Expanding upon the Gendered Continuum of Violence: Do gender norms in peacetime play a role in exacerbating armed conflict and violence against women during armed conflict?

The cases of the Former Yugoslavia and the Democratic Republic of Congo

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Abstract

This thesis aims to expand on the gendered continuum of violence to include gender norms. In other words, do gender norms have a role in exacerbating the likelihood of an armed conflict, and how are these directly linked to the gender-based violence (GBV) women face during armed conflict? The gendered continuum of violence provides an understanding of the gender-inequality conflict link, however, ignores that gender inequality is tightly intertwined with gender norms. Therefore, by hypothesising and researching the root causes of the gendered continuum of violence, a greater understanding of it can be achieved. Firstly, a systematic review was conducted in order to understand whether this newly hypothesised continuum has theoretical underpinnings and can be supported within the current literature. Secondly, the cases of the former Yugoslavia and the Democratic Republic of Congo were analysed to see if this hypothesis holds up in real-world settings. It is concluded that there is a link between gender norms, armed conflict, and GBV in armed conflict, and therefore the gendered continuum of violence was successfully expanded upon. However, this continuum plays out differently dependent on different contexts, and other factors, such as nationalism and poverty, are deeply intertwined in this continuum.

To every victim of wartime gender-based violence, outspoken, silenced, or forgotten. May you find peace.

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1. <u>Introduction</u>

1.1 Topic of research

This thesis draws from previous research and theories within international relations, sociology, peace and conflict studies, and gender studies. It aims to map out the link between gender norms during peacetime, armed conflict, and gender-based violence during conflict (in particular rape), by way of a continuum. In other words:

1) *Do gender norms during peacetime have a direct effect on violence against women during times of armed conflict?*
2) *Do gender norms have a link with a country's propensity for conflict e.g., do they perpetuate, sustain, or enhance an armed conflict?*
3) *Are these three factors linked by way of a continuum?*

 By doing so, this thesis aims to expand the gendered continuum of violence theory. This will be done by conducting a systematic review of the current literature and the analysis of two case studies: the former Yugoslavia, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

This topic was chosen because is highly relevant to a number of individuals. Firstly, by understanding if gender norms play a role in inciting and sustaining armed conflict, early warning signs and prevention techniques can be developed that attack the root causes of gender inequality and its link with the likelihood of armed conflict. Further, by better understanding how gender norms during peacetime play a role in inciting and sustaining violence against women during armed conflict, more specialised prevention measures against violence against women and girls can be developed and introduced. In addition to this, by taking the view that gendered violence during conflict is part of a continuum, the experiences of women (which have been historically ignored) can be taken into consideration. Lastly, by focusing on gender, a category that is deeply engrained and affects how every society is run, change can begin at a grassroots level. Creating a thesis that can inspire grassroots activism and societal change is crucial, because even if laws promoting gender equality are passed, cultural violence will still be present; instead, gender stereotypes and norms need to be

counteracted so legislation is better enforced, and equality is a reality instead of a ceremony without substance.

This research will not claim that gender norms/stereotypes/inequality are the reason armed conflict exists or gender-based violence exists. Doing so ignores other factors of conflict propensity which are well established. It would also take away the blame from the individuals that actively commit violence against women, which would be extremely problematic. Instead, it is hypothesised that gender norms are a contributory factor that can be capitalised on in order to create environments that insight/sustain armed conflict and perpetuate violence against women. Because this is a new line of enquiry within feminist research, expanding upon the gendered continuum of violence, it is not possible to make any generalisable conclusions. Instead, this thesis can be used in order to expand upon the possible gender norm and conflict link in order to guide and create research that can lead to falsifiable conclusions. This can also help further research bases that are historically androcentric, such as international relations and sociology. Furthermore, attention can be drawn to the harmful nature of gender norms and the need to root these out in order to further women's rights.

1.2 The Current State of Literature:

The current literature that relates to this thesis is based upon the apparent gender-inequality and armed conflict link. In other words, studies have found a link between a countries level of gender inequality and their likelihood of entering an armed conflict; the less gender equal a society is, the more likely they are to experience armed conflict.

The links between gender, war, and peace can be seen across centuries through ballads, myths, and event retelling (Winter, 2000). However, it is only in recent years (particularly the past two decades), in which attention has been given to this link within scholarly discourse at an ever-growing pace. A large proportion of this attention has focused upon how gender can be incorporated in order to improve peace-keeping post conflict (see for example, Pankhurst, 2000; Shepard and Hamilton, 2016; Varynen, 2010). However, one interesting (and still developing) finding that has come out of feminist international relations study is that gender inequality is linked to a country's propensity for armed conflict; that is to say, the more unequal the society is in terms of gender relations, the greater

likelihood a country will experience armed conflict. This ground-breaking finding deserves more analysis as it points towards a root cause of armed conflict. Therefore, if taken into consideration, conflict prevention and peace building can be more targeted by addressing societal causes of conflict within a given society. Over 150,000,000 deaths were caused by war/civil strife in the 20th century (Hudson et al, 2009). Thus, researching factors of conflict propensity that may seem nuanced, such as that of gender inequality, is imperative in order to gain a greater understanding of how conflict comes about.

In 2000, Caprioli measured the use of military action as a foreign policy tool between 1960 to 1992. Her research found that a 5% decrease in the proportion of women in parliament renders a state nearly five times more likely to resolve international disputes with military violence; decreasing fertility rate by 1/3rd makes a state five times less likely to resort to military violence; and increasing the proportion of women in the labour force by 5% renders a state nearly five times less likely to use military force to resolve an international conflict. This was one of the first studies to have researched and found a link between women's inequality and the likelihood of an armed conflict. Previous studies looked into human rights records as a whole and found that 'human rights rogue states' (a term coined by Caprioli and Trumbore, 2006) are more likely to enter into armed conflict (for example, see Watkin, 2004; Mertus et al, 2006). Whilst this positive correlation served to widen understanding of conflict and conflict prevention, the broad nature of 'human rights abuses' meant that further research had to be conducted; which 'category'-gender inequality, ethnic discrimination etc- of abuses were more at play, if any? Thus, led to the current (and ever-growing) research base we have today, which will be outlined below.

In 2005, following on from her previous work, Caprioli conducted a quantitative analysis of intrastate conflicts using data spanning from 1960-2001. This data was coded for gender equality, while controlling for other variables known to predict intrastate conflict. Gender equality was measured by both fertility rate and female percentage of labour workforce. The results matched that of the 2000 study, finding that the higher the level of gender inequality within a state, the greater the likelihood such a state will experience internal conflict. In 2009, Hudson et al found that the physical security of women (measured by the enactment of son preference through female infanticide and sex-selective abortion) is strongly associated with the peacefulness of the state and the quality of relations

between a state and its neighbours. Further evidence comes from El-Bushra and Sahl (2005); Melander (2005); Schaftenaar (2007).

The most argued theory underpinning this correlation is the 'gender gap' theory, also known as 'the women and peace hypothesis.' This is the belief that women are more peace-orientated and less militaristic when compared with men. Therefore, if women are granted a stage in which they can express their political opinions, it will result in fewer violent international disputes. In other words, gender equality will lead to a greater likelihood of peaceful reconciliation due to women's inherent disposition and the ability to express this disposition. This theory is not without it is quantitative support, as 'scholars have identified that women, in relation to men, are less likely to support the use of force' (Caprioli, 2000, page 1). In addition, with this line of reasoning it would be expected that if more women had a greater say politics, in particular international politics, then the likelihood of the state being involved in armed conflict would be lowered. This would be because women are less likely to vote for militaristic decisions. Evidence for this has also emerged; Caprioli (2000) found that a 5% decrease in the proportion of women in parliament renders a state almost 5 times more likely to resolve international disputes with military violence. However, this study also found that other aspects of gender equality affect the likelihood of a state entering a violent conflict, such as fertility rates, the duration of female suffrage, and female participation in the labour force. Therefore, the idea that the gender equality-conflict link emerges because women are inherently peaceful and therefore, if given a national/international stage through equality to use this peacefulness to affect policy, is flawed. Instead, the reasoning behind gender equality as a whole should be understood if we are to understand the full reasoning behind the gender equality-conflict link.

On top of this, the 'association of women with passivism [has] disconcerted many feminists' (Confortini, 2006, page 2). Tickner (1992) argues that the association of women with peace lends support to a masculinity which constructs women as passive victims that need protection. Therefore, for researchers to invoke the women and peace hypothesis, is a way for gender norms (and thus gender inequality), to remain deeply ingrained in power structures that have been built upon the domination and subordination of women (Scott, 1988, page 42). Gender is an analytical category which helps to organise the way people think of the world and therefore social reality is seen 'as a set of mutually exclusive dichotomous categories, in relationship of super/subordination one to the

other' (Confortini, 2006, page 9). French philosopher Michel Foucault (1926-1984) saw power as a pervasive regulatory system for social control in which everyone (individuals and institutions) participates in (for a deeper understanding of this, see Foucault, 1980, page 97-98). Feminist theories are often inspired by this concept of power, arguing that socially constructed genders are one of the primary ways of shaping, regulating, rationalising, and justifying other social systems of power (Peterson, 1992, in Confortini, 2006). Therefore, instead of perpetuating traditional power structures that subordinate women in order to explain the gender inequality-conflict link, the basis of what perpetuates gender inequality needs to be considered. That is gender norms.

1.3 Key concepts:

The Gendered Continuum of Violence:

The gendered continuum of violence sees gender-based violence (GBV) as a form of violent conflict in and of itself. Cynthia Cockburn (1934-2019) was the scholar that coined the term 'gendered continuum of violence', first in 1998. The theory suggests that a sharp distinction cannot be made between peace, war, and post-war when it comes to women and conflict. Instead, the relationship between gender inequality and all that it encompasses during peace and war are 'like linking a thread' (Cockburn, 2004, page 44) between 'the bedroom and the battlefield' (Cockburn, 1998). In fact, Kelly (2000, in Barberet and Carrington, 2018, page 8) categorises peacetime violence against women as a 'shadow war'. Based on 2 years of empirical evidence among women's anti-war organisations worldwide, Cockburn (2010) states that 'it is from the women I have met during my research that I have learned to see the continuum effect more clearly' (page 11). For example, she found that 'women are saying clearly that that they experience coercion by men in disturbingly similar forms in war and so-called peace' (page 9). This continuum may be due to a plethora of reasons, including that wartime violence against women feeds on peacetime patriarchy and the gender norms that uphold the patriarchy (Nikolic-Ristanovic, 2002); therefore, we cannot separate the violent conflict and patriarchal values, but see them as intrinsically linked.

On that account, it is imperative to research the gendered norms and how they affect a countries propensity of armed conflict. By doing so, the gendered continuum of violence can be understood fully. It is surprising that gendered norms and stereotypes have not been studied in regard to a country's propensity for conflict, considering that these norms and stereotypes play a large role in

underpinning inequality (Wright, 2014). As the OHCHR (date unknown) states, 'harmful gender stereotypes, rigid constructions of femininity and masculinity and roles are the root cause of gender-based violence against women'. Thus, in order to map out the gendered continuum of violence and consequently have a more comprehensive understanding of armed conflict, it is important to understand how these norms are formed/maintained

Gender norms and stereotypes:

Gender norms refer to how each gender is expected to behave in a given social context. This restricts gender identity into what is considered appropriate for each specific biological sex, and disproportionately affects women and girls (Save the Children, date unknown). Gender stereotypes are closely linked to gender norms. Gender stereotyping refers to the application of ascribing specific attributes, characteristics or roles to men or women, specifically because they are either a man or a woman (OHCHR). These stereotypes affect gender norms and gender norms affect gender stereotypes. For example, the stereotype that women should maintain the household has led to such a norm, and this norm has further strengthened the stereotype. A large proportion of these norms and stereotypes perpetuate gender inequality. For instance, women maintaining the household has meant that they are unable to earn their own money and must rely on men in order to stay out of poverty. This severely limits a women's freedom and opportunities.

This paper will first explain the methodologies used to undertake this thesis. This includes outlining how the systematic review and case studies were conducted and the rationale for choosing to use these methodologies. This chapter will then critically discuss the methodologies used as all researchers should be aware of the limitations of their study in order to give the reader full transparency, and to be able to address these limitations to the best of their ability (Gall et al, 1996).

The results from the systematic review form chapter one. This will look at the current theoretical underpinnings that can help explain whether there is a continuum between gender norms during peacetime, conflict, and violence against women during conflict. This will include a short debate of essentialism vs constructivism, the domestic-international violence theory, Galtung's general theory of violence, social learning theory, and masculinities. This chapter will then end with a critical analysis.

Chapter 2 will consist of the former Yugoslavia case study. This chapter will start with a brief outline of the conflict, before then outlining Yugoslavian society and women's place in this society, including the gender norms ascribed to them. Then, the violence against women during the conflicts, particularly within the Bosnian context, will be outlined, and the continuum will be mapped out. Lastly, a critical analysis of this chapter will be undertaken.

Chapter 3 will consist of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) case study, and it will follow the same chapter outline that chapter 2 does. Chapter 4 is the final chapter and ends this thesis with a summary and discussion of what has been outlined. Conclusions will be drawn, and short recommendations will be made.

2. <u>Methodology</u>

2.1 Systematic review

In order to assess the hypothesis that gender norms have an impact of the gendered continuum of violence during conflict, first a systematic review of the literature was conducted. This was done to gain knowledge of the theoretical underpinnings of this thesis. This is because a theory/theories are the reasoning behind an argument as they explain its 'relationship, its mechanism (if the relationship is causal), scope-conditions, background conditions, and any additional information needed to interpret the argument' (Gerring and Christenson, 2017, page 14). This was particularly needed for this thesis as work on the link between gender norms and armed conflict have not been carried out in a systematic manner, and thus knowledge on the theories was of utmost importance. In addition, the literature that has focused on gender norms and their impact on conflict is fragmented across various different disciplines, such as international relations, gender studies, and sociology. Therefore, for these reasons, it was very important to collate the current information into one place. This was done by searching keywords into Google Scholar. Google Scholar was used for its simplicity and ease of access. Because the researcher was on a tight time schedule, with Gall et al (1996) estimating that the completion of a systematic review can take anywhere between 3-6 months, Google Scholar was a rational choice. In addition, Google Scholar allowed the researcher to search across many disciplines and sources, which was useful because knowledge is fragmented. Furthermore, using Google Scholar meant that the search strategy resulted in articles varying in methodology. This allowed for 'triangulation', and thus a more comprehensive review of the literature is outlined in this thesis. A scoping search was first conducted. This was done to understand the current state of knowledge, and this could inform how the review was conducted. For the researcher, this allowed them to understand what the search criteria should be. Thus, the search criteria the researcher used was: (gender) AND ("gender identity") AND ("gender relations") AND (conflict) AND ("gender norms") AND (violence) AND (theory) AND (war) AND (patriarchy) AND (continuums) AND (causal) AND (militarism) NOT ("post conflict"). This search criteria found 106 results. These results were then exported to RefWorks and the duplicates were removed. This left the researcher with 98 sources. After this, all articles were screened for their relevance by reading the abstracts, or if needed, the full article. Overall, 18 articles

were removed because the researcher could not gain full access to them, and 28 were removed because they were not relevant. Therefore, 52 articles were used to form the first part of this thesis.

Obtained sources	Number of Sources
Overall sources obtained	106
Excluded because irrelevant	28
Excluded due to lack of access	18
Excluded because duplicates	8
Total sources excluded	54
Final number of sources analysed	52

These 52 articles were then read fully, and their main arguments, ideas, and important quotes were written down. After summarising these, the researcher undertook a thematic analysis. This was done by grouping the articles into themes based upon their overarching arguments, theories, and findings. These themes form each subheading of the first chapter. Each theme was assigned a colour and each article summary was tagged with their respective colour/s, so the researchers large document could be navigated with greater ease. Although Petticrew and Roberts (2005) recommend tabulating results for the readers ease when conducting a systematic review, this was not possible due to the large amount of qualitative data that was collected. As an alternative, the researcher's summary of every article was organised under its themes heading. Not only did this make it easier for the researcher to access relevant studies and therefore draw and obtain important conclusions, but it also allows the reader to assess the reliability of this systematic review.

2.2 Case Studies

For this thesis, two cases were analysed. These were the conflict in the DRC (1998-2003) and the breakdown of the former Yugoslavia, with a particular focus on Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992-1995) due to the large amount of data on the women's rights abuses that happened there during the conflict. Undertaking case studies was the correct course of action because of their usefulness in theory development; this is because they answer 'how' and 'why' questions in greater detail, which is a lot harder when using a larger sample. Of course, this was useful because this thesis aims to shed light on something that has not been researched in a systematic manner. At such an early stage of analysis, where research like this one serves an explanatory role (e.g., identifying causal factors), case studies are the best course of action (Gerring and Christenson, 2017, page 149). After this, the factors identified can be taken into consideration to form studies that test hypotheses in a falsifiable manner.

The cases chosen for this thesis were done so in a non-random fashion. The former Yugoslavia was chosen because the researcher is, at the time of writing, based in Zagreb, Croatia. The original thought process was that interviews could be conducted. However, due to COVID-19 restrictions, this was not possible. Despite this, choosing to study the former Yugoslavia was still a good decision because it meant the researcher had access to documents within archives, such as old newspaper articles, which would not have been possible had the researcher been based elsewhere. A second case was also analysed in order to assess the generalisability of the researcher's hypothesis. For the use of a second case to be most effective, the cases had to be both independent and different from one another. Consequently, the power of causal mechanisms can be best analysed. This is why the DRC conflict was chosen. Despite the differences between the countries, both of the conflicts were defined by women's rights abuses, in particular, the systematic rape and sexual violence committed against women. Therefore, the effect gender norms have on this could be studied, and the extent of this could be analysed by taking into consideration differences between the countries.

A huge advantage of using case studies is that multiple sources of evidence can form the research base. Because of this, documents were not gathered in a systematic manner, unlike the first half of this thesis. The researcher needed to rely on official documents written by governments, NGOs, and the UN, alongside academic articles, newspaper articles etc. Therefore, in order to gain the information that forms this half of the thesis, a search of official documents was first conducted. This

was the initial first-step because it allowed the researcher could gain a deeper understanding on the contexts of the conflicts, particularly the status of women and the crimes committed against them during the conflicts. By contextualising the problem, the researcher could then be guided on specific issues within the conflicts that may be useful to study, and thus the types of articles that should be read. Therefore, the secondary sources were found by searching academic databases. In addition, Google was also used in order to gain access to archived news articles. Furthermore, literature that articles cited was also gathered in order to expand the research base. Overall, 27 sources were collected for the former Yugoslavia, and 19 were collected for the DRC. Similar to the method used for the systematic review, these sources were then read, with their key takeaways written down. The researcher was then able to group them into their underlying themes, and these themes form each subheading of the case studies chapter.

2.3 Critical Reflection of Methodology:

One of the huge appeals of systematic reviews is that they follow a set of scientific principles. By using a specific search criteria, the biases and preconceived notions that the researcher holds surrounding the topic cannot guide the research (Boland and Dickson, 2017). As Petticrew and Roberts (2005, page 6) state: 'the reader is entitled to a comprehensive, objective, and reliable overview, not a partial review of a convenience sample of the authors favourite studies.' This also means that the reader can assess the reliability of this thesis by following the same process that the researcher did. However, the scientific validity of a systematic review is called into question after the articles have been collected. This is because there is no standard procedure to follow when conducting a thematic analysis. In other words, this process is subjective. One of the reasons the researcher chose to conduct a systematic review was to reduce bias by following a specific process, and therefore this undermines such logic. For this reason, Boland et al (2017) recommend having more than one researcher screen the studies that are used. However, this was not possible in this research because the thesis was assigned for the researcher to conduct alone. However, subjectivity is a limitation is all qualitative research, but conducting a systematic review limits this as much as possible by allowing the reader to undertake a replica of the study themselves, in order to assess the validity of the conclusions formed. It was not an option for the researcher to conduct quantitative research because the aim of this thesis

is to understand causal mechanisms and processes, and this is best done through qualitative research (Matthews and Ross, 2010).

Unfortunately, the strength of systematic reviews following scientific principles cannot be said for the way the researcher conducted the case studies. As mentioned above, the documents that form the case study chapters were chosen purposely. There is, therefore, a risk that certain documents are not used because they do not provide support for what the researcher is arguing. Whilst this is not the case for this thesis, the researcher did specifically search for articles that focus upon gender, gender norms, and women's rights. Therefore, other casual mechanisms that may play a role are ignored. In addition, by actively choosing to use documents that focus specifically on gender, the intersection between other casual factors and gender norms cannot be taken into consideration to the extent they may deserve. It is not the researcher's intention to downplay other factors, but rather shed light on an area that has received little attention. Moreover, because studying gender norms is a new line of enquiry, it would be too early to delve straight into the intersecting factors. Instead, it needs to be established as to whether gender norms during peacetime do in fact effect violence against women during conflict. Lastly, case studies lack representativeness, and therefore we cannot make assumptions on their generalisability. Whilst this is slightly overcome with the use of two case studies that are different from each other, we still cannot say for certain that the findings found from this study can be applied to other conflicts in the world. Thus, further research should be done in order to assess the generalisability of the conclusions found in this thesis. Therefore, this thesis can guide such further research.

Lastly, a weakness of both the systematic review and the case studies, is that a large proportion of the applicable literature may be either unpublished, or, as shown above, full access is not possible. Such literature is known as 'grey literature' (Petticrew and Roberts, 2005). By not using grey literature, the researcher risks missing out on important findings, arguments, and discussions. Grey literature can be located by contacting researchers directly. However, doing so would be incredibly time-consuming, and systematic reviews are already time-consuming; Gall et al (1996) estimate that a systematic review takes around 3-6 months to complete. This was, therefore, not possible as the researcher is a fulltime student with many other commitments and a short turn-around-time to hand in this thesis.

Despite this, the researcher was pragmatic as the approach used maximised the reliability of the search given the specific set of conditions they were under.

3 Systematic Review: Theoretical Underpinnings

This chapter outlines the findings of the systematic review and forms the basis of the other chapters by outlining the theoretical underpinnings that can be used to explain the gender norm, armed conflict, GBV continuum. It is incredibly important to cement this link into a theoretical context. This is because without background knowledge, prevention techniques will not be as specific, and therefore, not as effective. In addition, by understanding theoretical underpinnings, further research can be conducted in order to infer the extent to which such theories play a role in the hypothesised continuum. The theories within this chapter will also be used to explain why looking at gender norms in order to expand upon the gendered continuum of violence is most useful. This is because many of the theories this systematic review uncovers directly involve gender norms and have also been used to explain armed conflicts; however, the two are rarely, if ever linked. The theories this chapter outlines are: social constructivism; the domestic-international violence theory; the general theory of violence; social learning theory; and masculinities.

3.1 Social Constructivism

A common theme throughout the literature reviewed is the use of social constructivism when referring to gender. Social constructivism regards social knowledge as being rooted in history and culture. Thus, social knowledge is seen as being sustained by the social process (Burr, 1995); our social worlds are pre-organised through social interactions and there are certain patterns of behaviour and thinking 'available' to us, dependent on if we are male or female (Skjelsbaek, 2001). For example, boys are more likely to be given cars to play with, whereas girls are more likely to be given dolls. These choices made by parents are cemented by the gendered differences within society (which formed through a history of believing that women are inferior to men). West and Zimmerman (1987, page 4) put it nicely when they stated: '*doing gender means creating differences between girls and boys and women and men, differences that are not natural, essential, or biological*'; gender is, therefore, a reflection of societal norms and ideologies (Pepper, 2014). Sex differences are used to justify the social construction of gender differences (Reddy et al, 2018). Consequently, although gender inequality is deeply cemented, it is not inevitable. As we become who we are due to interactions with our surroundings and the society we live in, changing society from the bottom-up

can mean that gender inequality can slowly be untangled. To do this, gendered norms and stereotypes would have to be tackled (Gonzalez and Rodriguez-Planas, 2018).

We see how far this approach has already worked by looking at the immense strides that have been made towards gender equality within the last 100 years, in almost every society. For example, in the UK women gained the full right to vote in 1928 (Representation of the People Act), abortion was legally granted in 1967 (the Abortion Act, 1967), and marital rape became criminalised in 2003 (Sexual Offences Act, 2003). This is not just a Western phenomenon. For example, in 2018 Rwanda broke records with the world's largest number of women parliamentarians; its lower house consisted of 63.8% women (George, 2019). George (2019) notes that 'women's ability to have their voice heard as voters has long been shaped by gender norms… Norm change… has amplified women's voices in politics.' It would not be expected, therefore, that these monumental changes in women's roles and equality would happen if gender roles were inherent to an individual's sex, as the opposing essentialist debate provokes in one way or another. Instead of claiming gender and sex to be of the same thing, a separation of the two must be made, which feminists have been arguing for decades. The differentiation has become mainstream in organisations now, with the World Health Organisation, the UN, and many national governments (see for example, the UKs Office for National Statistics, 2019) distinguishing them. The World Health Organisation regional office for Europe (2002) defines sex as characteristics that are defined biologically, and gender as a social construct relating to behaviours and attributes based around what is considered masculine or feminine. Thus, not only will this thesis take on a social constructionist approach due to the large amount of evidence backing it up, but it will also take on this perspective to harmonise with the approach of international organisations, NGOs, and national governments.

Put simply, gender is a social construct based around ever changing gender norms and stereotypes. These norms are deeply ingrained within society and, therefore, affect how society is run. They are also deeply intertwined with gender inequality. Thus, we can expect gender norms to provide a reason for why there is a supposed gender inequality conflict link. Gender norms do affect violence against women. We see, for example, that violence against women is much more of a taboo in more gender equal societies. Consequently, we can expect the norms that may underpin a propensity for violent conflict, to also link directly to violence against women during conflict. Gender norms also

evolve. This can be seen in countries that enter violent conflict, as often gender norms revert back to traditional ones, and these perpetuate violence against women. For example, leading up the war in the former Yugoslavia, support groups for female victims of domestic abuse in Belgrade reported a large increase in phone calls to their helplines. Not only this, but they also noted that this happened most often after extreme patriotism was shown on the TV, highlighted by militaries and fighting (Maguire, 1998, as cited in Cockburn, 2001, page 6).

Despite this, although many of the articles mention that social constructivism is a key theory in understanding the relationship between gender norms/inequality, conflict, and violence against women, they do not go far enough in explaining how social constructivism can be used to explain the link. Instead, it is simply noted that because gender is a socially constructed phenomenon, we would expect that gender norms play a role in the construction of conflict and violence against women. It is also noted that social constructivism is the base of the other theories that will be explained below, so although social constructivism is nowhere near enough well-rounded to explain a link between gender norms, conflict, and violence against women, it should always be used to understand the context of other theories. Furthermore, social constructivism goes far in explaining gender inequality, as the above paragraphs show. Therefore, it can help us trace a link between gender norms and conflict. This is because there is an established gender-inequality conflict link, and social constructivism helps us get to the root cause of gender inequality. Thus, it expands this link and gives us a reason to expect that gender norms do play a role in perpetuating and sustaining armed conflict, as well as violence against women during armed conflict.

It must be noted however, that social constructivism is on the one side of two competing paradigms. On the other side of this paradigm is essentialism. Essentialism is based on the idea that many things are timeless and unchangeable, no matter how they are described or defined. Therefore, in regard to gender, essentialism maintains that gender identities and differences are the result of 'stable underlying factors' (Skjelsbaek, 2001, page 4), largely that of reproductive differences. Consequently, what it means to be a man, or a woman, is a matter of nature and not nurture; men's power status originates from their gender identity and this gender identity comes about due to biology and evolution. On this same line of reasoning, women have stayed at home and taken care of the house and children, due to their 'true' nature, which is one of care. Therefore, any gender inequalities that

arise from these differences, such as women staying in poverty due to their inherent need to stay home to care for the house and children, are seen as natural; the biological differences are taken as justification for differences in gender and the division of sexual labour (Reddy et al, 2018). One of essentialisms central claims comes from evolutionary psychology. Evolutionary psychology claims that (at least some) sex differences are attributable to historical challenges early humans faced regarding the selective pressures of intersexual selection and intrasexual competition (Zhu and Chang, 2019). For example, male-on-male competition may have led to males evolving to have a greater propensity for aggression and risk-taking. In addition, females may have evolved to become more dependent and less risk-avoidant because of their ability to carry and give birth to children (Buss and Schmitt, 2011). Therefore, essentialism throws into question the link between gender norms and gender inequality. This means, therefore, that perhaps studying gender norms is not useful in understanding the gender inequality-conflict link. However, as noted above, the idea that gender is a social construct is widely supported due to the swathes of literature that back it up. Social constructivism and essentialism are two ends of a spectrum, and, although the reality of gender is likely to fall somewhere in between, it is well established that gender is a social construct. The complex nature of the constructivism versus essentialism debate, however, is too great for this thesis. Greater research is needed to understand where on the spectrum of gender theories we should land when it comes to gender norms, armed conflict, and violence against women.

3.2 Domestic-International Violence Theory

The domestic-international violence theory is somewhat an expansion on the democratic peace theory (see Huth and Todd, 2002). The democratic peace theory is backed up by swathes of international relations literature (see Benoit, 1996; Cederman and Rao, 2001; Davenport and Armstrong, 2004), and argues that democracies are less likely to become involved in military conflicts. Explanations for this correlation are divided into structural explanations and normative explanations. The structural explanations focus on the officials and systems involved in decision making. For example, because governments are democratically elected, they will be cautious when making decisions that involve conflict because they want to be re-elected. On the other hand, normative

explanations argue that democracies are more likely to be characterised by norms of respect, and these norms will carry out into the international arena (see Placek, 2012). Sobek et al (2006) puts this normative explanation into a human rights framework. They argue that it is not just enough to look at democracy, but human rights as a whole. This is because there are democracies with relatively poor human rights records, and autocracies with relatively good ones. After Sobek et al finished examining all pairs of states from 1981 to 2001, they unanimously found that any pair of states that jointly respects any type of human right have a '*decreased probability of developing a militarised interstate dispute even when one controls for common correlates of conflict*' (page 6). They called this the Human Rights Peace Theory, which Caprioli (2000) also termed the Domestic-International Violence Theory. Caprioli also explains that states that exhibit discrimination/violence domestically will rely on the same tools in the international arena. However, she puts this into a gendered context, by looking specifically at the treatment of women. As Hudson et al (2009, page 3) states: 'gender serves as a critical model for the societal treatment of difference between and among individuals and collectives.' Therefore, the link between gender inequality and the likelihood of entering an armed conflict is directly related to gender norms; states/armed groups will bring the gender norms ingrained in their society, and thus the subordination that leeks from these norms, into a militaristic arena. Melander (2005, page 698) sums this up nicely by stating:

In societies characterised by more equal gender roles, the norms of respect and inviolability that characterise an individuals' closest relations are also expected to carry over to more distant relations.

Consequently, society needs to be free from the gendered stereotypes that perpetuate violence against women, as opposed to just the inclusion of women in foreign policy (although it must be noted that the two are somewhat interlinked). Bjarnegard and Melander (2017) studied this theory by looking at research collated from a total of 6670 individuals across China, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, and the US. The results showed that individuals that favoured gender equality in terms of equal rights and equality in marriage are significantly less likely to have hostile views than other nations. In fact, the risk of being hostile towards China was 29% lower among participants that thought women should have equal rights. In addition, although outdated, there is evidence of the domestic-international violence theory from anthropology. For example, Gorer (1968, as cited in Winter, 2000) observed that cultures that do not take pleasure in domination and killing have little

differentiation of sex roles (although if this research were done in 2021, it is likely that the standard of 'little differentiation of sex roles' would be a lot higher). In addition, Sanday (1981, as cited in Winter, 2000) cross-culturally studied 150 tribal societies and concluded that war is positively related to a direct measure of norms of male dominance. Therefore, gender norms may affect a countries propensity for violence in that norms that perpetuate gender inequality translate to a worldview that places some people/states as superior to others. These norms, that see men as more superior to women, also see their nation, nationality, certain ethnicities etc., as better than others, which can lead to conflict. Consequently, when during an identity conflict, men are likely to abuse their power over women, translating into violence against women. This could be seen in the former Yugoslavia, which is outlined in chapter 2.

3.3 The General Theory of Violence

Johan Galtung first introduced the idea of structural violence in 1969 and since then this general theory of violence has been expanded to incorporate many contexts. Galtung's main theory incorporates direct violence, structural violence, and cultural violence. Direct violence is what is instantly thought of when considering violence: it is direct actions which have a mental and/or physical effect on an individual's livelihood, such as murder, sexual assault, and bullying. Structural violence is the systematic ways in which individuals are hindered from equal access/more likely to experience direct violence through societies structures, such as legal structures. Cultural violence is a term used to describe the prevailing/prominent social norms that make structural violence and direct violence seem normal, or at least somewhat acceptable, such as seeing men as the stronger sex. These are all inherently linked; structural violence is a process by which cultural violence is institutionalised, and this institutionalisation leads to direct violence, and vice versa. In terms of looking at this theory from a feminist viewpoint on gender and conflict, structural violence against women (and often at the expense of men too) is maintained through cultural violence in the way of gender stereotyping and socialisation (Caprioli, 2005). Cockburn (2010, page 9) argues that 'war is just the tip of the iceberg…of an underlying set of institutions and relationships that can be understood as systematic'. When considering the General Theory of Violence from a gendered perspective,

structural violence is very similar to gender normative violence. Gender normative violence, a concept proposed by Margaret Urban Walker (2009), is defined by 'the widespread phenomenon of men's domination of women and girls and men's aspiration to control women and girls' lives' (Mazurana and Proctor, 2013) including sexual and reproductive activities, self-expression, political participation etc. Gender is a social structure and a way of categorising and symbolising power. Categorising individuals based upon the dichotomies of gender is therefore cultural violence in and of itself, because the demarcation of groups leads to systems of power which require unequal access and treatment to be justified, maintained, and normalised (Mazaurana and Proctor, 2013). In other words, gender norms are a type of cultural violence as they result in inequality and systems of power that perpetuate inequality. These systems of power and the inequality that flows from it is structural violence. Such structural violence that has been ingrained in society can be seen in the variables studied previously when researching the gender inequality-conflict link, such as female participation in politics, sex selective abortion, access to birth control, and participation in the labour market. Direct violence, in this case, would be armed conflict and the sexual violence women suffer in such a conflict.

Therefore, gender norms may have a role in the gendered continuum of violence because cultural violence leads to structural violence. This structural violence is what has been currently studied when looking at the gender inequality-conflict link, and the findings are sound. The general theory of violence argues that structural violence and direct violence cannot be understood without knowledge on cultural violence, and therefore, expanding upon the current knowledge of the gendered continuum of violence to include gender norms is important for a more well-rounded understanding.

3.4 Social Learning Theory

Social learning theory (SLT), proposed by Albert Bandura (1977), is closely linked to social constructivism. He posits that children observe the individuals around them. These individuals are called 'models', and they provide examples of behaviour to observe and imitate. The child is more likely to observe and imitate models they perceive as being similar to themselves, and therefore, more likely to imitate the behaviour of individuals of the same gender. Therefore, boys learn to become more violent through modelling the aggressive behaviours they observe, receiving immediate reinforcement for displaying violence (which can often be justified by cultural traditions, e.g., if a

country is historically more hostile towards women's rights than violence towards women will have a greater likelihood of being reinforced), and through male-bonded groups where learned behaviour/views on violence is reinforced (see Hudson et al, 2009 for a more in-depth analysis on this theory and how it relates to violence against women).

SLT is closely linked to the General Theory of Violence because it provides an explanation for how cultural violence becomes entrenched and how this violence leads to structural and direct violence. Cultural violence, in this case gender norms, is prominent because children unknowingly perpetuate it, and this perpetuation leads to structural violence and normalises direct violence. These theories can help us expand upon the gendered continuum of violence to include gender norms; countries with higher levels of gender equality are characterised with less strict gender norms and stereotypes and therefore boys are more likely to imitate a more positive hegemonic masculinity- one that does not involve the systematic oppression of women, or norms that are likely to play out in the international arena through direct violence.

3.5 Masculinities

Wright (2014) states: 'it is not gender inequality per se which is associated with conflict and violence, but rather the system of beliefs and values which underpin that inequality' (page 13). Therefore, if we are to understand why gender inequality has a link with a country's propensity with conflict, there needs to be a focus on understanding identities that are underpinned by beliefs and values (Bjarnegard and Melander, 2017, page 15). Gender norms and stereotypes create rigid (yet not universal) expectations for men and women based on an individuals assigned sex, leading to 'masculine' or 'feminine' identities.

War is among the most gendered of human activities (Goldstein, 2001), with the majority of combatants throughout history being male, and despite many states now permitting women to join the military, this disparity still exists. Such gender plays a key role in encouraging men to take part in conflict by invoking traditional ideas of masculinity to 'invoke, fuel, and perpetuate conflict and violence' (Birchall, 2019, page 3). There are various masculinities, all of which are hierarchical (El-Bushra and Sahl, 2005). At the top of this hierarchy is 'hegemonic masculinity.' Hegemonic masculinity

is a term developed by Connell (1995) used to describe the version of masculinity which is most valued in a particular context. Historically, this has meant masculinity that is focused upon men as protectors and providers, and characteristics that are strong, brave, and heroic. In addition, masculinities are often constructed in relation to (and often at opposition to) femininities (Enloe, 2012). Therefore, the hegemonic masculinity and traditional femininity can be capitalised upon during times of militarisation in order to prepare men to fight and for women to support (Eichler, 2014). After all, 'it is argued that militarism relies on the acceptance of patriarchal notions of masculinity and femininity in order to make militarised responses to conflict appear legitimate, normal, or even inevitable' (Wright, 2014, page 14). Thus, the hegemonic masculinity is then a 'militarised masculinity'.

This is not to say that gendered stereotypes and their ensuing masculinities and femininities are the reason a conflict is solved violently. Instead, it is to say that gendered stereotypes are more likely to be capitalised upon during conditions that affect a countries likelihood of armed conflict, and thus increases the likelihood further. This is because the way individuals perceive their duties and allegiance are intimately gendered (El-Bushra and Sahl, 2005). Societies built upon dichotomous categories that divide men as 'protectors' and women as the 'protected' will empower these 'protectors' to exercise authority and use violence if assumed necessary (Wright, 2014). Wright also notes that 'notions of masculinity which call upon men to use violence to protect their families and communities can prove useful to those seeking to mobilise men to take up arms' (page 16). In addition, discourses that emphasise women as defenceless can prop up and perpetuate masculinities that involve men as protectors (Cohn 2013, as cited in Duncanson, 2015). In fact, this ideology is so deeply embedded that often we see women themselves perpetuating it. For example, in the US and UK during World War One, women would give white feathers to men who had not enlisted in the army, thus marking them as cowards because they do not conform to the hegemonic masculinity of the time; that of militarised masculinity.

A militarised masculinity refers to a masculinity that involves traits that can be acquired and proven through military service/action, in particular in combat. It makes sense that the military perpetuates violent masculinities as 'the military is one of the clearest and most obvious arenas of men's social power, violence, killing and potential violence and killing' (Hearn, 2011, page 1). However, this

mutually reinforcing dynamic between militarism and masculinism is not bound only to the military, but operates within wider society, with militarised masculinities being produced at multiple sites across society e.g., by the actions of individuals, institutions, or international organisations. However, all the ways in which militarised masculinities are produced and reproduced rely upon gendered norms and stereotypes which create inequality between men and women (Eichler, 2014). It is these unequal power relations that create a gendered dichotomy based upon men taking life, and thus inherently violent, and women giving it, and thus in need of protection, that makes armed conflict seem normal (Runyan, 1990). After the military has relied upon appealing to masculine identities to recruit male citizens, or a state aims to display strength by capitalising on masculinities, they rely upon reproducing militarised masculinities (Eichler, 2014). By creating a culture that relies on 'equating manhood with toughness under fire', a soldier's reluctance to fight can be overcome (Schmeidl and Piza-Lopez, 2002, page 15). This can be done by militaries creating their own cultures of 'hyper-masculinities', drawing upon gender norms existing within wider society (Wright, 2014); therefore, having the resources for boys and young men to become 'men' (Krosness and Svedberg, 2011). The gender norms militaries draw upon are not just related to masculinities, but also femininities. For example, in army training, labels such as 'woman', 'girl', 'faggot' etc., can be used to put down men who fail to complete challenges that are associated with manliness. Therefore, militarism links 'feminine' qualities as inferior (Duncanson, 2015), further perpetuating the idea of masculinity as superior, and thus the normalisation of men having power over women. This power, combined with the normalisation of violence due to conflict situations, are likely to manifest themselves as violence against women, particularly enemy women (Ekvall, 2016).

However, whilst focusing on militarised masculinity is important in understanding how gender norms create an environment where violence is normalised, other masculinities are ignored. One of these is that of 'thwarted masculinity'. This refers to the experiences of men who are unable to conform to the gender norms set out by the society they live in. It is argued that those who are unable to achieve societies ideal expectation of masculinity are more likely to commit violence (Wright, 2014). Therefore, violence is used as a means to reassert their masculinity. For example, poor economic situations due to conflict may lead to males joining the military. In addition, if men are likely to be fighting, the women have to take on more 'male' jobs, which may emasculate men and lead to violence against women as a way of asserting themselves (Schaftenaar, 2017). However, there has

been little written and theorised about these other masculinities and their opposing femininities. Therefore, we do not have a well-rounded idea as to how militarised masculinity operates within the gendered continuum of violence. Focusing simply on militarised masculinity can be dangerous too. For example, by ignoring other masculinities, a narrative is created in which militarised masculinities are the only masculinities during conflict. This, therefore, spins all men as violent within the literature, which is a dangerous and wrong assumption to make. In addition, it comes close to the conclusion pulled from the women and peace hypothesis, essentialising genders and ignoring that they are social constructs. Lastly, although militarised masculinities have a large impact on women and the violence they face, they also have a negative impact on men, and this is ignored within the literature. Assuming that men are violent makes men vulnerable to forced recruitment and violent acts such as castration can be used to 'feminise' men (Wright, 2014). Wright argues that this is a form of gender-based violence in its own rights, and thus it deserves attention.

4 The Former Yugoslavia

This chapter will be focussing on the conflicts within the former Yugoslavia, in particular the gendered nature of the conflict, in order to test the hypothesis that gendered norms play a role in a country's likelihood of conflict, and that these are intrinsically intertwined within the gendered continuum of violence. This chapter will begin with a brief outline of the conflict, focussing on the history and the context in which the conflicts came to be. Secondly, women's status within the Former Yugoslavia (as compared to that of their male counterparts) will be discussed, focussing on both their substantive rights and their rights as defined by culture. This will be discussed in relation to the context of Yugoslav society, in particular the varying differences between urbanisation and traditionalism. Lastly, women's human rights during to conflict will be discussed, with an emphasis on the mass rape that was endemic during the conflict. The why of these crimes will be discussed in order to show how gender norms feed into conflict and how leaders/soldiers/military perpetuate them in order to gain an advantage for their 'side' of the fighting, and how they also related to GBV during the conflict.

4.1 The Conflict

After World War One in 1918, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes formed. In 1941 it was invaded by the Axis powers. In 1946 it was renamed the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) after German occupation, with a communist government headed by Josip Tito (1892-1980). It was a federation of six republics, consisting of Bosnia, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Slovenia. The strong authoritarian leadership of President Tito supressed tensions between ethnic groups. However, after Tito's death in 1980, these tensions re-emerged, manifesting themselves in increasing nationalism, and thus calls for more autonomy, particularly because the large majority of power was held by Serbia, with Belgrade being the capital of the former Yugoslavia. These nationalistic rhetoric's coincided with the collapse of communism and the revived nationalism in Eastern Europe in the late 1980s/early 1990s. The 'intense political and economic crisis' (ICTY) meant that the central government weakened, and militant nationalism emerged quickly. Political parties surfaced on both sides of the spectrum (see, for example, the Croatian Party of Rights and the Serb Democratic Party); some advocating for independence, and others arguing for greater powers for specific republics within the federation.

In 1991, both Croatia and Slovenia declared their independence. Slovenia's declaration triggered an intervention from the Serb dominated Yugoslav People's Army (JNA), marking what is commonly referred to as 'the 10-day war'. JNA suffered 44 fatalities and Slovenia suffered 19, whilst 12 foreign nationals were killed. It ended in victory for the Slovenian forces and marked the beginning of the Yugoslav wars. Croatia's declaration was marked by much more bloodshed when compared to Slovenia's. As there was a large Serb minority within Croatia, the Serbs rejected the newly proclaimed state. Thus, with the assistance of JNA and Serbia, almost a third of the Croatian state became Serb territory. Non-Serbs were expelled from this territory 'in a violent campaign of ethnic cleansing' (ICTY), leading to heavy fighting, including the siege of Dubrovnik (resulting in a total of 359 death and 16,000 Croatian refugees), and the battle of Vukovar (resulting in a total of 1982 deaths and the expelling of 20,000 inhabitants). In 1992, a UN monitored ceasefire came into force. However, during this time Croatia used its resources to develop and equip their armed forces. Thus, in 1995, the Croatian military took on two offensives to regain the majority of their territory. The war effectively ended in the autumn of 1995.

 Bosnia and Herzegovina experienced the deadliest conflict, largely due to the mixed composition of the population (43% Bosnian Muslims, 33% Bosnian Serbs, 17% Bosnian Croats, and 7% other nationalities). Due to Bosnia's strategic positioning, both Croatia and Serbia attempted to assert dominance over Bosnia. In March 1992, 60% of Bosnian citizens voted for independence, even though this referendum was boycotted by Bosnian Serbs. Therefore, Bosnian Serbs rebelled against this result with the help of the Yugoslav People's Army and Serbia. Due to the military superiority that the Serbs held, they asserted control of more than 60% of the country and undertook systematic persecution of non-Serbs. Furthermore, Bosnian Croats also rejected the authority of the Bosnian government and, with the backing of Croatia, declared it their own republic. This resulted in a three-sided fight for territory, characterised by bloody nationalism and ethnic persecution. For example, detention centres for civilians on all sides were set up in which horrendous crimes took place. The bloodiest atrocity occurred in the summer of 1995 in which the UN-declared safe area of Srebrenica came under attack by the Bosnian Serb commander Ratko Mladic, resulting in the execution of more than 8000 Bosnian Muslim men and boys. In the war that took place between 1992-1995, it is estimated that more than 100,000 people were killed and almost half the population were displaced. It has now been

established by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia that what happened constituted a genocide.

4.2 Gender Norms During Peacetime:

After the socialist regime came into power after World War Two (WW2), it conveyed a commitment to 'emancipating women' by advocating gender equality within the economic and political arenas (League of Communists of Yugoslavia, 1958). After the horrific acts of WW2, the government favoured rapid economic development, and opening the workforce up to women would allow for this (Clark and Clark, 1987). By establishing a set of norms in which all adults were expected to work, women were able to gain a greater standing in society and emancipate themselves from situations such as unhappy marriages (Denich, 1976). This equality was official government policy, in which there was 'a general egalitarian commitment' (Ivekovik, 1993, page 115) towards gender equality. In fact, Morokvasic (1983, page 11) states that the former Yugoslavia had 'some of the most progressive legislation regarding women'. For example, women were entitled to one year of fully paid maternity leave and the right to freely decide on bearing a child is a basic constitutional right as set forth under article 191 of the 1974 constitution.

However, although the new values of the socialist regime advanced women's equality, these norms and values were introduced for economic goals (Denich, 1976). In fact, during communism, feminism was seen as anti-Marxist (Batinic, 2001). In addition, prominent Croatian feminist, writer, and journalist Slavenka Drakulic outlines how Yugoslav socialism was often anti-feminist in her interesting essay 'Six Mortal Sins of Yugoslav Feminism' (1996, as cited in Batinic, 2001)). The main reason for this rhetoric was because feminism was viewed as a Western, capitalist ideology. The widely held view was that 'women have rights by law, so they are already equal' (Ivekovik, 1996, page 735), and therefore feminists seeking more than this were understood as being 'in love with power' (Batinic, 2001, page 5). Therefore, focusing simply on economic development meant that the rights of women within the private sphere were ignored; a particular issue because women's main workload was within the household. With women being expected to work under the socialist regime, and the lack of commitment to improving women's status outside of the economic and political spheres, women were faced with a 'double day' (Morokvasic, 1983, page 12), which Suvar (1980, page 19) states was

'doubling her enslavement'. Whilst this was not the case for many Yugoslav women, with a lack of legislation focusing on the private sphere, the old values that were entrenched in traditional Yugoslavian culture were maintained (Morokvasic, 1983, page 9). Therefore, the new constitutional and legal norms did not have the impact one would hope on the de facto equality of women.

After WW2, Yugoslavia saw large migratory processes, with a large proportion of the population shifting from agricultural work in rural areas to living in urban, industrial towns and cities. The traditional culture also migrated 'from village to town' (Denich, 1976, page 15). This traditional culture was organised on a patrilineal basis. At the core of this highly patriarchal society was the idea of *zadruga* (literally 'cooperative'). The zadruga was at the heart of the social organisation throughout the rural areas of the Balkans. It was a system based upon patrilocality. Jayachandran (2015) states that patrilocality is at the heart of gender inequality in many countries. This system organised itself within the former Yugoslavia in a way in which when a girl married, she left her parents zadruga to join that of her husbands. All holdings, including property, livestock, and land, were held communally, and passed on from the patriarch when they die, or in old age. In addition, all the family decisions were made by the patriarch. Because of this, women within zadruga's were 'valued as sex objects, mothers, and workers' (Olujic, 1998, page 5). 'Women's subordinate position was ritualised through kissing senior men's hands, taking off their footwear, washing their feet, standing by at meals, serving food, and eating what was left afterwards. The husband's authority [was] almost unquestioned, though differences [did] exist between regions' (Morokvasic, 1983, page 13). The status of women within zadruga's was researched by Erlich in 1939 (as cited in Erlich, 1971). Erlich interviewed individuals in 300 villages in seven regions of Yugoslavia. Some quotes included:

'Woman is the most backward of creatures.'

'Trust neither dog nor horse nor woman.'

'It is a husbands right to beat his wife.'

'Beat a woman and a horse every three days.'

Of course, this study was conducted before the changes that happened in the 1940s. The zadruga system started rapidly declining at the end of the 18th century, and this decline was even more rapid after the revolution and the process of urbanisation. However, these underlying values did not decline

at the same rate as *de jure* equality was introduced. Clark and Clark (1987) sum this up by stating that 'the political traditions and culture of the South Slavs evidently have proven much stronger than the stated ideological commitment of the socialist regime to gender equality' (page 417). Individuals are socialised to perpetuate these values, and therefore if there is little government emphasis on gender equality within the private sphere, it is likely that these will persist (Denich, 1976). Even 'the so-called private sphere progressive legislation was unable to shake the old values' (Morokvasic, 1983, page 9). For example, Buric (1971, 1973) mapped out the continuity of the zadruga to the modern, nuclear family. She found that although the zadruga had almost completely disappeared across Yugoslavia in that the size of the household decreased from a large and extended family to a nuclear family, the modern Yugoslav family had its roots in the zadruga, including behaviour, values, and norms. For example, a very strong kinship tie still existed. This meant that the norms that underpinned gender equality were perpetuated, which was elevated by the 'silenced area of private life [leaving] it open… to various influences through the mass media' (Morokvasic, 1983, page 12). Open to this perpetuation was two widespread cultural processes; the culture of honour and shame, and symbolic violence against women.

The honour/shame dichotomy is intertwined with societal understandings of femininity and masculinity as it is situated within traditional gender roles; women receive both honour and shame with their bodies (Farwell, 2004), and it is men's responsibility to guard this honour by guarding their chastity, fertility, and monogamy (Arvidsson and Nermany, 2007). This culture has been embedded in women's socialisation where:

 'Honour and shame are the basis of morality and underpin the three-tiered hierarchy of statuses: husband, family, and village. In the former Yugoslavia, these traditional values regarding sexual behaviour, which condoned rape through honour/shame constraints, took precedence over economic transformations, state policy commitments under communism, and male migration' (Olujic, 1990, as cited in Olujic, 1998, page 34).

 This culture was embedded symbolically in everyday life, through songs, jokes, and stories. For example, ganga is a Croatian form of epic singing which uses symbolism to convey its message. In ganga's, the sexuality of women is the main focus, and 'men usually sing about their virility and

masculinity' (Olujic, 1998, page 34). Olujic (1998) sets out an example of one of these in which the male is seen as powerful, and the women as a sexual object:

Ja sam moju i brija i sisa

na kominu di se pura misa.

I shaved and cut her [pubic hair]/ I shaved and cut [my woman]

On the open hearth where the polenta [cornmeal] is mixed.

This is an example of cultural violence (see previous section on Galtung's general theory of violence), and one in which structural violence (gender inequality) becomes embedded by way of objectifying women in everyday discourse. Another example of this is a form of courtship known as gonjaje (chasing), which involved 'male teenagers… run[ning] after a woman, knock[ing] her down, jump[ing] on top of her, pinning her to the floor, rolling her over, and then pinching her breasts or grabbing her genital region' (Olujic, 1998, page 37). In semi-structured interviews conducted by Olujic (1998), many women stated that this was done so men could boast about their ability to have power over women; in short, women's bodies are used to play out masculine competitions. Although the traditional culture had little overt sway in the public life, the values it was based upon still possessed 'a significant impact upon the political attitudes and sex-role stereotypes of many Yugoslavs' (Clark and Clark, 1987, page 414). For example, despite official government policy advocating for women's participation in political life, the political leadership of women only reached a token level. In fact, Denich (1976) cites how 'the proportion of women office-holders actually declined since the 1960s' (page 14) from 15% in 1963, to 7% in 1969. In addition, in 1976 women represented 53.7% of the unemployed and women with higher or secondary education had more difficulty finding a job than men with the same level of education (women made up 66.4% of this category) (Woman and Development, 1977, as cited in Morokvasic, 1983). The employment women were in was concentrated to 'typically female sectors' (Morokvasic, 1983, page 11), such as textiles, the clothing industry, and care services. Therefore, we see how gender norms and values were still present and deeply ingrained in Yugoslav society, despite the socialist commitment to gender equality. The next section will explain how these norms and values intertwined with other aspects to help fuel the conflict, and in particular, lead to the human rights abuses of many women.

4.3 Mapping out the Continuum

Along with heightened nationalism in the build-up to the conflicts, traditional gender norms also became heightened. These two became intrinsically linked. Women were reminded that their biological capabilities meant they should stay at home and nurture the family, whilst men were to protect the 'weak' women and children (Cockburn, 2004). For example, Tudjman (date unknown) labelled women who have abortions 'mortal enemies of the nation' and women who had not given birth to at least four children as having not fulfilled their 'unique sacred duty' (as cited in Mostov, 1995, page 518). By doing so, traditional gender norms were used to ready 'women to sacrifice their husbands and sons, and men to sacrifice their lives' (Cockburn, 2004, page 33). In addition, in the leadup to the conflicts, domestic abuse helplines reported increases in the calls they received right after nationalistic TV programmes which showed militaries and fighting (as cited in Maguire, 1998). Therefore, we see how gender norms were used in order to gain support for the nationalist cause, gain support for wars, and normalise violence and GBV. This highlights how the military, patriarchy, and nationalism are all linked. These three social structures and ideologies rely on and enhance men's power and 'all three are perpetuated through masculine subcultures' (Cockburn, 2004, page 8). Therefore, this chapter will link gender norms during peacetime in Yugoslavia to the gendered violence during the conflicts and show how these were deeply linked with nationalism and used to sustain the conflicts. It must be noted that a large proportion of the data used here comes from the conflict is Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is because a lot of media attention was drawn to the systematic rapes of Muslim Bosnian women, and thus the research is more detailed and of more use for this thesis. However, women of all nationalities were subject to rape and sexual assault. In addition, the GBV focused upon here is rape. This is not to say that other forms of GBV were not present. However, because rape is considered one of the most extreme forms of GBV, the literature focuses mainly on rape, and therefore this thesis must too because it is relying on secondary sources.

In the concluding comments of the *Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women: Bosnia and Herzegovina* (1994), it is stated that the Bosnian representative reported that approximately 25,000 victims of rape, as a result of the war, had been registered. This was referred to as 'mass and systematic rape of non-Serbian women of all ages [and] one of the most complex manifestations of aggression, the policy of ethnic cleansing and a particular form of genocide' (para

734). The number of rapes vary greatly, with estimates ranging from 12,000 to 50,000 (Wood, 2013, page 140). A large proportion of these rapes took place in camps/detention centres, which were 'established in buildings such as hotels, schools, hospitals, factories, peace-time brothels, or even animal stalls in barns, fenced pens, and auditoriums' (Salzman, 1998, page 359). *The Final Report of the Commission of Experts Established Pursuant to the Security Council Resolution 780 (1992)* states that it received information regarding 715 camps (para 218). These camps were 'ultimately intended to achieve ethnic cleansing' (para 230(a)). These camps saw daily killings, and torture. Mass graves have been exhumed as evidence of this; 'in the Prijedor region alone, there are approximately 62 grave sites, some of which are said to contain the remains of prisoners killed at Omarska Camp, Keraterm Camp, and other camps in the area' (the Commissions Final Report, 1992, paragraph 260). However, the ethnic cleansing was more complex than this, and women were reduced to their bodies to fulfil the goal of creating a 'Greater Serbia'. There were camps that specifically saw the sexual assault and rape of Bosnian Muslims by Serbs, in particular Bosnian Serbs. For example, the case of Kunarac et al by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) (as cited by the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, date unknown) saw three Bosnian Serb army officers charged for their prominent role in organising and maintaining the system of rape camps in Foca, Bosnia. Out of the 514 allegations of rape that the Commission of Experts received, 317 occurred in detention (para 71). These camps formed a very complex form of ethnic cleansing and genocide.

For many, it may be hard to understand how rape as a weapon of war can constitute ethnic cleansing; after all, there is always the likelihood of rapes resulting in pregnancy, and this may be seen as contradictory to the definition of ethnic cleansing. Taking into consideration traditional gender norms, however, sheds more light on this complex phenomena. Using rape as a form of ethnic cleansing is based upon what Beverly Allen (1996, pages 56-60) labels 'the genetic and cultural patriarchal myth'. This myth is based on a patriarchal system which reduces women to their bodies, and in particular their reproductive capabilities (Salzman, 1998). By seeing women as simply a vessel of the male heir, ethnic cleansing through rape makes sense; women are forced to carry the enemy's child, creating more citizens to populate the rapist's nation, whilst diluting the population of the nationality of the mother. We can trace this mentality to the zadruga, where women joined their husband's family as simply wives and mothers, and their children took on the identity of the husband. This mentality

became incredibly heightened during the conflicts, with Cockburn (2010, page 33) pointing out that 'the disintegration of the federal state of Yugoslavia in the early 1990s was preceded and accompanied by the re-emergence of such a gender ideology… the veneer of socialist modernisation was stripped away, and gender traditionalism refurbished by Croatian, Serbian, and other nationalist movements.' This patriarchal myth that intensified so greatly during the conflicts has been shown in many testimonies of victims of rape, where the rapists constantly reminded women that 'they would create 'Chetnik babies' who would kill Muslims when they grew up' (Salzman, 1998, page 359). The Commission of Experts also highlight this:

Perpetrators tell female victims that they will bear the children of the perpetrator's ethnicity, that they must become pregnant, and then hold them in custody until it is too late for the victims to get an abortion. Victims are threatened that if they ever tell anyone, or anyone discovers what has happened, the perpetrators will hunt them down and kill them (para 250(b)).

Raping women for the sake of impregnating them and then keeping them detained until it is too late to get an abortion shows how patriarchal notions of the role of females (in particular, their reduction to bodily functions) are played upon in order to reach the goal of creating a 'Greater Serbia'. This is put best by Salzman (1998, page 349):

In a traditionally patriarchal society, the Serbian government, military, and Orthodox church have explicitly formulated a perception of the female gender and its role and function within society. Essentially, the female is reduced to her reproductive capacities in order to fulfill the overall objective of Serbian nationalism by producing more citizens to populate the nation…This attitude has certainly had an impact, conscious or unconscious, on the overall perception and treatment of women, playing a part in the establishment of rape camps and the usurpation of women's bodies to achieve ethnic cleansing.

As previously discussed, masculinities and femininities play a large role in conflicts. This was no different for the conflicts of the former Yugoslavia. Arguably, the two main identities are gender identities and national identities. These two identities are deeply intertwined and are both socially and culturally constructed (Arvidsson and Nermany, 2007). Therefore, femininity has often been linked to purity and women as transmitters of culture (Cockburn, 2001). There are many examples of the female body depicting the nation. For example, the French 'Marianne', the Statue of Liberty, and

the Bavarian national statue 'Bavaria'. Therefore, when nationalism heightened in the countries of the Former Yugoslavia, so did the control of women's bodies; the female body became deeply intertwined with nationalism as the 'boundary of the nation' (Mostov, 1995, page 2). For example, the 'notion of family, sanctity of life, and motherhood' (Sofos, 1996, page 78) were central to Franjo Tudjman's goal of an independent and 'morally healthy' Croatia. Pro-life mentality, therefore, started to prevail. In 1992, 'The Ministry for the Restoration of the Croatian Republic' was established by the government. Within this was the 'Department for Demographic Restoration', whose purpose was to combat anti-life mentality. In fact, Tudjman stated that women who have abortions are 'mortal enemies of the nation' (as cited in Mostov, 1995, page 10). Consequently, 'President Tudjman [had] gone to great lengths to demonise women who chose not to accept their prescribed roles' (Sofos, 1996, page 78). On that account, we see how the female body was viewed as both the symbolic nation, but also property of the nation, and thus rape could destroy the nations cultural and social stability.

With this is mind, the use of rape as a weapon of war makes further 'sense'. By raping the enemy's women, the 'others' nation can be 'seized and conquered' (Korac, 2006, page 11). With femininity deeply related to purity and the concept of the 'motherland', rape can both trespass on the identities of the enemy, whilst also breaking down the concept that the nation is strong-standing, honourable, and independent. This is all deeply tied up with the honour and shame complex, that, as mentioned previously, was strong in the Balkans. Across the majority of cultures, the discourse that is tied within the honour and shame complex is that men are the physically strong ones and that their duty is to protect women and children (Cockburn, 2001). But as the underlying discourses rose to the surface, and militarised masculinity became the hegemonic masculinity, the honour and shame complex could be strategically played upon in order to breakdown the enemy nations moral. As previously mentioned in the systematic review, militarised masculinity is based upon toughness and the ability to fight with no overt opposition to such fighting. In addition to this general definition of militarised masculinity, the militarised masculinity within the conflicts of the former Yugoslavia was based upon protecting women and children, as it was their duty as physically strong men and protectors of the nation. For example, Ratko Mladic, now a convicted war criminal and previously the head of the Serb forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina, claimed in an interview with BBC2's Newsnight that the Bosnian Serbs were engaged in war because they had to protect '[their] women and children' (March 1994, as cited in Sofos, 1996, page 73). Sofos (1996, page 73) argues that Mladic's 'eroticised version of

nationalism and its explicitly gender character… is more or less typical of nationalist/populist discourses in former Yugoslavia'. Therefore, by raping enemy women, enemy men became feminised; they were failing to protect 'their' women and were thus failing the nation that they were fighting for.

This honour and shame complex also affected women in other ways. As femininity was associated with purity, a woman who was raped by the enemy was viewed by her community shamefully as she was perceived as being responsible for bringing dishonour to her family and community (Thomas and Ralph, 1999). The rapists sent a message that, like the nation, the women are worthless, and this seemed to be readily accepted by the males (and other females) of the community (Nikolic-Ristanovic, 1999). For example, the Women in the Law Project (1993) conducted interviews with rape survivors, and they often noted that the survivors were worried that if their husbands found out about the rapes, they would be ostracised, or in some cases violently abused, or even killed. The patriarchal myth that masculinity equates to being responsible for 'their' women is one of the reasons underlying this, and the belief in this myth seemed widespread (Salzman, 1998, page 371). For example, an article in a national newspaper in Serbia described a woman's experience of rape during the conflict and stated 'she would have been better off dead than alive to shame her husband, her family, and her community by giving birth to a child from the seed of the enemy (as cited in Stojsavljevic, 1995, page 39).

4.4 Discussion

This chapter has lent evidence towards the gendered continuum of violence in the context of the conflicts of the former Yugoslavia. Not only this, but it adds a new dimension to the gendered continuum of violence. This was done by mapping out how gender norms had played a role in gaining support for the conflicts and how peacetime violence against women was related to violence against women during the conflicts, and how this relation is, in the words of Cockburn, (2004, page 44) 'like linking a thread'. This violence during peacetime was mainly seen through the cultural violence embedded in the traditional culture of the Balkans; specifically with the zadruga, which was held up by harmful gender norms and also held up harmful gender norms, and the honour and shame complex. The gendered continuum of violence, and its expansion to include gender norms, is

understood in the context of the conflicts of the former Yugoslavia by understanding the honour and shame complex. Olujic (1998) sums this up nicely:

'The use of rape as a weapon of war comes directly out of southern European concepts of sexuality and honour, and without an understanding of these concepts in peacetime culture, wartime behaviour is not understandable. It is precisely because the ideology of honour/shame was shared by Croats, Muslims, and Serbs that war rapes became such an effective weapon in the former Yugoslavia' (page 17).

Although the concept of the zadruga fell out of favour and institutional gender equality was introduced in the former Yugoslavia with the introduction of communism, the norms that upheld the zadruga were still perpetuated, albeit subtlety. The reasons for this can be understood through social learning theory; there was a lack of gender equality policy within the private sphere and therefore the likelihood of children observing, modelling, and imitating the gendered behaviours that were common in the traditional culture, were higher. This may have been subtle as women's position in Yugoslav society did greatly improve with the introduction of communism. However, the important takeaway is that gender norms still played a large role in Yugoslav society, and these could be played upon in order to gain support for violence, and directly link from cultural violence during peacetime to direct violence in wartime, in particular with the use of rape as a weapon of war. Within the zadruga, women were seen as their husband's property, and this myth was used to destroy the nations stability; men did not live up to their role of protecting 'their' women, as defined by militarised masculinity, if a woman was raped. In addition, this myth could be used to further Serbia's goal of creating a 'greater Serbia', because women were seen as the vessels for the male's 'seed'.

Previous work on the gendered continuum of violence has failed to analyse the intersection between ethnicity/nationality and gender. This chapter has overcome this by putting the research done surrounding the intersection between gender and ethnicity into the gendered continuum of violence. Focusing solely on the gendered/patriarchal aspects of GBV during conflict essentialises women as victims, simply because they are women (Farwell, 2004, page 395) and thus the gendered continuum of violence as it currently stands is too deductive. As this chapter has shown, the use of rape during the conflicts of the former Yugoslavia would not nearly have been as effective if nationality were not also a factor; women did not become victims just because they were women, but the intersection

between this and their nationality. However, whether the gender norms during peacetime are also linked with nationalism is another question, and one that has not been studied. From this case study, it can be deduced that gender norms were used to gain support for nationalist causes, and this is where the intersection begins. However, more generalisable studies need to be conducted to provide support for this and to understand this intersection with greater detail.

Furthermore, this case study throws the use of the general theory of violence to understand the gendered continuum of violence, and particularly the introduction of gender norms into the continuum, into question. The general theory of violence argues that cultural violence, in this case gender norms, will lead to structural violence (and vice versa). This structural violence can manifest as unequal laws and policies against women in comparison to men. This is because structuralised violence is institutionalised cultural violence. However, this was not the case in the former Yugoslavia, where harmful gender norms were still present, but the laws were gender equal. It is believed that this is one of the reasons that the gendered continuum of violence exists; this cultural and structural violence leads to direct violence as conflict and GBV during conflict. However, this theory cannot explain how the gendered continuum of violence manifested itself in the conflicts of the former Yugoslavia. Thus, the general theory of violence is not generalisable and other theories on why gender norms play a role in conflict and violence against women during conflict, need to be considered.

5 The Democratic Republic of Congo

This chapter will be focussing on the conflict within the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), in particular the gendered nature of the conflict. This case study is done in order to test whether gender norms played a role in the DRCs conflict, and the violence committed against women during this conflict. This chapter will begin with a brief outline of the conflict, focussing on the history and the context in which the conflicts came to be. Secondly, women's status within the DRC (as compared to that of their male counterparts) will be discussed. This will focus on women's legal rights and their rights as defined by culture and how gender norms are deeply intertwined with this. Lastly, women's human rights during to conflict will be discussed, with an emphasis on the mass rape that was endemic during the conflict. These will be placed within the gendered continuum of violence, showing how they are used to exacerbate the conflict. In addition, gender norms during peacetime will be linked to why these rapes (and other forms of GBV) were conducted in relation to gender norms during peacetime.

5.1 The Conflict

The DRC is plagued by a 'complex history of colonialism and political oppression' and this has continued for decades, the most well-known of these are the brutal Belgium colonial rule, Mobutu's 32-year military dictatorship, and most recently with the conflict outlined here (Trenholm et al, 2011, page 141) The conflict in the DRC, also known as the second Congo war, was concentrated to the Eastern part of the country. It has its roots in the 1994 Rwandan genocide. Fearing reprisals from the newly appointed Tutsi government for their role in the genocide, more than two million Hutu fled to Eastern DRC. Here they formed armed groups along with opposing Tutsi, and other rebel groups that took advantage of the opportunity. The Congolese government was unable to defeat, or even control, these armed groups, and war eventually broke out in 1997, and officially ended in 2003. The Congolese government forces were supported by Angola, Namibia, and Zimbabwe, and rebel forces were supported by Rwanda and Uganda. All in all, seven foreign armies and several militia groups were involved in what has come to be 'the deadliest conflict since WW2'. It was therefore an ethnic conflict (Baaz and Stern, 2009, page 501). These armed groups activities were also fuelled by the massive untapped resources on DRC soil, where 'all sides took advantage of the anarchy to plunder

natural resources' (BBC, 2012). These include diamonds, gold, copper, colbalt, zinc, coltan and cassiterite and is estimated to be $24 trillion (Global Conflict Tracker). In addition, the collapse of state functions and formal economy, particularly after Kabila toppled Mobutu's government in 1997 and the subsequent turning against him in 1998, and rampant poverty, all contributed to this conflict.

5.2 Gender Norms during Peacetime

The DRC is, and has been since at least the last four centuries when it suffered under colonial rule (Peace women, 2010), a society plagued by a history of gender inequality. Women and girls are 'objectified and dehumanised by violence and poverty maintained by a system of oppression and exploitation that uses militarism, retrograde patriarchy, violent masculinity and misogyny' (Peace Women, page 10). However, specific elements of this gender inequality, such as societal organisation that perpetuates gender inequality specific to the DRC, cannot be pinpointed, unlike the case of the former Yugoslavia. This is due to a historical lack of access to the area, and the historic lack of motivation to study the DRC. However, gender relations are organised in a way in which women are subordinate to men as second-class citizens. Despite the DRC having ratified the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1976 and the Convention Against All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1986, it was the domestic law and social norms that planted women and girls as subordinate to men in Congolese society (Meger, 2010, page 127). This is clearly apparent in The Family Code (Code de la famille, 1987), which was slightly amended to not be as overtly misogynist in 2016. However, before this, certain articles made the norms that upheld gender inequality in the DRC official law. For example, article 44 stated 'The husband is the head of the household. He must protect his wife; she must obey her husband'; article 215 limits the autonomy of the wife; article 448 outlines that a married woman cannot undertake any legal act without her husband's consent; article 223 states that a legal guardian must be a competent person, and this excludes married women. This reflects the gender relations that permeate throughout Congolese society. For example, rape cases are known to be resolved by the victim accepting money from the perpetrator or his family, or, even worse, the family may arrange for the victim to marry the perpetrator (Jefferson, 2004, page 4). This is because a women's status is directly related to her marriage status and virginity is held in very high esteem; girls who are not virgins are often not considered suitable wives (Human Rights Watch,

2002). Because of this, early marriage is a common practice. It is estimated that 74% of women and girls aged between 15-19 are married in rural areas, in addition to around 20% per cent of rural girls aged between the ages of 15 and 19 that are mothers, either married, single, divorced, or widowed (Peace Women, 2010, page 4). In fact, the legal age of marriage for women is 15, whereas for men it is 18 (The Family Code, article 352), which reflects the double standards held for women and girls in society. Furthermore, educating boys is seen as much more important than educating girls as girls are expected to grow up to take care of the house and children (Jefferson, 2004, page 4). This mentality is reflected in official statistics, with only 46% of girls entering into the 1st year of primary school in 2001/2002 (World Bank, 2005). Because these norms underlie the subordination of women, the opposing social norms for men and 'their' masculinity further accentuates this:

'Expectations are placed on men to have a high sex drive, to obtain multiple partners, to bestow gifts in exchange for sex, to be financially capable of purchasing one or multiple wives, and having the physical, economic, and social power to protect their wives from other men' (Mechanic, 2004, as cited in Meger, 2010, page 129).

In fact, although polygamy is officially outlawed, it 'is widely practiced by men with total impunity' (Peace Women, 2010, page 4). These are not the only laws that are not enforced, as 'laws protecting the physical integrity of women… are rarely implemented. The government has not demonstrated political will to effectively enforce these laws' (Peace Women, 2010, page 6). This thus shows the strength of gender inequality within the DRC and its permeation throughout society.

5.3 Mapping out the Continuum

Since the outbreak of the conflict in the DRC, women and girls have become victims of rape and sexual violence on 'a scale never seen before' (Nolen 2005, page 56). In fact, the scale of this violence is so large that it cannot be compared to any other previous or current conflict (Meger, 2010, page 119), so much so that it is often described as a 'defining feature' of the conflict (Ertuck, 2006, page 6). The extent of the sexual assault that took place between 1998-2003 is unknown, but human rights non-governmental organisations place the number in the hundreds of thousands (Meger, 2010, page

119). Statistics, however, have been reported after 2003, as sexual violence is still very common. For example, in the month of June 2008, over 2200 rapes had been reported in the North Kivu province (Lewis, 2008) and between 2005 and 2007, 32,000 rapes had been reported in South Kivu, and this is thought to be around half of the actual number (Holmes, 2007). We can deduct from the statistics collected after 2003 that the number of rapes during the conflict were much greater, as the anarchy was taken advantage of to commit violence against civilians. A progress report submitted to the General Assembly in 2007 established that there were daily abuses being committed against women, by all sides of the conflict. However, the main perpetrators were the national armed forces 'Forces Armees de la Republique Democratique du Congo' (FARDC), with figures from United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (UN MONUC) estimating that they were responsible for about 40% of the sexual violence committed in the first part of 2007. Meger (2010) synthesised the pre-existing literature in order to understand and explain the reasons and functions for sexual violence and found 'three converging factors related to explain the prevalence of sexual violence in this conflict: economic ambition, hegemonic social constructions of masculinity, and the general inability to enforce discipline among armed groups in the war' (page 128). The social construction of masculinity is the most important for this subsection, but as always, it must be remembered that this is not the only explanation, and many factors intertwined to create this dangerous situation for women.

As stated in the previous subsection, social norms in the DRC place a large emphasis on masculinity. 'It is precisely these social ideas about masculinity and the appropriate roles of men and women in Congolese society that have been exacerbated by the war', because, as mentioned previously in chapter 2 and 3, armed conflicts rely on gender norms in order to gain support for them, (Meger, 2010, page 129), and this was just the same with the DRC conflict. Unfortunately, due to the lack of research on the gendered drivers of the DRC conflict (Combaz, 2013), this subsection can only be based on the few pieces of research conducted and papers written. One of the most cited of these is by Baaz and Stern (2009). Baaz and Stern conducted 49 group interviews with FARDC soldiers on how the soldiers explain sexual assault and rape. There was a total of 193 participants. A running theme throughout this piece of research was the concept of militarised masculinity in which the soldiers explained that commanding and combat 'demanded qualities that were considered stereotypically masculine and belonged decidedly to the military sphere: that is being courageous, level-headed,

tough killers' (page 505). Interestingly, the concept of militarised masculinity was not discussed as much as the traditional gender roles to explain sexual violence. The soldiers described that the 'natural', 'given' sexual needs of men require satisfaction, and this need is the reason for the sexual violence committed by soldiers. They stated that it is the women's role to satisfy these needs (page 505). Therefore, it is the traditional gender roles that have permeated DRC society that contributed to the rapes during the conflict. These gender roles intertwined with other conflict drivers to also explain sexual violence. For example, the soldiers often blamed poverty for the rapes. This was because the soldiers felt like their status as the breadwinner had been taken away from them, because women had to take up work traditionally seen as 'masculine' as the males were fighting. Because this status was taken away from them, they believed women had more power and therefore did not want to have sex, thus they had to resort to rape. Consequently, force was used to embody masculinity as the soldiers felt like the gender roles assigned to them, that made them 'masculine' before the conflict, had been taken from them. This is slightly strange considering that fighting gave the soldiers the chance to embody the ultimate expression of masculinity. However, this shows the strong-hold traditional ideals of masculinity and femininity have on DRC society. In other words, the economic landscape of the DRC meant that many men embodied a thwarted masculinity, a concept discussed in the systematic review. Lastly, soldiers differentiated between different types of rapes. These were classified into 'normal/lust rapes' and 'evil rapes'. These normal rapes occurred 'because a man must release sexual tension', and therefore they are unavoidable (page 509). On the other hand, 'evil rapes' depended on the level of brutality, and the intentions behind the rape and were 'often motivated by a wish to humiliate the dignity of someone' (page 510). They explained that these rapes stem from the climate of conflict and violence, and a wish to destroy that arises from the suffering felt from failing to live up to the 'notions of the provider' (page 511). Therefore, both rapes resulted from masculine heterosexuality, although differently. We can attribute 'normal rapes' to the patriarchal idea that men are entitled to a women's body and women must satisfy a males needs. The lust rapes can be attributed to the same underlying patriarchal myths, however widespread violence meant that it was more 'normalised' to take a woman by force, and in fact, if they were deprived of having their needs satisfied, they had the right to have their needs satisfied by force (page 514). This research also shows the extent to which gender-based violence is a normalised aspect within Congolese society and gender relations (Freedman, 2001, page 3). For example, in their short documentary, Journeyman

Pictures (2014) interviewed combatants and civilians in the DRC. One anonymous soldier stated that 'by the age of 12 I had already raped two girls. Two little girls' (0:53-1:00). Mama Masika, a woman who runs an orphanage for children born from rape, pointed out that 'everyone rapes. Its civilians, even police, even pastors. Everyone rapes' (1:12-1:20). The subordination of women in the DRC is therefore cemented not just through traditional gender roles and norms, but through gender-based and sexual violence being a banalized part of social relations.

Masculinity cannot be examined without examining the opposing femininity. In Congolese society, women are normally regarded as 'the core of the community' due to their roles as mothers, caregivers, home-care takers etc (Kelly, 2000, page 50, as cited in Meger, page 130). Therefore, as in the former Yugoslavia, an attack on women is an attack on the community they belong to. Meger (2010) cites Card (1996) to sum up this intertwining of femininity as a symbol of culture and sexual violence by stating:

The intention of the attacker can be understood from two dimensions: firstly, as a direct attack on an individual woman as a representative of her gender or her community; and, secondly, the attack is a symbolic gesture, sending a message to a second target, be it the woman's husband, father, or other men of her community (page 130)

In fact, the women themselves often perpetuated this symbolic gesture. Human Rights Watch (2002) conducted a three-week mission in which they spoke to survivors of conflict related sexual violence in the DRC. Often, due to the difficulties in accurately identifying perpetrators, some survivors and witnesses simply attributed the crimes to groups that they disliked (page 26). By doing so, the women sustained the idea that sexual violence was committed in order to attack the community. International Crisis Group (2009) point towards how sexual violence during the DRC conflict was used as a means of 'ethnic cleansing in pursuit of territorial domination' (page 5) in order to socially and psychologically breakdown communities and suppress any forms of resistance from opposing groups (International Alert, 2012, page 24, as cited in Combaz, 2013, page 5). Thus, sexual violence became 'a widely practised procedure for determining power relations' (International Crisis Group, 2009, page number 13).

Using sexual violence to breakdown a specific community was very effective in the DRC because there is a huge stigma attached to such violence, but it is mainly only women that face this stigma as

virginity is highly prized. In many cases women and girls are ostracized. For example, HRW (2002) outlines the case of a woman who was raped and told the local pastor about her ordeal:

 'When I got home, I went to the pastor to tell him what had happened. His wife heard our conversation, and she went around and told everyone about it. Now I am an outcast. No one will come to see me or share anything with me. My second husband said he was unlucky with wives because he had already lost two wives before me. We don't get along. Sometimes he says I should go back to [my first] husband…or I should go be with another man in the forest.' (Page 65)

They also quote a doctor that treated a fifteen-year-old girl who was gang raped:

'We can do little else to prevent her being rejected. It's not her fault," he said. "Physically she'll probably get better, although we don't know yet if she contracted any other illness. And on the psychological level, it remains a problem. She lost her virginity, which is something very important in the village. She can't even talk about it.' (Page 64)

Thus, not only were gender norms surrounding the 'pure female' vital in motivating perpetrators to commit sexual violence, but we can also see how the gendered continuum of violence goes beyond the act of violence; after violence has occurred, women face psychological violence due to deep-seated patriarchal notions.

Traditional gender norms also manifested in violence against women in other ways. During the armed conflict in the DRC, combatants frequently abducted women and girls, where they were forced to provide both sexual services and gender-specific work (Jefferson, 2004, page 5-6). This included cooking, cleaning, and washing clothes, which Jefferson (2004, page 5) argues essentially forces the women and girls to take on the role of 'wives' in the traditional sense as viewed by Congolese society. An example of this comes from a case reported by Human Rights Watch (2002, page 33). Two young women, an 18-year-old, and a 20-year-old, were abducted by three assailants in early June 2001. They were raped repeatedly and forced to cook and undertake other household work. This resembles gender relations during peacetime 'in which forced marriage and expectations of free female labour are common practice' (Jefferson, 2004, page 5). The deeply engrained gender-specific roles within

Congolese society, therefore, are violently conveyed in wartime, as can be seen by women's abduction and enslavement which is centred around traditional gender roles (Jefferson, 2004, page 6).

5.4 Discussion

In this chapter, the position of women, both before and during the conflict, has been put into context. The chapter has shown that women and girls are viewed as second-class citizens within the DRC. This is not only an informal position they hold, but also a position that is implemented in the law through the Family Code (1987). Women are expected to obey their husbands, and their position very much relies on their marriage status; married women have a higher status. In other words, women's position directly relies on the males/lack thereof in their lives. To have a higher chance of marriage, women must be considered 'pure', in particular, virginity is highly prized. This chapter has shown how these ideas directly related to the systematic gender-based violence within the conflict, particularly rape. For example, the soldiers interviewed by Baaz and Stern (2009) normalised rape by arguing that their needs deserve to be satisfied and it is a women's role to satisfy these needs. During violence and conflict, these 'normalised rapes' escalated into 'evil rapes' due to the anarchy that had erupted and the subsequent poverty; therefore, like the gendered continuum of violence hypothesises, we see a direct link between gendered violence in peacetime and wartime, and this is linked to gendered norms. Furthermore, because virginity is highly prized in peacetime, rape during wartime was an effective way of breaking down communities. This is further evidence that the gendered continuum of violence starts with gendered norms and ideals of masculinity and femininity.

However, this chapter risks simplifying GBV and sexual violence during the DRC conflict to gender norms and gender relations. This is not the case, and many other factors are involved. The biggest one of these cited in the literature is poverty, and therefore an understanding of the use of rape is best done by understanding the interaction between poverty, ideas of masculinity, and the political economy of the conflict. This was touched on slightly, with the soldiers in Baaz and Sterns (2009) research making the link between poverty, gender roles, and sexual violence. For example, many soldiers saw that due to the economic situation, their roles as breadwinners were taken away from

them and therefore they had to force women to have sex with them in order to embody masculinity in another way. This fits in with the idea of 'thwarted masculinities'. As mentioned in the systematic review, thwarted masculinities refer to the experiences of men who are unable to conform to the gender norms set out by the society they live in. Because the existing literature focuses mainly on militarised masculinities, this case study has shown that the current theories are too simplistic. In addition, this shows that the gendered continuum of violence, even when expanding it to include gender norms, is not a one-size-fits-all phenomenon. Instead, the gendered continuum of violence should take into consideration the unique aspects a certain conflict possesses, and how this may affect the continuum in a specific way. Another example of poverty affecting the gendered continuum of violence within the DRC is women and girls practicing 'survival sex'. Survival sex is when women and girls resort to trading sex for basic needs, such as food, shelter, and money. Whilst this is different from sexual violence committed by combatants, it 'creates a context in which abusive sexual relationships are more accepted, and in which many men- whether civilian or combatant- regard sex as a 'service' easy to get with the use of pressure' (HWS, 2002, page 21). Therefore, this chapter is simplistic and only explains one piece of a very large and intertwined puzzle. For more information on the link between poverty and sexual/gender-based violence in the DRC, see Baaz and Stern (2009), Freedman (2011), Cruz and Hintjens (2015).

Lastly, this chapter is reliant on the very few research papers conducted on the gendered drivers of the DRC conflict. All in all, only 9 articles could be found on the gendered drivers of conflict in the DRC. This has meant that this chapter is not as thorough as it could be, and perhaps many aspects have been left out simply due to a lack of interest on the gendered dimension of the DRC conflict. This chapter, therefore, slightly overcomes this by reviewing the current literature and therefore placing attention on the issue. However, this is by no means a way to overcome this limitation; instead, more research needs to be conducted in order to improve the situation for Congolese women. What is more alarming, however, is that only the research by HRW (2002) directly includes the voices of the women that are actually suffering. If we are not listening to the voices of women then there is a risk of speaking for them, which is dangerous because the wrong conclusions could be drawn. Therefore, there is a dire need to conduct research that directly involves Congolese women in order to properly understand GBV and sexual violence leading up to, during, and after the DRC conflict.

5. Conclusion

As previously mentioned in the introduction, this thesis set out to find out:

1) *Do gender norms during peacetime have a direct effect on violence against women during times of armed conflict?*

2) *Do gender norms have a link with a country's propensity for conflict e.g., do they perpetuate, sustain, or enhance an armed conflict?*

3) *Are these three factors linked by way of a continuum?*

This was done by conducting a systematic review and two distinct case studies: the former Yugoslavia and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The systematic review collated all the current knowledge on the continuum link between gender norms during peacetime, conflict, and violence against women during conflict. This led to the theoretical underpinnings of this hypothesised link, which formed chapter 1. These theories seem to suggest that there would be a strong link between gender norms during peace time, conflict, and gender-based violence during conflict. This is mainly because traditional gender norms entrench gender inequality into society and this gender inequality translates to norms that effect, maintain, and sustains a countries propensity for conflict. In addition, gender inequality is directly related to the likelihood of gender-based violence, and the anarchy of conflict means that these norms are heightened. However, the exact way this link works is contested by differing theories. The main ones are social constructivism, the domestic-international violence theory, the general theory of violence, and masculinities. This systematic review did not conclude which theory is more useful in explaining the hypothesised link. Instead, it concluded that the theories prove that the gendered continuum of violence needs to be expanded upon in order to include gender norms. This is because the theories directly provide explanations for the gendered continuum of violence whilst also incorporating gender norms into these explanations.

The case studies had to be conducted in order to understand whether the theorisation of the expansion of the gendered continuum of violence to include gender norms holds up in real-life settings. Two very different case studies were chosen because it allows for the power of gender norms as a causal mechanism to be analysed. Both of these case studies led to the conclusion that gender norms in peace time are directly linked to conflict and GBV during conflict. For example, the case of the former Yugoslavia showed how the gender norms during peacetime, which often came

from the concept of the zadruga, were used to gain support for the conflicts. This was also the case for the DRC. However, the way gender norms during peace time linked with GBV during conflict differed between the former Yugoslavia and the DRC. For example, in the conflicts of the former Yugoslavia, gender norms and nationalism were intertwined to create an environment in which systemic rapes took place. In comparison, ideals of masculinity and femininity and poverty was the most important factor for the GBV that took place in the DRC conflict.

Therefore, this thesis has found a link between gender norms during peace time, armed conflict, and GBV during armed conflict. Therefore, the researcher has successfully expanded upon the gendered continuum of violence. However, this thesis has also shown that gender is not the only factor and instead there is a complex link between gender and other factors such as nationalism and poverty. Consequently, using the gendered continuum of violence in its current state essentialises women and men. Thus, it is incredibly important to take the conclusions this thesis has made into consideration when attempting to understand the link between gender and conflict. This includes when conducting further research and when prevention techniques are considered and created; it cannot be assumed that the gendered continuum of violence plays out the same way in all armed conflicts or to the same extent, and the unique aspects and contexts of each country needs to be considered. For example, most literature on masculinities and femininities only focuses upon militarised masculinity, as could be seen in chapter 1. However, using this theory as it is in order to explain the link between gender norms, armed conflict, and GBV during armed conflict ignores the complexities of gender, and the specificities of a certain conflict. For example, the DRC case study has shown that thwarted masculinities played a large role in this continuum. Thus, further research needs to be conducted in order to expand upon the theories outlined in chapter 1 and the specific ways in which they can explain the continuum that this thesis has found.

It is the researchers hope that this is just the beginning of a growing body of literature that will research and uncover the links between gender norms in peace time, armed conflict, and GBV during armed conflict in order to expand upon the gendered continuum of violence even further. It is particularly important that the literature does not stagnate with this thesis because the case studies outlined here are not generalisable to other conflicts. Moreover, this thesis has focused mainly on rape during armed conflict. This is because the majority of literature focuses on rape, as it is seen as

the most severe expression of GBV. However, every victim of GBV matters, and therefore other forms of GBV and the way in which they fit into the gendered continuum of violence, need to be researched. This way, there will be a greater understanding of the link between gender norms during peace, armed conflict, and GBV during armed conflict, and more generalisable conclusions can be drawn. In addition, all the research synthesised here is qualitative and therefore quantitative research on this continuum needs to be conducted in order to create more objective conclusions. This way, conflict prevention techniques can be introduced or expanded upon that root out some of the ways in which armed conflicts are perpetuated and sustained. These techniques, whilst they may not tackle the main reason armed conflicts happen, could help prevent the human rights abuses of women during armed conflict. This is direly needed as GBV during armed conflict is often seen as an unfortunate side effect of the fighting, and therefore the lived experiences of women are ignored. In addition, therefore, further research can give voices to women and start to rewrite the historical narrative that sees women as second-class citizens.

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