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**War, Dissent and Resistance: An Analysis of Malalai Joya's *A Woman  
Among Warlords***

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**Abstract**

The democratic-reconstruction measures that were employed in Afghanistan following the US-led invasion in late 2001 were riddled with problems, one of which related to the composition of the new government. The inclusion of warlords in the nation-building process, although it made strategic sense for the fledgling government, resulted in the reproduction of cycles of violence and was particularly detrimental to the interests of women, whose supposed liberation was at the centre of the War on Terror discourse. This paper examines this phenomenon through the eyes of Malalai Joya, who, in her memoir *A Woman among Warlords* provides an insightful account of the radical, misogynist warlords who occupied positions of power in the newly formed government. As a young female politician in a historically male domain, Joya is a rare voice of resistance against her government and the American military. In raising her voice against the power holders, Joya subverts the dominant narrative of the war, especially pertaining to the liberation of Afghan women. She argues that by colluding with the warlords, the US and the Karzai administration were complicit in allowing violence to continue in political and social spheres. This paper argues that the US-led invasion largely failed to make any concrete ideological transformation and instead aided the reestablishment of oppressive power structures, especially in Afghanistan's provinces.

**Keywords:** Afghanistan, War on Terror, 9/11, Taliban, Warlords.