Gender & war:
Wartime sexual and gender-based violence
The case of Rwanda

Sára Dorottya Büki
MA Thesis
2019
Thesis supervisor: Anita Szűcs
# Table of contents

1. Introduction........................................................................................................................................... 3

2. Feminist literature review ..................................................................................................................... 7
   2.1. Feminist approaches....................................................................................................................... 7
   2.2. Gender........................................................................................................................................... 10

3. The war-gender nexus............................................................................................................................. 16
   3.1. Traditional views on war and security .......................................................................................... 16
   3.2. A toxic relationship? Gender, militarism, war ............................................................................. 19
   3.3. The role(s) of women in conflict.................................................................................................. 23

4. Conflict analysis................................................................................................................................... 29
   4.1. Theories and factors in conflict analysis ..................................................................................... 30
   4.2. The gendered dynamics of armed conflict ............................................................................... 34

5. Conflict-related violence and sexual violence ..................................................................................... 37
   5.1. Types of violence against women ............................................................................................... 39
   5.2. SGBV & rape .............................................................................................................................. 40
   5.3. The various interpretations of wartime rape ............................................................................... 43
      5.3.1. An inevitable byproduct of war? ......................................................................................... 44
      5.3.2. Contextual conditions & opportunity..................................................................................... 45
      5.3.3. Individual motives: ‘lust rape’ vs. ‘evil rape’ ........................................................................ 46
      5.3.4. Group dynamics .................................................................................................................... 46
      5.3.5. Rape as a strategy and a ‘weapon of war’ ........................................................................... 47

6. The Rwandan genocide ........................................................................................................................ 49
   6.1. Causes and drivers of the conflict ................................................................................................. 51
      6.1.1. Structural causes: gender inequality and ethnic divisions ................................................. 52
      6.1.2. Proximate causes .................................................................................................................. 58
      6.1.3. Internal developments ......................................................................................................... 63
      6.1.4. External components ............................................................................................................ 64
      6.1.5. The trigger ............................................................................................................................ 66
      6.1.6. Conflict triangles .................................................................................................................. 67
   6.2. Sexual violence in Rwanda: A case of gendered nationalism and ethnic cleansing through rape .......................................................................................................................... 68
   6.3. The role of Rwandan women in the genocide .............................................................................. 75
   6.4. The aftermath ............................................................................................................................... 78

7. Conclusion .......................................................................................................................................... 80

8. Reference list....................................................................................................................................... 82

9. Appendix ............................................................................................................................................ 94
## List of abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CRV</td>
<td>Conflict related violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SGBV</td>
<td>Sexual and gender-based violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GBV</td>
<td>Gender-based violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IO</td>
<td>International Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IHL</td>
<td>International Humanitarian Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IL</td>
<td>International Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICTY</td>
<td>International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICTR</td>
<td>International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HRW</td>
<td>Human Rights Watch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PTSD</td>
<td>Post-traumatic stress disorder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRT</td>
<td>International Relations Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LoN</td>
<td>League of Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IC</td>
<td>International Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPF</td>
<td>Rwandan Patriotic Front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPA</td>
<td>Rwandan Patriotic Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MRND</td>
<td>Mouvement Révolutionnaire National pour le Développement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RTLM</td>
<td>Radio Mille Collines</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to analyze the relationship between war and gender, understand their complex dynamic, and to investigate what factors have an impact on wartime sexual and gender-based violence. The central inquiry of this paper is: Is gender a causal factor in conflicts; and if yes, how does it influence them? If gender indeed impacts such dynamics, conflict-related sexual violence could also be investigated through the same lens. The empirical phenomenon of CRV has been observed repeatedly throughout human history, which generates several questions: Is SGBV a natural occurrence during wars, and thusly an inevitable episode that stems from human nature? What are the root causes of such atrocities, and what conditions make it more likely to happen during times of violence? Given the variety of answers to these questions, I am to set forth some arguments related to SGBV. Here, it is necessary to affirm, that these crimes can not only affect women, but men as well, as they can also become victims of CRSV. Nonetheless, for the purpose of my research and to limit its scope, I am to focus on women when discussing conflict-related sexual offences. An additional remark that I have to make is that while in conflicts women are stereotypically associated with victimhood, there is a much broader scale of roles that one must consider.

I have opted to make gender the analytical framework of my thesis, as it is a factor that invisibly permeates all areas of our lives, and in International Relations is an often-neglected approach to explain the presence of conflicts and conflict-related sexual violence. Thusly, with this study, I would like to contribute to the IR-, and mainly feminist literature through analyzing wars from this frequently overlooked perspective. As a woman studying International Relations, I find it mind-boggling just how marginalized women are in the field. Albeit, the situation is slowly but steadily improving, and admittedly women in ‘the West’ are very lucky compared to women in other parts of the world, we still live in a time where the lack of opportunity creates barriers for their equal representation. Given the events of the last 2-3 years, with the debate and conversation prompted by Hillary Clinton’s Presidential bid and by the #MeToo movement for instance, I found it more important to choose a topic within the frameworks of feminist theory, which might have been pushed to the backseat, because of intensive focus on developments in ‘the West’. By this token, I decided upon looking
at war as a practice, which is still very much a social problem\(^1\), but not through the eyes of realism or liberalism that are the most-cited theories related to the topic, but through the feminist “gender lenses”.

If one looks at the national-social context, it can be said that gender parity acts as one of the indicators of conflict. Thusly, countries that are highly patriarchic are more militarized, which when exacerbated by other factors, could spill over into direct violence. Additionally, feminist literature also opposes the proposition that SGBV is an inevitable implication of war, and rather emphasizes the importance of gender imparity in society as an indicator. A great deal has been written on the negative impact that masculine domination has on women, which is even more relevant during armed hostilities, that are the epitome of masculine, militarist practices. Feminist scholars, like Cynthia Enloe or J. Ann Tickner set forth the proposition that wartime SGBV also has its root causes in masculine oppression of women. It follows from this assumption that there is nothing natural and ineluctable in wartime rape, but that it occurs in highly patriarchal societies, and is another display of hypermasculinity.

While gender acts as an invisible force, and theories on which will serve as the backbone of this thesis, I would also like to showcase that gender in fact has a role in conflict analysis, and that it can indeed be inserted into other theories on conflict.

Hence, an additional framework to my analysis will draw upon ideas proponed by Johan Galtung. Galtung in his works elaborates on the notion structural violence, which opens doors to the introduction of ideas of feminist scholars. I firmly believe that looking at gender relations can enrich and deepen conflict analysis.

Analyzing gender inequality and gender normative roles is especially useful if one wishes to explain divergence in the scope of CRV, since rape and other types of sexual- as well as non-sexual offences feed on unequal power structures between men and women, and have roots in hegemonic masculinity\(^2\) and militarism; additionally, gender-

---


2 Hegemonic masculinity could be defined as „norms and institutions that seek to maintain men’s authority over women and over subordinate masculinities”. (Alison, M. (2007) ‘Wartime sexual violence: women’s human rights and questions of masculinity’, Review of International Studies, 33, pp. 75–90. doi: 10.1017/S0260210507007310.)
inclusive societies are less likely to be violent. Assaults on women carry several long-term implications for the society as a whole, effects of which can include mental health problems, the spread of HIV/AIDS, dehumanization, humiliation and social exclusion, all of which if not properly tackled, cumulatively widen the gender gap, reinforce masculine domination, and feed into the gendered continuum of violence, hence in order to counteract the violent tendencies that promote gendered exclusion, an inclusive ideology is key.

Sexual and gender-based violence has been utilized extensively as a strategic tool in wars, including in the 1994 Rwandan genocide, which will serve as a case study of my thesis. Through looking at the causes of the conflict, including how among other factors unequal power relations fed into the violence, I aim at showcasing how traditional gender normative roles coupled by the pre-conflict causes influenced the prevalence and magnitude of sexual assaults in Rwanda. Rape was a strategic weapon used for the purposes of ethnic cleansing, and in itself is a political act. It follows, that the country might be an idea case to instantiate how intersectionality feeds into conflicts.

All in all, what I want to demonstrate with my research is that there is strong interconnectivity between armed conflict and gender, and while one can recount several causes and factors, (may they be proximate or structural, direct or indirect) gendered relations that reflect structural power relations must not be neglected in conflict analysis. I would also like to refute the assumption that rape is an inevitable by-effect of wars, and contend that pre-conflict societies characterized by traditional gender normative roles and hegemonic masculinity serve as fertile grounds for CRV and exacerbate the extent of sexual offences during war, notably because of those structural inequalities that also increase the likelihood of direct violence. It is my belief that the scale- and strategic use of SGBV against women and men in Rwanda can be explained

---

3 Gender-inclusive in this context refers to a broadening of the incorporation of women into places where they have previously been marginalized.
5 Mazurana and Proctor.
by gendered nationalism, structural forces, and the constant need to prop up hegemonic masculinity and militarist practices. Finally, there are many stereotypes and debates related to women’s situation and roles during these periods, such as agency vs. passivity and victims vs. perpetrators, which I would also like to address. One should not apply a reductionist framework when looking at the role of women during conflict, since that denies them agency; moreover even when speaking of CRV, their experiences are much more complex and diverse than only being passive victims of wartime atrocities.

**Research methodology**

Relating to the methodology applied, I am to conduct a qualitatitive study, based on relevant feminist literature on the relationship between gender and conflicts. In addition to utilizing a feminist approach with gender-sensitive lenses, I am going to draw upon other approaches to conflict, such as Johan Galtung’s conflict theory, and the theory of intersectionality.

To enrich this inquiry, a case study is to be conducted, which shall test the hypothesis established. The Rwandan genocide of 1994 serves as an ideal candidate to explore the nexus between gender and war; as well as the implications for CRV.

This research is based on an interdisciplinary approach, which resorts to multiple disciplines, including International Political Theory, International Law, and History in order to derive the most comprehensive outcome.

The first set of category is related to gender-studies, including literature by prominent feminist writers, such as Jean Bethke Elshtain, Cynthia Enloe, J. Ann Tickner, Laura Shepherd or Cynthia Cockburn. In all of these instances, the workings and mechanisms of traditional gender normative roles and gendered societal relations, as well as the gendered international political sphere are well-accounted for. Moreover, I am to elaborate on the various approaches to conflict analysis, draw upon analysis of pre-conflict economic and social factors in predicting war, apply concepts of Johan Galtung, and introduce a gender-sensitive conflict analysis as well.

The second set of category relates to SGBV occurring in conflicts, which will on the one hand draw upon feminist literature, detailing the role that masculinity and militarism play in wartime atrocities. On the other hand, realist interpretations of rape as a collateral to and natural occurrence in wars will be sought through peer-reviewed articles to compare the two. Furthermore, I am to give an overview based on the
literature on the various types of violence against women, and various theories demonstrating the rationale behind such acts.

The last set of category revolves around Rwanda, including peer-reviewed sources about its history, colonial heritage, economic situation, and how the factors culminated in- and caused the events of 1994. Additionally, this section is composed of historical records on the Rwandan genocide, publications and reports of International Organizations, NGOs, governments, and news sources; besides, academic literature detailing the hostilities and the motives behind the mass rape in the country shall serve as another important pillar.

2. Feminist literature review

This chapter will provide an overview of the existing feminist literature on the topic at the center of my paper. There are several subcategories of feminism, which all offer similar, but yet different explanations on the matter, hence I am to elaborate on these, and what their contribution could be to questions on war and CRV. Additionally, the literature review will contain the definitions of central precepts, including gender, patriarchy and militarism; finally the operation of gender is to be discussed, following the thoughts of notable feminist figures.

2.1. Feminist approaches

Taking a closer look at the core ideas of feminist writers on the issues raised in the beginning is going to help further this investigation. It follows that under this section, I am to go through the main subcategories of feminism, and underline their basic tenets that relate to this study.

As alluded, while feminists unite under the proposition that women are subjugated to- and in an unequal power relation with men, feminism is not a monolithic approach, as there are many subcategories of it, contending how to alter such power dynamics.

For one, liberal feminists claim that women are discriminated against by legal measures and traditions, which halt them from exercising equal rights as those enjoyed by men. They devote extensive attention to the idea of ‘equality of opportunity’, which they would like to achieve through extensive political and legal reforms. However, one must
be conscious and make a distinction between ‘equal treatment’ and ‘treating as equals’. In many works detailing this theory, there is a tendency to use the former instead of the latter, which is a mistake. On the one hand, the first example emphasizes that women should get the same treatment as men, hence the wording falls short of considering previous injustices that women have suffered; this also relates to intersectionality, as even forms of discrimination can multiply and leave some more disadvantaged than others. On the other hand, treating as equals is a better approach as it levels the playing-field through the evaluation of previous social injustices and customs. In spite of the minor semantical difference, the core idea of provision of equality of opportunity through political-legal reform is essential as it focuses on the systemic power imbalances, which marginalize women. Relating to the case study of the thesis, one could argue that in Rwanda, there were major legal injustices in the system that discriminated against women, and have only been addressed in the aftermath of the conflict.

Another subcategory is standpoint feminism, which holds that our belief-system and knowledge are social constructs through language. J. Ann Tickner and other standpoint feminists hence raise concerns about those who make decisions, the normative viewpoint they follow, and whether those integrate women and their experiences as well. It follows, that in order to avoid the exclusion of women, one should start from their standpoint and experiences, otherwise masculine standpoints will be projected on politics, the state, and all areas of life. Within this subcategory, we can further distinguish between postcolonial- and care feminism.

On the one hand, the former devotes attention to the postcolonial discourses, exploitative relations, and political and economic inequalities; moreover, contrary to liberal feminism, it integrates other factors, such as racism. According to postcolonial feminism, the ‘East-West slope’, the East being less-developed and in need of the West’s civilizing mission is nothing but a Western conception. It is a way of legitimizing the exploitation of ‘the Other’ for self-serving purposes that derives from

---

8 Claire Malcolm, “Being and Becoming : Humanitarian Intervention and the Constructed Duty of Justice” (Cardiff University, 2009).
11 Malcolm, “Being and Becoming : Humanitarian Intervention and the Constructed Duty of Justice.”
capitalism. In addition, liberalism is also accountable for the reconstruction of flawed Western models of woman-man relations by forcing those models on other societies. This stands for the political and economic models as well, in spite of the local circumstances and their adaptability. A further critique is the Orientalist vision of women, showing highly sexual images of women that objectify them; which was also the case in Rwanda, where there was a hypersexualization of Tutsi women. In connection to the country-case, it is integral to talk about the ‘ethnic awakening’ that was the grim legacy of colonial period.

On the other hand, the latter theory investigates women’s position as mothers, caregivers, and peace activists. Care feminists like Sara Ruddick and Fiona Robinson theorize on the possible roles of women in conflict, such as that of ‘natural peacemakers’, caretakers and mothers; I am to debunk and contrast these assumptions with my case study. In reality, what we could see in Rwanda is that women’s role was not limited to these traditionally feminine and stereotypical duties, by the same token, they were very much involved in the perpetration of CRV.

As for radical feminism, advocated by Cynthia Enloe, the main notion that is the centerpiece of this subcategory of feminism is patriarchy, which they claim characterizes the whole system, and is “institutionalized through legal and economic, as well as social and cultural institutions”. Radical feminism theorizes much more about the binaries that patriarchy creates and reflects on its omnipresence, not only reflected in legal measures, but in all aspects of life; for this reason, it is mostly radical feminist ideas that my analysis will reiterate, albeit with reflection to other streams as well. A further consideration is that the early roots of the use of gender as an analytical framework can also be traced back to early radical feminism. The model proposed by radical feminists, which focuses on the underlying imbalances between men and women, also suggests that women are made invisible on the international scene, which

---


16 Tickner.
can only be changed by the total reconstruction of the society.\textsuperscript{17} Wars have gravely detrimental consequences for countries; nonetheless, they create peculiar post-conflict scenarios, whereby oftentimes women outnumber men, and offer a window of opportunity to rethink and reconstruct the traditional gender roles, which we could also see in Rwanda.

Finally, postmodern feminism rose as a reflection and critic to other subcategories, warning against the merging of ‘women’s’ experiences into a single category. They assert that since women’s experiences differ so much, a broader, inclusionary approach is necessary to avoid their further marginalization, as we cannot universalize their position and thus make ‘Western women’s’ experiences a point zero.\textsuperscript{18} Furthermore, the followers of these ideas fault those theories which reduce women’s role to a passive one; instead, they offer another perspective on women’s position in conflicts, one that is agency-centric, and one that completely opposes the victimization of women, as it holds that they are fully capable of taking care of themselves.\textsuperscript{19} Even though it is true that women have fallen victim to ethnic cleansing through rape in Rwanda, nonetheless they were also among the perpetrators, which resonates with the postmodern feminist views that women are agents themselves and not only passive sufferers of conflicts. The subsequent chapter is to deal with the common denominator of these warring sub-schools, and that is the workings of gender.

\textbf{2.2. Gender}

As many interpretations of the concept exist, one cannot circumvent the process of defining gender. It follows, that I am to elaborate on the notion, which is going to serve as the backbone of my research.

According to Diana Thorburn’s definition, we could define gender as “the complex social construction of men and women’s identities… [and] behaviors… in relation to each other. Fundamental in the discourse is the notion of power and power dynamics


\textsuperscript{18} Tickner, \textit{Gendering World Politics: Issues and Approaches in the Post-Cold War Era}; Sylvester, \textit{Feminist International Relations: An Unfinished Journey}.

between genders;”20 moreover, the fact that these identities are constructs, henceforth are changing based on how people define themselves.21 Feminist scholars seek to understand the relationship between the two (hence masculinity and femininity), which they describe as being asymmetrical. In fact, power is a notion associated with masculinity, which exerts its dominance over feminine identities, and produces a complex, able to reconstruct these unequal relations, that is referred to as patriarchy.22 I find that my research will be best served by focusing on and utilizing this delimitation, proposed by Thorburn.

In spite of such clear definition, which emphasizes the uneven distribution of capabilities and influence, feminist scholars do not tend to agree on what should be at the center of analysis. On the other hand, some might say, that instead of focusing on power, we should point out biological or natural elements, defining the gender of the person, and so associating females with caretaking activities, such as motherhood, while connecting men with qualities like aggression or violence.23 To illustrate this point, the description of gender by the International Committee of the Red Cross could be made mention of, whereby it “refers to the culturally expected behaviors of men and women based on roles, attitudes and values ascribed to them on the basis of their sex, whereas ‘sex’ refers to biological and physical characteristics”.24 I am of the opinion, that this interpretation of the notion does not give a complete picture, furthermore, I hold that it falls short of explaining the changes in women’s and men’s roles, as biological determinism is a static approach, while I am convinced that only a more dynamic interpretation can produce answers to the questions I’ve raised. In addition to the previous concepts, one might draw attention to Judith Butler’s concept of

---

24 Mazurana and Proctor, “Gender, Conflict and Peace.”

‘performativity’\textsuperscript{25}, which accentuates the rapport between sex\textsuperscript{26} and gender,\textsuperscript{27} asserting that both are figments of discourse and language, with people appropriating and internalizing gendered characteristics deemed pertinent to their ‘sex’.\textsuperscript{28}

Gender is a binary, not only influencing women, but men as well, who also have to conform to society’s expectations if they wish to fit in. Men harboring qualities associated with females, such as emotionality, are stigmatized for being weak. According to Sandra Withworth, hypermasculinity becomes scarred by deeds such as crying, having psychological issues because of PTSD, or being attracted to the same sex.\textsuperscript{29} Admittedly, the inquiry would be fully complete if one was to include the ways in which men, especially those not fitting into the mold of sharing the characteristics traditionally associated with masculinity, were touched by wars; moreover if an in-depth analysis would also be provided on the reasons behind and implications of sexual violence against men. Nevertheless, in the case of the Rwandan genocide, I am only to allude to their situation and the pressures that gendered expectations put on them, but shall focus on women’s experiences more. Still, I believe that one can draw some conclusion on their position as the reasoning behind the violations and consequences impacting their lives have the same roots as those for women.

One of the main difference between realism and feminism\textsuperscript{30} is that the former does not look at gender as being at the heart of causal relationships, hence believes in the applicability of a ‘gender neutral’ approach. In turn, the latter rejects the mere existence of such, and dedicates special attention to notions, such as ‘gender lenses’, since according to outstanding feminist theorist Cynthia Weber “gender differences permeate all facets of public and private life, a socially constructed divide”.\textsuperscript{31} Indeed, as Tickner

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{25} In her concept, performance indicates that there is a need for the repetitive performance of gendered characteristics in line with the sex of the individual, to be considered legitimate.
\item \textsuperscript{26} The sex of a person is usually determined by natural-biological factors.
\item \textsuperscript{27} Gender refers more to socio-cultural factors, rather than biological ones.
\item \textsuperscript{28} Butler, \textit{Bodies That Matter}; Shepherd, “Sex or Gender? Bodies in World Politics and Why Gender Matters.”
\item \textsuperscript{30} Feminism, contrary to masculinist discourse, promotes gender equality and opposes male superiority. (Goldstein, Joshua S. \textit{War and Gender: How Gender Shapes the War System and Vice Versa}. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.)
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
also pointed out, the standpoint from which one looks at events influences their understanding and interpretation; as women’s experiences differ vastly from those of men, one cannot conduct a gender-neutral analysis. Consequently, in looking at events through gender lenses, we are in reality focusing on underlying power-structures,\(^3^2\) which in this case are the ones that generate and boost violence and the likelihood of armed conflict.

Generally, we do not ponder about the meaning of gender, but perform the practice itself, which reconstructs the hierarchical structure favoring masculine traits. We seek social acceptance through the performance of ‘appropriate behavior’.\(^3^3\) Nevertheless, this is mostly not conscious, but a reflection of the fact that we take gender for granted.\(^3^4\) It is a social construct, a structure by which we make categorizations such as masculine or feminine tasks; still these deeds come together with a hierarchical ordering as well, assigning power relations unequally, in a way that masculinity will prevail.\(^3^5\) It follows that as politics is conducted by ‘gendered bodies’, these power dynamics are also enmeshed in its functioning,\(^3^6\) which make the political arena “a man’s world”.\(^3^7\) In fact, radical feminism finds the power-structure to be male-dominated or patriarchal, which they claim pervades all spheres, hence one must look at the picture through the gender lenses to uncover the institutional and normative workings of this male oppression.\(^3^8\) But if this power-relation is truly unjust, why don’t women act? As alluded, it is because they become normalized and ingrained in their identity. Social, economic, cultural, or political norms uphold the domination over women. It follows, that in conflict, sexual and gender-based violence can also be erroneously naturalized by those who overlook such factors.\(^3^9\) Feminists, especially radical feminists, claim that these oppressive structures must be challenged, otherwise we only reinforce the sexual objectification of women as well as a culture of violence; the way to achieve this and hence eradicate such oppressive structures is by the constant analysis of gender and the

\(^{33}\) Shepherd, “Sex or Gender? Bodies in World Politics and Why Gender Matters.”
\(^{34}\) Connell, *Gender*.
\(^{35}\) Mazurana and Proctor, “Gender, Conflict and Peace.”
\(^{36}\) Shepherd, “Sex or Gender? Bodies in World Politics and Why Gender Matters.”
\(^{38}\) Tickner, *Gendering World Politics: Issues and Approaches in the Post-Cold War Era*.
\(^{39}\) Mazurana and Proctor, “Gender, Conflict and Peace.”
notions associated with this binary. By and large, we should not take these categories as fixed and natural.

I have referred to a binary of masculinity and femininity, yet what do these notions subsume? Masculinity is in reality a social status, symbolizing superiority. The highly masculinized sphere of politics reflects the working of gendered ideas. As Simone de Beauvoir put it: “representation of the world, like the world itself, is the work of men; they describe it from their own point of view, which they confuse with absolute truth”;

this is in reality what feminist standpoint maintains. Although masculinity is robust, it is also very fragile, in need of constant work, or how Enloe puts it “daily propping up” to avoid its erosion. Wars are the ideal scenarios for men to assert their ‘manliness’, as they can solidify notions associated with masculine power, such as heroism, strength, leader and protector status, aggression, and domination. Thereupon, masculinity as a social construct prompts men to engage in hostilities, and is often viewed as a lesson for boys to ‘toughen up’ and be ‘real men’. We could also detect a glorification that encompasses these warriors. On the other hand, women are connected in mind to feminine traits, such as weakness, passivity, vulnerability, purity, caretaker roles, and emotionality; in fact, sometimes even feminist theories, such as care feminism, fall into the trap of strengthening such notions. An additional error according to postmodern feminists is the universalization of women’s experiences, since they claim that women’s circumstantial factors diverge significantly, and factors such as race, religion or ethnicity may act as further variables in determining their situation, including how vulnerable they are in a situation and how constrained their role is.

Naomi Cahn and Fionnuala Ni Aoláin drew attention to another key concept, ‘hypermasculinity’, which has to be treated differently from other subordinate types of masculinity. Angela Harris’s definition coins it as “a masculinity in which the strictures

41 Mazurana and Proctor, “Gender, Conflict and Peace.”
44 Mazurana and Proctor, “Gender, Conflict and Peace.”
47 Sjoberg and Via, "Introduction."
against femininity and homosexuality are especially intense and in which physical strength and aggressiveness are paramount”. In many societies, fighting and the person of the fighter is surrounded by respect that ultimately manifests itself in social and economic status, adding to economic imbalances between men and women. Moreover, the word aggressiveness has to be underlined, making people more prone to the escalation of violence and violent acts. As a consequence, this and other detrimental masculinities that emerge and thrive during armed conflict should be dedicated additional attention, as they can trigger extreme forms of violence, such as SGBV, as it could also be seen in Rwanda. According to Connell, this ‘macho’ power is a cultural ideal constructed by society, which rarely typifies most men, but serves the purpose of legitimizing and upholding patriarchy. Following Connell’s logic, we can see that CRV becomes an optimal instrument for the solidification and reconstruction of the fragile ‘macho identity’ that upholds patriarchy.

Radical feminists believe that patriarchy is one of the core notions that should be addressed, as its presence could be detected throughout history. By definition, it means “social organization based on men’s control”. Indeed, economic, social, legal, and cultural institutions all help maintain this system. It is now clear that patriarchy also serves the purpose of reconstructing unequal gender relations, which are multilayered, pervading all spheres of life, including economic inequalities, social injustices, and naturally political ones as well. It is what we could call a form of structural violence, one of the most fundamental ones, as it serves as the basis of and legitimizes other types of violence as well. An important deduction from all this could be that wars have their roots in patriarchy and gender inequalities; and no matter how one interprets the causes of a conflict, female-male identities and gender norms serve as the backbone of

---


49 There is a plurality of masculinities, not only one type, as men vary significantly. There are many factors, such as race, ethnicity, religion or class that shape their experiences. (Harris, A. P. (2000) ‘Gender, Violence, Race, and Criminal Justice’, Stanford Law Review, 52(4), p. 777. doi: 10.2307/1229430.)

50 Aolain, “Women, Vulnerability, and Humanitarian Emergencies.”

51 Raewyn Connell, Gender and Power : Society, the Person, and Sexual Politics (Stanford University Press, 1987).

52 Goldstein, War and Gender: How Gender Shapes the War System and Vice Versa.

the societal structure, which then engages in economic or political activities based on the dynamics set forth.

3. The war-gender nexus

In this chapter, I am to further explore the intricate relationship between gender and war, moreover introduce the notion of militarism. I am also to devote attention to what mainstream IR, mainly realist approaches have to say about the notion of war, how it deviates from the those of feminist literature, furthermore why I advocate the use of gender as an analytical framework.

According to Cockburn, wars are characterized by gendered dynamics, looking at which one can grasp how gender inequality and traditional gender normative roles help build up a system fertile and prone to conflict. Hence, gender normative violence\(^\text{54}\), which is “the routine domination, violence and silencing of women and girls”\(^\text{55}\) surfaces and becomes legitimized through social, economic or cultural norms for instance; as alluded, such norms are essential to the maintenance of patriarchy.

In the last part of this chapter, some of the main debates of feminist literature on conflict will be examined, namely that on the role of women in conflict, victimhood and agency. Conflicts are very context-specific, so we cannot make generalizations about their roots, but should always investigate the variables and indicators that play into the equation, with one of the most influential and underlying ones being gender. While in a situation like that in Rwanda, where women suffered SGBV, it would be instinctive to claim they were the victims of the conflict, it would also be erroneous as one should not restrict their agency to only one, passive role. Albeit, they were amongst the victim-population, some also acted as perpetrators, which goes contrary to stereotypical notions of women and their nature. To sum it up, one cannot neglect looking at the individual level and experiences of both men and women, as gender blind statist explanations very often fail to uncover the realities behind wars.

3.1. Traditional views on war and security

\(^\text{54}\) It related to how men exert control over and dominate women through various norms; and while there are levels to it, women are always situated in an unequal and lower position compared to men. At the same time, it helps normalize forms of violence against women. (Mazurana, D. and Proctor, K. (2013) Gender, Conflict and Peace. Available at: https://sites.tufts.edu/wpf/files/2017/04/Gender-Conflict-and-Peace.pdf (Accessed: 16 January 2019).)

\(^\text{55}\) Mazurana and Proctor, “Gender, Conflict and Peace.”
Most proverbial approaches to war are either the liberal or the realist one, while feminist theories are either completely neglected or have to suffice with the passenger’s seat. In fact, when one dives into the field of International Relations, power and security (interpreted as state security) are among the first notions that are studied, both of which are masculine concepts. On the one hand, there are definitions of power that portray it as the ability or capacity to achieve an aim, exert control, however already the 3rd definition utilizes the concept interchangeably with military strength. While Joseph Nye has written extensively about soft power, it is still hard power and high politics that is prioritized and first thought of when we hear the word. In reality, states and their actions are all gendered, as they work to maintain a system of oppression, favoring men, henceforth state-construction follows a masculine model.

Realism puts the main emphasis on states and gives them the central role in international relations, being the main, unitary actors. Their security is seen as paramount, since the international arena is characterized by anarchy, hence security also becomes a zero-sum game. Hobbes in Leviathan for instance argued that men live in a state of “perpetual war”, which also entails that survival in this system of self-help is the main goal, which could be achieved through balance of power. Nonetheless, given that they cannot trust one another, military buildup and readiness are crucial, since the state, which is male-dominated, must protect itself through military means if needed. It follows, that survival is connected to military buildup and military security. Core notions, as power or security, are defined by men and reflect their experiences, which feeds into the system of patriarchy and strengthens gender imbalances. As noted earlier, for realists, security in itself is a militarily- and politically defined concept, as the state must protect itself in the anarchical environment; however some like Hoffman argue that defense and military spending undermine the security of individuals, raising a

56 War either defined as “lethal ingroup violence” or “organized violence by groups”. (Goldstein, Joshua S. War and Gender: How Gender Shapes the War System and Vice Versa. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.)
59 Tickner, Gendering World Politics: Issues and Approaches in the Post-Cold War Era.
60 Anita Szűcs, ““Session 3: Realism, Lecture Notes, Theory of International Relations, Corvinus University of Budapest,”” 2018.
61 Szűcs.
culture that agitates violence.\textsuperscript{62}

The question arises: what role do social relations and individuals play in this equation? An often cited feminist critique of realism is that individual security concerns are overshadowed by these patriarchal, statist visions that concentrate on power in military-economic terms, and ensure the survival of this asymmetrical and unequal relationship between men and women.\textsuperscript{63} The father of neorealism, Kenneth Waltz offered a three-level-analysis in his famous piece \textit{Man, the State, and War}. While human nature serves as the first unit of analysis for realism, anthropological pessimism only portrays humans as rational egoists, lusting power; furthermore, it reiterates that conflicts are bound to arise as social relations are also conflictual.\textsuperscript{64}

Additionally, realists shut out women from the public sphere and are sidelined to the private domain for the stereotypical notions and beliefs already noted in the previous chapter. According to Enloe, this split and the categorization of the former as more important than the latter reflects the institutionalization of inequalities.\textsuperscript{65} Thusly, realism creates a gendered dichotomy that we can see, with women being associated with and assigned to the household and caretaking activities, while men with power and decision-making. According to Runyan, women’s identities become constructed in a way that they turn into outsiders in political life, the ‘other’ that is controlled and must be repressed for the maintenance of power by men, who control the state and ensure its preservation.\textsuperscript{66} What Runyan addresses in fact echoes Diana Thorburn’s definition of gender.

The feminist approaches to war and security differ significantly from the realist approaches as they apply a bottom-up methodology, focusing on the micro-level implications of hostilities.\textsuperscript{67} While other IR theories are concerned with modes of ensuring the security of the state and as noted in the previous part use a gender-blind approach, feminist theorists seek to integrate other aspects and widen the scope problematized, turning away from the state-centric analysis, to one that includes other security concerns, for instance issues related to sexual assaults and rape during wars,

\textsuperscript{63} Ruiz, “Feminist Theory and International Relations: The Feminist Challenge to Realism and Liberalism.”
\textsuperscript{64} Szűcs, “‘Session 3: Realism, Lecture Notes, Theory of International Relations, Corvinus University of Budapest.’”
\textsuperscript{65} Tickner, \textit{Gendering World Politics: Issues and Approaches in the Post-Cold War Era}.
\textsuperscript{66} Gülsen, “Feminist Challenge to Mainstream IR.”
\textsuperscript{67} Tickner, \textit{Gendering World Politics: Issues and Approaches in the Post-Cold War Era}.
which are concerns of human security, hence more individual-centric.\textsuperscript{68} Tickner for one rejects the state-centric view of security, as she talks about gendered insecurities, which are multileveled. Based on this logic, we can say that international, national and domestic/family securities are interconnected and all circumscribed by patriarchy.\textsuperscript{69} Jean Bethke Elshtain also offered a new model, following a similar logic to that of Tickner, which has at its heart the idea that gender molds and shapes all levels.\textsuperscript{70} It is visible that the concept of patriarchy, which was introduced in the previous section is a reoccurring theme of feminists when discussing security as well; given that it is multilayered and determines all aspects of our lives, we can view this structural inequality as a security threat and influencer of conflicts.

By and large, the gender blind vision of realism fails to look at the background, which is one pervaded by hegemonic masculinity; as noted in the introduction, it is its practices, norms and institutions that enable male domination over women, for instance facilitated by the military and militarism. It follows, that realism’s failure to address the gendered nature of the system and to broaden its understanding of security further marginalizes women. To illustrate this point, one could argue that women’s voices relating to security are not heard because they are not present at decision-making forums, thus their experiences are not taken into account when addressing security concerns; or one could make a similar argument, of standpoint feminism, that it is men’s sense of reality that is set as universal. By neglecting the differences of women’s and men’s experiences and security needs, and failing to address human security concerns, gender hierarchies remain. Therefore, another approach is necessary to reveal the invisible forces that affect security and can provide a comprehensive explanation of the causes of wars, which doesn’t deny individuals agency or reduce it to conflictual social relations mimicked by states.

3.2. A toxic relationship? Gender, militarism, war

\textsuperscript{68} Ruiz, “Feminist Theory and International Relations: The Feminist Challenge to Realism and Liberalism.”
Even though in the previous chapter I have instantiated what gender was, and built up the basis to understanding these convoluted relations, this chapter provides further theoretical examination of the nexus between war and gender, underpinning my theory that the two are very much interconnected and should be looked at jointly or in a relation to one another, especially if one seeks to understand how SGBV comes about in wars.

According to Cynthia Enloe, militarism is defined as “the step-by-step process by which something becomes controlled by, dependent on, or derives its value from the military as an institution or militaristic criteria”. An additional interpretation proposed by Peterson and Runyan highlights the pervasiveness of militarism as they claim it “refers to a process by which characteristically military practices are extended into civilian arena”, thus includes games or clothing that are connected to the military. Henceforth, militarization is inherently gendered, as several forms of authority, be that the state or the armed forces, work to legitimize and strengthen power-relations dominated by men. All in all, everything connected to the process is gendered, including the aim of power-competition, its means that are served by the military-industrial complex, its language that conveys domination and submission, and its impacts as well, which have severe detrimental consequences for women. It could be viewed as almost paradoxical that while realist theory claims to be gender-blind, through the omission of gender from the analysis of conflict and security, it ends up reinforcing the very thing.

In the same way, one could argue that it is a hard task to draw the exact boundaries between war and peace, as militarization is part of humans’ everyday life. Militarization is dependent on masculinity and the power relations that are connected to it, which are in need of constant legitimization by both men and women. Militaristic practices that go further and further serve this purpose, but at the same time blur the boundaries, and normalize these tendencies. In the previous chapter, I have pointed out that wars can boost men’s identity, as they transform the environment into one that

---

71 Enloe, Maneuvers: The International Politics of Militarizing Women’s Lives.
72 Sjoberg and Via, “Introduction.”
73 Mazurana and Proctor, “Gender, Conflict and Peace.”
74 Sjoberg and Via, “Introduction.”
75 Sjoberg and Via.
requires and prioritizes masculine values, such as strength and heroism. This environment in return is also more susceptible to violence, since to maintain ‘a real man’, one will have to engage in actions that will solidify hypermasculinity. Thereupon, these explanations and definitions complement each other and help illuminate the phenomenon of war as a gendered practice.

So, what is the liaison between gender and war? In a nutshell, they have a twofold relationship, whereby they mutually influence one another. On the one hand, the depth of dominance of masculinity in a given society has an impact on a country’s peacefulness or war-proneness, inasmuch as the deeper-rooted militaristic culture of highly masculinized societies makes them more disposed to engage in conflicts, unlike those societies that have low militaristic traditions.77 On the other hand, the after-war reconstruction period is just as important. Caroline O. N. Moser drew attention to the cyclical nature of wars, which can easily spiral back to the debut of hostilities. Provided that the rehabilitation efforts do not address the root-causes of the problem, one being deeply unequal gender relations, the same social institutions will be reproduced, subordinating and marginalizing women’s voices. Since militaristic practices are boosted by masculinity and patriarchy, militarization will spill over, and lead to the eruption of violence. According to her, until a steady peace with lower military investments is not reached, the spiral will go on.78 Unquestionably, conflicts have a major role in the preservation of unequal female-male relations, and only by breaking the cycle of reconstruction of previous patriarchal relations can one ensure that the asymmetric relation won’t heighten tensions.79

Joshua Goldstein in his book War and Gender identified several potential factors behind the gendering80 of war. On the one hand, he enumerated potential biological explanations for gender differences, such as: the genetics of men being programmed for violence, the relation between testosterone and aggression, strength, the adaptation of

79 Jean Bethke Elshtain, Women and War (University of Chicago Press, 1995), https://books.google.co.uk/books/about/Women_and_War.html?id=HkMHDr3d52oC.
the brain to violence, and lastly women’s nurturing role. On the other hand, he assessed psychological and behavioral theories, for instance: male bonding, working within hierarchies, childhood experiences, or views on intergroup animosity.\(^81\) A theory brought up in his book raised the issue whether women were more peaceful than men. Care feminist Sara Ruddick for one alluded that they were indeed more pacific, which was owing to their caregiver role, associated with motherhood.\(^82\) Albeit the idea is engaging, I am not convinced about her supposition. It seems to me that there is truth in the fact that women have a caretaking nature, though not all women do; additionally, it is also a question of the chicken or the egg, as women may seem more pacific only because they are for the most part reduced to passive roles and become excluded from active participation in combat. In such case, we can once again detect the workings of gender, scaling down the presumed causal relation to a plain correlation.\(^83\) Elshtain for one, refused to associate women with pacifism, as she held that it only served gendered dichotomies;\(^84\) while Tickner reiterated that by claiming that women are more peaceful than men, one inherently reduces women’s role to a passive one.\(^85\) Their position is in line with the postmodernist view that women’s agency should not be infringed upon by reductionist visions on women’s role.

As I have previously ascertained, gender is not static, and the division of stereotypically masculine or feminine tasks or traits is becoming more and more blurred. Indeed, we can talk about feminine men, or masculine women. Howbeit in mainstream literature on wars, men are associated with the heroic and just behavior of fighting, and women with victimhood; in reality there are many other roles that women can take on throughout periods of interstate- or intrastate struggle. I am to further elaborate on the potential roles of women during the hostilities in a forthcoming subchapter. All things considered, I hold that by using gender as an analytical framework, one can come to understand the buildup of wars in a complex way, with individuals being at the center; it opens up the possibility to view processes such as militarism in a different way, as a

---

\(^81\) Goldstein, War and Gender: How Gender Shapes the War System and Vice Versa.
\(^82\) Ruddick, Maternal Thinking: Toward a Politics of Peace.
\(^83\) Büki, “Humanitarian Intervention and Gender Equality, BA in IR.”
result of underlying power dynamics; as well as opening up new ways to understanding CRV.

3.3. The role(s) of women in conflict

Granted, it is not the central piece of my thesis, nevertheless it is my view that it is an essential part of this study to unmask and confute stereotypes associated with women in wars, especially when discussing such a sensitive matter that SGBV is, and at the same time reflect on criticism formulated by postmodern feminists. Debates on women’s victimhood and agency in wars form a part of feminist discussions as well, more often than not, their standpoints clashing, as it was also referred to in the theoretical overview. It is important to realize that while it would be one’s intuition to see women as mere casualties of the monstrosities of wars, it is only because of our conception based on gendered norms that this picture emerges in our head. Even though I am by no means trying to prove that they do not suffer and fall victims of the violence, to my mind it is equally important to accentuate that it is not only women who suffer, but men as well; furthermore, that women indeed have an agency, can take on many other roles such as becoming perpetrators and fighters, and that their active participation in the post-conflict reconstruction is pivotal to breaking the cycle between gender and wars. By and large, the postmodern feminist position is very important to look at, as it runs counter to common conceptions, and at the same time offers a more complex view.

Throughout history, we could see that gender identities were dynamic and malleable, hence the levels of asymmetry were neither the same in various national-, social-, cultural contexts, nor identical throughout time. In European history, both the First and Second World Wars brought about change in the situation of women. Life has been divided into two spheres: public and private, from which traditionally women were responsible for the maintenance of the private sphere, their role being reduced to mainly household activities, while men were the breadwinners, the heads of the family, and assigned to the public sphere henceforth being active in politics. Kaufman and Williams pointed out correctly, that during war, the two realms (public and private) converge, as women are often forced to take on roles from the public domain, which they were kept out from;\(^8^6\) this also reiterated Peterson and Runyan’s points on the pervasiveness of

militarism. In reality, the eruption of armed conflicts brought about a new and peculiar scenario, where men were off fighting, and many positions previously filled by men were left vacant, awaiting to be filled by the remainders, who were mostly women. Granted, the purpose of this thesis is not to give an overview of European women’s emancipation; nevertheless, I found this illustration impeccable, as it showcases the force that wars have on gender relations.

The standard model introduced in the previous section posits that masculinity and militarism are connected, within which masculine dominance thrives. There are two ways one could depict women’s roles. On the one hand, their portrayal could emphasize that women are in the majority of cases still excluded from the active participation in hostilities, and hence are interpreted as being the victims of war. This is also what we could call the ‘women and children first’ category, whereby adult women are reduced to the role of hopeless children, supported by the stereotypical view of “man does, woman is”87. On the other hand, a more radical-feminist opinion, which is also proponed by poststructuralist feminists, would reject their intrinsic victimhood, and would focus more on their agency, as they warn against the harmful consequences of drawing a passive picture of women.88 Charlotte Lindsey for instance claims that women are indeed actively involved in armed conflicts, but makes a differentiation between voluntary and involuntary engagement.89 Broadly speaking, I agree that there are indeed more roles that women take on when a conflict erupts, which corroborates their agency, that was defined by Long as “the capacity to process social experience and to devise ways of coping with life, even under the most extreme forms of coercion”90. It is fair to assume that both women and men are touched by armed conflicts through: involuntary displacement, loss of revenues, traumas and damages to physical and mental health.

---

equally, loss of relatives, torture or inhumane treatment, forced labor or sexual violence; howbeit, the extent and way in which they are affected by them is contingent on gender. Consequently, to imply that in such a situation one should not affirm and address their victimhood would be misguided, as even if one acknowledges the broadening of responsibilities and chores of women, their prospects in the public sphere, the inception of these duties cannot be taken lightly. What I mean here, is that these roles fall short of being conscious and voluntary choices but are as a matter of fact necessities prompted by the innate survival instinct that humans possess. Some might refer to them as survival strategies, which have a narrow elbow-room.

Be that as it may, in every scenario we can make a distinction between people that are more vulnerable and less vulnerable, as it is an inevitable and universal human condition. Stigmatization of victimhood however is not entirely based on gender differences or other constructs, but the existence of circumstantial factors too. As Martha A. Fineman put it, “some individuals can maneuver past disadvantage typically associated with our existing discrimination categories such as race or gender to excel”, which while acknowledging the presence and force of gender, assumes that there are other factors, such as race, but also religion or ethnicity, at the intersection of which some humans can be at more risk than others. Similarly, these are also constructs like gender, and can aggravate exposure to threats in case of their manifold presence. Economic factors and coping mechanisms are also relevant. Nevertheless, these are usually already limited by the existence of social factors, stereotypes, and constructs; it follows that they are only of secondary importance, and one should focus on the underlying power relations. It is for these reasons, conditional and circumstantial differences, that postmodern feminists warn against speaking of a single ‘woman’ category, bundling up their realities.

Women in many places, especially those with unstable order, face severe gender inequalities and discrimination, which compress into structural vulnerabilities that range from stereotyping, marginalization in the economic sphere with restricted labor market

91 Mazurana and Proctor, “Gender, Conflict and Peace.”
92 Aolain, “Women, Vulnerability, and Humanitarian Emergencies.”
94 Büki, “Humanitarian Intervention and Gender Equality, BA in IR.”
access, to reduced social mobility and exclusion. Armed conflicts, as noted earlier, are scenarios where these influences fortify, and push deprived and dependent people to the margins. Some might argue that women are not more vulnerable, yet I do not see eye to eye with this premise. Still, I wholeheartedly agree that they are not the only victims, and that they are not only victims. After all, without the intent to generalize, there are some cases and factors emphasized by experts, which underpin my argument. Byrne and Baden concluded several findings by which they put women in the ‘vulnerable’ category during wars especially. First of all, there is a biological/physical element making the female population more defenseless. They can be among the casualties, but most importantly are exposed to sexual and gender-based violence. At the same time, the raising intensity of hostilities heightens the risk of domestic violence as well. Indeed, a point often overlooked is the severe psychological impact that women are subjected to.

Second of all, they are a significant part of the internally-displaced persons, seeking refugee status or asylum. There are threats of sexual- and other forms of exploitation in refugee camps as well; moreover, even officials and police forces can take advantage of their authority. In addition, social and economic vulnerabilities become bolstered. Oftentimes they find themselves shut out from the formal labor market, lack the needed healthcare, and have reduced- or no access to financial support and educational opportunities, and are faced with water and food scarcity. Whereas men also face hardships, it is largely women who are more struck by these factors.

Finally, they adopt coping mechanisms or so-called survival strategies, which as they imply, fall short of being conscious decisions, but are rather involuntary acts that are called for by the situation. War-necessitated economic distress prevails upon women, who end up resorting to the only solution available to them, to take on jobs or wage-earning opportunities in the informal sector. Needless to say, these are perilous contingencies, which reduce these women’s safety, but seem to be the only means to provide for their families. Indeed, the demand for sexual- and other services flourishes

---

96 Albeit, it is mostly the combatants, thusly men who make up for the majority of war casualties.
98 Byrne and Baden, “Gender, Emergencies and Humanitarian Assistance (Report).”
during such chaotic situations. Militarism and socio-economic factors that have been mentioned lead to a rise of sex trafficking,\(^99\) prostitution or forced labor that are the forms of ‘modern day slavery.’\(^{100}\) The objectification of women is even more discernible where foreign soldiers or interveners are present, for instance in the case of Bosnia during and after the war.\(^{101}\) Other factors that raise the probability of human trafficking include patriarchal social structures and power hierarchies, discrimination and marginalization,\(^{102}\) or governmental failures. What is clear, is that gender plays a pivotal role in determining vulnerability to trafficking, as women are disproportionately overrepresented in this area.\(^{103}\) By exigency, they find themselves on the periphery, trying to juggle the newly-acquired roles and responsibilities. All in all, conflict scenarios undermine women’s stable position, their vulnerabilities become exploited through various forms of violence, and are forced to adapt or perish; nevertheless, based on the definition set out by Long, coping is an essential part of agency, so albeit women increasingly suffer and fall victims of armed conflicts, their experiences should not be treated as universal, more importantly should not be seen only through a window of victimhood. It is necessary to deconstruct essentialist notions such as women being only victims of war, as it not only reduces their agency, but necessitates a type of victimhood, that of the ‘ideal victim’ who is helpless and disempowered, to which many may not conform.\(^{104}\)

By contrast, some might decide to devote closer attention to women’s active role in hostilities and ponder on their status as soldiers, belligerents, or providers of support.

\(^99\) According to Article 3 of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, human trafficking constitutes the “recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.” (UNODC. “What Is Human Trafficking?” United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2019. https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/what-is-human-trafficking.html)


\(^102\) Ethnic, racial, religious or other forms.

\(^103\) Sullivan, “Trafficking in Human Beings.”

services. Quantitative data collected throughout human existence showcases that women have been active combatants once in a blue moon, with 99% of fighters having been male throughout the wars in history. It follows that this is a historical norm, which women conform to either because they have not had other aspirations, or they have been inhibited by institutions favoring men. Even though their presence amongst armed forces has been increasing since WW2, women fought and still fight mostly as members of irregular forces, and in some cases made up 30% of belligerents. According to many female fighters, the opportunities to take on new and significant roles empowered them unlike ever before, which means that there was a ‘raising of their status’ that accompanied their participation in the battle. The military roles that are typically associated with males led them to share that power from which they have been excluded. This also applies to the carrying of arms, which brought about the illusion of control and increased self-confidence. Despite precedence of female warriors taking on leadership roles in the military, gender injustices and discrimination remain, as they are frequently victims of rape or other sexual and gender-based violence, similarly to the civilian population. An additional factor to consider is these women’s statuses after the war is over. Most of them find themselves within the old patriarchal, oppressive framework, which creates severe problems in their reintegration. Owing to these reasons, they very often stand behind the idea that wartime was better for them, even if they were victims of abuse. Finally, Lindsey also cautions about ‘empowerment’, as she finds one should speak of it through the lens of other factors, including poverty, loss, violence and deprivation.

It is unambiguous that the situations of women in war and its aftermath are very complex and vary from case to case. It is my belief that the global picture cannot be complete without pinpointing both the restrictions conflicts put on women, but also the possibilities for them to step up more actively.

Finally, I would like to deliberate on women’s potential roles after the hostilities have ended. Albeit women are too often neglected in the post-conflict reconstruction, it

---

108 Arnett.
brings about new opportunities for them to assert their agency. What must be emphasized is that every conflict is different, hence they require distinct, context- and gender-sensitive approaches, targeting the diverging needs of people and groups, as they all have various capacities to deal with the exposure to the conflict and its implications. If women are not included in these processes, there is a high probability that the crimes suffered throughout the war will go unaddressed, which will strengthen structural vulnerabilities, therefore it is paramount that we assess this aspect as well. Given that war and gender mutually influence one another and that there is a gendered continuum of violence as Moser also pointed out, it is only by breaking and reforming the underlying structure, that root causes that feed into the conflict can be dealt with, since gender norms, roles and rules provoke the kinds of violence that are utilized. In the chapter to follow, it is the causes of conflicts, including this deeply entrenched structural source that is gender, what I am to devote attention to.

4. Conflict analysis

In the previous chapter, I have made a point about the diversity of conflicts, which necessitates their context-specific examination. Several causes, drivers, indicators, facilitators as well as impediments influence the dynamics as well as the eruption of conflicts, all of which have to be taken into account in this fiddly process, called conflict analysis.

The technique itself could be defined as “the systematic study of the profile, causes, actors, and dynamics of conflict.” There are several levels and approaches to conflict analysis; nevertheless, as a process, it helps grasp the dynamics and underlying motives that culminate in a conflict, which could be simply defined as a clash of interests. I am of the opinion that conflict-sensitivity is essential, hence there must be a good understanding of the pre-conflict context in order to successfully tackle the causes. One important factor, in which my analysis diverges from most, is that I seek to incorporate gender into the model, and transform it into a gender-sensitive analysis. This is not unheard of, as there are many toolkits that have been published by various

---

110 Lindsey.
112 Mazurana and Proctor, “Gender, Conflict and Peace.”
organizations, such as Saferworld and the Ugandan Land Alliance, that deal with the incorporation of this dichotomy in the dissection of armed conflicts.

In the prior section, I have reviewed the difference between traditional IRT and feminist approaches, and concluded that though realism and its lookout on security serve as important pillars in international relations, because its main actors’ (states’) actions are all gendered, constructed following a masculine model, the position to conduct a gender-blind analysis of conflicts would render imperfect accounts. Once realists coin security in political and military terms, militarization and gendered norms associated with it will prevail, laying the grounds for a feminist interpretation of events. Gender, as established earlier in this paper, serves as a quintessential basis, for gendered power relations cut across indicators and variables; furthermore, they very often go unnoticed and are neglected to the detriment of peace processes. It follows, that to fully understand the roots of the conflict, one must take into account gender norms and normative structures, institutions and processes such as militarization that shape conflict dynamics. What is more, is that CRV is also dependent on these relations and the interactions between masculine and feminine identities. All in all, if one wishes to look at wartime sexual atrocities, gender as a crucial underlying determinant among the causes of conflict has to be investigated.

The following section explores some common theories on conflict analysis, including categorization of its causes, and ideas related to its dynamics. A special emphasis will be put on Johan Galtung’s theory, as it opens a door for feminist concepts, including the gendered dynamics of armed conflict, which I contend could enrich his reasoning.

4.1. Theories and factors in conflict analysis

Several taxonomies exist related to the causes of conflicts and wars. On the one hand, there is an interpretation based on the temporal scope of events that identifies structural causes, proximate causes and triggers. On the other hand, one could take a path that is more focused on actors, categories including internal-, relational- and contextual causes. An additional theory concerns unmet needs, which falls short of providing an exhaustive criteria; furthermore, assumes all needs to be equal, which isn’t accurate.\(^{114}\)

Since categorizations are not mutually exhaustive, for my case study, I am to address

both temporal and relation-focused approaches. Likewise, both political-, economic-, societal- and security indicators are to be devoted attention.\textsuperscript{115}

Conflict situations are extremely complex, brought about by the coexistence of multiple phenomena; hence the responses to them should also be tailored in a way that they target the root-causes of that specific conflict. As Eleanor O’Gorman put it, it follows from this proposition that “conflict analysis should edit and capture the back story, the key events, the actors and their complex interaction over time.”\textsuperscript{116} The violent conflicts of the 1990s and 2000s were the driving forces behind the resolve to find conflict-sensitive approaches, which led to the development of tools in post-conflict development planning and reconstruction, such as conflict assessment and analysis. Due to the multifarious nature of conflicts, the types of analysis are also diverse, which at the strategic level may include for instance:

1. Actors/Parties: The players can be divided into three levels: national, regional, and international. One instance for the presence of all these could be the conflict in Syria. Within the levels, there can be actors such as political leaders, the government, rebel groups, human rights groups, regional or global powers, neighboring countries, etc.

2. Structural issues: These underlying tendencies are in reality the causes and drivers of the dynamics and the conflict as well. They can range from discriminatory treatment and inequalities, quest for resources, militarization, to other political, social, economic and security factors. Therefore, gender fits into this category as well.

3. Events and dynamics: The occurrence of certain events can further push towards the escalation of a conflict, including as an example tensions surrounding elections, or political violence.\textsuperscript{117}

O’Gorman’s conflict analysis matrix of a post-conflict situation\textsuperscript{118} reflects on the intricacy of wars in a very detailed manner. While she highlights some elements concerning the position of women, such as the number of female-headed households, legislative inequalities, or violence against women, it still falls short of going deep enough into the complex hierarchical relations between males and females; similarly her

\textsuperscript{117} O’Gorman.
\textsuperscript{118} See Appendix 1
understanding of violence against women is restricted to mostly sexual violence. Notwithstanding, I highlighted this theoretical approach as it is a much more inclusive and convoluted proposal than ones that only focus on the state-security level.

Correspondingly, one might say that when dealing with the subject of conflict analysis, the incorporation of Johan Galtung’s concepts is indispensable. As far as I am concerned, I see a great opportunity for feminist notions in his theory. Galtung is a widely acknowledged political scientist, who theorizes on peace and conflict studies. He founded the PRIO as well as the Journal of Peace Research. He has worked as a conflict mediator, which gave him first-hand experience of the dynamics of conflicts. His peace and conflict theory has been recognized worldwide, moreover the ABC triangle that he conceived often serves as the basis of conflict analysis. The ABC triangle, or conflict triangle provides a comprehensive framework, whereby A indicates attitude, B belief, and C context and contradiction. Firstly, A/attitude is the cognitive element, hiding the hard feelings and perceptions of parties and actors to the conflict. Secondly, B/behavior denotes the actual deeds that cause harm to the other side, and includes violence. Thirdly, C/contradiction & context could be framed as the major incompatibilities due to colliding interests, one excluding the other. The sources of incompatibility can be numerous, ranging from economic-, social-, political changes, unequal societal structures or scarcity of resources, to many other disagreements of needs or interests. Causation amongst the three can work in just any way, as they are interactive and codependent.

In my case study, I am also to put to use Galtung’s second triangle, which separates conflict into three variations: cultural violence, structural violence and direct violence. While the former two are invisible, the latter has a physical and/or psychological element that is manifest, henceforth killing, torture, humiliation, rape and

\textsuperscript{119} As well as mathematician, sociologist, and the founder of the discipline of peace studies.
\textsuperscript{120} See Appendix 2
\textsuperscript{121} Patriarchal structures and ethnic tensions would fit here.
\textsuperscript{123} See Appendix 3
\textsuperscript{124} The two triangles are linked, as the contradictions and incompatibilities in the system culminate in structural violence; cultural violence is connected to conflict attitudes; and direct violence is sparked by conflict behavior.
sexual assault are within this category. It is important to emphasize that direct violence has its roots in the other two forms of violence, and at the same time it feeds into them. Cultural violence contains the belief-system of individuals and groups that are negative towards another group. It serves as a motivating factor as well as one that establishes legitimacy to structural- and direct violence. Finally, structural violence is a very relevant element when trying to fit gender into the picture, as it relates to the constellation of conditions having unjust and harmful implications for a group; thus is discrimination against a group, which creates inequalities in the social-, economic- or political system. It follows, that traditional gender normative roles and processes such as militarization, stemming from highly patriarchal systems are sources of gender inequality, and are within this category. Indeed, Galtung explicitly mentions patriarchy as a manifestation of structural violence, since it is exactly about power relations, which are unequal in nature, positioning males and females in superordinate-subordinate relations, having unjust consequences for the latter, which are constantly legitimized through cultural violence.

While Galtung in his theory opens the door for a gender analysis and he himself mentions it, he still falls short of unmasking the social relations and power hierarchies that it masks, which forge violence. What is more, he doesn’t make a clear distinction between sex and gender; as well as neglects many forms of patriarchy, albeit it wasn’t his main purpose to comprehend and explain in depth the intricate operations of gender. While his brainchild is one of a kind, spreading out and covering many factors and aspects of conflicts, from a feminist point of view, it still falls short of tackling some crucial aspects of gendered relations, the magnitude and effects thereof, as it is at the heart of the construction of violence. It follows that an additional point of view or approach might benefit his theory, which could shed light to the underlying dynamics of gender, how this social construct manipulates the various stages of violence, and how armed conflicts, as well as gender normative violence, serve the exact purpose of

128 Confortini, “Galtung, Violence, and Gender: The Case for a Peace Studies/Feminism Alliance.”
legitimizing and maintaining male dominance. Direct violence in reality is extremely influenced by gendered power dynamics. Patriarchy, as a form of structural violence as Galtung put it, gains legitimacy and is strengthened through the military, an archetypical patriarchal institution; but also through direct violence, as toxic and violent masculinities thrive in these situations, rewarding stereotypical masculine traits. Following this logic, we can assert that it is a two way street. On the one hand, structural violence can spill over into direct violence, in this case, a patriarchal structure with unequal power relations and traditional gender normative roles increases the likelihood of direct conflict; on the other hand, direct violence increases the structural violence, widening the gap and power asymmetries.

4.2. The gendered dynamics of armed conflict

Most of the arguments of this paper have already provided a far-reaching outlook on how gender permeates all facets of our lives and shapes armed conflicts. I have previously elaborated on some theories and approaches to conflict analysis; moreover, in prior chapters discussed the relationship between war and gender and detailed how militaristic practices connected to patriarchy easily undermine peace. The subchapter to follow shall introduce an additional analytical approach, which is based on gender and how it affects wars. The concept of ‘gendered dynamics’ was coined by Cynthia Cockburn, who was a feminist scholar having conducted extensive research on women in armed conflicts and how gender shaped conflict dynamics. It is my belief, that her concept has a place in- and adds value to my thesis, as it is precisely on how gender, a notion symbolizing power, organizes relations and social constructs, shaping the system and influencing war-proneness and violence.

In reality, the distinction between women and men, including ideas as well as expectations associated have been normalized and are rarely looked upon, since there is a routine and habit associated with them. Equally important is the fact that these gendered roles have been reinforced as a norm. It follows that “gender power is seen to shape the dynamics of every site of human interaction, from the household to the international arena”; it not only structures social relations, but molds political power as well.129 Thereupon, as an underlying factor, is omnipresent, and has significance for the

---

different stages of violence. In each stage, Cockburn highlights indicators of the working of gender, which help understand how it shapes conflicts.

Firstly, Cockburn identifies a the pre-conflict period, in which one can detect conditions, factors and warning signs that point towards the onset of an armed conflict or atrocities. Johan Galtung’s structural violence would fit into this category, with economic inequalities or hardships and gender inequalities being among the indicators. Conflicts that have erupted in the 90s, just like it was the case in Rwanda, had roots in economic imbalances, both internally and externally, which were a result of tendencies of the previous two decades, comprising the rise in oil prices in the 70s and 80s recession. Countries such as Rwanda suffered gravely from their economic dependency, and became forced to undergo economic liberalization followed by structural adjustments, which had grave societal implications. Traditional family models with male breadwinners were destabilized by high unemployment rates, also pushing them to look for other opportunities, mostly in the military or as outlaws. Around this period, we can speak of the feminization of poverty, with economic distress hitting women hard. The rise in men joining the military, along with higher military spending are often coupled by changes in discourse. The media becomes a powerful tool in spreading messages of patriotism, traditional family values based on patriarchy, or ethnic purity.\(^{130}\) It follows that all of these factors and conditions make countries more prone to violence.

Secondly, political violence and/or armed conflict erupts. It is mostly men that are involved in the fighting. This is for a variety of reasons, ranging from patriotism, through self-defense, to money; nevertheless, the patriarchal system and hegemonic masculine identity that needs perpetual corroboration through notions like heroism, strength and power, provide the rationale underneath all. According to most of the literature, women become objects in need of protection, and chiefly constitute the ‘civilian’ category, along with children. Other viewpoints on the roles of women during times of armed conflict have already been mapped out, hence I wouldn’t go further into this. Nevertheless, Cockburn in *War and security, women and gender* observes that the qualities that women and men become associated with, as protector-protected, are dichotomous and complementary, which means that “war can seem the fulfilment of

\(^{130}\) Cockburn.
gendered destinies”. Correspondingly, the struggles and challenges women must face have been noted, including the survival strategies, their new position as the head of the household, forced displacement, and conflict-related violence. Sexual offences increase significantly during wartime, but this will be the subject matter of the next chapter, exploring and analyzing why and when these atrocities come about during armed conflicts. By all means, it is visible that gendered power relations are prime movers of events.

Thirdly and finally, a peacemaking process and a post-conflict reconstruction follow in an ideal case. While women are seen by many as ‘natural peacemakers’, their potential contribution to such processes goes unnoticed. In fact, they are seldom invited to the table, which has as a consequence that the post-bellum order will be formed to men’s image, rebuilding and strengthening the same patriarchal system that existed beforehand. Additional concerns are related to for instance post-conflict justice, as in many cases wartime atrocities are not addressed, no tribunals are set up, and perpetrators go on to enjoy impunity. Social stigma is also something that women have to live with following violent conflicts. In many cases the rigid social and gender norms lead to women’s ostracism. Rape carries a heavy stain on women’s lives, for which their families can cast them away, since they violated family honor and virtue; under those circumstances, they will find themselves without a support system and wage-earning opportunities, thus will slide deeper into poverty. Their options will reduce to sources of income from the informal economy, such as sex work. Duly noted, the experiences lived through carry a heavy burden for men as well, very often suffering from PTSD, which also entails that they would not fit into the traditional gender normative role expected of them.

These ideas closely relate to what Moser called the gendered continuum of violence, which maintains that there is a “threefold continuum of political, economic and social violence”; by the same token, gendered causal factors can also be identified at all levels. Moser’s stance is in a synergy with what Tickner holds, which I have

---

132 Cockburn, “The Gendered Dynamics of Armed Conflict and Political Violence.”
133 Cockburn.
135 The levels being structural, institutional, interpersonal and individual.
previously implied, namely that gendered insecurities are present at all levels and are interconnected. Given these points, it is fair to say that there must be sensitivity to gender differences in post-bellum peacemaking and reconstruction, since men and women had very different experiences; accordingly, they will have diverging needs. Following Cockburn’s argument, we could see how the lack of adequate (as in gender-sensitive) peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction can lead to an unstable and unequal system, where structural violence remains and thrives, fueling direct violence. Understanding what effects gendered power structures have on institutions, be those the family, the state or the military, moreover how intersectionality with ethnicity, religion or race works, helps us better understand the dynamics of armed conflicts as well as reconciling animosities.

5. Conflict-related violence and sexual violence

The question may arise, how does conflict-related violence and sexual and gender-based violence fit into this inquiry and case study? First of all, I find it to be a useful illustration, given that such crimes pose major security concern both immediately and most likely in the future as well. This is in line with my previous criticism of realism that fails to take into account the individual; hence once again, I am opting to look at human security and utilize a bottom-up methodology. Second of all, there is a tendency to speak of such atrocities in a way that normalizes and naturalizes their occurrence; thus I wanted to review the existing theoretical explanations surrounding them and find the one that can best account for their manifestation. Lastly, I maintain that the presence of CRV in wars indicate gender imbalances in the country in question, warranting an analysis that acknowledges gendered power dynamics. As we cannot say that such atrocities are universal concomitants of armed conflicts, it is essential to try to debunk why they have taken place in that exact country, what were the factors that made it a fertile ground for such acts. All things considered, conflict-related sexual and non-sexual violence serve as indicators and symptoms of the gendered nature of wars. In Rwanda, the occurrence of mass systemic rape, as well as its weaponization, highlights the presence of structural violence and unequal gender relations in the pre-conflict period, which contributed to the culmination of problems in a direct conflict with sexual violations. In fact, their mere presence showcases the direct objectification of women,

138 Cockburn, “The Gendered Dynamics of Armed Conflict and Political Violence.”
and a normative culture that deemed these actions appropriate, since women were not viewed as being equal to men and were constrained by stereotypical, gendered expectations. It is my belief that we have to explore and evaluate conflicts through gender lenses, since only by looking at these complex, multilevel dynamics and gendered power relations can we grasp the underlying causes of conflict-related violence. While it would be easy to infer that these grievances are natural concomitants of armed conflicts, it would also be an erroneous oversimplification of a wider phenomenon. For this reason, chapter five shall focus on the last notion introduced by this research, which is wartime sexual and gender-based violence as well as CRV.

It is important to realize that CRV is not only sexual violence, as there are many distinct forms and shapes that it can take. Furthermore, sexual violence is not only rape; hence I will start by the clarification of the elements and definitions to be introduced. First, violence in general is defined as “behavior involving physical force intended to hurt, damage, or kill someone or something.” Examples could be forced displacement, killing or massacre, sexual violence or torture. If we look further, violence against women is already given a broader description, the UN characterizing it as “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life”. This is different, as it already relates to psychological damage, as well as specifying that it is absolutely irrelevant from a definitional point of view, in which sphere that violence against women have taken place. Regarding the private-public dichotomy, an important observation made by Kaufman and Williams was that one could draw a direct correlation between the increase of domestic violence and war. Second, sexual violation as a form of gender-based violence is “any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, or other act directed against a person’s sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting”. It can have several manifestations, such as rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced

142 WHO, “Violence against Women.”
pregnancy, enforced sterilization, forced miscarriage, trafficking, forced nudity or mutilation.\textsuperscript{143}

Third, rape, as a form of sexual violence, could be defined as “the physically forced or otherwise coerced penetration of the vulva or anus with a penis, other body part or object.”\textsuperscript{144} The subchapter to follow will dive further into the types of violence that women face.

5.1. Types of violence against women

As has been noted, we can identify several forms of violence against women. Sexual assaults against them is only one form that it takes on, albeit the most commonly referenced one. There is in fact less attention paid to socioeconomic grievances or reproductive violations; furthermore, even the forms of sexual aggression and rape are sometimes portrayed in a hierarchy, genocidal rape being at the top.\textsuperscript{145} I am of the opinion that by rating these violations as more or less egregious, one runs the risk of tacitly making some of them more acceptable, which creates a slippery slope. One model, that was drawn up by Mazurana and Proctor denoted seven distinct categories of gender-based harms and violations that are the following.

1. Male exchanges aiming at asserting their manhood: This category includes strategies to uphold their domination and maintain control, hence strategies to build favorable power-dynamics. An example that would fit here is gang-rape.

2. Gender-symbolism: As gender carries symbolic meaning, those who overstep the boundaries of femininity will be punished for their transgressions.

3. Torture, mutilation, or other bodily harms: In order to terrorize women and ensure their subjugation, reproductive organs of women are mutilated. Other means or coercion include sexual slavery, rape, forced pregnancy, etc. Rape in its own can take on several forms, with objects, public rape, or gang-rape.

4. Motherhood-related violence: The maternal role of women can be exploited in several forms, such as through forced pregnancy, emotional torment by the abuse, kidnapping, or other forms of harm inflicted upon their children. Accordingly, both


\textsuperscript{144} WHO, “Violence against Women.”

\textsuperscript{145} Henry, “Theorizing Wartime Rape: Deconstructing Gender, Sexuality, and Violence.”
psychological and physical forms of violence are parameters here.

5. Labor and property-related issues: The disruption of peace and traditional gender-roles has severe economic consequences for women, who usually have to step up as providers of the family. Nevertheless, this is a hard task, as economic injustices are entrenched in societies, with women having restricted labor mobility. In addition, in many countries property ownership for women is curbed by law. Livelihood opportunities hence become narrower, increasing poverty and defenseless, which is coupled by increased responsibilities, such as caring for the family, and in cases for orphans of the war as well.

6. Social capital: Humiliation and exclusion associated with social stigma can lead to disruption of social networks, which can trigger material losses as well.

7. Gender multipliers: The marginalized status of women and the abuses suffered during the conflict makes them more susceptible to further harm, which is referred to as gender multipliers.146

It is visible from these categories that Mazurana and Proctor not only created the taxonomy enlisting the examples of violence, but in each case they tried to give an underlying reasoning of the motivation behind these acts. In the case of Rwanda, some of these forms have been already present during the pre-conflict period, while others have surfaced during and after the genocide.

5.2. SGBV & rape

Rape as a war tactic is not a new phenomenon but has cropped up throughout the wars in history. The Red/Soviet Army was infamous for the raping of women and girls, which was also the case throughout the occupation of Berlin in April-May 1945, also having been an act of retribution and revenge for German ideology of racial superiority during the Second World War. The Japanese established brothels filled with ‘comfort women’, who were forced to satisfy the sexual demands and fetishes of soldiers. The majority of them were minors from Korea, but their exact number is hard to predict, because of both their undocumented status and the destruction of documents by authorities. During the Bosnian war, the scale of sexual slavery and sex trafficking shocked the International Community. Other cases that could be mentioned include

146 Mazurana and Proctor, “Gender, Conflict and Peace.”
sexual assaults in Sierra Leone, Israel or Palestine, Sri Lanka, El Salvador, and Rwanda.\textsuperscript{147}

Nowadays, sexual violence is surrounded by an international taboo, including several legal measures and protections. It is not a novelty that the prohibition and prosecution of such acts exists, since it was a gradual development, a response to specific acts of violence. Already in 1863, rape was considered a banned activity by the Lieber Code, and while IHL forbade forms of sexual violence during armed conflicts, it was only with the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 that they were expressly addressed, which was coupled by the Additional Protocol of 1977.\textsuperscript{148} The mass atrocities that have been committed against women (but also men) in Rwanda as well as Bosnia during the 90s sparked the necessity for the furthering of legal measures in order to ensure that these crimes do not go unaddressed. Thusly, the ICTY and the ICTR have been set up, which helped break a culture of impunity, added to the evolution of International Law,\textsuperscript{149} and set out precedents. Rape became to be considered a war crime, crime against humanity, and since the Akayesu case, we can speak of genocidal rape as well.\textsuperscript{150}

The reoccurrence of instances of CRV of a sexual nature could serve as legitimate basis to the claim that as SGBV has characterized many wars, it might be inevitable; notwithstanding, feminist scholars firmly reject this supposition, as rape is for them an inherently gendered activity that is about power. The presence, frequency and type of rape in conflicts varies significantly,\textsuperscript{151} which means that it is erroneous to interpret it as a natural part or collateral of war. A recent quantitative study conducted by Cohen and Nordås found that out of 177 African conflicts, 59\% experienced no reported sexual


\textsuperscript{149} Büki, “Humanitarian Intervention and Gender Equality, BA in IR.”


\textsuperscript{151} Wood, “Armed Groups and Sexual Violence: When Is Wartime Rape Rare?”
violence, and in 11% and 16% was there systematic and severe patterns.\textsuperscript{152} The statistics also underpin that rape and sexual violence does not occur in every war, and not every soldier becomes a rapist, so we must be cautious and should never treat it as natural; although it has to be noted, that in many cases sexual violence in armed conflict becomes normalized within the community,\textsuperscript{153} which can be viewed as a consequence of gender normative violence. Nevertheless, for the sake of accuracy I shall make mention of all of the ideas on the catalysts as well as the purposes of sexual violence during armed conflicts.

The general motivations cited are fourfold, including but not restricted to militarism, the lack of restraint, a biosocial association between sex and violence, and violence and sexuality being incremental. In fact, it is most commonly explained either through the narrative of sexual desire and the ‘testosterone argument’\textsuperscript{154}, or through internal anger and frustration.\textsuperscript{155} Not only the etiology and underlying motivations, but the aims behind someone committing rape during an armed conflict can also be multiple. Some of these include theories on male bonding and the boosting of morale; others focus on how rape is used as a tool of torture, terrorization and humiliation, which is motivated by hatred of the enemy; also others see it as a tool and form of genocide and ethnic cleansing.

Finally, Cynthia Enloe in \textit{Maneuvers} speaks of three types or forms of militarized rapes, which can vary in situations, based on the ulterior motivations enumerated. First, ‘recreational rape’, which is linked to prostitution and an example of it would be the ‘comfort women’ in Okinawa. Second, ‘national security rape’, which means that rape or the threat thereof is present for the perceived assurance of national security. One could mention several historical moments, such as the terrorization and humiliation of women in Ireland during the Easter Uprising. It was also an efficient tool in making the population construe security in military terms. Beneath this rhetoric is a male-

\textsuperscript{155} Eriksson Baaz and Stern, “Why Do Soldiers Rape? Masculinity, Violence, and Sexuality in the Armed Forces in the Congo (DRC).”
dominated apparatus, which entails that policymaking is conducted by this masculine elite, who ingrain notions of loyalty, honor and strength within institutions. Lastly, we can speak of ‘systematic mass rape’, which reflects the case of Rwanda. The attacks followed a pattern, and were part of a gendered, ethnically specific oppression, that was legitimized by gendered nationalist narratives. In the next subchapter, various perceptions on rape are to be introduced.

5.3. The various interpretations of wartime rape

As I’ve detailed it in the previous subchapter, conflict-related sexual violence and rape have several explanations in the field. One integrative interpretation that Eriksson Baaz and Stern write about looks at these instances as results of a complex web of factors, including violence, the disintegration of order, power dynamics and hunger for domination, aggression, sexual desire, and increased vulnerability of women. What they itemize here, are in reality elements connected to hegemonic masculine practices. I advocate that rape and other types of sexual violence should not be treated as commonplace occurrences of armed conflicts or natural byproducts of war, but should be viewed as a part of the symptoms of gendered power relations, practices and institutions that work to uphold this unequal power dynamics, with one example of such being militarism.

Expert on the subject, Simona Sharoni has written extensively on the connection between militarism and GBV. One of the points that she made is that militarism can have an effect on all three types of violence, these being the ones elaborated on by Galtung, so direct-, structural- and cultural violence. All three have been widely present in the case of Rwanda. Structural hierarchies as well as norms are important parts of the process of understanding how militarism can lead to GBV. Under these circumstances, the levels of militarization and the pre-existing SGBV in the country act as indicators of the magnitude of CRV. Militarism hinges upon militarized masculinity and is legitimized and naturalized through patriarchal domination.

---

159 Sharoni.
Thusly, notions of manliness are very much tied to the military, as it offers the possibility for men to perform their traditional gender normative role and corroborate their masculine identity; or as Lisa Price explained, it allows the “actualization of identity, through violence”\textsuperscript{160}. Bravery, strength and offering protection to those who are vulnerable\textsuperscript{161} all carry a symbolic weight,\textsuperscript{162} and are masculine conceptions, that are bolstered through war.\textsuperscript{163} Price evaluates this relationship as not only a matter of opportunity, but holds that this type of nationalism-driven militarization compels men to be more violent.\textsuperscript{164} This could also be perceived in Rwanda, where masculinity was associated with being a warrior.\textsuperscript{165} Indeed, feminist scholars talk about the military as a patriarchal institution, which teaches boys and men how to be ‘manly’ or behave like a man, so heterosexual violent masculinity thrives in them. At the same time, an internal dissonance arises, which could be imputed to the discrepancy between the level and type of masculinity expected in the military, versus one’s self-depiction. Because of this frustration, masculine identity will be very fragile, in need of deeds that constantly prove alignment, one of which is sexual violence and rape.\textsuperscript{166} Furthermore, studies have also proved that intergroup dynamics contributed to a rise of sexual aggression during war.\textsuperscript{167} As a matter of fact, these premises reiterate ideas of Goldstein on the factors behind the gendering of war that I’ve introduced in chapter 3.

While I advocate that this deeper and more thorough understanding of the phenomenon is necessary to get an accurate depiction of how CRV arises, there are several other explanations as to why and with what objectives rape is present in some conflicts.

5.3.1. An inevitable byproduct of war?

\textsuperscript{161} Based on this logic, women.
\textsuperscript{162} Mazurana and Proctor, “Gender, Conflict and Peace.”
\textsuperscript{163} Enloe, \textit{Maneuvers: The International Politics of Militarizing Women’s Lives}; Mazurana and Proctor, “Gender, Conflict and Peace.”
\textsuperscript{164} Price, “Finding the Man in the Soldier-Rapist: Some Reflections on Comprehension and Accountability.”
\textsuperscript{166} Eriksson Baaz and Stern, “Why Do Soldiers Rape? Masculinity, Violence, and Sexuality in the Armed Forces in the Congo (DRC).”
\textsuperscript{167} Sharoni, “Militarism and Gender-Based Violence.”
The first main explanation is probably the most ignorant one, as it proposes that rape and sexual offences that are committed during wars are natural and inevitable byproducts thereof. Even in ancient Greek and Roman times, we could observe rape having been committed, and some go on to claim that wartime rape has been present since wars themselves. Backers of this view take it as the ‘spoils of war’ or ‘war booty’, while others simply interpret it as an ‘inevitable byeffect’, a collateral or ‘regrettable side effect’ of armed conflicts.

Another idea that fits within would define rape as an ‘atrocities within the atrocities’, thusly stating that it is nothing more than a violent act that has been triggered by the spiral of violence. Inherent to this is a process of naturalization and normalization, through which rape and other acts of sexual violence become universalized. Such approaches are one-dimensional, reiterated by traditional IRT, which fails to include the various ways in which social, economic and political life are pervaded by patriarchal, gendered visions and mechanisms. Even if some men claim that they considered women during war to be ‘war booties’ that they were entitled to, it does not reveal the latent motivations and thus why they felt that way. Henceforth, this theory is the furthest from a far-reaching one that could help understand what factors encourage sexual violations.

5.3.2. Contextual conditions & opportunity

The second account is closely tied to the previous one. It attributes CRV to the changes in contextual conditions, more precisely to the breakdown of normal societal order and weakening of government institutions, which open up new opportunities for individuals. In this sense, rape is interpreted as an opportunistic crime, as lawlessness and impunity start to wreak in armed conflicts. Wood in her study for instance stated that individual opportunism coupled by the disappearance of normal societal order and norms prohibiting sexual violence could explain CRV. This understanding however significantly downplays the importance of structural causes, including gender and

---

168 Kaufman and Williams, “Conflict and Violence Against Women.”
171 Koos, “Sexual Violence in Armed Conflicts: Research Progress and Remaining Gaps.”
social- or economic relations. Gender inequality and disadvantages that arise from it are seldom integrated into studies and looked at as causal variables, which means that without thoroughly looking at the structural conditions in the conflict-affected country, one cannot assert that gendered relations did not influence other factors. One simply cannot conduct a gender neutral study on such a topic. By all means, Wood’s explanation may have its merits, as contextual conditions can facilitate the commission of CRV; still, it falls short of giving complete answer.

5.3.3. Individual motives: ‘lust rape’ vs. ‘evil rape’

The third main stream in academic literature deals with the individual aspect; more precisely ponders on the ‘ethics of rape’. By speaking of “lust rape”, as an act brought about by sexual desire, we instantly normalize it, claiming that it is because of inherent biological and physical needs. What is even more absurd, is that there is an antithesis to this ‘natural atrocity’, which they dub ‘evil rape’ that encompasses those acts perpetrated with extreme brutality for the purposes of humiliation and terror. The common denominator between the two is that both are driven by hypermasculinity. I personally find it quite hard to speak of the ‘ethics of rape’, as I cannot see eye to eye with this type of normalization of violence that aims at subjugating, objectifying and humiliating people. To remain unbiased, this point of view had to be noted as well, nonetheless, the biologically-driven explanation of rape has also been scientifically disproven, as it is rather driven by gendered power relations and institutions connected to it. To put it simply, it is not biology and sexual drive that incites men to rape, hence it is not in through trying to canvass the morality of individual motivations that one will find the answer to the reoccurrence of systematic SGBV in wars, but rather in the structure.

5.3.4. Group dynamics

Many found the explanation of CRV to be best described by group dynamics. The commission of sexual offences is a form of male communication according to Seifert, [Sara E. Davies and Jacqui True, “Reframing Conflict-Related Sexual and Gender-Based Violence: Bringing Gender Analysis Back In,” Security Dialogue 46, no. 6 (2015), https://doi.org/10.1177/0967010615601389.]

[174 Davies and True.]


[Koos, “Sexual Violence in Armed Conflicts: Research Progress and Remaining Gaps.”]
In this manner, the joint commission and experiencing of such acts renders men a collective feeling of superiority and power. Gang-rape according to Price constitutes a part of soldierly solidarity, male bonding and strengthening of group identity. What is more, it creates a sense of loyalty, tying members even closer to the group through this shared experience and in a sense shared culpability. It is also a test of loyalty, as those soldiers who would not commit to these acts on their own, will share the burden of it with others. In this sense, it spreads accountability and blurs individual responsibility in their minds, since it takes place within the superior-subordinate, as well as a command structure. An important point that has to be made mention of is that even though some perpetrators may doubt the rightfulness and necessity of these deeds, their masculine identity is at stake in the eyes of others and thus them as well, which creates an internal dissonance that they have to reduce, so in many cases they become even more brutal to balance it out internally, and show force, heteronormativity, manliness and loyalty externally. I find that the theory of male bonding and group dynamics helps in understanding why soldiers go along with the perpetration of sexual assault, but does not necessarily address why it surfaces in the first place.

5.3.5. Rape as a strategy and a ‘weapon of war’

A final interpretation takes sexual violence and rape during wars as a weapon of war, utilized as part of dirty strategic calculations. The main aim is rather simple, that is, to bring about the end of the enemy through causing both physical and psychological destruction through humiliation, control and terror. This subjugation of the adversary carries a dual message. For one thing, it humiliates enemy women; but at the same time, defeats enemy men as well. In Rwanda, mass rape was a calculated strategy and weapon as well, in this highly gendered ethno-national conflict, which will also be discussed in

---


178 Koos, “Sexual Violence in Armed Conflicts: Research Progress and Remaining Gaps.”


the chapter to follow.

Out of the categories drawn up by Enloe, rape as a weapon of war occurs in both ‘national security’- and ‘systematic mass rape’. Generally speaking, a weapon of war could be seen as something that gives advantage to one side over the other; it is utilized to bring about the end of the enemy or weaken it, but in all cases it serves the purpose of trying to dominate the other and shift the power balance. Sexual violence and rape have been systematically utilized weapons throughout the conflicts in the 90s, including in Rwanda.

Interpreting rape as a weapon itself carries a significant element of dehumanization, since women become objects of this act that allows perpetrators to exert domination over the other side, and ‘conquer’ them. According to Uchida, it is erroneous to look at rape as a weapon and tactic of war as a mere power act, since one risks looking at rape as only a power-issue and ‘hard power’, as it has been done by traditional IRT. It is important to realize thus, that gendered power dynamics very much influence this weaponization of forms of sexual violence. Because of patriarchal power structures that subjugate women, they become objectified and dehumanized, all for masculine militaristic purposes. By and large, a bottom-up approach is necessary to explain wartime violence against women and men, otherwise there is a high probability of falling into the trap of naturalizing rape as a weapon.

Although the act itself has immediate effects on one’s physical and mental wellbeing, it is a very powerful weapon, because it has medium- and long-term consequences for societies. To illustrate this point, we could talk of HIV/AIDS endemics that appear after systematic rape in the country, or unwanted pregnancies that especially in ethnic conflicts create instability. Ostracism is another major concomitant of rape in patriarchal societies, which perpetrators bear in mind. Having been violated carries a deep stigma, aggravating women’s hardship, since social exclusion and internal tension also undermine the strength of a community. All in all, because of these ramifications, we could say that it is a more destructive and lethal weapon against a group/society than death itself.

---

181 Uchida, “Constraints On Rape As a Weapon of War: A Feminist and Post-Colonial Revision.”
182 Uchida.
6. The Rwandan genocide

Rwanda is a small country, approximately the size of Myanmar, and is considered to be “the land of a thousand hills”, howbeit its landscape also contains many plains. It is among the most densely populated countries in Africa. Its population as of 1994 was around 6 million people, which doubled by 2018. Three ethnic groups live alongside one another: Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa, out of which the Hutu ethnic group forms the majority. The country’s official language is Kinyarwanda, while the two main religions practiced are Protestantism and Roman Catholicism. In 2018, Rwanda was the 6th country in the world in terms of gender parity. Indeed, after the genocide, many steps have been taken to ensure women’s inclusion in public life. Although women have gained power both in economic and political terms, the society in general is still very much influenced by patriarchal power dynamics, and gender inequality is still very much present in the private sphere. It is a landlocked country, the majority of the economy of which is focused on the export of agricultural products, mainly coffee and tea. This, especially in the 90s, created a dependency on the world market, and the country became very exposed to external shocks. Generally speaking, there are many difficulties that African countries face, most of them stemming from colonial period. Rwanda’s case isn’t any different. The obsession of colonizers with race and ideas of racial superiority constructed deep structural inequalities in the country, that were augmented by a gendered power division that was embedded in social and cultural norms.

Just prior to the genocide, the country has been emerging from a 3-years long civil war, which in reality, started to build up around the country’s independence in 1962, after

---

184 Rwanda’s total territory is 26.338km².
185 Paul J. Magnarella, “The Background and Causes of the Genocide in Rwanda,” Journal of International Criminal Justice, no. 3 (2005): 801–22, https://watermark.silverchair.com/mqi059.pdf?token=AQECAHi208BE490oan9kkhW_Ercy7Dm3ZL_9Cf3qfKAc485ysgAAAlgwwigUBgkqkhkI9G9w08BwagggJFMILiCQIQ1BADCCAjoGC5qGSIb3DQEHATAeBglghkgBZQMEAS4wEQQMEVhjbu1UVxQc1C8AgEglllC4VLurX9rDvM8PWootD0gStTr5kOSVAYG2msRC9HU3aAfuQQ.
188 Bükl, “Humanitarian Intervention and Gender Equality, BA in IR.”
many Tutsis were forced to flee to the neighboring Uganda, and it appeared to have ended with the signing of the Arusha Peace Accord in 1993. The illusory peace however was short-lived, as on 6th April 1994, an intrastate war started in the capital Kigali between Hutu extremists and the RPF, then spread sporadically throughout the country. During the 3 months or the “100-day genocide”, the violence reached a magnitude never experienced before. Around 800.000 people have been killed, albeit the exact number varies based on the literature, putting it between 0.5 million and 1 million; 2 million people fled to neighboring countries of the Great Lakes region, and many became IDPs; diseases started to spread, claiming the lives of more than 50,000 people; by and large, the whole country has been scorched by the violence physically or emotionally. The inaction and unwillingness to halt the genocide is up to nowadays one of the most cited failures of the IC. Genocide is defined by the UN GA as “any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

(a) Killing members of the group;
(b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
(c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
(d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
(e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.”

If one deconstructs this definition, it becomes apparent that several of these points have also been displayed through the commission of mass rape in the country. Sexual violence that roamed the country was by no means a collateral of war, but was a strategic choice to further genocidal purposes, including causing physical and mental harm, preventing births through impregnating enemy women and destroying the other ethnic group. Although it is hard to give an exact number, the scale of rape in the country was massive; according to the Human Rights Watch report of 1996, “almost every woman and adolescent girl

---

189 Newbury, “Understanding Genocide.”
who survived the genocide was raped”, and it impacted every age group, from “two years old to over fifty”. Sexual violence was systematically utilized as a weapon of war to bring about the destruction of the enemy group. It is hard to fathom the magnitude of the massacre and assaults that have been committed. Numbers are hard to grasp, but imagine that out of all the population of Budapest, every second person would perish; imagine that everyone in Paris would flee to another country; and imagine that up to the whole population of Lisbon would be impacted by some type of sexual violence. Even though they are numbers in reports, those numbers are in reality people, so one must keep that in mind while discussing statistics.

The next part of this chapter is dedicated to unraveling the historical context and the causes and drivers of the conflict in the country, with special emphasis on how gender influenced the conflict, as well as the causes thereof.

6.1. Causes and drivers of the conflict

This human-created hell on earth, that lasted for 3 months, was neither a simple matter of ethnic discord, nor an isolated event, but can be understood as a product of social, political, economic and military factors and processes, all enmeshed with asymmetric gender relations and traditional gender normative roles. As Lentin also noted, combat is an essential part in the construction of masculinity and manhood, as well as a tool to legitimize superordinate-subordinate relations. It is important to realize, that in Rwanda, many men suffered from an identity crisis, which was existential. Declining opportunities led to the reduction in their position, which meant that their predominance, the essence of their masculine status was eroding due to several causes,

---

196 The population of Lisbon was around 0.5 million in 2017. (Wikipedia (2019) List of cities in the European Union by population within city limits, Wikipedia [online]. Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_cities_in_the_European_Union_by_population_within_city_limits. )
197 Newbury, “Understanding Genocide.”
which also prompted them to resort to militaristic practices and reclaim their identity through violence. On the other side, women were viewed not equal to men, bore many wrongdoings and inequities. This also meant that the structural disadvantages that they had to cope with on an everyday basis have already been there in the pre-genocide period; it follows that their humiliation and domination only intensified with the heightening of tensions. Gender unbalances, constructs and expectations are key to understanding what gave an impetus to resorting to direct violence. The next section is dedicated to looking at sources of structural violence.

6.1.1. Structural causes: gender inequality and ethnic divisions

(a) Colonial rule & ethnic divisions

The roots of the conflict that erupted in the country can most definitely be dated back to colonial period, where power rivalry and commercial interests of colonizers predetermined the faith of society. Following colonial rule, ethnicity become a variable on the structural and societal level, as it began to shape social conditions, favoring some, while hindering others through discrimination and domination. Unlike many believe, prior to German and Belgian colonial rule, there was no ethnic conflict so to say. During the time that the country was a centralized kingdom, (between the 14th and 19th century) we could speak of differences and tensions, but these were local, socioeconomic, class and political ones, not an ethnic, Hutu-Tutsi contention. Newbury also makes the point that these identities are not at all rigid, but malleable, and socially produced; furthermore, that ethnic categories are shaped by the given power context. As a huge shift in the power dynamics, we could mention colonization. Tutsis became deemed by colonizers as more intelligent and civilized compared to Hutus. It was during the German colonial period in the end of the 19th and early 20th century that ethnic identity started to develop, where Tutsis gained wider access to material resources.\textsuperscript{199} This could be imputed to the approach of Germans to governance of Rwanda, which was an indirect one, delegating power to the Tutsi monarch and chiefs.\textsuperscript{200} This gap grew wider after Rwanda was given to Belgium as a LoN mandate after 1918; the Tutsi ethnic group, which was a minority of 14%, was assigned all

\textsuperscript{199} Newbury, “Understanding Genocide.”
\textsuperscript{200} Magnarella, “The Background and Causes of the Genocide in Rwanda.”
prominent administrative positions and declared a ‘superior race’, thus giving them a higher social status compared to Hutus, most of whom were forced to do manual labor and were assigned to forced cultivation. The Belgians even introduced identity cards in the 30s, based on which ethnic identities became even more distinguished, so much so, that the categories became to be referred to as ‘races’, also implying a superior-inferior division. Belgian colonial period hence was even graver for Hutus than under the Germans, as they became stripped of all their administrative positions as chiefs, only having left a handful in place. It follows that ethnic relations, just like gender ones, were very much tied to power and the distribution thereof.

Following the country’s independence and complete alteration of power-dynamics with the Hutu takeover, divisions were only reinforced. Discrimination against Tutsis was interpreted and legitimized as a revenge for the prior period. The tables turned, Hutus became those with privilege, while Tutsis were portrayed as former oppressors, the enemy. Albeit, for more than three decades, political power has been in the hands of the Hutu majority, the strong presence of Tutsi figures in the country’s economic life and high stance on the social ladder led to jealousy and exacerbated ethnic tensions in the nation even further.

Simultaneously, we can single out a gendered impact of colonial rule; therefore, it not only created an asymmetry in the influence of ethnic groups, but set out male-female relations, as well as female-female ones. As far as male-female relations are concerned, the same gendered power structure followed by Western colonizers also continued and were enhanced. Concerning women, an ethnic positioning, or a ranking of women based

---

202 Corvée labour
203 Magnarella, “The Background and Causes of the Genocide in Rwanda.”
204 Magnarella.
on their ethnic affiliation could be seen. In fact, postcolonial feminist scholars would draw attention to this binary drawn between Hutu and Tutsi women. In the eyes of colonizers, both were ‘Others’, sexualized subjects of domination, yet they also associated beauty with this racial superiority of the ‘quasi-Caucasian’ Tutsis. Myths regarding Tutsi women started to spread, and as a result of media propaganda, they became intriguing targets of violence. Many Hutu fighters developed sexual fantasies about Tutsi women, and gave voice to them before raping them, saying things such as “we want to look inside” or “we want to have a taste of Tutsi women”. Henceforth, gender imbalances have become subject to an ethnic agenda.

(b) Gender inequality

Several studies conducted proved, that there is an inherent link between armed conflicts and gender inequality, which could be categorized as a structural cause of armed conflicts and direct violence, if we follow the model set forth by Galtung. Thusly, we can make a connection to what feminist scholars advocate, that it is vital to look at gender in conflict analysis, as it molds and lays the structure that other factors are built upon. The difference, as already noted, is that while Galtung brings up patriarchy as one example, feminists ascribe a far greater importance to it, and tend to look at other factors through that lens as well, claiming that gender serves as the basis of structural inequality. For one, Caprioli in her probe went even further, to explain intrastate conflict through gender inequality, asserting that those countries with higher gender inequality are much more likely to experience intrastate conflicts, as these states are “permeated with norms of violence”. Underlying social conditions are indeed very important, not only from the point of ethnicity, but from the point of domestic gender equality as well, since patriarchal domination of women translates to societal-level repression of women and violence against them. Structural violence has four key elements: exploitation, penetration, fragmentation, and marginalization, all applicable to this case as well. Gendered hierarchies are created

211 Caprioli in her study quantified it as fertility rate and the female percentage of labor force.
212 Caprioli, “Primed for Violence: The Role of Gender Inequality in Predicting Internal Conflict.”
213 Exploitation underscores structures that breed unjust relations, be those social, economic, political or legal. Penetration means putting figures in important positions, who influence the structure.
through the exploitation of women through social norms, roles and expectations set up, that they need to conform to, which lead to structures with men in important positions, which produce and reproduce these differences, and at the same time those differences lead to the restriction of opportunities for women, who are confined to the private sphere, hence fragmented, and finally marginalized, because they become part of the ‘second class.’ It is obvious that it’s a process, which is then normalized and legitimized through cultural norms and cultural violence. As norms change over time, roles that women are associated with are also subject to change; nevertheless, these power relations are seldom disrupted, since unequal relations are ingrained in the structure, and invisibly mend political, social and economic relations, which at the same time influence group dynamics. It follows that structural violence enshrines these norms that subjugate women, and can be manifested in several forms, such as domestic abuse, sex-segregated wages and legal protections, the gendered division of labor, differences in healthcare or economic- and political opportunities.

Indeed, following the concept of Cockburn on the gendered dynamics of armed conflicts, we can see that what she highlighted as being part of the pre-conflict period was amongst other things inequality, indicating Galtung’s structural violence as well. Rwandan women fit Butler’s concept of performativity, since they internalized characteristics that society deemed appropriate based on their sex. From a gender perspective, this entails that they have been in a subordinate position in the pre-genocide context, living within a traditional patriarchal structure, where women were not welcome in the public sphere, were lagging behind in education compared to men, had less economic opportunities, and were strangled by customs. Saying such as “the hen does not crow with the cocks” or “a woman’s only wealth is a man” portray a vivid picture of Rwandan society’s beliefs about the place of women.

---


Women were degraded to a childlike position, had a lower social status, with their situation having been dependent on the attitude and views of men in the family.\textsuperscript{218} Despite many reports and records on women’s secondary position in the pre-genocide societal structure, some like Hogg suggest, that the situation was not as unbalanced as often painted. To illustrate this point, she drew attention to the fact that women headed 22\% of rural households, and that they were in reality important advisors to their husbands.\textsuperscript{219} Be that as it may, the mere fact that there were more complex cases, or even some that ran counter to traditions does not mean that women were not in an inferior position, or that it was not the experience of most.

Discrimination against women in the public sphere, education, the economy, health, or politics were very common. Their number enrolled in primary education did not even reach half of the total students, having been around 45\% in the 80s. The data was even worse for secondary education and university, men outnumbering women 9 to 1 and 15 to 1. These can be imputed to the young age of marriage of women in Rwanda, also pushing up female illiteracy, which was much higher than male. Their main role was being good wives and mothers, for which education was ‘not necessary’.\textsuperscript{220} Concerning labor opportunities, they were mostly involved in agriculture, and while around 65-70\% of all activities have been performed by them, they were poorer than men.\textsuperscript{221} Additionally, legal injustices have curbed their possibilities. Some of these measures included barriers to inheritance, or the denial of land acquisition by women. According to liberal feminists, it is these legal biases that should be addressed if one wishes to eliminate inequalities between men and women. Albeit in the post-genocide country context there have been significant developments, the situation was quite dire for women pre-1994, bearing much of the burden, without any opportunities. Especially economically, women were dependent on their husbands, because they did not possess land rights and required permission to conduct business activities. It follows, that in case of a divorce, women usually had to go back to their parents to get by. As for single women, they had to rely on their family for financial support. Any act that went counter to conservative standards, norms and traditions, for instance ‘being loose’ or bearing an


\textsuperscript{219} Hogg, “Women’s Participation in the Rwandan Genocide: Mothers or Monsters?”

\textsuperscript{220} Nowrojee, “Shattered Lives : Sexual Violence during the Rwandan Genocide and Its Aftermath.”

\textsuperscript{221} Hogg, “Women's Participation in the Rwandan Genocide: Mothers or Monsters?”
illegitimate child, led to being shut out of the family, and forced these women to rely on survival tactics, including earning their wage through prostitution.\textsuperscript{222}

As far as women’s marginalization is concerned, political life was no different. Political ideology of women usually followed that of their husband. Participation also followed accordingly, and was very low, never going above 17\% in the parliament, while this figure was 5.26\% for executive branch appointees after 1990, and only 3 of the ministers were women following the 1991 reforms. Indeed, there were unique cases when women managed to get into politics, their true role and influence was almost nonexistent. For one, Agathe Uwilingiyimana became Prime Minister of the country, and advocated women’s rights. She was amongst the first to be sexually assaulted and killed. Interestingly, the three other women in a position of power have allegedly incited to violence.\textsuperscript{223} This raises the question whether it was partly a result of women having taken up more masculine roles in political life.

Albeit an awakening started in the years leading up to the genocide, whereby women tried to form organizations and fight against social, political and economic injustices, they were constantly met by pushback.\textsuperscript{224} All these factors and living conditions were coupled by the subordinative everyday dynamics between men and women at home.\textsuperscript{225} Domestic abuse and violence were part of the methods by which husbands exerted superiority over their wives and tried to prove their conformity to standards of masculinity. The hunger for power and control thusly was already present at the domestic-level, even before it could have manifested itself on the state-level through mass sexual violence. It is very much apparent, that the societal norms and customs of the country laid the grounds for the commission of such atrocities, as women were viewed as second-class citizens, whose role was that of the wife/mother.

To sum it up, their objectification was prevalent and nothing out of the ordinary, which allowed for them to become targets of rape in the name of ethnic cleansing. In this sense, we can speak of the gendered dimensions of nationalism, which was reflected in the sexual violence committed in Rwanda. As Caprioli put it, nationalist and ethnic visions on the necessity of violence are very much connected to structural inequalities.

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{223} Hogg, “Women’s Participation in the Rwandan Genocide: Mothers or Monsters?”
\item \textsuperscript{224} Doan, “Rwandan Women and the 1994 Genocide: The Effect on Their Social and Political Roles. MA Thesis.”
\item \textsuperscript{225} Doan.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
and gendered relations, whereby gender stereotypes and gendered language will act to help mobilization. In Rwanda, messages about the protection of the ethnic community and identity were complemented by messages on the importance of the protection of those who were vulnerable, hence women. Women symbolized the reproducers of ethnic identity, and were targeted because of this reason as well.

Under these circumstances, other causes, drivers and accelerators of the armed conflict have also arose. The common denominator between them was that these traditional gender norms that permeated the society influenced the actions and reactions of actors to them. The next part is dedicated to unmasking these factors and how gendered perceptions shaped them.

6.1.2. Proximate causes

There have been several developments during the period preluding the genocide, which are to be interpreted as proximate causes to the conflict. Proximate causes are different from structural ones, as the latter can be viewed as underlying or root causes, and are “long-term or systemic causes of violent conflict that have become built into the norms, structures and policies of a society”; while the former are also referred to as immediate causes, being more recent developments “that can accentuate structural causes and lead to an escalation of violent conflict”.

(a) Economic downturn

Many experts have written on the relation between economy and conflict, and some, like Bookman have further made the observation that economic downturn and ethnic conflicts are very much connected, as hardship and struggle for goods, commodities or economic power festers tensions and hostile behavior, such as scapegoating. During the 80s, the country experienced severe economic downturn and shocks as a result of its position in the world market. It follows, that economic turmoil was not only a proximate cause, but was influenced by external factors as well. The main source of income for 60% of families at the time was from coffee, hence the huge plunge of its

---

226 Caprioli, “Primed for Violence: The Role of Gender Inequality in Predicting Internal Conflict.”
228 Herbert.

---
price on world markets was disastrous for them. Coupled with the devaluation of currency by 40% and inflation that naturally follows these measures, the economy plummeted. One of the solutions that the government offered was the subsidization of the coffee sector, which backfired as the country accumulated an enormous debt.\textsuperscript{230} Specialization according to the country’s comparative advantage also started, which only made people reliant on agricultural production more fragile to the volatility of the markets and inflation.

The huge pressure that people put on lands, with around 95% of the population having been tied to agriculture violently backlashed. While the size of the nation was growing steadily, the economic output did not follow this tendency, further aggravating day-to-day subsistence for many. People were suffering, and hundreds died from hunger because of food shortages.\textsuperscript{231} The possibilities to accumulate wealth shrank to the acquisition of foreign aid; howbeit, that was only accessible to those with political power.\textsuperscript{232} Draught in the country wreaked further havoc, soil erosion and exhaustion became more and more common.\textsuperscript{233}

\textbf{(b) Socioeconomic struggles}

One of the economic remedies of the era was the Washington Consensus, with structural adjustment programs offering economic rehabilitation for countries that became highly indebted because of economic mismanagement. Liberal institutions such as the IMF were convinced that through the passing of a new economic agenda, these countries would surmount their catastrophic economic performances, hence they made loans contingent on the adoption of neoliberal economic policies, which were the so-called structural adjustment programs, including trade liberalization, deregulation, privatization, etc. Once again, socioeconomic conditions in the country that developed proximately before the direct conflict, were affected by external causes and pressures as well.

The policies that the IMF and World Bank have forced upon the state significantly weakened its ability to provide social benefits for the population. Social spending was


\textsuperscript{231}Newbury, “Understanding Genocide.”

\textsuperscript{232}Magnarella, “The Background and Causes of the Genocide in Rwanda.”

\textsuperscript{233}Turshen, “The Political Economy of Rape”; Magnarella, “The Background and Causes of the Genocide in Rwanda.”
curbed, healthcare and education fees were introduced. In the meantime, the state budget was drained because of high military spending on the war with the RPF. Austerity measures led to further impoverishment, especially amongst women, but also leaving men without labor and a source of income that could uphold their position of breadwinners in the family. It follows, that the economic imbalances in the country had a direct impact on masculinity, scorching it and pushing for new ways to help uphold their traditional role in society. Young Hutu men were especially suffering from a gender crisis according to Adam Jones, because their masculine identity was undermined by these economic hardships. As I have stated earlier, and as Withworth put it, hypermasculinity is hurt because of the failure to meet gendered expectations. It created an existential crisis for them, since in Rwanda, social status and in turn social mobility were tied to their material assets, as customs and laws required them to be able to provide for their family. Under the terrible economic circumstances, the loss of revenues also affected their education opportunities, since without earnings from coffee production, they could not afford to pay school fees. The breakdown of labor- and land-acquisition opportunities directly meant that they would be unable to fulfill their duties as men, hence their mobilization became smooth. Evidence from quantitative data has also showcased, that unemployment emanating from the economic turbulence experienced in the country boosted the participation of Hutu men in the perpetration of violence, which is in line with the hypothesis that negative shocks act as facilitators in the emergence of violence.

Consequently, it is apparent that the gender norms that men (but also women) had to reconcile, put an increasing pressure on them when economic conditions halted to provide opportunities to young men. They found themselves in an uncharted territory, one that was more common for women. On the one hand, the opportunity structure already favored men over women in economic terms, and negatively impacted both in their own way. On the other hand, what gave a bigger boost to the culmination of

---

234 Turshe, “The Political Economy of Rape.”
237 Newbury, “Understanding Genocide.”
238 Friedman, “Local Economic Conditions and Participation in the Rwandan Genocide. MA Thesis.”
problems in direct violence was that men, who have been and should have been in a dominant position based on the gender- and social norms ascribed to them, found themselves in a feminized position, without access to possibilities that other Rwandan men had. These young Hutus felt without wealth and prospects, as if they were failing to display their manhood, so they became anxious and frustrated. For them, militarization and armed conflict were the key to reclaiming their identity. According to Des Forges, many were fooled to believe that they would acquire the lands looted, which also boosted their willingness to cross ethical and legal boundaries.

Intersectionality can be detected here as well, since it was not only gender identity that they have been struggling with, but it was a matter of ethnic identity and class as well; as Prunier also noted, concerns about social mobility and class were among the motivating factors in the resort to militarism and violence. In many cases, violence against women and their coercion was driven also by these class and economic concerns of men, who were desperate to seize control of land and resources.

(c) War with the RPF

Another proximate cause was the ongoing conflict with the RPF, residing in Uganda that also reflected a highly militaristic culture, to which men turned partially as a result of desperation. Since October 1990, there was a civil war with the Tutsi-led RPF forces who fled to the neighboring country decades earlier. After incursions and attacks by the RPF on the northern parts of Rwanda, the government retaliated by systematically attacking Tutsis. The conflict had devastating effects for the country, uprooting many, forcing millions to become IDPs and refugees in neighboring countries; what is more, it put a heavy weight on the government expenditure and caused damage to the country’s economy through the destruction of land and annihilation of farmers. Economic devastation, aggravated by the war, forced many

---

240 Alison Des Forges, “Leave None to Tell the Story: Genocide in Rwanda” (Human Rights Watch, 1999); Magnarella, “The Background and Causes of the Genocide in Rwanda.”
243 Albeit the RPF and its RPA (Rwandan Patriotic Army) was led by Tutsis, it also incorporated Hutus who have been exiled.
244 Magnarella, “The Background and Causes of the Genocide in Rwanda.”
245 Magnarella.
in this northeastern region to rely on food distribution. In addition, these Tutsi moves brought back colonial memories of the oppression of Hutus; indeed there was an agitation among Hutus, fearing they would lose their favorable position. Many camps have been set up for those internally displaced, which became recruiting grounds. Conversely, while the government was politically rather weak, with a declining support rate, it was able to maintain power due to its militarization; indeed, this enabled the ‘propping up’ of masculinity that we could see in Enloe’s theory. Between 1990 and ’92, the number of armed forces increased six-fold. A military surge, along with the rise in its spending are also part of the gendered dynamics of pre-conflict periods. Indeed, the military as an archetypical patriarchal institution is a male preserve, cherishing masculine values, for instance male bonding and privilege. It is also deeply connected to violence, as it carries it out, which can be turned against women as well. Although the Arusha Accords of 1993 were about to bring an end to the violence, subsequent events overturned developments. The construction of an ‘enemy’ and the ‘us’ vs. ‘them’ dichotomy reinforced militarism. In reality, Hutu extremists resorted to violence and militarism to reclaim influence, which was nothing but the natural consequence and reflection of shifting dynamics, their declining power and traditional masculine position.

(d) Media propaganda and scapegoating

Finally, a convincing argument can be made that the media played an escalatory role in the incitement of violence. Ethnic tensions were commoved through systemic propaganda; hate speech and ethnic slurs have become commonplace in the radio and magazines during the period preluding the genocide. It is important to realize however that gendered nationalism, at the intersection of ethnicity and gender, was strongly present in these messages too. As remarked earlier, there was a hypersexualized vision of Tutsi women, who were portrayed as ‘Other’, arrogant and dangerous, highly erotic seductresses. By contrast, Hutu women were depicted in conformance with their traditional gender normative role, so good mothers and caretakers. In the mindset of many Hutu men, retribution was necessary for Tutsi women’s superior attitude, hence

246 Newbury, “Understanding Genocide.”
249 Turshen, “The Political Economy of Rape.”
250 Sharoni, “Militarism and Gender-Based Violence.”
they had to be humiliated too, a tool of which in this case was rape and sexual violence.\textsuperscript{251}

Hutu supremacy was advocated in newspapers such as the Kangura\textsuperscript{252}, as well as the radio. The infamous “Ten Commandments of the Hutu” were also published in the aforesaid newspaper, which disparaged those Hutus who had anything to do with Tutsis; moreover, it set forth that every power-holder should be Hutu, be that economic, military or political power. The commandments further proposed that these rules should be taught to every Hutu.\textsuperscript{253} By and large, it demonized Tutsis and tried to convince Hutus to see all as their archenemies. Though 34\% of the population was illiterate, the articles with vivid cartoons made the propaganda very effective.\textsuperscript{254} Cultural violence intensified, as even the country’s intelligentsia was continuously receiving these biased messages, since it was the government that funded education.\textsuperscript{255}

Even more successful, messages dispersed over the radio have continuously encouraged the perpetration of violent acts, and called on people not to be merciful even with women and children.\textsuperscript{256} Radio Rwanda and RTLM dehumanized Tutsis, for instance calling them cockroaches and speaking of ‘inherent differences’, and at the same time, made arguments underlying the legitimacy behind their extermination. After the presidential plane was shot down, RTLM shifted the blame onto the RPF, and continuously supplied the society with misinformation to install fear and feed into the violence.\textsuperscript{257} Accordingly, the media with extremist newspapers and radio broadcasts at the forefront, were drivers and accelerators of the conflict, having increased the country’s proneness to violence; besides, through the hypersexualization of Tutsi women, encouraged the commission of CRV and sexual atrocities.

\textbf{6.1.3. Internal developments}

\textsuperscript{252} Meaning „Wake up”.
\textsuperscript{253} Magnarella, “The Background and Causes of the Genocide in Rwanda.”
\textsuperscript{255} van Haperen.
\textsuperscript{256} Magnarella, “The Background and Causes of the Genocide in Rwanda.”
(a) “Democratization” & disillusionment

After having come to power through a coup d’état in 1973 and having created the second republic, Juvénal Habyarimana introduced a totalitarian, one-party system led by the MRND, which favored the Hutu majority and institutionally discriminated against the Tutsi minority. The Tutsi minority practically became pushed out of the public sphere; only two members out of seventy in the parliament, and one out of thirty cabinet ministers were of Tutsi ethnicity.\(^{258}\) Albeit, relative stability and growth have been achieved, they had high costs: control of the media and civil society, exclusion of political parties. The turning point came in 1990, when the IC started to press for the democratization of the country.\(^{259}\) The main problem according to Newbury was that the country was in such bad shape economically, that the people were very frustrated with the government. The country was severely struggling because of the economic turmoil, making it reliant on foreign aid, which became tied to democratization and liberalization.\(^{260}\) Average Rwandans became alienated from this political transition, having no wish to be part of the reforms, as they felt that the government was not doing anything to alleviate conditions. The credibility of the administration in the eyes of the population was declining constantly, which allowed for radicals to seize this window of opportunity and increase their dominance.\(^{261}\)

### 6.1.4. External components

As stated by Newbury, there is a false perception regarding African countries, which is that they are isolated from the rest of the world; nonetheless, this is a stereotype, as they are also very much integrated into global affairs and the world economy. As a consequence, we can claim that external forces also had an influence on the conflict, and rather than a containing and curbing effect, they exacerbated the severity of events.\(^{262}\) The two major external factors that we can mention are Rwanda’s position in the world economy as a natural resources exporter, and the tendencies in international arms trade following the end of the Cold War.

(a) Economic dependency

---

\(^{258}\) Magnarella, “The Background and Causes of the Genocide in Rwanda.”


\(^{260}\) Halefom, “Conflict Analysis of the Rwandan Civil War-Genocide.”

\(^{261}\) Newbury, “Understanding Genocide.”

\(^{262}\) Newbury.
As I have detailed already, the devastating economic situation in the country, as well as its dependency on constant external help gave a huge bargaining power to the outside world. External powers not only made further economic aid contingent on structural adjustments to the economic field, but further pressured the country to accelerate the democratization process. Following a Wallersteinian perception, we can say that Rwanda as a peripheral country producing raw materials suffered from its exploitative relationship with core countries. The country relied gravely on upward economic tendencies, but when the world market sored, Rwanda became unable to manage, given its exposure.

(b) International arms trade

An important facilitator in the militarization was a global tendency that emerged from the end of the Cold War. Since the resolution of this atypical hegemonic war, the price of armaments went down globally, which meant that even countries that previously had no means of acquiring weapons could get their hands on cheap arms.  

France played an important role in the weapons-acquisition of the Rwandan government. A parliamentary commission that has been set up in 1997 to investigate French involvement in Rwanda found shocking evidence that the country was partially responsible for the weapons acquisition of forces in Rwanda. France was a major arms dealer to the country, which according to the HRW Arms Project enabled Hutu extremists to perpetrate the massacre on a much larger scale.

Since 1990, French presence has been observable in the country, providing training and military assistance to the Rwandan Government Army in its war with the RPF. Although 17 May 1994, the UN imposed an arms embargo, which should have put an end to French engagement, arms deliveries continued through eastern Zaire. Its ex-colonizer, Belgium also delivered small arms to the country, yet when things started to become violent, it put a halt to it.  

RPF forces on the other hand had also possessed external support, not only from Uganda, but also from Tutsi émigrés living in the US and Europe.  

All in all, we could see that the end of the Cold War and foreign weapons supplies exacerbated the magnitude of the conflict. Militarization became externally-sponsored,

---

263 Newbury.
which facilitated these processes, and allowed for the government to rely on violence when tackling dilemmas.

6.1.5. The trigger

The trigger, which was the final straw that in the end ignited the physical violence, was a plane crash over the capital the 6th of April 1994. On the plane was the President of Rwanda, Juvénal Habyarimana, who was flying back from Tanzania, where he had been negotiating the peace process of the war with the RPF. Although the Arusha Peace Accords have been signed, the implementation process was met with reluctance from both the members of the government and the military. The main reason for the former was that the agreement called for the demobilization of the northern area, which also would have meant a reduction of the size of the military, and would have forced people out of their jobs. As I have previously instantiated, many Rwandan men, especially young Hutus have turned towards the military to better their lives and increase their opportunities, as well as reclaim their masculinity. In that sense, the ‘accident’266 indicated a non-acceptance of all the conditions of the peace agreement, and was a critical judgment of the direction that the government was shifting towards.

An additional element that was resented by many concerned the implications that the Arusha Accords had on the country’s political transition. The democratization process was in fact despised by a lot of people, especially radicals in the government, who saw it as a threat to their power that they accumulated due to the very reasons (corruption and favoritism) the democratization wanted to tackle.

It is debated by many scholars how much this was a case of truly democratic transition. Some held that it was just an adjustment to a multiparty system instead of the single-party system that had been in place for 20 years, while the political elite would have been left untouched. Regardless, perception mattered, and the perception of the narrow elite was that their power was in danger. These developments, coupled by the outside pressures to undergo political changes led to the rise of extremists within the government. Fearing they would lose their influence in the process, they started to eliminate potential rivals, but most importantly, started to look for a new source of the threat, one which they could rally people against; this was the Tutsi minority. Right after the plane crashed, road blocks were set up, and a political purge, coupled by

---

266 Several signs have shown that it was no accident that the plane crashed, but was shot down by a missile. Hutus blamed the RPA, while some say it was Hutu ultra-nationalists.
scapegoating of Tutsis commenced. From the capital, the direct violence spread to the northeastern region, followed by the south-central part. In two weeks, the whole country was in flames.\footnote{267 Newbury, "Understanding Genocide."}

6.1.6. Conflict triangles

In light of the facts and the causes enumerated explaining the eruption of direct violence, arguably Moser’s threefold continuum of violence was manifest in Rwanda, enmeshed with culturally-inscribed gender norms and roles. The conflict triangles are quite self-explanatory; nevertheless, I am to instantiate how they could look in the case of Rwanda. To start out, let’s reflect on the first triangle, about the conflict attitudes, beliefs and context/contradictions.

It can be argued that many contradictions were observable in the conflict between the two sides. Most of these colliding interests were products of structures and processes that resulted in power concentration in the hands of one group, while unfairly discriminating and disadvantaging the other side. If we look at the history of the country, starting from the colonial period, it became especially salient that it was one or the other ethnic group that enjoyed uneven access to political, economic and social mobility. Major economic challenges in the country, including its dependency on agricultural production left its society exposed to shocks, spearing only those who had wider access to materials and stood on several pillars. The visions of these groups were colliding; one that foresaw an only-Hutu territory, and one that wished to reacquire its leadership position after having been deprived from the privileges once enjoyed.

Perception of course is key, hence one might ask the question, to what extent posed these real threats to one another’s security? It is also prevalent that not only ethnic inequalities, but the patriarchal structure in the country also drove the conflict, stimulating many other factors as well. The economic despair coupled by the rigidity of gender-normative roles and customs pushed a society full of resentment towards militarization; moreover, it allowed for the commission of mass systemic sexual violations during the intrastate conflict.

What can we learn of the conflict attitudes in light of the causes of the conflict? This cognitive element is key to understanding actors’ behavior. The major conflict attitude that has to be recognized could be explained through the word injustice. During the
colonial period, the Tutsi ethnic group was in a favorable position, which led to the buildup of animosity and reprisal by Hutus when they came to power. Another important element was fear, fear of the loss of privileges enjoyed, and that the old Tutsi-led power dynamics would be reinstated. Hutu extremists were indeed terrified of a potential resurge of Tutsi domination, which in their mind was a valid possibility. Therefore, injustice, inequality, discrimination, oppression, fear, suspicion and mistrust all motivated conflict behavior to some extent, paving the way to a struggle that claimed the lives of almost a million people and traumatized the nation as a whole most probably forever.

As for the second triangle, on the types of violence, all three mentioned by Galtung could be spotted in the case of Rwanda. The ‘us’ and ‘them’ view within ethnic communities, motivated by feelings of injustice and fear, has been passed down on several generations and became institutionalized.\textsuperscript{268} It follows, that cultural violence was present in several areas of socialization, including within the family and in the education system; moreover, was propagandized by various mediums such as the Kangura, RTLM or Radio Rwanda. Incompatibilities stemming from the inequalities on the structural level between the two ethnic groups created structural violence, which further deepened the wedge between Hutu and Tutsi. The colonial heritage of a distinctive ethnic division set forth an inevitable clash. Unequal access to resources, social mobility and political power were all symptoms of the phenomenon. Furthermore, rigorous gender norms and inequalities put an additional burden on society, forcing men to comply with the role of the protector-breadwinner, while assigning women a passive role in the private sphere. The structural violence in Rwanda became legitimized through the enumerated means of cultural violence, both forms of violence having rallied up tensions and having fed into the eruption of direct violence, including systematic rape.

The next subchapter is going to assess the sexual assaults perpetrated in the country, and shall uncover how ethnic identity intersected with gender identity.

\textbf{6.2. Sexual violence in Rwanda: A case of gendered nationalism and ethnic cleansing through rape}

\textsuperscript{268} Lower and Hauschildt, “The Media as a Tool of War: Propaganda in the Rwandan Genocide.”
In the 21st century, there is an ever-faster change in technology, and global progress. These transformations apply to conflicts as well, that have similarly undergone radical changes in terms of their means, goals, and methods. One of the most visible divergence is the shrinking number of interstate conflicts. At the same time, there has been a radical increase in the number of intrastate conflicts. According to Mary Kaldor, these ‘new wars’ are attached to identity politics, which is relevant to the case of the Rwandan genocide as well; while Twagiramarinya and Turshen speak of ethnic cleansing as the politicization of rape. The presence of mass rape and its utilization as a genocidal weapon also underpin my argument that conflicts are gendered, as women in the case of Rwanda came to symbolically represent the ethnic community as a whole, the destruction of which was the strategic aim of both sides. Furthermore, the case also instantiates that CRV is not an evident and inevitable collateral of direct violence, but can be explained through the patriarchal structure and militarism, which legitimizes and helps uphold male superiority and power, as it was showcased above in Sjoberg and Via’s as well as Enloe’s theory on the role of the military. By and large, gender identity and ethnic identity will be discussed in the chapter to follow.

According to the estimates of HRW, the number of women raped during the genocide can be put somewhere between 250,000 and 500,000. While there is a huge divergence between these two numbers, it is very difficult to give an exact figure, as there are many who did not report incidents because of fear of the consequences that would accompany these confessions. Although the government that formed after the genocide tried to mask and deny it, both sides have committed acts of CRV. It was on the one hand a case of ‘national security rape’, and on the other hand ‘systematic mass rape’. While out of the these two forms coined by Enloe that I’ve discussed in chapter 5, the latter is more apparent, we can also explain it through the former, as it was part of an ethno-national war, which had well-defined threats to national security, and sexual violation of women, conducted on a systematic and mass scale, was part of the strategy to achieve national security.

These atrocities that roamed through the country were a result of intertwining variables.

---

270 Turshen and Twagiramarinya, “‘Favors’ to Give & ‘Consenting’ Victims: The Sexual Politics of Survival in Rwanda.”
which reverberates Eriksson Baaz and Stern’s theory that was discussed earlier. Indeed, this web of factors as they’ve put it, had at the core gendered power dynamics and relations. Militarism and a shift towards militant masculinity were boosted by the causes enumerated in the previous subchapter; however, in all cases and factors, the invisible mechanisms of gender were fundamental in the buildup of the violence, including CRV and mass systematic rape in the country. As it was also specified previously in the theory of Sharoni on the relation of CRV and militarism, ‘gendered workings of power’ were transformed into violence against women in the case of Rwanda as well. I’ve also explained that militarization was very much present in the country during the pre-conflict period, or rather the period that preluded the genocide. Militarized masculinity, as Sharoni put it, helped naturalize patriarchy and thus legitimize sexual violations as well.

In like manner, rape cannot be explained by traditional IRT, as it was not a natural byproduct of the civil war roaming through the country, but was a wartime strategy having served multiple purposes, which could occur as a result of such gender imbalances and intersectionality of ethnic-, class-, and gender identity as well as frustration and anger attached to them because of the inability to change structural inequalities. We can identify three main narratives, all connected to gendered power relations, that try to identify the symbolic, constitutive and performative explanations of mass rape in Rwanda during the genocide.

First, it symbolized power and victory over the enemy, as their ethno-national identity was scorched through the rape of ‘their’ women, those on whom the future of their very identity hinged upon by bearing the children of the group.

Second, it was a constitutive part of soldiers’ identities, reinforcing their identity and thus hegemonic masculinity as well.

Third, it not only worked to humiliate and subjugate ‘Other’ women, but had a dual purpose of emasculating enemy men, strengthening the idea that they were not able to perform their manly duty to protect their women.

---

273 Korac, “Feminists against Sexual Violence in War: The Question of Perpetrators and Victims Revisited.”
275 Confortini, “Galtung, Violence, and Gender: The Case for a Peace Studies/Feminism Alliance.”
These three ideas were present at the same time and fed into one another. SGBV against women was used systematically, as a weapon of war, carrying a crucial symbolic meaning that mustn’t be swept aside. These were public acts, which aimed at drawing an ethnic line and establishing a binary of ‘us’ and ‘them’, targeting the ‘Others’, who were seen as the enemy, hence had to be humiliated, dominated and destroyed. Consequently, these cannot be justified as war booty or another atrocity within atrocities, as the answer lays at the intersection of ethnic identity and gender identity.

Sexual violations formed a part of ethnic cleansing, since they deprived women of their identity and sense of self-worth, moreover degraded and humiliated them. Men bolstered their domination over women through rape, but also showed their supremacy over enemy men. On the one hand, it symbolized male power and strength; on the other hand, it took away from the manliness of those men whose community was violated, for the purpose of which soldiers often assaulted women in front of their husbands or male relatives. Masculine identity, more precisely hegemonic masculinity is fragile, and was in a vulnerable position in Rwanda; its corroboration was thus essential, which was achieved through notions of heroism and protection of the community. Thereupon, the country’s case not only underpins Cockburn’s theory on the gendered dynamics, but is expressly in line with the theory of Price that I’ve introduced in the previous chapter. Actually, men were indeed compelled to be more violent because of the nationalism-driven militarization, and felt that their identity could be reinforced and validated through fighting the enemy and committing sexual atrocities, which further conveyed their manliness, in line with the expected hegemonic masculine characteristics.

Gender symbolism was even more strongly present for women, who became targets of rape, as they are viewed as the biological reproducers of the group; moreover, they serve as V. Spike Peterson put it “the symbolic markers of the nation and of the group’s cultural identity”. It follows, that when a woman is raped, it is “the symbolic rape of

278 Turshen, “The Political Economy of Rape.”
the body of the community”, 281 which also allows for this and other forms of sexual violence to become weapons of war, and at the same time brings about the “feminization of genocide”. 282 In the background of these acts, and messages they send, are as Turshen put it “the institutionalization of attitudes and practices that regard and treat women as property”; 283 thusly she reflects on the already noted argument of Uchida, the objectification- or sexual dehumanization of women. Indeed, in traditional societies, cultural-, social- and gender norms ingrain these practices that treat women as less than-, owned by men; for instance, some societies require dowries for brides, in others men are the legal guardians of women, or they possess control of household assets. Since Rwandan society was very rigid, with high gender inequality and traditional gender normative power structure, it was deemed as natural to treat women as objects that could be used and sacrificed for the security of the ethnic community. Some soldiers explicitly said that sexual servitude was women’s contribution to the war effort, and those who did not perform their duties had to perish. 284 As elaborated on in chapter 3, Runyan, just like Uchida, came to the conclusion that women often become ‘othered’ by men for the maintenance of their domination, and that they become objectified and violated for ‘the cause’, to ensure security of the nation, which is also defined by them.

Another important point that was very much present in Rwanda is the theory on male bonding and group solidarity. While some leaders find sexual offences during wars counterproductive to the cause, in Rwanda, it was a leadership strategy to use it as a weapon, and to explicitly promote these acts. Such deeds, while may have ran counter to the beliefs and attitudes of many were part of a wider scheme, a command and control system. Seifert and Price’s theory on group dynamics, which I’ve illustrated in the chapter afore, could partially account for the sexual violations in the country at case. Group solidarity and primary group cohesion in the military is essential, which also means that gang-rapes and acts perpetrated together boosted morale, eased intra-group tensions, gave them a sense of togetherness, including shared responsibility and loyalty raising group cohesion; but more importantly, it strengthened the military hierarchy and masculinity, which then legitimized their actions. Indeed, many Rwandan soldiers who

281 Seifert, “War and Rape: A Preliminary Analysis.”
282 Lentin, “The Rape of the Nation: Women Narrativising Genocide.”
283 Turshen, “The Political Economy of Rape.”
284 Des Forges, “Leave None to Tell the Story: Genocide in Rwanda.”
partook in gang-rapes had to consume a lot of alcohol to help them build up their courage, yet their actions went along with the will of the majority, averting potential clashes and solidifying their identity. Generally speaking, this can be viewed as a classic example of small-group dynamics, where the pressure of conformity is very high, hence individuals will engage in standardized rituals that will help them solidify their identity and ease the dissonance of clashing views.285

It can be asserted that women are essential to the construction of national identity, as we can speak of gendered nationalism as Peterson put it, within which women contribute to political identity struggles either through active engagement or through being symbols of the group, having the responsibility to reproduce further generations of the group. Women in this sense function as reproductive vessels,286 are seen as the “social reproducers of group members and cultural forms”,287 and act as indicators of intergroup differences through representing the cultural identity of the group or being its “symbolic repository”.288

The number of children born out of these forced sexual assaults of women can be put between 2000 and 5000,289 resulting in thousands of ‘little interahamwe’ or devil’s children.290 Indeed, forced pregnancies epitomized the destruction of the community,291 and served undermine a community in a dual way: on the one hand, it led to the impregnation of women of one ethnic group to children of the other; on the other hand, this also meant that they would not be able to bear children of their own ethnic community, as they became undesired in and excluded from their community.292 In many cases, those Hutu women who were carrying Tutsi men’s children were persecuted and killed in order to stop the birth of Tutsis.293 It is without doubt, that

286 Kaufman and Williams, “Theoretical Framework”; Turshen and Twagiramariya, “‘Favors’ to Give & ‘Consenting’ Victims: The Sexual Politics of Survival in Rwanda.”
287 Peterson, “Gendered Nationalism.”
288 Peterson.
290 Turshen and Twagiramariya, “‘Favors’ to Give & ‘Consenting’ Victims: The Sexual Politics of Survival in Rwanda.”
291 Kaufman and Williams, “Conflict and Violence Against Women.”
292 Turshen, “The Political Economy of Rape.”
293 Magnarella, “The Background and Causes of the Genocide in Rwanda.”
ethnic cleavages exacerbated the levels of sexual violence in the country,294 and allowed for the use of rape systematically as a weapon for both the subjugation of women, the emasculation of men, and the destruction of the ethnic community.

To sum it up, sexual offences and sexual torture carried deep symbolic meanings for both men and women. Firstly, they helped strengthen group- as well as ‘macho’ identity, and hegemonic masculinity through male bondages, all solidifying patriarchy. Secondly, they overpowered women and boosted men’s sense of dominance, solidifying their identity. Lastly, they diffused fear and led to fractures in individual identity as well as the erosion of group identity of those against whom the violations have been committed.295

In essence, in light of the facts, we can assert that all the seven types of violence enumerated by Mazurana and Proctor have been present in the county. While the main strategy and aim was ethnic cleansing through rape, which was called forth through militarism and gendered nationalism, all seven could be detected before, throughout, or after the genocide. Probably the most salient is the physical violence, which Mazurana and Proctor cast under the “torture, mutilation, or other bodily harms”.296 The magnitude of the sexual violence and rape committed in the country established that the conflict would not go unnoticed, and that even though the IC did not intervene to stop the atrocities, it would step up against the evasion of these crimes with impunity. As illustrated, gender symbolism played an influential part in these acts, as it allowed for rape to become such a powerful weapon. Militarism and violence increased as the economic crisis in the country pushed young Hutu men, while the political instability drove those whose power was threatened. Land and resource thusly were at the heart of the concerns of these individuals, which was also reflected by their actions, seizing lands of the people that they massacred, or forcing women into marriage so that they would get their hands on land. The domination that they sought was also translated into CRV, including through the commission of gang rapes; this is what was referred to as “male exchanges aiming at asserting manhood”,297 which helped prop up hegemonic masculinity, uphold patriarchal domination, and assert the ‘macho power’ coined by Connell, which I’ve referred to in a previous section. Women as symbolic markers of

294 Koos, “Sexual Violence in Armed Conflicts: Research Progress and Remaining Gaps.”
296 Mazurana and Proctor, “Gender, Conflict and Peace.”
297 Mazurana and Proctor.
the community were also touched by motherhood-related violence, as the main aim of the armed conflict was to eradicate the other side, a whole ethnic community; forthwith, forced impregnation was deliberately utilized in several thousand cases. As a result of the harms suffered, in the post-genocide situation women had to deal with the remaining two types of violence. The social status of those who have fallen victim of sexual violence, which was the majority of women, was scorched, as the norms, customs and traditions stigmatized them. On top of the dehumanization and humiliation suffered, they became more disempowered in the direct aftermath of the armed conflict as well; several reports claimed that these incidents haven’t ceased right away. As a further multiplier, ostracism that resulted from the social stigma, also restricted their prospects.

6.3. The role of Rwandan women in the genocide

Cynthia Enloe asserted in 1987 that war was a male drama, in which women appear as “an off-stage chorus”. This metaphor instantiates the general position of women well, who seldom occupy leadership positions. Their portrayal during armed conflicts also tends to follow this pattern, whereby their influence and agency is rarely a subject matter. Contrary to what most of the traditional literature claims, and their universalized portrayal as victims, women were in fact involved in the violence having been committed in Rwanda. Their engagement is very much a question surrounded by controversy; some proposed that women “stayed at home and cried”, while others alleged that the majority of women were actively involved in the brutalities that have taken place in the country. We could see through anecdotes and reports that although not as high in number as men, women were also amongst the perpetrators of CRV during the 100 days of terror. This instance also underpins that women are not all the same, there is no set of criteria such as peacefulness that they share, but their views vary significantly. It follows, that ideas of care feminism introduced in the beginning would hardly provide a sufficient explanation of this case. At the same time it means, that we cannot make generalizations of ‘good Tutsi’ and ‘evil Hutu’, as there were victims of violence and perpetrators thereof on both sides, both men and women. Albeit the majority of those who have been raped were from the Tutsi community, Hutu men

---

299 Hogg, “Women’s Participation in the Rwandan Genocide: Mothers or Monsters?”
also raped Hutu women who were intermarried or were seen as traitors; soldiers from the RPF committed revenge rape of Hutu women, but also pressured Tutsi women into having sexual intercourse as a war booty. As Newbury put it, it was “a gender issue that reached across ethnic lines”. An additional point to consider is that men have also fallen victim of atrocities, their bodies have also been violated, which further created an identity crisis, bruising their manliness. Many claim that man-on-man violations are even more humiliating from a normative point of view, being the utmost humiliation to be stripped of masculinity through rape, as male victims become effeminate. While sexual abuses committed in wars are in general underreported, those against men are surrounded by an even deeper silence. It follows, that while reports of organizations may not contain any reference to the presence of SGBV during a conflict, we should not make the direct assumption that it has not taken place.

A frequently explored debate in the field surrounds the active engagement vs. passive victimhood debate. In spite of the universal depiction of women as victims of wars, there are cases that sharply contradict this stereotype and oversimplification. One of the most infamous cases of female génocidaires is that of Pauline Nyiramasuhuko, who was ironically also the head of the country’s Ministry for Family and Women’s Affairs. She was the first woman to be convicted by the ICTR, for the participation in the killing and raping of hundreds. Other female perpetrators include Athanasie Mukabatana, Odette Nyirabagenzi or Rose Karushara. Women’s engagement in the conflict varied: some looted areas where massacres have taken place; others spied and told on those who were hiding the enemy; also others pressured Tutsi women into sex slavery; but many actively participated in the killings.

In this regard, the question arises: is the militarism-argument sufficient in explaining CRV and rape? In spite of the limitation that women’s participation in atrocities puts on the argument, its validity should not be questioned, as if one looks at the incentives behind women’s actions, there is a strong parallel that can be drawn to those of men, which I’ve elaborated on in the theoretical framework where I’ve cited Goldstein and

---

301 Turshen and Twagiramariya, “‘Favors’ to Give & ‘Consenting’ Victims: The Sexual Politics of Survival in Rwanda.”
302 Newbury, “Understanding Genocide.”
303 Korac, “Feminists against Sexual Violence in War: The Question of Perpetrators and Victims Revisited.”
304 Wood, “Armed Groups and Sexual Violence: When Is Wartime Rape Rare?”
Lindsey. The reasons accounted for in the case of female génocidaires in Rwanda are multiple: we can notice aggression directed at Tutsi women, which can be interpreted as a result of jealousy and hatred that have been stimulated by the hate propaganda; some women claimed they were afraid and felt coerced to commit crimes; many resonated with Hutu men’s ethnic motivation, of bonding and solidarity, as well as ensuring the security of the community; but there were some, who joined because it gave them a sense of liberty from the constraints on their lives, the conformity with traditional norms and customs, hence felt empowered. Overall, we can say that many women took on more ‘manly’ roles to benefit from a more masculine, dominant position, one of power.305

Indeed, the fact that women were also involved in the perpetration of CRV in Rwanda questions what care feminists postulate. Whereas they highlight women’s nurturer and peaceful character, they leave the door open for attacks on their hypothesis when looking at wars as the one Rwanda, where women have also been involved in the fighting and brutalities. Although I cannot say that I personally share their view as it is, there might be an explanation resonating their argument. As follows, emphasis should be on women’s caretaking role, but with a wider scope, that of the ethnic community. This means that we can to some extent interpret women’s actions as part of their attempt to safeguard their community.

If we go further into the debate on active and/or passive role, there are many ambiguous cases to be found. Twagiramariya and Turshen researched faiths and stories of Rwandan women, and recited the various ways in which women were coerced to or felt pressured to consent to sexual violence as a mere survival tactic. Forced marriage and the custom of bride abduction was a form of direct coercion. These marriages allowed many militiamen to seize control over the properties of women, hence enabled them to move upwards on the societal echelon.306 Nevertheless, there were instances where sexual services may have been interpreted as having received ‘consent’ or been treated as a ‘favor’. These included the intsinzi, who were those women who offered themselves to the military as a form of congratulation for their victory, yet it wasn’t really consensual; the so-called ‘ceiling girls’307 were viewed as war booty by RPF soldiers; some women


307 Ceiling girls were those who hid in the ceilings of huts, waiting to be rescued.
offered ‘favors’ in return for visitation right to see their jailed husbands; and others granted sexual favors to save their family property. It is clear, that by no means did these women give consent or favors because that was their true desire, but because they were in a situation where they had no real choice, but to submit themselves to these deeds. Evidently, in these cases, there was a very limited leeway for women; nevertheless, as postmodern feminists as well as the tenets of Long hold, their agency in resorting to methods of survival should not be reduced to that of passive victims of a situation, since by that, we completely take away their power. Indeed, as I’ve instantiated in a prior chapter, Lindsey also made the distinction not between activity and passivity of women, but their voluntary and involuntary engagement. Given these points, it is evident, that the two structural causes of the conflict, that are ethnic tension, as a colonial legacy, and gender inequality, which built up structural violence in the country, were very much interconnected. Unequal gender relations and the country’s traditional gender normative roles that influenced the conflict set out the possibility for the commission of systemic rape in the country for the purposes of ethnic cleansing and setting straight the power structure between ethnic groups.

6.4. The aftermath

The genocide that wreaked havoc in the country left many short-, medium- and long-term consequences, both physical and psychological. One of the main challenges in the aftermath of the atrocities was how to overcome the mistrust amongst Rwandans. In many cases, neighbors and family members, trusted people became entangled in the brutalities, which shook Rwandans’ confidence in one another. It follows, that it not only destabilized the Tutsi community, but brought about a societal crisis. War pregnancies not only led to additional mental challenges for women, who had to grapple with the constant reminder of what they’ve had to suffer through, but also carried a stigma. In the chapter on the gendered dynamics of armed conflict, I have elaborated on isolation and ostracism, which became common phenomenon in the country in the period that followed. Indeed, oftentimes women were blamed and accused of having been willingly involved in such sexual acts. As intermarriage was common in the country, the genocide that followed ethnic lines also divided families. Many could not cope with the events and the shame that they felt

---

308 Turshen and Twagiramariya, “‘Favors’ to Give & ‘Consenting’ Victims: The Sexual Politics of Survival in Rwanda.”


and were made to feel, so they committed suicide. Additionally, CRV did not halt immediately after the massacres have ended, but went on for years after on, just at a lower intensity. The resettlement of IDPs and refugees who fled to other countries also posed a challenge that the government had to tackle. The profound health concerns were not only mental, but had physical symptoms as well. HIV/AIDS was widespread afterwards, which could also be imputed to the fact that soldiers also utilized HIV/AIDS as a tool or additional weapon. Oftentimes perpetrators carrying the virus, which was around 25-35% in the times before the genocide, deliberately raped to transmit it.\textsuperscript{309}

One of the steps taken in the subsequence of events, was the setting up of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, with the goals to “prosecute persons responsible for genocide and other serious violations of international humanitarian law…”\textsuperscript{310} The ICTR had great success in the inclusion of rape as a crime against humanity as well as a war crime prosecutable by the ICC. Overall, the tribunal was interpreted as a success by most, as it ensured accountability and invigorated IL and international norms.\textsuperscript{311}

The important takeaway however, which I explored previously is that of Moser, as she claimed that those conditions and underlying factors that generated the armed conflict as well as the systematic sexual violations, can reproduce unless there isn’t a conscious effort to tackle them.\textsuperscript{312} Rwanda went through major changes during the post-conflict period; for instance, it passed many legislative reforms to boost women’s participation in the public sphere. In that sense, we can see the reflection of liberal feminists and also radical feminists to an extent. On the one hand, the legal reforms passed by the country echo liberal feminist views; on the other hand, some believe that a total reconstruction of gender-roles happened in the country, since women became 70% of the population


\textsuperscript{311} Büki, “Humanitarian Intervention and Gender Equality, BA in IR.”

\textsuperscript{312} Newbury, “Understanding Genocide.”
and began an emancipation, including their incorporation into political and economic life.

Some of the traditional cultural and gender norms have seen a positive shift towards a more balanced society, including the afore-mentioned legal reforms allowing women to inherit property. Indeed, the country’s statistical performance in terms of the number of women in political life, as well as the advances in gender parity have been significant. Notwithstanding, one should not take these for granted and should be cautious, as there is the risk of giving too much credit to numbers and quantitative data analysis. With due respect to the leadership’s efforts, Rwandan society is still a patriarchal one, with traditions and gender roles still having a significant impact on women’s lives; this also means, that gender remains a factor to influence societal structure and hence the potential causes of tensions and conflicts.

7. Conclusion

This study serves as a window to understanding how gender and traditional norms associated with it can lead to the escalation of violence in a country, moreover can allow, or even prompt the perpetration of mass systemic sexual violence within the conflict-context. All in all, the questions that were tackled were the following: Is gender a causal factor in conflicts, and if it is indeed, how does it influence them? Is sexual and gender-based violence an inevitable, natural occurrence during wars? What can be the root causes of CRV, and what conditions make it more likely?

I hypothesized in the beginning, that a strong connection is present between armed conflicts and gender; furthermore, that rape and other types of sexual atrocities, which were also present in the Rwandan genocide, are not omnipresent in wars, but are the results of gendered power dynamics in the pre-conflict and conflict period. Through the case of Rwanda, I wished to show that societies tainted by structural inequalities, especially gender injustices and traditional gender normative roles are highly prone to such occurrences.

On balance, we could see that the Rwandan genocide was the result of very complex social, economic and political factors that have been encompassed by a patriarchal structure with asymmetrical power dynamics between men and women. These traditional gender norms have been ingrained in and embedded into people’s everyday lives, and became legitimized through institutions that constantly strengthened these
norms and processes. Albeit, in most cases, looking at male-female relations is not enough to draw a straight line to violence and armed conflict; we can argue after looking at the findings of the case study, that gender inequality was a crucial factor in the conflict for several reasons, and that it resulted in the commission of systemic, genocidal rape. A conclusion that can be drawn from the findings is, that the various forms of sexual violence that have taken place during and after the genocide could be directly imputed to the unequal power relations between men and women. Women having faced discrimination on the labor market and politics, and were treated as childlike figures, as ‘less than’ men; notwithstanding, both men and women were under enormous pressure by society to conform to norms and customs. It is within this context that violence against women has been committed. Knowing these factors makes it easier to comprehend why women, who have been seen as passive, wives and mothers, could become targets of rape and weapons in an ethnic conflict.

The other important takeaway of this research is that although not the most easily recognizable and apparent, gender in fact is a cause of conflicts, as it penetrates all aspects of life, influencing other, more visible sources of conflicts as well. In case of Rwanda, there has been an enormous pressure on men to act in line with their traditional gender normative role, as providers for the family, as leaders and protectors of the community. To put it simply, gendered expectations surrounded the society, and when faced with hardships and threats to their position and identity, they moved towards the solidification thereof, through militarism. Their masculine identity was scorched by economic turbulence that left many young Hutus without any economic or social prospects, and a threat of losing their favorable political position meant a loss of power and thus emasculation. These factors arose within favorable conditions to the breakout of violence, a highly militarized country, a war that just ended but was easily inflammable, the easy access to weapons, and extensive propaganda legitimizing the eradication of the 'enemy'. Gendered identity construction was hence achieved through war and degradation of women through sexual assaults. In that sense, structural violence in the country led to direct violence, both of which became legitimized by cultural violence.

The foregoing discussion has attempted to highlight the importance of applying gender as an analytical framework when examining conflicts. By doing so, we find that it leads to the discovery of more complex processes, the understanding of which could help
interpret the events taking place or having taken place. Only by addressing the root causes, structural violence and asymmetrical-, gendered power dynamics, can we challenge oppressive and unfair complexes and achieve a longer-lasting peace. To conclude with the words of Kofi Annan, “gender equality is more than a goal in itself. It is a precondition for meeting the challenge of reducing poverty, promoting sustainable development and building good governance.”\textsuperscript{313}

8. Reference list


https://books.google.co.uk/books/about/Women_and_War.html?id=HkMHDr3d52oC.


https://search.proquest.com/docview/231947149/fulltextPDF/EC081B2CA5984BB1PQ/1?accountid=17256.


Friedman, Willa. “Local Economic Conditions and Participation in the Rwandan
http://cega.berkeley.edu/assets/miscellaneous_files/wgape/19_Friedman.pdf.


Koos, Carlo. “Sexual Violence in Armed Conflicts: Research Progress and Remaining


Magnarella, Paul J. “The Background and Causes of the Genocide in Rwanda.” *Journal of International Criminal Justice*, no. 3 (2005): 801–22. https://watermark.silverchair.com/mqi059.pdf?token=AQECAHi208BE49Ooan9k khW_Ercy7Dm3ZL_9CF3qfKAcr485ysgAAALgwggJUBgkqkhiGi9w0BBwagggJF MIICQlBADCCajoGCSqGSlb3DQEhAATaEBglghkgBZQMEAS4wEQQMEV hjbu1UVxCQe1C8AgEQgIICC4VLurX9rDvM8PWootD0gStTr5kOSVAYG2msRC9HU3aAfusQQ.


-----. ““Session 5: Conflict Analysis, Lecture Notes, Peace, Security and Conflict Studies, Corvinus University of Budapest,”” 2019.


Szűcs, Anita. “‘Session 3: Realism, Lecture Notes, Theory of International Relations, Corvinus University of Budapest,’” 2018.


Uchida, Carina Minami. “Constraints On Rape As a Weapon of War: A Feminist and


9. Appendix


**Table 1** Conflict analysis matrix: sample elements for a country emerging from conflict

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels of Analysis</th>
<th>Security</th>
<th>Political</th>
<th>Economic</th>
<th>Social</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Global</td>
<td>Neighbours troops have</td>
<td>Country is an list of</td>
<td>Country has been approved for</td>
<td>Long history of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>withdrawn</td>
<td>countries to be</td>
<td>HIPC</td>
<td>migration of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>UN Mission Mandate has</td>
<td>considered by the</td>
<td>debt-relief</td>
<td>migration and now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>been extended for 6 months</td>
<td>Peacbuilding Commission</td>
<td>subject to new EU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>but peace-keepers expected</td>
<td>for longer-term</td>
<td>Aid dependency; volume expected</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to be drawn down by end of</td>
<td>support.</td>
<td>to reduce</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>that time</td>
<td></td>
<td>and existing pledges have not</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>been fully honoured</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>International business interests</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>in timber and rubber operate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>through national proces - supply</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>lines and ‘taxes’ paid are unclear</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Regional/Cross-Border
- Good offices of regional organisation have not succeeded in preventing continued political interference of neighbouring President with former militias.
- Cross-border tradition is essential but still beset with security and corruption challenges.
- Flows of refugees and border camps that require massive repatriation and settlement programmes.

### National
- Incomplete DDR programme implementation of terms of Peace Settlement is ongoing and precarious.
- Continued rivalry of former rebel factions amongst political elite.
- Integration of new national army hampered by the ineffective verification of officers and links with human rights investigations.
- Weak public service with irregular payment of salaries and poor training and capacity.
- No progress on security sector reform (SSR) as government reluctant to address existing power structures in army and police.
- Civil society groups emerging but weak and riven by party political affiliation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels of Analysis</th>
<th>Security</th>
<th>Political</th>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Economic</th>
<th>Social</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National (Cont.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>dividends of peace</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Culture of impunity for serious human rights abuses including sexual violence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local/Sub-national</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Decentralisation of government services affected by weak and fractured central administration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Culture of violence continues as legacy of war with implications for women and children in particular</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Road and transport infrastructure needed to open up rural areas and access to markets for smaller farmers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tensions between IDPs and settled major and communities as returns accelerate following elections</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Social cohesion is weak following major and multiple displacement of communities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Small weapons are widely available and landmines remain a threat in more remote areas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>