

LETTER FROM OUR MANAGING EDITOR

3

Oxford, February 2019

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the February 2019 issue of the St Antony's International Review (STAIR).

Embedded in recurrent discussions on the nature of contemporary conflict, this issue of STAIR grew out of the editorial board's reflections on the changing character of conflict in terms of driving factors, dynamics, and participants, as well as how academic scholarship has approached the analysis of this transformation. In particular, this issue, entitled "Individuals in Conflict: Agency, Rights, and the Changing Character of War," examines the role of individuals in various aspects of conflict, be it as combatants or non-combatants, victims or perpetrators. In so doing, it gathers contributions that elaborate on individual agency in the context of conflict, diverging from the traditional and still predominant focus of international relations scholarship on the role of states and structural factors in inter- and intra-state conflict.

Reflecting its central role in discussing individuals in conflict, which emerged during preparations for the issue, this edition of STAIR includes two features focusing on the role of gender and gendered conflict dynamics. In her article, Charu Hogg, of the All Survivors Project, discusses the phenomenon of sexual violence against boys and men in the context of conflict and forced displacement. The feature interview with Marissa Conway, co-founder and United Kingdom director at the Centre for Feminist Foreign Policy further reflects on these issues as well as the nature and influence of intersectionist feminist foreign policy.

True to STAIR's tradition, this issue presents the contributions of established academics and emerging scholars from various academic backgrounds. Crucially, the issue also acknowledges that analysis of conflict must engage with perspectives from the field and of practitioners directly interacting with individuals in conflict environments. At STAIR, we are confident that scholarly and expert knowledge can play a positive role in society, and we see our search for excellence in sourcing and publishing articles as part of that role.

I would like to offer my personal gratitude for the hard work in preparing this issue of the entire STAIR editorial team as well as for the guidance of senior member Kalypso Nicolaïdis. I would also like to thank all members of the STAIR Advisory Board, St. Antony's College, and the Department of Politics and International Relations for supporting STAIR.

I sincerely hope you enjoy this issue of STAIR.

Best wishes,

Linda Slapakova
Managing Editor

EDITORIAL INTRODUCTIONS

I. Theme Section Introduction

Katie Mann, Lucy Song, Giuseppe Spatafora, Julia Vassileva

II. General Section Introduction

Aleksei Opacic, Carina Uchida, Sophie Vèriter

III. Book Review Introduction

Jan Tomek

I. Theme Section

In the last few decades, the world has become more sensitive to the necessity of protecting individual rights. Ongoing conflicts have changed dramatically over the past century, and individuals are now, more than ever, both the primary agents and primary victims of violence. Denis Mukwege and Nadia Murad jointly received the 2018 Nobel Peace Prize “for their efforts to end the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war and armed conflict.”¹ The Nobel Committee’s choice of recipients serves to highlight the importance of combating forms of violence that target the most vulnerable individuals; moreover, it is also indicative of how persistent and pernicious these forms of violence remain. Humanitarian crises continue to flood headlines: last year, around a million people from the Rohingya minority escaped the Rakhine state of Myanmar, following major ethnic cleansing attempts, with Aung San Suu Kyi, Myanmar’s de facto leader and a Nobel laureate herself, criticised for insufficiently using her power to prevent the events.² Meanwhile, rape remains a weapon of war in conflicts around sub-Saharan Africa.³ These ongoing events, and many other examples, illustrate an enduring reality of conflict and suffering, especially among the most defenceless. This issue of STAIR aims to bring attention to this dimension, using the perspective of the individual to analyse warfare, everyday violence, and rights (or the lack thereof).

International Relations (IR) as a discipline has been traditionally concerned with states, diplomacy, and war. IR theorists have focused on state and systemic “images,” which, according to IR scholar Kenneth Waltz, determine outcomes of war and peace.⁴ However, the first “image,” that of the individual contributing to outcomes of war and peace, has been neglected by much of the discipline’s current scholarship. As the character of conflict becomes increasingly complex—often too complex to be analysed from a strictly statist perspective—scholars must recognise and address the individual dimension of conflict. From implications of just war theory to the gendered elements of ethnic cleansing, the

inherently public dimension of the human body as an element of socialisation and political life is an increasingly central theme in international relations scholarship and practice. Given the growing contestation of the human rights regime and its associated institutions, the tension between human security and state interests raises questions of responsibility and obligation within an progressively interconnected international system.

In this context, this issue of STAIR aims to advance evolving scholarship through contributions addressing the following questions: Who is responsible for protecting the human right to bodily integrity in a globalised world? How does the transformation of warfare in the technological, political, and strategic realms affect the rights of civilians and combatants? What theoretical perspectives may allow IR scholarship to move beyond a state-centred analysis of world politics?

Central to this edition is the scholarly investigation of transformations of existing entities and the emergence of new actors in warfare. The discipline of IR has comprehensively examined the changing nature of conflict following the end of the Cold War. The term “new wars,” coined by Mary Kaldor, characterises warfare in the post-Cold War era as a phenomenon involving a much broader variety of agents than just states.⁵ Other scholars, such as Edward Newman and John Mueller, have advanced vocabulary to convey an analogous recognition of a new generation of warfare, including phrases such as “wars among the people,” “wars of the third kind,” “hybrid wars,” “privatised wars,” and “postmodern wars.”⁶ These “new wars” have witnessed changes in the objectives of conflict: while past motives of war were primarily geo-political and ideological, contemporary conflicts are often grounded in identity politics. Groups make claims to power on the basis of a particular identity, and may seek to shape the socio-political order in favour of that perceived in-group. As Sheila L. Croucher and others claim, this surge in identity politics is buttressed by the concomitant divide between those who prosper and those who are stifled in a globalised world.⁷

For centuries, conventional warfare was underpinned by the assumption that conflict is an extraordinary aspect of life; even some realist scholars concede that in the anarchical state of nature, war is always around the corner, but is not the day-to-day activity of states. Preparation for war, on the other hand, is. In the new types of conflicts, all these assumptions are questioned. There is no clear divide between uniformed combatants and civilians. Moreover, the psychological element of warfare has become central to victory or to continuation of conflict; where one seeks to gain political control, one must also “capture the hearts and

minds” of the population, at times through fear and intimidation, but often by means of persuasion, presenting oneself as the liberator from injustice. The most successful non-state groups are often better than governments at effectively controlling territory, because they enjoy the support of the population for supplies and safe havens.⁸ This feature of new wars has led actors to lay special emphasis upon the political control of the population. Associated with these changing patterns of warfare is the growing difficulty of distinguishing between combatants and non-combatants, identifying a clear authority that is liable for the conduct of said combatants, and delineating and enforcing clear rules of engagement that allow for discriminating between combatants and non-combatants while simultaneously guaranteeing protection for combatants themselves.⁹

Warfare is no longer an orderly affair carried out by hierarchical military institutions. One mainstream thesis argues that, unlike in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, contemporary warfare involves a heterogeneous range of actors, both state and non-state, who may or may not operate under centralized command.¹⁰ The monopoly on seemingly organized violence, the argument follows, is now more easily infringed upon by certain actors and organizations seeking to privatize violence, such as paramilitary organisations. Yet this assumption of organized versus privatized violence can also be questioned. First, from the viewpoint of the individual, especially one from the most vulnerable elements in society, war is never an organised, clean, and surgical activity. Rather, it is always messy, bloody, and destructive for the social fabric of those who live in the territory. Second, violence is not necessarily becoming private; in a certain sense, it has always been. The drivers of violence at the state level are often reflected at the private level. As one of the contributions in this issue argues, the daily household violence that women in a village near the India-Pakistan border is different in form, but not in substance, from the “official” violence that the two states perpetrate against each other. These theoretical insights show how problematic it is to draw a line between war and non-war, between war and other types of “disorganized” violence, and between combatants and non-combatants.¹¹ This is a key message that this issue aims to deliver: one should be careful not to further propagate such simplistic heuristic distinctions when attempting to understand the complex dynamics at work in the context of conflict.

This issue of STAIR gathers contributions that go beyond the explanation of conflict as a contest between state actors driven by structural factors, a framework which overlooks the importance of incentives, circumstances, and patterns of human action

in conflict, whether in relation to inter-state war, civil conflict, or domestic violence. Actors in conflict, while somewhat constrained by structural realities, retain varying degrees of autonomy in determining conflict outcomes, whether at the individual, group, or international level. The emphasis on systemic factors that dominates conflict studies fails to recognise several important issues: the moral dilemmas soldiers face, the risks taken by international personnel involved in humanitarian crises, and the dynamics of domestic violence that are intertwined with violence in the public sphere. These topics are addressed in depth in the following contributions.

Human rights are often most at risk of violation among conflict-affected populations. A discussion of agency and the individual dimension of war presupposes a re-evaluation of the concept of human rights in such a way as to challenge the utilitarian interpretation of a trade-off between human and national security. More specifically, this issue intends to bring to the forefront a need to recognise and protect the rights of bodily integrity and freedom of movement. Contrary to conventional assumptions that the human body is apolitical and asocial, these contributions highlight its politicised and socialised dimensions.¹² For example, many crimes of sexual violence that occur in conflict are committed as a social or political act, and the violation of the victim's rights of bodily integrity is motivated by more than opportunistic incentives, as identity and other socially constructed values are often key drivers of such violent acts.¹³ Militaries and armed groups often target specific ethnic or religious groups when carrying out sexual violence, torture, and other forms of collective political violence. One need only recall historical cases such as the Rwandan genocide,¹⁴ as well as contemporary crises, like that in the Democratic Republic of Congo,¹⁵ in which the beliefs of a collective in-group engender harm against the physical bodies of an out-group. Moreover, the idea of a clear distinction between public and private violence is in itself a fallacy; attempts to fully dichotomize the causes and effects of domestic and public violence are short-sighted. The empirical reality of conflict is far more complex than many theories are willing to allow for, and structural elements of conflict can have far-reaching effects that trickle down to the everyday experiences of individual non-combatants, both in public and private spaces.¹⁶ The dynamics between the collective and the individual, the public and the private, are shaped and reshaped in any given conflict. Bodies are made and marked by social and political values, beliefs, and acts. This issue provides a glimpse into the complex ways in which individuals are connected and exert agency upon one another in conflict situations.

Following the end of the Second World War, human rights emerged at the forefront of international political debates. Leaders sought to codify international responsibility and accountability for the protection of human rights into a global legal framework, yet this framework is made by states for states, and is principally aimed at regulating inter-state behaviour.¹⁸ Human rights law—codified in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, the human rights covenants including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), and additional protocols—takes important steps to protect individuals. However, the success of these conventions has been severely limited and important questions concerning enforcement remain unanswered: Who differentiates between combatants and civilians in armed conflict? Who should be held accountable for the conduct of non-state actors? Who is responsible for the physical security of refugees and other displaced peoples? Who should administer punishments for the violation of individuals' rights?

Further obstacles remain in establishing an individual-centric perspective regarding protection from and prosecution of human rights abuses in conflict. The International Criminal Court (ICC) was created with the aim of prosecuting individuals who have committed grave international crimes, such as genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and crimes of aggression. However, the efficacy of the court has been significantly undermined by a lack of participation on the part of numerous states, notably the United States and Russia.²⁰ In the realm of individual rights, the ICC paradoxically aims too high and falls too short. The Court's jurisdiction is limited to egregious crimes with a very high threshold. However, crimes committed at the individual level, small in scale but consistent in perpetration, are likely to fall outside its jurisdiction. For example, even though the ICC has a mandate to pursue crimes of sexual violence as a crime against humanity, a war crime, and a method of genocide since 2008, Melinda Reed, Executive Director of the Women's Initiatives for Gender Justice, has remarked, "[i]t is very disappointing to note that, as of today, there has not been a single successful conviction for sexual and gender-based crimes." While leaders of groups committing large-scale crimes may be investigated, the individuals responsible for the physical perpetration of specific crimes are often left unprosecuted. Aggregation of war crimes under the culpability of those most powerful effaces the crimes of those directly involved: the individual perpetrators.

This issue includes an eclectic array of articles addressing the connection between inter-state and domestic violence along the India-Pakistan border; the boundaries of combatants' moral responsibility toward civilians in conflict through the perspective of Michael Walzer's "morality of risk" theory; and patterns in the reporting of sexual violence in conflict situations such as in the case of Myanmar. While aimed at surveying the problem of individuals in conflict as a whole, the issue has developed a specific focus on the dynamics of gender and violence in situations of conflict, as well as new perspectives that gender-aware theories can bring to the study of politics. In so doing, it emphasises the magnitude and complexity of tackling the challenges faced and the agency harboured by individuals in armed conflict. Therefore, we invited practitioners to provide their own perspectives on the enduring plague of sexual and gender-based violence in one feature article and a feature interview.

The changing character of war and the rise of asymmetric conflicts, in which one side has vast technological superiority and can resort to safer combat tactics such as aerial bombing and drone strikes, imposes a re-evaluation of the role and the responsibilities of soldiers. In her article "Walzer and the Morality of Risk," Silviya Lechner addresses the ethical dilemma of minimizing soldiers' death risk in war, at the cost of increasing the harm to enemy civilians. She reconstructs Michael Walzer's "morality of risk" theory to argue that soldiers themselves must take on additional risks in order to save enemy civilians. She argues that Walzer's theory improves on the general doctrine of "double effects"—the imperative to distinguish between military and civilian targets, and to minimise collateral damage in war—because it imposes on soldiers the duty to minimise collateral damage to civilians, rather than passively letting civilians die. Lechner's paper is a reminder that the moral principles of war, first theorised in medieval times, need to be respected, taking due consideration of the sanctity of life, even in the age of new technologies that apparently "sanitise" warfare, but in reality represent a violation of ethical duties.

An underlying theme of this issue is that violence is not an occasional event, but a daily experience for many, especially for the most vulnerable individuals, and it extends beyond the classical theatres of warfare. Devika Ranjan's paper, "Acting Out: Violence, Community, and Women's Theatre on the India-Pakistan Border," explores the omnipresence of violence in the daily life of men and women. Through an ethnographic lens and an innovative methodology for IR papers, Ranjan contextualises domestic violence in

the village of Manguchak on the border between India and Pakistan, locating its origins in the structural and conflict-related violence occurring within the national and international domains. Violence at the international, national, and individual levels is intimately connected and impacted by colonial history, nationalism, and patriarchal social norms. This village in the borderland, Ranjan argues, experiences the force of Michel Foucault's "biopolitical state," which imposes suffering and subordination in direct ways, as well as indirect ones, together with a culture and a state structure that tolerates abuse, alcoholism, and domestic violence. The venue of Manguchak serves as a manifestation of an important reality: conflict and violence extend themselves beyond combat lines; they enter every household, affecting the lives of individuals with the silent consent—or even the active assistance—of official organs.

As previously noted, the awarding of the 2018 Nobel Peace Prize is indicative of an increased international interest in tackling issues of conflict-related sexual violence. However, what has received little attention is the condition of the individuals who work in reporting and preventing these types of crimes. This is the focus of Sara Davies's paper, "Reporting Sexual Violence during Conflict. A Case Study of Humanitarian Workers in Myanmar." The author identifies critical challenges to non-governmental organization and international government organization envoys, including reporting timeliness and competition, the politicisation of reporting, and the logistical as well as resourcing gaps for humanitarians who are told to report but are rarely given guidance on how and when to report in situations where access is difficult or dangerous. The case of Myanmar sheds light on three further reporting challenges faced by humanitarians. The main concern with the logic of differentiating sexual violence reports between first-order and second-order reports is that these are too general. Hence, Davies argues for the establishment of differentiated reporting requirements of humanitarians depending on the severity of crimes, the reporters' access to populations at risk, and the stability level of the conflict situation. Attention to the individual presupposes attention to context.

Many of the contributions in this issue take a critical approach, questioning the role of gender in the shaping of power and conflict dynamics. Feminist literature has expanded in many areas of political science and in this context our interview with Marissa Conway explores the application of a feminist lens to foreign policy. Conway, the co-founder and United Kingdom Director of the Centre for Feminist Foreign Policy (CFFP), explains that "feminist foreign policy" aims to increase attention towards the local factors and the

populations of interest in foreign policy-making. She believes that this type of foreign policy is achieved through a combination of a top-down perspective—such as the appointment of more female cabinet members and women in positions of power—as well as a more bottom-up approach, such as grassroots activism. The interview also discusses the broader implications of feminist foreign policy for the study of political life from an individual-centred perspective. Conway stresses the fact that the goals of feminist foreign policy go well beyond the vindication of the rights of women and should address the fundamental patterns of inequality that are perpetrated in social life.

That sexual and gender-based crimes are not just aimed at women is a central claim of Charu Lata Hogg's feature article "Bridging the Gap: Addressing Sexual Violence Against Men and Boys in International Policy." She addresses the often underreported phenomenon of sexual violence against men and boys in the context of armed conflicts and forced displacement. Hogg outlines recent progress in the international recognition of sexual violence perpetrated against men in conflict, such as guidelines issued by the United Nations (UN) High Commissioner for Refugees, and argues that the UN Security Council's explicit acknowledgment that men and boys can be targets of conflict-related sexual violence is a first and necessary step towards establishing policies that help put an end to such practices. A more effective international criminal justice system, along with a firmer and more coherent normative framework, will help ensure that the rights and needs of victims and survivors are met.

Through the aforementioned articles and interviews, this edition of STAIR hopes to elucidate the nexus between the ethical, individual, legal, and political dimensions of contemporary warfare. Exploration of these topics can allow IR scholars to better understand changes in the nature and character of war.

II. General Section

The General Section of STAIR accompanies a selection of articles addressing a common theme, and encompasses pieces from a wider variety of disciplines. In this issue, the General Section includes original contributions on Russia's external action both in military and non-military terms, the balance of power in the Middle East, ethnic land regularisation in Brazil, and re-Sinicisation campaigns in the context of China's rise.

Reflecting on existing scholarship examining the contemporary character of Russia's foreign policy, Ivan Kentros draws on Viatcheslav Morozov's post-colonial theory of Russia's role in in-

ternational affairs as a “subaltern empire” to examine its rhetoric concerning the use of force in military operations. Based on two case studies, the 1992 Ingushetia operation and the 2015 intervention in Syria, Kentros illustrates Russia’s normative dependency on the West and reliance on external legitimisation of its rhetoric on the use of military force, a result of its “long-term, enduring normative entrapment.”

Alla Baranovsky-Dewey analyses factors that determine the timing and intensity of “information attacks” through case studies of Russia’s disinformation campaigns in Georgia and Ukraine. She argues that the security dilemma applies to such situations to explain the occurrence of attacks, whereas the target state’s vulnerability determines their timing and intensity.

In exploring Saudi Arabia and Iran’s mutual rivalry for regional influence, Mikael Naghizadeh advances a “mid-level” theoretical framework that maps out patterns of interaction within dyads of states and attempts to bridge international relations (IR) theory and area studies scholarship. Examining the history of this rivalry through the 1979 Iranian revolution as well as the two countries’ rapprochement in the 1990s to the 2003 invasion of Iraq, Naghizadeh argues that the fluctuating intensity of the Iran-Saudi Arabia rivalry is less a function of the balance of military power than the balance of power between potential or actual proxies in other Middle Eastern countries.

Within the context of the rise of alt-right populist candidate Jair Bolsonaro to the Brazilian presidency, Katerina Hatzikidi explores the nation’s political context through the history of “ethnic” land regularisation, especially of Brazil’s protected quilombo territories. The author’s genealogical study into the quilombo community’s land rights struggles allows us to contextualise the contemporary challenges of obtaining land rights from numerous government agencies.

Finally, Ashton Ng delves into the re-Sinicisation of Chinese Singaporeans following the 1979 “Speak Mandarin” campaign, which targeted both language and immigration reintegration of these communities. The author highlights the ineffectiveness of such policies, which further imbued resentment amongst the de-Sinicised community. These policies are placed within the context of China’s rise, both regionally and globally, which can be perceived through Singapore’s economy, popular culture, and language in the 21st century.

We hope that the selected contributions of this issue’s General Section will serve as an insightful addition to the Theme Section contributions, as they build on the diversity of tools and strategies used by political actors in international affairs.

It is my great pleasure to introduce our book reviews section. Three out of four publications reviewed here have a strong connection with the present issue's theme, while the fourth publication relates to the broader scholarship of International Relations. Benoît Siberdt, a DPhil candidate in Politics at the University of Oxford, reviews Abbey Steele's *Democracy and Displacement* in Colombia's Civil War. The book highlights the previously unexplored link between electoral processes and forced displacement during wartime. Elections, on a local level, can create a dichotomy of "loyal" versus "disloyal" local communities, with the latter being singled out for expulsion from their homes. Siberdt skilfully assesses the pros and cons of Steele's quantitative methods-heavy approach, its scope, and the author's decision to study specific communities in greater depth.

Carlos Rodriguez-Cruz y Celis from University of Texas-Dallas, in turn, reviews *Armed Conflict and Forcible Displacement: Individual Rights under International Law*, a rich co-authored volume edited by Elena Katselli Proukaki, whose own family history includes experiences with forced displacement. Rodriguez-Cruz y Celis perceptively outlines the legal reasoning behind Proukaki's case, arguing for the existence of a legal principle of protection against displacement as one grounded, albeit somewhat implicitly, in the already existing provisions of international humanitarian law, international human rights law, and international criminal law. The co-authored format allows for a wide range of case studies, including country contexts as disparate as Cambodia and Cyprus. Anisa Kassamali, an alumna of Oxford, the University of London – School of Oriental and African Studies, and currently a trainee solicitor, reviews *Garrisoned Minds: Women and Armed Conflict in South Asia*, edited by Laxmi Murthy and Mitu Varma. Among the publications reviewed here, it is arguably the least strictly academic, incorporating approaches from journalistic and public advocacy work. As Kassamali rightfully assesses, any such reservations are largely compensated by the contribution the edited volume make in giving a voice to silenced and vulnerable women in militarised pockets within South Asia.

Among recent contributions to broader International Relations literature, Patrick Tiney, a DPhil candidate in International Relations at Oxford, tackles *Restraining Great Powers: Soft Balancing from Empires to the Global Era*. The latter book was authored by international relations scholar T.V. Paul and examines the complexities of soft balancing—which is occasionally both an alternative and a complement to hard balancing. As Tiney points

out, the novel idea of this 2018 publication is that of soft balancing by means of undermining the domestic legitimacy of the rival state's policies. This kind of activity, as well as other channels of soft balancing, could very well continue to gain prominence in this increasingly interconnected and interdependent world. All in all, the book reviews section promises a thought-provoking and critically engaging read.

Notes

1 "The Nobel Peace Prize 2018," Nobel Media AP, accessed December 17, 2018, <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/2018/summary/>.

2 "Myanmar Rohingya: UN says military leaders must face genocide charges," BBC News, last modified August 27, 2018, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-45318982>; see also: "Report of the independent international fact-finding mission on Myanmar," Human Rights Council, 39th session 10-28 September 2018, https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/FFM-Myanmar/A_HRC_39_64.pdf.

3 Paul Kirby, "How Is Rape a Weapon of War? Feminist International Relations, Modes of Critical Explanation and the Study of Wartime Sexual Violence," *European Journal of International Relations* 19, no. 4 (2013): 797.

4 Kenneth Waltz, *Man, the State, and War: A Theoretical Analysis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959).

5 Mary Kaldor, "In Defence of New Wars," *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development* 2, no. 2013): 4.

6 For an overview of the debate, see: Hew Strachan and Sibylle Scheipers, *The Changing Character of War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Edward Newman (2004), "The 'New Wars' Debate: A Historical Perspective Is Needed," *Security Dialogue* 35 no. 2 (2014): 173–189; John Mueller, *The Remnants of War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003); Martin Shaw, *War and Genocide: Organised Killing in Modern Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015); Frank Hoffman, *The Rise of Hybrids Wars* (Arlington, VA: Potomac Institute for Policy Studies, 2007).

7 Roger Coate and Markus Thiel (Eds.), *Identity Politics in the Age of Globalization* (Boulder, Colorado : First Forum Press, 2010); Sheila L. Croucher, *Globalization and Belonging: The Politics of Identity in a Changing World* (Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield, 2018).

8 Richard N. Lebow, *Why Nations Fight: Past and Future Motives for War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

9 For an overview of the debates on legitimate targets and the principle of discrimination, see: Janina Dill, *Legitimate Targets? Social Construction, International Law and US Bombing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Stephen Deakin, "Naked Soldiers and the Principle of Discrimination," *Journal of Military Ethics* 13, no. 4 (2014):320-330.

10 Marissa C. Fleming, "New and Old Wars? Debating a Clausewitzian Future,"

The Journal of Security Studies 32, no. 3 (2009): 213-241.

11 Veena Das, Arthur Kleinman, Margaret M. Lock, Mamphela Ramphele, and Pamela Reynolds (Eds.), *Remaking a World: Violence, Social Suffering, and Recovery* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).

12 Victoria Sanford, Katerina Stefatos, and Cecilia M. Salvi, *Gender Violence in Peace and War: States of Complicity* (London: Rutgers University Press, 2016).

13 Maria Eriksson Baaz and Maria Stern, "Why Do Soldiers Rape? Masculinity, Violence, and Sexuality in the Armed Forces in the Congo (DRC)," *International Studies Quarterly* 53 (2009): 495-518.

Violence, and Sexuality in the Armed Forces in the Congo (DRC)," *International Studies Quarterly* 53 (2009): 495-518.

14 Llezlie L. Green, "Gender Hate Propaganda and Sexual Violence in the Rwandan Genocide: An Argument for Intersectionality in International Law," *Columbia Human Rights Law Review* 33 (2002): 733-776.

15 Baaz and Stern, "Why Do Soldiers Rape?," 495-518.

16 Sara E. Davies and Jacqui True, "Reframing Conflict-Related Sexual and Gender-Based Violence: Bringing Gender Analysis Back In," *Security Dialogue* 46, no.6 (2015): 495-512.17 Laura Shepherd, *Gender, Violence & Security* (London: Zed Books, 2008), 2.

18 Gerhard Hafner, *The Emancipation of the Individual from the State under International Law* (Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 2013).

19 Alison Brysk and Michael Stohl (Eds.), *Contracting Human Rights: Crisis, Accountability and Opportunity* (Cheltenham, UK Edward Elgar Publishing, 2018).

20 Triestino Mariniello, "The International Criminal Court," *International Human Rights Law Review* 3, no. 1 (June 2014): 122-145. Christian M. de Vos, Sara Kendall, and Carsten Stahn (Eds.), *Contested Justice: The Politics and Practice of the International Criminal Court Interventions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

21 "Overturn of 1st ICC Conviction for Crimes of Sexual Violence," Women's Initiative for Gender Justice, last modified June 12, 2018, <https://4genderjustice.org/overturn-of-1st-icc-conviction-for-crimes-of-sexual-violence/>.

FEATURE INTERVIEW: MS MARISSA CONWAY

In this interview, “Individuals in Conflict” theme editors Giuseppe Spatafora, Katherine Mann and Lucy Song had the chance to pose a set of topical questions to Marissa Conway, co-founder and United Kingdom Director of the Centre for Feminist Foreign Policy (CFFP), a research and advocacy charity encouraging a feminist approach to foreign policy. Marissa joined the STAIR Theme Section editors to discuss the merits and the innovations that the feminist approach brings to the theory and practice of foreign policy, as well as its broader implications for the study of political life from an individual-centred perspective. Marissa Conway stressed the fact that the goals of feminism go well beyond the vindication of the rights of women in order to address the fundamental patterns of inequality that permeate social life

The idea behind CFFP initially came about when Marissa completed her MA in Gender Studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. Her areas of interest include nuclear disarmament, US foreign policy, masculinity, and feminist foreign policy. While focusing her research on the ways through which feminist theory can rethink nuclear policy, she quickly became convinced of it's value in rethinking the broader foreign policy status quo. Much of her personal feminist approach is inspired by Cynthia Enloe's encouragement of a feminist curiosity, one which takes women's lives seriously.

Originally from Silicon Valley in California, Marissa moved to London in 2015 to pursue her MA. She also holds a BA in Political Science and a BA in Music from Chapman University in Orange County, California. In addition to her work with the CFFP, she is the CEO of Marissa Conway Creative, a branding and design agency that helps feminist organisations tell their stories, and is the Director of Copywriting at the social media firm Triarc. She is also a freelance writer and publishes pieces on feminist foreign policy, gender and nuclear weapons, feminism, entrepreneurship, and life as a Californian in London.

STAIR: First and foremost, what is “feminist foreign policy” and how does it contribute to international relations?

Marissa Conway (MC): Feminist foreign policy is both a very broad ideology and praxis. The best way I've found to describe it is as “people-centred policy.” International relations as a subject

is very abstract and heavily saturated with realist thinking, and in this heavy state-centred theorising, the discipline loses track of the human consequences of policy decisions. A feminist perspective aims to recover the impact on the individual and place this as a key focal point in policy making processes, as well as act as a connection between the local and the global understanding of political events. And though its agenda is rooted in gender equality, feminist foreign policy is much more than this. To be truly effective, feminist foreign policy must be intersectional and seek to actively undo the systemic racism embedded in political practices. In the UK, for example, this means actively seeking to understand how colonial legacies shape policy and policy-making today and then changing up those very mechanisms to ensure that we are not perpetuating violence, racism, or imperialism.

STAIR: Your answer relates to our next question: Do you think feminist foreign policy is best achieved through a top-down perspective, such as the appointment of more female cabinet members and women in positions of power, or a more bottom-up approach, such as grassroots activism?

MC: I think you really need both. Foreign policy is often a top-down activity. As such, in order to give foreign policy a feminist twist, initial discussions need to be happening with existing policy-makers and government officials. Feminist foreign policy won't be implemented by the state or individual political parties without buy-in from that particular group of people. So, it quickly becomes clear that diversity in political leadership is extremely important, because the more closely representatives mirror the makeup of our population, the more policy will reflect the wider concerns of the everyday individual. Moreover, we need more women in decision-making roles, but also more people from all marginalized communities. It is important to note that simply adding women to representative bodies does not guarantee feminist principles will be promoted. Theresa May is an excellent example of this. But it does mean that different life experiences and a wider range of concerns beyond those of older white men will inform policy.

However, simply creating policy does not lead to real structural change in society. Therefore, there is also a need for action at the grassroots level, as people in power must be held accountable. There are so many feminist activists and NGOs doing noteworthy and inspiring work, without whom feminist foreign policy as an idea might never have seen the light of day. It is important that these top-down and bottom-up activities are not just limited to labelling policies as feminist: this needs to be more than a

public relations stunt. There needs to be awareness at the state and grassroots levels that feminist foreign policy is a continuous process and there is always work to do to make better policy and improve policy-making processes. The main challenge is making sure that we're truly promoting feminist values and not co-opting feminism for the sake of optics.

STAIR: A quick follow-up: Do you think that one of these arguments—the top-down versus the bottom-up approach—is more commonly used than the other in regard to foreign policy, and if so, why is this the case?

MC: I would say that feminist foreign policy is much more activism-based right now. There are major exceptions, as of course there are with anything: Sweden has a feminist foreign policy and Canada has a feminist policy team. In the United Kingdom, the Labour Party has recently championed a feminist development policy and the Women's Equality Party has recently announced that they will pursue a feminist foreign policy. But that's the end of the list in terms of official feminist foreign policy. Outside of this, the majority of the momentum for feminist foreign policy comes from feminist activists who are championing equality in foreign policy, and feminists who are embedded in policy-making institutions themselves. We at the CFFP are often welcomed into these political spaces to have conversations precisely because there are feminists already there who are pushing for change internally and shaking up the status quo from the inside.

Because there are more and more feminists (who do not necessarily all identify as women getting into foreign policy, feminist foreign policy is welcomed in a way that I didn't expect when I first started CFFP. For instance, last summer [2018], I attended the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) summit, where participation was almost evenly split between women and men (40% to 60%), thanks to the work of Women in International Security who helped organise the "NATO Engages" conference I attended. But even as I met with and spoke to male politicians and military leaders from all over the world, every single one of them took me and feminist foreign policy seriously. Since the conference I have never so strongly believed that the time for a feminist foreign policy is now: it is no longer a distant goal.

STAIR: You have talked a lot about the work that feminist foreign policy does. Theories of politics and international relations tend to be abstract and often provide little guidance for action. How does the CFFP expect to effectively integrate theoretical

perspectives into policy-making? And how does the Centre adjudicate between the often-divergent perspectives of theory and practice?

MC: That is a great question and the big question for feminist foreign policy. Many of our upcoming projects include looking at case studies to give concrete, data-driven examples of how foreign policy is helpful. The best way to blend theory into practice often involves grounding it into a specific issue. For example, one of the CFFP's briefings covers the unethical practice of indefinite immigrant detention in the UK, which is the only country in the EU without a cap on detention time. Within a feminist framework, such a policy violates basic human rights and a feminist foreign policy in the UK would end this practice immediately.

STAIR: To what extent do you think feminism remains a Western-centric concept?

MC: Feminism has a rich history all over the world and means different things in different localities, though many shortsighted and unhelpful ideas under the feminist umbrella are rooted in white feminism, which is heavily Western centric. One simple step to take in ensuring that feminist foreign policy isn't perpetuating the damaging patterns found within the feminist movement itself is to recognize that feminist foreign policy will look different in different contexts. The work of feminism – and our work at the CFFP – is not to authoritatively define what feminist foreign policy means for anyone, because it is ultimately up to each population to decide for themselves. We advocate for overall principles and push this agenda forward. Yet feminism suffers from being very Western-centric and marginalising in a variety of cases. For feminist foreign policy to be really effective, we need to incorporate an intersectional approach that really understands the harmful legacies that both feminism and foreign policy have had and still have, just like the racist and colonial practises that still exist.

I strongly believe that there is so much potential for this approach to be revolutionary and emancipatory. But part of that process means recognizing the shortcomings of both feminism and foreign policy. We need to be mindful of that, inclusive, and avoid speaking on behalf of other people. I'm Californian and I live in the UK. I can't offer a truly well-informed opinion on how countries other than the United States and the United Kingdom should operate, because my lived experience is limited to these two countries. We cannot assume to speak on behalf of anyone

else nor tell them how best to incorporate feminism into their foreign policy. The CFFP's job, then, is to encourage the overall idea, but it is up to the population of a given country to decide how to envision it within their particular context.

STAIR: United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 outlined provisions addressing the protection of women and girls in conflict zones, focusing specifically on issues of sexual violence and internal displacement; however, while originally applauded by feminist scholars and policy-makers, this resolution has increasingly drawn criticism. One key issue is the fact that the resolution exclusively addresses the plight of women and girls in conflict-affected areas, while failing to directly address issues related to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) targeting men and boys. Do you think this depiction of SGBV is acceptable? If not, how might a different feminist perspective create space for protections against and support in the aftermath of male-targeted SGBV to be better incorporated under international law?

MC: Resolution 1325 paved the way for feminist foreign policy. Without it, so much of the work that feminists do in international relations would not have been possible and it surely would not have had the momentum it now enjoys. The principles upon which we have based the CFFP stem from the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda. Yet, I do think there is a degree of short-sightedness in it. UNSCR 1325 has a tendency to box women into specific gendered roles, for instance, emphasising that women are either victims or peacemakers. But there is real power in having Security Council resolutions that focus explicitly on the impact of armed conflict on women, and UNSCR 1325 is especially significant as the first of its kind. While we must focus on how SGBV impacts all regardless of gender identity, it's also important that we don't fall into the trap of assuming that just because we're making space to focus on one issue (in this case armed conflict) and its effect on one population—in this case women—we're then intentionally ignoring everything else that is occurring.

I see UNSCR 1325 and the WPS agenda as sitting under the umbrella of feminist foreign policy. And feminism is not just about women, of course. It is not even solely about gender. Feminism is about power, and in the case of UNSCR 1325, it urges people to see violence as a result of power dynamics and how bodily harm is used both as a weapon of war and as a tool to perpetrate structural inequality in order to preserve the power of those at the top. And sitting right next to it, under our umbrella, is SGBV targeting men and boys.

STAIR: Another criticism of UNSCR 1325 is its failure to address the structural causes of inequality that render women more susceptible to victimisation in armed conflict, sometimes through sexual violence. The resolution does not take into account gendered power relations within existing institutional structures. How might this shortcoming be ameliorated? Do you have any thoughts on how international law might better convey women's agency with regard to these issues, rather than perpetuating the conventional image of the helpless female victim?

MC: One of the major failings of foreign policy I see over and over is its disconnect from the local and how infrequently foreign policy leaders receive input from the people that policy will eventually impact. The example you mention is very relevant, and I see a large degree of filtering before the stories of women who experience violence in conflicts reach governments. For example, the UK government is taking wonderful steps to prioritise a more feminist peace and security agenda through its National Action Plan for Women, Peace and Security, but it often relies on third-party mediators to communicate messages between the women who are affected by conflict and the UK government. These mediators are often excellent NGOs that are carrying out amazing work, but are underfunded and overstretched, and yet this critical responsibility falls often to them and them alone. However, policy-makers and those affected by policy must still cope with the absence of direct lines of communication. So, a very easy way to ensure that policy and law properly convey women's agency is to start with direct consultations with the people who are affected by foreign policy. Foreign policy-making needs to be an exercise of listening and learning, not making assumptions.

STAIR: The connection between the local and the global fits well into our next question: What is the relationship between the domestic—interpreted as both the national level and as the household level—and the international in regard to gendered conflict issues? How might feminist foreign policy be able to address issues related to intimate partner violence and other individual-level repercussions of civil and interstate conflict?

MC: We cannot have a feminist foreign policy without a feminist domestic policy. Foreign policy tends to set a very general framework of interests and goals. Yet, these large-scale policies always have a significant and sometimes unintended impact at the domestic level. Oftentimes, foreign policy-makers are people who have no idea about the everyday life experience and the situation

on the ground.

A great example of this is United States foreign policy towards the Middle East. For decades, before the Trump administration, the United States has positioned itself as a leader in the promotion of human rights, including women's rights. For example, First Lady Laura Bush has spoken about the necessity to "save" women in the Middle East, as if they were incapable of understanding what is best for their own lives and without agency. This type of rhetoric further reinforces how the United States sees itself as a "hero", which itself is a very gendered idea rooted in masculinity and power. This narrative during the Bush administration has also heavily shaped the United States' domestic perception of women's rights, and has led to the rise of Islamophobia and current misunderstanding of immigration and immigration policy.

Another area of my research in which the influence of the domestic reveals itself in the international is the role of hegemonic masculinity in nuclear policy. The perceptions that white American men have about themselves and the expected behaviour that "should" follow suit is reflected in the way the United States presents itself as bolder, stronger, and more capable than other states. This masculinity-informed policy-making became obvious during the period of mutual threat exchange between United States President Donald Trump and North Korean Chairman Kim Jong-un, as Carol Cohn excellently describes. Drawing a clear connection between foreign policy and local impact is fundamental. The ways in which gender roles are set out domestically affects how we do policy. And much of foreign policy is taken at face value, and accepted as an objective, unchangeable structure. But in reality, this structure is grounded in a very specific, very subjective understanding of the world. It's difficult to see our own biases even when prioritising it, but doing this work ourselves and expecting it of our leaders is critical to making more helpful and less harmful foreign policy. In order to reach effective long-term equality, we need to shake the structure up, show its biases, and address the underlying inequalities that it perpetuates.

STAIR: One of the principal feminist criticisms of international organizations (IOs), such as the UN, is their state-centrist outlook, which often fails to sufficiently incorporate individual-level considerations. Some claim that this characteristic is unavoidable, as states form these institutions. Do you think there is a way to implement a more people-centred decision-making process within these IOs? What would be the incentives that states have to reform existing IOs?

MC: At the end of the day, states are made up of people. Although state representatives at the UN are there to represent their countries, they are also individuals with their own life experiences, which inform their decisions. Our language is not particularly helpful either as we tend to talk about states as the main actors, and not the individual policy-makers who call the shots. In this process of abstracting who is subject, we often forget that there are humans “behind the curtain,” to use a metaphor from *The Wizard of Oz*.

This is another key insight that feminist foreign policy provides: ensuring that policy-making has a more people-to-people approach. Those in power are still likely to be very privileged, and perhaps may not be as impacted by certain policies as the average citizen would be, and particularly the most vulnerable ones. Often, proposals to do foreign policy better suggest bringing more women to the table, but it’s still important to consider the ways in which even these women have easier access to power than others. A different approach is needed, and the UN can play an important role in implementing a dialogue with local people, for instance by establishing networks of communication, running consultations with those who are affected by a policy, or focusing more Security Council resolutions on this topic. We must get out of our comfort zone and reach out to the people whom diplomacy does not usually take seriously.

These kinds of approaches can be embedded into bureaucratic structure and infrastructure, if the will is there. This is taking place, for instance, with NATO, where the Special Representative for Women Peace and Security, Claire Hutchins, is doing incredible work to prioritise women’s rights and the rights of vulnerable people. Her work is causing a significant shift in NATO’s internal culture and strengthening the importance of the local level in NATO’s decision-making, as well as in their operations. I think that NATO’s experience is perfectly replicable. Whether or not state leaders and staff are willing to change is a totally different conversation.

STAIR: Throughout this interview, you have described feminist foreign policy as people-centred rather than gender-centred. To what extent do you think that the label ‘feminist’ might be limiting or potentially leading to misunderstandings about what its aims are?

MC: There is definitely a large degree of misconception surrounding feminism. Fighting for women’s rights is the foundation of feminism, and due to its historical salience, it tends

to dominate the discourse. Many times we end up conflating women and gender. But contemporary feminism, be it in foreign policy or pop culture, is becoming more and more wide-reaching as we better educate ourselves about what effective and values-driven feminism looks like. Ultimately, if feminism isn't intersectional, then it's not feminism. By only focusing on gender and discounting race, socio-economic factors, nationality, or ability, for example, then the story is incomplete.

Part of our mission at the CFFP consists of advocating for such an intersectional approach and helping people understand that when we talk about feminism, we're not just talking about women, and not even gender: we're talking about race, age, class, sexuality, ethnicity, and many other factors that contribute to marginalisation and keep voices from being heard. This is the true feminist approach.

STAIR: Many post-structuralist theorists have argued that delimiting gender as a dichotomy is not constructive, and that actually, it may do little more than reinforce gender stereotypes or gender hierarchies. Do you think feminist foreign policy contributes to this dichotomized understanding of gender or can it be reconciled with these critiques?

MC: There is an obvious danger in looking at foreign policy through a gender lens that is rooted in male versus female. I find it more helpful to look at masculine and feminine characteristics, which are ascribed to certain gender identities. These traits are used to inform the way we are expected to behave based on our own gender identity, which of course informs life experience and decision making. We also cannot expect certain gendered characteristics from someone just because they are of a certain gender. For example, the notion that female policy-makers would be more peace-oriented than their male colleagues is simply not true... The male/female binary is not the most adequate lens through which to look at any issue, and this is also why at CFFP we try not to focus on gender as the only way to analyse something.

Moreover, as you correctly pointed out, gender is a spectrum. Any conversation focusing on men versus women serves to reinforce these damaging stereotypes. Many people are driven by a variety of factors and expectations which cannot be boiled down to two gendered shades. Feminist foreign policy is a big idea that will make big changes to the status quo, and myself and countless others know that the time is ripe to interrupt foreign policy as usual and turn the institution into something that promotes equality and works for all people, regardless of gender identity.

FEATURE ARTICLE: BRIDGE THE GAP: ADDRESSING SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST MEN AND BOYS IN INTERNATIONAL POLICY

Charu Lata Hogg

As elucidated in the introduction to this issue, sexual- and gender-based violence has received increasing attention in the academic and policy spheres. Nevertheless, our understanding of the phenomena is still limited and international responses are nascent and underdeveloped. In the following feature article, we invited Charu Lata Hogg to discuss a particular type of sexual violence, namely that perpetrated against boys and men. Hogg outlines recent progress in the international recognition of sexual violence perpetrated against men and boys in conflict, and she argues that the UN Security Council's explicit acknowledgment that men and boys can be targets of conflict-related sexual violence is a first and necessary step towards establishing policies that help put an end to such practices. At the same time, a more effective international criminal justice system, along with a firmer and more coherent normative framework, will help ensure that the rights and needs of victims and survivors are met.

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Ms. Hogg has briefed UN member states on the human rights and political situation in Myanmar (Burma), Sri Lanka, Nepal and India at the Human Rights Council in Geneva; the UN Security Council Working

Group on Children and Armed Conflict in New York; and the European Parliament in Brussels. She has conducted in-depth research on sexual violence in Sri Lanka and provided expert evidence to the UK Upper Tribunal Country Guidance case on Sri Lanka in 2013. Ms. Hogg received a Bachelor of Arts in History from Hindu College, University of Delhi, and an MSc in International Relations from the London School of Economics and Political Science.

Introduction

The pervasive nature and appalling consequences of conflict-related sexual violence are the subject of ongoing inquiry and action. There is increasing evidence that men and boys, as well as sexual and gender minorities, are widely impacted and, in some cases, directly targeted, by such violence.¹ Although significantly underreported, conflict-related sexual violence against men and boys is known to have taken place in at least twenty-two countries worldwide during current and recent armed conflicts and/or in the context of forced displacement.

A boy or man who is a victim of sexual- and gender-based violence may be raped; forced to rape family members or fellow detainees; subjected to genital mutilation, forced circumcision, or forced castration; forced to perform sexual acts such as fellatio on their guards or captors; forced to ejaculate on, or perform other sexual acts, with inanimate objects; or subjected to other forms of degrading or humiliating treatment, such as forced nudity.²

The global response to sexual violence against boys and men in situations of conflict and displacement has thus far been inadequate. To date, no United Nations (UN) human rights instrument explicitly focuses on sexual violence against men and boys and very few organizations work exclusively on the issue of sexual violence against men and boys.³ In a 2001 survey of 4076 non-governmental organizations working on rape and other forms of political sexual violence, only 3 percent (or 122 organizations) made any mention of the experiences of male victims in their programmes or informational literature.⁴ Male sexual violence, even when acknowledged, has usually been framed as a form of torture or ill-treatment rather than gender-based violence.⁵ While this may open avenues for accountability and reparations, it fails to recognise the sexual- and gender-based nature of the acts in question or to take account of wider risks to men and boys, and the multiple, often intersecting factors that can contribute to their vulnerability, including ethnicity, religion, political affiliation, sexual orientation or identity, age, and socio-economic status.

Gender stereotyping of men and boys as perpetrators of vio-

lence and not as victims/survivors, taboos around discussing issues of rape and sexual violence against men, as well as generalised stigma and shame around sex all reinforce the silence that surrounds the issue and contribute to the lack of acknowledgement and action. The limited availability of information and awareness about the extent and nature of sexual victimisation of men and boys is a significant contributing factor to the lack of acknowledgment and appropriate action.

Recent Progress

Only in recent years has attention been paid to the issue of male sexual violence in conflict. In July 2012, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees issued *Guidelines on Working with Men and Boy Survivors of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Forced Displacement*,⁶ recognising for the first time that sexual and gender-based violence against men and boys was “a recurrent protection concern in situations of conflict and displacement”⁷ that was “less understood or acknowledged”⁸ compared to violence against women and girls. In May 2012, the United Kingdom (UK) Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) launched the Prevention of Sexual Violence Initiative (PSVI)⁹ to raise awareness, rally global action, and promote international coherence in the fight against impunity from consequences of committing sexual violence in conflict.¹⁰ Although intended primarily to focus on conflict-related sexual violence against women and girls, the PSVI has been a catalyst for action on sexual violence against men and boys. In April 2013, the UK hosted the G8 Meeting of Foreign Ministers, adopting the Declaration on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict, and recognising for the first time made that men and boys are victims of sexual violence in armed conflict: “Ministers underlined the importance of responding to the needs of men and boys who are victims of sexual violence in armed conflict.”¹¹ The G8 Declaration further called for “comprehensive support services to victims, be they women, girls, men or boys.” [emphasis added]¹²

Two months later, in June 2013, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) passed its fifth resolution on sexual violence in armed conflict,¹³ acknowledging the G8 Declaration¹⁴ and recognising for the first time that sexual violence affects men and boys.¹⁵

In July 2013, the Special Representative to the Secretary General on Sexual Violence in Conflict convened a workshop on the issue of sexual and gender-based violence against boys and men in conflict. The Special Representative noted that in at least twenty-five countries, allegations of sexual violence against men and boys were documented, “ranging from anal rape through being co-

erced into committing various sexual acts, to also include forms of genital mutilation.”¹⁶ The UN Special Representative issued twenty-nine recommendations, which included calls for disaggregated data and more evidence-based research on sexual- and gender-based violence against men, as well as increased funding and commitment from the international community to respond to this violence.¹⁷

In September 2013, two thirds of the Member States of the UN General Assembly endorsed the Declaration of Commitment to End Sexual Violence in Conflict,¹⁸ tabled by the UK FCO under the PSVI. The Declaration explicitly recognised that “boys and men are victims’ of sexual violence in conflict.”¹⁹

In June 2014, the United Kingdom hosted the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict as part of the PSVI,²⁰ bringing together over 1,000 delegates (state representatives, academics, faith leaders, youth organizations, international non-profit organizations (INGOs) and civil society organizations) from 120 countries to tackle the culture of impunity surrounding the use of rape as a weapon of war, and to change global attitudes to these crimes.²¹ During the Summit, the PSVI launched the International Protocol on the Documentation and Investigation of Sexual Violence in Conflict, the first comprehensive guide documenting and investigating allegations of sexual violence in conflict.²²

Subsequently, the PSVI also supported the Institute of International Criminal Investigations (ICII) in developing similar guidelines²³ to focus explicitly on accountability for conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence against boys and men. In June 2014, the ICII convened a three-day long expert group meeting to draft guidelines that complement existing investigation frameworks and practices, focusing on conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence against women and girls or children.²⁴ The Guidelines for Investigating Conflict-Related Sexual and Gender-based Violence against Men and Boys were released on 29 February 2016.²⁵

Need to Develop the Normative Framework

Recent Security Council Resolutions (SCR) have begun to recognise that sexual violence in armed conflict and post-conflict situations affects men and boys, and that male survivors should

benefit from relief and recovery programmes."^a However, detailed, practical measures for implementation or enforcement have focused primarily on women and children, and have not, thus far, adequately addressed the need to prevent and respond to conflict-related sexual violence against men.

Little attention has been paid to sexual violence against men and boys by the UN General Assembly (UNGA) to date, and to the extent that it has addressed sexual violence in its resolutions, it has done so with reference only to women and children. In 2016, the UNSC affirmed for the first time a resolution addressing trafficking of persons (UNSCR 2331). It observed that victims of acts of sexual violence committed by terrorist groups should be classified as victims of terrorism and be eligible for official support, recognition, and redress. It also states and that survivors, including men and boys, should benefit from relief and recovery programmes. However, relevant UNSC thematic and country resolutions, while sometimes acknowledging that men and boys, as well as sexual and gender minorities, are among the victims of sexual violence, have not yet called for specific actions to address the issue. Likewise, reports by the UN Secretary General and his Special Representatives (SRSG) on sexual violence in conflict (SVC) and on children and armed conflict (CAAC) have recognised the problem and documented cases in some countries, but their work under these mandates remains focused primarily on women and girls.

The UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC), its special procedures, and human rights treaty monitoring bodies have occasionally referenced sexual violence against men and boys, but the issue is not yet squarely on the agendas of human rights mechanisms. For example, Universal Periodic Review (UPR) recommendations for measures to prevent and respond to sexual violence in conflict-affected countries focus on women and girls/children and to some extent on gender minorities, but do not address sexual violence against men.^b Likewise, the Human Rights Committee, the Committee against Torture, and the Committee on the Rights of the Child have made references to sexual violence against men and/or boys and/or gender minorities, but the issue is not yet systematically addressed in their concluding observations on state party reports on implementation of human rights treaties.

a SCR 2106 (2013) noted "... sexual violence in armed conflict and post-conflict situations disproportionately affects women and girls..., while also affecting men and boys...", and SCR 231 (2016) recognised that "...men and boys who may have been victims of sexual violence in conflict, including when associated with trafficking in carpersons in armed conflict" should benefit from relief and recovery programmes

b Although many recommendations are gender-neutral, the reports frame sexual violence as perpetrated against women and girls or women and children.

This limited international acknowledgment and action both reinforces and is echoed in a lack of action at the national level. In many countries, men and boys are not legally protected against rape and other forms of sexual violence, and national strategies, action plans, and other policies aimed at tackling sexual violence often fail to take account of sexual violence against men. Key stakeholders, including government, law enforcement agencies, and the judiciary frequently lack knowledge of and expertise on sexual violence against men and boys.

Limited Monitoring and Documentation

Research conducted by All Survivors Project reveals a lack of systematic monitoring of sexual violence against men and boys. Its research in the Central African Republic (CAR) found that human rights experts were not sufficiently proactive in investigating incidents involving men and boys because humanitarian workers and other service providers were often too poorly equipped to identify and respond to such violations. Even where data was gathered, it was not shared among relevant stakeholders, which undermined the possibility of establishing the scope and nature of the problem and thereby responding appropriately to it.²⁶

Existing mechanisms, including the Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting Arrangements (MARA) and the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) on grave violations of children's rights in situations of armed conflict, have documented incidents of sexual violence against men and boys. However, they do not adequately capture trends and patterns needed to inform responses in the situations in which they operate. UN peacekeeping missions are not always sufficiently attuned to the possibility that sexual violence can affect men and boys as well as women and girls.²⁷

More timely, reliable information about the scope, nature, and patterns of sexual violence against men and boys is required to better understand the risks, vulnerabilities, and impacts of these crimes. Such information should be used to tailor prevention initiatives, sensitisation campaigns, treatment protocols, and services for survivors. Greater coordination among humanitarian and human rights, gender and child protection stakeholders, including data sharing where safe and appropriate, is also required to improve responses to all survivors of sexual violence, including men and boys.

Challenging Impunity and Supporting Access to Justice

There have been limited, positive developments in recent years in addressing accountability for sexual violence against men and boys.

Commissions of inquiry and other UN-established investigative bodies are increasingly addressing the issue in their work.²⁸ Prosecutions of individuals for acts of sexual violence against men and boys by the International Criminal Court (ICC), the International Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), and Extraordinary Chambers of the Court of Cambodia (ECCC) have also been influential in broadening acknowledgement and understanding of the issue. Nevertheless, prosecutions of individuals responsible for conflict-related sexual violence are still rare, and all the more so for cases involving men and boys. To date, only a handful of cases involving sexual violence against men and boys have been prosecuted in international or hybrid tribunals. Apart from trials in the domestic courts in Bosnia and Herzegovina, little information exists about whether acts of conflict-related sexual violence against men and boys have been prosecuted at a national level.

There are multiple reasons for this state of effective impunity. In many countries, national laws contain provisions or procedures which promote *de facto* impunity and prevent male victims of conflict-related sexual violence from accessing justice. In 62 jurisdictions, male rape is not criminalised under domestic law²⁹ and in over 70 countries, same-sex sexual conduct is criminalised, which exposes survivors to prosecution and inhibits reporting.³⁰ Failure to systematically include men and boys in sexual violence human rights monitoring and investigation processes can also contribute to impunity for perpetrators and a lack of remedies for victims and survivors.

Additionally, research by ASP points to other barriers, including lack of awareness of the issue and of specialised expertise needed to address it in judicial institutions; inadequate protection for victims and witnesses; and lack of legal support necessary to encourage and facilitate the safe participation of victims/survivors in judicial processes.³¹

Likewise, sexual violence against men and boys has generally not featured prominently in non-judicial transitional justice processes, including truth commissions, reparations programmes, and institutional reform processes. With few exceptions, transitional justice processes have not put in place specific procedures to encourage and support the participation of male survivors of sexual violence or to challenge the silence, invisibility, and exclusion surrounding male experiences of sexual violence.

Funding

The 2018 Annual Report of the UN Secretary General on conflict-related sexual violence highlighted continued funding shortfalls for programming designed to combat sexual and gender-based violence,

and for sexual and reproductive healthcare in conflict-affected settings. It called for this to be addressed and for sustained and regular funding for the work of the UN Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict and the United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict network.³²

Given the challenges involved in securing funds for existing programmes on gender-based and sexual violence against women and girls, there is naturally concern that tackling the problem of conflict-related sexual violence against men and boys could take valuable resources away from this important work. It is therefore critical that both the reality and the perception of such a trade-off be avoided, so as not to pit male and female survivors against one another needlessly, distracting from the imperative to address this problem for all. An ongoing lack of funding not only negatively impacts the availability of services to female survivors, but it is also used to explain the lack of programmes providing support to men and boy survivors: humanitarian stakeholders interviewed by All Survivors Project in CAR, Syria, and Turkey consistently cited funding as a fundamental obstacle to addressing sexual violence against men and boys.

Therefore, in addition to covering existing funding gaps, there is an urgent need for UN Member states and other donors to provide new, additional funding to enable humanitarian stakeholders to address sexual violence against men and boys as a core part of their work, without diverting resources from much-needed programmes for women and girls. Equally vital is the need for long-term funding, so that programmes can address the complex and often long-lasting medical, psychosocial, and other needs of survivors, particularly survivors of sexual torture, who require in-depth, tailored, and sustained support for their rehabilitation.

Conclusion

The culture of deep silence and denial which surrounds male victimhood is changing, and an acknowledgment of sexual violence against men and boys is a crucial first step in initiating much-needed changes in the normative framework. Explicit acknowledgment by the UNSC that men and boys can be the targets of conflict-related sexual violence is a first and necessary step towards triggering concerted policy action to end the practise. In all this, state and non-state actors (NGOs) need to ensure that survivors remain at the centre of policy implementation, therefore informing responses and policy discussions, as well as ensuring that all interventions are appropriately context-specific.

Urgent action is needed to protect men and boys in situations of armed conflict and forced displacement from the risk of sexual vio-

lence; it will also put in place measures, services, and programmes to ensure the rights and needs of victims and survivors are met.

Notes

1 For example, UN Human Rights Council-mandated investigations into allegations of international law in Sri Lanka between February 2002 and November 2011 found that men were as likely as women to be the victims of sexual violence by the security forces. See Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) Investigation on Sri Lanka, UN Doc. A/HRC/30/CRP.2(2015), available from undocs.org/A/HCR/CRP.2. Investigations by the International Independent Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic have found that torture, including sexualised torture, has been used against thousands of people in detention including men and boys as young as 11 years old, at a level that amounts to war crimes and crimes against humanity; see, for example, Out of Sight Out of Mind: Deaths in Detention in the Syrian Arab Republic, UN Doc. A/HRC/31/CRP.1 (2016), and "I lost my dignity": Sexual and gender-based violence in the Syrian Arab Republic, Conference room paper, UN Doc. A/HCR/37/CRP (2018); in Afghanistan, 82 cases of rape or other forms of sexual violence against boys were documented by United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) in 2017 including verified or credible allegations of incidents relating to the practice of bacha bazi (a practice involving the sexual abuse and enslavement of boys by men in positions of power) see Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict, UN Doc. A/72/865-S/2018/465 (2018). During research in Central African Republic (CAR) in 2017, All Survivors Project (ASP) recorded information on a possible 51 incidents of sexual violence against men and boys by non-state groups in two prefectures during 2017 and was informed by a humanitarian organisation that 121 males survivors of conflict-related sexual violence had been received at their facilities in another prefecture during 2017, see ASP, "I don't know who can help": Men and boys facing sexual violence in Central African Republic, February 2018.

2 United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, 'Report of the Workshop on Sexual Violence against Men and Boys in Conflict Situations,' 25-26 July 2013, accessed at: <http://ifls.osgoode.yorku.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Report-of-Workshop-on-Sexual-Violence-against-Men-and-Boys-Final.pdf>, p 10 ('SRSG 2013')

3 Lara Stemple, "Male Rape and Human Rights," 60 Hastings Law Journal 605, 2009, p 612 (Lara Stemple 2009).

4 Augusta Del Zotto & Adam Jones, 'Male-on-Male Sexual Violence in Wartime: Human Rights' Last Taboo?' Presented at Annual Convention of the International Studies Association (ISA), New Orleans, LA, 23-27 March 2002, (unpublished paper) accessed at: <http://adamjones.freesevers.com/malerape.htm> (Del Zotto 2002).

5 M. Loncar, N. Henigberg, P. Hrabac. Mental Health Consequences in Men Exposed to Sexual Abuse During the War in Croatia and Bosnia. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*. 24: 2009; 191-203.

6 United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Guidelines on Working with Men and Boy Survivors of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Forced Displacement, Need to Know Guidance 4, July 2012, accessed at: <http://www.refworld.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/rwmain?docid=5006aa262>

7 Ibid, 3.

8 Ibid.

9 Foreign & Commonwealth Office, 'Foreign Secretary announces UK initiative on preventing sexual violence in conflict,' 29 May 2012, accessed at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/foreign-secretary-announces-uk-initiative-on-preventing-sexual-violence-in-conflict>

10 Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 'Sexual violence in conflict,' May 2012, accessed at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/sexual-violence-in-conflict>

11 Foreign & Commonwealth Office, G8UK, 'Declaration on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict,' adopted in London on 11 April 2013, accessed at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/185008/G8_PSVI_Declaration_-_FINAL.pdf para 3.

12 Ibid, para 5.

13 The United Nations Security Council passed five resolutions relating to sexual violence in conflict between 2000 and 2013: UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000), 31 October 2000, UN Doc. S/RES/1325 (2000); UN Security Council Resolution 1820 (2008), 19 June 2008, UN Doc. S/RES/1820 (2008); UN Security Council Resolution 1888 (2009), 30 September 2009, UN Doc. S/RES/1888 (2009); UN Security Council Resolution 1960 (2010), 16 December 2010, UN Doc. S/RES/1960 (2010); UN Security Council Resolution 2106 (2013), 24 June 2013, UN Doc. S/RES/2106 (2013).

14 "Recognizing the Declaration on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict adopted by G8 foreign ministers in London on 11 April 2013, and the commitments it makes in this regard," opening paragraph 3, UN Security Council Resolution 2106 (2013).

15 "Noting with concern that sexual violence in armed conflict and post-conflict situations disproportionately affects women and girls, as well as groups that are particularly vulnerable or may be specifically targeted, while also affecting men and boys and those secondarily traumatized as forced witnesses of sexual violence against family members [emphasis added]." Opening paragraph 6, UN Security Council Resolution 2106 (2013).

16 Office of the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, "Report of Workshop: Sexual Violence against Men and Boys in Conflict Situations," UN Workshop on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence against Men & Boys, 25-26 July 2013: Executive Summary, 5 December 2013, accessed at: <http://ifls.osgoode.yorku.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Exec-Summary-Report-of-Workshop-on-SV-against-Men-and-Boys.pdf>, p 2; see also Office of the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, "Report of Workshop on Sexual Violence against Men and Boys in Conflict Situations," New York, 25-26 July 2013, 5 December 2013, accessed at: <http://ifls.osgoode.yorku.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Report-of-Workshop-on-Sexual-Violence-against-Men-and-Boys-Final.pdf>

17 Ibid.

18 "The Declaration contains a set of practical and political commitments to end the use of rape and sexual violence as a weapon of war, which terrorises and destroys communities during conflict. The Declaration sends an important message to the victims of these crimes that the international community has not forgotten them, and to the perpetrators of rape that they will be held to account," Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Right Honorable William Hague, "The Declaration of Commitment to End Sexual Violence," 24 September 2013, United Kingdom, accessed at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/113-countries-pledge-action-to-end-sexual-violence-in-conflict-timetoact>

19 Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Right Honorable William Hague, "A Declaration of Commitment to End Sexual Violence," September 2013, United Kingdom, accessed at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/summit-report-the-global-summit-to-end-sexual-violence-in-conflict-june-2014> https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/274724/A_DECLARATION_OF_COMMITMENT_TO_END_SEXUAL_VIOLENCE_IN_CONFLICT.pdf

20 Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict Report published," 10 December 2014, United Kingdom, accessed at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/global-summit-to-end-sexual-violence-in-conflict-report-published>; see also Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict," June 2014, accessed at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/sexual-violence-in-conflict>

21 "Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict," June 2014, accessed at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/sexual-violence-in-conflict>

22 Foreign and Commonwealth Office, International Protocol on the Documentation and Investigation of Sexual Violence in Conflict: Basic Standards of Best Practice on the Documentation of Sexual Violence as a Crime under International Law, Prevention of Sexual Violence Initiative, First Edition, June 2014, accessed at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/319054/PSVI_protocol_web.pdf

23 Institute for International Criminal Investigations, "Guidelines for investigating conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence against men and boys," News, 2016, accessed at: <http://www.iici.info/news-events>

24 Ibid.

25 Institute for International Criminal Investigations, "Guidelines for investigating conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence against men and boys," 29 February 2016, the Hague, accessed at: http://www.iici.info/uploads/docs/160229_IICI-InvestigationGuidelines_ConflictRelatedSGBVagainstMenBoys.pdf, p 17.

26 ASP, "I don't know who can help': Men and boys facing sexual violence in Central African Republic," February 2018.

27 For example, in the course of its research for its 2018 report on CAR, whereas the ASP recorded information on a possible 51 incidents of sexual violence against men and boys by non-state groups in two prefectures during 2017 and was informed of 121 cases (see footnote 3), United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission (MINUSCA) verified just two cases of conflict-related sexual violence against

men or boys between mid-2015 and mid-2017, although has since documented others. Similarly, many informants interviewed by ASP in 2018 for its research on Syria believed that sexual violence against men and boys is more prevalent than has so far been documented and that the vulnerabilities of men and boys there is insufficiently understood: 60% of informants were able to relate specific incidents of sexual violence against men and boys that had taken place in the context of armed conflict in Syria. See ASP, “‘Destroyed from within’: Sexual violence against men and boys in Syria and Turkey,” September 2018.

28 For example, the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic; the Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan; Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights Investigation on Sri Lanka; and the Group of Independent Eminent International and Regional Experts on Yemen.

29 See, for instance, Sarah Solangon and Preeti Patel, “Sexual violence against men in countries affected by armed conflict,” *Conflict, Security & Development*, Vol. 12, No. 4 (2012): 417–442.

30 See “Report of the Secretary General on conflict related sexual violence,” UN.Doc, S/2016/361 (2016) and “UN Factsheet: Free and Equal for LGBT Equality”, available from [www.unfe.org/system/unfe-43-UN_Fact_Sheets_-_FINAL_-_Criminalization_\(1\).pdf](http://www.unfe.org/system/unfe-43-UN_Fact_Sheets_-_FINAL_-_Criminalization_(1).pdf).

31 See ASP, *Legacies and Lessons: Sexual violence against men and boys in Sri Lanka and Bosnia & Herzegovina*, May 2017; “I don’t know who can help”: Men and boys facing sexual violence in Central African Republic, February 2018; and “Destroyed from within”: Sexual violence against men and boys in Syria and Turkey, September 2018.

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THEME SECTION

WAR AND THE MORALITY OF RISK

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Abstract

Modern just war theory presents war as a rule-governed activity, regulated by two kinds of moral rules: jus ad bellum (just resort to war) and jus in bello (just conduct of war). This paper addresses to what extent, if any, soldiers are required to risk their lives in order to minimize the harm done to enemy civilians in a war that is fought justly. This problem pertains to the jus in bello criterion of discrimination, which requires differentiating enemy non-combatants (civilians) from enemy combatants (soldiers) who alone are legitimate targets of military attack. My central claim is that a morality of risk, as developed by Michael Walzer, overcomes the defects of the doctrine of double effect, the standard moral principle for discussing discrimination, while preserving its insights. The task is to highlight the significance of the morality of risk, understood as a peculiar morality of war zones that cannot be reduced to a general morality of human conduct. This morality of risk requires soldiers to take additional risks on themselves to save enemy civilians.

The Moral Basis of Discrimination in Just War Theory

Just war theory is a discourse of thinking about war, which originates in the Judeo-Christian tradition. Its cardinal premise is that waging war constitutes a rule-governed activity.¹ Rules here refer to limits on conduct which are not strategic or power-related but normative; these constitute permissions. Just war thinkers reject the idea that in war, as in love, all is fair.² A just war is necessarily a limited war, in which belligerents are constrained by rules of two kinds: jus ad bellum (regulating the resort to war) and jus in bello (regulating the conduct of war).³ Ideally, a just war is initiated on just grounds, such as self-defence, and conducted by just means, without committing atrocities or wanton violence. The idea that wars ought to have a just cause descends from medieval just war theory, but that they also must be waged by just means is of a more recent pedigree.⁴

The *ad bellum* set of rules comprises just cause, right intention, right authority, last resort, reasonable prospect of success, and

Silviya Lechner, "War and the Morality of Risk," *St Antony's International Review* 14, no. 2 (2019): 37-56.

proportionality. The most notable one is just cause. In the Middle Ages, just cause included considerations of spreading the faith, punishing wrongdoing, or reclaiming property previously lost to an aggressor.⁵ The question of whether or not such causes exist was to be settled by the consciences of private individuals.⁶ Nowadays, just war regulates the conduct of hostilities between public authorities, states, and their agents (e.g., political leaders, soldiers, military commanders). Under the current United Nations Charter, a state has a just cause if it acts in self-defence against an aggressor state and, since the 1990s, if it participates in a humanitarian military intervention abroad.⁷ *Ad bellum* rules, such as right authority and right intention, are designed to prevent unauthorized wars, as well as wars pursued for ends other than a just cause, such as for economic profit. Additional rules require that military action be undertaken only as a last resort, and only if there is a reasonable chance of success. The *ad bellum* criterion of proportionality specifies that on balance, the harm brought about by a prospective war should not exceed the good.⁸ In turn, the *in bello* set of rules includes proportionality and discrimination. It is notable that *ad bellum* proportionality (at the macro level of war as a whole) is distinct from *in bello* proportionality (at the micro level of individual acts of war).⁹ The latter stipulates that particular acts of self-defence must be proportionate to the injury caused by an attacker. Discrimination, known as a principle of non-combatant immunity, requires those waging war to discriminate between enemy combatants and enemy non-combatants and prohibits intentionally harming or killing the latter. Although all these principles are reflected in the contemporary laws of war, the ensuing discussion is about the morality of war.¹⁰

This paper offers a re-examination of the doctrine of double effect, which is the standard moral principle that justifies the exception against killing non-combatants built into the rule of discrimination.¹¹ It argues that this doctrine is too permissive because it allows soldiers to harm civilians in war zones, provided the harm is foreseen but unintentional. What we might term the “morality of risk,” as developed by Walzer in *Just and Unjust Wars*, is a more adequate moral basis for tackling the problem of avoiding civilian harm.¹² With its publication in 1977, Walzer’s book established the field of contemporary just war theory and has stimulated debates on the ethics of war ever since.¹³ One philosophically important problem that has escaped the attention of commentators is Walzer’s argument for the morality of risk in war.¹⁴ My strategy is to defend this argument by reconstructing it and by fleshing out the relation between the general moral principles and the specific moral principles that structure our

thinking about war. Walzer's position, known as "traditionalism" in the just war literature, is that while these two sets of principles are closely connected, the latter cannot be reduced to the former because war constitutes a distinctive domain of the moral world. Critics of traditionalism, or "revisionists," such as Jeff McMahan and David Rodin, view the morality of war as reducible to general moral principles of individual morality, central among which is self-defence.¹⁵ This principle holds that in certain conditions a person may, without wrongdoing, kill an assailant in self-defence. Revisionists endorse, and traditionalists reject, the procedure of explaining interstate war using the same general principles drawn from individual level morality.¹⁶ My reading supports the traditionalist case without attempting to refute revisionism largely because this -ism is marked by internal complexity, but also because whenever revisionists have accounted for risk, it has been defined narrowly, as an epistemic category of probability estimation.¹⁷ In sharp contrast, Walzer treats risk as a standard of practical deliberation that enjoins combatants to exercise *due care* in their treatment of non-combatants in war zones. But since he does not tell us much about the relation between the morality of risk, as a general moral principle that deliberators may use in various contexts, and the morality of risk in *warfare*, one of my aims is to explicate this relation and show its philosophical significance.

Concretely, my thesis is twofold. First, that as a general moral principle, the morality of risk *supersedes* the doctrine of double effect without cancelling it out.¹⁸ Second, that Walzer's own emphasis is on demonstrating that the morality of risk fares better than double effect as a special principle elucidating the distinctiveness of the morality of war. War is not just a realm of interaction between human beings qua human beings; it is a special realm of interaction between states and their armies. To understand Walzer's moral argument for risk in warfare, therefore, it is requisite to attend to the distinctions between the zone of war and the zone of peace; between combatants and non-combatants; and between unintentional harm and active risk-taking.

Two Moral Principles: Double Effect or Risk-Taking?

The first thesis advanced here is that the morality of risk retains the positive aspects of the doctrine of double effect while overcoming its shortcomings. This doctrine, like just war theory itself, descends from medieval Catholic casuistry.¹⁹ Its purview is moral discourse.

The doctrine of double effect embodies a moral principle that

connects intentions to outcomes.²⁰ It stipulates that an action whose end is good may permissibly bring about harm as an unintended effect.²¹ The harm should be unintentional, and it should not serve as a means to the intended end. Under the principle of double effect, it is permissible to harm civilians if this harm is the foreseen but unintended side effect of an attack on military targets. If a munitions plant is bombed, nearby civilians may be injured or killed. Their killing is described as *collateral damage*, the term “collateral” indicating that the damage is unintended; it is the unfortunate effect of an intentional attack on military targets that is just or permissible. The issue here is not the infliction of harm per se, but the permissibility of targeting in war: legitimate targets include enemy combatants as well as the military installations and infrastructure they use, whereas civilians (non-combatants) are illegitimate targets who enjoy non-combatant immunity.²²

The category of collateral damage has been regarded as too lax. As Thomas Hurka and Henry Shue point out, the fact that certain harm is unintended, as collateral damage is, is not sufficient to justify it.²³ The problem, in their view, is the tendency of just war theorists to interpret the general doctrine of double effect, which distinguishes intentional acts from unintended effects, by tying it to a single just war criterion: the rule of discrimination, which identifies civilians as a class exempt from intentional harm. For Hurka and Shue, an additional rule of proportionality must be invoked to ensure that the harm brought about by the intended action and its unintended consequences is not disproportionate to the good end.²⁴ Killing thousands of enemy civilians to achieve a trivial military objective cannot be justified, but it may be tragically necessary if the outcome of the whole war is at stake.

Walzer, too, worries that the language of collateral damage is excessively permissive. His position is more radical than that of Hurka and Shue because he traces the problem of allowing civilians to be easily harmed in warfare to a tension in the doctrine of double effect itself. He expounds the doctrine in the following way:

1. The act is good in itself or at least indifferent, which means, for our purposes, that it is a legitimate act of war;
2. The direct effect is morally acceptable – the destruction of military supplies, for example, or the killing of enemy soldiers;
3. The intention of the actor is good, that is, he aims only at the acceptable effect; the evil effect is not one of his ends, nor is it a means to his ends;
4. The good effect is sufficiently good to compensate for the evil effect; it must be justifiable under [Henry] Sidgwick’s proportion-

For Walzer, the third criterion, intention, requires correction. As construed within the doctrine of double effect, an intentional act has two effects: a direct (morally acceptable) effect and an indirect effect which is “evil.”²⁶ The indirect, negative effect has to be accepted as the regrettable but unavoidable consequence of a positive action that is morally justified. But what good is it, Walzer asks, to tell the victims who were killed—were speaking to the dead possible—that their deaths were foreseen but unintended?²⁷ The category of unintended effect, entailed by the principle of double effect, is morally problematic. Thomas Nagel makes a similar point in his article “War and Massacre.”²⁸ He categorizes the principle of double effect as an element within an “absolutist” morality, exemplified by the Decalogue or Immanuel Kant’s moral theory:

[W]hat absolutism forbids is doing certain things to people, rather than bringing about certain results. [...] Catholic moral theology seeks to make precise this distinction in a doctrine known as the law of double effect, which asserts that there is a morally relevant distinction between bringing about the death of an innocent person deliberately, either as an end in itself or as a means, and bringing it about as a side effect of something else one does deliberately. In the latter case, even if the outcome is foreseen, it is not murder and does not fall under the absolute prohibition, though of course it may still be wrong for other reasons (reasons of utility, for example).²⁹

For Nagel, the principle of double effect reflects a fundamental moral distinction between doing and allowing, or between killing and letting die. Thus, bombing a village where guerrillas are hiding amounts to killing the civilians who live there, whereas a doctor who administers the only available medicine to one of two critically ill patients, the second of whom dies as a result of non-treatment, does not kill, but only lets the latter die.³⁰ The intuition here is that either we do something as active agents (we kill somebody) in control of the situation, or something happens uncontrollably (we let someone die) as a result of what we do. Hence, we are morally responsible for causing harm through our deliberate actions, but not for the unintended consequences of deliberate actions. Curiously, Nagel interprets the village case as an example of the deliberate killing of innocent people, which constitutes the moral wrong of massacre, but for many this oft-discussed case exempli-

fies the non-deliberate killing of the innocent.³² This is also how Walzer sees matters. He argues that not intending to harm the innocent is not enough; it is necessary to intend not to harm them.³³

As the contradictory descriptions of the village case indicate, it seems hard to find a clear-cut criterion that separates intended acts from their unintended effects. Yet, there is a coherent way to expound the difference between doing and allowing. Doing, as Philippa Foot remarks, implies active agency, an agent as an originator of a causal sequence of events that produce certain effects, whereas allowing points to a sequence of events that is already underway and where an “agent who could stop or prevent it does not do so, and therefore allows it to go on.”³⁴ For philosophers like Nagel and Foot, the doing/allowing distinction maps onto the intended action/unintended effect distinction, the former being the more basic one; this premise underlines my interpretation of Walzer

On my reconstructive reading, Walzer can be said to take issue with the allowing side of the doing/allowing distinction and not merely with the unintended effect side of the intentional action/unintended effect distinction. Instead of allowing civilians to die (or, what comes to roughly the same thing, instead of presenting their deaths as collateral damage that proceeds from good intentions), he claims, it is morally necessary to prevent their deaths in the first place.³⁵ This is a proposal for a morality of risk in warfare, condensed in the following thesis: to present non-combatants from being killed, soldiers must take additional risk *on themselves* (the qualifier “additional” is notable because war is an inherently risky affair).³⁶ Initially, Walzer states the thesis as a prescription for soldiers to seek to “minimize [the evil involved] by accepting costs to themselves.”³⁷ But this formulation is incomplete. He immediately provides a more illuminating formulation in terms of a “positive commitment to sav[ing] civilian lives.”³⁸ Moreover, “if saving civilian lives means risking soldier’s lives, *the risk* must be accepted.”³⁹ An illustration of the principle of risk-taking is found in the memoir of Frank Richards, a rank-and-file soldier in World War I.⁴⁰ Richards and his fellows had to bomb dug-out cellars on French territory, aware that French civilians may have been hiding there. By shouting before throwing a bomb down the cellar, they were able to warn any civilians of the coming danger. But this practice was risky, as it might have brought German troops out, guns blazing. The converse option of using explosives without prior warning would have been safer for the bombers, but it would have certainly harmed more civilians. Decreasing the risk to civilians required increasing the risk to soldiers.

The significance of the morality of risk is that it criticizes the

stance of moral passivity that characterizes the doctrine of double effect with respect to the indirect, “evil” effect. This doctrine assumes that one positive action together with its projected positive effect takes place (say, one bomb destroys a terrorist training camp) and is followed by a negative effect (civilians held hostage by the terrorists die in the process), but that we can only sit and watch how this unintended, “evil” result unfolds. For Walzer, this is dissatisfactory. Rather than *allow* a certain negative effect (the killing of civilians) to happen, we should *do* something (incur additional risks) to minimize or prevent the effect from occurring. This is not a suggestion to discard the doing/allowing distinction but rather to reformulate it as a doing/preventing distinction. That is, we perform an action (bomb a terrorist camp) and, in performing it, seek to prevent a foreseen adverse effect (the killing of hostages) by assuming certain risks (enter the camp to find the hostages).

Prevention supposes an active intervention by an agent in a causal chain of events which otherwise would continue to unfold, culminating into some foreseeable harm, as suggested by Foot. Risk-taking is equally an active moral stance, since to risk is to *act* (and not merely to *observe* what is going on), by estimating probabilities of possible harm that may befall one. To return to the example of the terrorist camp: an air raid would be the safest strategy to obliterate the camp, but bombs, especially when released from high altitudes, cannot properly discriminate between legitimate and illegitimate targets. A risky alternative is would be to dispatch a commando unit on the ground. Ground forces are better positioned to discriminate between terrorists and hostages, but they can also be more easily killed by terrorist counter-fire. Walzer warns that military strategists and politicians in the West should stop idolizing airpower. For the combatants, a ground operation is riskier than an air operation, but it is the former, not the latter, which is conducive to saving the most civilian lives.⁴²

So far, this is a rough sketch of the morality of risk as Walzer understands it. A central aspect of Walzer’s argument is that the morality of risk is a morality of war zones. Before its evaluation in the final section, an interlude will clarify the idea of risk as a general moral principle separate from considerations of warfare.

The Moral Right to Impose Risk on Others

Walzer’s morality of risk is an adaptation of Charles Fried’s account of risk imposition in tort law.⁴³ Walzer compares the unintended effects of action, such as the accidental killing of civilians in war, to cases of negligence in tort. Tort law is the “law

of non-criminal wrongs” where in cases of fault the injured party has a right to demand compensation for damages from, but not the punishment of, the responsible party.⁴⁴ For Fried, negligence is based on the idea that “it is wrong to act without giving *sufficient care* to the *safety* of others.”⁴⁵ Stated in the language of risk, it is morally wrong to impose unreasonable risk on others (this moral wrong is recognized in law). The degree of wrongness depends on whether said others impose equivalent risks in return, as well as on the background standards of reasonableness.⁴⁶ Fried’s argument for risk will be outlined, with a focus on questions of risk equivalence and reasonableness.

Fried begins by noting that any action of the individual, and, analogously, any interaction between multiple individuals, involves a certain amount of risk.⁴⁷ To this correspond the ideas of personal risk (where the individual accepts certain risks in order to realise certain desirable ends) and interpersonal risk, where multiple agents impose risks on each other.⁴⁸ Fried is interested in the risk of death, where death is a reminder that we have a finite budget of resources that we shall “use up” in the course of our lives. Thus, “one might say that just as it is rational to use up our lives, so it is moral to use up each other’s lives. The question is, on what basis do we use each other’s lives?”⁴⁹ Stated differently, life is short, and we have to make choices about what ends to pursue given our limited resources. But the realisation of our ends will affect other individuals by imposing risks on them. The moral problem is, what entitles *us* to expose *them* to risk in the pursuit of our ends? One part of the answer lies in Kant’s principle of equal right. It states that “a person is entitled to the fullest amount of freedom compatible with a like freedom for all other persons according to general laws.”⁵⁰ Hence, it would be morally wrong to impose risks on others while denying them this same right with respect to oneself.

Interpersonal risks cannot be eliminated, but they can be managed via what Fried terms a *risk pool*.⁵¹ If two agents, Adam and Betty, agree to impose risk on each other—or pool together the reciprocal risks their interaction entails—both remain free to engage in a self-selected activity while paying a price for this freedom, which entails accepting an amount of risk that stems from the risky activity of the other party.⁵² By driving a car on the public road, Adam imposes a risk on Betty, since there is a chance that his car may run her over, while Betty imposes a reciprocal risk on Adam by riding a bicycle, since they may collide.^a If Adam and Betty strive for absolute safety, they must do nothing. But if they intend to act in the world (e.g., drive cars or ride bicycles), they

a The examples used in this section are mine, not Fried’s.

have to accept certain risks.

The moral problem arises because we impose risks on others through our own actions. Kant's principle of equal right regulates risk imposition in cases where the ends of one agent affect those of others. But certain ends (e.g., trade or public security) cannot be realised without mutual coordination or cooperation within a group of agents. Here, the moral ground of risk imposition is not the bedrock principle of equal right but a moral principle of fairness applying to schemes of social cooperation.⁵³ For Fried, the pooling of risk, like the pooling of resources in a cooperative enterprise, entitles the individual participant to no more than a fair share of the common pool.⁵⁴ The implication is that each area of human interaction, including warfare, involves an average benchmark level of risk for its participants, meaning that the morally responsible individual should not act in ways that increase this risk above the benchmark.⁵⁵

This leads us to consider the central component of negligence: the concept of *due care*, measured against a standard of reasonableness. A person who violates the principle of due care acts negligently ("carelessly") by inadvertently imposing an unreasonable amount of risk on others. Boarding a civil plane with toxic materials in one's bag is an act of negligence. The concept of reasonableness is notoriously vague, but we still have an intuitive grasp of what counts as a reasonable amount of risk in a given situation. If a team of scientists carry toxic liquids aboard a plane equipped for on each other. The presumption is that the risk of spillage, as a probability estimate, is known in advance, and that the scientists have protective suits and equipment to deal with the risk should it materialize. We can tell that the overall risk of death in this case is higher than in the civil plane case (when its risk benchmark is calculated without including the dangerous passenger) although it is impossible to assign precise numeric values.

Walzer extends Fried's account of interpersonal risk of death, as a moral principle, to the context of war. For Walzer, the morality of risk is, characteristically, a morality of war. This view rests on the premise that "war is properly a war of armies, a combat between combatants, from which the civilian population should be shielded."⁵⁷ To complete the analysis of Walzer's thesis for risk, we have to distinguish the zone of war from the zone of peace, as well as the different risk relations that obtain between soldiers, on one side, and between soldiers and civilians, on the other.

The zone of war and the zone of peace

We begin by considering the differentia of the zone of peace. For Walzer, peace is not a cessation of hostilities, but “peace with rights,” a term describing the lawful condition inside a civil state.⁵⁸ Inside the state, police are present to ensure that citizens are exposed to a low risk of death (by other citizens). In international relations, peace in the society of states involves police work that is decentralized and carried out by the members of international society themselves. When war breaks out, states may cooperate in the sense of agreeing to follow common rules (say, the rules of just war), but this form of international cooperation is “thin,” as it does not generate a common social surplus to be distributed among the parties.

Because human casualties and destruction are part of the phenomenology of war, its direct participants, the combatants, and, occasionally, its indirect participants, the non-combatants, are exposed to a relatively high risk of death. While we cannot quantify this risk, it is intuitively clear that the benchmark level of risk of death incurred by a given individual in the zone of war is *overall* higher than the corresponding benchmark level of risk in the zone of peace (inside the civil state).⁵⁹ The difference in risk averages across these two domains can be understood on the analogy of taking a walk in Central Park at night (a risky act since, due to the absence of police, one may be assaulted or killed) compared to a city walk on a bright day (a less risky act, assuming that police are actively at work).

We have registered the difference in overall risk averages between wartime and peacetime. On this basis, we shall proceed to analyse Walzer’s morality of risk thesis from the perspective of just war theory. The *in bello* rules are relevant to this end. To see why, we may recall Fried’s observation that the morally relevant concept of risk is that of *interpersonal* risk. It pertains to the agent’s imposition of risk *on others*, and not just the acceptance of risks on oneself, even though the two forms of risk are connected. In just war theory, *jus ad bellum* comprises standards for assessing the justness of a war; they are not standards of interpersonal conduct. The interpersonal rules of the game belong to *jus in bello*, determining what the combatants are permitted to do to one another and to non-combatants if the war is to be fought justly. The morality of risk in war zones postulates a parallel between two species of moral relations consistent with the *in bello* rule of discrimination: a relation between combatants (soldiers) and

between combatants and non-combatants (civilians). Each type of relation implies a different distribution of risks for the parties involved.

Jus in bello: risk and the moral equality of combatants

We begin with risk that soldiers impose on others in warfare. By “risk,” Walzer means a threat of a *probable* harm or *potential* harm that may occur at any time. Thus, for him as a just war traditionalist, the combatants represent potentially harmful agents, a status they acquire by joining the army.⁶⁰ Because the modern, state-dependent army is an institution, the term “soldier” designates an institutional role, that of an agent bearing arms. Walzer contends that soldiers impose a risk of death on others, and while this danger is presumed rather than actual, it is sufficient to strip them as a class of the default right of each human being not to be killed.⁶¹ By the mere act of fighting, soldiers have lost their rights to life and liberty, “even though, unlike aggressor states, they have committed no crime.”⁶² In epistemic terms, the concept of risk is part of a discourse of probabilities and their estimates. For Walzer, even soldiers who do not fight but read newspapers or sleep constitute a *likely* threat (probable harm) to the lives of others. Just war revisionists like Jeff McMahan rely on the opposite concept of actual harm. McMahan claims that soldiers who are disengaged from battle or temporarily demobilized are not harmful agents but “military non-combatants” and thus not legitimate targets for combatants.⁶³ Here, the soldier is not an occupant of an institutional role whose status depends on a web of stable human relations but a player whose identity (combatant / non-combatant) can change depending on what the player is doing at a particular instant.^b

Let us now attend to the moral relation of risk obtaining between soldiers. “Soldiers are made to be killed,” Walzer writes, quoting Napoleon’s chilling dictum.⁶⁴ In war, every soldier has an equal right to impose a lethal risk on any soldier fighting for the adversary.⁶⁵ This is Walzer’s famous thesis for the moral equality of soldiers.⁶⁶

War itself isn’t a relation between persons but between political entities and their human instruments. These human instruments are not comrades in arms in the old style, members of the fellowship of warriors; they are ‘poor sods, just like me,’ trapped in a war they didn’t make.

^b McMahan’s view leads to epistemic difficulties of recognizing who counts as a combatant and who does not that are beyond the scope of this paper.

This shows that the actual conduct of warfare is not like an armed robbery inside domestic society. If a robber shoots a bank guard pleading self-defence, this is murder; but if one soldier shoots an enemy soldier in war, this is not considered murder.⁶⁸ The former scenario assumes a victim-aggressor relation, where only the victim (the guard) may justifiably claim a right to self-defence. For Walzer, combatants on both sides of the war divide are *victims* acting in self-defence, so their relation is morally symmetric.⁶⁹ By virtue of this symmetry, every soldier holds an equal moral right to endanger the life of an enemy soldier. The moral equality of combatants is the analogue of Kant's principle of equal right.

Each soldier represents a victim because war is a domain of coerced activity. Indeed, "war is hell."⁷⁰ Soldiers are *coerced* or "victimize[d]" into rallying behind a single purpose: victory.⁷¹ A soldier, a man or a woman who bears arms, is not entitled to a plurality of purposes of one's own, but must fight for the singular purpose of winning the war.⁷² The modern state has a right to introduce conscription, an inherently coercive practice. But a sense of patriotic duty can also compel men and women to join the army. Soldiers, then, act by being coerced to contribute to the war effort, either by the state or by their own consciousness.⁷³ The modicum of free choice left to them is minimal. This argument is not without difficulties, for it does not cohere with another basic claim Walzer makes: that moral agents, be it states or humans, *ab initio* hold a right not to be harmed. One can lose this right only through an act of one's own, such as aggression.⁷⁴ The inconsistency is that soldiers become dangerous because they *choose* to impose risk of death, though at the same time, in their capacity of coerced victims, they seem to lack autonomous choice. Ultimately, Walzer resolves the tension by portraying soldiers as agents with limited autonomy or as "instruments" to be used by political leaders and generals.⁷⁵

But if soldiers do not choose to make war, they must be absolved of the moral responsibility of participating in an unjust war, which lies with political and military leaders alone. "Soldiers fighting for an aggressor state are not themselves criminals ... soldiers fighting against an aggressor state have no license to become criminals."⁷⁶ Thus, all soldiers, irrespective of the justice of their war, have a right of self-defence. But although soldiers are not responsible for the justice of war (*jus ad bellum*), it is still up to them to decide whether to wage war justly (*jus in bello*) by observing moral and legal constraints. Walzer's position has the advantage that even

unjust wars (i.e., wars that lack a just cause) can be fought in a just way.

Jus in bello: risk and the moral asymmetry between combatants and non-combatants

Enemy combatants stand in a relation of moral symmetry, meaning that a soldier commits no moral wrong when imposing an equal risk of death on an enemy soldier—or even killing the enemy soldier. We now turn to the relation between *civilians* and *soldiers*. The hypothesis is that the soldier-civilian relation is morally asymmetric and that soldiers ought to take *additional* risks in order to save civilian lives in war zones. This is Walzer's morality of risk thesis. The thesis, like the doctrine of double effect, presupposes a morally significant distinction between innocent and harmful agents in war. The "innocent" is a term of art in just war theory; they are not guiltless but *harmless* individuals, disengaged from the war effort, who as such do not impose a risk of death on others.⁷⁷ The distinction between harmless and harmful agents is also tracked by the *in bello* rule of discrimination, which allows combatants to kill enemy combatants (if they are not defeated or wounded), but prohibits the *deliberate* killing of non-combatants. Where the risk thesis and the doctrine of double effect diverge is over the *unintended* killing of civilians. In Walzer's view, as noted previously, the doctrine of double effect makes it too easy to kill civilians by pointing to a lack of intention. This passive acceptance of collateral damage, he urged, has to be replaced with active risk-taking.

The morality of risk requires soldiers to take additional risks for the sake of (enemy) civilians. Soldiers, the argument goes, ought to exercise due care with respect to non-combatants.⁷⁸ This translates into a moral requirement, or obligation, to do one's best to prevent *harm to civilians*.⁷⁹ Harm here means "imposing lethal risk," and the consideration is that civilians have a baseline right not to be exposed to lethal risk since as actors disengaged from battle, they do not impose this type of risk on others.

Notably, Walzer's risk thesis does not require soldiers to increase the risks to themselves so as to minimize the loss of life to *enemy soldiers*.⁸⁰ Such risk-taking *goes beyond* the baseline of duty and constitutes an act of supererogation.⁸¹ In just war theory, this baseline duty is contained in the *in bello* proscription against barbaric killing of the adversary. As Walzer says:

They [enemy soldiers] can try to kill me, and I [a soldier fighting for the opposing side] can try to kill them. But it

is wrong to cut the throats of their wounded or to shoot them down when they are trying to surrender. These judgments are clear enough, I think, and they suggest that war is still, somehow, a rule-governed activity, a world of permissions and prohibitions—a moral world, therefore, in the midst of hell.⁸²

There is, then, a difference between duty-bound acts and supererogatory acts (i.e., self-sacrifice) that exceed the requirement of duty. Such supererogatory acts are performed by extraordinary agents, saints or heroes, whose character epitomizes moral excellence.⁸³ But it would be too much to demand of ordinary moral agents to be saints or heroes. Thus, submarines in World War I rarely surfaced to rescue enemy soldiers from sunken vessels, because such supererogatory deeds would have been too risky to undertake.⁸⁴

This shows that the moral relation between combatants remains morally symmetric. For this reason, risk-taking between opposing camps of combatants in war is constrained by factors of strategic advantage and military necessity, subject to the *in bello* proscription against barbarism.

How much risk should soldiers seeking to prevent civilian harm take? The response is that in war, no one can enjoy a risk-free environment, for “war necessarily places civilians in danger: that is another aspect of its hellishness. We can only ask soldiers to minimize the dangers they impose.”⁸⁵ Soldiers cannot, therefore, be asked to sacrifice themselves for the purposes of preventing civilian harm. Yet, although risk-taking by combatants is bound by prudential limits, it accords normative priority to the non-combatants, including enemy non-combatants; this is another way of acknowledging the moral asymmetry between combatants and non-combatants.

Walzer’s argument for moral asymmetry has been recently criticized by Asa Kasher and Amos Yadlin, who claim that soldiers are *not* required to accept extra risks to save *enemy civilians*. This is because the moral obligations of soldiers are based on ties of citizenship: they are obligated to protect the civilians of their own state, on territory controlled by that state.⁸⁶ Military conduct is to be governed by criteria of military necessity and proportionality.⁸⁷ The corollary is that the agents we fight in a war are simply enemies, and there is no room for discriminating between enemy combatants (who pose a danger to us) and enemy non-combatants (who are presumably innocent). But to grant this is to abandon the moral discourse of war, which demands respect for the rights of the innocent, regardless of which side of the frontline they happen

Conclusion: Three Virtues of the Morality of Risk

In conclusion, three virtues of the morality of risk deserve to be mentioned. The first, the leitmotiv of the foregoing discussion, is the idea that the *in bello* criterion of discrimination in just war theory must be decoupled from its orthodox moral basis, the principle of double effect. A more coherent picture emerges if this criterion is tied to a morality of risk. This morality, when it is brought to bear on the discourse of war, shows that there is a principled distinction between the soldier-to-soldier risk relation and the soldier-to-civilian risk relation. The morality of risk, argues *towards*, not from, the principle of discrimination.

Second, the morality of risk can elucidate new forms of warfare, such as asymmetric warfare, where relatively small groups of insurgents equipped with low-tech weapons confront regular, technologically advanced armies. In the preface to the fifth edition of *Just and Unjust Wars* (2015), Walzer focusses on two cases of asymmetric warfare: the Taliban and the United States in Afghanistan in 2010 and Hamas and Israel in Gaza in 2014.⁸⁸ One well-known problem is that insurgents use terrorist tactics like taking cover among the civilian population, using civilians as human shields, and firing from buildings where civilians are likely to be present. Should the invading regular army write these civilians off as collateral damage and attempt to secure victory at the lowest cost to itself by minimizing risks to its own troops? Should, in other words, air strikes, drones and other *riskless* military methods be used in asymmetric warfare? Walzer thinks not. He reiterates his commitment to the principle of risk-taking: "The army [...] must take positive measures to limit civilian injury. And these positive measures include soldiers accepting risk, to some degree, in order to minimize the risks they impose on civilians."⁸⁹ To this end, intelligence or commando forces will have to be deployed on the ground to ensure that the relevant target areas include as few civilians as possible. Ground operations are risky, but it is precisely this willingness to assume risks in the name of the innocent that preserves the moral superstructure of war as an activity subject to moral limits.

Third, the most fundamental philosophical question that the morality of risk invites us to rethink is the boundary between the notions of doing and allowing, or between killing and letting die. In the foregoing pages, the doctrine of double effect was interpreted not by reference to the conventional intentional action/unintended effect distinction but rather in terms of the more

basic doing/allowing distinction. One limitation of this doctrine, as we found, was its failure to provide clear guidance about cases in which harmful effects occur not due to scarcity (as in the scarce medication case) but because of the fact that the agent does not intervene to halt a chain of events that would generate harmful effects. A paradigmatic example is the bombing of a village for military purposes, which results in the foreseen death of many civilians.⁹⁰ The morality of war is concerned with situations like the village bombing, where the two moral intuitions—of killing and letting die—converge, since what on the surface appears to be a case of letting the villagers die is actually very close to killing them. Walzer's contribution is to have established that it is morally wrong to claim that the deaths of the civilian villagers simply *happen*, as it were, passively or unintentionally. To prevent civilians from being killed in warfare something ought to be done *actively*: a special class of agents, soldiers, ought to take additional risk on themselves to prevent civilian harm. And because this morality of risk applies exclusively to war zones, it may explain what is distinctive about the morality of war.

Notes

11 On war as a conventional activity, see Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations*, 2nd ed. (New York: Basic Books, 1992), 24, 43.

2 Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, 2nd ed., 3.

3 Henry Shue argues that it is important to ask how *jus ad bellum* is connected to *jus in bello*. See Henry Shue, "War," in *Oxford Handbook of Practical Ethics*, ed. Hugh LaFollette (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 734–761. Thomas Hurka usefully summarizes the main rules of just war in Thomas Hurka, "Proportionality in the Morality of War," *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 33 no. 1 (2005): 34–66, 35ff. On the *ad bellum* rules of war, see also Jeff McMahan, "The Ethics of Killing in War," *Ethics* 114, no. 4 (2004): 693–733, especially 708–709.

4 See for example, Francesco de Vitoria, "On the Law of War," in *de Vitoria, Political Writings*, ed. Anthony Pagden and Jeremy Lawrence (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 293–327.

5 De Vitoria, "On the Law of War," 297–298, as discussed in Shue, "War," 736.

6 Jeff McMahan, "War," in *Oxford Handbook of Political Philosophy*, ed. David Estlund (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 298–315, 298.

7 See Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, 2nd ed., on the "legalist paradigm" (58–63) and humanitarian intervention (101–108).

8 For an analysis of proportionality, see Shue, "War," 743, 747–752, and Hurka, "Proportionality." Walzer regards the criterion of proportionality with suspicion; see "Preface to the Second Edition," in *Just and Unjust Wars*, 2nd ed., xvi–xvii.

9 The distinction between micro- and macro-proportionality is Shue's; see "War," 747–748.

10 On the laws of war, see Yoram Dinstein, *War, Aggression and Self-Defence*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), and *The Conduct of Hostilities Under the Law of International Armed Conflict*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004). On the relation between morality and law, see David Rodin, "Morality and Law in War," in *The Changing Character of War*, ed. Sybille Scheipers and Hew Strachan (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 446–463; Henry Shue, "Laws of War," in *Fighting Hurt: Rule and Exception in Torture and War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 429–446; and Adil A. Haque, *Law and Morality at War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).

11 On the doctrine of double effect, see note 20 below.

12 I am using Walzer's argument as expounded in the second edition of *Just and Unjust Wars*, where it is most elaborately presented; Walzer has refined but not changed his position over the years. See Walzer, "Preface to the Fifth Edition," in *Just and Unjust Wars*, 5th ed. (New York: Basic Books, 2015), xx–xxi; Walzer, "Terrorism and Just War," *Philosophia* 34, no. 1 (2006): 3–12, 9; and Walzer, "The Risk Dilemma," *Philosophia* 4, no. 2 (2016): 289–293.

13 See symposium "Twenty Years of Michael Walzer's *Just and Unjust Wars*," *Ethics and International Affairs* 11, no. 1 (1997): 1–104, with contributions by Terry Nardin, Michael J. Smith, David C. Hendrickson, Theodore J. Koontz, and Joseph Boyle, and with Walzer's response. A more recent assessment is Yitzhak Benbaji and Naomi Sussmann, eds., *Reading Walzer* (New York: Routledge, 2014).

14 The moral problem of risk in warfare has seldom been discussed by commentators of *Just and Unjust Wars*, as Walzer observes in "Preface to the Fifth Edition," xix. An exception is Steven Lee, "Double Effect, Double Intention and Asymmetric Warfare," *Journal of Military Ethics* 3, no. 3 (2004): 233–251. Lee links Walzer's conception of risk imposition to the paradigm of recklessness (intentional harm) in tort law, whereas I pursue Walzer's original proposal, which links it to the paradigm of negligence (unintentional harm) in tort. On the source of Walzer's hypothesis in tort law, see notes 43 and 44 below. Another insightful discussion is David Luban, "Risk Taking and Force Protection," in *Reading Walzer*, 277–301. Luban defends Walzer's argument that soldiers should assume equal risks in order to minimize the risks to enemy civilians and not just to their own civilians. (This argument has been criticized by Asa Kashner and Amos Yadlin; see note 88 below.) Neither Lee nor Luban focus on the basic moral principles of risk-taking that underpin Walzer's analysis.

15 David Rodin, *War and Self-Defense* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003); McMahan, "War as Self-Defense," *Ethics and International Affairs* 18, no. 1 (2004): 75–80.

16 The question of self-defence is not the sole issue that divides traditionalists and revisionists. For an overview of the complex set of issues involved in this controversy, including methodological reductionism, collective rights vs. individual rights, and moral equality of soldiers, see Seth Lazar, "Just War Theory: Traditionalists versus Revisionists," *Annual Review of Political Science* 20 (2017):

37-54, and Francis Kamm, "The Morality of Killing in War: Some Traditional and Non-Traditional Views," in *The Moral Target: Aiming at Right Conduct in War and Other Conflicts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 81-105.

17 Jeff McMahan, *Killing in War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), especially chapter 2.

18 G. W. F. Hegel's term *aufheben* means preserving an identity at a higher level of development in a dialectical process by overcoming its shortcomings while retaining its positive aspects. Miller translates *aufheben* as "supersede." See Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 68.

19 Thomas Aquinas, "Of Killing," in *On Law, Morality, and Politics*, ed. William P. Baumgarth and Richard J. Regan, S.J. (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1988), 226-227.

20 Classic essays on the doctrine of double effect in moral philosophy, by proponents such as G. E. M. Anscombe, Thomas Nagel, and Warren Quinn, and critics such as Jonathan Bennett, are collected in P. A. Woodward, ed., *The Doctrine of Double Effect: Philosophers Debate a Controversial Moral Principle* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001). This volume contains Walzer's argument for the morality of risk, as a corrective to double effect: Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, 2nd ed., 151-159. In my analysis of double effect, I have found particularly useful Thomas Nagel, "War and Massacre," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 1, no. 2 (1972): 123-144, especially 130-131; Warren Quinn, "Actions, Intentions, and Consequences: The Doctrine of Double Effect," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 18, no. 4 (1989): 334-351; and Philippa Foot, "Killing and Letting Die," 78-87, and "Morality, Action, and Outcome," 88-104, in *Moral Dilemmas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

21 For Walzer's formulation of double effect, see note 25 below.

22 The point that this prohibition concerns targeting is made in Hurka, "Proportionality," 36, and Shue, "War," 747. On justifying targeting civilians on the basis of double effect, see Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, 2nd ed., 153.

23 Shue, "War," 747; Hurka, "Proportionality in the Morality of War," 38.

24 *Ibid.*

25 Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, 2nd ed., 153, n21 uses Kenneth Dougherty's formulation of double effect as presented in *General Ethics: An Introduction to the Basic Principles of Moral Life According to St. Thomas Aquinas* (Peekskill: Graymoor Press, 1959), 65-66.

26 Walzer refers to Dougherty's description of evil consequences, see note 25.

27 Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, 2nd ed., 153.

28 Nagel, "War and Massacre," 130.

29 *Ibid.*; original emphasis.

30 Nagel, "War and Massacre," 131.

31 See Quinn's ground-breaking analysis of active agency ("Actions, Intentions, and Consequences: The Doctrine of Double Effect") in relation to double effect.

32 Quinn labels Nagel's example the "strategic bomber." Unlike a "terror bomber," the strategic bomber attacks the village in order to eliminate a military target without intending to kill the civilians in it. Quinn, "Actions, Intentions, and

Consequences: The Doctrine of Double Effect,” 336.

33 Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, 2nd ed., 155–156.

34 Foot, “Morality, Action and Outcome,” 90; see also Foot, “Killing and Letting Die,” 81.

45 A similar but more exacting normative formulation in terms of moral “absolutism” is offered by Nagel in “War and Massacre,” 132: “Absolutism requires that we avoid murder at all costs, not that we prevent it at all costs,” original emphasis.

36 Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, 2nd ed., 151, 156; Walzer, “The Triumph of Just War Theory (and The Dangers of Success),” in *Arguing About War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 3–22, 17; Walzer, “Preface to the Fifth Edition,” xx–xxi; Walzer, “Terrorism and Just War,” 9; Walzer, “The Risk Dilemma,” 291.

37 Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, 2nd ed., 155.

38 *Ibid.* 156.

39 *Ibid.*

40 *Ibid.* 152.

41 See Walzer, “Kosovo,” in *Arguing About War*, 99–103, 99.

42 Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, 2nd ed., 154–155, 157; “The Triumph of Just War Theory,” 17–18.

43 Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, 2nd ed., 156n. Walzer draws on Charles Fried’s notion of risk imposition. Charles Fried, “Imposing Risks on Others,” *An Anatomy of Values: Problems of Personal and Social Choice* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970), 183–206.

44 This definition of tort law as the “law of non-criminal wrongs” is provided in Kirsty Horsey and Erika Rackley, eds., *Tort Law*, 4th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 2.

45 Fried, *Right and Wrong* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978), 106, emphasis added.

46 See the discussion in Lee, “Double Effect, Double Intention and Asymmetric Warfare,” especially 243ff.

47 Fried, “Imposing Risk on Others,” 183, 192–193.

48 For the concept of personal risk, see Fried, “Life Plans and Mortality,” *Anatomy of Values*, 155–182; for his concept of interpersonal risk imposition, see note 43 above.

49 Fried, “Imposing Risk on Others,” 183.

50 *Ibid.* 185.

51 *Ibid.* 187–190.

52 *Ibid.* 187

53 *Ibid.* 195.

54 *Ibid.* 189.

55 *Ibid.* 195.

56 *Ibid.* 188.

57 Walzer, “The Triumph of Just War Theory,” 10, and *Just and Unjust Wars*, 2nd ed., 42.

58 Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, 2nd ed., 51.

- 59 Walzer, "Terrorism and Just War," 11.
- 60 Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, 2nd ed., 144.
- 61 On soldiers as members of a class (or an institution, the army), see Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, 2nd ed., 144–145 and 144n, and Walzer, "Terrorism and Just War," 4.
- 62 Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, 2nd ed., 136.
- 63 McMahan, "The Ethics of Killing in War," 697. McMahan argues that Walzer's criterion of an agent posing threat to (or, as we may say, imposing risks on) others is neither necessary nor sufficient for liability (of being killed), which is the mark of combatant status: *Ibid*, 719.
- 64 Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, 2nd ed., 136.
- 65 *Ibid*, 36, 41; Walzer, "Postscript: A Defense of Just War Theory," *Just and Unjust Wars*, 5th ed., 335–346; Walzer, "Terrorism and Just War," 3.
- 66 According to McMahan (a revisionist), unjust combatants have no equal right to attack just combatants, or to inflict collateral damage on non-combatants; see *Killing in War*, especially chapters 1–2. According to Lazar, who has traditionalist leanings, this revisionist objection refutes the moral equality of soldiers thesis. The objection states that just combatants are entitled to inflict some collateral damage which is rendered proportionate by the fact of their fighting for a just cause: Lazar, "Just War Theory," 46. However, this assumes, and thus cannot prove, that there are two separate classes of combatants with unequal standing, namely, unjust combatants and just combatants.
- 67 Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, 2nd ed., 36.
- 68 *Ibid*, 127–128.
- 69 *Ibid*, 36, 45.
- 70 *Ibid*, 22.
- 71 *Ibid*, 28, 32.
- 72 Walzer, "Terrorism and Just War," 4.
- 73 Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, 2nd ed., 28, 145.
- 74 *Ibid*, 135.
- 75 *Ibid*, 29.
- 76 *Ibid*, 136.
- 77 *Ibid*, 30, 146; Walzer "Terrorism and Just War," 3; Nagel, "War and Massacre," 139.
- 78 Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, 2nd ed., 152.
- 79 *Ibid*, 136.
- 80 *Ibid*, 150.
- 81 On supererogation, see note 85 below.
- 82 Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, 2nd ed., 36.
- 83 James O. Urmson, "Saints and Heroes," in A. I. Melden, ed., *Essays in Moral Philosophy* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1958), 198–216.
- 84 Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, 2nd ed., 147, 149–150.
- 85 Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, 2nd ed., 156. "Terrorism and Just War," 11.
- 86 Asa Kasher and Amos Yadlin, "Human Life in the War of Terrorism: A Response to the 'Risk Dilemma' by Michael Walzer," *Philosophia* 4, no. 2 (2016): 295–308,

especially 299, 304–305. See Walzer, “The Risk Dilemma,” and his rejoinder, Walzer, “Response to Asa Kasher and Amos Yadlin,” *Philosophia* 4, no. 2 (2016), 309–311.

87 Kasher and Yadlin, “Human Life in the War of Terrorism,” 306.

88 Walzer, “Preface to the Fifth Edition,” especially xviii–xxi. See also Walzer, “The Risk Dilemma,” 289.

89 Walzer, “Preface to the Fifth Edition,” xx.

90 Nagel, “War and Massacre,” 131.

ACTING OUT: VIOLENCE, COMMUNITY AND WOMEN'S THEATRE ON THE INDIA-PAKISTAN BORDER

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Abstract

The village of Manguchak, located 500 metres from the razor fence that separates India and Pakistan, is regularly caught in the cross-fire between the warring nations. Without warning, fatal shelling attacks can destroy Manguchak residents, their property, and their agricultural livelihood. The border-dwellers constantly fear the death, injury, displacement, and destruction that permeates their lives. When I first decided to propose a women's theatre workshop in Manguchak, a village in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir, I assumed that it would focus on the extraordinary violence of state-sponsored surgical strikes. I soon understood that "everyday" forms of violence, like alcoholism and domestic abuse, saturate every household in the village; the women of Manguchak discuss them in tandem with cross-border shelling. Violence against women, especially in conflicted border regions, cannot be considered in isolation from nationalism, international war, governmental neglect of vulnerable women, and masculine insecurity. The biopolitical state exposes innocent citizens to danger and death in the name of sovereignty, as the Indian and Pakistani armies continue to fight a decades-long struggle fuelled by nationalism. The state necessitates this continued violence by invoking the "protection" of its citizens, yet ironically endangers them, their property, and their livelihoods. Similarly, the men of Manguchak attempt to impose a patriarchal "protection" over the women of the village; but because of the irregular shellings, instability in the region, and cyclical poverty, they cannot fulfil the traditional duty of providing for their families. Women take on more of the emotional and physical labour while the men cope with their frustration through alcohol and opium. The men domestically abuse the women of Manguchak to assert their masculinity at home; and the women, ashamed and denying the domestic violence in their own homes, gossip about others who "deserve the beating" for being immoral women. Drawing on the theories of Michel Foucault, Lauren Berlant, and Iris Young, I will demonstrate the ways in which each instance of violence enables others due to a history of colonialism, fuelled by nationalism, and systematically justified by modern patriarchal frameworks. Using theatre as an ethnographic methodology, I will contextualise the layers of violence experienced by the women of Manguchak. The workshop participants overcame men's suspicions, their own hesitations, and prevalent cultural norms to participate in our theatre workshop. These shared experiences created courage, spurred unprecedented political action, and forged a community of female leaders who continue to navigate daily, extraordinary, and embedded violences.

Devika Ranjan, "Acting Out: Violence, Community and Women's Theatre on the Indian Pakistan Border," *St Antony's International Review* 14. no. 2 (2019): 58-79.

During the summer of 2016, I conducted theatre workshops in Manguchak, a tiny, predominantly Hindu village 500 metres from the India-Pakistan border. Manguchak is in the Samba district of the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir. The village and its residents have been exposed to war, violence, and a military presence since the Partition of India in 1947. It is one of thousands of border villages caught in the cross-fire of India-Pakistan skirmishes, attacks, and displays of military strength.

The media's story of Manguchak—and most of the stories about South Asian borderlands—concentrates on violence, border infiltration, and casualties.¹ People become collateral damage, destruction becomes a price tag. When I arrived, I assumed that I would make theatre about the border conflict with the women of the village. My proposed project, as sponsored by a Kathryn W. Davis Projects for Peace Fellowship, focused on building female community leadership in the context of areas of border violence.

But while the women of Manguchak were stressed about the random shellings, a force of destruction they could never see coming, they were more concerned about the violence that they knew would appear every day: domestic abuse, drug addiction, and the alcoholism of Manguchak men. In this article, I argue that these forms of violence are deeply interconnected. Violence against women, especially in conflicted border regions, cannot be considered in isolation from nationalism and international war, governmental neglect of vulnerable citizens, and masculine insecurity. I soon understood that alcoholism and domestic violence saturates every household in the village, and in many ways, this “everyday” form of violence is more urgent, and more relevant, to the women than the international shellings. While it is undeniable that shelling is a horrific, random, and unjustified danger, the women's lives are permeated by physical, emotional, and verbal abuse that occurs on a much more regular—and sometimes, more regularly life-threatening—basis. Even if international tensions cool, patriarchal violence remains rooted in the community.

Peace scholar Johan Galtung describes the interconnectedness of direct, structural, and cultural violence through a triangle—each contributes to, and thrives from, the other.² The case study of Manguchak illustrates the ways in which these violences enable each other particularly severely in a bordered conflict zone. Beginning with the direct violence of cross-border surgical strikes, overt and international, I combine Michel Foucault's theory of biopower and Giorgio Agamben's idea of political exceptionality with the women's experiences in Manguchak to describe the in-

vasive nature of state-sponsored violence on the India-Pakistan border. Foucault writes that a biopolitical state forces its citizens to live in certain hypersurveilled ways (making live) and that the sovereign can also make certain citizens vulnerable to death by refusing or withholding its protection (letting die).³ In the context of Manguchak, residents' lives are permeated by the presence of military and special extrajudicial forces; they are endangered by the state's continued violence as well as its unwillingness to permanently evacuate them from the war zone.

The constant threat of strikes creates an environment of chronic stress for the residents of Manguchak. The men of the village, unable to fulfil patriarchal expectations of providing for the family, rely on alcohol and drugs to relieve their tension. As social theorist Lauren Berlant describes in her theory of "slow death,"⁴ they are blamed for their own addictions despite the "crisis ordinariness" that the biopolitical government creates in the border villages.⁵

Spurred by their inebriation, the men release their frustration by beating or abusing their wives and daughters. This violence is enforced by South Asian patriarchal structures; as feminist scholar Iris Young theorises, misogynistic social norms mimic those of the security state in their justifications of violence to "protect" the vulnerable.⁶ Many of the Manguchak women, like state citizens, accept the need for protection; but in reality, they are further endangered by the violent acts of their "protectors."

For the workshops, I adapted games and pedagogy from Augusto Boal's *Theatre of the Oppressed*. *Theatre of the Oppressed* intends to honour participants as experts of their own experience rather than subjects that must be civilised, educated, or Westernised. Building on training from Nepal, India, and the United States and equipped with an arsenal of theatrical games and activities, I co-created the workshop with the participants with their needs as the foundation.

Through theatre, the workshop participants and I explored the ways in which these violences are deeply interconnected. *Theatre of the Oppressed* games are intended to help participants re-make their everyday problems to understand their structural nature. They also allowed the participants to play, laugh, and re-imagine their trauma in ways that they could control. By participating in the workshops, the women moved their private suffering, sadness, and shame into a public environment in which they were able to support each other. By creating plays about alcoholism, domestic violence, firing, and other community issues, the participants acted against what was no longer the struggle of an "immoral" woman, but rather a community of leaders.

As a woman of Indian origin brought up in the United States, I was met with initial curiosity in Manguchak. The women were interested—with some scepticism—to see what I could bring. When I proposed theatre workshops, I explained to them that it would be a project for both myself and their community. I offered to create a space for Manguchak's women to build community, establish trust, and facilitate discussion about village-wide problems. I told them that I wanted to learn about their lives as part of my research, and that I would write about their experiences and tell their stories abroad. By actively listening to their needs and committing to three full weeks with them, we quickly created mutual trust.

Through close collaboration with the participants, I was entrusted with personal stories through which they created theatrical performances. By initially re-creating their experiences or feelings with their bodies, they were able to express much more than they would have been comfortable saying through words; this methodology allowed them, among other things, to build comfort with me and each other and reveal their stories at their own pace.

The participants enjoyed the games and opportunity to be silly within our space; they also felt a kinship to me and a need to protect me, especially since I was a young, semi-foreign woman alone in their village. Though I did not speak the local language of Dogri and communicated through a translator during the workshop, our communication was built on presence, body language, and non-verbal games and activities. This was particularly beneficial for Rani, a deaf participant.

The games invite participants to grapple with their own problems as social, cultural, and structural issues; creator Augusto Boal declares Theatre of the Oppressed a “rehearsal for the revolution.”⁷ At the same time, my identity in the context of Manguchak is that of an educated, English-speaking Indian woman raised in the United States. To a degree, the participants expected that I held the answers to their problems because I convened the workshop with these privileged identities. If I intervened, instructed, or offered “solutions”—especially as an outsider to their community—I risked the safety of the women and a backlash from the men.

By facilitating these workshops, I am inseparable from the research. I proposed games, challenged assumptions, organised meetings, and helped the participants brainstorm “solutions.” As a result, I identify myself as a subjective researcher and facilitator. This article discusses my perceptions of violence within Manguchak based on what the participants shared within the workshop

that we co-created, and what I noticed during my time in the community.

Direct Violence

On January 4, 2015, a woman named Toshi Devi was killed by a Pakistani mortar shell while she was sweeping in front of her Manguchak house.⁸ The other villagers were evacuated to a nearby temple by the local government. For days of shelling, they anxiously wait for the end of the violence.

When the villagers returned to their homes, many had lost cattle, crops, and property. In Toshi Devi's house, Somraj had lost his wife, and Paro, a teenage girl, had lost her mother. Paro was soon pulled out of school and assumed the responsibilities of her mother.

I conducted the workshop in memory of Toshi Devi, offering it as a space in which women could gather and process the extraordinary violence in their community. They had many stories to tell: about the constant fear that a shell would fall at any time, about the ways that the state neglected them during times of firing and shelling, about the trauma that they suffered, about the loss of property, livelihood, and life.

Once, while playing a Boalian theatre game, I asked the women to make images with their bodies to depict various problems within the village: alcoholism, unemployment, and water shortage, among others. Image theatre is a traditionally sombre exercise in which the participants form a group image without speaking to each other. For the most part, the game was played in total silence. But when I said the word "firing," referring to the cross-border strikes, the group exploded into chaos. The women ran around the school courtyard, screaming and shouting in wild laughter. Some hid in groups around the empty space. Four women picked up 70-year-old Aanchal by her four limbs and dragged her around, wailing that she had been injured and crying for help. Meera fashioned her dupatta as a gun and pretended to shoot at the other women. Paro and Sachita grabbed bricks and mocked a take-down of the "Pakistani terrorist." The chaos ended in peals of laughter as the women rolled around on the dirt, although they knew that at any moment, even that moment, a shell could fall without warning.

Make Live

The India-Pakistan border is one of the most fortified borders in the world. Paula Bannerjee and Anasua Basu Ray Chaudury state

that the victimisation of Jammu and Kashmir residents stems from the seeds of animosity of the 1947 Partition, the violent split of South Asia during which it is estimated that 200,000 to one million civilians died while crossing from modern-day India to Pakistan and vice-versa.⁹ They write, “what happened over 60 years ago transitioned into an obsession with national security and shaped the policy decisions of the two countries India and Pakistan—who deem themselves as stakeholders of two divided parts of Jammu and Kashmir on two sides of the border.”¹⁰ The border remains a source of nationalistic pride and self-determination for both India and Pakistan—and border-dwellers are caught in the cross-fire.

Through a Foucauldian lens, the Indian state makes its border subjects live in certain hyper-surveilled ways, especially through the technologies of the border and the military. From a legal standpoint, the state of Jammu and Kashmir, where the studied village is located, claims a special autonomous status in the Indian Constitution. According to Article 370, Jammu and Kashmir is exempt from all laws enacted by the Parliament of India, except for those relating to defence, communications, and foreign policy.¹¹

The border region of India is further exempted from Parliamentary law and is overseen by the Border Security Force, an agency of the Ministry of Home Affairs. In Jammu, the Border Security Force guards the border, enforces paramilitary law, gathers counter-terrorism intelligence, and conducts civil service activities, such as hosting free medical camps and providing safe drinking water.¹² An estimated 700,000 Indian soldiers are stationed in Jammu and Kashmir, enforcing arbitrary arrests, curfews, and raids.¹³ 200,000 Indian and Pakistani soldiers enforce the border, known as the “Line of Control.”¹⁴ Manguchak, like other border villages, exists in a codified state of exception—a situation in which, as described by Agamben, the conditions of the emergency are expanded and routinized.¹⁵

This is most clear through the disembodiment of Jammu’s media-curated image. The overwhelming metaphorical value of the border renders its inhabitants invisible. While the border gets an immense amount of military funding, news coverage, and political clout, border-dwellers receive no such attention. For instance, many of the workshop participants told me that they had lost livestock during the shellings and wanted compensation for their losses; yet in light of the increasing spending towards border “defence,” remuneration for a cow or a goat is a small, expense that is still ignored.

The extraordinary military presence was most apparent during my car rides from Jammu city, an urban and densely populated region, to the countryside and border towns. The closer I got to the

border, the more these restrictions increased. The roads leading up to Manguchak are smoothly paved, which is surprising for a rural village in India, since the roads must be well maintained for the military trucks and tanks that operate out of border bases. As Ania Loomba and Ritty A. Lukose state in *South Asian Feminisms*, the saturation of border “society, polity, economy, environment, and psyche with the corporeality of militarized governance profoundly affects and shapes the ‘everyday.’”¹⁶

Butalia writes the following about Partition: “Life under militarisation undermines people’s capacity to intervene in regularised and intimate impairments.”¹⁷ But sixty years later, the same sentiments ring true. The Indian Army’s presence creeps into the minds and psyches of Manguchak residents. As Bannerjee and Chaudury write, “the levels of violence are not always visible, often not reported but felt psychologically, due to the build-up of troops, excessive restrictions, fences and mined areas. The huge military presence imposes restrictions on their movement, often ends up in harassment and keeps the civilian administration away, forbidding any development to penetrate.”¹⁸ Everything on the border region is heavily militarised and heavily suspect—including my own presence.

Halfway through my time in Manguchak, I learned that the men of the village had filed a police report against me because they suspected that I was a Pakistani spy. Though I am a woman of Indian origin, I am not local to the Samba region, nor do I speak the local language of Dogri. Since I was raised in the United States, perhaps the men had suspicions that I was “radicalizing” the women of the village or inciting them against the men. Of course, this is indicative of the pervasiveness of the cross-border violence, even in relative peacetime. As a result, the residents—like the nations of Pakistan and India themselves—remain trapped in a vicious cycle of violence. To borrow the term from Das et al.’s anthology *Remaking a World*, the militarisation and consequent denial on the borders contributes to the “slow erosion” of society as political violence “works on lives and interconnections to break communities.”¹⁹

Let Die

While the biopolitical state forces those in the border region to live under a super-monitored environment, it neglects the villagers during the times of shelling and lets them, and those around them, die. As Foucault states, the sovereign power is capable of “every form of indirect murder: the fact of exposing someone to death, increasing the risk of death for some people, or, quite simply, political death, expulsion, rejection, and so on.”²⁰ Though India

does not directly kill its citizens, its actions to sustain war with Pakistan—and its inaction to provide a safe environment for its citizens—constitute the indirect murder to which Foucault refers.

The Indian government denies its role in the violence and militarisation of Jammu and Kashmir. According to Meghana Nayak, “the Indian website on Jammu and Kashmir ... expresses a deep regret over the border problems in this region, denying any role whatsoever by the Indian government in the political volatility yet placing the integrity of India in the future of Jammu and Kashmir’s borders.”²¹ Often, in efforts to downplay the effects of the war, the governments deny or erase any evidence of the opposite country’s surgical strikes or skirmishes on their soil.²² Therefore, many surgical strikes, casualties, and damages remain unnoticed. Despite these denials and a lack of statistics due to media blackouts, military confidentiality, and press unreliability, border-dwellers confirm the trauma of shelling. Somraj, Toshi Devi’s widower, showed me the shell that killed his wife; he has preserved it on a shelf in the house, next to her framed photograph.

The state of India does not assume responsibility for this damage or the loss of life in Manguchak because the shells come from the Pakistani side; yet, India continues to deploy surgical strikes and other aerial violence on Pakistan over the border. By producing the conditions of hostility in which it must use violence, the state validates its use of violence and continues with sovereign impunity. Meanwhile, it is the border-dwellers who suffer. While the people of Manguchak support the Indian government because of the “protection” it offers, most residents hope that the fighting will stop.

Though the state fights for the symbolic importance of the border region, it neglects the safety of the border-dwellers. Manguchak residents are often exposed to fatal attacks for days before the Indian state intervenes to evacuate the residents from the border village. In these cases, they are displaced to a local temple for several weeks without access to their homes, schools, or livelihoods. Despite the ongoing violence, many are forced to return to their homes to care for their crops and cattle; otherwise, they would become destitute upon return and further trapped in their own poverty.

According to the workshop participants, the government of India refuses to remove Manguchak residents from the war zone, as a permanent evacuation would indicate international weakness within the decades-long border conflict. On the other hand, the people of Manguchak cannot leave voluntarily because they do not have the money or job security to move. Most Manguchak residents are agriculturalists living on their ancestral property—

though the shelling often destroys their land or cattle, and they must continually compensate for the losses during the violence.

Structural Violence

Within a “state of exception,” as Agamben famously writes, all people are treated indiscriminately by the oppressor.²³ The direct violence of surgical strikes does endanger all residents of Manguchak at roughly equal rates of state-sponsored injury or death. While some men of Manguchak work outside of the village, as truck drivers or policemen, and are not at continual risk in the way that the women, children, and male agriculturalists are, they are still exposed to the fear that the violence creates for themselves and their families. But despite the fairly uniform chance of becoming a victim, the threat of violence has a deeply different psychological effect on men and women within the community.

The men in the village, in accordance with traditional Indian patriarchal structures, are expected to work and earn for the family; however, the duties that they must fulfil are often disturbed by the firing, displacement, and border unrest. Their ancestral fields or cattle may be destroyed by the strikes; they could lose their job because they are forced into hiding or displaced due to violence; they may be unable to secure reliable transportation because of the risky geography in which they live. As a result, many of the men in Manguchak are unemployed or earn meagre wages. To cope with their frustration, nearly all the men turn to addictive substances. According to the women of the workshop, every household contains a man who is addicted to alcohol or opium.

Alcoholism and drug addiction are commonplace in Indian agricultural, rural, or illiterate communities—but in this situation, the presence of chronic violence exacerbates the stress of poverty. The state neglects impoverished border-dwellers and blames the men for their own addictions. Through the gaze of the state, their bodies are seen as expendable—whether they are in the direct line of fire or wasting away because of their drug dependencies. Structural violence, in this situation, is the debilitation of border-dwellers because of their low status in society.

Slow Death

Berlant’s theory of “slow death” considers the ways in which individuals cope with the chronic stress of structural violence. People in situations of “crisis ordinariness,” a term which refers to the ongoing and continual normalcy of biopolitical suffering, are blamed for their own “slow deaths” because of destructive habits.²⁴

Berlant discusses the American obesity epidemic among working-class and predominantly Black communities, noting that eating is a coping mechanism for people who are simply trying to stay alive. Within the structural violences they face—of capitalism, racism, sexism, etc.—food is comfort. Addictive fast food is cellophane-packaged survival, especially when they do not have the money, time, or transportation to acquire fresh or home-cooked meals. It is a means of “self-medication” that is a “fitting response to a stressful environment.”²⁵ This creates a certain self-suspension in which consumers, labourers, and citizens are merely surviving in “crisis ordinariness,” or, as Foucault would put it, made to live. Individuals are then blamed for their own poor health, even though they must rely on pre-packaged food because their economic conditions—as created by their capitalist and racist environment—preclude healthier options.

I propose that the alcoholism is a “slow death” response to the “crisis ordinariness” that the men face in Manguchak. Most villages in India suffer from cyclical unemployment, failed crops, lack of upward mobility, and have issues with addiction;²⁶ Manguchak exists not only in a generic village’s crisis ordinariness, but also with the added chaos of its violent border exceptionality. The continual threat of random violence exacerbates the fear and contributes to the emasculation of the men of the village because of their lack of control. Substance abuse is a means for the men to escape this reality and self-medicate for short-term survival within long-term stress. But the state uses the villagers’ substance abuse to ignore the problems of the residents of Manguchak. From my interaction with local government officials, they blamed the men for their alcoholism despite the fact that it stems from financial and safety insecurities that are created by the state’s actions.

Berlant points out that food is necessary to the human body and therefore becomes an easily accessible means of consolation in the endlessness of “crisis ordinariness.”²⁷ Alcohol and opium are, of course, not necessary to survival in the same way; but instead, they become a substitute for the necessities that the men cannot provide for their families. The women say that their husbands ignore requests to buy flour and vegetables to make food for the family. The men’s purchases simply contribute to the vicious cycle. According to the women, whatever little they earn is almost immediately spent on alcohol and drugs. Perhaps, from the point of view of the men, their addictive substance is more necessary than food; it combats their psychological pain and helps them forget about their hunger, inadequacy, and strife.

As a result, many women work in the fields to make up for their husbands’ lost salaries. This economic shift upsets the traditional

conservative societal balance of the rural Indian household; with women working outside as well as inside the house, the husbands feel further emasculated. According to Wenona Mary Giles and Jennifer Hyndman in *Sites of Violence*, “depressed wages and high unemployment among male breadwinners destabilize relations in the family”²⁸ and forces women to carry more of the economic and emotional burden.²⁹ The women must take over even more of “the role of managing livelihood for the family while their male counterparts have slipped into acute frustration, depression and alcoholism” because of their perceived lack of control.³⁰ To reassert control, the men physically, emotionally, and verbally abuse their wives and daughters.

Importantly, “slow death” deals with crisis ordinariness over a long period of time—with no end in sight. Berlant states that “slow death prospers not in traumatic events...but in temporal environments whose qualities and whose contours in time and space are often identified with the presentness of ordinariness itself.”³¹ I see this as a modification of Agamben’s “state of exception,” a lens to understand the exacerbation of biopolitical violence in impoverished populations. Rather than the physical boundaries that are demarcated by Agamben’s camp or, in the instance of Manguchak, a border region, Berlant emphasizes the ongoing and endless components of chronic stress.

For the men of Manguchak, alcoholism and drug abuse are not a means of sustaining life, or making it better, but rather a way to endure the failures that stack up around them. A striking reminder of this was a sign that I saw regularly during my drive to Manguchak, about a kilometre away from the village. In English, it advertised liver transplants outside the only doctor’s office between Manguchak and the closest town, Samba. The sign indicated the frequency of medical complications that result from alcoholism as well as the extreme (and expensive) surgeries that a person must undergo to remedy them. As many of the women said during the workshop, they do not have the money for these pricy surgeries or even a doctor’s visit. Many men in the village simply waste away—leaving the women widowed and without the insufficient salary that the men consumed.

Forum Theatre

Within the workshop, we created a Boalian “forum theatre” play which depicted a familiar situation for the women of Manguchak: an inebriated husband arrives home and beats his wife. In forum theatre, a member of the audience (here, the workshop participants) can intervene in the scene by saying “STOP!” and taking the

role of the protagonist: the wife. The workshop participants aimed to change the course of the play so that the wife would not suffer from domestic violence.

Sachita, one of the most vocal participants in the workshop, said “STOP!” first. She assumed the wife’s role in the scene and beat up the husband. The workshop participants cheered and clapped; they were thrilled because the wife was able to defend herself, but then they pointed out that a woman who beats her husband would be ridiculed, mocked, and that people would gossip about her. Her husband may leave her. Isha, one of the younger women, asked why no one cares when a man beats his wife, but so many people become upset when a woman is violent.

Paro offered another intervention and called the *sarpunch* [village chief]. After a long dialogue, the *sarpunch* convinced the man to live in happiness with his wife and not drink. Again, the participants were happy with this result; but they soon realized that when the couple came home and there was nobody to intervene, the husband would kill the wife for disrespecting him and publicising their private matters.

The next day, Sachita mentioned that her sons had gone to the tea stall and someone had told them that their mother was imitating a drunkard during the workshop. Since we were working in the open courtyard of the school, people passed by all the time and small children often watched the action—so despite our confidentiality agreement, word spread. Sachita explained to the boys that she was performing a drama to show the problems of the community. Despite the gossip, she wanted to continue doing the work that she was doing.

Sachita offered another intervention and took the husband to the hospital. When the doctors explained the terrible health consequences of alcoholism, the man decided to stop drinking. A lot of the women agreed that this would work but discussed the problem of finances and distance. The nearest hospital is about half an hour away by car, and even if they arrived, the hospital bills (on top of their food, accommodation, transportation, and missed work) would cost too much.

Finally, Madhuri suggested a ban on liquor stores. She called the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and asked him to ban liquor in the entire country. While we agreed that Madhuri might never be able to ban liquor in all of India, the women were divided on whether a liquor ban in the village was possible. Many pointed out that men could obtain liquor legally from other villages, and drugs like opium were illegal in India, but the men were still able to access them.

By the end of these four interventions over two days, the partic-

ipants were very frustrated. They said that there was no solution and that they would continue to be beaten forever. One woman stated that if they pursued any of these interventions against their husbands, they would be sent back to their childhood homes to live with their families in shame.

Paro, Toshi Devi's daughter, interrupted, with tears in her eyes. "At least the wives have homes to return to. What about those who are not yet married? Where will we go?" The other women reported that her father and brother abuse her when they are drunk. They forbid her from leaving the house. She stayed with her uncle and relatives for two months, but they sent her back, saying that her dowry would be too expensive. Paro said that she gets no love from her family and hinted at sexual abuse.

Most women around her were sympathetic—though Maya Devi privately mentioned that Paro deserves the beatings because she talks to boys on the phone all the time. Paro said that even if she eloped and ran away, the family would be insulted, and she would be shunned.

Cultural Violence

Patriarchy is a form of global cultural violence that manifests in numerous ways: rape, domestic violence, sexual harassment, female infanticide, lack of education for girls, and the devaluing of women as a whole within society. In South Asia, it is enabled by the culture of sexism and male superiority that is rooted in traditional discourse and ritual. Women like Paro are restricted to their homes, isolated from communities, and punished for their resistance. In conflict zones, the violence is exacerbated.³² Patriarchal power easily fuses "with violent institutions like the family, the military, [and] the state" in Manguchak.³³

Violence Against Women At Borderlands

India is called the "motherland" in Hindi and other native languages. After the Partition of India and Pakistan in 1947, many alluded to the country's violent split as a woman being mutilated and split in half—like the hundreds of thousands of women who were beaten, maimed, and raped during mass migrations.³⁴ Many women were abandoned in the crossing, and these violences were justified by the claim that a dishonoured woman was of no use to the pride of the nation.³⁵ It is estimated conservatively that 75,000 women were sexually assaulted.³⁶ In the context of Manguchak, it is essential to acknowledge the long history of female suffering on South Asian borders.

This disproportionate violence against women continues in Jammu and Kashmir today. Jammu and Kashmir is a political fault line, and on it, according to Bannerjee, “the socially and economically weak or the women naturally [bear] the greater brunt, demonstrating the hierarchy of victimhood stemming from social, economic, and gender factors.”³⁷ Instances of open gender-based and sexual violence are extremely high in the state, and the normalisation of sexual violence is exacerbated by the military occupation of Kashmir.³⁸ Based on a report conducted by Ruhee Rashid and Santosh Kumar Maharishi in 2011, the sex ratio (number of women to men) in Samba district, where Manguchak is located, was 886:1000. This is on par with the Jammu and Kashmir state average of 889:1000, but far below India’s national average of 940:1000.³⁹ These numbers primarily indicate the high rate of female infanticide that continues in the region, despite its illegality in India.

Mirrors of Masculine Protection and State Protection

According to feminist scholar Iris Young, patriarchal systems expect men to protect women in the same way that a modern state protects its citizens. An ideal man should be chivalrous, someone who “faces the world’s difficulties and dangers in order to shield women from harm and allow them to pursue elevating and decorative arts.”⁴⁰ This type of romanticised patriarchy is omnipresent throughout South Asian culture; the expectations of a possessively protective partner are inscribed in Hindu mythology, Islamic doctrine, Bollywood pop culture, and the media. In return, the woman is expected to “[adore] her protector and happily [defer] to his judgement in return for the promise of security that he offers.”⁴¹ This “good patriarchy” is supposed to protect women by sheltering them from the gang rapes, public shaming, and sexual harassment that pervade South Asian news stories and streets.

Cultural traditions dictate that “a ‘good’ woman should move under the guidance of a man.”⁴² According to patriarchal logic, if she decides not to accept this protection, she opens herself to attacks and justifies the violence that may come to her.⁴³ Mainstream South Asian society punishes women for being independent through these stigmas. For instance, in most of India, especially in rural villages like Manguchak, society expects a woman to live in her father’s house until she is married, and then moves to her husband’s. She must dote on the male members of her family, especially her husband, and look “up to him with gratitude for his manliness and admiration for his willingness to face the dangers of the world for her sake.”⁴⁴ These layers of protection mirror co-

lonial ideologies, which, ironically, were the original cause of the border rupture and succeeding decades of border violence against women.

This patriarchal cycle ensures that the woman is never without “protection” and reinforces the belief that women who live or function alone deserve the violence that they may encounter. While it is hard to estimate the prevalence of domestic violence in Indian households because of the shame implied in disclosing that information, the Planning Commission of India has estimated that 84% of Indian women are victims of domestic or familial abuse.⁴⁵ Yet, women who suffer violence at the hands of their husbands, fathers, or fathers-in-law do not have the option of leaving and living independently because their pride (and protection) is directly tied to their patriarchal connection. A woman without a man is wholly shamed and would likely not be taken back by her birth family, since “battered women have known that they could expect little protection from a society made up of individuals who resembled, at least in thought, the men who beat them.”⁴⁶

The relationship between a man and the protection he beneficently provides to a woman mimics that of a security state to its citizens. These relationships play out doubly in the state of exception of the Indian borderlands. According to Bannerjee, while the security personnel of Jammu and Kashmir are supposed to be:

“on the border to protect the people from external aggression and intruders, they become a cause of internal aggression by intruding on the lives of border people and disregarding their privacy. Violence in excess from both security forces as well as militants, gives rise to instinctive frustration among the menfolk which finds its outlet in the form of sexual violence against women.”⁴⁷

These “protections” not only encroach on the freedoms and privacies of women, but also place them “in a subordinate position of dependence and obedience”⁴⁸ that is enforced by the militarized zones around them. The irony is that while both patriarchal restrictions and the presence of the military claim to “protect” women, they rather endanger them by perpetuating violence.

Women's Relationship with Patriarchy

According to Young, “good citizenship in a security regime consists of cooperative obedience for the sake of the safety of all.”⁴⁹ Like “good citizens,” many women accept the logic of patriarchal protections. The women of Manguchak yearned for good patriar-

chal behaviour and male protection. They blame the aggressive behaviour on their husbands' and fathers' intoxicated avatars and assured me that if there were no addictive substances in the village, no alcohol or opium, their husbands would not beat them anymore and would return to their kind selves. There is an invented nostalgia for a "good masculinity," perhaps pulled from the model patriarchy of Bollywood, in which male lovers behave possessively and generously.

But there is no "good patriarchy." The logic of this patriarchal protection resembles Foucault's biopower; the patriarchy constructs the violence from which it claims to defend women. Each layer of protection is another level of violence enacted on women. One of the biggest problems in the village, as discussed in our workshop, was that of harmful bystanders. When a woman is assaulted by her husband or father, the neighbours simply watch or cheer on the beating, encouraging the perpetrator to greater violence. The bystanders, some of whom are women, spread gossip and often blame the victim for the violence. They say that the battered woman is an immoral woman—because she does not do work, or cooks poorly, or displeases her husband or father in any other way.

The gossip is exacerbated by the isolation of women in Manguchak. Though they live in a tiny village, the women only knew the names of their sister- or mother-in-law at the beginning of the workshop, because all their work was conducted inside the house. Because they were so isolated, gender norms and domestic violence seemed like they only occurred in their own households and in the households of the "bad women" who were the fodder of gossip. As a result, the women were initially unwilling to discuss domestic violence for fear of engendering rumours and damaging family reputations.

During one of the earlier workshops, some participants mocked Meera because her husband was a known alcoholic; yet within the workshop, everyone revealed that their household contained an alcoholic or drug addict. Instead of ostracising a member of their community to protect themselves from gossip and further violence, the women bonded over their common experiences and shared possible solutions to improve their condition.

Theatre on the border

Even the act of telling the stories of assault, violence, and fear—though it could resurface traumatic memories—helped to mitigate the cultural violence that the women faced within their own homes and the society. Through the workshop, the women

created an environment in which they could trust each other and understand that they were not at fault for the beatings; rather, the violence came to be understood as a cyclical and societal occurrence that stemmed from their husbands' or fathers' addictions. By creating theatre about the violence that they experienced, the participants identified that the men's addictions came from their insecurity. As the men could not fulfil the role of the breadwinning patriarch due to state-sponsored violence, lack of welfare, and governmental neglect, they asserted their masculinity through violence.

Through our workshop, the women were able to identify concrete steps that they could take to remove themselves from these oppressive structures—for instance, if they see domestic violence occurring in someone's house, they can knock on the door to distract the perpetrator. Not all of them agreed that this was the right thing to do or even agreed to do it, but some decided that this was a step within their purview and that they would increase the level of community responsibility. In this way, they could prevent domestic violence or at least discourage it for future generations.

Regardless of the action that they decided to take, the women in the workshop realised that the structures of oppression and cultural violence were present in every household in their village; that they were not alone in their pain, and did not have to keep it a secret. In a way, their shared experiences created courage among the group. They were bonded by the stories that they shared and kept them deeply confidential to protect each other and me.

At the end of the workshop, the District Commissioner of Manguchak agreed to come to watch the women's plays. The participants prepared three plays, followed by speeches about proposed government interventions. One was the original play about addiction and abuse, called "Don't smoke, it is injurious to the health." The women emphasised the need for female economic independence and training, a ban on liquor, and a police force to watch for illegal drug abuse. The second, called "Manguchak Government School," described the problems with the lack of water in the schools. They requested a hand-pump for water, gate and boundary wall to keep the children inside, and transportation to upper-level schools outside of the village. The final play, called "Firing," told the story of Toshi Devi, Paro's mother. The women demanded compensation for family members who were killed, crops that were destroyed, and cattle that was lost. Additionally, they spoke about the need for rapid emergency transportation, shelter, and mobile schools in times of shelling.

Though the District Commissioner was not able to come, the District Magistrate arrived instead and was impressed by their

performances, especially because women were asking for what they wanted. She promised to send a government official to deliver a water-pump for the school within the week and assured the women that she would dispatch a police force to circulate the village. However, she said that the eradication of domestic violence was up to the women. If they felt threatened, they could go to her office and file an official complaint. She would then send a police officer to arrest the perpetrator and “lock him up for 10 days,” after which he would learn his lesson. While the participants were concerned about what would happen when the husband returned from jail, especially the reactions of the village and potential disgrace of the household, they were generally open to this idea.

The presence of the District Magistrate encouraged the women to report and act against the violence. They told me that nobody had ever listened to their opinions before our workshop. Overjoyed, Sunita said, “We have done what the men could not do in all of these years!” The women had marked a huge achievement for the village in their political engagement and self-advocacy.

Within a month, the original participants gathered about 100 women from the neighbouring villages in efforts to create economic independence for themselves, but since then, they have not been able to meet as frequently because of their work at home. Subsequently, an official from the District Magistrate’s office visited the school. In March 2017, the government constructed a gate and wall around the school—thanks to the advocacy of the women themselves.

The day after the workshop ended, Sachita’s husband confronted Madhuri, who was also a community counsellor and village leader. He was furious that his wife had been impersonating him as an alcoholic. Madhuri and her sister-in-law Sneha berated him with great force. They said that he had no right to interfere in his wife’s private business and that he was overstepping his boundaries. He apologised and relented.

Conclusion

Despite these victories, violence of all types continues in Man-guchak. The village survived a particularly bad series of shellings in 2016 and 2017, but its residents continue to fear the next round. Alcoholism and drug addiction continue to afflict the men, and the intoxicated men continue to abuse their wives and daughters.

A few weeks after the workshop ended, Paro eloped with a boy from a neighbouring village, partially to escape her abusive home. Since then, she has been shunned by the village because of her disobedience to her father. The patriarchal norms of the village,

which have been rooted in the culture for centuries, may be the most resilient violence. Though direct, structural, and cultural violence are separated into simple categories, it is essential to see these violences as connected and amplified by the conflicted border region.

Direct violence manifests most overtly in the form of cross-border surgical strikes between India and Pakistan. This form of biopower uses nationalism to justify continued violence for the protection of the people—though they are suffering because of their sovereign's actions. These zones exist in a permanent "state of emergency" which, especially with the saturation of the military, undermines the capability of "normal" existence.

Structural violence in the form of capitalism and patriarchy, paired with the chronic stress of state-sponsored violence, leads the men of Manguchak to alcoholism and opiate addiction. Because their lands are constantly destroyed by shelling and they do not have transportation to steady work, they are no longer the breadwinners of the family. The men turn to alcohol and opium to cope with their poverty, unemployment, physical insecurity due to shelling, and failure to fulfil "male duties" as expected by a patriarchal society. They are blamed by society and the government for their own "slow death," and the cyclical depression, poverty, and addiction continues. The men express their frustration through abuse of the women.

The women, on the other hand, do not turn to alcohol or drugs; they do not have a means to process extraordinary state violence, other than gossiping about others. Through the theatre workshop, the women created a space to unpack their trauma and bond with other women. In other settings, they could not express their opinions or offer their own narratives because of patriarchal restrictions; but through theatre, they created a space in which they could discuss, dialogue, and express themselves. Their plays are centred on themselves as women who fought against injustice within their communities and their households, and they put that into action with the District Magistrate's visit and in their interactions with each other.

Though they pledged to diminish the violence in the village, especially for future generations, this magnitude of work cannot only be done just by the women of Manguchak. Patriarchal forces, nationalism, and structural inequality are deeply rooted within the India-Pakistan borderlands; the end of violence—against innocent civilians, against impoverished people, against women—must be a commitment made by the men of Manguchak, the South Asian society, and the warring nations.

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REPORTING SEXUAL VIOLENCE DURING CONFLICT: A CASE STUDY OF HUMANITARIAN WORKERS IN MYANMAR

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Abstract

Preventing sexual and gender-based violence in conflict-related situations, and protecting people from it, requires an understanding of how and why sexual violence happens, as well as the capacity to calculate its likelihood. Reporting on conflict-related sexual violence serves multiple functions. It can be used to guide public health and humanitarian responses, and to serve as an evidence-gathering exercise in the service of legal accountability. How and when to report sexual violence in conflict situations has become a crucial issue since the introduction of UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolutions 1820 (2008), 1888 and 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), and 2106 (2013), all of which call for the systematic reporting of sexual violence in conflict and conflict-related situations with a view to alerting the UNSC and the wider international community to the need to prevent such violence, protect potential victims, and provide relief and recovery. In such situations, reporting sexual violence may be interpreted as much a political act as a humanitarian one. This article examines the reporting choices that professional humanitarian workers consider when reporting sexual violence incidents in the specific case of Myanmar. The article argues for differentiated reporting requirements depending on the severity of the crimes, the humanitarian workers' access to populations at risk, and the (in)stability of the conflict situation.

Introduction

There is an international responsibility to report sexual and gender-based violence. In 1998, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) identified sexual and gender-based violence – rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilisation, and other forms of sexual violence – as crimes against humanity and/or war crimes when committed in international and non-international armed conflicts.² This definition of gender-based violence includes acts of persecution based on gender among crimes against humanity. Acts of sexual and gender-based violence fall under the ICC's jurisdiction if they constitute acts of genocide, crimes against humanity, or war crimes.³ These crimes can be referred to the ICC irrespective of whether they are perpetrated within or outside armed conflict. Crimes of sexual

Sara E. Davies, "Reporting Sexual Violence During Conflict: A Case Study of Humanitarian Workers in Myanmar," *St Antony's International Review* 14 no.2 (2019): 80-101.

and gender-based violence are also recognized as threats to international peace and security, and a state's failure to take timely and decisive action to end these crimes can be referred to the UNSC.⁴ At the time of the adoption of UNSC Resolution (SCR) 1325 in 2000, the UNSC called for an "immediate and complete cessation by all parties to armed conflict of all acts of sexual violence against civilians," referring to these crimes under the 1998 Rome Statute.⁵ The UNSC adopted a series of measures designed to give force to SCR 1325 in SCR 1820 (2008) and subsequent SCRs specifically on conflict-related sexual violence: SCR 1888 (2009); SCR 1889 (2009); SCR 1960 (2010), and SCR 2106 (2013). Among these was a heightened call for more field-level reporting on "conflict-related sexual violence, including rape in situations of armed conflict and post-conflict and other situations relevant to the implementation of SCR 1888 (2009)."⁶

The scope of relevant reporting has expanded with the adoption of each resolution.⁷ The Office for the Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) on Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict (SVAC) developed an early warning matrix to alert the UN Secretary General (UNSG) to situations that merit attention. Since 2012, the UNSG has submitted an annual report to the UNSC on conflict-related sexual violence, listing crimes and perpetrators by country and/or situation.⁸ Reporting on situations that are not on the agenda of the UNSC is permitted, as is reporting on situations outside armed conflict if the crimes are considered sufficiently serious, widespread, and/or systematic. The UNSG can request that the UNSC convene a meeting to discuss a situation in which sexual violence is taking place to such an extent that it is judged to present a threat to international peace and security. The UNSC is to monitor situations where suspected conflict-related sexual violence has taken place, is permitted to attach sanctions to individuals and armed groups suspected of committing these crimes and may refer individuals to the ICC.⁹

SCRs on conflict-related sexual violence identify three specific functions – monitoring, reporting, and protection – that should be fulfilled by the UN and other actors (such as UN agencies and offices, humanitarian actors, peacekeeping forces, security sector actors, and state officials) in the field.¹⁰ According to the SCRs, these actors have a responsibility to protect people from sexual violence.¹¹ These same actors have a responsibility to monitor situations of high risk, and to address cultures of impunity in the social, military, political, and judicial sector. They also have a specific responsibility to report situations and individuals suspected of sexual violence. The SCRs (especially SCRs 1888, 1889, and 1960) are all very clear on reporting as one of the three functions and re-

sponsibilities of relevant actors. Reports assist with the collection of evidence to investigate and prosecute sexual violence perpetrators, so as to address cultures of impunity that enable these acts of violence and to provide an evidence base for service provision to treat and support survivors.¹² The UN Office of the Special Representative on Sexual Violence is permitted to receive reports from UN and non-UN organizations and to brief the UNSC through the UNSG.¹³ Reports aim to publicly “name and shame” perpetrators.¹⁴ The act of reporting thus places the first responders, often humanitarians, into situations of sexual violence, in a politically important albeit precarious situation.¹⁵

Ostensibly, reporting sexual violence in conflict and other fragile situations can help achieve other objectives. It can support advocacy for strengthening services, offer potential victims better protection by dissuading perpetrators if they know they are being watched, and provide an evidence base for legal accountability.¹⁶ Reporting also builds a database so that first responders, policy makers, prosecutors, and researchers can understand motives and patterns in these acts of violence, as well as the harm they cause.¹⁷ However, evidence of the efficacy of interventions to address and prevent sexual violence remains low.¹⁸ We have little direct evidence to support the assumption(s) that reporting sexual violence delivers the objectives it is purported to achieve, and relatively little understanding of humanitarians’ practical experiences of reporting.

This article focuses on the experiences of humanitarian workers who report sexual violence in conflict situations, and the politics of such reporting. I argue that we need to pay more attention to the complexities of reporting and its relationship to reporters’ rights and responsibilities. The article proceeds in three parts. The first part looks at the challenges described to date by humanitarian workers in reporting sexual violence in conflict and other fragile situations. The second part examines these experiences in specific detail in the Myanmar case based on fieldwork between 2015 and 2018. The third part reflects on the experiences of humanitarian workers in Myanmar with reporting expectations of the international community. In studying the Myanmar case, the article argues that more attention must be given to how humanitarians collect and report information.

Humanitarian First Responders and In Situ Reporters

In the ten years since the UN reporting system on conflict-related sexual violence was established, first responders who report according to the system have described experiences of rivalry,

tension, despair, frustration, neglect, and danger. We will examine such personal testimonies in more length below. Here, I briefly outline some of the main obstacles currently associated with the process of reporting sexual violence in the last ten years since the introduction of the SCRs on conflict-related sexual violence. This will help situate the workers' experiences in Myanmar in a broader context.

Humanitarian assistance is guided by the principles of humanity, neutrality, and impartiality. However, with these minimum standards comes a paradox: "humanitarian action is more than a technical exercise aimed at nourishing or healing a populations defined as 'in need'; it is a moral endeavour based on solidarity with other members of humanity."¹⁹ Humanitarianism affects patterns of aid and protection in conflict locations. Humanitarians have increasingly been called upon to consider the unintended consequences of their action (or inaction) in conflict.²⁰

On this point, Hugo Slim argues that no humanitarian agency can escape accountability to report what they witness: "Agencies need to be able to 'know and show' what they have intended, done, and the results that have flowed from their actions."²¹ The challenge, he argues, is differentiating between what humanitarians must report immediately (i.e., within twenty-four to forty-eight hours) in order to minimize negative consequences, from what can be reported later (i.e., in an annual report). Slim suggests the responsibility to report has two levels – first order and second order. A first order report takes account of immediate relief and protection needs. For example, reporting sexual violence might stop short of identifying perpetrators in order to maintain humanitarian access. Second-order reporting provides more comprehensive detail to satisfy demands for accountability and impartiality.²²

We see some important tensions in the responsibility to report.²³ Reporting can intensify stigma and shame directed at those who report, which can compromise trust and access between local populations and humanitarian organizations, especially those that provide medical care.²⁴ Humanitarian workers in the field face practical and logistical barriers to reporting. There is also a problem of apathy towards reporting, which is less widely discussed.²⁵ The politically, socially, and culturally difficult conditions in which humanitarians report may be known by humanitarian organizations, but it is very difficult for individuals to speak of these conditions without appearing to be furthering the power, purpose, and impunity associated with sexual violence.²⁶

Humanitarians have voiced frustration about the 'race' to report, followed by the selectivity of incidents chosen for the annual reports. In South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo

(DRC), and Afghanistan, for example, decisions about when to report were fraught with tension. Frustration was expressed within the UN system by those who felt that some acts of sexual violence received more political attention – and hence resources – than others because they happened to fit with the priorities of key external governments.²⁷ In the case of Afghanistan, for example, when the Taliban took over Kunduz in September 2015, humanitarian reports of rape were doubted within the UN and other INGOs. A UN gender specialist who arrived in October and began to make her own independent enquiry into the reports found that, when pressed, there would be acknowledgment by humanitarian first responders that sexual violence was “probably” widespread, but their responses were: “This is [just] a problem in the homes, it [sexual violence] existed between families and communities, it happens but [is] not a deliberate strategy in the conflict or a weapon of war like the Congo.”²⁸

A second concern raised in the humanitarian space is that the international community is not speaking with one voice. The UNSC’s five permanent members are divided on what situations of sexual violence are within the UNSC’s remit and which are not. This leads to situations where, in one year, reports of sexual violence against women in Congolese refugee camps in Angola and sexual violence against women protestors in Egypt are included in the UNSG’s annual report, and the next year, these “non-conflict” situations are removed.²⁹ Alternatively, take the case of the DRC, where Sahla Aroussi has argued that the act of reporting has become perfunctory, with little expectation that it will deliver legal, political, or social change to the lives of those who survive such violence (and the families of those who do not survive such violence).³⁰ Reporting sexual violence in the DRC is met with little objection in the UNSC, but evidence that any of the resulting interventions – from peacekeeping to mobile justice clinics – has made a sustained difference is harder to establish. This is a source of frustration for many. Humanitarians, particularly the medical humanitarian community, dispute whether the reporting process has contributed to improved care.³¹

Despite the articulation of international standards on the management of rape in humanitarian settings, the few clinics that manage to safely reach the conflict locations – where most of first responses to rape must take place – rarely have the necessary provisions for clinical standard treatment of rape care.³² In social environments that may be resistant to the delivery or prioritization of clinical care for sexual violence (and domestic violence), humanitarian workers may only meet minimum standards in a low-key manner.³³ This can compromise reporting – the evidence base

will be lower and the “proof” of care and need is difficult. Some humanitarians argue that this situation suits particular UNSC members who are resistant to expand the role and function of UN humanitarian agencies in these locations.³⁴

Finally, the situation is further complicated by the relationship between reporting and legal accountability. On the one hand are those who advocate for the amplification of forensic evidence units in conflict and humanitarian situations with a long-term view to investigation and prosecution. On the other are those who argue that the delivery of basic health care should be the priority and that this can be compromised by a blurring of lines between impartial humanitarian engagement and other forms of engagement, including reporting.³⁵ If we examine the case of South Sudan, the initial roll-out of the UN Women Protection Advisers (WPA) program was minimally funded. This meant that sometimes one WPA was present to document rapes in a 30,000-person internal displacement camp, and sometimes there was no WPA in the entire country.³⁶ To whom did humanitarian first responders then report situations where high numbers of sexual violence had occurred? Often practices fell back to procedures prior to the WPA system, with humanitarians going to their respective UN agencies, offices, or non-government head office, for logistical support.

Since the passage of SCR 1820 in 2008, significant demands for more reporting have emerged, but unresolved challenges associated with SGBV data collection remain.³⁷ If reporters are going out on a limb to report a “situation of concern” that is not on the UNSC’s agenda, the reports must detail a high threshold of very strong evidence of sexual violence already taking place sourced from reports from the field offices.³⁸ But meeting these thresholds is not easy: “Practitioners in the field estimate that for each rape reported in connection with a conflict, ten to twenty cases go undocumented. The figures presented here reflect incident reports and therefore do not indicate the magnitude of the problem.”³⁹ Even in situations where humanitarian access is unrestricted and documentation of sexual violence widespread, reports may still be the tip of the iceberg in terms of actual violence.⁴⁰ There are many reasons why people do not disclose the violence they have suffered, problems amplified when safety and anonymity are not assured.⁴¹

The remainder of this article examines how these challenges have manifested in Myanmar, where crimes of sexual violence are strongly associated with the country’s sixty-year conflict and political transition. Myanmar has been included in the UNSG’s reports on conflict-related sexual violence since 2012. Humanitarians in Myanmar are constantly balancing what to reveal and what

to conceal. They have become consequential actors within the politically-contested space. Their reports have consequences for the victim, the perpetrator, the agency, and the political context in which they are located. They are acutely aware of this and spend much of their time balancing the politics of access, the politics of data collection, and the politics of protecting people through their reports. The politicization and logistical difficulties associated with reporting were regularly raised as critical concerns.

Myanmar: Background

After decades of military rule, Myanmar underwent electoral reforms following the introduction of a new Constitution in 2008. Two nationwide elections were held to fill seats in the upper and lower houses of parliament in 2012 and 2015. The National League for Democracy won a majority of seats in 2015, but they share this governing majority with the *Tatmadaw* (military), who retain thirty-three percent of the seats in parliament and hold ministerial portfolios (Home Affairs, Border, and Defence).

Between 1948 (Myanmar's independence from Britain) and 1962, there were attempts to create a federal system of government to manage Myanmar's large and diverse ethnic population (135 recognized ethnic groups). The 1962 military coup ended this negotiation. Civil war, Western-led sanctions, and poverty have been Myanmar's experience since then. Today, the country's eighteen "recognized" non-state armed groups are being asked by the *Tatmadaw* and Government to sign a Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement, which has been the subject of negotiations since 2013 and ready for signatories since 2015. The State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's ambition is to negotiate a substantive peace agreement in 2020 with all armed groups.

One of the largest ethnic armed groups, the Karen, has signed; the other large ethnic armed group, the Kachin, has not. There are ongoing conflicts in Shan and Kachin, and most recently, crimes of ethnic cleansing and genocide against the Rohingya minority population in Rakhine State. Many of the conflicts are low-intensity, with battle deaths ranging between fifty and one hundred per year. Most of those deaths are civilians and non-state combatants. In Kachin and Rakhine, the intensity is higher, with over 1,000 deaths per year. There remain non-government-controlled areas in many conflict and post-conflict locations, which means that humanitarians must seek the permission of the government and armed ethnic groups to access populations for health care treatment, including clinical management of sexual violence.

Since 2012, the UNSG's report on sexual violence in conflict-

related situations has listed Myanmar as a site of ongoing sexual and gender-based violence. In 2018, the report identified patterns of violence in Myanmar taking place “against a backdrop of entrenched gender-based inequality, which impedes the ability of women to participate in political, economic and social life.”⁴² Ongoing conflicts between ethnic minority groups and the *Tatmadaw* has been identified as the cause for incidences of conflict-related sexual violence taking place in militarized zones such as Kachin, northern Shan and parts of southeast Myanmar. Mass displacement and the imposition of military checkpoints and military curfews by the *Tatmadaw* and ethnic armed groups have contributed to high rates of sexual violence, trafficking, and sexual slavery of women and girls in the conflict locations. In addition, this report mentions crimes of ethnic cleaning committed against the minority Rohingya community in Rakhine State in late 2017, where “widespread threat and use of sexual violence [by the *Tatmadaw*] was integral to their strategy, humiliating, terrorizing and collectively punishing the Rohingya community and serving as a calculated tool to force them to flee their homelands and prevent their return. Violence was visited upon women, including pregnant women, who are seen as custodians and propagators of ethnic identity, as well as on young children, who represent the future of the group.”⁴³

Myanmar is cited along with the Central African Republic, the DRC, Iraq, Mali, Nigeria, Somalia, and South Sudan as locations where:

“[S]exual violence continued to be employed as a tactic of war, terrorism, torture and repression, including the targeting of victims on the basis of their actual or perceived ethnic, religious, political or clan affiliation. In many cases, the intent and impact of such violence was to forcibly displace and disperse the targeted community, with corrosive effects on social cohesion. [...] It was also noted in several settings that women and girls rarely report sexual violence by members of their own community in times of war, owing to overarching political and ethnic loyalties and pressures.”⁴⁴

Methodology

To understand the challenges of reporting sexual and gender-based violence within Myanmar, interviews were conducted with national and international humanitarian workers based in clinics distributed across the country. Four fieldwork trips were conducted between August 2015 and July 2018. Due to the condition of

anonymity necessary to secure the interviews, and the ongoing sensitivity of the information supplied in these interviews, there is no discussion of the identities of humanitarian organizations or their locations in Myanmar. The ethnic identities of the community where they operate are not stated. These were the conditions necessary to secure the interviews, which illuminate the stress that humanitarian workers consider themselves to be in when making decisions about what to report.

Interviews were a mix of one-to-one and focus group interviews (suggested by those being interviewed) with local (provincial level) civil society organizations and international organizations with field office locations in Myanmar provinces. The majority of local civil society organizations interviewed provide humanitarian support (shelter, food, clothing, medicine) for individuals from within their ethnic group, and some were located in non-government-controlled areas. A non-government-controlled area is one where the combatant group controls that territory, including humanitarian access. The international organizations interviewed were with three humanitarian response-focused UN agencies and two international non-government organizations with field offices located in states including Mon, Karen, Kayin, Shan and Rakhine.

All interviews discussed a range of topics relevant to three research programs: gender inclusion in peace process, citizenship for returned displaced persons, and reporting sexual violence in conflict affected areas. Interview locations were in Yangon, Mon, Karen, Kayin, and Shan states. All interviews on the situation in the Rakhine state were conducted in Yangon. The interview participants number twenty individuals. The interviews were semi-structured, and individuals were selected due to their work on gender inclusion in the peace process and/or a history of reporting sexual violence in a conflict situation within Myanmar (i.e., the individual interviewed or their organization was sourced as a report author). Most of the discussions recounted below turned to the individual experience of reporting sexual violence near the end of the interview. All interviewees requested complete anonymity when the conversation turned to their experience of reporting sexual violence incidents in Myanmar to the authorities, combatant armies, and respective organization headquarters.

The author's interest in those who report sexual violence to the UN stems from earlier, informal conversations with individuals were managing this responsibility. In the literature on conflict-related sexual violence, the majority of research to date is on testimony and experience from victims and perpetrators. Apart from a 2014 special issue published by the *International Review of the Red Cross*, there are few detailed studies of how humanitarian agencies

are accommodating the increased demand that they report the incidents of sexual violence that they witness.

What is Observed and What is Reported: Three Challenges in Practise

Reporting in an ongoing conflict

Only a few interviewees reported feeling under any time pressure to report. Their primary concern was the selectivity of headquarters (in Yangon, New York, and/or Geneva) determining which reports were referenced in publications (especially among UN agencies and organizations) and followed through. The humanitarian workers then must manage the political consequences of reporting; what often concerns them is the unpredictability of these repercussions. It has sometimes stayed their hand from writing the full, complicated picture of violence that they may be observing. I provide the full discussion below so we can read the train of thought of one humanitarian worker located in one of the most dangerous areas with intense conflict and high volume of displacements in Myanmar between 2012 and 2015, here referred to as “X.”

“The ability of anyone to follow up on these violations, whether it’s local or national actors is very, nil. It’s nil actually. So there’s not an interlocutor even to follow up with if that happens and that would be – in terms of state actors, there are a range of state security actors who would be responsible in those areas, and not necessarily the Tatmadaw, but no possibility for recourse to justice.

One of the biggest problems we have in X is that when someone does report a rape we have a lot of trouble trying to support that survivor to access health services. First of all, because sometimes there is no health service for [these] women. If [it is] an emergency, they go through a clinic and then they can get to the X General Hospital but we have stories out of X General Hospital where women are giving birth and they’re being beaten up at the same time for giving birth to another dog [derogatory term for member of the ethnic group in question], literally. So women don’t feel safe or supported accessing those general state-run health services. Even if they did want to, the perception, and [...] we’ve done quite a bit of work around what the law looked like, what kind of administrative or

local orders were in place that might be supporting this concept of first incident reporting where the survivor has to go to the police, file a report, talk about who the perpetrator was, what was involved in the incident. Then the police will prepare a report and then the survivor can take that to the township medical officer who will then provide her with medical assistance. I don't know but 99 per cent of survivors don't want to do that."⁴⁵

Another, in 2017, described the "blowback" from reporting:

"So seeking health care is pretty difficult and then seeking help in general is also fairly difficult for rape cases. There's – across Burma it's fairly common for families to react violently for – against the woman or the girl, for bringing shame on the family; that's a fairly common reaction. It's particularly common within X communities. Primarily, the community solutions are either to marry the perpetrator or to have the perpetrator pay some sort of fine. But that fine generally goes to the camp management committees in our camp settings, rather than the family or the person."⁴⁶

When asked if it was possible to circumvent the local orders and treat victims without informing the state, two of the four humanitarian workers said nothing.⁴⁷ I am not sure from this silence whether this was something that they do but do not want to discuss. The fourth humanitarian worker, interviewed in 2018, only said, "We are working under a Memorandum of Understanding here with the government, which is still really the Tatmadaw outside of Yangon. We have to be careful so we can keep staying here."⁴⁸ Scrupulously complying with the duty to report sexual violence in this context would create inevitable costs, but the pay-offs were uncertain.

Certainly, there is little prospect that reporting leads to legal accountability or additional humanitarian assistance. There is a sense of futility and compromise. Reports are not going to change the situation on the ground, which remains dangerous. Women may stop coming to clinics if they feel they are being reported on, influencing how the clinic is perceived in the community. When I suggested that reporting is important because it can detail the suffering and needs of the people on the ground, the humanitarian workers acknowledged that this is true. They pointed out that they have submitted reports detailing such violence, which is why I was there interviewing them. The concern they had with such

reporting was that it did not tell the whole picture, which is that in some communities, women experience violence from everyone.⁴⁹ Border guards, police, Tatmadaw, local health care workers, and family members all abuse them.

The logistics and politics of data collection and access

The humanitarians interviewed expressed a strong desire to gain access to communities in conflict-affected areas that suffer acute shortages of health care services, health education, and psychosocial support. In conflict and non-government-controlled areas this access is both vital and difficult to obtain. The logistics and politics of gaining access means making difficult trade-offs and compromises.

“In X, we haven’t had access into the non-government areas. We have four centres in the government-controlled areas and four centres in non-government-controlled areas. We haven’t had access to any of our centres in the non-government-controlled areas for nearly a year. We have no idea what’s going on. We have no idea what the centres look like. We know they’re providing services because the organization we partner with tell us they are. They’re reporting data, but we don’t know the quality of care, or response...So it’s really, I think – I worry a lot about the women in the NGCA (non-government-controlled areas).”⁵⁰

Do the humanitarian actors feel they have power to persuade armed groups for access? There is strong rejection of using reports to pressure the armed groups. The concern is that they cannot control the consequences of such reports. The government could latch onto them, access to the government-controlled areas could be withdrawn, and it could take years to get the humanitarian organizations back to where they are. Caution in deciding what to report is a salient theme in this discussion, as it was often raised by interviewees and reflects the broader findings regarding the process of negotiating access with non-state combatants.⁵¹ What then, of humanitarians’ responsibility to report, if they are being selective in what they report?

“We work a lot on getting information, gathering of information and verifying data for the reports and then emphasizing the limitations of that data. We use it to say things I think we can’t say here in Myanmar. So we use it with other human rights reporting mechanisms.

I think I feel it's the same. There are certain things you can't say within Myanmar and then it's useful to use the international reporting mechanisms to do that, and also to get data out I suppose where you can. Yeah, that would be the main benefit for it I suppose. You have to be really careful as well because some of the reports are really – yeah, you have to be very careful in how you frame things because it can also have a bad effect operationally, if we're identified as a source of information.”⁵²

“Well, we're the only ones operating in certain areas so it will be clear where we are. There are several examples of that. But also, the government will just have a very strong reaction against some of the reports. As you know, in the case of a report on human rights in Myanmar [which] just publicly said that they don't agree with any of the recommendations made...but we can say – that is their report not ours. We supplied the data, but we didn't write the report.”⁵³

“It depends. If we're focusing on advocacy, we try to make the advocacy points and the asks very tangible. So it's not necessarily that we're doing [thematic] advocacy or advocacy around human rights and why this is a human rights concern; that would be very sensitive. It's more like we advocate for smoother and less complicated referral processes to hospitals or we advocate for women who we identify as meeting certain criteria to be able to move their food ration from one camp to the other or things like that. Because all of those things are also virtually impossible, so we try to keep it very concrete...within the NGO, UN system, if it's at our camp level and then anything else try and push to a different level or do in a different way.”⁵⁴

“You can't have reporting for the sake of reporting; it's unethical and it's – you're asking these women to put themselves at more risk. Girls are asking staff to put themselves at risk and if you're not going to provide meaningful services, if you're not going to work on things like psychosocial and health and safety and justice, then why are you asking these people to do that? You've got to provide services. You've got to have a focus on services.”⁵⁵

These responses reveal marked differences in approaches to reporting responsibilities. Some take the reporting responsibility

seriously and agonize over what to include and exclude. Others resent the reporting system as they feel it feeds a global competition for attention, where Myanmar struggles against other conflict situations, such as South Sudan. Concerns were expressed that reporting was not tied to follow-up mechanisms and that it was creating additional burdens and complications without delivering tangible benefits for victims. Other humanitarians see reporting as giving them the freedom to talk about what they observe and release it to other bodies which bear a responsibility for political action. Bearing witness remains an important humanitarian function actively embraced by these humanitarians themselves. The difficulty they encountered was weighing a calculated risk – to bear witness and to protect access – without being complicit in the crimes they were witnessing.⁵⁶ When the humanitarian found a way to “get the information out” without compromising their personal access to populations, they expressed genuine relief.⁵⁷

Politics of Data Collection

What was unexpected and proved consistent across the interviews was a politics of data collection on sexual violence that revolved around the perpetrator more than the victim. The identity of the perpetrator, the perpetrator’s social status, and the specific relationship of power between perpetrator and victim matters greatly in determining what data is collected.

“Well, we set up the centres in X. We’re working with a local organization and just getting to a point of establishing best practice with them, discuss what our centre would look like, what a safe space looks like, how we establish a counselling room. So, we spent the first six months just trying to get the centres in a place that was actually safe for women. Then we slowly started to introduce the idea of reporting on case management. In the first six months of operation we think we had something like 8,500 women accessing the eight centres...But they’re still not recording perpetrator information. They don’t feel comfortable doing it. So, we haven’t asked them to. All we ask them to do is record whether it’s IPV [intimate partner violence], if it’s a stranger, if it’s a family member. We are just trying to get an idea of what the need is.”⁵⁸

When probed further about the perpetrators of sexual violence in these conflict locations, the discussion turns to the “comfort”

and “familiarity” of reporting the Tatmadaw as the perpetrator, derived from the prior expectations of Tatmadaw responsibility among international actors.⁵⁹ The corollary to this is that a focus on sexual violence in conflict may help conceal other acts of violence that women in particular are exposed to within their community.

“If you look at the actual data the incidences and prevalence rate of sexual violence in conflict affected areas is actually quite low compared to the very high levels of gender-based violence and intimate partner violence across Myanmar. You would think it would be quite strategic for national women’s organizations to take their sole focus off sexual violence in conflict and bring it into this broader discourse, the policy framework of addressing gender-based violence.

But I think it’s incredibly hard for women’s organizations – and in turn for us – to report this. Because some of them are formed upon ethnic lines and they often work very closely with ethnic armed organizations [EAOs]. The discourse of sexual violence is always – it’s the [Tatmadaw] committing crimes against ethnic women. This is the conflict narrative in this country. Reflexivity isn’t there for them to say you know, in my ethnic community I could also be experiencing gender-based violence but it’s so normalized, because this narrative sexual violence is so strong right?”⁶⁰

Humanitarian workers talk of “accepted” silences and taboos that no one crosses when reporting sexual violence. The incidence of institutionalized sexual violence by monks is a case in point. In one township, two humanitarian workers (one local, one international) discussed the high incidence of female-headed households in the former conflict territory having a particular problem with some monks assuming these women were “theirs.”⁶¹ This discussion was in whispered tones; I was not allowed to record the conversation. Buddhist Monks have complete legal immunity when wearing their robes, and in this particular community, have a strong relationship with the Tatmadaw. There is a monk or group of monks usually located in each village, which have on average a population of 250. In this area, there is a high number of female-headed households and housing is rudimentary. It is easy to gain access to houses at any time of the day and few villages have electricity. It was lamented that only when monks rape children do communities quietly – always quietly – demand the monk(s)

be relocated. It takes great bravery to stand up against a monk in this area.

The humanitarian workers suspected the Tatmadaw may be blamed for crimes, especially rapes, that they did not commit because it was considered more acceptable to blame the military than to blame other actors, especially in regions not controlled by the military. The two humanitarian workers said, “no one is ready to talk about this issue and nor are we.”⁶² When asked how they feel about this, they both noted the difficulty. There is no doubt that individual Tatmadaw members engage in acts of sexual violence with full expectation of impunity, but they may not commit them in the numbers reported. The humanitarian workers talk of the effort they put into trying to ensure that the small number of women’s centres which support women fleeing violence within their communities have access to the resources needed. The really dangerous work, the humanitarian workers stress, is being done by a local woman who runs a shelter for women who need respite.

First and Second Order Reporting

“Doing humanitarian work at scale is doing politics.”⁶³ Reporting sexual and gender-based violence in conflict-affected places is a difficult, dangerous, and deeply political business that involves trade-offs and compromises. The discussions with the humanitarian workers in Myanmar reveal a genuine concern that their reports are being received without an understanding of the complexity they encounter in the field. The workers themselves question the distinction between sexual violence perpetrated by armed combatants and the same crime perpetrated by an intimate partner in a displacement camp. They wrestle with the knowledge that reporting Tatmadaw rapes is more “acceptable” in communities than rapes by border police or members of non-state armed groups of the same ethnicity. Denial of access to health services by ethnic armed groups should women report violence they experience in the non-government controlled areas is a real concern. Some humanitarians feel that they are reporting what they observe, even if it never sees light in a report to the UNSC or the UN Human Rights Council, is important; others doubt its utility.

They express frustration with what they see as ‘reporting for reporting’s sake’ and a system which supports the violence they are witnessing on the ground, but interestingly, those most frustrated with the reporting system admit they report the least. Should protection, advocacy, and resources be supplied without evidence? This was the position of some humanitarian workers. Their refusal

to publicly discuss rape cases by monks and violent acts committed against women by armed groups from their own ethnicity did not mean they were not working to address these abuses in quieter ways. Humanitarians make trade-offs based on calculations about how to maximize the protection of vulnerable people, sometimes gain access to particular areas by not talking about the different types of sexual violence (and its perpetrators) they witness there and participate in selective data collection. There is little doubt that humanitarian access is helped by their organization's decisions on data collection "gaps" and reporting "trade-offs," but this means that their work falls short of the evidence and accountability standards that the sector has established.⁶⁴

Conclusion

Scholars and practitioners need to engage more with the complexity of sexual violence reporting rights and responsibilities. In the first part of the article I presented the challenges described by humanitarian workers on reporting sexual violence in conflict and other fragile situations. To date, critical challenges include the timeliness of reporting (and competition among humanitarians to report first), the politicization of reporting, and the logistical, as well as resourcing, gaps for humanitarians who are told to report but rarely given guidance on how and when report in situations where access is difficult or dangerous.

Through the Myanmar case, I have identified three further reporting challenges faced by humanitarians. First, humanitarians cannot control the consequences of reporting. They are vulnerable to local (provincial) and national politicization; and they cannot control this politicization. It affects their access to populations and determines what they do or do not report. The second challenge relates to managing the logistics of reporting, particularly if it affects access to populations requiring protection. Reporting timeliness and reporting competition were rarely raised by those in the field; access and protection were the priorities. The third, least expected finding was the careful decisions made around data collection. Even prior to discussions on what to report, everyone discussed the difficulties of which data could be safely collected—even for internal purposes. Collecting data on perpetrators and types of sexual violence are particular areas of contestation and tension.

Humanitarians acknowledge their reporting obligations. They understand the logic of differentiating between first-order (i.e., to deliver immediate humanitarian supply and resources) and second-order (i.e., to deliver structural reform and justice mechanisms

within the region or state) reports of sexual violence. Their concern is that even this practice is situation-specific. The humanitarians describe situations where they hope to secure long term access for vulnerable, displaced populations where reporting is so dangerous that organizations decide to simply stop collecting data because of the potential risks of data exposure and attacks on humanitarians, especially local workers. Interviewees spoke candidly of setting up clinics in the knowledge that no data will come from these clinics; they acknowledge that these conditions have led to gaps in their reports, but this has to be balanced against the need to maintain access and provide services to vulnerable populations. Under these conditions, we see the difficult line humanitarians tread and the compromises they make concerning data collection and reporting.

The Myanmar case is not unique. What it reveals is the need to pay more attention to the purpose of sexual violence reports when humanitarians are juggling their reporting obligations with the politics of access. Reporting is demanded by most agencies and organizations, but it is not clear who is responsible for defending those who do report from local (and international) criticism, or how reporting can be done comprehensively without inhibiting access and thus the provision of direct care to vulnerable populations.

First-order reports (i.e., quantitative reports) call for specific resources and assistance in the immediate stages of the crisis. These may be permitted to exclude detail on perpetrators, location (e.g., home, military base, or refugee camp) and victim identity. Second-order reports must then follow with considered analysis on the typologies of the sexual violence encountered in that context, the composition of who seeks and who receives humanitarian assistance, and the obstacles to delivering assistance to each of the groups. More effort should be dedicated to differentiating sexual violence reporting expectations to international and non-government organizations, in recognition of the local and international political obstacles experienced by humanitarians when reporting such data. Differentiated reporting does not end the search for evidence and accountability but acknowledges the political space in which humanitarians operate.

Decisions on when and how these reports should be disseminated and who should be responsible for issuing these reports (i.e., headquarters or the field office) can be decided outside of the context, where reporting is difficult and dangerous. This opens the space for humanitarians to issue reports that detail the evidence necessary to request resources, but it also creates a safe space for more detailed second-order reports that include considered analysis on the observations and experiences of those responding to incidences of sexual and gender-based violence in that specific

Notes

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- 51 Rob Grace, Briefing Note: Frontline Negotiations with Non-State Armed Groups (Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, 2016), accessed February 6, 2019, https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/nsag_literature_review_0.pdf; William Carter and Katherine Haver, Humanitarian Access Negotiations with Non-State Armed Groups: Internal Guidance Gaps and Emerging Good Practice, Secure Access in Volatile Environments (SAVE) Resource Paper (Global Public Policy Institute, October 2016), accessed February 6, 2019, https://www.gppi.net/media/SAVE__2016__Humanitarian_access_negotiations_with_non-state_armed_groups.pdf.
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- 53 NGO official, interview with author, Mon State, July 10, 2018.
- 54 INGO official 2, interview with author, Yangon, August 18, 2015.
- 55 INGO official, interview with author, Yangon, July 3, 2017.
- 56 Terry, *The Paradox of Humanitarian Action*, 244.
- 57 This reflects Laura Hammond's argument that "what humanitarians have come to terms with is not, I suggest, the demise of these principles [neutrality and impartiality] but the possibility that they may be co-opted by forces that present a real danger to the lives and work of those who seek to assist civilians in conflict zones." Laura Hammond, "The Power of Holding Humanitarianism Hostage and the Myth of Protective Principles," in *Humanitarianism in Question*, 194.
- 58 INGO official 1, interview with author, Yangon, August 17, 2015.
- 59 NGO official, interview with author, Yangon, July 7, 2017.
- 60 INGO official, interview with author, Yangon, July 3, 2017.
- 61 INGO official, interview with author, Mon State, July 10, 2018; NGO official, interview with author, Mon State, July 10, 2018.
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GENERAL SECTION

NORMATIVE DEPENDENCY AND THE USE OF FORCE: THE DECLARATIVE DIMENSION OF RUSSIA'S MILITARY OPERATIONS¹

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Abstract

The 2014 annexation of Crimea led to a debate on the fundamental character of Russia's post-Soviet foreign policy. Moscow's actions abroad have been roughly characterised as either offensive and expansionist or reactive and fundamentally defensive. This debate has reduced the declarative dimension of Russia's foreign policy to either Kremlin propaganda or statements that are sincere inasmuch they reflect Moscow's worldview. By focusing on the short-term, both perspectives are overly simplistic. This article aims to present a structural explanation of the patterns of argumentation in Russia's foreign policy declarative dimension. Drawing heavily from Viatcheslav Morozov's post-colonial analysis of Russia's foreign policy, I set out to look into Russia's declarative regard for norms governing the use of force as reflected in its rhetorical strategies. My aim is not to present a new theory but to present evidence for Morozov's structural perspective on Russia's foreign policy. A study of selected military operations carried out by post-Soviet Russia at home and abroad reveals that their declarative dimension exhibits a pattern of placing the normative pole outside Russia and into Western-leaning understandings of international norms. Two in-depth cases—the 1992 operation in Ingushetia and the 2015 intervention in Syria—highlight a consistent argumentative pattern that cuts across time, place, and the nature of the military operation. While further research is needed to conclusively characterise Russia's rhetorical strategies regarding the use of force, it can be said that Moscow's patterns of argumentation do not arise exclusively from tactical, short-term necessity; rather, they reflect Russia's enduring condition in the international system.

Ivan Kentros, "Normative Dependency and the Use of Force: The Declarative Dimension of Russia's Military Operation," *St Antony's International Review* 14, no. 2 (2019):102-120.

The post-2014 crisis between Russia and the West has seen the two sides exchange accusations of regarding the use of force abroad to upset the world order and assert their own interests. Russia accuses North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) countries of being self-serving, pointing to the wars in Yugoslavia and Iraq as cases where the West's human rights rhetoric obscured its violations of international law. Similarly, Western leaders have accused Moscow of using force to restore its former great-power status at the expense of a rules-based global order. Neither side accepts the other's interpretation of its own use of force. Indeed, Russia's rhetoric on its own use of force holds that Moscow is upholding international law. This apparent contradiction has been incorporated into divergent interpretations of the character of Russia's foreign policy as variously aggressive and defensive. Is Russia aggressively subverting and exploiting the language of international norms in its propaganda? Or are these rhetorical strategies earnest inasmuch they reflect Russia's apprehension towards the imposition of a Western understanding of international law? My aim is not to address this debate and argue for or against either interpretation. Instead, I aim to consider whether these rhetorical strategies, particularly those regarding the use of force, reflect a pattern in Russia's relationship to international norms.

In this article, I build on Morozov's characterisation of Russia's place in the international system as a "subaltern empire."² I aim to draw attention to Russia's normative dependency on the West through the case of the declarative dimension of its use of force. Morozov's argument, which I elaborate upon here, is that Russia's structurally determined position compels it to adopt a rhetoric of defending international law in its military operations. This is not a tactical choice made for short-term gain, but rather the outcome of its long-term, enduring normative entrapment.³ This point is made by Morozov himself,⁴ but I aim to present further evidence for it by reviewing the rhetorical strategies that accompanied its use of force in the post-Soviet period.⁵ My objective is not to offer a thorough analysis of the legal rationale behind each military operation but to offer an overview illustrating Russia's normative dependency in its military operations, as reflected in its rhetoric.

In the first section, I introduce the debate on the character of Russia's foreign policy and how it stands to benefit from a struc-

tural approach to Moscow's rhetoric. In the second, I offer a brief overview of Morozov's concept of Russia as a subaltern empire, with a focus on Russia's normative dependency on the West. In the third, I offer an overview of the official rhetoric that accompanied some of its post-Soviet military operations, with the aim of identifying Moscow's justification for the use of force at the onset of each military operation. Finally, I offer a comparison of two cases to better illustrate this dynamic: the peacekeeping operation in Ingushetia/North Ossetia–Alania (1992) and the intervention in Syria (2015). I argue that in spite of their differences—in time, place, duration, scale, and objectives—the underlying discursive similarities testify to Russia's normative dependency. I conclude by suggesting that this observed pattern is consistent and must be taken into consideration in the debate on Russia's foreign policy character, regardless of one's preferred interpretation. In any case, Russia's foreign policy character stems from not only its policies but also its rhetoric.

A Structural Perspective on Moscow's Rhetoric

The 2014 crisis in Ukraine and Russia's annexation of Crimea renewed debate on the drivers of Russia's foreign policy. Was Russia provoked into annexing Crimea and intervening in Ukraine out of fear of Western encroachment? Or did Russia exploit an opportunity to further its interests at the expense of Ukraine? These two perspectives offer conflicting interpretations of the overarching character of Russia's foreign policy, as variously aggressive and defensive.⁶ Both perspectives strive to identify the drivers of Russia's foreign policy and to offer a coherent account of the conditions that led to Russia's actions in 2014. The question of the character of Russia's foreign policy can also be detected in the academic debate on Russia's regard for international norms. One view holds that Russia has instrumentalized its permanent United Nations Security Council (UNSC) seat; another maintains that Moscow seeks to defend international security through the organisation, such as by resisting Western unilateralism.⁷

This debate stands to benefit from taking into account the declarative dimension of Russia's foreign policy as a response to external structural conditions. Many accounts of Russia's rhetorical strategies have characterized them as no more than a supplement to Moscow's foreign policy initiatives. Such an approach overlooks

an important source of insight into how Russia regards the conflicts in which it is involved and how it reconciles its actions with its rhetoric. Nevertheless, previous work on Russian perspectives on international affairs has explored the drivers behind Moscow's rhetorical strategies. Studies of critical geopolitics,⁸ Russia's regard for norms,⁹ and the long-simmering Russia-West conflict¹⁰ have all considered Moscow's rhetoric. However, Morozov's structural perspective on Russia's foreign policy offers an account of the enduring conditions in which Russia is embedded and which shape its stance on norms and potential rhetorical responses.¹¹ Thus, it can serve as a framework for addressing the declarative dimension of Russia's use of force. While Morozov's analysis of Russia's foreign policy lends itself to the aforementioned "defensive" interpretation, I argue further below that the normative dependency he identifies applies to the "offensive" one, too.

Normative Dependency: Russia as a Subaltern Empire

As mentioned above, the apparent contradictions in Russia's foreign policy rhetoric make neatly characterising Moscow's foreign policy a challenging task. Drawing from Morozov's study, I argue that these contradictions are a consistent as well as intrinsic part of Russia's foreign policy and use of force. Based on Laclau's concept of hegemony, Morozov¹² asserts a link between Russia's material condition and the discursive dimension of its foreign policy under the formula of the subaltern empire.¹³ The conceptual underpinning for this formula is an ontological perspective that places the analysis of the ideological—subjective and ideational—and the material on the same footing and presents them as mutually constitutive. This is a kind of ontological monism that lends itself to a particular perspective on Russia's identity formation, namely, as one determined by its asymmetrical relationship with the West. This offers a new insight into Russian history, which is marked by Russia's inability—save for the Soviet period—to produce an identity that is completely different from a European one and which does not frame Russia as a part of Europe *tout court*.¹⁴ Both possibilities have been impeded by enduring structural constraints: Russia's material and technological gap with the West, and its ontological insecurity, stemming from its "hierarchical inclusion" in European society.¹⁵ Using Laclau's concept of hegemony, Morozov notes that Russia finds itself both at the centre of its own hegemonic order and on the margins of European hege-

mony. Therefore, Russian society finds itself caught between establishing its own norms or value system and adopting those of Europe. In other words, it is a subaltern condition in which Russia cannot speak for itself and must speak through a hegemonic form of speech.¹⁶ In other words, the structural condition that compels Russia to adopt these rhetorical strategies affects not only its choice of narratives but also the very language in which it articulates these narratives.

For Russia, Europe remains the “standard of civilisation,” namely, the normative standard upon which Russian identities may be formulated, either in favour of integration—championed by Westernisers—or against it, in the case of Slavophiles.¹⁷ This does not mean that Russia is unable to shape international norms. Among other means, Russia capitalises on its permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council and its membership in multilateral organisations such as the Commonwealth of Independent States.¹⁸ However, it does suggest that Russia’s confrontational actions on the international stage are not necessarily aimed at the international order’s overthrow. Morozov cites the BRICS grouping, comprised of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, as an example.¹⁹ With the explicit aim of offering an alternative to Western-dominated international economic institutions, BRICS effectively imitates the technocratic perspective of its supposed rivals. Similarly, Morozov points to the declarative dimensions of Russia’s campaigns in Georgia (2008) and Ukraine (2014 to the present) as indicative of Russia’s inability to produce original normative grounds for using force.²⁰

The aim of the present paper is to determine whether these observations about the Georgia and Ukraine campaigns reflect a pattern in the rhetorical strategies accompanying Russia’s use of force. To this end, most of the major military operations carried out in the post-Soviet period by Russia were analysed, with the political declaration officially stating the military operations’ objectives identified and classified for each case. On the basis of this classification, the rhetoric used in the political declarations was studied in search of evidence for a pattern in Russia’s regard for international norms. A more exhaustive study would also address Russia’s legal rationale for its use of force in each operation.²¹ However, this declarative dimension already makes explicit how these instances of the use of force relate to international law and norms. Internal operations are also discursively linked to interna-

tional law and causes, such as the struggle against international terrorism. While my interest is not in the material dimension of Russia's condition as a subaltern empire, a diachronic comparison of how Moscow framed and executed two operations offers a more complete image of how Russia's normative entrapment compels it to consistently use certain rhetorical strategies in its military operations, regardless of their conduct. Indeed, the two cases addressed—Russia's 1992 peacekeeping operation in the Ingush-Ossetian conflict and its 2015 extra-regional operation in Syria—were selected because of their many differences. Yet, in both military operations, the rhetorical justifications offered by the authorities reflected Russia's normative dependency on the West.

Russia's Military Operations and Their Declarative Dimension: An Overview

In just over twenty-five years of existence, the Russian Armed Forces have conducted numerous military operations under a variety of banners (Table 1). These have differed widely in type, from interventions in other countries' civil wars to internal conflicts to interstate wars. Some have been asymmetric conflicts, while others have more closely resembled conventional wars. The country's leadership and political orientation has also varied from military operation to military operation, with Presidents Boris Yeltsin (1991–1999), Vladimir Putin (1999–2008, 2012 to the present), and Dmitri Medvedev (2008–2012) all undertaking military action while in office. Even so, in the time period under consideration, Russia's military operations were never discursively framed by the authorities as intended to defy the international order or selfishly pursue Russia's national interest.

Period of Russian Involvement	Location	Russia's Position
1991-1992	Moldova/ Transdniestria	External Operation
1992	Ingushetia/North Ossetia-Alania (Russia)	Internal Operation
1993-1996	Tajikistan	External Operation

1999-2009	Chechnya (Russia)	Internal Operation
2008	Georgia	External Operation
2014 to date	Ukraine	External Operation
2015 to date	Syria	External Operation

Table 1. Conflicts with major involvements of the Russian armed forces in the post-Soviet period.

Table 1 does not distinguish the use of force in a war from the use of force in an intervention. Instead, like Allison, I opt for a broad definition in order to account for a range of possible motives for the use of force.²² Hence, it includes both internal operations conducted on Russian soil and external ones conducted outside Russia’s borders. Internal and external operations have different implications vis-à-vis the laws and norms governing their conduct. External operations are governed by international rules and conventions on war as well as the domestic laws of belligerents. For example, United Nations peacekeeping mandates provide countries with a legal rationale for the use of force outside their borders.²³ By contrast, an internal operation’s legal rationale is grounded entirely in a country’s domestic laws and treaty obligations. The same applies to the means used to apply force. For example, although international law prohibits the use of chemical weapons in combat, because Russia’s domestic laws permit their use by the security services, security forces used tear gas for riot control against Chechen separatists in the 2002 Moscow theatre hostage crisis.²⁴

In the case of internal operations, my interest is in the deployment of federal forces in the context of armed conflict. I omit certain brief regional peacekeeping operations conducted in the early 1990s—Abkhazia and South Ossetia, both in 1992—and include only the relatively larger ones conducted in Moldova and Tajikistan, with the latter more illustrative of the trend of that time. Following Mackinlay, multilateral peacekeeping efforts in which Russia participated—Bosnia in 1995, South Sudan in 2011, among others—were excluded, as these did not necessarily capture Russia’s approach to the design and execution of peacekeeping

operations.²⁵ Finally, the Ingushetia/North Ossetia–Alania peacekeeping operation of 1992 was included, as it saw Moscow deploy federal forces and, unusually for the time, was conducted inside Russia’s borders.²⁶ Despite the variation in duration, location, scope, and stated aims, the discursive dimension of these military operations was consistently based on arguments that underscored the normative primacy of the legal rationale for the use of force, as reflected in Moscow’s official classification of the military operations (Table 2). Different Russian politicians and government officials have offered different legal and political justifications for each military operation; Table 2 lists the armed forces and security services’ stated rationale for the use of force as of the start of each operation. For external operations, the stated rationale was either peacekeeping, the protection of Russian compatriots abroad, or the struggle against terrorism. For internal operations, the rhetorical strategies employed invoke domestic law. However, as the case of Ingushetia/North Ossetia–Alania illustrates, international norms are not disregarded in the declarative dimension, nor does an internal operation preclude Moscow from deploying military units meant to operate overseas. Yet, most operations were controversial on the international stage, and doubts have been raised about what Russia’s real objectives were.

Location, year of start	Official name of the military operation
Moldova/ Transdnister, 1991	None (retroactively called a peacekeeping operation)
Ingushetia/North Ossetia–Alania (Russia), 1992	Protect constitutional order, peacekeeping
Tajikistan, 1993	Peacekeeping
Chechnya, 1994	Measures to restore the constitutional order
Chechnya, 1999	Anti-terrorism operation
Georgia, 2008	Self-defense
Ukraine, 2014	Protection of Russian Compatriots abroad
Syria, 2015	Anti-terrorism operation

Table 2. Conflicts with major Russian involvement and the name of the Russian

Operations during the 1990s

Save for the 1994 Chechnya campaign, all the military operations conducted in this period were labelled peacekeeping operations. A major study of Russia's peacekeeping efforts in the 1990s and early 2000s argues that Russia's peacekeeping operations are paradoxical, as they reflect both the problems of a poor, conflict-prone country and the advantages of a rich country capable of providing security beyond its borders. The outcomes, it finds, are distinctly Russian solutions and patterns in the use of force. This was particularly salient in the execution of peacekeeping operations in the post-Soviet space and especially inside Russia where Moscow's execution of operations disregarded standard international peacekeeping procedures. Therefore, the execution of Russia's 1990s peacekeeping operations reflected Moscow's pursuit of a "strong national agenda," or the national interest, in imposing peace through forceful methods.²⁹ While these operations can be considered successful insofar as they ended hostilities between the warring parties, the bias for national interests may not be compatible with the aim of making peace.³¹ In more concrete terms, Russia's peacekeeping efforts did not enforce the principles of impartiality and minimal use of force, privileging instead a forceful approach, the imposition of a peace, and the taking of sides to achieve operational objectives. However, the declarative dimensions of these peacekeeping operations do reflect a regard for the UN and international norms. As Sagramoso mentions,³² although Russia's peacekeeping practices were inconsistent with UN standards, official documents couched the former in the language of the UN, a component of Russia's claim to be a good global citizen.³³

The military operations of the 1990s thus featured three conflicting elements: a declarative dimension that cast peacekeeping operations in normative terms; an execution at odds with the normative standards governing peacekeeping operations; and objectives incompatible with the normative agenda (i.e., to act in the name of peace rather than the national interest). While challenges to military reform may have complicated the task of executing the peacekeeping operations in line with UN standards, Russia could have invoked other motives, such as by openly stating its true objectives (protecting its allies at home and abroad and defend-

ing its territorial integrity).³⁴ That Russia consistently settled on this rhetorical strategy throughout the 1990s suggests that it was compelled not by the desire to secure short-term, tactical gains through good public relations but instead by a long-term need to appeal to a normative pole not of its own making.

Operations during the 2000 and 2010s

Like Yeltsin's campaigns, those in Chechnya (1999–2009), Georgia (2008), Ukraine (2014 to date) and Syria (2015 to date) were controversial and justified in terms of international law and norms. However, four differences must be considered: the improvement of the Russian Armed Forces following a period of disarray; Russia's newfound assertiveness in the post-Yeltsin period; the War on Terror; and the growing acrimony between Russia and the West. These factors shaped the execution of Russia's peacekeeping operations as well as the environment in which these took place.³⁵ However, the aforementioned need to appeal to an external normative pole was present in each instance. Prosecuted roughly fifteen years apart, the Second Chechen War and the intervention in Syria were both portrayed by Moscow as contributions to the international struggle against terrorism. Instead of emphasizing their operational objectives—reincorporating Chechnya into the Russian Federation and defending an ally in need—Russia once again adopted a rhetorical strategy that appealed to an external normative pole, a particularly Western-centric one at that. In the case of the 2008 war with Georgia, multiple justifications were given, including the responsibility to protect, or R2P.³⁶

While this section aimed at comparing Russia's military operations in the post-Soviet period, a diachronic comparison of two specific military operations will give a better understanding of the underlying dynamic. This comparison focuses on the aforementioned mismatch between Moscow's objectives, its execution of each military operation, and its stated normative rationale justifying the use of force. The 1992 peacekeeping operation in Ingushetia/North Ossetia–Alania and the 2015 Syria campaign were selected as cases because they are markedly different in terms of execution and objectives yet share commonalities in their accompanying declarative dimension and, I argue, reveal Russia's consistent tendency to appeal to an external normative pole.

Case One: Internal Operation in Ingushetia/North Ossetia–Alania (1992)

The Ingushetia/North Ossetia–Alania conflict may be broadly characterised as defined by the issues of land ownership and state dysfunction in the immediate aftermath of the Soviet collapse. The conflict is also named after the Prigorodnyi district, the contested area between the autonomous Russian republics of North Ossetia–Alania and Ingushetia, over which a brief war was fought in 1992. This conflict has the distinction of being the first instance of Russia deploying its armed forces in an internal conflict.³⁷ Fighting broke out between Ossetian and Ingush militias on October 30, 1992. In the wake of state collapse in Ingushetia, Ingush militias attempted a takeover of the contested district, at which point federal forces—the 9th Motor Rifle Division and the 76th Guards Air Assault Division—arrived, though it would take until November 2 for them to directly intervene. The basis for this intervention, a presidential decree published on November 2, did not specify how the federal forces should proceed and merely appealed to the armed forces to protect the constitutional order.³⁸ Fighting lasted until November 6, 1992, resulting in 546 casualties and over 30,000 refugees and displacing nearly all the Ingush population of the district out of North Ossetia.³⁹ As the fighting ended, the Ingush side was presented with a *fait accompli*, and negotiations were conducted on the basis of Ossetia’s *de facto* control of Prigorodnyi. The resulting 1995 treaty between the two republics saw Ingushetia renounce its claims to Prigorodnyi.

Russia’s intervention was labelled a peacekeeping operation, but its execution and objectives bore little resemblance to a typical peacekeeping operation. First, on the ground, federal forces exhibited a preference for the Ossetian forces, which contributed to the creation of conditions in which the Ingush could be expelled and have a peace favourable to the Ossetians imposed upon them. Second, Moscow adhered to a pattern exhibited throughout this period: foregoing a proportionate response in favour of the excessively heavy-handed use of force.⁴⁰ Finally, when negotiations began, the facts on the ground favoured the Ossetians, who already controlled Prigorodnyi.⁴¹ Moscow’s *modus operandi* and the conflict’s ultimate outcome reflected Russian sympathy for Ossetian claims. Indeed, according to Kasaev, at the time of the fighting, Russia’s leaders viewed the Ossetians as closer and more loyal to

Moscow than the Ingush. There was also speculation that Russia's intervention was launched to affront and intimidate neighbouring, then-independent Chechnya, which had not yet been brought to heel.⁴² Finally, the conflict's lasting resolution—the basic aim of any peacekeeping operation—was not brought about since the Ingush did not, in fact, relinquish their claims to Prigorodnyi.⁴³

Still, in the declarative dimension of the military operation, the goal of countering a threat to public peace was officially espoused, and peacekeeping was invoked instead of the objectives Moscow adopted in practice: countering Ingush militias and ending the conflict to Ossetia's advantage. Furthermore, despite its pro-Ossetian position, Moscow opted to promote negotiations between the warring parties, a sign of a shift in Moscow's normative view of the utility of force since the end of the Soviet era.⁴⁴ Therefore, on the basis of the rhetorical choices made by Moscow, it cannot be said that the normative ground for this operation suggests a clearly Western-centric view. However, it does show Moscow's need to appeal to "international" norms to sanction its use of force, instead of adopting a frame reflecting the true rationale behind its chosen operational objectives. Inasmuch as international organisations reflect Western understandings of the international order—and reflecting Morozov's structural understanding of said order—the "international" norms in this case are distinctly Western.

Case Two: External Operation in the Syrian Civil War (2015 to date)

The Syrian Civil War resulted directly from Damascus's response to the Arab Spring. The pro-reform protests that broke out in 2011 were met with fierce repression, causing tensions to escalate into open conflict between the Syrian government and various rebel groups, which eventually wrested control of parts of Syria from Damascus. In 2015, an embattled Damascus, a long-time Russian ally, called for Russia's direct military involvement in the war. Moscow had already aided the regime in weathering international isolation, most notably by brokering a 2013 agreement to dismantle Syria's chemical weapons stockpile. The Russian Armed Forces entered the fray in September 2015 with the initial aim of ensuring the survival of the Syrian regime. Since that time, Moscow has come to focus on assisting Damascus in the retaking of rebel-held territory.⁴⁵

As Lo argues, a combination of “self-interest, moral relativism, and basic instinct” led Russia to intervene in Syria. First, the military operation was seen as a way to enable the renewal of Russia’s presence in the Middle East following a decades-long post-Soviet lull in engagement with the region. As a result of its Syrian campaign, Moscow has cultivated a positive image among certain actors in the Middle East.⁴⁷ Second, the involvement was also driven by Moscow’s fear of a “colour revolution” at home, a fear stoked by the Arab Spring and the insurgency in Syria.⁴⁸ Finally, the military operation was undertaken to assert Russia’s great-power status.⁴⁹ On the ground, ensuring the survival of the Syrian regime was the crucial operational objective; hence the campaign’s focus on targeting non-Daesh rebels.⁵⁰ The campaign was a counter-insurgency operation with only a limited counter-terrorism element.

Rhetorically, however, Moscow has stressed the military operation’s counter-terrorism aspect and downplayed its counter-insurgency element. At the campaign’s start, the declarative dimension emphasized the struggle against international terrorism as the military operation’s primary goal. As in the Second Chechen War, Moscow sought to legitimize the campaign by invoking the goal of countering terrorism. This corresponds to what Allison refers to as Russia’s feeling of entitlement regarding counter-terrorism: the view that the Chechen experience has entitled Moscow to a leading role in international counter-terrorism efforts.⁵¹ Russia’s claim to be acting against terrorism was bolstered by Damascus’s invitation to intervene in Syria, which made Russia’s role in the civil war “legitimate.” Implicit in this understanding of legitimacy is a normative vision whereby “legitimate” governments should not be overthrown.⁵² Finally, Moscow has aimed to make the war against Daesh a new theatre for East-West cooperation, alluding to the legacy of East-West cooperation in the struggle against Nazi Germany.⁵³

However, Russia’s rhetoric also regularly assails what it sees as the West’s hypocrisy; Russia considers the West guilty of double standards in its actions in the cases of Syria and, before it, Libya, having called for the removal of those countries’ leaders on normative grounds yet siding with the oppressive Gulf monarchies. This rhetorical strategy, as well as Putin’s invocation of East-West cooperation during World War II, indicates that the stated normative principle of Russia’s Syrian campaign is distinctly Western. In other words, the rhetorical strategy that has accompanied Russia’s

Syrian campaign does not entirely reflect the objectives it pursues. Instead, it emphasizes objectives and aspects of Russia's involvement in the war that relate to a Western normative agenda—namely, the War on Terror—as well as a particular understanding of international law.⁵⁵

Conclusions

The discursive dimension of Russia's post-Soviet military operations reflects Moscow's normative entrapment. An evaluation of its stated normative objectives and the execution and operational objectives of a series of its campaigns reveals a persistent mismatch between these three elements. How these campaigns were prosecuted and what they ultimately accomplished on the ground bore little resemblance to how one would expect such military operations to be conducted based on the ends stated by Moscow. In each case, force was used in the pursuit of the national interest, even as the normative case for the use of force was made on the basis of an external normative pole, rather than a set of normative principles produced by Russia itself. The consistency in this pattern may be explained by Morozov's conception of Russia as a subaltern empire incapable of configuring and asserting its own normative agenda and forced to derive legitimacy from external sources. Moreover, a more visibly Western-centric bias becomes visible in the rhetorical strategies accompanying military operations after 2000, especially those invoking anti-terrorism as a normative ground. In general, Moscow's normative dependency has compelled it to invest in the framing of its use of force as an example of good global citizenship.

The military operations in Ingushetia/North Ossetia–Alania (1992) and Syria (2015) vary greatly in their scope, duration, and operational goals, which is why they were selected as cases. In neither case were Moscow's objectives pursued in the manner prescribed by the UN for peacekeeping operations. Nor were these objectives entirely consistent with the Kremlin's normative agenda. Moreover, the military operations were grounded in different legal bases, with one internal and another external, a distinction with implications for the kind of forces deployed to fight. However, they share the commonality of being rhetorically portrayed by Moscow as operations meant to uphold international norms, either by promoting peace in line with said norms or by countering

terrorism as prescribed by the international community's security agenda. In the first case, the rhetorical strategy employed shows the internationalization of Russia's view on the norms governing the use of force. The Syrian campaign shows the continuation of this trend, but with a more explicitly Western-centric outlook.

There are numerous limitations to this inquiry. First, many simplifications were made. Namely, Western norms were considered with little distinction between European and American normative approaches. At times, these have contrasted markedly, particularly regarding the War on Terror. Also, determining the ultimate justification for the use of force involved some oversimplification. The approach chosen emphasized the justification given by the armed forces or the executive at the start of each operation. In some cases, this was not clear, ambiguous or hard to determine. Further research could track the changes in the official posture in the run-up to, and subsequent development of, each operation. Furthermore, it may be argued that governments around the world commonly abuse the struggle against terrorism as a justification. However, in the Russian case, its use is consistent both across time and with the larger pattern of appealing to external normative poles. While a comparative study could better determine the features of Moscow's instrumentalization of the Global War on Terror narrative, this pattern already suggests a persistent incapacity of Moscow to appeal to its own normative agenda regarding the use of force.

Nevertheless, a structural look at Russia's rhetorical strategies regarding the use of force recalls Morozov's characterisation of Russia's normative dependency. Its apparent regard for Western norms does not settle the debate on whether Russia's use of force is fundamentally aggressive or defensive, but it does undercut such a binary assessment. Based on Morozov's argument that Russia, despite its seemingly confrontational policies, is in an asymmetrical relationship with the West, particularly where international norms are concerned, Russia appears to be embedded in an asymmetrical structure, compelled to consistently adopt language reflective of Western understandings of international norms and legitimacy, regardless of its ultimate course of action. Notwithstanding its aggressive and disruptive manoeuvres, Moscow's rhetorical strategies show that insofar as its identity is concerned, Moscow cannot break with the Western normative pole.

1 Acknowledgments: This text was based on two conference papers. The first one was presented on May 26, 2017, as part of the panel “The Drivers of Russia’s Post-2008 Military Adventurism” at the Clashing Visions conference held at St. Antony’s College, University of Oxford. That paper was subsequently published online as part of the conference proceedings under the title “Russia’s Normative Dependency and the War on Terror.” The second one was presented on April 13, 2018 at the annual conference of the British Association for Slavonic and East European Studies, held at Churchill College, University of Cambridge. The presentation’s title was “Prigorodnyi Conflict: Between Counterinsurgency and Peacekeeping.” The feedback received at each conference was critical. I attended those two conferences as a University of Glasgow and University of Tartu graduate student, respectively. At that time, my studies at both institutions were funded with the help of an Erasmus Mundus Scholarship of the European Commission. Without this financial support, I would not have been able to participate in either conference. I also thank Nicole Grajewski and Samuel Ramani, both at the University of Oxford, for their encouragement to complete and submit this article. Also, a sincere thank you to the anonymous reviewers for their extensive and thoughtful comments. These were very helpful for improving the draft submitted to STAIR. Finally, I thank my fiancée Sophie, now at the University of Glasgow, for her feedback and support throughout this period. I dedicate this paper to her.

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3 A sincere thank you to the anonymous reviewer for introducing to me this useful phrase to refer to Russia’s normative dependency.

4 Morozov, *Russia’s Postcolonial Identity*, 110–111.

5 Throughout the text I refer to the “declarative dimension” of Russia’s foreign policy as well as Moscow’s “rhetorical strategies.” In this text, these two terms refer to the same thing: how Russia “spins” its foreign policy initiatives, including specific instances of the use of force.

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DETERMINANTS OF THE TIMING AND INTENSITY OF PROPAGANDA ATTACKS: RUSSIA'S INFORMATION OFFENSIVES IN GEORGIA AND UKRAINE

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Abstract

What factors determine the timing and intensity of information attacks between states? The security dilemma – the psychological motivations of the attacking state coupled with sufficient propaganda resources – partially explains the occurrence of information attacks. The second set of factors that better explains the timing and intensity of such attacks concerns the vulnerabilities of the target state. These include a polarized political environment; an open mass media market; a pivotal historic event; and the target state's awareness and preparedness. These factors combine in various ways to determine when a country decides to attack. I apply this theoretical lens to the cases of Russia's information campaigns in Georgia (2008) and Ukraine (2014). The theory presented here has practical implications for gauging the likelihood of Russian interference in Western elections.

Introduction

In 2016, Russia stunned American observers by interfering in the United States' presidential election. Pursuing the twin goals of promoting the candidacy of Donald Trump and harming that of Hillary Clinton, it launched both cyberattacks and a propaganda campaign. In a 2017 report, the US intelligence community stated that Russia's strategy combined "covert intelligence operations – such as cyber activity – with overt efforts by Russian Government agencies, state-funded media, third-party intermediaries, and paid social media users or 'trolls.'"¹

Here, a sovereign state undertook efforts designed to influence another country's domestic affairs. Although in some cases there may be a direct, observable benefit to the attacking state's actions, in many cases the benefit is unclear. Why do countries engage in information attacks against one another? One explanation – a modified version of the security dilemma – holds that in an anar-

Alla Baranovsky-Dewey, "Determinants of the Timing and Intensity of Propaganda Attacks: Russia's Information Offensives in Georgia and Ukraine," *St Antony's International Review* 14. no. 2 (2019):121-137.

chic world devoid of external authority, countries are motivated by fear and the anxiety that their own information channels may be attacked and driven to build up their information resources.² In the realm of information, defensive and offensive resources are frequently identical, meaning that countries simultaneously build up their defensive and offensive capabilities. At a critical point, this dangerous spiral sees one country use its resources to attack the other.

Although this explanation accounts for the occurrence of an information attack, it does not explain the timing of this dangerous spiral's escalation into an attack. In other words, when do countries engage in either cyberattacks or propaganda campaigns against one another? And what determines the intensity of such attacks?

The main argument put forth in this paper is that the timing and intensity of such attacks is determined by the quality of the target state. These are transient, or more long-term, vulnerabilities that combine in various ways and increase the likelihood of an attack by another state. These factors include a polarized political environment; an open mass media market; a pivotal historic moment; and the target state's level of preparedness and awareness of its vulnerability.

In this paper, I concentrate on the last of these factors: the target state's level of awareness and preparedness. Two cases examined here demonstrate its importance. In 2008, Russia waged an initially aggressive information campaign in Georgia before retreating in the face of a reactive Georgian public relations campaign aimed at securing foreign assistance. By contrast, in 2014, Russia found in Ukraine a nearly perfect target that was unprepared to formulate a coherent information strategy and quickly lost the information war with Russia. The other three factors were quite similar in the two countries when Russia initiated its information attacks and can therefore be understood as constant.

The many similarities between these two cases make them sound choices for analysis. Both are former Soviet republics that have navigated an uneasy independence from their large, threatening neighbour, Russia. Both have regions – Donetsk and Luhansk in Ukraine,³ Abkhazia and South Ossetia in Georgia⁴ – that vocally pushed for independence from their parent states and whose political leaders have aligned with Russia. Both also have Western-oriented popular sentiments that resist Russia's interference in

their affairs. The difference between them – the relative level of preparedness for an information attack – is shown here to be determinative of the timing and intensity of the information attacks Kyiv and Tbilisi faced.

Existing Explanations for Information Attacks

The realist framework of international relations sees the state as a unitary agent whose core goals are state-building and security. Although military security is supremely important within this framework, the security of information networks has assumed increasing importance. A well-established theory within the realist framework that could explain information meddling is the security dilemma. This enduring theory, claim its proponents,⁵ offers explanatory power with respect to both rapidly evolving crises, like the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, and long-term strategic international policy decisions. John H. Herz, a political scientist, first formulated the idea in his *Political Realism and Political Idealism*,⁶ and Herbert Butterfield, a historian, outlined a similar causal path in *History and Human Relations*, although he named the scenario differently.

The sequence of events unfolds in this manner: a state that rationally fears for its security begins to acquire resources to guarantee it, through means such as the acquisition of arms and the formation of military alliances. As it continues to strengthen itself, this state not only builds up its defensive capabilities but also begins to look more threatening to other states. These other states, recognizing their own relative weakness, will invest in their own security resources. As the process develops, it runs the risk of spiralling into an international conflict.

The security dilemma rests on a major assumption that the world order is an anarchic rather than hierarchical arrangement. In an anarchic world, which lacks a single, central authority to provide arbitration and resolve conflict, life, in the words of the English political theorist Thomas Hobbes, is “solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.”⁷ States sometimes fight for no other reason than their lust for power.⁸ In an anarchic world, states do not trust each other and lack the motivation to cooperate.⁹

It is possible to apply the security dilemma to information attacks because information warfare is a subset of warfare. In his description of the security dilemma, Jervis outlined a process

whereby states “interfere pre-emptively in the domestic politics of others in order to provide an ideological buffer zone.”¹⁰ Indeed, in an anarchic international system, one state’s security gains inevitably threaten others, and any accumulation of propaganda resources, defensive or offensive, strikes other states as threatening.

This applies, even though propaganda resources are not strictly uniform, to offensive as well as defensive applications—as with conventional military resources. There exists sufficient overlap between the offensive and defensive contexts. The former includes state-run international media outlets; agencies dedicated to disseminating information on social media (e.g., the Internet Research Agency, or IRA, in Russia); and public relations expertise that can be drawn on to promote a particular message abroad. Some of these resources can be used domestically as well, to protect against other countries’ information interference. Thus, RT, the Kremlin’s international news network, claims that its purpose is to cover “stories overlooked by the mainstream media” and to provide “alternative perspectives on current affairs.”¹¹ The stated goals are defensive in nature, but the resource has also been used for propaganda attacks. Similarly, the IRA, the “troll farm” tasked with promoting narratives friendly to Russian President Vladimir Putin in the West, has produced domestic propaganda challenging Western-friendly narratives.¹²

This intersection between offensive and defensive resources is similarly present in the realm of cybersecurity, a related domain. Gartzke and Lindsay, for instance, show that deception is one such common resource for both offensive and defensive capabilities in the cyber realm.¹³ Cyber attackers use deception in an offensive way to gain access to porous computer networks, but the same resource allows the target state to lay traps for the adversary online.

The security dilemma has been convincingly applied to cybersecurity. Buchanan argues that the theory explains both the fear that states feel when they experience network intrusions and their subsequent actions.¹⁴ States build up their offensive capabilities, with the absence of national boundaries in cyberspace and the nature of network intrusions meaning that they can do so in secret and well in advance of when they actually decide to intrude. But they also suffer from constant fear of intrusion, which means that they will proactively try to collect intelligence – sometimes by breaking into the networks of other states – that would indicate the existence or absence of a threat. This, coupled with technologi-

cal difficulties in assigning blame in cyberspace,¹⁵ leaves the line between offensive and defensive cyber-actions blurred and may affect the so-called ‘cybersecurity dilemma.’

A related body of literature that intersects with the above is the literature on hybrid wars, a subset of security studies. The term “hybrid war” used to be applied to non-state actors, but it has more recently come to encompass the non-traditional tactics of states like Russia, which used military, economic, information (including cyber), and diplomatic resources in the course of its annexation of Crimea.¹⁶ Deception and information attacks have been shown to be a weapon used by Russia, alongside conventional military measures, in Ukraine¹⁷ and, to an extent, in Georgia,¹⁸ but not in Chechnya or Afghanistan.¹⁹ These two sets of scholarship converge inasmuch as information attacks accompanying conventional military operations are concerned. The theory presented here, however, also explains propaganda attacks that do not coincide with military campaigns.

Another important literature that intersects with this theory is that on determinants of war in the domestic politics of the attacking state. For instance, the diversionary theory of war states that a country’s political elite will go to war to distract the population from internal economic, political, or social problems.²⁰ Indeed, Russian domestic politics has been marked by large-scale political protests and a deepening economic crisis, among other problems. Following the annexation of Crimea, Putin’s approval rating increased dramatically.²¹ But while the diversionary theory of war explains overt conventional military campaigns well, it is less convincing in explaining covert information attacks. Indeed, governments go to great lengths to conceal propaganda attacks from their own citizens, let alone foreign ones.

Theory

Although the cybersecurity dilemma explains the occurrence of information attacks, it offers more limited explanatory power when it comes to timing and magnitude. For example, Russia’s campaigns to influence the 2016 US presidential election and, before it, Britain’s Brexit referendum were strategically timed to coincide with important votes in the target states. Similarly, the information offensives against Georgia in 2008 and Ukraine in 2014 were timed to coincide with military operations.

In this paper, timing concerns the following considerations: when does the information attack occur in relation to other relevant events? Does it precede conventional military operations, or does it follow them? Is it orchestrated in isolation or in combination with a conventional military attack? By intensity, I mean the magnitude of the effort or resources devoted to an information attack. Although scholars rarely have access to granular records of expenditures on such endeavours, as they occur in secret, we can gauge the relative magnitude of the effort by comparing attacks and evaluating the means used.

A complete explanation for information attacks must account for two sets of factors. States perpetrate information attacks against other states when:

1. Their information power resources allow for this. This follows from the logic of the security dilemma; information power resource endowment is a variable that includes know-how, institutions and organizations to engage with foreign recipients of information. In Russia, for instance, organizations like the IRA, RT, and Sputnik relied on decades of experience crafting propaganda under the Soviet state.²² Information power resource endowment is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for the initiation of an information attack.
2. The target states exhibit certain vulnerabilities. These vulnerabilities include a polarized political environment, an open mass media environment that frequently gives voice to marginal opinions, a pivotal historic event that could be shaped by an external intervention, and poor awareness of such vulnerabilities or preparedness for an information attack. These factors can exist separately or in tandem. The various ways in which they combine affect the calculated payoff for the attacking state and the resulting timing and intensity of the information attack.

Unlike the security dilemma, this theory does not hold that states will orchestrate information attacks when they fear other states' build-up of information resources. Their actions are only partially motivated by fear, anxiety, and moral considerations. They do not wait to strike until their adversary has indicated that they are about to launch a propaganda campaign. Instead, they launch information attacks when their own power resources al-

low for this and when they find vulnerability in the politics of the target state.

This theory interacts somewhat with Stephen van Evera's work on the "offence-defence" theory of war.²³ According to this rather broad theory, war is more likely when attacking states expect conquest to be easy. The present theoretical framework contributes to clarify the precise factors that lead the attacking state to conclude that an information attack would be easy as well as to adapt the framework to information warfare.

Georgia and Ukraine: Vulnerability of the Target State

The cases of Ukraine (2014) and Georgia (2008) are appropriate choices for analysis because they conform to a well-accepted method of case selection: John Stuart Mill's Method of Comparison. When two cases are similar in all aspects but one, that one aspect is likely to be determinative of the different outcomes. Ukraine and Russia are both former Soviet republics and they are similarly important to Russia in geopolitical terms. Norman Friedman has argued that the two military campaigns "suggest a pattern."²⁴ Both have vacillated between loyalty to Russia and the pursuit of integration with the West. Both have dealt with secessionist regions backed by Russia and in whose defence Russia has launched military interventions, justifying its actions by invoking a responsibility to protect compatriots.²⁵

Vulnerabilities in the target state include a polarized political environment, an open mass media market that gives voice to marginal opinions, a pivotal historical event that could be shaped by an external intervention, and the target state's poor awareness of such vulnerabilities or preparedness for an information attack.

A polarized or contentious political environment increases the likelihood of an information intervention by another state. Polarisation, or contentious domestic politics, leads to gridlock in government,²⁶ leaving the public skeptical of the government's ability to govern and distrustful of not only government but also institutions like the press. A classic study by Robert Vallone et al. finds that partisans on two sides of an ideological debate interpret the same news as hostile to their point of view, the "hostile media phenomenon."²⁷ Simply put, partisan attitudes correlate with low trust in the media.

When citizens do not trust the media they consume to cover

news fairly, this increases their demand for marginal, less known, or less established sources, a perfect opportunity for a propaganda attack by a hostile state. When lower trust in the media combines with a higher trust in anecdotal information transmitted by family and friends, this augments the role of social media – now a common channel for the transmission of political information to foreign audiences – in propagating political stories and disseminating them to a large number of internet users.

Both Georgia and Ukraine experienced contentious domestic politics in the lead-up to Russia's information offensive, with Georgia dealing with a flare-up in separatist sentiments in the breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia,²⁸ and Ukraine witnessing the chaotic ouster of its president after several months of mass protests.

An open mass media environment is necessary for outside voices to reach a target state's citizenry. Ukraine and Georgia acted in a similar manner when it came to their media markets. Both countries granted Russian-produced media access to their countries until the Kremlin launched its information offensives. However, both countries quickly responded by banning Russian news outlets, affecting trust in the media and creating the appearance that both countries had something to hide.

A pivotal historical event partly determines the timing of an information attack by increasing the payoff of the effort. Russia's possible involvement in Britain's Brexit referendum²⁹ and its interference in that year's US presidential election was timed to coincide with critical votes providing Moscow with a tangible way to measure the effectiveness of its efforts.

The target state's final form of vulnerability – one that I explore in further detail below, since it is in the respect that Georgia and Ukraine differed – is the extent to which it is aware of its vulnerabilities and prepared for an information attack. Particularly in the past years, Russia has been more likely to orchestrate an information attack, or dedicate more resources to one, when it has perceived the target state to be either unaware of its vulnerabilities or unprepared for an information attack. In cases where the target state demonstrated a robust defensive strategy or was able to quickly show its ability to detect and reverse offensive actions, Russia's calculus changed and sometimes resulted in retreat.

In 2008, tensions grew over the status of the breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, which declared indepen-

dence from Georgia in the 1990s, leading to belligerent incidents. The Georgian government indicated that the presence of Russian ‘peacekeepers’ on what Tbilisi considered its own territory had become intolerable. In early August 2008, the two sides engaged in a series of military provocations; Georgia is widely recognized as the side that began the fighting.³⁰ The actual military campaign was brief – it lasted five days – but the information aspect of the war was substantial and deserves to be analysed.

The needed cause of the Ukrainian crisis, for its part, can be found in Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich’s November 2013 rejection of an association agreement with the European Union in favour of a trade deal with Russia. Yanukovich’s decision touched off street protests, drawing hundreds of people, then thousands, then hundreds of thousands. Ukrainian police resorted to lethal force, bringing more people into the streets; by January, the situation had escalated into a full-blown political crisis.³¹

In February 2014, following additional deadly clashes between the protesters and the authorities, Yanukovich was deposed and fled the country, while Russia put its troops on high alert. On March 1, armed men, identified by Kyiv as Russian servicemen, seized key points of the Crimean peninsula as this predominantly Russophone region began to secede from Ukraine. Despite international condemnation and the threat of economic sanctions, Russia annexed Crimea later that month.

By early April, pro-Russian protesters had occupied several key cities in Eastern Ukraine, with Donetsk and Luhansk becoming hotbeds of separatist support. As clashes between rebels and pro-government forces continued, a civilian passenger airliner carrying 298 foreign nationals was shot down in July; all passengers and crew members were killed. Russia and Ukraine held each other responsible for its downing, with Moscow and its state-run media circulating implausible explanations that were later shown to be deceptive.³²

Russia’s initial information offensive in Georgia in 2008 was both proactive and aggressive. Several weeks before the war itself, Russian hackers subjected the unprepared nation’s internet infrastructure to so-called distributed denial of service (D.D.O.S.) attacks, taking down the website of Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili. Several other state computers were hacked, too, including those belonging to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defense.³³ In anticipation of hostilities to come, Mos-

cow sent journalists into the region – by some accounts, as many as forty-eight – to ensure that its version of events to come would be thoroughly covered.³⁴

Orchestrating a cyberattack requires specific information resources, including trained hackers and advanced networks. Georgia's internet was partly supplied by Russia and Turkey. Its internet infrastructure was dwarfed by Russia's considerably vaster information power resources. Possessing these resources enabled the Kremlin to begin the information war against Georgia.

The resource differential also meant that at least at first, Russia was on the offensive, and Georgia was playing defence. This reactive policy was not always wise. For instance, one measure to which the Georgian government resorted in an attempt to limit the damage of Russia's aggressive information campaign was to censor Russian-produced media and Russian-language websites.³⁵ This permitted Moscow to accuse Georgia of not being the open and democratic society it purported to be. As a Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs representative said at the time:

The information blockade of the Russian media in Georgia represents a crude violation of international standards of press freedom that guarantee the obligation of the government to provide citizens the right to freely access information, and the ability of the press to disseminate such information. [...] Such [a] policy of the Georgian authorities has nothing in common with democracy.³⁶

Although Georgia lacked the technical capabilities to respond in kind, the country quickly mobilized its public relations resources, a subset of defensive information war resources. The target state was thus prepared to respond and did so as actively as possible.

The Georgian government quickly sought the assistance of public relations professionals. Paul A. Goble notes that Tbilisi approached foreign firms for help in crafting a global image.³⁷ Georgian political blogs multiplied, with Tbilisi transforming existing websites in some cases and creating entirely original content in others. Its strategy shifted from the defensive to the offensive. The new information campaign featured carefully chosen language that characterized Russia as the aggressor. It compared the Russian invasion of Georgia to the 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia and even accused Moscow of genocide.

This heavy barrage of allegations against Russia raised the cost of involvement for the Kremlin and corresponded with a subsequent dramatic deintensification of the information war. As Russian dissident poet Lev Rubinshtein poignantly noted when comparing Soviet propaganda to the information tactics of the Kremlin in August 2008:

A [Soviet] common man, even one without access to information, firmly knew: the case is directly opposite that which has been painted for him by the newspaper or the television. But if the Soviet magician worked with a screen, using all sorts of smoke to obscure the mysteries of his profession, those of today saw the lady in the golden dress in half right in front of the respectable citizenry, without any mysterious smiles, without the pink smoke, without a turban and other abracadabras.³⁸

In other words, in the early stages of the war, Russian propaganda was intense and crude. Meanwhile, many in the international community condemned Russia's actions in Georgia. In late August, once most of Russia's troops had withdrawn from Georgia, US President George W. Bush spoke strongly in support of Georgia, a sign that Tbilisi's narrative had been accepted in the West.³⁹ Similarly, Western news outlets offered even harsher assessments of Russia's role in the conflict, even as they criticized Georgia's conduct on the battlefield.⁴⁰

Ukraine, on the other hand, lacked "an international voice or image" throughout the confrontation with Russia, and was thus a far better target for a sophisticated and sustained information attack following Russia's annexation of Crimea.⁴¹ Russia's information strategy was more advanced than Ukraine's, and it constantly evolved and adapted to new challenges.

Although Russia's information campaign was aimed at the international community and a Ukrainian audience in equal measure, the Kremlin began its work at home. In the lead-up to the Ukrainian crisis, it systematically eliminated or reorganized many of Russia's remaining independent news outlets. Dozhd' (Rain), a television news channel, was dropped from all cable networks and evicted from its offices.⁴² RIA Novosti, Èkho Moskvyy (Echo of Moscow), and Lenta.ru all experienced Kremlin-directed "restructur[ing]" whereby Putin-friendly professionals replaced

liberal-minded ones.⁴³

A prominent narrative in this information war saw all pro-Ukrainian government forces characterized as “fascist.”⁴⁴ It was claimed that far-right groups had hijacked the anti-Yanukovych protests and were harassing Ukraine’s Jewish and Russian communities. Although these claims were repeatedly debunked,⁴⁵ the mere fact of their existence and persistence in the public discourse is indicative of the success of Russia’s strategy. As scholars and practitioners of political campaigns are well aware, a small amount of untruthful information is exceptionally difficult to counteract, even with copious amounts of factual data.⁴⁶

One reason why Russia was so successful with its narrative of fascism in Ukraine was that far-right fascist groups genuinely operated there. Moscow and its mouthpieces were simply overstating the magnitude of the problem. Such claims, then, illustrate the distinction between misinformation and disinformation. The former is quite easy to spot if one is in possession of factual data. Misinformation consists of factually incorrect information. When Russia claimed that Georgia had inflicted thousands of civilian casualties in August 2008, it was engaging in misinformation.⁴⁷ Disinformation, however, takes half-truths and distorts them further. The remaining kernel of truth is what makes disinformation so difficult to reject outright.⁴⁸ In Ukraine, Russia’s sophisticated disinformation techniques were a vast improvement over the crude misinformation campaign orchestrated in Georgia only a few years earlier.

Kremlin-backed narratives about Ukraine did not stop at accusations of fascism. The Kremlin accused the West of waging a hybrid war in Ukraine.⁴⁹ The Kremlin claimed that it had no intention of using military force in Crimea.⁵⁰ Deriding Western journalists, Putin asserted that the Russian soldiers spotted in Crimea were really Ukrainians with store-bought Russian military uniforms: “Why don’t you have a look at the post-Soviet states [...] There are many uniforms there that are similar. You can go to a store and buy any kind of uniform.”⁵¹

In addition to propagating a rich and expanding array of untruths, the Russian propaganda machine used blogs and social networks to reach their targets, which comprised various target audiences: Ukrainian separatists, Russians at home, and the international community. Unlike Georgia, Ukraine was not prepared to put up a fight, making Russia’s reach vast and its effects consider-

Practical Implications

When considering the impact of information attacks originating overseas, sceptics may question the extent to which it matters whether a state launches propaganda campaigns if these have little to no effect on their intended audiences. Can we demonstrate that there was a measurable effect on international public opinion because of information campaigns in Georgia and Ukraine? Did Russia's propaganda campaign also have an effect in the US during its 2016 presidential election? Were there American voters who either abstained from voting or supported Trump after initially planning to vote for Clinton? Answering these questions is methodologically difficult, since too many factors influence an individual's voting decision.

But thinking about propaganda campaigns is nonetheless important. Firstly, the apparent methodological challenge does not make evaluating effects of propaganda campaigns on public opinion impossible. Indeed, studies of the effectiveness of propaganda (that is, its effect on public opinion) have been conducted for decades.⁵² Recent advances in the discipline of causal inference allow us to make even more robust assertions about the magnitude of the causal effect of information on public opinion.⁵³

Secondly, even though it is difficult to measure the effect of foreign propaganda campaigns on public opinion, we can safely say that they do have a measurable effect on diplomatic relations. The relationship between the US and Russia, even against the backdrop of a highly idiosyncratic friendship between Trump and Putin, arguably reached its nadir in decades after the US learned that Russia had meddled in its domestic affairs.

In the years leading up to the 2016 US presidential election, Moscow, relying on decades of Soviet experience with propaganda, created outfits like the IRA tasked with sowing political discord in the US through the dissemination of disinformation. The Kremlin is back at it again. In June 2018, Russia founded a new news outlet in the US, USA Really.⁵⁴ Much like its predecessors, it covers divisive political issues like freedom of the press, capital punishment, race relations, and LGBT rights.

These actions are indicative of growing information resource endowment. They may indicate that another spiral of the security di-

lemma is underway. The theory presented here suggests that this build-up of resources will culminate in an information campaign once a number of target state vulnerabilities align. In 2020, a pivotal historic event—presidential and congressional elections—will take place in the US, dividing its society along partisan lines and leaving its media market sufficiently open to allow Kremlin narratives to penetrate it. This time, however, the US intelligence community is aware of the Russian threat. This will likely affect the intensity and timing of an information attack, should one come.

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RIVALRY THROUGH PROXIES: HOW IRAN AND SAUDI ARABIA COM- PETE FOR REGIONAL INFLUENCE

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Abstract

Middle Eastern politics remains underexplored and undertheorised from an international relations (IR) perspective. One reason for this is the persistent gap between IR and area studies as well as the tendency to treat regional politics as a variation on general laws rather than a source of unique knowledge. This gap can be bridged by mapping out the logic of interaction within dyads and engaging in mid-level theorising to detect patterns common to dyads in similar conditions. One such attempt at mapping the dynamics of a single dyad is the present paper, which argues that the fluctuating intensity of the rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia is less a function of the balance of military power than that of the balance between potential or actual proxies in other Middle Eastern countries. The 1979 Iranian Revolution triggered a rivalry over the mantle of Islam and mutual attempts at outmanoeuvring the other through ideological posturing and support for proxies in other countries. Rapprochement became possible by 1997 as a result of Iran's seriously diminished ability to interfere abroad. The 2003 invasion of Iraq reignited the Saudi-Iranian rivalry, not because the balance of military power shifted in Iran's favour, but because it inflamed relations between confessional communities in the region, culminating in the civil wars in Syria and Yemen. The Saudi-Iranian rivalry's sectarian tinge is a consequence of a bottom-up dynamic, whereby local actors compete for national power along sectarian lines and look to their co-religionists abroad. Such dynamics cannot be inferred from overly structural and ahistorical variables, and the nature of competition between Middle Eastern states cannot be understood without engagement with the specialist literature on the region. One path forward is to continue exploring patterns of interaction within dyads of states and comparing cross-dyad patterns.

Introduction

"Saudi Arabia is [the] Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques and the birthplace of Islam, and as such it is the eminent leader of the wider Muslim world. Iran portrays itself as the leader of not just the minority Shi'ite world, but of all Muslim revolutionaries interested in standing up to the West."¹

The ebb and flow of the rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia is

^a I thank the Aker Scholarship for supporting my studies at the University of Oxford.

a dynamic that is central to Middle Eastern politics and the Islamic world more broadly. The reverberations of this competition for regional supremacy are felt through the impact of not only traditional geopolitical manoeuvring, but also the two regimes' contest for the mantle of Islam. The latter has seen Iran and Saudi Arabia engage in ideological posturing—such as by claiming to embody Islam's true form—and support proxies abroad. This dynamic has taken an increasingly sectarian turn since the US invasion of Iraq effectively demolished Saudi Arabia's policy of containing Iran through a "Sunni wall" of hostile regimes.² The fall of Iraq's Ba'athist regime did not simply cause the balance of conventional military power to shift in Iran's favour, it also fuelled fears among Iran's rivals that it would be able to exercise influence in the region through the political empowerment of Arab Shi'ites in an area stretching from Iran to Lebanon. Saudi-Iranian relations deteriorated after 2003 because Iran's position was strengthened, though not militarily. Instead, the destabilisation of third-party countries in the region has allowed Iran to pursue its interests through proxies, leading to a broader pattern whereby the Saudi-Iranian rivalry has intensified as Riyadh and Tehran have taken opposing sides in local conflicts increasingly fought along sectarian lines.

Despite the Saudi-Iranian relationship's central significance as a determinant of the shape of the regional order, it remains understudied and undertheorized from an IR perspective.³ There is a persistent divide between IR scholars, who treat regional politics as a variation on a universal set of laws, and area experts, who dismiss IR theories as blind to the contextual characteristics of regions.⁴ It is imperative to bridge this gap. One path forward could be to thoroughly examine and map out dynamics of interaction within dyads of states, avoiding the tendency to rely on overly structural and ahistorical variables, as IR scholars often do. In doing so, it should be possible to detect certain mechanisms or general laws that are common to multiple dyads of states in specific conditions. Engaging in an iterative process between induction from state dyads and mid-level theorising can help advance the field of IR in terms of theoretical sophistication and policy relevance by ensuring that it is continuously informed by an effort to map out the nature and logic of action within dyads of states as well as cross-dyad patterns.

One such attempt at mid-level theorising about a specific dyad is made here. I argue that fluctuations in Saudi-Iranian relations are

less about shifts in their conventional military capabilities than changes in Riyadh and Tehran's ability to project power through regional proxies. Security competition between the two regional powers intensifies when both believe they can influence the political balance in a third-party country in favour of their proxies, which has increasingly been the case since the Arab Spring and the United States-led invasion of Iraq before it. Tensions have eased when at least one of the two states have not seen an opportunity to influence the political balance in a third-party country in favour of its proxies, a state of affairs that enabled a Saudi-Iranian rapprochement between 1997 and 2003.

The Academic Divide

There is a persistent interdisciplinary divide between IR and area studies when it comes to the study of Middle Eastern politics. Explicit theorising about the region's politics is more the exception than the rule as regional specialists have tended to favour a descriptive approach to the exclusion of theoretical and conceptual development. In IR's case, the tendency has been to treat the region as a source of data to test general theories and overlook how the unique knowledge of area experts can help inform theorising. This is regrettable, since the study of the Middle East can inform topics of concern to IR after the Cold War, such as sub-national processes and challenges to the state system as well as the significance of transnational ethnic and religious identities.⁵ A more fundamental problem is that macro-level theorising cannot shed light on more than a select few important dynamics, for example, balancing. For IR scholars, there can be no substitute for engagement with area specialists' knowledge of how states interact in specific contexts.

Two notable exceptions to IR's neglect of the Middle East are Stephen Walt's *The Origins of Alliances*⁶ and Michael Barnett's *Dialogues in Arab Politics*.⁷ Both books draw their empirical data from what is commonly referred to as the "Arab Cold War" of the 1950s and 1960s – the conflict among rival Arab regimes for supremacy in the region within the broader context of the global Cold War. However, they espouse fundamentally antithetical goals in that the realist Walt treats the region as a testing ground for a general theory, whereas the constructivist Barnett seeks to explain dynamics specific to Arab politics. Walt's concept of balance of

threat is based on states' perceptions of others' aggressive intentions, but he subscribes to an ontology that treats state identities as *exogenously given*. This exposes him to the critique that his commitment to a realist ontology and reliance on ideational variables leaves his theory underspecified because intent is not conceptually linked to either anarchy or the balance of power.⁸ Barnett's book, on the other hand, is an important example of how IR can interact with the scholarship of regional specialists. He argues that the incomplete process of nation-building in the region means that states are concerned about internal security, and that ideational threats may be more potent than military ones. During the Arab Cold War, Arab regimes were far more concerned about rivals' ability to incite revolts through the manipulation of images and symbols than their military capabilities. There are important parallels between the Arab Cold War and the region today, especially the fact that ideological posturing and influence over proxies may offer the region's powers a more effective means to exercise regional influence than conventional military force.

Another contribution, May Darwich's, presents identity as a potential source of conflict in that it causes ontological insecurity.⁹ While this draws attention to the reinvention of Saudi political identity vis-à-vis Iran after 1979, it relies on an explanatory logic that anthropomorphises states by ascribing to them psychological states like anxiety. Such a theoretical leap is not necessary to study how ideational shifts influence threat perceptions. Lawrence Rubin similarly points to ideational threats as central to Middle Eastern politics.¹⁰ His theory, however, treats ideology as potentially threatening to the internal stability of states, overlooking that states such as Iran and Saudi Arabia also balance ideationally and that a regime's identity affects its capacity to tilt a third-party country's political balance in favour of its proxies and, indeed, determines who these proxies are.

IR theory is almost completely absent from the scholarship on Saudi-Iranian relations. Just one of four central texts on the subject — by Shahram Chubin and Charles Tripp,¹¹ Frederic Wehrey et al.,¹² Simon Mabon,¹³ and Banafsheh Keynoush¹⁴ — engages in explicit theorising. Mabon's framework, the incongruence dilemma, assumes that ruling elites, if faced with an internal threat to their rule, will deploy aggressive rhetoric, which other states may find threatening, intensifying security competition. Since the Saudi and Iranian regimes both derive their internal legitimacy

from Islam, any rhetorical or symbolic references to that religion provoke a response by the other. This approach conveys Middle Eastern leaders' concerns about internal security without obscuring their interest in the broader balance of power in the region.

Saudi-Iranian relations may be understood as a "game" occurring in a normative structure external to the players and encouraging certain forms of strategic behaviour, since the players see social contexts as constraints on their ability to reach goals. Strategic games are also internal to the players because they establish the cultural terms specific to the historical context in which the players think and relate, which inform their beliefs and strategies.¹⁵ Political actors have multiple identities and the relative importance of specific frames or ideas in specific historical contexts will influence how they define themselves in relation to others as well as how they interact with one another. Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi of Iran pursued a secular and nationalist vision for Iran and shared with Saudi Arabia an interest in cooperating with the United States to counter the dual threats of Arab nationalism and communism.¹⁶ Iranian nationalism did not pose much of a threat to the Arab regimes because it could not overcome the Arab-Iranian ethnic divide and thus could not be used by Iran to exercise influence in the Arab world. The 1979 Iranian Revolution, however, removed Iran from the U.S.-led security structure and saw the installation of a regime that defined itself in religious terms, allowing it to overcome the Arab-Iranian ethnic divide by invoking Islamic rhetoric and imagery in its appeals.

Middle Eastern politics is defined by political actors trying to appropriate transnationally influential myths in a regional context in which states have not fully transformed into nations.¹⁷ The 1979 Iranian Revolution initiated exactly such a contest over the interpretation of religious norms and control over Islamic institutions.¹⁸ This set the stage for how Iran and Saudi Arabia would compete for regional influence after 1979. Here, I outline four theoretical assumptions about fluctuations in the intensity of their rivalry.

Competing Through Proxies

The first theoretical assumption draws from F. Gregory Gause's argument that "[t]he seriousness of a regional cold war is determined by the number of domestically weak states that exist at a

given time.”¹⁹ The collapse of state authority in a given country may intensify security competition between opposing sub-state groups, increasing the risk that the country becomes an arena of geopolitical competition as outside actors align with the rivaling communities out of opposition to one another. The second assumption is that transnational identities shared by communities, sub-state groups, and states create the potential for alliances. Intercommunal competition in the Middle East is increasingly occurring along sectarian lines, leading local actors to look to their co-religionists abroad for support.²⁰ Neither Iran nor Saudi Arabia provide such support for religious solidarity’s sake, but where there is a vacuum, there is also an opportunity to keep the other power out. The Saudi-Iranian rivalry’s sectarian dimension is therefore largely the result of spillover from local conditions in the region, as the potential for sectarian alliances is conditional on Shi’ite-Sunni relations on the ground in countries where Riyadh and Tehran compete for influence.

Thirdly, both states view the political balance between their proxies as a zero-sum game and, if given the opportunity, will try to influence said balance to the advantage of their alliance networks, which are often organised along sectarian lines. The two regimes typically see gains by either Sunnis or Shi’ites in third-party countries in zero-sum terms, as gains for either themselves or the other power.²¹ Finally, both states are more acutely concerned with the other power’s ability to influence the political balance between their actual or potential proxies in the region than the balance of conventional military power, provided that neither state sees the latter as so heavily tilted in favour of one state that a direct military confrontation is considered viable. Overall, this framework expects fluctuations in the Saudi-Iranian relationship to be a function of both states’ ability to influence the political balance between proxies in third-party countries, more than the balance of conventional military power. This roughly follows Walt’s insight that states balance against threats and seek amicable relations if they realise that they are too weak to influence an outcome, while deviating from the a priori assumption that military power is the most salient form of power.²²

Revolution and Containment

The foundations for how Iran and Saudi Arabia interact can

only be understood through the modern history of both countries. The Saudi state emerged in the early twentieth century through conquests that subjected people and tribes without a common national heritage to the rule of the House of Saud. In the absence of a strong sense of national unity, the royal family relied on an alliance with a clergy preaching the Wahhabi form of Sunni Islam that legitimated the monarchy's rule by promoting the king's role as protector of the mosques in the two holy cities of Mecca and Medina.²³ This, however, proved to be a double-edged sword, since Wahhabism imposed limits on nation-building—the Wahhabi clergy saw Shi'ites as heretics²⁴—and exposed the House of Saud to external attacks on its Islamic credentials.

The 1979 Iranian Revolution represented precisely such a threat, as it brought to power an Islamist regime that challenged the House of Saud's claim to the mantle of Islam. Iran's revolutionary regime was the very antithesis of the Saudi monarchy in that it promoted a radical, republican, and Third World articulation of political Islam, which it sought to spread by promoting revolution abroad.²⁵ The Saudis perceived a serious threat to both their internal stability and regional position. In 1979, one U.S. diplomatic cable observed, "[the] Saudis are now talking openly about the end of the House of Saud and the inevitability... of a bloody revolution."²⁶

One pillar of Saudi Arabia's response was to contain Iran ideologically through the promotion of anti-Shi'ite articulations of Sunnism by financing like-minded clerics and seminaries throughout the Muslim world.²⁷ A second pillar was to support hostile Sunni regimes that surrounded Iran, chiefly Saddam Hussein's regime, which fought Iran from 1980 to 1988 in an attempt to cut Tehran off from Arab Shi'ites in Iraq and the Levant. In the east, Shi'ite groups had been clashing with the Pakistani state since a 1977 coup, a confrontation that escalated into a low-intensity conflict between Saudi- and Iranian-backed sectarian militias after 1979. Saudi Arabia also financed a network of clerics and madrasas with ties to the Saudi Wahhabi establishment. This served the dual purpose of recruiting fighters for the anti-Soviet resistance in Afghanistan and countering Iran's ideological influence and strengthening anti-Shi'ite militias in Pakistan.²⁸

In this initial phase, the deterioration of Saudi-Iranian relations was to a large extent tied to the threat represented by Iran's revolutionary regime. Iran was stuck in a resource-draining war

with Iraq, yet was perceived as a threat to the internal stability of Muslim countries because it called for revolution among Muslims everywhere. The Saudi response was to support Sunni regimes hostile to Iran in Iraq and Pakistan while also countering Iran's ideological influence through the promotion of a specific brand of Islam. Both states became involved in a low-intensity conflict between sectarian proxies in Pakistan.

Rapprochement

By the early 1990s, Iran had come to be perceived as far less of a threat, partly because of its depleted military capabilities and the establishment of a permanent U.S. military presence in the Persian Gulf, but also because the 1979 Iranian Revolution had failed to inspire similar uprisings elsewhere. Iran's policy of exporting revolution ended in 1989, when Ayatollah Ali Khamenei succeeded Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. This gave Iran's political leaders room to pursue a more conciliatory approach towards Saudi Arabia, and a period of rapprochement began in 1997 following the election of President Mohammad Khatami. Khatami's election is not a sufficient explanation for rapprochement, however, as the president cannot make major foreign policy decisions without the Supreme Leader's approval.²⁹ This begs the question of why Saudi Arabia saw the new president's attempts at outreach as credible.

One necessary condition is that the Saudi regime knew that Iran's moderation was largely a consequence of its diminished ability to interfere in regional affairs.³⁰ The threat from Saddam's regime remained on Iran's western frontier, even after Baghdad's failed invasion of Kuwait and the 1994 Shi'ite and Kurdish uprisings in Iraq. While hostile towards Saddam, the Saudi regime preferred Iraq be ruled by a stable, predominantly Sunni regime as opposed to a Shi'ite-led government; in 1994, Prince Abdullah, the future king of Saudi Arabia, made clear to Iranian diplomats that the success of any reconciliation efforts with Iran depended on Iraq's stability.³¹

By 1996, it had also become clear that the Saudi policy towards Afghanistan and Pakistan had succeeded. In Afghanistan, the Taliban overran the mainly Shi'ite area of Hazarajat, hitherto a training ground for Pakistani Shi'ite militias, and Iran ceased its funding of Pakistani Shi'ite groups, clear signs of Iran's diminished

influence in its eastern neighbourhood.³² Iran did, however, succeed in achieving lasting influence in Lebanon through its role in the creation of Hezbollah. Although the Saudis resented this influence, they were unable to challenge it because of Syria's military presence in Lebanon. An equilibrium of sorts emerged, with neither country able to challenge the political balance between its actual or potential proxies in other Muslim countries, making a Saudi-Iranian rapprochement finally possible.

The Sectarian Turn

Hard power explanations tend to explain growing Saudi-Iranian tensions after 2003 as a consequence of the regional power balance shift in Iran's favour after the invasion of Iraq.³³ The problem with this explanation is that Iran remained far outclassed by its Gulf Arab neighbours in terms of both budget and military technology. Iran has a quantitative advantage in terms of its population and the size of its military, but this is offset by the superior quality and equipment of the armed forces of Gulf Cooperation Council member states. Saudi Arabia alone outspends Iran by four or five times annually.³⁴ One striking example of Iran's technological inferiority is that its new Kowsar fighter jet, unveiled in 2018, appears to be a derivative of the Shah-era F-5 fighter jet.³⁵ Iran thus lacks the capacity to project enough military power across the Persian Gulf to directly threaten the Arab Gulf states; instead, its military is primed for self-defence and adversarial deterrence.³⁶ Accordingly, the Saudi leadership does not perceive a direct military threat from Iran: Saudi Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman, at the time the kingdom's defence minister, commented in 2016 that he did not foresee a war with Iran.³⁷

Not even the possibility of Iran acquiring a nuclear weapon worries the Saudi regime as much as Iran's ability to destabilise Sunni Arab countries, not least because the latter is an asymmetric threat that cannot be easily deterred by the military superiority of the U.S. and its Arab allies. One indication of this is that Saudi-Iranian relations did not improve after Iran and the P5+1 countries — China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Germany — concluded the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) on Tehran's nuclear programme in 2015. This, even as Saudi leaders have refrained from accusing Iran of violating the JCPOA by developing a nuclear weapon in secret. Instead, Riyadh's

representatives, including Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir, have expressed concern that the JCPOA has provided Iran with the resources necessary to increase its interference in the region.³⁸ In other words, Saudi Arabia anticipates that Iran's development of a nuclear weapon would leave Tehran less fearful of direct military retaliation and less constrained in interfering in regional affairs.³⁹

Thus, the deterioration of Saudi-Iranian relations after 2003 can only be understood in the context of the destabilisation of the political balance between regional proxies, beginning with the fall of Iraq's Ba'athist regime. Political power in the Arab world, except in Syria, had historically been strongly concentrated in Sunni hands, including in Shi'ite-majority Iraq, where Saddam's regime was perceived as a Sunni bulwark against Iran.⁴⁰ Saddam's removal virtually ensured the political empowerment of Shi'ites in Iraq, leaving the Sunni Arab regimes fearful of the emergence of a "Shi'ite crescent" stretching from Iran to Lebanon, in the words of King Abdullah II of Jordan.⁴¹ The notion that either confessional community constitutes a monolithic bloc is wrong. Nevertheless, one can increasingly observe a bottom-up dynamic in weak states whereby armed groups associated with confessional communities come into conflict as they try to assert themselves in a volatile national environment.⁴² These weak states proceed to become arenas of Saudi-Iranian competition, with Riyadh and Tehran's respective interests affected by a local struggle's outcome. The way in which Saudi and Iranian leaders perceive threats is therefore highly contextual, and this rivalry's increasingly sectarian tinge, which is deeply influenced by the destabilization of the political balance between confessional communities in countries such as Iraq.

Iran relies on proxies in the region to compensate for its relative military weakness vis-à-vis the U.S. and its allies, creating spheres of influence throughout the region.⁴³ The consequences of regime change in Iraq illustrate how shifts in the sectarian balance in favour of Shi'ites can significantly strengthen Iran.⁴⁴ Although Saudi political elites found the prospect of Iranian primacy in Iraq disconcerting, Riyadh did little to prevent it because its original plan—the conclusion of a power-sharing agreement with the participation of ex-Ba'athists—collapsed as a result of Iraq's post-invasion de-Ba'athification.⁴⁵ It also abstained from directly supporting Sunni militias because King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia had promised U.S. President George W. Bush that it would not meddle in Iraq.⁴⁶ It pragmatically accepted Iranian primacy in Iraq, though

this acceptance was contingent on a continued U.S. military presence in Iraq, an arrangement that somewhat alleviated Riyadh's fear of Iranian dominance in Iraqi politics. In 2006, however, the Iraq Study Group recommended that the U.S. withdraw from Iraq, infuriating the Saudis.⁴⁷ One Saudi government advisor, Nawaf Obaid, suggested that Saudi Arabia would intervene militarily in Iraq to protect Sunnis from Shi'ite militias.⁴⁸ Similarly, Jamal Khashoggi, the Washington Post columnist and one-time advisor to Prince Turki al-Faisal, who was infamously murdered in 2018, voiced concern that Saudi foreign fighters would end up fighting "shoulder to shoulder with al-Qaeda" militants in an Iraqi civil war.⁴⁹ These frustrations were amplified by the royal family's fear of internal unrest among Wahhabi hard-liners over its alliance with the U.S. and perceived inaction on Iraq.⁵⁰

The decisive impetus for Saudi action against Iranian influence came from Lebanon. In July 2006, as a war between Israel and Hezbollah unfolded, the pro-Western Arab regimes found themselves caught in the dilemma of wanting to condemn Hezbollah yet risking giving the politically dangerous impression that they were unwilling to confront Israel. Saudi Arabia was compelled to adopt a more confrontational approach whereby it sought to curtail Iranian influence in post-war Lebanon, a course of action made significantly more viable by Syria's April 2005 withdrawal from Lebanon.⁵¹ Riyadh increased its support for the Lebanese state in concert with the U.S. and channelled funds to fundamentalist Salafi groups.⁵² According to David Samuels with *The Atlantic* magazine, the Arab Gulf states also began supporting a broader campaign to roll back Iranian influence in the region by funding Sunni political and paramilitary groups.⁵³ From 2006 on, Riyadh became more actively involved in Iraq, as the U.S. courted the support of Sunni groups, later known as the "Sons of Iraq," in its efforts against AQ.⁵⁴

Riyadh's increasingly assertive attitude worried the Iranian regime because it feared that Saudi Arabia was leading an Arab political front against it. These mutual suspicions and fears led to renewed efforts at bilateral dialogue and cooperation on regional disputes as well as a 2007 joint Iran-Saudi declaration on sectarian strife.⁵⁵ However, these steps had no discernible impact because the political balance between communities in the region was in flux and the conditions for a Saudi-Iranian rapprochement were simply not there as they had been in 1997. In a 2009 speech de-

livered to an audience dominated by Iranian Sunnis, Ayatollah Khamenei pointed a less-than-subtle finger at Saudi Arabia when he claimed that terrorism in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan was being carried out by petrodollar-funded Wahhabi Muslims.⁵⁶ Saudi Arabia, on the other hand, was acutely aware of its inability to contain Iranian influence, not least when in 2008 Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki reined in the Saudi-backed Sons of Iraq while ignoring Shi'ite militias and filling the ranks of the Iraqi Army and the security forces with Shi'ites.⁵⁷

Eventually, Saudi Arabia came to see Iraq as so firmly established within Iran's sphere of influence that its focus in Iraq shifted from rollback to damage control, especially once Maliki negotiated the withdrawal of US troops by the end of 2011.⁵⁸ Meanwhile, Riyadh resolved to roll back Iranian influence in the Levant, especially over Hamas, Iran's lone significant Sunni ally. Saudi influence over Hamas was limited because of Riyadh's alignment with the U.S., which precluded the adoption of an overtly confrontational position towards Israel and ruled out the role of a moderating influence for Riyadh after Washington refused to accept Hamas's victory in the Palestinian territories' 2006 legislative election.⁵⁹ Tehran, however, actively courted Hamas, appealing to their mutual hostility towards Israel. The turning point came in 2012, when Hamas broke with the Iran-Syria-Hezbollah axis following the outbreak of a sectarian civil war in Syria.⁶⁰ Forced to choose between Sunni and Shi'ite allies, Hamas sided with its co-religionists.

This case illustrates the region's broader turn towards sectarianism in the wake of the 2011 Arab Spring, which further destabilised Saudi-Iranian relations by disrupting the political balance between confessional communities in countries like Syria and Yemen. Saudi Arabia saw in Syria's civil war an opportunity to offset setbacks in Iraq.⁶¹ Saudi Arabia and other Arab Gulf States supported Sunni militants opposed to Syrian President Bashar al-Assad with the aim of bringing about regime change, while Iran supported Damascus, not least by deploying Hezbollah and various Iraqi militias to fight in Syria.⁶² The Saudi regime also intervened militarily in Bahrain in 2011 to protect the Sunni ruling family against mainly Shi'ite protesters demanding political reform.⁶³ In Yemen, it responded to the January 2015 capture of the capital, Sana'a, by Shi'ite Houthi fighters by undertaking a military intervention there.⁶⁴ Riyadh and Tehran have also accused one another

of promoting sectarianism in the region. In a 2016 op-ed Iranian foreign minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, penned an op-ed in the *New York Times* claiming that al-Qaeda consisted predominantly of Saudi nationals and those brainwashed by Saudi-financed demagogues.⁶⁵ In response, al-Jubeir, his Saudi counterpart, accused Iran of having pursued sectarian and expansionist policies through its proxies since 1979.⁶⁶

Finally, it is worth noting that relations deteriorated despite the election of President Hassan Rouhani, who made a Saudi-Iranian rapprochement a central campaign promise, in 2013.⁶⁷ Saudi-Iranian relations reached their nadir in 2016 as Riyadh suspended its diplomatic relations with Iran as relations deteriorated following the September 2015 Hajj stampede in Mecca where a large percentage of the dead were Iranian pilgrims.⁶⁸ Saudi-Iranian reconciliation efforts failed in 2016 despite succeeding nearly ten years earlier because regional conditions did not accommodate such a rapprochement. The region's destabilization in the decade after 2003 put the political balance among conflictual communities in multiple Middle Eastern countries into question and thus provided both Iran and Saudi Arabia with opportunities to reshape the regional order to their advantage. The military balance remains heavily tilted in Saudi Arabia's favour, but so long as third-party countries where Riyadh and Tehran exercise significant influence remain unstable, Saudi-Iranian relations will remain poor.

Conclusion

IR scholars should draw from the scholarship of regional specialists to better engage in mid-level theorising. The Saudi-Iranian rivalry is particularly interesting because both states emphasise and utilise identities with transnational appeal to compete with one another. Another noteworthy aspect is how they interact with non-state actors who can influence the terms on which these states interact. The 1979 Iranian Revolution triggered a contest for the mantle of Islam and led to mutual attempts to outmanoeuvre the other through ideological posturing and support for proxies abroad. The completion of a "Sunni wall" of hostile regimes around Iran limited Tehran's influence in the region, enabling the gradual improvement of Saudi-Iranian relations and a rapprochement lasting from 1997 to 2003. The relationship deteriorated, however, as the invasion of Iraq and its reverberations led to the

destabilisation of several countries in the region. The resulting local conflicts have increasingly been fought along sectarian lines, pushing Iran and Saudi Arabia to align with their co-religionists and strive to influence the political balance in these third-party countries. This attempt at mid-level theorising was restricted to one state dyad, but it would be interesting to examine whether similar mechanisms hold across more dyads, especially in the Middle East. For example, Saudi-Iranian relations are reminiscent of how Arab states competed for the mantle of Arab nationalism in the 1950s and 1960s. Engaging in systematic cross-dyad comparison may reveal hidden patterns of value to IR scholars and policy-makers alike.

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"ETHNIC GROUP" LAND REGULARISATION AT THE CROSSROADS: SOME NOTES ON THE CHALLENGES FACED BY QUILOMBOLAS IN BRAZIL

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Abstract

This article sets the contemporary Brazilian political context against the background of "ethnic" land regularisation. It discusses some of the main challenges faced by the so-called "remnants" of ancient quilombo communities in Brazil, especially in relation to the legal framework that seeks to regulate their collective rights. After a brief genealogical overview of the different uses and meanings of the term "quilombo", the discussion focuses on the political organisation around land rights for the inhabitants of quilombo communities (quilombolas). The article subsequently explores the growing political influence of three pressure groups in the National Congress, namely the Parliamentary Front for Farming (FPA), the Evangelical Parliamentary Front of the National Congress (FPE), and the Parliamentary Front for Public Security (FPSP) and examines the role of these parliamentary fronts and of their political allies in the process of quilombo land regularisation. Finally, the concluding remarks reflect upon the future of ethnic land struggle in Brazil in the current context of political polarisation and polemical discourse against "ethnic" land right.

Quilombo: From informal settlement to metaphor for political struggle

Quilombos and mocambos^a in Brazil have historically been described as maroon settlements, formed by runaway and/or self-emancipated enslaved people and their descendants. Reference to the terms, both of Central African origin initially designating im-

^a The terms are essentially synonymous. Throughout this essay I will be using the word "*quilombo*," reflecting its broader use in Brazil today. For a discussion of definitions and different appropriations of the terms throughout the centuries see especially: Almeida, A. W. Bero de. 1996. 'Quilombos: sematologia face a novas identidades'. In SMDDH, CCNM, AMQF (Org.), *Frechal: Terra de preto. Quilombo reconhecido como reserva extrativista*. São Luís: SMDH-PVN/CCN; Leite, I. Boaventura. 2000. 'Quilombos: Questões conceituais e normativas', *Etnográfica*, 4(2): 333-354.

Katerina Chatzikidi, "'Ethnic Group' Land Regularisation at the Crossroads: Some Notes on the Challenges Faced By Quilombolas in Brazil," *St Antony's International Review* 14. no. 2, (2019): 155-170.

provided encampments, is found in colonial records. The earliest known record dates back to 1575, where the term “mocambo” is used to describe a group of enslaved runaways in Bahia. The word “quilombo” first appears in colonial documents at the end of the seventeenth century.¹ The largest quilombo known to have existed in Brazil is Palmares, the “Black republic” of the Serra da Barriga, in the current State of Alagoas. Palmares reached its apogee in the seventeenth century, numbering about 20,000 inhabitants and having successfully resisted colonial authorities for almost a century.²

While Palmares stood out because of the settlement’s size and duration, and because its history is consequently better documented than that of most other quilombos,³ small, makeshift and temporary settlements of formerly enslaved people were a constant phenomenon throughout slavery and across Brazil’s immense topography. These “extrastate zones of flight and refuge” were typically “a composite of runaways and earlier-established peoples,”⁴ often forming an extremely diverse ethnic array. As Leite has phrased it: “The quilombo, besides being a disruptive force to the Portuguese colonial system, is at the base of the transcultural and historical experience and of the formation of the political systems that characterise the so-called culture of the “Black Atlantic”.”⁵

Throughout the colonial period, the legal occupation of land was, by and large, the exclusive privilege of wealthy White individuals and absolutely unattainable for quilombolas (the residents of quilombos). After Brazil gained independence from Portugal in 1822, land titles remained essentially out of reach for the inhabitants of those Black rural communities. Although on many occasions they managed to collectively acquire land and effectively establish themselves in specific areas, these acquisitions were not accompanied by legal titles but rather were usually realised through donation from former landowners, the disintegration of lands owned by Catholic Orders, purchase, or appropriation of land in disuse.

During the First Brazilian Republic (1889-1930), founded soon after the abolition of slavery in 1888,^b the country was far from discussing any form of slavery reparations, or land reform that would include parts of the population denied most human rights and excluded from the right to own land. To the contrary, it was a time when Brazil struggled to maintain the Afro-Brazilian population in a state nearly as suppressed as during slavery. Indeed, the abolition of slavery seemed like an empty gesture in the light of

^b Brazil was the last country in the Western hemisphere to abolish slavery, on 13 May 1888, with the Imperial Law n. 3.353, commonly known as *Lei Áurea*.

the politics of *branqueamento* (literally “whitening”) that characterised the following decades.⁶ The mass influx of White European immigrants, invited to the country and given preference even for menial jobs, importantly limited the socio-economic integration of Afro-Brazilians in the post-abolition era.⁷ With restricted (or no) access to the job market, education, healthcare, land and housing, the Afro-Brazilian population faced insurmountable barriers to survival, let alone wellbeing and growth.

Things were slightly better for some Afro-Brazilians in the growing urban centres of Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, and Salvador, where several political and cultural groups started to emerge.^c The influential Black Brazilian Front (FNT, 1931-1937) was carved out of São Paulo’s urban context by a group of Afro-Brazilians. Besides its concentrated efforts to educate the urban Black population of São Paulo, it also importantly lobbied for human rights and won some victories in the field of civil rights.⁸ However, after the 1930 coup d’état such movements were legally prohibited and most of the FNT’s actions ceased abruptly.⁹

While Black movement activism was mobilising hundreds of Afro-Brazilians, the formal political scene in Brazil remained hostile, or indifferent at best, to the Afro-Brazilian population. The short-lived democratic period of the Fourth Republic (1946-1964) was violently interrupted by the military dictatorship that was established in 1964 and ended in 1985. However, not all was lost. Despite structural constraints, the different expressions of the Black movement would persevere and eventually grow. In 1978, the Unified Black Movement Against Racial Discrimination (later known simply as Unified Black Movement, MNU) was born in São Paulo. While many of its actions were violently suppressed by the military dictatorship, the MNU publicly debunked the myth of “racial democracy” and denounced everyday racism suffered by the country’s non-White population.¹⁰

From the mid-1970s until the end of the military dictatorship in 1985, Brazil entered a rather slow process of gradual democratisation called “*abertura democrática*” (period of democratic transition). While this period was still characterised by severe restrictions on civil rights, it allowed some flexibility in applying more liberal social and economic reforms, which opened the way

c Of course, many of the abolitionist intellectuals and activists were Afro-Brazilians. However, organised groups with an explicitly political agenda pressuring for better living conditions for the Afro-Brazilian population only started to emerge in the 20th century.

for major changes that took place in the post-junta era. Soon after the dictatorship's end, a new federal constitution coincided with the centennial of the abolition of slavery. As a result of the wider social and political changes taking place in the country, and long battles fought by militants of the Black movement, three of the articles introduced in the 1988 Constitution marked an important legal conquest for (a large part of) the Afro- Brazilian population. Initially given negative connotations as it was used as an accusatory and deprecating term by police and state officials in the colonial and imperial periods,¹¹ "quilombo" had been re-appropriated by Afro-Brazilian political activists who started to positively re-semanticise it. A landmark moment for the word's positive re-appropriation and eventual transformation into a keyword in the struggle for human rights was the publication of the newspaper Quilombo in December 1948. Abdias do Nascimento, its editor, a prominent Black movement activist, artist, and intellectual, wrote in the editorial of the first issue: "The struggle of QUILOMBO is not specifically against those who negate our rights, rather especially to remind the Black man (o negro) himself of, or acquaint him with, his rights to life and culture."¹² This use of the word, symbolically representing the Black struggle for freedom and equality entwined with a historical legacy of resistance, was the harbinger of the way "quilombo" came to be popularised and turned into an emblem of Black political activism.

However, even if the term has been used by Black movement activists since at least the 1940s, it was only after its introduction in the 1988 Federal Constitution that quilombos, as existing communities, began to re-appear in official documents and the use of the term gradually gained popular currency.

Collective Organisation around "quilombo land rights"

Also known as Brazil's Magna Carta, the 1988 Federal Constitution defined the country as a "multi-ethnic state" and made a radical break with past constitutions.¹⁴ Article 68 of the Temporary Constitutional Provisions Act (*Ato das Disposições Constitucionais Transitórias*, ADCT), states, "Final ownership shall be recognised for the quilombo remnant communities which are occupying their lands and the State shall grant them relevant land titles."^d

d All translations from Portuguese in this essay are mine unless otherwise stated. The original reads: 'Aos remanescentes das comunidades dos quilombos que estejam ocupando suas terras é reconhecida a propriedade definitiva, devendo o Estado emitir-lhes os títulos respectivos'

Not only did Article 68 recognise land rights for *quilombolas* for the first time, but it also formally relaunched and established the word “*quilombo*” and created a specific, ethno-racial, category of citizenship. Furthermore, Articles 215 and 216 included Afro-Brazilian and quilombo cultural manifestations and their sites—i.e. *quilombo* territories—in the country’s national cultural heritage (*patrimônio cultural*).

It took a century after the abolition of slavery for Brazil’s Constitution to establish land rights for a part of the Afro-Brazilian population, namely *quilombolas*. Article 68 gave legal grounds to pre-existing *quilombola* struggles for land nationwide. Although initially it was a marginal article of the Constitution, one that lawmakers did not expect to affect more than a few communities in the country,¹⁵ it became the focal point of an array of social movements and organisations working in defence of land and other human rights, mobilising and directly affecting thousands of people. Besides establishing a legal framework for land struggles, Article 68 consolidated positive meaning for the term “*quilombo*.”

A phenomenon “more intensely” observed in the northeastern states of Brazil,¹⁶ Black rural quilombo communities were locally known by various different names before Article 68 established a national consensus on their denomination (by establishing a legal category). For example, in most of the northern and northeastern states, quilombos were largely known as “Black lands” (*terras de preto*) or simply as sites (*sítios*) and villages (*povoados*).

Popular awareness of, and political mobilisation around, quilombo rights was greatly fostered in national meetings of Black rural communities in the states of Maranhão and Pará in the early 1980s.¹⁷ The forms in which *quilombolas* articulated their communities’ claims over land and other rights were also shaped by the influence of intellectuals, political activists, members of governmental and civil society organisations, and even clergy and lay Church agents. All these actors have acted, in various degrees and at different times in recent history, as agents for the dissemination of knowledge of human rights and political organisation, and often provided technical and administrative support to the communities.

With time, the strong reluctance to identify with what was often considered a disparaging term attached to a dreadful slavery past was gradually transformed and the term was reappraised.¹⁸ It was in this context that the name “Black rural *quilombo* communities” (*comunidades negras rurais quilombolas*) was adopted by political activists to describe and unite, under a common denomination, the different Black rural communities across the country. As Linhares has emphasised, landowners had restricted the word “*quilombo*”

to settlements formed by runaways, “but today’s [B]lack activists prefer the term *rural [B]lack community*, which minimises the importance of how these social groups were formed.”¹⁹

This self-denomination was largely established after the organisation of the first National Meeting of Black Rural Quilombo Communities in Brasília in 1995, and the creation, in 1996, of the National Coordination for the Articulation of Black Rural Quilombo Communities (CONAQ). This is the formal political organisation the national Quilombola movement chose for its legal representation with delegates from most states.²⁰ Eventually, the inhabitants of Black rural communities collectively recognised that a quilombola identity may not only be positive, but also necessary, to enshrine basic human rights, especially their rights to land.

The fact that the use of the term *quilombo*, and the identification as *quilombola*, might have arisen, in some areas, in the wake of the 1988 Constitution’s action, has given fertile ground to conservative voices who question the legitimacy of claims to *quilombo* identities and have consistently tried (especially in the press and mainstream media) to discredit *quilombolas* as “ethnic fraud.”²¹ Indeed, in certain ways, a posteriori identification as *quilombola* has been one of the constant accusations levelled against *quilombolas* by those who oppose, and typically have vested interests in standing against, *quilombo* land regularisation. However, such accusations fail to consider that a change in the lexicon does not necessarily reflect changes in the way people see themselves and their history.²²

Current Challenges

In 2003, Presidential Decree n. 4.887/2003, inspired by Brazil’s 2002 ratification of the 1989 International Labour Organisation Convention 169 on indigenous and tribal rights, codified “self-identification” (*auto-atribuição*) as the main requisite for a community to be recognised as a *quilombo*. The Decree, fruit of the first year of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva’s presidency (2003–2011), aimed to facilitate the extremely slow and heavily bureaucratic process of land regularisation for *quilombolas* by revoking Decree n. 3.912. The latter, issued by former President Fernando Henrique Cardoso in 2001, required the production of a technical report that would justify whether a given community actually had any historical, cultural, ethnic, or other links with ancient quilombos. Anthropologists (usually the authors of such reports) were often compelled to marshal historical “evidence” for a given quilombo’s ethnic ancestry.²³

Decree n. 4.887 was met with disapproval by opposition parties and was questioned by a Direct Action of Unconstitutionality (ADI-3239), proposed by representatives of the Democrats political party (DEM, former PFL). After several years of deliberations and session rescheduling, in February 2018 the Brazilian Supreme Court (STF) voted in favour of the constitutionality of the 2003 Decree, reopening the way for the attribution of *quilombolas'* long overdue land rights.^e But other obstacles persevere.

The Palmares Cultural Foundation (FCP) is the government institution entrusted with the task of issuing official certificates to *quilombo* remnant communities based on their self-identification as such. These certificates are not equal to title deeds, which, since 2003, can only be issued by the National Institute for Colonisation and Agrarian Reform (INCRA). Despite the legal and institutional framework however, the issuance of title deeds for *quilombos* in Brazil has faced major obstructions since 1988. Only 174 *quilombo* territories in the country have been given titles deeds, while more than 1,600 are still facing land insecurity, and their permanence in their traditionally-occupied territories is often threatened.²⁴

Large so-called development initiatives of national interest (ranging from technological to mining and from military to agribusiness projects, both public and private) have been identified, especially in the anthropological literature, as *quilombos'* principal threat.²⁵ Such initiatives require large areas for their realisation, and *quilombo* land regularisation severely hinders the possibility of using land currently occupied by these communities for other purposes. Pressure groups and other agents who are against the establishment of collective land titles to *quilombo* communities therefore concentrate their efforts on preventing the regularisation of their land.

This discussion is particularly pressing in recent months, since Brazil's socio-political crisis has intensified ahead of the 2018 presidential elections. The already highly-tense political situation, which appeared to culminate in August 2016 with the impeachment of former President Dilma Rousseff, and her succession by Michel Temer, reached a new climax with the imprisonment of former President Lula and the ascent to the Presidency of Jair Bolsonaro, after a volatile and polarising presidential rally. But what is more important for our discussion is how these developments

e A relevant case from Latin America is that of Saramaka People V Suriname. In 2008, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights decided in favour of the application, by analogy, of the collective rights of indigenous peoples to their lands under Article 21 of the Inter-American Convention of Human Rights (ratified by Brazil in 1992) to rural communities of descendants of formerly enslaved people. See Richard Price, *Rainforest warriors: Human rights on trial* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011).

may influence the future of “ethnic” land regularisation in the country (such as indigenous and *quilombo land*). In what follows, I will attempt to sketch a brief outline of the political powers that arguably represent one of *quilombola*’s chief antagonists, contributing to the prolongation of land insecurity for hundreds of communities.

The Parliamentary Fronts

During the National Constituent Assembly of 1987-1988, members of the parliament initiated the formation of different interest groups that eventually became today’s Parliamentary Fronts (PF).^f Among those was the PF representing the *bancada ruralista* (lit: “ruralist bench,” for the places they occupy in the national parliament), a multi-party coalition aimed at protecting and promoting the interests of large landholders and agribusiness in the country.²⁶ Until 1994, the ruralist interest group existed only informally. In 1995, the Agricultural Parliamentary Front was founded as the formal instrument to voice the ruralist lobby in the National Congress. In 2002, it was relaunched as Parliamentary Front in Defence of Farming, and in 2008, its name was changed to the Parliamentary Front for Farming (*Frente Parlamentar da Agropecuária*, FPA), a name that remains to this day.

FPA’s official website reads:

In recent years, the Parliamentary Front has distinguished itself through its work in the National Congress. With a multi-party composition, and uniting more than 200 Members of Parliament, the bench has been an example of a very successful interest and pressure group. It is considered to be the most influential [PF] in the discussions, articulations and negotiations of public policies within the scope of the Legislative Power.²⁷

The self-assured tone of the FPA’s self-description of its achievements and popularity is reflected in the growing number of its members in the National Congress: 260 federal deputies and senators, from over twenty political parties, have formally joined the FPA, which is currently represented by deputy Tereza Cristina Correa da Costa Dias.

^f According to Act n. 69 of 2005 of the Board of the Chamber of Deputies, Parliamentary Fronts are associations of members of the Federal Legislature from various parties that decide to join forces in order to promote the debate for the legislation of a specific subject of social interest.

Another popular front in Brazil's National Congress is the Evangelical Parliamentary Front of the National Congress (*Frente Parlamentar Evangélica do Congresso Nacional*, FPE). Nearly 200 federal deputies and senators are members of the FPE, which is currently represented by deputy and Assembly of God pastor Hidekazu Takayama. One of the fastest-growing PFs in the Brazilian Congress is the Parliamentary Front for Public Security (*Frente Parlamentar de Segurança Pública*, FPSP), with nearly 300 adherents. It should be noted that Members of Parliament can, and typically do, join more than one front. Indeed, it is not uncommon for deputies and senators to join the FPA, FPE, and FPSP, three of the most influential pressure groups in the country.

As mentioned previously, there are multiple obstacles to *quilombo* land regularisation. However, I do not have the space to discuss these in detail here. Instead, I would like to draw attention to what is arguably one of the most significant and long-standing impediments to such procedures: the political pressure exerted by the FPA, FPE, and FPSP Parliamentary Fronts.

Ingrained in the state apparatus, powers antagonistic to *quilombola* land rights have managed to significantly curb *quilombo* land regularisation.²⁸ Indeed, the influence of these three lobbies on Brazilian national politics has grown, especially since they have taken a grip on key government positions, including in the very institutions that regulate land. The synergy between the three PFs is commonly described in the press and the parliament as the “BBB bench” from ox (*boi*), bible (*bíblia*), and bullet (*bala*), evoking three elements with which members of the three *bancadas* are most commonly associated.

The headline of an article published in one of Brazil's major newspapers, *Folha de São Paulo*, after the Chamber voted in favour of Rousseff's impeachment, vividly illustrates this point: “Ox, Bible and bullet: the ‘BBB bench’ fortifies defeat of Dilma in the Chamber.”²⁹ Clustering a large number of the total of 513 deputies in the Chamber of Deputies,^g the parliamentary power of the BBB cannot be downplayed. Since the 2016 impeachment, the influence of the BBB in the National Congress has become ever more tangible. As Alceu Luís Castilho, journalist from the *De Olho nos Ruralistas* agribusiness observatory, states, “It is a matter of numbers: the members of the FPA today have the power to overthrow a president and maintain another in power.”³⁰ Half of the votes in favour of the impeachment (49.59%) of Dilma Rousseff in 2016 and in favour of keeping Michel Temer in power

^g The Chamber of Deputies is a federal legislative body and the lower house of the National Congress of Brazil. It comprises 513 deputies who are elected by proportional representation to serve four-year terms.

in 2017 (51%) came from the FPA alone.^h

The BBB's popular support also appeared especially visible and audible ahead of the 2018 presidential elections. Jair Bolsonaro, a former military officer and the most voted candidate in the 2014 general elections in the state of Rio de Janeiro, has enjoyed popular approval as a federal deputy. Having gained popularity especially due to his far-right and highly controversial views of human rights and minorities—especially women, LGBTIQ, Black, and indigenous people—in 2016 he announced his candidacy for President “whether we liked it or not.”³¹ An admirer of United States President Donald Trump, Bolsonaro has declared that Trump “serves as an example” for him, and has repeatedly expressed his wish for Brazil to follow in the USA's footsteps of “development” and “progress.”³² After the imprisonment of former President Lula and the withdrawal of his presidential candidacy, Bolsonaro maintained his lead over other candidates and finally won the elections in the second round.

An affiliated member of the FPE, or “Evangelical bench” (*bancada evangélica*), and the FPSP, or “Bullet bench” (*bancada da bala*), Bolsonaro, although not formally affiliated with the FPA, has consistently voted in favour of the bills proposed and/or advocated by the three lobbies in Congress, and has voiced opinions that support their actions. Breaking its purportedly neutral stance on the presidential rally, and only a few days before the 2018 elections, the FPA officially declared its support for Bolsonaro. Silas Malafaia and Edir Macedo, pastors and leaders of two of the most influential evangelical churches in Brazil (Assembly of God Victory in Christ and Universal Church of the Kingdom of God, respectively) also formally supported Bolsonaro's presidential candidacy.

For the deputy, as for many representatives of the BBB, any demarcation of *quilombola* and indigenous territory is nothing but an impediment to the country's progress and economic development. In April 2017, addressing an auditorium of 300 people, Bolsonaro said that his impression from a visit to “some *quilombo*” was, “They don't do anything. I don't think they serve as procreators anymore. More than 1 R\$ billion per year is wasted on them.” He went on to say, “You can rest assured that if I get there [elected President] ... every citizen will have a firearm in his house. There won't be a centimetre demarcated for indigenous reserve or for *quilombolas*.”³³

The racism so blatantly explicit in Bolsonaro's speech shocked

^h Of the 155 deputies of the FPA who voted both on 17 April 2016 and on 2 August 2017, 124 of them voted against Dilma Rousseff and in favour of Michel Temer. That is 80% of the voters of FPA. For further reading see link in the previous endnote.

and enraged many, but also found enthusiastic support from other groups of people. Discrediting *quilombolas* in the way the presidential candidate did in the above statement, which caused national outrage especially amongst Afro-Brazilians, closely relates to the notion of “ethnic fraud.” Indeed, this has been a key phrase used by members of the FPA and/or the FPE, as well as by those who espouse the views of the ruralist pressure group in general when attacking ethnic groups. Such accusations not only aim to discredit their land struggle, but to fully deny their existence as distinct groups within a pluralist, multi-ethnic state.

For many members of the BBB, *quilombola* and indigenous struggles for land rights are organised efforts to take advantage of constitutionally-guaranteed rights without “really” qualifying for them. Anthropologists have long examined the phenomenon of “constructivist invention of ethnicity” or “ethnic resurgence,” which Arruti has called “the emergence of ‘remnants’,” against the background of ethnic legislation and land insecurity.³⁴ They did so by showing that a relatively recent, or indeed subsequent to relevant legislation, identification as “indigenous” or “*quilombola*” does not, and should not, have any implications for the legitimacy of a given group’s “political processes of claiming ethnic differentiation”³⁵ and ethnic-based land rights.

However, the agendas of BBB members dictate otherwise. Indeed, in May 2017, the Parliamentary Inquiry Committee (CPI) of the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI) and INCRA published a report which recommended the indictment of nearly 100 people for purportedly illicit acts in the processes of demarcation of indigenous and *quilombo* land and rural settlement projects. The degree of the ruralist lobby’s involvement in state decisions that affect land regularisation is evident in that many of its members hold positions in the very institutions that regulate such procedures. Deputy Nilson Leitão, at the time president of the FPA, is also the author of the report. The president of the Committee, Alceu Moreira, is a member of the FPA, the FPE, and the FPSP. In fact, all seven core members of the Inquiry Committee formally adhere to the FPA, with many of them also being affiliated members of the FPE and/or the FPSP. Jair Bolsonaro also participated in the session as a member (*titular*) of the Committee.

In other words, members of the same Parliamentary Fronts that formally represent and lobby for the rights of large private landholders, the promotion of agribusiness, and the influence of Evangelical (mainly Pentecostal and neo-Pentecostal) churches are the same people who comprise the Committee accusing authors of expert reports (many of them anthropologists) of skewed assessments favouring indigenous, *quilombolas*, and

landless groups. Despite the constitutionally-guaranteed rights to land at stake and the public outrage at the Committee's report, and in reflection of the power currently held by the ruralist and Evangelical interest groups in the National Congress, the second CPI of FUNAI-INCRA approved the final version of the report authored by Leitão on 30 May 2017. The final report requires the indictment of sixty-seven people linked to activities developed through, and in collaboration with, FUNAI, among them 15 anthropologists and 26 indigenous people, and of 23 people linked to activities developed through, and in collaboration with, INCRA.

For many federal deputies, the 2017 report authored by Leitão is not only absurd or farcical, but "a pamphlet against the people," representing an "effort of new colonisation of the country by the large rural property owners," as deputy Érika Kokay put it. Many members of the parliament opposed the report, predominantly from such parties as the PSOL, which has no members that are signatories to either the FPA or the FPE (but has one affiliated to the FPSP). Some also relate the discourse of the BBB to physical attacks against *quilombola* and indigenous groups. The alarming number of reports, made by members of such groups and activists, of usurpation, threats against their lives—especially of political leaders—and even reported murder cases, points to a parallel growth of human rights violations with an influence on conservative, and often far-right, sectors of the legislature. According to data published by the National Office of the Ombudsman for Human Rights and the CONAQ, the number of registered murders of *quilombolas* has increased dramatically since 2016,³⁶ and many fear attacks will soar after Bolsonaro's election.

Concluding Remarks

Across different periods in history and shifting political regimes, one factor appears to remain unchanged regarding *quilombola* land struggles in contemporary Brazil: the obstacles raised against the final legalisation of *quilombo* land occupation. Indeed, the long and bumpy road of political conquests for *quilombolas* has, as I have demonstrated, always met strong opposition and faced important setbacks. To a great extent, this derives from the dynamics of instability that have steadily characterised Brazilian national politics.

The latest chapter in the saga of *quilombola* land regularisation is being written at this precise moment, in the aftermath of the 2018 presidential elections, placing the future of this process at a crossroads. It is therefore pertinent to set this brief historical overview against the background of contemporary *quilombola*

land struggles. This short essay places issues around *quilombo* land regularisation within Brazil's current context of political uncertainty and polarisation to remind us that rights that were conquered with great difficulty can be taken away in the blink of an eye. If previous governments were already slow or inert in issuing legal land titles to quilombo territories, the status quo is certainly at stake when a political figure who has engaged in explicitly polemical discourse against *quilombolas*, such as Bolsonaro, is Brazil's new president.

Of course, this moment is not only crucial to the long-standing struggles of minority groups within the national state, but for a wide range of civil rights established during Brazil's fragile democratic periods. And this is precisely why the present political situation is highly critical.

These sparse notes, however, simultaneously remind us that the history and importance of *quilombola* political movement is not something that can be obliterated "whether we like it or not." In fact, past and present barriers have not yet stopped *quilombolas* from organising and even strengthening their collective political representation in recent decades. *Quilombolas* will continue to fight until their long-overdue constitutional rights to land are finally established and remain secure independently of the incumbent government in power.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Ignácio Albornoz, Jonathan Alderman, and the anonymous reviewers for their feedback on earlier versions of this article.

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32 See relevant story: <https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/poder/2017/10/1925626-o-trump-serve-de-exemplo-para-mim-diz-bolsonaro-em-visita-aos-eua.shtml>, accessed on January 22, 2019.

33 The video of the speech has circulated widely in news media. For an article covering the news story, see the following published on 4 April 2017: <https://deolhonosruralistas.com.br/2017/04/04/bolsonaro-nem-um-centimetro-para-quilombola-ou-reserva-indigena/>, accessed on January 22, 2019.

34 Jose Mauricio Arruti, "A emergência dos 'remanescente': Notas para o diálogo entre indígenas e quilombolas," *Mana* 3, No. 2 (1997): 7-38.

35 Susana de Matos Viegas, *Terra calada: Os Tupinambá na Mata Atlântica do Sul da Bahia* (Rio de Janeiro: 7Letras, 2007), 65-66.

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CHINA'S RISE AND THE RE-SINICIZATION OF ETHNIC CHINESE IN SINGAPORE

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Abstract

Ethnic Chinese have settled in Malaya (present-day Singapore and Malaysia) since antiquity, and have undergone two waves of de-Sinicization and two waves of re-Sinicization. Early Chinese immigrants intermarried with indigenous Malays, producing mixed descendants who adopted Chinese-Malay creoles and no longer identified with China (this was the “First Wave” of de-Sinicization). Following Singapore’s founding as a British port, a sustained influx of immigrants from China kept Singapore intimately connected with developments in the late Qing dynasty and the Republic of China. Some de-Sinicized local-born Chinese developed nationalistic sentiments towards China and studied Mandarin to reaffirm their Chinese origins (this was the “First Wave” of re-Sinicization). After China curtailed immigration to and from Singapore in the 1930s, Singaporean-born Chinese rapidly outnumbered first-generation immigrants, and by the 1950s many ethnic Chinese in Singapore no longer identified with China. Chinese Singaporeans increasingly abandoned the Chinese language—which had little economic value—and opted for English-medium education. The collapse of Chinese-medium education in Singapore in 1978 accelerated the widespread adoption of English and the “Singlish” creole (this was the “Second Wave” of de-Sinicization). Singapore’s 1979 Speak Mandarin Campaign marked the beginning of government-led efforts to re-Sinicize Chinese Singaporeans (the “Second Wave” of re-Sinicization). These efforts, which included integrating new immigrants from China, were partially successful but bred resentment among some Chinese Singaporeans. Accompanying China’s rise in the twenty-first century is a dramatic revival of interest among Chinese Singaporeans in Chinese culture, language, and identity. An ascendant China, with its stated ambitions of winning the loyalty of overseas Chinese, may have already initiated a “Third Wave” of re-Sinicization of Chinese Singaporeans. Singapore’s government faces the delicate balancing act of promoting English without creating a pseudo-Western society, while promoting Chinese language and culture, and yet forging a distinct Chinese Singaporean identity.

Introduction

China’s rise has stirred discussions about whether Chinese Singaporeans identify with China¹ and what the Chinese Singaporean identity is.² In July 2018, Singaporean academic and former ambassador-at-large Bilahari Kausikan argued that China’s

Ashton Ng, “China’s Rise and the Re-Sinicization of Ethnic Chinese in Singapore,” *St Antony’s International Review* 14, no. 2, (2019):171-190.

imposition of a Chinese identity onto Singaporeans is Singapore's "greatest foreign policy challenge"³ while "an educated public is the best defence" against "Beijing's psychological manipulations."⁴ Chinese ambassador Hong Xiaoyong responded that China "has no intention of influencing Singaporeans' sense of their national identity."⁵ In February 2019, Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong devoted his Chinese New Year message to emphasizing the distinctness of Chinese Singaporeans "from Chinese communities elsewhere," and persuaded new immigrants to "adjust their social norms to our local context, and embrace our uniquely Singaporean cultural habits."⁶

Sinicization occurs when "non-Chinese" identify China as their cultural motherland. Because China has continuously evolved, Sinicization has meant different things throughout history. Sinicization usually involves the adoption of Chinese language and culture. In the Six Dynasties period (220–589), northern China was annexed by non-Chinese peoples whom the Chinese termed *hu* (barbarians). These "barbarians" gradually became "so thoroughly Sinicized that they regarded themselves as the heirs" to the former northern Chinese states.⁷ Frequent intermarriage with Chinese resulted in the dissolution of *hu* identities.⁸ For example, the ethnic Xianbei emperor Tuoba Hong (467–499) outlawed Xianbei clothing, surnames, and language. He adopted the Chinese surname "Yuan" and forced his subjects to speak Chinese, adopt Chinese manners, and identify as Chinese.⁹

De-Sinicization occurs when ethnic Chinese cease to identify China as their cultural motherland. It usually involves the partial or complete abandonment of Chinese language and culture. Since at least the fourteenth century, Chinese immigrants have settled in Malaya (present-day Malaysia and Singapore), intermarrying with indigenous Malay women. The "vast majority of" Malayan-born Chinese "became the natives of the Malayan States, having lost touch with China in every respect."¹⁰

Malayan-born Chinese spoke Chinese-Malay creoles "with a liberal admixture of Malay words peculiar to each Malayan region." In Malacca, "the womenfolk had entirely dropped the use of Chinese, while the Malacca-born Chinese males only acquired the [Hokkien] dialect colloquially for the purposes of trade." After Singapore's foundation as a British port on February 6, 1819, it attracted many such Malayan-born Chinese—mostly from Malacca¹²—who "had only thin cultural ties with [mainland] China and

over the generations these inevitably atrophied.”¹³

Whether overseas Chinese will de-Sinicize or re-Sinicize depends heavily on the degree of cultural contact they maintain with China. This article analyses China-Singapore cultural contact post-1819 and explores how contact with twenty-first century China can influence Chinese Singaporean identities.

Sustained Contact with China (1819–1945)

Within a year of its founding, Singapore attracted “people of all nations,” mostly “Chinese, Arabs and a few Europeans.”¹⁴ In China, widespread poverty throughout the 1800s forced many to emigrate to Malaya “in search of business and job opportunities.”¹⁵ Singapore’s Chinese population spiked from 3,317 in 1824 to 303,321 in 1911.¹⁶

Population of Singapore (1824-1911)									
	1824	1830	1834	1836	1860	1881	1891	1901	1911
Chinese	3,317	6,555	10,767	13,749	50,403	86,766	121,908	164,041	219,577
Total	10,683	10,034	26,329	29,984	80,792	130,205	184,544	228,555	303,321
Percentage	31	65	41	46	62	62	66	72	72

Figure 1.

The naturalist Alfred Russel Wallace, who frequently visited Singapore between 1854 and 1862, noted: “By far the most conspicuous of the various kinds of people in Singapore ... are the Chinese, whose numbers and incessant activity give the place very much the appearance of a town in China.”¹⁷ Wallace detailed Singapore’s bustling Chinese world: “hundreds of small shops” and “sellers of water, vegetables, fruit, soup, and agar-agar” everywhere.¹⁸ In contrast, the European district was the only part that was “dull and sleepy,” with lifeless merchants and their wives who, “growing paler every week, lead half-expiring lives,” wrote the explorer Isabella Bird on her 1880 visit.¹⁹ The writer Rudyard Kipling, too, described his 1889 visit: “England is by the uninformed supposed to own the island. The rest belongs to China and the Continent, but chiefly China. I knew I had touched the borders of the Celestial Empire when I was thoroughly impregnated with the reek of Chinese tobacco.”²⁰

Immersed in Singapore’s overwhelmingly Chinese environment, some Malayan-born Chinese became re-Sinicized. Throughout

Singapore's colonial history, many Malayan-born Chinese attended British schools and thrived as middlemen "with their knowledge of English and their ability to connect with other Asians."²¹ After Republican China (1912–1949) was established, it launched a massive campaign to encourage nationalism and unite the 'five ethnicities' (Han, Manchu, Mongol, Hui, and Tibetan) under one national identity, *zhonghua minzu* ('the Chinese race'). Emigrants brought these ideas to Singapore, where some Malayan-born Chinese "began to learn [Mandarin], the national language, and studied things Chinese to affirm their Chinese origins."²² Not all Malayan-born Chinese were re-Sinicized, as some pledged loyalty to the British Empire and "[supported] Empire war efforts from the Boer War to two World Wars."²³ Evidently, resuming contact with China does not, on its own, cause re-Sinicization. Re-Sinicization requires individuals' desire to connect with their Chinese heritage.

While most Malayan-born Chinese viewed Malaya as home, China-born immigrants "often came as sojourners intending to make enough money to enjoy a comfortable old age back in China."²⁵ From 1819 to 1919, less than three percent of Chinese immigrants settled permanently in Singapore, while ninety-seven percent "formed a fleeting and migratory population."²⁶ Most intended to leave within three years "but, out of ten, only one or two individuals are able to return after that time." Some returned "after seven, eight or ten years," whereas others squandered their meagre savings on opium and gambling. Trapped for life, they "ultimately die[d] and repose[d] their ashes" in Singapore.²⁷

Unlike Malayan-born Chinese who maintained little contact with China, China-born immigrants anxiously awaited the annual visit of junks from China. An 1837 account noted that, when the first junk was spotted on the horizon, "the greatest bustle [pervaded] the Chinese community." Boats flocked toward the junk, causing it to resemble "a locust which has inadvertently crossed an ant's nest, and is dragging after it countless myriads of the engaged inhabitants." Those on boats "[endeavoured] to gain as much information as they [could] by shouting out questions to the people on board."²⁸

As the junk approached the overcrowded port,

the emigrants would cast anxious glances among them, and a ray of delight would occasionally brighten the

countenance of one of the 'high aspirants' on recognising the face of a relative or friend, on whose favourable report he had probably decided on leaving the country.²⁹

The above account was "equally applicable to our own time," wrote the lawyer Sir Song Ong Siang in the 1910s.³⁰ One can imagine the intense longing with which Chinese-born immigrants viewed their motherland, where loved ones awaited.

The 1877 establishment of a Qing Empire consulate in Singapore gave the Chinese there an official identity: *huaqiao* ('overseas citizens'). During this period, the modern concept of nationalism swept the region.³¹ Previously, "the idea of being Chinese 'nationals' [had] not yet arise[n],"³² and Chinese-born immigrants, divided into geographical subgroups which spoke mutually unintelligible dialects,³³ "did not identify with the Qing Empire."³⁴

Many *huaqiao* in Singapore identified with China as their *guojia* ("nation-home") and felt responsible for shaping China's destiny. For example, natural disasters in China often elicited sympathy among Chinese in Singapore. During the Northern Chinese Famine of 1876–1879, Hokkiens, Cantonese, and Teochews in Singapore united to raise \$17,178 in April 1877, and \$11,000 in January 1878.³⁵ When another famine struck northern China in 1889, the Chinese in Singapore donated \$27,600 to compatriots "even in that part of China which they do not come from," remarked then-Acting Colonial Secretary Allan Maclean Skinner.³⁶

The Chinese in Singapore also influenced political developments in China. When Emperor Guangxu (1871–1908) married and began formal rule on February 26–27, 1889, the Chinese in Singapore "made the event a gala season, decorating and illuminating their houses, with theatrical performances in different parts of the town."³⁷ After Empress Dowager Cixi incarcerated Guangxu on September 22, 1898, some Chinese in Singapore sent telegrams to Cixi, entreating her to relinquish power and intimating that they "would defend the Emperor with their lives."³⁸ Such loyalists became a minority in 1900s Singapore, where 10,000 avowed revolutionaries funded Sun Yat-sen's revolution to topple Qing rule.³⁹ After revolutionary forces captured Beijing in November 1911, the Chinese in Singapore displayed revolutionary flags everywhere, burnt the Qing imperial flag, and severed their queues. The ankle-deep debris of crackers carpeted downtown Singapore.⁴⁰

Whether during Qing rule or Republican China, the Chinese

in Singapore fiercely backed China in the wars it fought. After the First Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895), many Chinese in Singapore hated the Qing statesman Li Hung-chang, whom they blamed for China’s humiliating defeat. When Li visited Singapore on April 14, 1896, he required “very complete” police protection.⁴¹ During the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937–1945), the Singapore Overseas Chinese Relief Fund raised five billion yuan from 1937 to 1941 for the purpose of supporting China’s war effort.⁴² After the Japanese disabled most Chinese ports, 3,200 brave souls from Singapore—mostly Chinese men but also four women—volunteered to deliver supplies to China via the Burma Road. Approximately a thousand of them sacrificed themselves.⁴³

After Republican China’s founding, Chinese schools in Singapore adopted China’s national curriculum, while “numerous teachers and journalists” kept the Chinese in Singapore “close to developments in China.”⁴⁴ From 1819 to the 1930s, unbroken contact with China prevented most Chinese in Singapore from de-Sinicizing, except for English-educated Chinese who “tended to identify with modern civic ideals from Britain” and whose Chinese identities had receded.⁴⁵

Reduced Contact with China (1945–1978)

China curtailed immigration to and from Singapore in the 1930s. As “the influx of single males stopped,” Singapore’s Chinese society stabilized.⁴⁶ Isolated from China, most Chinese born in post-WWII Singapore “decided that Singapore was their home. Their Chinese identity was not tied to either the mainland PRC or the ROC in Taiwan but was increasingly focused on their cultural heritage”⁴⁷ and preserving their language in a plural society.⁴⁸

After WWII, the Chinese in Singapore who still identified with China were predominantly first-generation immigrants, who became rapidly outnumbered by Singaporean-born Chinese. In 1921, first-generation immigrants constituted seventy-six percent of the Chinese population in Singapore, but this figure dropped to sixty-four percent by 1931 and forty-two percent by 1947.⁴⁹

Reduced contact with China did not lead to the de-Sinicization of Chinese Singaporeans, *per se*. The “tumultuous events in China under Mao” and “the horrendous damage [they] did for Chinese culture and values removed any remaining inclination to admire that China.”⁵⁰ After becoming internally self-governing in June

1959, Singapore launched numerous programmes to foster national pride, displaying the Singaporean flag, the national anthem, and other symbols during National Loyalty Week from December 3–10 of that year. Additionally, Singapore organized popular “People’s Cultural Concerts,” radio dramas, and film screenings promoting nation-building messages.⁵¹

Any overseas Chinese community isolated from China eventually de-Sinicizes. This was especially evident in post-WWII Southeast Asia, where most governments feared communist China. For example, British Malaya banned all books from China, as “anything to do with modern China was suspect; every Chinese was a potential communist, and even the Chinese themselves thought that other Chinese were communists.”⁵² The newly-independent Southeast Asian states also raced to construct distinctive national identities, which meant suppressing the language and culture of their ethnic Chinese citizens.⁵³ A tide of de-Sinicization enveloped Southeast Asia, fuelled by anti-communism and cultural assimilationism. This tide of de-Sinicization met varying resistance in different areas. Thailand and Indonesia, for example, successfully abolished Chinese-medium education, whereas Malaysia’s attempts to control Chinese-medium schools were thwarted by ethnic Chinese politicians.⁵⁴

The Chinese in Singapore resisted the tide of de-Sinicization most strongly. Post-WWII Singapore even saw the number of Chinese-medium schools increase to nearly 350 by 1950, all of which were privately run. Approximately 70,000 ethnic Chinese students attended these schools, constituting fifty-eight percent of Singapore’s students.⁵⁵ These schools also attracted numerous students from neighbouring countries.

The British allowed Chinese-medium schools to operate but forbade students from attending university in China; those who did were barred from returning.⁵⁶ Determined to preserve their culture, ethnic Chinese in Singapore—from millionaires to street hawkers—united in the early 1950s to establish Nanyang University, the first Chinese-language university outside of China.⁵⁷ As the university’s founder Tan Lark Sye declared: “We are now sowing a cultural seed here and our Chinese culture in Malaya will glow as the sun and moon, and coexist with the sky and earth. Chinese culture will never be extinct, and our culture will last forever like Malaya itself.”⁵⁸

Nanyang University also received tremendous support from

Southeast Asia's Chinese communities, and symbolized Singapore's status as the region's "Chinese educational and cultural hub."⁵⁹ In 1960, only thirty-nine percent of Nanyang University students were from Singapore, while the rest were predominantly Southeast Asian Chinese.⁶⁰

Eventually, Chinese-medium education proved unhelpful for finding employment in Southeast Asia. The governments of Indonesia and Thailand, for example, "viewed with apprehension" their citizens attending Nanyang University, and curbed job opportunities available to Chinese-educated graduates.⁶¹ As Chinese-medium schools across Southeast Asia folded, Nanyang University struggled to maintain its student intake.⁶²

By the 1970s, Chinese Singaporean students favoured the University of Singapore over Nanyang University, although this meant learning English.⁶³ Situated in Southeast Asia, which was rapidly de-Sinicizing, and in Singapore, where English was the working language, Nanyang University faded away as "parents and employers realized that a Nanyang University degree was of little value." In fact, late 1970s graduates "used their School Certificates instead of their Nanyang University degrees when seeking jobs."⁶⁴

Nanyang University was not the only institution swept aside by the tide of de-Sinicization. In the 1970s, "it was only a matter of time before Chinese schools disappeared, victim to market forces that placed a premium on English-medium education."⁶⁵ In 1959, forty-six percent of Singapore's primary school students enrolled in Chinese-medium schools, but by 1978 this number fell to eleven percent.⁶⁶ By the 1970s, a little over twenty years after the Chinese in Singapore built Nanyang University to safeguard their language from erosion, Chinese-medium education was on the verge of collapse.

Collapse of Chinese-Medium Education (1978)

In 1978, English was abruptly declared the sole medium of instruction in all Singaporean schools, save for second-language classes. Many Chinese-educated students endured the transition to English-medium education by having two sets of textbooks, reading the Chinese version first to understand the content before memorizing the English version.⁶⁷ With "teary eyes," the educator Ho Woon Ho taught Alphonse Daudet's *The Last Lesson* in his final Chinese-language General Paper class, recounting Prussia-

occupied France's banning of French in schools. Ho's "heart ached for the Chinese-educated students who were sacrificed under the new system." The majority struggled, while many dropped out.⁶⁸

Anxious parents "[believed] that they [would] help their children master English by speaking to them at home in their less than grammatical English with incorrect pronunciations."⁶⁹ The abolition of Chinese-medium schools engendered a new generation of Chinese Singaporeans who speak "Singlish" as their first language, a "unique local patois with Malay, Chinese, and Tamil words and speech patterns scattered within."⁷⁰ In 1989, less than twenty-five percent of Chinese Singaporean students entering primary school spoke English at home, but this figure jumped to fifty percent by 1999, and sixty percent by 2012. For many de-Sinicized Singaporeans, "learning Chinese when they start schooling is akin to learning a foreign language."⁷¹

De-Sinicization resulted in a wide spectrum of language abilities among Chinese Singaporeans schooled after 1978. On one end are bilingual speakers of English and Mandarin, followed by monolingual English speakers. In the middle is the man on the street, who speaks Singlish as his first language and commands "little more than conversational Mandarin."⁷² On the other end are Singaporeans who speak neither English, Mandarin, nor Chinese dialects, but a creolized mixture.

Even the university-educated Stefanie Sun Yanzi, a Singaporean singer, lamented her inadequacy in Mandarin when she went to Taiwan in 2000 as she began her rise to fame:

"In Singapore, you could formulate a sentence with bits and pieces of different languages and be perfectly understood. In Taiwan, particularly in Taipei where many speak only Mandarin, this is not the case. Speaking complete sentences in Mandarin was uncomfortable to me."⁷³

Sun attended prestigious Singaporean schools and spoke "mainly Mandarin at home."⁷⁴ The fact that even Sun struggled with Mandarin speaks volumes about the degree to which Chinese Singaporeans had de-Sinicized by the 1990s.

Government-Led Re-Sinicization Efforts

On September 7, 1979, Singapore launched the Speak Mandarin Campaign, aimed at eradicating non-Mandarin dialects among

young Chinese Singaporeans within five years. At the time, eighty-five percent of Chinese Singaporeans spoke neither Mandarin nor English at home.⁷⁶ The imposition of Mandarin on Chinese Singaporeans constituted both de-Sinicization and re-Sinicization. What was *removed* was Chinese culture of the past, when myriad dialects were spoken across China: only forty-one percent of China's early 1950s population understood Mandarin. What was *added* was the culture of the new China, where Mandarin is spoken throughout: by 1984, ninety percent of China's population understood Mandarin.⁷⁷ Re-Sinicization is a time-sensitive concept: it refers to the adoption of the language and culture of the "present" China.

Non-Mandarin dialects were banned in the media.⁷⁸ From 1980 to 1989, "students from mainly dialect-speaking families dropped from sixty-four percent to seven percent."⁷⁹ Despite the Speak Mandarin Campaign's success in eliminating non-Mandarin dialects, it battled an inevitable trend: overseas Chinese with diminished contact with China eventually de-Sinicize. The campaign failed to raise the "low mastery" of Mandarin among younger Chinese Singaporeans.⁸⁰

As early as the mid-1950s, many English-speaking Chinese Singaporeans despised the Chinese language; some were even proud of failing in Chinese classes.⁸¹ In particular, the prestigious Anglo-Chinese School has a reputation for nurturing monolingual, English-educated elites—the most de-Sinicized of Chinese Singaporeans. Today, most Chinese Singaporeans "do not want to continue with Chinese" past O-Levels.⁸²

Singapore's government-led re-Sinicization efforts, which began in 1979, are not limited to language policy. They also entail integrating new immigrants from China. Beginning with China's opening-up in December 1978, Singapore received a still-ongoing influx of new Chinese immigrants. After Deng Xiaoping praised Singapore highly on his 1992 southern tour, Singapore became a significant emigrant destination as its reputation in China soared.⁸³

Singapore's founding father Lee Kuan Yew "sought to tap the presence of Chinese immigrants in Singapore to boost [Singapore's] Chinese-speaking environment," because he "always believed that it [was] important for Singaporeans to speak the standard Mandarin used ... in China, not some adulterated version we concoct[ed] on our own."⁸⁴ Lee opined that new Chinese

immigrants working in broadcast and print media could ensure that these use standard Mandarin. New Chinese immigrants “who accompany their school-going children can also become teachers and assistants in the local kindergartens.”⁸⁵

Singapore seeks to replenish its ethnic Chinese population—who has “the lowest birth rates amongst all the races in Singapore”—by receiving new immigrants from China. Lee Kuan Yew argued that many new Chinese immigrants who acquire Singaporean citizenship or permanent residency quickly become “Singaporeanized in the way they think and act” and that “their children will grow up no different from other Singaporean children as they go to our schools.”⁸⁶

Government-led re-Sinicisation efforts assume that new Chinese immigrants will assimilate into Singapore. Unlike earlier immigrants, recent newcomers enjoy “the ease of Internet communication and convenience of travel”⁸⁷ and remain connected to their social media networks in China. This “presents a new challenge in their assimilation efforts”⁸⁸ and allows new Chinese immigrants to easily remain un-Singaporeanised. Furthermore, while pre-1990s Chinese immigrants came largely from China’s southern parts such as Fujian and Guangdong, recent immigrants have come from more diverse areas, ranging from cities like Beijing and Shanghai to regions including Shandong, Sichuan, and Zhejiang.⁸⁹ Socio-geographical disparities plus the perception of new Chinese immigrants as job competitors have caused resentment among Chinese Singaporeans⁹⁰ and necessitated substantial efforts by “new immigrant associations” aimed at integrating the newcomers.⁹¹ However, some new immigrants may not even want to assimilate, because they “regard Singapore as a springboard to Europe, America and other countries” and have no intention to stay long-term.⁹²

When Singapore’s table tennis team won silver at the 2008 Beijing Olympics, its victory was celebrated by Singapore’s government, but coldly received by Chinese Singaporeans because all three team members were born and bred in China, having acquired Singaporean citizenship in 2006. When one of the members, Li Jiawei, said on Chinese television that she was happy to compete on “home turf” and proud of being a *zhongguo ren* (Chinese citizen), her comments drew widespread criticism from Chinese Singaporeans. Adding fuel to the fire was a video of the Olympic opening ceremony in which Li, Team Singapore’s flagbearer, dragged

Singapore's flag across the floor briefly.⁹³ The fact that Chinese Singaporeans engaged in Chinese-on-Chinese "racism" suggests that they had de-Sinicized to the point that they considered themselves distinct from mainland Chinese.⁹⁴

In fact, before the 2010s, it was common for Chinese Singaporeans to despise China.⁹⁵ Chinese Singaporeans have a widely-used derogatory slang adjective: *cheena* ("from China"). The animosity towards new Chinese immigrants was addressed in the 2001 National Day Rally Speech by then-Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong, who quoted a newspaper letter from some young Chinese Singaporeans: "We do not feel any affinity to the Chinese people. ... The *cheena* people are sucking away all the foreign investments and along with them, our jobs. ... The *cheena* people working in Singapore are really such a crude lot." Goh rebuked: "Chinese are called 'Orang Cina' in Malay. If we are not Cina, what are we? *Angmoh* (white)?"⁹⁶

Other common derogatory slang nouns denoting new Chinese immigrants include PRC and ah tong. Such terms reflect an indiscriminate lumping together of all new Chinese immigrants, and "negative social practices or behaviour of individuals are generalized as applying to the whole group."⁹⁷

"Third Wave" Re-Sinicization (2010-Present)

When contact with China diminishes, overseas Chinese and their descendants inevitably de-Sinicise. This occurred when early Chinese migrants to Malaya partially lost their Chinese language and culture, instead adopting Chinese-Malay creoles and a Malaysian identity (the "First Wave" of de-Sinicization). In post-WWII Singapore, local-born Chinese gradually shed their Chinese dialects, acquiring the Singlish creole and a Singaporean identity (the "Second Wave" of de-Sinicization).

When contact with China is re-established, some overseas Chinese may re-Sinicize if China's soft power appeals to them. This occurred when Republican China aroused patriotism among some Malaysian-born Chinese (the "First Wave" of re-Sinicisation). Singapore's government-led re-Sinicization efforts (the "Second Wave" of Re-Sinicization) partially "re-synchronized" Chinese Singaporeans with linguistic developments in China; Mandarin home-speakers increased from 0.1 percent in 1957 to 35.6 percent in 2010.⁹⁸

In a replay of Republican China's massive nationalist campaign, Chinese President Xi Jinping in 2017 rallied "Chinese sons and daughters" around the world to contribute to "the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation."⁹⁹ China's government also increasingly funds "roots-seeking" visits for Chinese Singaporeans to their ancestral villages.¹⁰⁰

Around the world, China increasingly mobilises ethnic Chinese to advance its interests. Already in August 2017, Singapore deported Chinese-American academic Huang Jing for influencing Singaporean foreign policy and public opinion in collaboration with foreign agents.¹⁰¹ In Canada, Chinese-Canadian politician Michael Chan caused outrage in June 2017 by praising China's human rights record, while journalists critical of Chan were suppressed. Frequently speaking at important political events in China, Chan told a Xinhua reporter: "The motherland is great ... our overseas Chinese hearts are with the motherland."¹⁰² Chinese-Canadian newspapers, fearing loss of distribution deals with China, were pressured to promote Beijing's position.¹⁰³ Singapore's most-read Chinese-language newspaper, *Lianhe Zaobao*, receives most of its readership from China. In September 2018, Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong affirmed *Lianhe Zaobao*'s promotion of Singapore's unique Chinese culture and objective reporting.¹⁰⁴

Between 2010 and 2017, China's image in Singapore transformed dramatically. Chinese Singaporeans increasingly visited China and "spoke breathlessly of their experiences," such as then-Manpower Minister Lim Swee Say, who visited Shanghai and felt like a *suaku* (ignoramus; literally "mountain tortoise") for using cash while locals made mobile payments.¹⁰⁵ Another remarkable example was Nathan Hartono, a former Mandarin-spurning Anglo-Chinese School alumnus turned Chinese language ambassador after going to China to compete in Sing! China 2016, a blockbuster singing contest widely-watched in Singapore.¹⁰⁶

Long before China's rise, some Chinese Singaporeans reaffirmed their Chinese identities not because of China's soft power, but due to a deep-seated need to reconnect with one's cultural heritage. Lee Kuan Yew, for example, recounted his undergraduate days in late-1940s England:

"We became conscious of how deculturalized we were whenever we met students from China. We were like hundreds of Raffles College graduates, not well-tutored in

their own Asian cultures, yet not part of British culture either. We were lost between two cultures. I felt separated from the mass of ordinary Chinese who spoke dialects and Mandarin.¹⁰⁷

Lee pitied Chinese from the West Indies, who “spoke in sing-song West Indian ‘English’ and absolutely no Chinese.” Lee resolved to learn Chinese and protect his children from “[ending] up the same way, Chinese by ethnicity yet alienated from their Chinese heritage.” Lee’s efforts to re-Sinicise himself led some to call him a “born-again Chinese,” to which Lee responded: “If this is the case, my rebirth must have taken place in the late 1940s.”¹⁰⁸

The desire to mend a rupture in one’s cultural heritage, coupled with renewed contact with a rising China, may engender a “Third Wave” re-Sinicization of some Chinese Singaporeans, depending on whether future generations of Chinese Singaporeans and mainland Chinese grow up exposed to similar cultural content—such as television, music, film, books, and social media—whose values often shape society’s zeitgeist. China’s cultural exports have become popular in Singapore, from televised singing competitions to blockbuster dramas like *Story of Yanxi Palace* (2018). Mainland Chinese food, too, is becoming ubiquitous in Singapore, with mala hotpot stalls opening in numerous food centres. China’s cultural exports may re-Sinicize some Chinese Singaporeans while keeping new Chinese immigrants “un-Singaporeanised.”

Coupled with China’s strengthening cultural influence, Singapore’s bilingual policy encourages re-Sinicization. All Chinese Singaporeans study Mandarin in primary and secondary school. Singapore’s bilingual policy was implemented to provide Singaporeans with “cultural ballast” and prevent them from becoming “deculturalized and pseudo-Western people.”¹⁰⁹ With “insufficient people conversant enough in Chinese language and culture to engage Chinese officials with ease,”¹¹⁰ Singapore implemented the Bicultural Studies Programme in 2005, aimed at producing “Singaporeans who are not only highly competent in the Chinese language, but also have a deep understanding of China’s history, culture and contemporary developments.”¹¹¹

Numerous platforms also extend China’s influence into Singapore, such as the Singapore China Friendship Association, formed in 1993 to promote mutual understanding “through exchange of visits and cultural activities.”¹¹² Another example is Business China, launched in 2007 to “promote extensive use of the Chinese

language as a medium of communication not only to sustain Singapore's multicultural heritage but also to build various forms of linkages (including economic, business, social, cultural and educational) with China."¹¹³

Singapore's economy will become increasingly dependent on China and its tourists.¹¹⁴ China is Singapore's largest trading partner, while Chinese tourists are the top spenders in Singapore, generating forty percent of Singapore's total tourism receipts¹¹⁵ and "form a key pillar of not only the Singapore tourism sector but also the Singapore economy as a whole."¹¹⁶ Singaporean businesses are incentivised to "Sinicise" themselves to attract China's consumers; many hired mainland Chinese salespeople. On November 1, 2018, six hundred retail outlets in Singapore began accepting payments in China's renminbi currency through WeChat Pay, including all 7-Eleven convenience stores, Guardian drugstores, as well as Cold Storage and Giant supermarkets.¹¹⁷ For Chinese tourists, shopping in Singapore is already a seamless experience. Further Sinicization of local businesses may alienate non-Mandarin speaking Singaporeans.

Large-scale re-Sinicization will deepen the divide between Chinese Singaporeans who culturally identify as Chinese and those who do not. As the Singaporean trade representative Geraldine Lee wrote in an essay, in which she described learning Mandarin as "pure torture" and "a waste of time and resources" for herself and her monolingual children:

With the influx of Chinese nationals in Singapore, we monolinguals are becoming "foreigners" in our own country. Many businesses are now manned by Chinese nationals and it is next to impossible to make my orders or requests understood. Nowadays, I just avoid all businesses where the person at the counter is a Chinese national ... our own citizens are now breaking into Mandarin at every opportunity they get. Go to a bank and when you reach the counter, you are greeted with a barrage of Mandarin. Don't they know that English is still the official business language? ... The alternative is to move to a Western country. ... At worst, we might have to pack up and go too. "¹¹⁸

While some English-speaking Chinese Singaporeans may recognise the newfound economic value of Mandarin, others will resist becoming re-Sinicized.

A 2017 nationally representative survey asked some 1,130 Chinese Singaporeans about the importance of feeling a connection to their country of ancestral origin:

How important is it for someone who considers himself/herself a Singaporean Chinese to feel a connection to the country where his ancestors came from?	Unimportant	23.5%
	Somewhat Unimportant	37.8%
	Somewhat Important	29.3%
	Important	9.4%

Figure 2.

Chinese Singaporeans are divided on their perceived affinity to China. The nearly thirty-nine percent who regard it at least “somewhat important” are China’s likelier targets of re-Sinicisation. Defending Singapore’s bilingual policy, Lee Kuan Yew wrote:

Mastering both English and Chinese requires tremendous effort. But the effort has to be made, if we are to survive as a distinctive society worth preserving. If we do not, we will become deculturalized and pseudo-Western people. We should not speak pidgin English, mindlessly aping the Americans or British, with no basic values or culture of our own.¹²⁰

In its fifty-fourth year, Singapore’s nation-building project faces a Herculean labour: promoting English without becoming “pseudo-Western,” while promoting Mandarin without returning to Rudyard Kipling’s description of 1880s Singapore: “borders of the Celestial Empire.” Will an ascendant China engender a “Third Wave” re-Sinicization of Chinese Singaporeans? Signs of its onset may already be apparent.

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ABBEY STEELE, *DEMOCRACY AND DISPLACEMENT IN COLOMBIA'S CIVIL WAR*. PUBLISHER: CORNELL UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2017.

Benoit Siberdt

Civilian displacement, defined as “migration provoked by one or more armed groups during war,”¹ has been a common feature of civil wars—and politics more broadly—for centuries. In 2014, the United Nations estimated that around the world, 19.5 million people live as refugees in new countries and around 38 million displaced people remain within the boundaries of their home country.

Colombia is one country that has experienced such displacement on a massive scale. More than six million people have been forced to flee their homes and became internally displaced since the mid-1980s. Yet the levels of displacement throughout Colombia’s civil war exhibit great variation. The fundamental puzzle driving Abbey Steele’s book is the following: what explains the variation in the form, level, and spread of this displacement?

Many consider displacement to be a mere byproduct of violence. When the intensity of violence increases, higher levels of displacement ensue. However, Steele argues that such a view is incomplete. Rather than being an unintended consequence of violence, displacement is used strategically by armed actors and takes the form of political cleansing: “the expulsion of a particular group from a territory.”² The main question therefore is: when and where do armed groups attempt political cleansing? Steele addresses this question in a structured manner, with exemplary clarity and precision.

The book’s fundamental insight is that, in their conquest of territorial control, armed groups seek to strategically remove the civilians that they perceive as disloyal. In fact, by removing the supporters of their rivals, cleansing helps these groups to secure collaboration, which in turn consolidates their control of the territory. Steele argues, and later convincingly shows, that armed groups attempt to politically cleanse when and where they can as-

certain civilians' loyalties.

In the pursuit of cleansing, armed groups resort to collective targeting, defined as "violence or threatened violence against members of a group because of membership in that group."³ The challenge faced by armed groups in such a situation is how to identify civilians' preferences and loyalties. Steele demonstrates that elections, though often deemed by policymakers as tools to reduce and ultimately end a conflict, tend to trigger violence and precipitate displacement. This is the case because elections facilitate the identification of preferences and link them to specific locations within the community. In addition, these consequences are especially salient when a political party is closely associated with an armed group.

Steele follows the clear and concise first chapter, which lays out the book's theoretical framework, with a historical overview of the Colombian civil war. The second chapter grounds the book in the Colombian context, identifying the origins of political loyalties that will be central in what Steele calls the contemporary civil war of 1986–2012, which is covered in detail in the third chapter. Both chapters have value on their own. In conjunction, however, they offer a comprehensive and innovative overview of Colombia's civil war through the lens of displacement, showing how it shaped loyalties and was later used by armed actors in their strategy of territorial control. The fourth chapter introduces and convincingly connects the democratic reforms that took place in Colombia through the 1980s—in particular, the introduction of local-level elections and the creation of the *Unión Patriótica* (UP) by the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* (FARC)—to the puzzling onset of displacement in the late 1980s.

The fifth chapter is undoubtedly the book's strongest. Having described the origins and context of Colombia's contemporary civil war, Steele turns to test her logic of political cleansing. She collected fine-grained quantitative and qualitative data for the nine communities of the municipality of Apartadó near the Gulf of Urabá in northwest Colombia. Using archival material, Steele starts her case study with a quantitative analysis of individuals' residence and political preferences, showing a robust correlation between one's neighbourhood support for the UP and the likelihood that one would leave the municipality between 1991 and 1998—the year of the two voter censuses she used for comparison.

Building on interviews to uncover the micro-dynamics that led to displacement, she corroborates her quantitative findings that in Apartadó "residents associated with the UP were indeed targeted for political cleansing by the paramilitaries."⁴ Her findings bring about another puzzle: while residents of urban communities

supporting the UP were expelled by paramilitaries, those living in rural communities were much more resilient and correspondingly less likely to leave. Building on data collected through fieldwork in two rural communities, Steele shows that these communities were targeted by the paramilitaries but managed to resist them. In the following chapter, she tests the implications on a larger scale, and evaluates the extent to which political cleansing took place in other municipalities within Colombia. Relying on quantitative methods, Steele shows that the UP's vote share in a community accounted for higher levels of displacement across Colombia, indicating that political cleansing was not restricted to Apartadó.

As the author herself notes, the chosen order of chapters five and six is unusual in the field of political science.⁵ It shows, in a transparent manner, how her research unfolded and thus strengthens her argument. Chapter six, taken on its own, is relatively weak. However, the investigation of political cleansing through a case study in the previous chapter mitigates the limitations inherent to a cross-municipality analysis in chapter six. Furthermore, the book offers a refined and well-crafted demonstration that a case study does not necessarily require the use of qualitative methods. It shows that a case study is "a particular way of defining cases, not a way of analyzing cases or a way of modeling causal relations"⁶ an affinity often misinterpreted in the field.

In her conclusion, Steele identifies how her argument could apply to cases of non-ethnic civil wars beyond Colombia. However, some questions remain. Firstly, the logic of political cleansing applies to all armed groups.⁷ Even though the author briefly theorizes that insurgent groups are less likely to attempt political cleansing, it remains unclear if the strategy for territorial control is not primarily a counterinsurgency tactic. Given how events unfolded during Colombia's civil war, it would be challenging to investigate political cleansing by insurgents in Colombia empirically. Secondly, the scope of Steele's theory might be unnecessarily narrow. In fact, the extent to which political cleansing might be at play in contexts other than local elections is missing, and would have made the contribution of the book even greater. After all, the argument is not only a story of dynamics when elections take place during wartime, but more broadly one of what happens when loyalties are revealed.

These shortcomings do not dilute the book's main contribution. Rather, they open the way for further research. By advancing our knowledge of the conduct of war—and of displacement more specifically—as well as by moving away from the study of lethal violence that has occupied a central place in the field, Abbey Steele's book paves the way for the refinement of our understanding of

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ELENA KATSELLI PROUKAKI (ed.),
*ARMED CONFLICT AND FORCIBLE
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 PUBLISHER: ROUTLEDGE, 2018.

Carlos Rodriguez-Cruz y Celis

Elena Proukaki's *Armed Conflict and Forcible Displacement: Individual Rights under International Law* is a compelling edited volume of legal scholarship. It presents a comprehensive account about the development of international law with respect to the individual right of protection against forcible displacement. Proukaki recognises that the current legal framework "has been unable to effectively protect individuals from being unlawfully displaced,"¹ and builds a strong case for recognising the fundamental right of individuals to "be protected from forced displacement that results from armed conflict."² She argues that such a right already exists, and details the provisions of international humanitarian law, international human rights law, as well as international criminal law that supports her assertion. Her argument substantiates the urgency of extending this protection, while identifying the legal vacuum that has enabled national governments to skirt their responsibility to protect civilians against displacement.

The most outstanding characteristic of Proukaki's work is her ability to trace the evolution of legal protections against forcible displacement. Proukaki's analysis is thorough, lucid, and incisive. She builds on a substantial body of existing scholarship, identifying gaps and offering improvements to the existing legal framework. She authors two of the book's eight chapters, while serving as the editor for the entire volume. Each segment presents an in-depth assessment of the relationship between legal protections against forcible displacement and the realities facing individuals on the ground. The work contains a detailed overview of over 125 court rulings of cases from the European Court of Human Rights, the International Court of Justice, and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, among others. This provides a diverse look at the jurisprudence governing the protection of human rights with respect to displacement resulting from armed conflict and gross human rights violations. The book's scope extends beyond the establishment of a fundamental protection against forcible displacement, as Proukaki and her colleagues explore the legal basis for

the right of displaced persons to return home and receive property restitution. This latter analysis is grounded in international human rights law.

In tracing the history of jurisprudence related to protections against displacement, Proukaki begins by exploring the assessments of international courts regarding forced deportations in the context of population exchanges. She investigates the interplay between international treaties and court judgments in the development of a legal doctrine outlining the legality of population exchanges. Proukaki finds that international courts across geographical regions addressed forced population exchanges in an inconsistent manner. In addition to the disjointed development of a body of law surrounding such exchanges, court judgments were complicated by national governments who enshrined population transfers as a part of peace treaties. Despite the inconsistent application of protections against forced deportation, Proukaki concludes that the developments in post-World War II international humanitarian law—especially through the Fourth Geneva Convention—established a prohibition against state-sanctioned displacement of individuals.

The later chapters include insights towards compound challenges that arise in situations when the forced displacement of individuals takes place on a mass scale, such as Syria and Colombia. Yasmine Nahlawi looks at the forced evacuations of Daraya and East Aleppo in 2016 as symbolic representations of the wider pattern of forcible displacement as a “weapon of war” in the Syrian conflict. Based on the Blagojević and Karadžić cases from the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, Nahlawi argues that the Daraya evacuation of “both civilians and combatants” is a “strong indicator” that the displacement was caused by a “political motive of establishing regime control over the city.”³ This chapter calls into question the role of the international community, including the United Nations, in enabling situations of forced displacement. “The [United Nations’] seemingly contradictory stance in the East Aleppo evacuation as compared to those of Daraya and Al-Waer,” Nahlawi argues, “requires further discernment of what its role should be when forcible displacement is pursued in the context of wider mass atrocity situations.”⁴

The book provides new perspectives on cases that may not have yet received as much attention from contemporary scholars of international human rights. Smith, Ly, and Khourn’s analysis of forcible displacement in Cambodia, and its lasting impact in terms of property restitution for affected persons, will be useful to scholars interested in a chronological study of the long-term challenges faced by displaced persons in Cambodia. Meanwhile, scholars of

Latin American history and law will find Carrillo-Santarelli's chapter analysing the effects of Colombia's protracted internal conflict on its civilian population particularly interesting. The focus on capturing the scale of internal displacement as a result of the conflict in Colombia is notable, contextualising the harsh realities faced by displaced persons seeking to return to their homes. Furthermore, Gillet's analysis of rulings from the International Criminal Court and the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia provides an in-depth perspective on the treatment of displacement crimes under international criminal law.

In addition to exploring less-analysed situations of forced displacement, the book provides fresh insight into cases where protracted conflicts have—over the course of decades—created unexpected difficulties in restoring home and property rights to displaced populations. Tzevelekos's chapter scrutinizes the lawfulness of downgrading from restitution to compensation, within the context of international law as decided by the European Court of Human Rights. In relation to the forced displacement of Cypriots, Meleagrou and Paraskeva's chapter provides a sharp assessment of a case where competing international jurisprudence muddies the clarity of an outcome and prevents the establishment of a lasting peace. Particular to the situation in Cyprus is the difficulty that arises from the inability of displaced persons to return to their place of origin. Their analysis of the situation facing Greek Cypriots found that displaced persons stand "to lose their separate right to respect of home and the full benefits of their title as the legal property owners, if a domestic remedy is finally introduced after a lengthy period of time."⁵ Displaced populations face an uphill legal battle on the journey to reclaim their property rights, creating lasting uncertainties that undermine trust in legal institutions to provide restitution of lost property.

Armed Conflict and Forcible Displacement: Individual Rights under International Law is a must-read for legal scholars and practitioners whose work intersects with issues of international humanitarian law. It provides a timely insight into the lasting impacts of forced displacement, providing a solid foundation for policymakers to assess their responsibilities under international humanitarian law, international human rights law, and international criminal law. Proukaki and her colleagues identify substantial portions of customary international law to build a case that highlights the necessity to recognise the protection against forcible displacement. While the book remains rooted in a robust legal analysis, Proukaki's personal experience with displacement informs her scholarship, resulting in a work that is rich, compelling, and informative.

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LAXMI MURPHY (ed.), *GARRISONED MINDS: WOMEN AND ARMED CONFLICT IN SOUTH ASIA*, PUBLISHER: SPEAKING TIGER BOOKS, 2016.

Anisa Kassamali

Garrisoned Minds: Women and Armed Conflict in South Asia tackles the issue of militarisation in South Asia. Editors Laxmi Murthy and Mitu Varma, together with the volume's contributors, build a solid case arguing that domestic and external actors alike increasingly resort to militant techniques to control civilian populations residing within the region's conflict zones. Their response to these troubling developments is this anthology of personal accounts. The latter explores the impact of the aforementioned violence on the daily lives of women in these areas.

The book's genesis can be traced back to a project by Panos South Asia, an organisation which supports media efforts within the region. Backed by the Canadian International Development Research Centre, Panos selected and trained twelve journalists to report on the experiences of women in these militarised zones, connecting them to research institutes and mentors in academia. Through their joint efforts, the journalists produced fifty-five reports in a variety of formats, including feature articles and television documentaries.

Garrisoned Minds consists of a selection of these reports, dividing them into four geographically-ordered sections. Each section starts with an accessible introduction to an area's history of conflict, contextualising the following chapters and highlighting any links or common themes between them. The first consists of a series of reports and stories from Pakistan's border with Afghanistan, illustrating the effects of sectarian strife in Balochistan, as well as of Taliban rule in the Federally Administrated Tribal Areas and in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Swat Valley. The reader is then transported to the Maoist insurgency in Nepal, where women played an active role as armed combatants in the People's Liberation Army. Next, the book shifts its focus to northeast India, where the actions of the Indian Armed Forces are likened to those of their colonial predecessors. India's Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act of 1958 permits the state to use violence against its own citizens in areas designated as "disturbed." Finally, the book visits Kashmir, with

its long-standing conflict. It identifies the three key players laying claim to this territory—India, Pakistan, and the Kashmiris themselves—before investigating the impact of this dispute on Kashmiri women. The reports describe the effect that sexual violence can have on a population and its collective memory, as well as examine the issue of disclosure in the context of rape cases.

The publication centres on personal stories, which provide the basis for its key argument. In her introduction, Murthy explains that “only when women’s lives matter and when every individual’s story is heard, can the military mindset be challenged.”¹ The book does provide broader historical context insofar as this is necessary, but its aim is ultimately to tell the reader about the individual experiences of women living in these conflict zones. It is emotive, and purposefully so, highlighting the very relatable effects of militarisation on an oft marginalised group. Explicitly drawing on the human instinct to relate to an individual rather than a statistic, *Garrisoned Minds* appeals to its reader to reject militarisation on both an intellectual and an emotional level.

Perhaps inadvertently, *Garrisoned Minds* also provides a degree of justice to the women whose stories are being told. The field of transitional justice considers such issues in the context of conflict and, as might be expected, is subject to much debate surrounding its objectives and goals. This is perhaps best summed up by Ruti Teitel, who coined the term transitional justice in 1991. He suggests that “complex and sometimes competing aims” are often used to describe transitional justice processes.² That said, there is strong evidence that the very act of bearing witness to past injustices can be somewhat cathartic—at least for the individual involved—whether or not that act yields broader results.

The book’s main shortcoming is that the individual case studies are not fully integrated into the relevant literature. This is an inherent flaw of the approach used and thus a difficult issue to rectify. Murthy’s introduction is strong, setting out a robust analysis of the scholarship surrounding gendered elements of conflict. She draws on the research of various academics to suggest that militarisation is closely connected to patriarchy and certain conceptions of nationalism. A connection is made between women’s bodies and land, and both are then subjected to the hyper-masculine desire to possess and protect. In other words, women’s bodies are treated as land to be conquered or protected from conquerors. Murthy argues that this can often find its expression in sexual violence. Such themes are clearly integral to the individual stories told in *Garrisoned Minds*, but these connections are not explicitly established by the contributors. Zahid Rafiq’s discussion of sexual violence and its psychological

impact in “Shadows of a Dark Night” could, for instance, have been served well by such an analysis. It would have been similarly useful to review the experience of Nepalese women during the Maoist insurgency through the lens of Margaret Gonzalez-Perez’s assessment of female militants. Gonzalez-Perez argues that women are generally more active in domestic militant struggles, as such instances provide an opportunity to improve their own inferior status in society.³ However, discussion of Gonzalez-Perez is limited to Murthy’s introduction.

Murthy and Varma’s volume is undoubtedly a compelling read. It is an informative and accessible anthology of reports shedding light on the widespread impact of militarisation in South Asia. The history of each conflict is set out clearly and succinctly—for those less familiar with the context—while the journalists’ individual reports make an implicit argument against militarisation. The book would have benefited if the literature review was better integrated into the case studies, but this does not take away from the independent strength of both sections.

Notes

1 Laxmi Murthy and Mitu Varma, eds., *Garrisoned Minds: Women and Armed Conflict in South Asia* (Mumbai: Speaking Tiger Books, 2016): 38

2 Ruti Teitel, “The Law and Politics of Contemporary Transitional Justice,” *Cornell International Law Journal* 38, no. 3 (2005): 839–840.

3 Margaret Gonzales-Perez, *Women and Terrorism: Female Activity in Domestic and International Terror Groups* (London: Routledge, 2008).

T.V. PAUL, *RESTRAINING GREAT
POWERS: SOFT BALANCING FROM
EMPIRES TO THE GLOBAL ERA*,
PUBLISHER: NEW HAVEN: YALE
UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2018.

Patrick Tiney

Seeking to refute the realist notion that hard balancing against great powers or external threats is inevitable, T. V. Paul argues in his new book that states frequently resort to soft-balancing strategies instead. Such strategies rely on international institutions, economic sanctions, and ‘informal ententes’ to delegitimize the foreign policies of other states. The book makes a clear theoretical contribution, explaining how state leaders choose between hard- and soft-balancing strategies as well as how said choice is shaped by technological and normative changes over time. Paul’s analysis of the central role of the concept of legitimacy also constitutes an important and interesting addition to the scholarship. His theory is timely amid US retrenchment, Russian revanchism, and the rapid growth of China’s military and economic power, since it suggests that hard balancing is far from inevitable, as is the resulting emergence of a security dilemma.

Soft balancing, like hard balancing, is a strategy aimed at changing a target state’s cost-benefit calculations. Whereas hard balancing involves the military, through either alliance formation or defence spending, soft balancing relies on informal, institutional, and economic means. Paul argues that in all cases, the common conceptual thread in soft balancing is to delegitimize a target state’s policies.¹ Accordingly, three elements distinguish soft balancing from hard balancing. First, soft balancing implies an appeal to an audience beyond the political leadership of the target state, be it the target state’s citizens, the domestic political opposition, or third-party states. Second, it assumes the existence of a common normative framework in which a set of fundamental norms—especially sovereignty, territorial integrity, and self-determination—are widely upheld and can thus be appealed to. Third, since it does not alter the military balance between states as hard balancing does, it reduces the risk of a security dilemma.

Paul is careful to delineate the conditions in which soft balancing is a viable strategy. The threat environment cannot be too severe, and broad participation of states is required. Furthermore, it is more effective in eras in which defensive and deterrent weapons

dominate, and when states are economically interdependent, increasing their leverage. Perhaps most crucially, “the success of soft balancing depends on how much importance the great powers assign to international legitimacy as a basis of their power.”² This latter point is a necessary condition, since if international legitimacy is unimportant, a strategy premised upon its significance is bound to fail. As can be readily appreciated, these factors jointly suggest two things. First, the importance of nuclear deterrence, and, second, the impact of economic globalization on state power. Not only does Paul’s theory suggest that policymakers have a wide range of strategies to choose from when dealing with states, but also that these different strategies are associated with dramatically different mechanisms. This, however, is simultaneously a strength and a weakness of the theory, for it seems that under Paul’s definition, nearly any foreign policy decision made with respect to another state’s perceived hostility could be characterized as soft balancing. The role of international legitimacy is also somewhat unclear, with the audience from which legitimacy is sought varying across cases.

Paul bases his argument on developments from 1990 to 2010—an era of unipolarity, deep economic interdependence, the rapid proliferation of international organizations, widespread acceptance of the norm of territorial sovereignty, and the absence of sharp ideological cleavages or rivalries on the world stage. In sum, this state of affairs has left states feeling less threatened and in turn made hard balancing largely irrelevant, since one cannot balance against a non-existent threat. The author argues that in these conditions, soft balancing flourished as a way to deal with less severe threats. This suggests, however, that soft balancing is not an alternative to hard balancing but rather its precursor. When threats become more acute, hard balancing comes to the fore. Thus, policymakers truly have a choice only when the severity of a threat remains uncertain.

Yet, soft balancing is not a purely contemporary phenomenon. Rather, Paul contends that it has operated since at least 1815, under the Congress System. For the reader, it is unclear whether soft balancing has always been a strategy, or whether the 1990–2010 period was simply unusual. It seems that Paul suggests both; if so, the two arguments need to be more carefully delineated. Factors conducive to soft balancing, from economic interdependence to the expansion of international society, have deepened since 1800. However, the broader question of utility remains: when do policymakers choose to soft balance and when do they opt against soft balancing? A future examination of whether the threshold between hard and soft balancing has changed as the world has

become more deeply interconnected would be welcome.

The book's title, much of the terminology used in its chapter on theory, and most of the cases analysed suggest a great-power focus; but chapter 4, which examines balancing during the Cold War, focuses on the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). The book's framing in terms of great powers speaks to the concern that we are heading into a world in which great-power competition is more acute. In this context, such a focus is understandable. Yet, Paul's application of the theory to non-great powers is particularly interesting and novel. His argument—that the states of the NAM were able to 'soft-balance' against great powers on issues including decolonization and nuclear proliferation—is insightful, and suggests that far more attention should be paid to the ability of weaker states to leverage legitimacy as a means of challenging great powers.

The book's theoretical focus on great powers is not without flaws, particularly since it neglects to define 'great powers' and 'rising powers'. While the former is forgivable—the field of international relations often takes the term for granted, despite the existence of competing conceptions—the latter is less so. This is most clearly demonstrated when Paul analyses contemporary Russia in Chapter 7 and terms the country 'resurgent'. Although this book is not the place for a discussion of conceptions of 'rising' and 'revisionist' powers, such ambiguity leaves the reader uncertain of the theory's applicability. The case of Russia is one of threat, while that of contemporary China is one of capabilities and/or power. Is the theory of soft balancing meant to be applied to both balance of threat and balance of power logics? The former approach is broader and dovetails with the consensus within the emerging literature on soft balancing. It is a shame that this idea is not addressed more directly here, particularly since the book is clearly intended to both inform a wide audience and inspire future research.

Paul's theory and topic are certainly interesting, but the great-power focus of *Restraining Great Powers* arguably obscures its key finding: that weak states can soft balance powerful interests. The book attempts to speak to both academics and practitioners and is generally successful in this respect. At times, however, greater conceptual clarity would aid its core message. *Restraining Great Powers* should be read by anyone interested in great-power relations as well as those wishing to better understand the foreign policy tools of the weak.

1 TV Paul, *Restraining Great Powers* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2018): 28.

2 *Ibid.*, 31.