaped in order to be able to contain a number of different arguments due to the empirical material nature used in this specific study. It shall be noted that this decision has been made on the expense of a greater reliability as a broader decoding jeopardize it to become a less accurate method. This premise is not uncommon to be scarified in the usages of the ideal type as the analytical tool within studies in political science. The instrument serves to highlight repeated patterns of arguments in the empirical material and categorize them and enable a comparison of each speech to the others. The danger of this constructed spectrum of indicators is to prioritize its utility above the actual empirical material, resulting in making the researcher seek to identify patterns that do correspond to the analytic method but does not actually exist in the empirics. Such knowledge and insights are crucial for anyone conducting or reading studies of this kind, and this thesis shall utilize ideal types with reason and wisdom.

94 For further discussion about the relationship between context and arguments, see Bergström, Göran & Boréus, Kristina (red.), Textens mening och makt: metodbok I samhällsvetenskaplig text- och diskursanalys, 3., [utök.] uppl., Studentlitteratur, Lund, 2012, p. 33 & 83.  
The judgment of arguments will be illustrated in the following chapter by examples taken from the original empirical material in order to provide the reader with sufficient information to be able to evaluate the reliability of this method.

3.3.2 Analysis and Results

The analytic tool will be implemented in a quantitative and qualitative fashion and applied on the empirical material to generate findings which can answer the stated research question. The previously presented indicators above will be utilized and searched for in the contents of the statements. The speeches will be divided into smaller parts of sentences and segments which are mentioning, or in a similar way encapsulate, the various indicators of the different ideal types. These parts will be interpreted as belonging to one or several levels of victory. Again, the tactical victory is mainly associated with arguments of military achievements and progress in actual fighting while strategic victory is connected to political reforms or policy changes and the grand strategic victory emphasis the ideological battle and an international role of leadership for the United States of America.

As mentioned above, the indicators could be understood as rather dim, but the dynamic nature of the material and its content demands a rather broad and blunt tool of analytics. The speeches will be exposed to the investigation a number of times in order to make sure that the analysis and the findings seem valid. The indicated rhetorical arguments will then be summarized in a table in order to illustrate the findings.

The qualitative part of this study is mainly to focus on the content of the speeches and present some of the most distinguished topics and issues within the sentences and segments which concerns the American activity and behavior within the Global War on Terror. This method is used in order to make the analysis more detailed and interesting for the reader to study while also adding the potentials of providing more detailed information regarding each specific speech and its content which could be of interest for the discussion of the quantitative results. The qualitative results shall be presented as a summary of the main topics in each speech, and will to some degree also be reflected in the title naming the different subchapters of each State of the Union in the following chapter.

The qualitative approaches will be implemented by reading through the selected parts of the speeches multiple times and gather information and acquire a notion of the distinguished topics in each State of the Union. The most frequently reappearing issues being stated will then be highlighted and presented within the context of the three levels of victory and further discussed in the later chapters.

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98 No other part shall be included in this study than those directly emphasizing the conduct of war and political initiatives within the Global War on Terror and more specifically the two campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq; leaving out the discussions regarding economics, domestic political issues such as welfare and even the defensive initiatives such as increased budgets to the department of homeland security etc.
4 Analysis

This chapter will present the conducted analysis and the qualitative information which has been deducted from each speech. Each State of the Union shall be analyzed separately and shall be individually presented in separate subchapters, structuralized in chronological order starting from year 2002 and on to year 2008. Each sample includes the qualitative investigation which summarizes the specific topic presented in the State of the Union, and some examples of quotations which provides some guiding insights for the reader to understand the machining and analysis in the qualitative and quantitative method has been implemented on the contents. The subchapters are concluded with a shorter remark of the total amount of indicators deducted by the quantitative approach. These results will be concluded and interpreted in the following chapter in order to unveil in what manner the implication of victory is presented during the years.

4.1 The American Response, 2002

The initial State of the Union in this investigation is dated January 29, 2002, and could be interpreted as a response speech to the terrorist attacks on 9/11 which served a major role in initiating the Global War on Terror, which began with launching the American invasion of Afghanistan. The tactical achievements are announced with a notion of the major combat operations belonging to the past while the challenging task ahead for America is expressed to be long and difficult.

“Our war on terror is well begun, but is only begun. This campaign may not be finished on our watch, yet, it must be and it will be waged on our watch, we can’t stop short. [...] History has called America and our allies to action, and it is both our responsibility and our privilege to fight freedom’s fight.”

Much of this speech emphasizes the vulnerability of the global, free world and the threat exposed to it by the danger composed by terrorist cells and potential supporting nations around the globe. In this address, two great objectives are presented: fighting the terrorists and preventing the terrorists and other regimes to

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100 “These enemies view the entire world as a battlefield, and we must pursue them wherever they are.”
101 “Thousands of dangerous killers [...] are now spread throughout the world like ticking timebombs[.]” etc. Ibid.
acquire weapons of mass destruction. The President is clear that America will not tolerate any nation supporting, sponsoring and harboring terrorists and underlines the military ability of the United States of America, being able making it ‘clear to every enemy of the United States: Even 7,000 miles away, across oceans and continents, on mountaintops and in caves, you will not escape the justice of this Nation.’ The second objective expresses the global vision of the country in the notorious Axis of Evil statement in which Bush declare Iran, Iraq and North Korea as terrorist allies, armed and constantly threatening the peace of the world. This part is included in this study as it concerns both Iraq and the global perspective of this Global War on Terror and the grand strategic importance of this struggle. The use of the traditional symbols of good and evil is continuously appearing in the statement and the opposing enemy is never seen as a legit actor but an evil force.

The speech includes many actions taken in order to achieve strategic impact on the society and political landscape as it promotes the political reforms which have been made or are being made in Afghanistan:

“[W]e have a great opportunity during this time of war to lead the world towards the values that will bring lasting peace. [...] [T]he rule of law; limits on the power of the state; respect for women; private property; free speech; equal justice; and religious tolerance.”

Another strategic victory presented this evening is the recently implemented ‘interim leader of a liberated Afghanistan, Chariman Hamid Karzai’ who appears present in the audience and also mentioned as an indicator of the American successes in the Global War on Terror in the speech.

The tactical victories are indicated in arguments referring to numbers of captured terrorists, the retreats of terrorist leaders, the actual fighting against Taliban forces, and the actions taken by the U.S. military to limit their ability to put up any continued resistance. The presence of the tactical victories are indicated already in the fifth sentence where the President tells the audience that they have ‘captured, arrested and rid the world of thousands of terrorists,’ etc.

The analysis of the 2002’s speech indicated 7 tactical victory references, 10 strategic victory and 11 citations of grand strategic victory, a total number of 28 indicated rhetoric concepts translated through the analytical tool of this thesis.

101 Note; this statement is considered as a tactical victory statement as it includes both the indicators of an argument regarding maneuverability and a metaphor to military action. Ibid. pp. 1-2.
105 Ibid.
4.2 Preparing for the Second Frontier, 2003

In his speech before congress in January 28, 2003, President Bush presents a greater threat composed by the reigning regime in Iraq and the American responsibility and ability in ‘leading the world in confronting and defeating the manmade evil of international terrorism’ while confirming that ‘[t]he world goes on, and we are winning’.\footnote{Bush, George W., “Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union”, January 28, 2003. Online by Gerhard, Peters & Wolley, John T. The American Presidency Project.} This great threat against the international peace is said to be generated by Saddam Hussein’s continuous support to Al-Qa’ida and the uncertainties regarding the Iraqi possessions of WMDs. The importance of these political undertakings is emphasized in great length in the content of the 2003 State of the Union with statements such as:

“[L]et there be no misunderstanding: If Saddam Hussein does not fully disarm, for the safety of our people and for the peace of the world, we will lead a coalition to disarm him.” and further “A future lived at the mercy of terrible threats is no peace at all. If war is forced upon us, we will fight in a just cause and by just means, sparing in every way we can, the innocent, And if war is forced upon us, we will fight with the full and might of the United States military, and we will prevail.”\footnote{Ibid, p. 6 and for further readings on the Bush administrations connecting Iraq and the Global War on Terror, see Metz, Steven, Decisionmaking in Operation Iraqi Freedom: removing Saddam Hussein by force, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, 2010, pp.24-39.}

This speech is characterized by the importance to achieve strategic victories in order to change political agendas and support the implementation of a democratic system in Afghanistan and ‘bring to the Iraqi people food and medicines and supplies and freedom.’\footnote{Bush, George W., “Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union”, January 28, 2003. Online by Gerhard, Peters & Wolley, John T. The American Presidency Project. http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws?pid=29645.} Other indications of strategic victory other than the disarmament and abandonment of the terror sponsoring Iraqi regime could be seen in other statements such as:

“In Afghanistan, we helped to liberate an oppressed people. And we will continue helping them secure their country, rebuild their society, and educate all their children, boys and girls.”\footnote{Ibid. p. 3.}

Again, much of the used rhetoric also describes the grand strategic level of analysis and the tactical dimensions of victory. The President announces that:

‘Once again, we are called to defend the safety of our people and the hopes of all mankind. And we accept this responsibility. [...] In all these efforts, however, America’s purpose is more than to follow a process; it is to achieve a result, the end of terrible threats to the civilized world. [...] Whatever action is required, whenever
action is necessary, I will defend the freedom and security of the American people."110

The presence of these imminent global threats to the international order and stability shall be met by the American people ‘and we must act before the dangers are upon us.’ while the tactical victories in the conflicts are recurrently achieved as ‘We have the terrorist on the run. We’re keeping them on the run. One by one, the terrorists are learning the meaning of American justice.’111

The total number of indicated rhetoric concept and arguments in the 2003 State of the Union are 19 which are represented by 5 tactical victory references, 8 strategic victories and 6 grand strategic emphasis.

4.3 No One Can Now Doubt the Word of America, 2004

During the year of 2003 the American administration reinforced the idea that the battle in Afghanistan was over and best described as a period of stability, and the American activities would focus more or less exclusively on reconstruction of the Afghan state. But the success of the afghan campaign seemed only secure due to the shadows falling from the unexpected challenges formulated within the Iraq campaign.112

This year’s State of the Union was delivered before the congress on January 20, 2004 and could in many regards be comprehended as a summary of the activities made during the recent years under the reign of President Bush. By referring to how the Global War on Terror began after the events during September the 11th 2001:

“[I]t is tempting to believe that the danger is behind us. The hope is understandable, comforting- and false. […] The terrorists continue to plot against America and the civilized world. And by our will and courage this danger will be defeated.”

The President resubmits in this State of the Union to the speech in 2001 in which he calls upon the two objectives of: disrupting further terrorist activity and eliminating the terrorists; prevent terrorists and regimes to acquire WMDs.113

Bush presents an America on the offence, where tactical successes have been made in order to achieve the first objective as two-thirds of all known key leaders in the Al-Qa’ida network had been captured or killed in action. The President also

111 Ibid., pp. 3-4.
ensures that strategic effects are being created as ‘we are also confronting the regimes that harbor and support terrorists and could supply them with nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons.’ The campaign in Iraq is discussed in great length while the Afghan challenge is merely mentioned and then only to be presented as a strategic victory in the Global War on Terror as:

"As of this month, that country has a new constitution guaranteeing free elections and full participation by women. Businesses are opening. Health care centers are being established, and the boys and girls of Afghanistan are back in school. With the help from the new Afghan army, our coalition is leading aggressive raids against the surviving members of the Taliban and Al-Qaeda."115

Much of the successes achieved in Iraq are described as tactical successes where all but ten official of the former regime has been captured or killed in the recent operations. The offensive against the remaining resistance continues with ‘over 1,600 patrols a day and conducting an average of 180 raids a week.’116 while the search for the Iraqi WMD-related program runs in a parallel process.

Bush sets the agenda by arguing that the mission is to achieve a situation where the Iraqi people will live in freedom from fear and oppression while the killers must fail to spread violence and fear. He also touches upon the grand strategic levels of analysis when he repeats the global responsibility of the United States of America: ‘Because of American leadership and resolve, the world is changing for the better. [...] For all who love freedom and peace, the world without Saddam Hussein’s regime is a better and safer place. [...] The cause we serve is right, because it is the cause of all mankind.’117

This third State of the Union gave a total of 21 indicators of victory, and the distribution founded was 8 tactical-, 9 strategic-, and 4 grand strategic victory references.

115 Ibid.
117 Ibid, pp. 2-6.
4.4 A Renewed Commitment, 2005

The reelection of President George W. Bush in late 2004 offered the administration to repeat its foreign commitments for the next term in office. Much of the State of the Union of February 2, 2005 touch upon domestic political policies and is only to a relative minor degree dedicated to the challenges and ambitions inherent to the American foreign adventures. The emphasis on the American exposure to an increasingly threatening world is less frequent in this annual statement than in any other State of the Union investigated in this study. There are examples of such statements, but they are all followed by some counter arguments and examples of practical changes within societies and strategic goals:

“The terrorists and insurgents are violently opposed to democracy and will continue to attack it. Yet the terrorists’ most powerful myth is being destroyed. The whole world is seeing that the car bombers and assassins are not only fighting coalition forces: they are trying to destroy the hopes of Iraqis, expressed in the free elections. And the whole world now knows that a small group of extremists will not overturn the will of the Iraqi People, [...] We are in Iraq to achieve a result, a country that is democratic, representative of all its people, at peace with its neighbors, and able to defend itself.” 118

Similar to the previous State of the Union in 2004, much of the context presented is of a describing character of what is being done on the field and the importance of recommitting to support the military campaigns overseas: ‘Pursuing our enemies is a vital commitment of the war on terror[.] [...] During this time of war, we must continue to support our military and give them the tools of victory.’ 119 Interesting observation in this year’s speech is the absence of any mentioning of the WMD-program in Iraq, but all focus is on the political reconstruction and political reformation within the country. The political process regarding the assumptions of the Iraqi possession of WMDs had been debated since early 2004 when the CIA’s weapons inspector resigned and testified of false reports and both the U.S. and the British government had established commissions to further investigate the case. 120

The reoccurring presentation of the Global War on Terror as a global ideological war is announced in this year’s statement in the following way:

“The only force powerful enough to stop the rise of tyranny and terror and replace hatred with hope is the force of human freedom. [...] We’ve declared our own intention:

119 Ibid, p. 4.
America will stand with the allies of freedom to support democratic movements in the Middle East and beyond, with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world.”

Another new feature in President Bush’s speech touches upon the issue of the future of the active troops on the ground. During the previous year, the American death toll reached 1,000 troops which could constitute a reason for the raised concern and awareness regarding the American exit strategy from the two campaigns of Iraq and Afghanistan. Bush declares that ‘We will not set an artificial timetable for leaving Iraq’ but the serving troops will return home when the mission has reached its end and the final victory has been achieved.

The State of the Union in 2005 indicated a total of 12 rhetorical references to the three different levels of analysis: 5 tactical-, 4 strategic- and 3 grand strategic victory motivations.

4.5 In a Time of Testing, 2006

In President Bush’s speech on January 31, 2006, the future of the American security is said to depend on the ending of tyranny in the world. In a time defined by the London subway bombing in the summer of 2005 and the national tragedy of Hurricane Katrina, together with increasing levels of violence in Iraq, Bush raises the rhetoric question of ‘Will we turn back or finish well?’ In order to answer the question, the President delivers a broad set of issues and goals which America seeks to achieve:

“Our work in Iraq is difficult because our enemy is brutal. But that brutality has not stopped the dramatic progress of a new democracy. In less than 3 years, the nation has gone from dictatorship to liberation, to sovereignty, to a Constitution, to national elections. At the same time, our coalition has been relentless in shutting off terrorist infiltration, clearing out insurgent strongholds and turning over territory to Iraqi security forces. I am confident in our plan for victory; [...] we are in this fight to win, and we are winning.”

As the American death toll had doubled during 2005, the speech addresses the domestic debates and feelings about previous decisions. The importance of

125 Ibid. p. 2.
maintaining the stated ambitions and not turn back is continuously repeated in the speech as Bush declares that: ‘our nation has only one option: We must keep our word, defeat our enemies, and stand behind the American military in this vital mission.’ The tactical victory is presented as important throughout the speech but is announced to essentially be interdependent with the strategic level of victory as the President state that:

“Ultimately, the only way to defeat the terrorists is to defeat their dark vision of hatred and fear by offering the hopeful alternative of political freedom and peaceful change.”

A further interesting note in the 2006 speech is a disclaiming of responsibility to bring the American troops home by a political decision. The President argues that such decision must be taken by the military commanders when the tactical victory has been achieved and the progress on the field can allow the Iraqi forces to take the lead. This is combined with statement rhetoric indicators of the tactical level of analysis where the objective is presented to fight the enemy and continue the offensive against the terror networks and their leaders.

The total number of indicated rhetoric concepts translated in the 2006’s State of the Union is 15 which are distributed as the following: 9 tactical victory references, 5 strategic victory and 5 citations of grand strategic victory,

4.6 Not the Fight We Entered but It Is the Fight We’re in, 2007

The development in the two main campaigns in the Global War on Terror continued to evolve against the American ambition during the year of 2006. Statements from high rank officials warns about a possible outbreak of civil war in Iraq while they oppose further reinforcement and the opinion polls in the U.S. indicate that the war is become increasingly unpopular among the American population. The President’s greatest achievement is the conviction of Saddam Hussein in late 2006 and just days before the State of the Union on January 23, 2007, Bush announces the intention to initiate a surge in Iraq and send further reinforcement in order to retake the initiative:

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128 Ibid.
“Every one of us wishes this war were over and won. Yet it would not be like us to leave our promises unkept, our friends abandoned, and our own security at risk. [...] It is still within our power to shape the outcome of this battle. Let us find our resolve and turn events toward victory.”

The tactical level of victory is being presented at great length in this speech as Bush continues to argue ‘that to win the war on terror, we must take the fight to the enemy’ and that the enemy is experiencing a very limited maneuverability and their decisiveness is decreasing for every day that have passed since the 9/11.

The emphasis on the development in Iraq creates an obvious absence of a more detailed presentation of the process within the Afghan campaign. It may be seen included in the greater visions and grand strategic victory illusions that are being drawn up in the speech:

“America is still a nation at war. [...] This war is more than clash of arms, it is a decisive ideological struggle. And the security of our Nation is in the balance. [...] What every terrorist fears the most is human freedom: [...] so we advance our own security interests by helping moderates and reformers and brave voices for democracy.”

Interesting to note is the President’s decision to highlight the importance to measure success in the things that did not transpire: ‘Our success is this war is often measured by the things that did not happen. We cannot know the full extent of the attacks that we and our allies have prevented[.]’ As this paper does not include the so called defensive understanding of victory due to its limitations in its level of analysis, this detail will not be investigated, it will be satisfactory to note and acknowledge the presence of such a statement and its connection to the concept of victory as well.

This analysis showed a total of 19 indications of victory within this speech: 2 of these are connected to the grand strategic victory, 5 strategic-related and 12 indicated tactical victory arguments.

132 Ibid. p. 3.
133 Ibid. pp. 3-4.
134 Ibid.
4.7 Our Troops Are Coming Home, 2008

President Bush delivers his last State of the Union on January 28, 2008. Seven years have passed since his administration took office and George W. Bush has possessed the role as a war-waging President in over six years, a role he probably never intended to play on such a grand scale.\textsuperscript{136} Much debate could be spent on discussing the degree of success within the action taken during those years, but as President Bush himself states: ‘We are grateful that there has not been another attack on our soil since 9/11. This is not for the lack of desire or effort on the part of the enemy.’\textsuperscript{137}

The substance of the speech concerning the progress and action taken within the Global War on Terror, much of the focus is directed to the implemented surge which was initiated the previous year. The pursuit of the enemy is presented as much efficient and given highly appreciated results; the clearing out of terrorists and holding the ground is said to have proved to deny the enemy the possibility to return and continue the opposition:

\begin{quote}
“While the enemy is still dangerous and more work remains, the American and Iraqi surges have achieved results few of us could have imagined just 1 year ago. [...] A year later, high-profile terrorist attacks are down, civilian deaths are down, sectarian killings are down.”\textsuperscript{138}
\end{quote}

The presented tactical successes achieved by the surge are argued to make new strategic initiatives possible, and this provides the baseline for an announcement of a smaller increase of forces to the Afghan campaign. ‘We have taken the fight to these terrorists and extremists. We will stay on the offense; we will keep up the pressure; and we will deliver justice to our enemies. [...] Al Qaida is on the run in Iraq, and this enemy will be defeated.’\textsuperscript{139}

An interesting observation is the absence of a direct usage of the word \textit{victory} in the text. Much emphasis is laid on the importance of defeating the enemy and fight for a safer international environment, but any explicit usage of the term could not be found. Another observation is the increased emphasis on the policy of ‘return on success’; a policy to send troops stateside after their objectives has been achieved; connecting the returning of the soldiers as a measurement of success in the conflicts:

\begin{quote}
“[O]ne Army brigade combat team and one Marine expeditionary unit have already come home and will not be replaced. In the coming, four additional brigades and two Marine battalions will follow suit. [...] [T]his means more than 20,000 of our troops are coming
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{138} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{139} Ibid. p. 4.
home. Any further drawdown of U.S. troops will be based on conditions in Iraq and the recommendations of our commanders.\textsuperscript{140}

The President draws a picture where there is much fighting still ahead, but states that the objectives in the coming years will be to be more focused on sustaining the obtained accomplishments. He calls upon the transition to the next phase of the American strategy which is to focus on capacity building measures within the societies and stabilize the political landscape to create a sustained environment for their strategic successes: ‘a nation that was once a safe haven for Al Qaida is now a young democracy where boys and girls are going to school, new roads and hospitals are being built, and people are looking to the future with new hope.’\textsuperscript{141}

President Bush summarizes the desirable end states and potential gains the American adventure in Iraq has been trying to achieve, providing an example of the tactical victory together with the strategic victory in his phrasing of:

“A free Iraq will deny Al Qaida a safe haven. A free Iraq will show millions across the Middle East that a future of liberty is possible. A free Iraq will be a friend of America, a partner in fighting terror, and a source of stability in a dangerous part of the world.”\textsuperscript{142}

The rhetoric of framing the war as an ideological struggle is still present in the speech and the terrorists are presented as the opposing force to everything that could be connected to the humanity and decency which liberty and freedom stand for. The President ensures that: ‘And that is why, for the security of America and the peace of the world, we are spreading the hope of freedom.’\textsuperscript{143}

This last State of the Union to be delivered by the 43\textsuperscript{rd} President of the United States of America, Mr. George W. Bush, has indicated 10 rhetorical references to tactical victory, 5 strategic victory and 4 grand strategic victory motivations according to the analytical tool which are utilized within this study.


\textsuperscript{141}Ibid. p. 4.

\textsuperscript{142}Ibid. p. 5.

\textsuperscript{143}Ibid. p. 4.
5 Results

This chapter presents the findings of the analysis and illustrates some of the results in order to make it easier for the reader to overview the indicated arguments in the text. One must never hold dear to the illusion that these findings are in anyway representing reality or provide the reader with a perfect illustration of the truth as they are generated by an analytical tool based on some basic assumptions and simplifications. But even then some of these findings could eventually provide a base for further discussions and investigations which shall be further discussed in the next chapter.

5.1 Quantitative Results

The number of indicated arguments have been variegating in some degree within the annual speeches. Why this is the case or how one can understand the political reason cause these choices of rhetoric constructions of the speeches are all questions reaching beyond the boundaries for this paper. These answers can only be unveiled in the additional supplement of other studies and their findings. What one can observe from this study is how these have varied and to what degree they compose the speeches. The quantitative investigation in this study has provided the following result which will be further elaborated in order to seek a potential pattern or dynamic variations in the speeches.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Tactical</th>
<th>Strategic</th>
<th>Grand</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Amount: Victory-Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table illustrates the number of identified indicators of the different ideal types of analysis for each year’s speech, presented in clear text in the last segments of each subchapter within chapter 4.
The figure above illustrates the absolute number of rhetorical arguments indicated in the empiric material, but in order to get a better overview and fully gain the ability to actually compare the speeches with each others, the following figure has been generated in order to illustrate the proportionate distribution of the different victory-arguments in the State of the Unions. By presenting the data utilized in figure 3 but convert the results to the proportionate distribution in percentage one, can clearly track how the variation is acting out between the years without putting further emphasis on the total amount of indicated argumentations.\textsuperscript{144}

By observing figure 4 one can see how the different rhetoric argument of victory has been utilized and called upon in the annual State of the Unions during the period from 2002 until 2008. It is clear that the arguments of tactical victory have been increasing gradually over time in contrast to the strategic and grand strategic references which have been declining during the same period. This author would argue that these findings indicate that the implication of victory has been utilized in a dynamic fashion, due to this shift, rather than in a static pattern of expression during the examined time period and within the empirical materials investigated in this study. Once again, one must remember and emphasis the fact that this

result has been obtained through the specific analytical tool which has been constructed and utilized in this study. This result could be drastically transformed if one was to use a different set of indicators or apprehend the empirical material in a different light than what have been presented in this thesis.

5.2 Qualitative Results

The qualitative results of this study provide some further information regarding the certain focus of the contents of the separate speeches. The findings may not provide any further information on the relationship between the different speeches in the same way as the quantitative results, but it may provide some insight and reason in why these variations can be observed when focusing on a particular speech and its content.

The first State of the Union, dating 2002, drew much attention to the events of 9/11 and elaborated further on the political challenges and ambitions which flourished after the initial success in Afghanistan. To call upon the triumvirate of the axis of evil, and its connections and potential sponsoring to different suspected and known terrorist organizations and groups, President Bush declares a number of strategic interests which some could be translated to indications of the importance of the strategic victory while there is an absence of descriptions regarding how the President should respond to these threats. Much of the speech also condemns the ideology behind tyranny and oppression which further emphasize the grand strategic importance to succeed against the axis of evil and terrorist groups.

The second State of the Union from 2003 constitutes severely on the Iraqi case and making the connection between Afghanistan, Al-Qaida and Saddam Hussein himself. The agenda to prevent any possession or proliferation of WMDs is argued to demand a clear political statement towards the Iraqi regime and it is presented to be the U.S’s role to act against this ideological threat to world stability, making the case for the importance of the grand strategic victory which is imbedded in the strategic victory of altering the Iraqi agenda and political stance. The tactical references are low in this speech and could possibly indicate the lack of major combat activities within Afghanistan, making the tactical victory to be seen as already be accomplished rather than be unimportant for the President’s agenda.

The third State of the Union, delivered in 2004, must be seen in the contextual environment of an American election year. This summarizing statement include the earlier achievements in Afghanistan and Iraq, both tactical and strategic victories are presented while the grand strategic notion of American responsibility for international freedom and liberty are less frequently called upon.

After the reelection of President Bush, the world is being described as less threatening and less exposed to danger than in previous statements. The 2005 speech contains just a small numbers of segments. This could be regarded as
treatment of victory, which could be seen in figure 3 in the subchapter above, but the mentioning of the importance of getting the troops out of the battlefields is very interesting as it could be argued to be connected to the tactical victory, but it could also indicate the defeat or inability to wage war.

President Bush’s State of the Union from 2006 is primarily defending the previous decision to declare The Global War on Terror, the invasion of Afghanistan and especially, the still challenged campaign in Iraq. The President presents some of the important steps which has been made in order to achieve a strategic victory and further defend the ambition to reach a final tactical victory by continue the fight against the Iraqi insurgents, the Taliban skirmishers and other evil doers. It is a speech presenting the tactical implications of the campaigns and focuses on the military road to victory and the need for security in order to obtain development.

The speech of 2007 is fundamentally about arguing for the necessity of an increased reinforcement in Iraq in order to implement a surge and establish a tactical victory in order to stabilize the country and generate a breeding ground for further political changes and implementations, constituting the strategic victory in Iraq and within the Global War on Terror. The State of the Union is more profoundly framed by argumentations of the necessity of combating and actually fighting the terrorists than any other speech investigated in this study.

The final State of the Union ever delivered by President George W. Bush from 2008 actively argues for the successes of the implemented surge and the decreased threat coming from within the Iraqi society but also emphasize the situation in Afghanistan where an increased troop size is deemed necessary in order to prevent the enemy from achieving the initiative and risk the tactical advantage and in the long run, the tactical victory. The homecoming of troops could be seen as one of the important deliveries in the speech as much of the argumentation within this speech connects to the ability to withdraw more troops from the conflict zones and bring them stateside. The strategic and grand strategic purpose of the war does occur in the rhetoric, but not in the same degree as the importance of the tactical victory in order to fulfill the policy of return on success.

One can conclude these finding by stating that the more detailed investigation of the speeches generated results which indicates a shift in emphasized victory. The earliest speeches focused on the strategic importance of reducing the incentives for states to sponsor terrorism and seek WMD and the agenda to secure international stability. Some of this focus clearly disappeared after the initial phase and the agenda transformed into promoting activities of nation building and reconstruction, while the desire to stifle the remaining strongholds of the resistance continued. It becomes clear after the speech in the year 2005 that the strategic objectives are overshadowed by the tactical challenge possessed by the increasing violence. Both conflict zones called for additional American troops and this emphasis is clear in the statement from the year 2007 and this could also be a reason for the increased awareness of the political costs that are intertwined with an increased number of casualties.
6 Conclusion and Discussion

This thesis was set out with the purpose to investigate the potential shifts in how victory is presented in the duration of contemporary conflicts. The argumentation focused on how democratic states, involved in wars, seem to announce different statements regarding victory in its outreach to its inhabitants. This paper has studied the case of the American administration of George W. Bush, who initiated and ruled during the first years in the Global War on Terror. By investigating seven annual State of the Union speeches in a combined quantitative–qualitative method, and with Martel’s theoretical framework on victory, the analysis searched after such potential shifts or static usage of the linguistics approach to victory. The answer to the stated research question according to this study is that the publicly announced implications of victory have been utilized in a dynamic way since it has been subjected to an ongoing shift during the examined time period.

The quantitative results indicated an actual shift in rhetorical arguments as the number (and therefore the argued importance) of the strategic and grand strategic victory motivations are perceived as decreasing in the shadow of the tactical victory which becomes increasingly dominant over time. Figure 3 and 4 both illustrates how the speeches delivered in the initial period of 2002-2004 emphasized the importance of the strategic victory. This tendency reached its maximum percentile proportion during the re-election year of 2004, only to become subordinated to the rhetoric of the tactical victory was primarily focused upon in the posterior period of 2006-2008. The grand strategic victory was certainly argued for in the initial speech of 2002 but could be argued to possess a minor role in the following year’s announcements, especially in the year of 2007 when the international and ideological aspect of the conflicts are barely mentioned in the statement. The relative disinterest in promoting the grand strategic victory rhetoric could indicate the difficulties of picturing the conflict as an existential ideological conflict. This conclusion is however not possible to draw from this paper alone, but this author calls upon continuous studies to fully explore this level of victory and its meaning.

The complementing qualitative result also indicates a shift in rhetoric during the reign periods of George W. Bush. The findings indicate a shift of emphasis from presenting the goals as implied with policy changes and political reforms abroad to the actual fighting on the ground. It roughly takes shape as the timeframe for the conflict drags out, even though President Bush clearly states in his speeches that this war cannot be finished without a long term commitment. This shift is visual due to the changed agenda and emphasized victory. At first, the strategic goal of preventing states to sponsor terrorism and to obtain WMD capabilities which transforms into an approach closer to nation building- and reconstruction activities after the Iraqi invasion. This shift is only visible in the
qualitative study as the transformation occurs within the strategic level of victory. The later shift, and the more significant shift for the purpose of this thesis, concerns the modification to focus primarily on a tactical victory in the speeches and the inclusion of arguments regarding preserving and bringing home American troops. This could be seen as a contra productive argument if the aim was to sustain or achieve the certain reforms or implement democratic institutions in the societies of Iraq and Afghanistan which had been emphasized in the earlier speeches, especially during a period of increased level of resistance.

The multiple usage of the different victory conditions enable the President to announce that victory is being achieved throughout the time period and all the speeches are characterized by the never ending success of the American endeavors to preserve the initiative and constantly being victorious. This flexible but undefined notion of victory does indeed prove its utility in this investigated case. Martel argued that the grand strategic visions were defined by this uncertain end state, but this thesis also indicates how the strategic and tactical victory can be a subject of change when the domestic political climate or the cruel reality of war and conflicts demands such a shift to occur.

The qualitative approach enabled this investigation to gain further insights in the details of each speech, but these findings are limited to the inelastic empirical materials which do not permit any further elaboration. One would definitely be more successful in finding explanatory reasons for why this shift has occurred by approaching a more diversified material and be able to analyze different variables and how they behave in a relationship with each other. This argued development can be questioned and criticized by the definition and selection of indicators, the matching with the materials or the simplifications of reality, but this author argues that the results should at least initiate a thought of the necessity to conduct further study on the concept of victory and defeat and elaborate on its meaning and consequences. The presented study in itself contributes with just a minor indication of the observed development and to ignite further reflection in the mind of the reader. In order to make more trustworthy conclusions, a more diverse material would need to be included, a larger amount of variables investigated and a range of causal relations examined.

6.1.1 Elaborations of Thoughts

One obvious question one should raise after reading this paper is the importance of the tactical victory in order to achieve the strategic and grand strategic levels of victory. As argued by this author earlier in this thesis, some political transformations may be generated while the conflict is lasting, but could one really argue that these political changes by themselves constitute a strategic victory? For example, the Americans did eventually provide both the Afghan and Iraqi society with presidential elections even though the violence continued out on
the streets, but these were not defined as the end state goal but just seen as a part of the greater political ambitions of these countries. This may indicate that the theoretical approach explained by Robert Mandel has something to provide the theory of William C. Martel in Mandel’s separation between the war winning and the peace/strategic winning phase of conflicts where the strategic effects of victory can only be achieved in the aftermath of the violence. The result generated by a study which utilizes such an approach should be compared to the findings presented in this study in order to examine the potentials of the different theoretical frameworks. This author is still puzzled regarding how to grasp the division of the two argued phases on a practical level: when does the war winning phase actually end? President Bush declared Mission Accomplished with reference to the Iraqi invasion in May 2003, but clearly he was wrong. How can one measure these processes of transition and identify the final end state of wars?

The result that has been presented in this paper raises a range of further questions and thoughts to elaborate, but it should also be utilized for further investigation on the connection between political rhetoric and the concept of victory in war and peace. One crucial discussion which should follow this thesis concerns the manifested importance of returning troops and its implications for the notions of victory. The growing concern to this issue in the later period of the speeches indicates the value of this phenomenon. This area demands further studies to unveil the lucrative and complex relationship: the withdrawal of troops could indicate the tactical victory and military superiority but it could also indicate a decreasing ability to bear the domestic political cost for continuing the war, which has been the argument put forward by Gil Merom. This could be further investigated by comparing American opinion polls with these findings and compare the emphasis on arguments about taking the troops stateside with a potential decrease of popularity for the American military involvement abroad. Further depth could be found by investigating the implications of the presidential re-election in the year 2004 which in this study indicated the last year in which the arguments concerning the strategic victory were superior to the number of tactical victory rhetoric. Could this correlation support the arguments of Martin Shawn et al. who argue about the connection between American Presidents usage of military in foreign affairs and the domestic presidential elections?

This question is related to the threat apprehensions of the society and the political process of securitize a threat in order to gain the support needed to take actions against a foreign threat. This thesis has been privileged by the simplicity to only study the notion of victory within one actor. The complex reality demands

scholars to elaborate this question further and raise the question of how victory and defeat are apprehended by the two opposing sides in relation to each other. The complex relationship between limited wars and existential wars got an increased level of attention from both scholars and military thinkers after the American failure to bring the Vietnam War to a closure, but the continued failure of large nations to bring closures in small wars highlights the essential uncertainties that characterizes the issue.\textsuperscript{150} The finding in this thesis indicated that the issue of the political cost of continuing the Global War on Terror became increasingly pressuring for President Bush, and his arguments concerning the returning of the troops could be a symptom of the issue described above. It would be interesting to see further studies dealing with the societal threats apprehensions in relation to the appreciated costs of preventing these threats from realizing.

This thesis has also presented a case which should be interesting to elaborate further within the field of political science and rhetoric. Combined with the stated questions above, the potential political rule of different politicians could then be a result of the specific politician’s skill to camouflage and cover up a complete failure or other mistakes by framing other factors as favorable achievements, while another, less lucky or able, politician may face an overwhelming collapse in political support when failing to recognize the importance of this issue. One could in later studies compare the shift of perspective of victory presented in this study with the generated results of similar studies of other cases such as other American Presidents, different countries and cultures etc. The actual securitization of a threat or a conflict is certainly interesting in itself, but this paper emphasis the value of understanding how conflicts are politically motivated during their existence. Such study should also elaborate with the lucrative phenomenon of the fog of war which can reposition earlier assumptions and believes.

\section*{6.1.2 Epilogue}

This thesis has shown how the meaning of victory has been utilized in a dynamical way within the annual State of the Unions delivered by the American President George W. Bush during his time of reign. This thesis has not been conducted in order to generate detailed and exhaustive answers but to initiate further discussions on the subject. The findings cannot provide any explanations to why this shift emerged in the speeches in isolation, but it can be used as a baseline for further comparisons and future research which could seek such answers. This character is both the blessing of this study and the curse of this thesis as the methodological and theoretical choices did not provide any further opportunities to study. On the other hand the presented result is rather dull: the shift has been illustrated and the contents of the individual speeches has been

exposed and subjected to investigations, but this paper cannot provide the underlying truth and reason regarding the existence and occurrence of this shift. Has the strategic goals been obtained or have they been subjected to subjugation under the military process within the conflicts due to increased difficulty to sustain the dominant role? As scholars and military thinkers continue striving for greater knowledge and insights in to the minds of decision makers and historical processes, this contribution describes but how one reality has been presented to the American audience by their leader, and could potentially illustrate the reason why several thousands of American individuals have sacrificed their lives in countries beyond seas and oceans away from their homes, knowing that in war, there is no substitute for victory.
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