Gendered Influences on Conflict Resolution in Intrastate Conflicts

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Abstract

To what extent do gendered aspects of society and violence influence conflict resolution in intrastate conflicts? There is a substantial body of literature that demonstrates how structural factors such as terrain, economic development, quality of governance, and ethnic divisions shape conflict parties' decisions to start, continue, end, and resume armed conflict. There also is extensive research that shows how the balance of power between belligerents, relative rebel strength, and number of actors influence third party conflict resolution efforts and their chances of success. Gender is an integral part of these factors. However, it has been largely overlooked in the systematic study of conflict resolution. Hence, I make an important theoretical contribution by applying a gender lens to the process of conflict resolution in intrastate conflicts. My arguments and analyses in this thesis are informed to varying degrees by liberal, constructivist, and realist feminist approaches. In my empirical analyses I primarily rely on logistic regression, duration, and count models. Using these I illustrate that more patriarchal gender relations that manifest in greater exclusion of women from public life decrease the likelihood of negotiations in intrastate conflicts. I further demonstrate that mediation onset is strongly associated with rebel sexual violence and provide evidence from the case study of Sierra Leone to support my argument. Additionally, I show that conflicts are more likely to recur when armed groups mobilize and socialize new recruits by perpetrating sexual violence in the preceding inactive period. These findings have important implications for governments, potential mediators, policy makers and international advocates seeking to peacefully resolve armed intrastate conflicts.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Motivation – Gender blindness

'We need to increase women's representation in a systematic and meaningful way that goes far beyond tokenism. Women must be in decision-making roles at all levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention and resolution of conflict' – Antonió Guterres, New York, 5 March 2018[1]

'They tied me on a chair ... and they undressed my wife in front of me. I was trying to help her, but I failed ... They said, "We are not going to kill you, but we will enjoy your wife in front of you." I begged to pay money instead, or even that they should kill me, but they refused... they were just laughing at me and my wife' – James, Pagrinya II refugee settlement, Uganda, 5 December 2016[2]

These quotes illustrate different forms of gendered influences on conflict and conflict resolution. The remarks by UN Secretary-General Antonió Guterres serve as a reminder that improving structural factors in society, such as women's equal participation in public life, are deemed integral to achieve the reduction of violence and the peaceful resolution of conflicts. James's account from South Sudan is both a reminder of the brutality inflicted on civilians in many intrastate conflicts and also an instructive account, shedding light on different facets of conflict and conflict resolution. It highlights the fact that men are more likely to be killed and women more likely to be raped, that those considered protectors are ashamed of failing in their responsibility, and that sexual violence in conflict often involves gang rape by multiple perpetrators.

South Sudan is not an anomaly in regards to sexual violence. State and non-state combatants in intrastate conflicts across the globe perpetrate sexual violence against thousands of civilians. Other examples of conflicts range from Myanmar,

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[1] Remarks made at the presentation of the Secretary-General report on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace
[2] Quoted in Amnesty International special report (2017)

the former Yugoslavia, Peru, to the Côte d'Ivoire. Yet, it would be a mistake to assume that sexual violence is ubiquitous in conflict (Cohen and Nordås 2014). Sexual violence in intrastate conflicts contributes to and exacerbates short- and long-term consequences for the affected people and countries as well as surrounding countries. These challenges include internally displaced people, refugees, diminished state capacities, weakened economies, and regional instability. The immense costs and threats to human security, political and economic stability, and development underscore the importance of managing and permanently resolving such intrastate conflicts. Accordingly, improving our understanding of when, why, and how successfully belligerents engage in conflict resolution is crucial. In this thesis I approach these questions with a gender lens that highlights previously overlooked gendered influences on conflict resolution.

Conflict in general refers to the pursuit of incompatible goals by different actors (Ramsbotham, Woodhouse, and Miall 2016). This broad definition encompasses a number of potential combinations of state and non-state actors (e.g. interstate conflict between states, intrastate conflict between the government of a state and at least one domestic non-state actor, or communal conflict between non-state actors without the involvement of the government) and also implies that not all conflicts are pursued violently. In this thesis, I focus on a subset of conflicts. Specifically, I focus on armed intrastate conflicts, i.e. violently pursued incompatibilities over governance or territory between the government of a state and at least one domestic group that result in at least 25 battle-related deaths (Gleditsch et al. 2002).

The term conflict resolution refers to positive and nonviolent processes in which conflict parties seek a shared solution to the underlying incompatibility. Conflict management is a related term, which is narrower and refers to the settlement and containment of armed conflict. Conflict management can take different forms such as peacekeeping to mitigate and geographically contain violence or negotiation and mediation to come to a formal settlement (e.g. ceasefire or peace agreements) that officially halts or terminates the armed conflict (Ramsbotham, Woodhouse, and Miall 2016). In this thesis I engage with negotiation and mediation as forms of conflict management, which seek to settle the conflict. Although settlement suggests certainty and finality, conflicts frequently recur, which I also address. Conflict recurrence indicates that the

underlying incompatibility has not been sufficiently addressed. Hence, for the overall thesis I draw on the broader concept of conflict resolution.

Research primarily focuses on three fundamental factors regarding the resolution of armed intrastate conflict: country-level structural factors, conflict dynamics, and external interventions. In this thesis I draw attention to gender as an important aspect of these factors that has been overlooked in systematic conflict resolution research. Conflict processes are frequently deemed gender-neutral and as a result conflict research is often gender-blind. One reason for this is that men's behavior and perspectives are assumed to represent the universal human experience (Scheman 1993). Put differently, conflict processes become gender-neutral and the study of them becomes gender-blind because men assume their perspective to be the universal norm (Sjoberg 2012). Only by bringing women in does gender become visible because women are perceived as gendered beings while men are not. Hence women are frequently seen as a proxy for gender and vice versa. However, it is a critical to 'not only add women but also ask how gender – a structural feature of social life – has been rendered invisible' (Peterson and True 1998, 23). Accordingly, in this thesis I apply a gender lens to make these gendered influences on conflict resolution visible. The overarching research question this thesis addresses is: To what extent do gendered aspects of society and violence influence conflict resolution in intrastate conflicts?

Research shows that country-level structural factors such as terrain, economic development, quality of governance, underlying conflict incompatibility, and ethnic divisions shape conflict parties' decisions to start, continue, end, and re-start armed conflict (Buhaug, Gates, and Lujala 2009; Toft 2003, 2010; Fearon and Laitin 2003; Walter 2015). While other domestic-structural factors such as youth bulges or horizontal and ethnic inequalities have received ample attention and are considered important variables to control for in systematic analyses (Cederman, Weidmann, and Gleditsch 2011; Fearon 2004; Østby 2008; Urdal 2005, 2006, 2008), gendered influences are rarely addressed or included. Yet, research shows that gender is an integral organizing element on both societal and state institution level playing a crucial role in decision-making, influencing participation in political violence, and shaping who receives protection (Barnes and O'Brien 2018; Bjarnegård, Brounéus, and Melander 2017; Carpenter 2003, 2005, 2006; Hudson et al. 2012; Karim and Beardsley 2017). Domestic structural factors that shape

conflict behaviour are underpinned, upheld, and institutionalized by gendered practices (Caprioli 2000, 2003, 2005; Caprioli and Boyer 2001; Hudson et al. 2012; Melander 2005a, 2005b).

A fundamental tenet of conflict research is the assumption that conflict actors are rational actors who assess all available information to weigh the expected costs and benefits of their actions (Fearon 1995). This assumption underpins most research explaining the occurrence and success of conflict resolution efforts (Clayton 2013; Clayton and Gleditsch 2014; Thomas 2014; Wood, Kathman, and Gent 2012; Wood and Kathman 2014). Characteristics and dynamics of a conflict thus are information, which belligerents assess in terms of costs and benefits to decide whether to continue fighting or to entertain peace talks (Clayton 2013, 2016; Greig and Regan 2008; Kaplow 2016; Melin and Svensson 2009). Accordingly, the ability to impose costs on the opposition is crucial, particularly for insurgents who typically operate within an asymmetric conflict against a more powerful state (Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan 2013).

One way of imposing costs is targeting strategic centers of gravity, i.e. civilians, to break the opposition's will to fight. Or put differently, the power to hurt the opponent through civilian victimization is power to bargain (Schelling 1960). What remains implicit and unacknowledged in this rationalist framework is the gendered logic that underpins civilian victimization and centers of gravity. First, states (consciously or unconsciously) frequently perceive women as 'beautiful souls' and biological and cultural reproducers of the nation rendering them the strategic center of gravity (Elshtain 1987; Sjoberg 2013). Second, the gendered division of civilians (women and children) and combatants (men) tasked to protect these women and children, clearly assigns gendered roles of (feminine) vulnerable groups and their (masculine) protectors (Carpenter 2003, 2005). Third, an attack targeting the feminine strategic center can be perceived as a challenge to the protector's masculinity. In other words, the victimization of civilians (read women) is employed to symbolically hurt the presumed protector. Hence, the power to hurt strategy is inherently gendered. Yet the majority of conflict literature remains gender blind (Sjoberg 2013).

Research is equally gender blind in its analysis of how conflict dynamics influence decisions to propose and accept conflict resolution offers. The rationalist

framework suggests that self-interest rather than normative concerns influence third parties' decision to intervene because interventions, military or diplomatic, are associated with a range of costs and benefits. In diplomatic efforts, third parties could face negative publicity, receive blame if the peace process collapses, and may lose face as result (Bercovitch and Schneider 2000; Beardsley 2008). The potential political, economic, and reputational costs can lead to a selection bias that favors ostensibly easy cases that guarantee a successful outcome for the intervening party (Melin 2011; Regan and Stam 2000; Young 1967; Zartman 2000). Yet, intermediaries also often react to intense conflicts that present the greatest threat to international security (Bercovitch and Gartner 2006; Beardsley et al. 2006; Greig 2005). At the same time, studies show that bargaining information and the balance of power between belligerents, such as relative rebel strength, number of actors, and mutually hurting stalemates, influence openness to third party conflict resolution efforts and their chances of success without addressing the gendered understanding of power (Clayton 2013; Cunningham 2006; Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan 2009; Fearon 1995; Zartman 1995). Although some research has called attention to the gendered dynamics of interventions (Carpenter 2003, 2005), the gendered influences on decisions to offer and accept interventions as well as their chances of success are largely overlooked in systematic conflict research.

Overlooking the gendered aspects of domestic-structural factors, conflict dynamics, and external intervention has multiple implications. First, gender blindness, rather than promoting gender equality, conceals and perpetuates power structures that effectively promote gender subordination (Tickner 1992). Second, it implies a narrow understanding of peace and conflict. Omitting gendered aspects renders an incomplete picture of what is defined as conflict, who are the actors, victims, and survivors of conflict, and what constitutes peace. Third, as a result we are fundamentally limited in our understanding of how and why these conflicts start, end, or recur. Assuming that conflicts are gender-neutral blinds us to important questions, such as: To what extent does women's inclusion in society influence the onset of nonviolent conflict management? How does the perpetration of sexual violence by armed actors influence the onset of conflict management? How does sexual violence by armed actors in the post-conflict period influence peace durability? Put differently, bringing gender in enriches our understanding of

different phases of conflict cycles by illuminating neglected aspects of decision-making, power dynamics, as well as government and rebel group behavior. Fourth, it implies that our understanding of conflict resolution, i.e. what works, how, when, and why, is incomplete. If we do not recognize the gendered aspect in conflict processes and subsequently do not address their influence on conflict resolution efforts, we cannot ascertain that measures work, nor that they work at this particular time for the assumed reasons. In other words, gender is an integral part of traditional factors thought to influence conflict resolution and as such is instrumental in recognizing and defining the concepts of security, war, and peace. Hence, I apply a gender lens to my analysis of conflict resolution processes in intrastate conflicts.

1.2 Addressing the problem – Applying a gender lens

It is important, at the outset, to define the terms *gender* and *gender lens*. I draw on feminist international relations (IR) theory to define gender and explain what constitutes a gender lens as well as its application. It is important to note that there is not one uniform feminist IR theory. Rather there are different approaches within feminism akin to other IR theories, such as realist, liberal, constructivist, critical, post-structural, and post-colonial (Tickner and Sjoberg 2013). Throughout this thesis my arguments and analyses are informed to varying degrees by a liberal feminist approach that focuses on women's inclusion and exclusion, a constructivist feminist approach that focuses on gender as a socially constructed idea, and a realist feminist approach that focuses on power relations. I draw on these three approaches because each helps illuminate a different gendered aspect of conflict resolution processes in intrastate conflicts. In chapter 2, I explicitly draw on a liberal feminist approach to examine patriarchal practices of women's exclusion and their effects on conflict resolution efforts. In chapter 3, I primarily turn to a realist feminist approach to illustrate the gendered nature of the power to hurt logic and underscore that power relations between states and rebels are shaped by gendered identities and gendered violence. While a constructivist feminist approach is fundamental to all three empirical chapters to understand the gendered nature of both state and non-state actors as social creation, whose rules and practices reflect the values of their creators and members, it is particularly pertinent in chapter 4. In this chapter, the constructivist approach helps explain

the gendered dynamics that underpin non-state actors' mobilization and subsequent escalation of violence.

Despite this heterogeneity within feminist IR, there are certain elements these different approaches share, most importantly the central role of gender. Unlike biological sex categorization, gender is understood to be a social construct (Peterson 2004). This means gender is constructed by members of a culture, society, or organization that implicitly or explicitly agree to follow certain norms and conventions. This implies that gender is complex and intersubjective because it is neither fixed nor universal, but dependent on time and space. In other words, different people in different places can construct gender differently at different times. On an individual level, gender refers to socially constructed expectations that persons who are perceived to belong to a biological sex category will exhibit certain traits and behaviors. On an institutional level, there are key interactive processes through which organizations are gendered (Acker 1990): First, constructing divisions of labor, of appropriate behavior, of physical space, and of power, along gendered lines; second, constructing symbols and images that illustrate, justify, reinforce, and perpetuate these divisions; third, interactions between women and men, women and women, men and men, that produce social patterns, structures, and practices of domination and submission; fourth, these processes diffuse and thus facilitate the production of gendered components of individuals' identities. In other words, gender is an essential part of the production of social structures. In family, kinship, informal, and formal organizations and institutions, gender is an integral part of the individual, the collective, and underlying relations in the collective.

To be conceptually sound and empirically viable, research always has a lens that focuses on some issues, while relegating others to the background. A gender lens highlights 'gendered power, gendered experiences, gendered knowledge, and gendered values' (Sjoberg 2013, 6). Feminist scholars contend that despite claims of gender neutrality, every level of politics – and therefore also armed intrastate conflicts – are gendered (Enloe 2000). A gender lens illuminates how social expectations about masculinities and femininities influence the onset, dynamics, structure, and processes of conflict resolution. Examining conflict resolution through a gender lens thus draws attention to gendered aspects in conflict processes such as the power relations between conflict parties, who is included,

who is excluded, and what belligerents do, including gendered forms of violence and their effects. Concretely, applying a gender lens for example means focusing on who experiences (or is perceived to experience) sexual violence (the feminine, i.e. civilians, women and children) and who is deemed responsible for providing protection (the masculine, i.e. the state, soldiers, men), and what it means if the assumed protector fails to fulfil its fundamental task of protecting the vulnerable.[3]

A gender lens highlights that states are deeply gendered institutions (Peterson 1992; Tickner 1992, 2001; Sjoberg 2013). Institutions provide the structures for social and political order through establishing formal and informal rules, as well as everyday practices. As a result institutions govern the behavior of individuals in their respective communities and organizations. Institutions are fundamentally social creations, meaning their laws, rules, and practices reflect their creators' preferences and values (Karim and Beardsley 2017). To this day, men have created and continue to create the majority of institutions. This renders institutions highly gendered, meaning 'advantage and disadvantage, exploitation and control, action and emotion, meaning and identity, are patterned through and in terms of a distinction between male and female, masculine and feminine' (Acker 1990, 146). Gender thus is an essential part of institutional processes, 'embedded in institutions through ongoing practices, values, and expectations of appropriate behavior' (Chappell 2010, 184).

States are the primary authority governing, i.e. creating and sustaining social and political order, their constituents' lives and everyday practices through the establishment of laws, rules, and norms. Therefore governments ought to be considered formal, highly gendered, institutions (Karim and Beardsley 2017). The gendered nature of states is manifested in multiple ways. From a liberal feminist perspective: men continue to exclude women from positions of power, i.e. men occupy the overwhelming majority of executive and legislative positions in governments including the most prestigious and powerful portfolios (Barnes and O'Brien 2018). From a constructivist perspective: governments prioritize the protection of vulnerable populations, women and children (Carpenter 2003, 2005), while neglecting male victims of conflict-related sexual violence and other

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[3] This does not imply that only women experience sexual violence, but reflects the socially constructed gender roles, which lead to male survivors of sexual violence often remaining unacknowledged, marginalized, and feminized regardless of their biological sex.

forms of gender-based violence (Carpenter 2006). This is rooted in the socially constructed gendered protection norm based on the separation of combatants and civilians along gendered lines (Carpenter 2003, 2005; Sjoberg 2013). From a realist feminist perspective: governments rely on masculine behaviors and characteristics such as showing strength and aggression through military posturing to defend and protect themselves, their citizens, territory, and identity (Sjoberg 2013).

Feminist IR theory approaches, like other IR theories, are primarily frameworks for understanding state behavior in international relations and interstate conflicts. However, I draw on these feminist approaches in applying a gender lens to intrastate conflicts and conflict resolution processes in them. Applying a gender lens foregrounds how women's marginalization and exclusion from position of power influences decision-making and limits the repertoire of acceptable policies, strategies, and tactics of how to deal with internal challengers. Applying a gender lens to intrastate conflicts highlights how states' self-perception as protector and sole legitimate wielder of violence shapes how governments respond to armed insurrections, rebels perpetrating sexual violence, and international offers to mediate. Applying a gender lens to intrastate conflict resolution also draws attention to what happens in the post-conflict period. Which actors continue to exist? What kind of violence do they perpetrate? And what are the consequences for peace durability?

Drawing on such a gender lens, I seek to specifically address three primary research questions in this thesis: (1) To what extent do gender relations in society influence the likelihood of negotiations during intrastate disputes? (2) To what extent does sexual violence influence the likelihood of conflict management in intrastate conflicts? And, (3) to what extent does sexual violence in inactive conflict years influence the likelihood of a return to active armed conflict?

1.3 Contributions

This thesis offers a number of contributions to different sections within the field of conflict research. I argue and empirically demonstrate that structural, organizational, and conflict process factors previously deemed 'gender neutral' are in fact inherently gendered. In applying a gender lens that draws on different approaches of feminist IR theory to illuminate multiple facets of conflicts I present

a major theoretical contribution to the study of intrastate conflicts. In three empirical chapters I demonstrate how applying such a gender lens poses new questions, offers different perspectives on mainstream conflict research, and provides important insights. In posing and answering these questions I show that a gender lens can help detect previously overlooked patterns and relationships that underpin and influence conflict resolution in intrastate conflicts.

A major contribution of this thesis lies in combining feminist IR theory with systematic analyses that rely on positivist methodology. In doing so I contribute to an emerging body of literature that bridges these two approaches that are often deemed incompatible (Sjoberg, Kadera, and Thies 2018; Karim and Beardsley 2017). I illustrate that systematic analysis and feminist IR theory are not just compatible, but have the potential for valuable synergies that enrich our understanding of conflicts and conflict resolution processes. As a result the thesis underlines the benefits of combining these two approaches and underscores that effective conflict resolution requires an understanding of the gendered influences in intrastate conflicts.

Chapter 2

In addition to this overarching contribution, each of the following three empirical chapters offers specific contributions. In chapter 2, I examine the question, to what do extent gender relations in society influence the likelihood of nonviolent conflict management? Thereby I contribute to the body of literature examining the connection between gendered inequality and conflict. Existing research finds that high levels of gendered inequality influence a number of aspects of armed conflict: the likelihood of going to war (Caprioli 2000), the likelihood of using severe violence (Caprioli and Boyer 2001), the likelihood of being the first actor to resort to violence in an interstate dispute (Caprioli 2003), the likelihood of civil war onset and the likelihood of high intensity violence in such conflicts (Caprioli 2005; Melander 2005b). Other research investigating the success of peacekeeping missions finds that peacekeeping is more successful when women have a higher relative status in the country where the peacekeeping mission is deployed (Gizelis 2009). I address a critical aspect in intrastate conflict cycles that has been overlooked so far: belligerents' decision to engage in nonviolent conflict management.

In this chapter I develop the general argument underpinning most of the systematic research on the gender-conflict nexus, which presents a substantial theoretical contribution. In line with the literature I argue that patriarchal gender relations that manifest in the violent marginalization of women are at the heart of the connection between gendered inequality and conflict. To explain how these societal norms and micro-level processes shape state behavior on the macro-level I introduce the concept of practices (Bourdieu 1977, 1990). Identifying practices as the crucial missing link to explain how gender relations at the micro-level – between individuals in society – influence state behavior at the macro-level presents a key theoretical contribution. Practices diffuse between individuals, society, and formal state institutions; they thereby influence a state's framework for how to govern, including how to deal with conflicts. Put differently, introducing practices is a crucial step towards delineating the causal mechanism that the existing literature has put forward. This also opens new avenues for future research because the concept of practices enables researchers to bridge the perceived gap between a feminist IR theory and systematic analysis because practices make intangible norms measurable.

I show in chapter 2 that more patriarchal gender relations, i.e. greater exclusion of women from public life, decrease the likelihood of nonviolent conflict management in intrastate conflicts. This thesis is the first study to systematically capture this relationship. In my analysis I draw on new data on women's inclusion from Sabrina Karim and Danny Hill (2018) as well as new data on negotiations in intrastate conflicts by Baris Ari (2018). These data allow me to test my argument on all intrastate conflict dyads in the UCDP dataset between 1975 and 2014 using logistic regression models. The robust results strongly support the argument that patriarchal gender relations expressed through practices of women's exclusion are an influential factor in intrastate conflict management.

Chapter 3

Besides adding to research on the nexus of gendered inequality and conflict, I also contribute to a burgeoning body of literature on sexual violence in armed conflict. The vast majority of existing research seeks to explain causes and variation (Alison 2007; Leiby 2009; Wood 2006, 2009; Cohen 2013a, 2013b, 2016; Cohen and Nordås 2014, 2015; Nordås and Rustad 2013; Karim and Beardsley 2016; Loken

2017; Johansson and Sarwari 2017). Despite this increasing body of literature, we know surprisingly little about the effects of sexual violence during and after conflict. Only three recent studies have started to investigate the consequences of sexual violence in armed conflict. On the one hand they find a pattern of peacekeeping operations in conflicts with sexual violence (Kreutz and Cardenas 2017; Hultman and Johansson 2017), and on the other an increased likelihood of negotiated settlements when both sides perpetrate sexual violence (Chu and Braithwaite 2018). In the process I also contribute to the largely gender blind body of literature that examines the effects of civilian victimization (Wood and Kathman 2014; Thomas 2014; Fortna 2015).

Chapter 3 presents a crucial contribution to the nascent body of work on the effects of conflict-related sexual violence by examining the question: to what extent does sexual violence influence the onset of mediation in intrastate conflicts? Theoretically, I add a crucial piece to the puzzle by arguing that the effects of sexual violence cannot be fully understood without understanding the gendered nature of states. Specifically, I contend that reports of rebel-led sexual violence emasculate the government by publicly exposing its inability to fulfill its self-appointed function as a protector of women and children. This gendering of the power to hurt logic presents an important theoretical contribution to and refinement of the traditional rationalist conflict processes and management literature.

In chapter 3, I draw on mixed methods combining a systematic statistical analysis of all intrastate conflict years between 1990 and 2009 with a case study of Sierra Leone to empirically support my theoretical argument. For the statistical analysis I use the Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict (SVAC) dataset (Cohen and Nordås 2014) and the Civil War Mediation (CWM) dataset (DeRouen, Bercovitch, and Pospieszna 2011). The logistic regression models show that mediation onset is strongly associated with rebel sexual violence. I further corroborate the statistical analysis using Sierra Leone as a crucial case for the theoretical argument because the widespread perpetration of sexual violence by the RUF renders it the most likely case to observe the causal link between sexual violence and mediation onset. Drawing on government documents, Truth and Reconciliation Commission data, NGO reports, and memoirs I illustrate how widespread rape by the RUF

accentuated the gendered protection norm thereby shaping the onset of the mediation process following the siege of Freetown in January 1999.

Chapter 4

In chapter 4, I contribute to the literature on post-conflict stability and conflict recurrence. The pattern of recurring civil wars is well established, often referred to as the conflict trap (Collier and Sambanis 2002). Existing research largely revolves around the influence of structural factors on conflict recurrence such as previous conflict outcomes, good governance, and natural resources (Kreutz 2010; Quinn, Mason, and Gurses 2007; Mason et al. 2011; Hegre and Nygård 2015; Rustad and Binningsbø 2012; Walter 2004, 2015). Only recently have scholars started to also examine the influence of group characteristics such as cohesion and the use of child soldiers on conflict recurrence (Haer and Böhmelt 2016; Rudloff and Findley 2016). In examining to what extent sexual violence influences conflict recurrence, I contribute to this literature focusing particularly on rebel groups' organizational dynamics and mobilization efforts in inactive conflict years.

Specifically, I argue that greater rebel group capability increases the likelihood of conflict recurrence and that rebel-led sexual violence in inactive conflict years is one possible way of observing rebel mobilization and capability in such inactive periods. I contend that rebel-led sexual violence signals capability and mobilization in two ways: first, it is a clear sign that an identifiable group continues to exist and is capable of perpetrating violence at a detectable level; and second, it indicates mobilization efforts and attempts to increase group capabilities by building social cohesion among old and new fighters. Specifically, I draw on Dara Kay Cohen's work on rape during civil war and her socialization argument (Cohen 2013a, 2016, 2017) to argue that rebel-led sexual violence increases rebel capability and thus the likelihood of conflict recurrence because it is an effective way of creating social cohesion and improving military effectiveness. For rebels, sexual violence in inactive conflict years thus facilitates the escalation of violence to levels of active armed conflict. Chapter 4 thus presents an important theoretical contribution in foregrounding the implicit and explicit gendered organizational dynamics that contribute to the escalation of violence and conflict recurrence.

To empirically examine the relationship between sexual violence and conflict recurrence I rely on logistic and negative binomial regression models. I use

an updated version of the SVAC dataset (Cohen and Nordås 2014) that includes the years 2010 to 2015 and the Armed Conflict Termination dataset (Kreutz 2010). The different models show a robust relationship between sexual violence in inactive years and a subsequent escalation of violence. Accordingly, this chapter presents a valuable contribution to our understanding of how conflict-related sexual violence influences conflict dynamics and conflict recurrence.

2. Gender relations and negotiations in intrastate conflicts

2.1 Abstract

To what extent do gender relations in society influence the likelihood of negotiations during intrastate disputes? A substantial body of literature recognizes gender relations as integral to understanding conflict, yet they have received little attention in systematic studies of conflict management. I argue that patriarchal gender relations, those that reflect a preference for masculinity over femininity, influence belligerent's susceptibility to negotiate. To explain how gender relations translate into shaping state behavior regarding conflict I draw on the concept of practices. Specifically, I contend that practices of excluding women from fully participating in public life legitimize and institutionalize violence as the preferred masculine way of managing conflict. The implication is that countries with more patriarchal gender relations are less likely to engage in negotiations during intrastate conflicts. I systematically test this argument on all civil conflict dyads between 1975 and 2014. The analysis shows that countries that marginalize women's participation in public life are significantly less likely to engage in negotiations. The robust results provide strong support for my theoretical claims and offer systematic evidence in support of core claims of the feminist peace theory. These findings have implications for the study and practice of civil war management.

2.2 Introduction

How does the status of women within a society influence how violent conflict is managed? Over the past two decades a substantial body of research has emerged supporting the link between gender and conflict (for an overview see Reiter 2015). Studies show that men who subscribe to patriarchal values of honor and idealize masculine notions of toughness are more likely to participate in political violence (Bjarnegård, Brounéus, and Melander 2017), and that political organizations that have more gender-inclusive ideologies are more likely to employ nonviolent tactics (Asal et al. 2013). Research further shows that states in which gendered inequality is prevalent are more likely to go to war (Caprioli 2000); use severe violence (Caprioli and Boyer 2001); be the first to use violence in interstate disputes (Caprioli 2003); suffer intrastate conflict (Caprioli 2005); escalate to high intensity violence and are less likely to deescalate violence once it begins (Melander 2005b). It is less clear how gendered inequality influences efforts to end violent conflict. An analysis of women's relative status and peacekeeping missions shows that peacekeeping missions in more egalitarian countries are more successful (Gizelis 2009). This however omits a critical phase in conflicts: conflict parties' openness to nonviolent means of terminating a dispute. In other words, the question of how gender relations influence a state's preferences towards conflict management has so far been left unexplored.

I fill this lacuna by developing an argument linking gendered inequalities with belligerent's propensity to enter into negotiations. I argue that patriarchal gender relations, those that reflect a preference for masculinity over femininity, influence belligerents' predisposition to negotiate. Specifically, I argue that belligerents in countries with lower levels of women's inclusion in the public sphere, i.e. in societies that more extensively curtail women's inclusion and participation in education, commerce, and politics, are less likely to engage in negotiations to resolve political violence. For patriarchal gender relations normatively and structurally sanction the use of violence to manage conflicts because they embody and reinforce values of a violent hegemonic masculinity such as domination, subjugation, and denigration of women and femininity. As a result I expect that all else being equal, countries in which gender relations are more patriarchal are less likely to manage conflicts nonviolently. I identify practices as the missing link in explaining how gender relations at the individual and societal

micro-level influence state behavior at the macro-level. Practices diffuse between individuals, society, and formal state institutions; they thereby influence a state's framework for how to govern, including how to deal with conflicts. Gender relations manifest in inequitable gender practices such as restricting women's access to economic, educational, and political opportunities, which means these practices tangibly express a gender hierarchy that reflects individual and societal beliefs about masculinity's superiority over femininity.

I test this argument using logistic regression models in 249 armed intrastate conflict dyads between 1975 and 2014 taken from the Uppsala/PRIO Armed Conflict dataset (Gleditsch et al. 2002). This involves 1,989 conflict dyad years, of which 533 also feature negotiations. I rely on recently released data on negotiations (Ari 2018), and gender relations in a society (Karim and Hill 2018). These new data enable me to capture practices that reflect the different levels of patriarchal gender relations within and between countries over time. The statistical analysis substantiates my argument, provides cross-national support for micro-level findings that patriarchal values and ideals of masculine toughness drive participation in political violence (Bjarnegård, Brounéus, and Melander 2017), and offers systematic evidence in support of core claims underpinning the feminist peace theory.

2.3 Conflict management

Why and how do disputants manage intrastate conflict?

Violent conflict is costly and rational disputants should avoid it (Fearon 1995). Yet, violent conflict remains prevalent, although nonviolent conflict management offers great benefits to disputants. Primarily it presents a way of preventing or ending costly violence (Dixon 1996). Conflict management can take multiple forms including, but not limited to, bilateral negotiations. Negotiation is a voluntary and nonviolent form of conflict management. Thus, at its core it is a process that builds on collaboration and compromise, rather than the imposition of one's will through power and control. To facilitate the discussion I use negotiations interchangeably with conflict management in this article.

The rationalist framework posits that violent conflict is the result of insufficient information about the resolve and capabilities of the other side (Fearon 1995). Fighting then becomes a way of obtaining this information.

According to this framework, prolonged fighting can be deemed necessary before exploring nonviolent alternatives of managing conflicts. Using this rationalist framework a significant body of research explores factors influencing the likelihood of peace talks in civil wars. Studies focus primarily on conflict and actor characteristics such as conflict intensity and history (Bercovitch and Jackson 2001; Greig 2005; Melin 2011), belligerents' strength and cohesiveness (Clayton 2013, 2016; Cunningham 2013). A common theme throughout these studies is the role of power in influencing talks. Gender is integral to understanding power, yet has received little attention in systematic studies of conflict management.

Although conflict management offers many benefits and is less costly than violence, it is not free either. The costs and benefits of talks differ depending on when they take place. Talks to prevent violence are less costly than talks once violence has erupted because that can be portrayed as appeasement and framed as weakness. Before intrastate conflicts descend into violence the primary impediment to conflict management is the question of legitimacy. Opening a dialogue with a group can be perceived as granting the group and its cause legitimacy (Svensson 2007; Kaplow 2016). The government's decision to talk can be interpreted as a de facto acknowledgement that the other side is a legitimate actor or has a legitimate grievance. This can be problematic, particularly if a government faces multiple separatist movements, because acknowledging one group is likely to encourage others to further pursue their agendas (Walter 2006b). India is a good example of this as the government continues to face multiple separatist movements in the northeast of the country alone. Talks with one group would undermine the government's ability to take a hardline stance on others. I argue that there is a gendered dimension to this and that patriarchal gendered relations, which are linked to the conflicts in Northeast India more generally (Forsberg and Olsson 2013), can also help explain the comparative dearth of negotiations in them.

Once violence erupts, costs of conflict management increase. In intrastate conflicts the government should have a structural advantage in terms of economic and military resources (Gent 2011). This asymmetry often results in the pursuit of a military solution. The flipside is that agreeing to talks effectively signals weakness and the admission that despite the structural advantage the government is unable or unwilling to outright win the conflict (Melin and Svensson 2009;

Kaplow 2016). Opening dialogue thus can potentially damage the government's reputation with important domestic or international supporters, who might lose faith in the government's resolve and/or capabilities (Kaplow 2016). Accordingly, the government will only agree to talks if the benefits of ending the violence outweigh their costs (Melin and Svensson 2009). Despite publicly claiming the opposite, governments often engage in talks with groups that use terrorist tactics because the benefits of ending attacks on civilians outweigh the costs of talking (Thomas 2014). For example, in Northern Ireland the UK government engaged first in backchannel talks despite denouncing the IRA as a terrorist organization, before a formal mediation process delivered the Good Friday Agreement in 1998.

Opposition groups stand to benefit greatly from talks because they confer legitimacy giving them a boost in domestic and international standing. For the government, however, talks cement its inability to withstand opposition pressure (Melin and Svensson 2009). Consequently, groups might interpret the decision to accept talks as a signal that hard bargaining or further fighting would result in more concessions, potentially leading to increased support from the population or the emergence of new groups (Toft 2003; Walter 2006b).

2.4 Gender, power, conflict

States can be understood as formal institutions, which are "defined, conceptualized, and structured in terms of a distinction between masculinity and femininity" (Britton 2000, 419). Put differently, states are masculine entities (Enloe 2014; Tickner 1992; Peterson 1992; Sjoberg 2013).[4] This gendering is embedded in institutions through practices, values, and expectations of appropriate behavior and institutional norms and rules that privilege certain behaviors and certain actors over others (Chappell 2010, 184). Historically men have created most formal institutions. Yet it is important to recall that gender differences are not synonymous with sex differences, but are best understood as the result of social expectations and interactions. Gender roles are fundamental to this. The values and behavior ascribed to masculinity and femininity that are expressed in daily interactions, social norms, and gendered language, legitimate

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[4] It is important to distinguish between the nation, which is often framed in feminine terms, e.g. 'motherland' (Yuval-Davis 1997), and the state, which is the masculine, formal political institution

and encourage men's domination and women's subordination and oppression that create a power imbalance between the genders (Sideris 2001).

One reason for this imbalance is that women are predominantly socialized to be submissive and peaceful. The socialization of women as stereotypical feminine, e.g. nurturing, caring etc. instills peaceful values that are reflected in women's use of language, their conception of power, politics, and security (Caprioli and Boyer 2001, 504–5). Men on the other hand are socialized to be dominant, strong, rational, fighters, and protectors (Tickner 1992; Goldstein 2001). They are seen as natural protectors that 'suppress their own fears, brace themselves and step forward to defend the weak, women and children' (Enloe 2014, 12). This traditional division of gender roles leads to gender power imbalances that subordinate women and femininity while idealizing men and masculinity.

A feminist framework places gender relations, in particular the underlying norms of subordination and domination of others, at the center of structural inequalities and violence (Sjoberg 2013). Within such a framework gender relations between wives and husbands, parents and their children, are at the most fundamental level and thus present the blueprint of any social interaction thereby shaping societal norms and actions: 'To the extent that the father dominates and controls the mother, this model teaches the child that domination by one group over another is appropriate and normal' (Bjarnegård, Brounéus, and Melander 2017, 752). Domestic structures and gender relations are templates for social relations in larger society (Caprioli 2000, 2005; Hudson et al. 2012). Put differently, gender relations serve as a normative framework for social interactions in wider society, placing them at the heart of any conflict. Accordingly, more peaceful societies are characterized by norms of equality and egalitarianism between the genders, whereas countries that have greater gender power imbalances are more violent.[5]

However, in the literature on gendered inequality and conflict the mechanisms at work are often not clearly delineated. The existing research does not specify how norms of gender relations become a framework for society, how these societal norms influence policies, and particularly how these norms inform conflict processes. Drawing on Bourdieu's concept of *practices* (1977, 1990) the

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[5] Of course there are other important sources of hierarchies such as race or class that frequently intersect or interact with gender.

following section offers an explanation of how power imbalances based on gendered roles, values, and behavior, influence conflict management. Put differently, practices help us understand how gender power imbalances diffuse within society to influence formal institutions and state policies. As such they help us bridge the gap between micro-level behavior that prioritize men over women and macro-level state decisions to rely on violence to manage a conflict.

Practices - connecting micro- and macro-level

Norms and values are intangible, difficult to measure, even invisible, only becoming apparent when violated. Thus testing an argument based on gender norms and relations is difficult and often has to rely on crude approximations that stretch the conceptual boundaries of the norms in question.[6] One possibility to overcome this inherent epistemological problem is to use practices (Bigo 2011). Practices combine into one concept the different notions that are captured in a variety of terms such as: customs, tradition, tacit knowledge, ideology, framework and presupposition (Turner 1994, 2).

Although often used interchangeably, the concepts of behavior, action, and practices are not the same. Practices are patterned actions within an organized context, socially embedded through learning and training (Adler and Pouliot 2011, 6). Through repeating actions or reproducing similar meaning over space and time practices represent and reproduce the world in a specific way implicitly claiming that this is in fact the world's natural state, that this is 'how things are done'. Practices, therefore, are ultimately what people use to explain their actions and rules; they are the system of reference by which they interpret events and actions (Stern 2000, 61). Thus, practices are fundamental to any understanding of the world, they 'not only organize the world - they are also the raw materials that comprise it' (Adler and Pouliot 2011, 13). For example, the democratic practice of voting results in the governing, i.e. organizing, of our lives through democratic institutions such as legislature, executive, and judicature. Accordingly, practices bridge the perceived divide between tangible experiences and invisible norms (Adler and Pouliot 2011, 17). Generally practices, then, can be defined as 'meaningful patterns of action' that simultaneously perform, embody, and

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[6] See Karim and Hill (2018) for discussion of concept stretching in relation to gender inequality

challenge organized background knowledge and discourse (Adler and Pouliot 2011, 6). Simply put: *practices are 'culture in action'* (Adler and Pouliot 2011, 14 emphasis added). Practices perform, embody, challenge, and institutionalize the values and norms of a society. This renders practices as markedly political as they serve to sustain (or undermine) patterns of power (Adler and Pouliot 2011, 21).

Ultimately, practices are performed by individual social beings. Collectively, however, practices are structured and performed by communities of practice in which they develop, diffuse, and become institutionalized (Bourdieu 1990, 59; Adler and Pouliot 2011, 17). In line with this, a society should be considered a community of practice (Adler and Pouliot 2011). Gender is integral to practices, as Bourdieu argues that children construct their social identity 'at the same time as [they] construct their representations of the division of labor between the sexes, on the basis of the same socially defined set of indissolubly biological and social indices' (Bourdieu 1990, 78). For example, patriarchal societies are normatively upheld and behaviorally re-enforced by family structures in which sons experience preferential treatment over daughters, which in turn sets the tone for the oppression of women and others in general. In other words, communities of practice provide both the normative justification in which action is grounded and the habitual framework for any social interaction.

Based on this premise, gender practices are developed, diffused, and institutionalized, becoming part of the normative framework for societal interactions in general. Women and men, girls and boys, are raised and socialized to adhere to gendered roles. 'Boys will be boys' becomes prediction, instruction, and excuse (Ahmed 2017). For example, soldiers' combat training socializes them to adopt certain behavior that possibly cannot simply be "turned off" outside of a military setting. As a result associated practices diffuse into other areas outside the military into society and politics. This further embeds the power imbalance in gender relations, which is expressed through both overt aggressions (for example: domestic violence, sexual assaults, or honor killings) and nonviolent oppression (for example: exclusion from public life, relegation of women to "feminine", domestic work). Both are part of a wider set of practices that are inherently violent and oppressive of femininity and non-hegemonic masculinities. On a societal level the practices idealizing masculinity include for example restricting women's access to education, commerce, and politics as these are deemed 'masculine domains'.

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These societal practices cement the gender power imbalance. The pervasive nature of practices means that they often become invisible and go unquestioned because they are part of the social fabric: practices become *naturalized through habituation*, for example in the investment bias towards sons in the allocation of food and education. As a consequence, women themselves not only accept these practices, but are co-opted in perpetuating them against other women or their own daughters, for example in cases of female genital mutilation or female infanticide (Hudson et al. 2012).

Hegemonic masculinity and the state

Society and its formal institutions, i.e. political parties, the government, and security institutions such as the police and military, are products of such practices. This implies they are gendered and therefore reflect the underlying gendered power imbalances that award primacy to masculinities (Karim and Beardsley 2017). Within these institutions masculinity can take multiple forms depending on the spatial, temporal, and political context, but some are hegemonic, i.e. a 'configuration of gender practice which guarantees the dominant position of men and the subordination of women" (Connell 2005, 77). Tickner highlights the glorification of power in this socially constructed ideal of a hegemonic masculinity (1992). The ideal-type hegemonic masculinity is the set of characteristics to which men in a given society are expected to aspire and which this society should reflect (Sjoberg 2013, 89).[7] This implies that 'within an institution certain masculinities have power while femininities and other masculinities do not. The structures, rules, practices, and customs of the institution are oriented around the leading masculinities, and other forms of masculinity and femininities are subordinate' (Karim and Beardsley 2017, 30). The key point here is that the gender power imbalance takes a central role in shaping institutions and policies.

The idealization of a warrior identity accompanied by the militarization of masculinity entrenches this gender power imbalance (Karim and Beardsley 2017). The warrior identity as the hegemonic masculinity conflates masculinity with courage, toughness, rationality, and physical prowess (Tickner 1992). Femininity and other forms of masculinity such as the stay-at-home dad, the metro-, or

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[7] Simultaneously, it has to be acknowledged that masculinity is understood and conceptualized differently across time and space, that masculinity is not uniform, and that like any social construct it is subject to change (Sjoberg 2013).

homosexual man, then become synonymous with weakness, irrationality, and dependence (Tickner 1992; Duncanson 2013). The warrior identity has historical origins: participation in combat presenting the ultimate test of manhood - a rite of passage needed to turn 'boys' into 'men' (Enloe 1983; Elshtain 1987; Goldstein 2001). The monopoly of violence vested in the state plays on and feeds off this warrior identity in attracting men wanting to prove their manhood in security institutions such as police and military where fighting is expected. These security institutions perceive the warrior identity as an ideal to which they aspire resulting in the privileging of fighting prowess over other characteristics such as nonviolence and de-escalation (Karim and Beardsley 2017, 31). As a result it is the masculinity of the state and particularly the embedded warrior identity of its security institutions that shape state policies because they are deemed necessary to defend the nation (Sjoberg 2013).

The second factor entrenching gender power imbalances is the militarization process in state institutions (Enloe 2000). The state and its security institutions need large numbers of recruits – primarily men – both capable of fighting and willing to potentially sacrifice their lives. While the warrior masculinity is instrumental in the recruitment, to increase capability and willingness to fight the state relies on a militarization process (Karim and Beardsley 2017, 38).[8] As part of the militarization process state militaries and armed groups frequently use violence to socialize their fighters into cohesive combat units (Cohen 2013a, 2017; Littman and Paluck 2015). In this process they pit the "in-group" against an "out-group" as violence against outsiders is more likely to lead to ties among insiders (Littman and Paluck 2015). State officials, such as prime ministers, presidents, or defense ministers, tasked with managing conflicts are overwhelmingly male (Barnes and O'Brien 2018), and often have often gone through such socialization processes, especially when they have a military background.

Gender and sexuality play a crucial role in the creation of such out-groups. Important in this regard is the devaluation of femininity (Tickner 1992). The militarization process is designed to strip men of their femininity by socializing them into suppressing emotions and individual identities, proving their manhood,

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[8] Pervasive socialization processes within armed groups/militaries ensure that women's inclusion does not substantially affect their practices (Cohen 2013b; Loken 2017)

shaming others for "acting like women", using violence without emotion, and feminizing the enemy (Whitworth 2004). Particularly soldiers are evaluated based on their adherence to this militarized masculinity and anything that does not fit it, including femininity and women, is denigrated (Karim and Beardsley 2017, 38). States, particularly their security institutions, promote the notion of proving one's manhood and the kind of militarization based on the rejection of all that is feminine. A militarized warrior masculinity requires the construction of the "other" as feminine and thus is promoted and sustained through the denigration of femininity and lesser masculinities.

Gender and conflict management

Practices diffuse from society into formal state institutions, thus shaping states' frameworks for how to govern, including how to deal with conflicts. Specifically, if society's idealization of masculinity is expressed in practices of exclusion and subordination directed against women and femininity, then these practices influence the state's policies, particularly its reliance on violence and militarism. It is this gender power imbalance that shapes state policies. As Laura Sjoberg argues 'policy options such as empathy, positive-sum collaboration, unilaterally deconstructing the cycle of violence, care, or empowerment are often missing from states' toolboxes because the gendered system selects for power-over rather than power-to or power-with' (2013, 95). Similarly Claire Duncanson asserts that the warrior identity influences policy priorities preferring combat to nonviolent conflict management and de-escalation (2013, 137). This manifests for example in politicians' reluctance to reign in military spending and in a preference of meeting threats with a "manly" response, i.e. force and violence. To exercise caution, to choose de-escalation and nonviolent conflict management, is perceived as feminine and thus not part of the warrior identity (Duncanson 2013).

Another aspect that helps explain how societal practices shape governmental action is the selection of prototypical leaders. Groups commonly select prototypical leaders that epitomize practices that are held in high regard by group members (Hogg 1996). For leaders this entails that embodying these values and norms grants them greater legitimacy because they are seen as representatives of the group. This is particularly relevant for political leaders as masculinity (power, strength, and control) is what is supposedly needed to defend

the nation (Sjoberg 2013, 199). This translates to citizens opting for masculine leadership because they expect and demand protection (Sjoberg 2013, 162). The idealization of masculinity leads to a prioritization of males, whose masculinity is naturally assumed, over females, who have to prove their masculinity, because biological sex serves as a shortcut for identifying desirable leadership characteristics (Sjoberg 2013, 141). States that idealize a warrior masculinity develop, diffuse, and institutionalize practices that harm, oppress, exploit, and exclude women, making it seem that this is the world's natural state and that this is 'how things are done': violently. Thus the rejection of femininity and idealization of a warrior masculinity results in the selection of leaders that exemplify the desired masculine practices. This in turn influences their policies. If aggressive and violent practices are what leaders know and what they think are expected of them, then that is what they will employ.

On the other hand, when societies do not idealize masculinity to the same extent this shapes their practices too. It can lead to practices of nonviolence, respect, and egalitarianism, which increase women's inclusion in the public sphere. Societal practices that reflect a greater gender power balance thus should result in greater sex parity in public domains such as politics and the formal economy. As women's inclusion increases this further promotes practices that reject governance through domination and coercion and instead emphasize and embody values of empathy, care, nonviolence and respect. Sweden is a good example of this. In 2015, the self-defined feminist Swedish government declared to pursue a feminist foreign policy using a toolbox of representation, rights, and reallocation, for the explicit purpose of challenging gendered hierarchies and power structures (Aggestam and Bergman-Rosamond 2016). The case of Sweden illustrates that the increased inclusion of women and subsequent policies reflect changes in gender relations, rather than women's essential peacefulness. Sweden is part of a larger pattern that shows that as women's inclusion in legislatures and executives increases countries are less likely to increase defense spending and initiate wars (Koch and Fulton 2011; Shair-Rosenfield and Wood 2017). Key here is that, when violent practices of subordination are less dominant in gender relations one would expect society as a whole to be more peaceful as there is a greater normative constraint on the use of violence.

Practices rooted in a gender power balance recognize the other as equal, and thereby acknowledge the validity of one's opponent's interests and grievances. Sjoberg refers to empathy, care, and empowerment as policy options that more feminist states might integrate (2013, 95). This applies to both intra- and intergroup relations, affecting states' internal structures and societies' choice of conflict management tools. Within societies that do not idealize masculinity, i.e. no longer equate leadership skills and decision-making qualities with masculinity and men, this should result in increased women's inclusion and participation in the public sphere and decision-making positions. The inclusion of women and their increasing influence should then lead to a self-affirming development in influencing and shaping societal practices that place a greater emphasis on collaboration and empowerment of marginalized groups. In terms of intergroup relations, practices based on a gender power balance that highlight care, empathy, and respect, are important because an influential factor in choosing a conflict management tool is the concern for one's opponent's outcomes (Bercovitch and Jackson 2001, 63).

At the same time, it is important to keep in mind that women's increased inclusion does not guarantee that they have greater power in these public spaces or the ability to change institutional power structures (Karim and Hill 2018). Feminists argue that women's admission into these institutions and structures is often based on meeting established standards of personality and practicing masculinities. Thus women in decision-making positions cannot be simply equated with growing femininity in a society as women often adopt masculinized personas in politics (Sjoberg 2013). Put differently, female politicians behave in masculinized ways to be elected by an electorate looking for hegemonic masculinity leadership traits thus preventing any feminization through the inclusion of women. In other instances the higher percentage of women in parliament might be the result of an external shock, for example Rwanda's genocide, or the result of quotas neither of which necessarily affect prevalent societal practices.[9] Hence it is important to look at women's inclusion beyond the political realm to include different aspects of public life such as visibility and participation in commerce, the formal economy, and education.

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[9] This is not an argument against quotas, but merely highlights that the introduction of quotas without an accompanying shift in norms and attitudes might not achieve the desired changes.

I argue that the idealization of masculinity expressed through the exclusion of women in the public sphere fosters the continued use of violence in managing conflicts and hampers the use of nonviolent conflict management. Patriarchal practices of excluding women from public life normatively and structurally sanction the use of violence to manage conflicts because they embody and reinforce values of a violent hegemonic masculinity such as domination, subjugation, and denigration of women and femininity. Put differently, the more patriarchal gender relations are, the less likely is the use of nonviolent conflict management methods that are perceived as more feminine such as negotiations. On the other hand, in a more inclusive society, practices should produce both normative and structural restraints against violence. Practices that reflect greater gender power balance through the inclusion of women should challenge the predominance of the warrior masculinity and thereby discredit the use of violence to manage conflicts. The diffusion and institutionalization of practices expressive and reflective of greater gender power balance, i.e. greater levels of women's inclusion, should manifest as a normative and structural restraint against violent conflict management, while fostering nonviolent conflict management and de-escalation. In other words, when deciding on how to manage a conflict, states in which there is a greater gender power balance should be less constrained in by a societal desire to adhere to a militarized warrior masculinity. Subsequently, if violent conflicts do erupt, states that are more inclusive should be more likely to employ nonviolent methods to manage them, i.e. negotiation. From the above discussion I derive a testable hypothesis:

Hypothesis: Higher levels of women's inclusion in society increase the likelihood of negotiations in intrastate conflict.

2.5 Methodology

Data and models

In testing this hypothesis I draw on new negotiation data collected by Baris Ari (2018), and UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict data. The argument, however, is not specific to negotiations and could be extended to other nonviolent conflict management tools such as mediation. I use Ari's data for two main reasons: (1) The unit of analysis is conflict dyad year, meaning it is more fine-grained than

other available data; (2) Mediation depends on a third party's willingness to offer its services and disputants' willingness to accept the mediator and to give up some level of control over the process. Put differently, mediation processes introduce a third set of interests and accentuate both benefits and costs of negotiations, which can substantially change the incentives for conflict parties to participate in a peace process. Therefore, in line with the theoretical focus on patriarchal gender relations within a country the empirical focus of the primary models is on bilateral negotiations between governments and non-state actors. Nonetheless, I also run robustness checks using the Civil War Mediation data (DeRouen, Bercovitch, and Pospieszna 2011).

Negotiations might also take place when fighting is suspended. Thus I also include non-active years that do not reach the UCDP threshold of 25 battle-related deaths. In robustness checks I also run my full model using only active conflict dyad years. As the dependent variable is binary, I use logistic regression models to estimate the probability that there will be a negotiation in a conflict dyad year. To control for a potential lack of independence of observations I cluster standard errors on the country. To account for temporal dependence, i.e. negotiations running for multiple years, or a negotiation process in one year prompting another round of negotiation in subsequent years, I include time since last negotiation and its cubic polynomials. Logistic regression models evaluate how the log odds of an event change with the independent variable. The parameters of a logistic regression model cannot be interpreted in their raw form; hence I also provide the marginal effects of women's inclusion. Marginal effects measure the expected change in the dependent variable (negotiation occurrence), for one unit change in the independent variable (women's inclusion) while holding all other covariates constant.

Dependent Variable
Negotiation is defined as 'a meeting between a state-party and a non-state armed group that is recognized by both parties and that is held to fully or partly resolve the conflict through verbal communication' (Ari 2018). The data only include acknowledged negotiations, thus indirect or secret backchannel talks are not included. *Negotiation* is coded as dichotomous (0 = no negotiation, 1 =

negotiation). Table I. displays that 533 observations (or 27% of all conflict dyad years in the sample) see a negotiation process.

Table I. Negotiations in intrastate conflicts

Negotiation	Frequency	Percent
0	1,456	73
1	533	27
Total	1,989	100

Independent Variable

I argue that women's level of inclusion captures a given society's idealization of masculinity, which is embodied and reinforced through the subordination, oppression, and exclusion of women and femininity from the public sphere. This implies a distinct mechanism, which requires me to distinguish women's inclusion from other dimensions of gendered inequality that have been posited to influence conflict such as women's physical security captured through micro-level violence (Hudson and Den Boer 2002; Hudson et al. 2012) and women's legal rights. Accordingly, I use Sabrina Karim and Danny Hill's scale for women's inclusion as my main explanatory variable, while including women's rights and women's security as control variables (2018). Karim and Hill construct these three scales using Bayesian mixed factor analytical models, which allows for missing values in the component indicators. "Mixed" means that the models can combine indicators with different levels of measurement (continuous and binary) 'by assuming different functional forms for the relationships between the latent variable and the observed indicators' (Karim and Hill 2018, 22). The inclusion scale is constructed using 37 different indicators including female participation in the legislature and executive, female labor force participation, female participation in education (see Appendix A for all 37 indicators). The values of women's inclusion in my sample range from -5.90 on the low end to 2.62 on the high end, with a mean of -0.38 and a standard deviation of 0.93 (see Table II).

Control Variables

The physical security of women in society may influence states' behavior in conflict. The general idea is that higher levels of micro-level violence increase the

likelihood of macro-level violence (Hudson et al. 2012). If society tolerates or even encourages men (or women) to commit violence against women, for example their wives or daughters, then committing violence against strangers will be much easier. Thus, negotiations might be less likely because violence is the 'natural' way of managing conflicts. To control for this possibility I include Karim and Hill's scale on women's security.

Women's rights might also influence conflict management. The implementation of laws relating to women's rights (even if only partially enforced) sends a signal that the state recognizes the concept of women's rights, which places it among countries that are in theory moving toward adherence to liberal norms such as democracy and human rights (Karim and Hill 2018). Thus the state's institutionalization of women's rights goes hand in hand with adopting democratic ideals and norms of non-violence. The underlying mechanism is similar to the democratic peace theory (Maoz and Russett 1993) that suggests that the adoption of democratic norms and practices reduces conflict. Accordingly, I include Karim and Hill's scale for women's rights and use the V-Dem data to control for the possibility that any observed relationship is actually driven by either the pacifying effect of women's rights or democracy more generally (Coppedge et al. 2017). Table II displays the range, mean, and standard deviations for women's inclusion, security, and rights.

Table II. Descriptive statistics women's inclusion, rights, security

	Observations	Min	Max	Mean	Standard Deviation
Women's inclusion	1,955	-5.897	2.615	-0.380	0.932
Women's rights	1,957	-3.085	1.793	-0.217	0.762
Women's security	1,979	-3.056	1.401	-0.155	0.897

Table III shows bivariate correlations for the three scales. There are moderate correlations between two sets of variables, security and inclusion (r = 0.65) as well as security and rights (r = 0.62). This indicates that there is a positive relationship between security and inclusion — on average higher scores for

security is associated with higher levels of inclusion – and between security and rights – higher scores for security is associated with higher scores for rights. However, the correlation between inclusion and rights is only r = 0.34. This indicates that the three dimensions—women's inclusion, women's rights, and women's security—capture distinct concepts.

Table III. Bivariate correlation matrix - women's inclusion, rights, security

	Inclusion	Rights	Security
Inclusion	1.000		
Rights	0.338	1.000	
Security	0.646	0.616	1.000

I also control for conflict characteristics previously identified to influence the likelihood of negotiations. Conflict intensity is argued to be a key factor in shaping conflict parties' decision to accept talks (Melin and Svensson 2009). Thus, the model includes a measure for intensity. Based on UCDP data, for each conflict year the intensity level is coded either 0 for inactive years, 1 for conflict resulting in 25 - 999 battle-related deaths, or 2 for a war with more than 1,000 casualties.

The rationalist framework points to the importance of duration in terms of collecting information about the other side's resolve and capabilities. The longer a conflict goes on the costlier it becomes (Filson and Werner 2007; Greig 2001). Increased costs should increase the likelihood of negotiations. Accordingly, I include the natural log of the dyad duration to control for the effects of conflict duration on negotiation occurrence within a dyad.

Previous studies show that relative rebel strength influences the likelihood of mediated peace talks (Clayton 2013, 2016; Clayton and Gleditsch 2014). A similar dynamic might influence the occurrence of negotiations. To account for this I include a measure of relative rebel strength from the Non-State Actor database (Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan 2013). I use a binary variable indicating that takes on the value of 1 if rebels are weaker or much weaker than the government and 0 if at parity with the government or stronger than the government.

Thomas (2014) finds that on the African continent negotiations are more likely to take place in ethnic conflicts. To control for the potential influence of ethnicity on negotiation occurrence, I include a binary variable based on (Vogt et

al. 2015) that indicates if the non-state actor in the conflict dyad represents an ethnic group.

Parallel conflicts can have both positive and negative effects on the likelihood of peace talks. On the one hand, multiple conflicts require the government to divide attention and resources thus improving rebel's relative position and increasing the likelihood of talks. On the other hand, multiple conflicts increase the recognition costs associated with accepting negotiations thus reducing the likelihood of negotiation onset. Furthermore, more conflicts mean more potential spoilers (Cunningham 2006). To account for both possibilities I include a variable indicating the number of active groups in a country in each year.

Lastly, research indicates that high economic development fosters peace by helping reduce resource scarcity and improving institutional stability (Doyle and Sambanis 2000). Therefore, I include the natural logs of GDP per capita as well as the natural log of the population size as controls.

2.6 Results

All other things being equal, women's inclusion shows a positive, statistically significant relationship with negotiation occurrence, i.e. greater levels of inclusion are associated with a higher likelihood of negotiation. The statistical results are reported in Table IV (parameters presented are the logistic regression coefficients). As the introduction of control variables can also introduce bias (Clarke 2005) I limit Model 1.1 to just the independent variable without any controls. The results of the logistic regression model are significant at the $p < 0.001$ level in the expected direction. Model 1.2 introduces the conflict related controls such as dyad duration, intensity, whether it is an ethnic conflict, and rebels' relative strength. Women's inclusion remains statistically significant. The results indicate that years of intense conflict (>1,000 deaths) are more likely to feature negotiations. Additionally, the variable for relative group strength also shows the anticipated negative relationship ($p < 0.001$), i.e. weak rebels are less likely to engage in negotiations. However, none of the other control variables show a significant relationship with negotiations.

In model 1.3 I include variables to account for country characteristics that might influence the likelihood of negotiation occurrence, such as level of democracy, GDP per capita, population size, and number of active non-state groups

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in the country. Furthermore I introduce the controls for women's security and women's rights. Women's inclusion and rebels' relative strength continue to be statistically significant. In this model dyad duration is also statistically significant, the positive coefficient indicating that negotiations become more likely as dyads last longer. Higher scores on democracy are also associated with higher chances of negotiations, while both higher levels of GDP per capita and bigger populations decrease the likelihood of negotiations. The number of active groups does not influence the likelihood of negotiations. Neither women's security nor women's rights have a significant relationship with negotiations.

In contrast, Karim and Hill (2018) find that women's security is a significant predictor of conflict onset. One potential explanation is the argument that women's inclusion, women's security, and women's rights are distinct concepts that need to be disaggregated because there are different mechanisms connecting them to conflict depending on the stage of the conflict cycle. Micro-level violence (women's security) normalizes violence thereby making macro-level violence (conflict onset) more likely, but once conflict is ongoing this no longer influences how the conflict is managed and instead patriarchal practices reflecting the idealization of masculinity influence conflict management. Another potential explanation is that this is a selection effect. Countries with relatively low women's security scores are more likely to experience conflict, which subsequently reduces the variation of women's security scores in my sample. The descriptive statistics offer support for this as women's security has a smaller range of variation than women's inclusion (see Table II).

In model 1.4, I introduce cubic polynomials based on the time since the last negotiation to control for potential temporal dependence (Carter and Signorino 2010). The main results remain unchanged, meaning higher levels of women's inclusion are associated with higher chances of negotiations. Rebels' relative strength also remains significant and ethnic conflict becomes significant (p = 0.091), while neither conflict intensity nor democracy are any longer significant. Thus these results lend strong support to the hypothesis that the greater the level of women's inclusion increases the likelihood of negotiations.

Table IV. Logistic regression models 1.1 – 1.4 (95% confidence interval in parentheses)

	(1.1)	(1.2)	(1.3)	(1.4)
Women's inclusion	0.406***	0.516***	0.580***	0.385***
	[0.169,0.642]	[0.237,0.795]	[0.268,0.893]	[0.176,0.595]
Dyad duration (ln)		0.063	0.263*	0.604***
		[-0.165,0.291]	[0.027,0.499]	[0.428,0.780]
Conflict		0.331	0.199	-0.111
		[-0.215,0.876]	[-0.306,0.704]	[-0.553,0.331]
War		0.753*	0.574	0.125
		[0.108,1.397]	[-0.096,1.245]	[-0.503,0.753]
Ethnic		0.272	0.323	0.303t
		[-0.270,0.815]	[-0.242,0.887]	[-0.049,0.655]
Weak rebels		-2.081***	-1.341**	-1.201**
		[-3.186,-0.976]	[-2.318,-0.365]	[-1.939,-0.464]
Active groups			-0.099	0.013
			[-0.384,0.187]	[-0.190,0.216]
GDP per capita (ln)			-0.861***	-0.546***
			[-1.250,-0.472]	[-0.809,-0.284]
Population (ln)			-0.409***	-0.204**
			[-0.616,-0.202]	[-0.347,-0.061]
Democracy			2.024*	0.963
			[0.341,3.708]	[-0.441,2.367]
Women's security			0.133	0.13
			[-0.262,0.528]	[-0.165,0.425]
Women's rights			0.054	0.018
			[-0.573,0.680]	[-0.470,0.505]
Time since last negotiation				-0.791***
				[-0.991,-0.591]
Time since last negotiation^2				0.051***
				[0.021,0.081]
Time since last negotiation^3				-0.001*
				[-0.002,-0.000]
Constant	-0.892***	0.544	9.974***	6.229***
	[-1.206,-0.577]	[-0.499,1.588]	[5.923,14.02]	[3.555,8.902]
AIC	2225.824	1989.189	1771.161	1437.328
Area under ROC	0.602	0.693	0.757	0.862
Wald-chi^2	11.30(1)	31.80(6)	80.21(10)	369.54(15)
Prob > chi^2	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Log likelihood	-1110.912	-987.594	-874.580	-702.664
N	1,955	1,817	1,755	1,755

95% confidence intervals in brackets

*t p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001*

Besides the sign of the coefficient indicating the direction of the relationship, logistic regression coefficients are difficult to interpret in their raw form. Consequently, I also provide the marginal effects. These illustrate the substantive effects of the relationship between women's inclusion and the likelihood of negotiations. The effect of women's inclusion on the likelihood of negotiation is best observed when comparing two scenarios in which women's inclusion presents the only significant difference. The hypothetical conflict conditions I propose are: a minor conflict (25-999 battle-related deaths), weak rebels, and one other active group. I hold dyad duration, population size, GDP per capita, women's security, women's rights, and democracy level at the sample mean. Using predicted values I compute the probability of negotiation occurring in a conflict year in a country where women are largely excluded (women's inclusion at the 10th percentile = -1.662) and a country where women are comparatively well included (women's inclusion at the 75th percentile = 0.559) under conditions of holding all other covariates constant. In the former scenario there is a 9.30% probability of negotiation occurring. In the latter scenario there is a 19.43% probability of negotiation occurring. To further show how the likelihood of negotiation changes with the level of women's inclusion Figure 1 illustrates the predicted probabilities based on Model 1.4. The hypothetical conflict dyad year is set in the same conditions as above. The marginal effects show a steady increase in the likelihood of negotiations as women's inclusion increases.

Figure 1. Marginal effects for the difference in likelihood of negotiations (95% confidence interval)
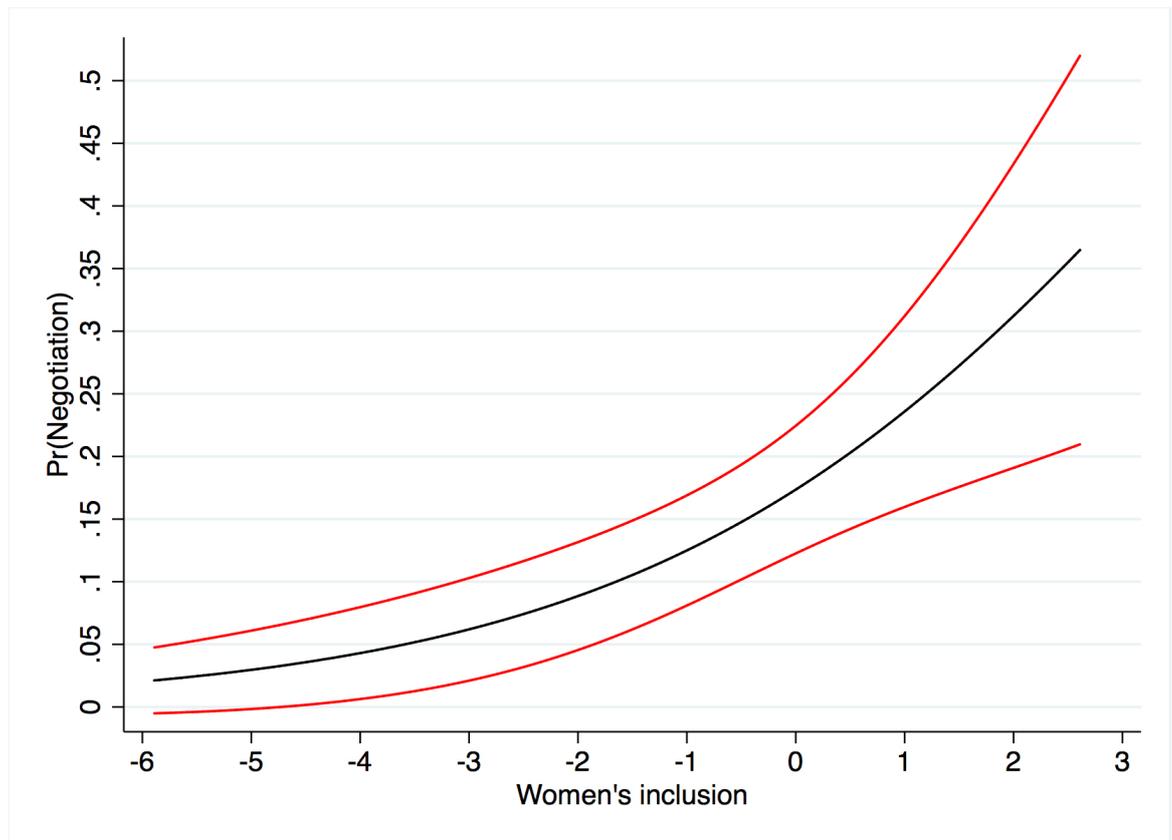
Robustness checks

For the first robustness check I limit the sample to active conflict years. This reduces the sample size to 1,204 observations. When running Model 1.4 the substantial results, however, remain unchanged. Women's inclusion still has a positive, statistically significant relationship with negotiation occurrence (p = 0.015). In a second robustness check I replace the conflict intensity variable with the natural log of battle-related deaths, which further restricts the sample to the time period between 1989 and 2014, resulting in 828 observations. Nonetheless, women's inclusion continues to have a positive statistically significant relationship with negotiation occurrence (p = 0.048).

To test the argument's validity in terms of other conflict management methods I use yearly mediation data on the conflict level based on the Civil War Mediation dataset (Clayton, 2013; DeRouen, Bercovitch & Pospieszna, 2011). I run a model using a binary mediation variable and a model using a binary variable that combines negotiation and mediation. In both models women's inclusion is

statistically significant, offering strong support for the argument that patriarchal gender relations influence the likelihood of nonviolent conflict management.

To ensure that women's inclusion in public life does not merely capture a strong civil society I include the core civil society index from the V-Dem dataset as a control variable. The results remain virtually unchanged. To account for the possibility that levels of women's inclusion or the occurrence of negotiations are shaped by geographical regions I run Model 1.4 including a control for geographical regions. In comparison to the reference category, conflict dyads in Europe, only conflict dyads in the Middle East are less likely to see negotiations. To further probe the robustness of the findings I run Model 1.4 with dyad-fixed effects, which produces the same results concerning women's inclusion: higher levels of women's inclusion are associated with a higher likelihood of negotiations (p = 0.003). Interestingly, when including dyad-fixed effects women's rights also have a positive, statistically significant relationship with negotiation (p = 0.009). This suggests that increasing women's rights can also have positive effects for the likelihood of negotiations in intrastate conflicts and merits further investigation in the future. Women's security remains statistically insignificant throughout all model specifications.

Overall, these robustness checks consolidate the strong empirical support for the hypothesis that low levels of women's inclusion are associated with low chances of negotiation occurrence. The consistently significant results across different model specifications speak to the robustness and validity of the finding and offer strong support to the argument that societies' idealization of masculinity as expressed through the exclusion of women from public life has negative effects on how states manage intrastate conflicts.

2.7 Discussion

This study adds to a burgeoning gender-conflict literature by examining how patriarchal gender relations influence the likelihood of nonviolent conflict management. By focusing on negotiations this study sheds light on an aspect of the gender-conflict nexus that had so far received very little systematic attention. It provides robust statistical support for the argument that countries that marginalize women's participation in public life are less likely to engage in nonviolent conflict management.

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This study also adds to the literature on negotiations in civil wars by offering a theoretical innovation through the introduction of a societal factor as a factor for negotiation occurrence. This is an important shift from traditional conflict aspects such as intensity and duration. The theoretical shift complements previous studies on the pacifying effects of sex equality (Caprioli 2000, 2003, 2005; Caprioli and Boyer 2001; Gizelis 2009; Melander 2005b; Regan and Paskeviciute 2003).

The paper contributes to the theoretical framework underpinning the majority of work on the gender-conflict nexus. It develops the general argument and through the introduction of practices offers an innovative step towards delineating the causal mechanism at work. The introduction of practices also helps bridge the perceived gap between a feminist IR theory and systematic analysis, as practices are both intangible norms and tangible experiences that are measurable. This study is the first to identify the gender power imbalance as expressed through patriarchal practices of women's exclusion as a causal factor for conflict management and empirically capture this relationship.

The findings are also policy relevant. Negotiations are often crucial in ending armed conflicts peacefully, thus gaining a better understanding of when negotiations are likely to occur is crucial. The decision to engage in talks is often considered from a perspective of ripeness (Greig 2001; Zartman 1995) in terms of conflict characteristics such as duration, casualties (Filson and Werner 2007), or capabilities (Clayton 2013, 2016). This study suggests that in addition to conflict characteristics societal factors are also influential. It particularly points to the importance of practices that lead to the subordination and exclusion of others. In line with the theoretical argument the results indicate that conflicts in countries that exclude women from public life are less amenable to negotiations. Although these norms and practices are susceptible to outside manipulation and do change over time (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998), they are an unlikely lever for third party influence within an ongoing conflict, particularly in comparison to conflict characteristics such as intensity or parties' strength, which are more susceptible to outside influence. The changing of a society's practices is not a quick fix for third party actors looking to end a armed conflict, but should be a long-term process underpinning a comprehensive feminist strategy of bolstering values of equality, care, empathy, nonviolence, and respect. In line with this, ensuring women's

inclusion needs to be seen as an intrinsic and fundamental human right that has positive side effects, rather than through an instrumental lens as a potential tool for peace.

2.8 Appendix A

Indicators in women's inclusion scale

1. Female chief justice
2. Expected years of schooling, ratio
3. Graduation rate at lower secondary, ratio
4. Secondary enrollment rate, ratio
5. Primary enrollment rate, ratio
6. Female share of graduates in health, tertiary
7. Female share of graduates in education, tertiary
8. Female share of graduates in social sciences/business/law, tertiary
9. Female share of graduates in humanities and arts, tertiary
10. Female share of professional and technical workers
11. Wage and salaried workers (of employed), ratio
12. Completed bachelor's degree (25 yrs+), ratio
13. Female share of graduates in agriculture, tertiary
14. Used an account to receive wages, ratio
15. Tertiary enrollment rate, ratio
16. Female share of graduates in engineering/manufacturing/construction, tertiary
17. Completed masters degree, ratio
18. Proportion of female high court justices
19. Completed upper secondary, ratio
20. Completed tertiary, ratio
21. Female share of graduates in science, tertiary
22. Proportion of firms with female participation in ownership
23. Proportion of female legislators
24. Proportion of female cabinet members
25. Completed primary, ratio
26. Female head of government
27. Female share of graduates in services, tertiary
28. Completed lower secondary, ratio
29. Completed doctoral degree, ratio
30. Ratio of female to male labor force participation rate
31. Employers (of employed), ratio

32. Avg. hours spend on unpaid domestic work, ratio

33. Children out of primary school, ratio

34. Proportion that do not own land (15-49 yrs), ratio

35. Completed no schooling, ratio

36. Contributing family workers (of employed), ratio

37. Child employment rate (7-14 yrs), ratio

Indicators in women's security scale

1. Participation rate in decisions about own health care (15-49 yrs)

2. Participation rate in decisions about major household purchases (15-49 yrs)

3. Participation rate in decisions about visits to family/friends (15-49 yrs)

4. Participation rate in decisions about daily purchases (15-49 yrs)

5. Contraceptive prevalence (15-49 yrs)

6. Literacy rate, ratio

7. Demand for family planning satisfied (of married women)

8. Pregnant women w/ ≥ 4 antenatal visits

9. Decisions about woman's own healthcare made mainly by her (15-49 yrs)

10. Births attended by skilled health staff (of total births)

11. Participation rate in decisions about what food to cook daily (15-49 yrs)

12. Legal age of marriage, ratio

13. Pregnant women receiving prenatal care

14. Debit card in own name, ratio

15. Male to female births, ratio

16. Smoking prevalence, ratio

17. Account at a financial institution, ratio

18. Life expectancy, ratio

19. Decisions about a woman's visits to family/relatives made mainly by her (15-49 yrs)

20. Maternity leave, days paid

21. Paternity leave, days paid

22. Mothers guaranteed equivalent position after maternity leave

23. Saved money in past year, ratio

24. Prevalence of severe wasting, ratio

25. Access to antiretroviral drugs, ratio

26. Cannot come up with emergency funds, ratio

27. Prevalence of underweight, ratio

28. Unemployment rate, ratio

29. Prevalence of Female Genital Cutting

30. Wage gap (median wage)

31. Long-term unemployment ratio

32. Received loan in past year, ratio

33. Prevalence of stunting, ratio

34. Maternity leave, pct. wages paid

35. Child mortality ratio (1 yr)

36. Proportion that do not own house, ratio

37. Vulnerable employment (of employed), ratio

38. Self employed (of employed), ratio

39. Infant mortality rate, ratio

40. Prevalence of HIV, ratio

41. Under 5 mortality rate, ratio

42. Women subjected to physical/sexual violence in last 12 months (15-49 yrs)

43. Prevalence of obesity, ratio

44. Unmet need for contraception, married women (15-49 yrs)

45. Adolescent fertility rate (15-19 yrs)

46. Maternal mortality rate

47. Fertility rate

48. Decisions about major household purchases made mainly by husband (15-49 yrs)

Indicators in women's rights scale

1. Married women can travel outside their home

2. Protection orders for domestic violence exist

3. Married women can travel outside the country in same way as men

4. Domestic violence legislation protects unmarried partners

5. Protection orders provide for removal of perpetrator from the home

6. Woman's testimony carries the same evidentiary weight in court as a man's

7. Domestic violence legislation covers emotional violence

8. Legislation on domestic violence protects family members

9. Female and male surviving spouses have equal rights to inherit assets

10. Domestic violence legislation covers physical violence

11. Unmarried women can be head of household in same way as men

12. Protection orders prohibit/limit contact with survivor

13. Sons and daughters have equal rights to inherit assets

14. Married couples share legal responsibility for maintaining family expenses

15. Domestic violence legislation protects former spouses

16. Unmarried women can confer citizenship on her children in same way as men

17. Unmarried women can apply for passport in same way as men

18. Married women can confer citizenship on her children in same.way as men

19. Specialized court or procedure exists for domestic violence

20. Married women can choose where to live in same way as men

21. Unmarried women can obtain national ID card in same way as men

22. Married women can get a job/pursue a trade/profession in same way as men

23. Domestic violence legislation exists

24. Married women can confer citizenship to a non-national spouse in same way as men

25. Legislation on sexual harassment in employment exists

26. Civil remedies for sexual harassment in employment exist

27. Married women can be head of household in same way as men

28. Domestic violence legislation covers sexual violence

29. Civil remedies for sexual harassment exist

30. Law provides for the valuation of non-monetary contributions

31. Dismissal of pregnant workers is prohibited

32. Nonpregnant/nonnursing women can work in jobs deemed morally/socially inappropriate in same way as men

33. Legislation on sexual harassment in education exists

34. Married women can sign a contract in same way as a man

35. Nonpregnant/nonnursing women can work in jobs deemed arduous in same way as men

36. Nonpregnant/nonnursing women can do the same jobs as men

37. Nonpregnant/nonnursing women can work the same night hours as men
38. Married women can open bank account in same way as men
39. Legislation explicitly criminalizes marital rape
40. Clear criminal penalties for domestic violence exist
41. Domestic violence legislation covers economic violence
42. Legislation specifically addresses sexual harassment
43. Law mandates nondiscrimination based on gender in hiring
44. Married women can register a business in same way as men
45. Married women can obtain national ID card in same way as men
46. Married men and women have equal ownership rights to property
47. Unmarried men and women have equal ownership rights to property
48. Law mandates equal remuneration for females and males for work of equal value
49. Property rights index
50. Women's access to justice index
51. Unmarried women can travel outside her home in same way as men
52. Criminal penalties for sexual harassment in employment exist
53. Unmarried women can open a bank account in same way as men
54. Unmarried women can register business in same way as men
55. Law prohibits/invalidates child or early marriage
56. Unmarried woman can choose where to live in same way as men
57. Unmarried women can sign a contract in same way as men
58. Penalties exist for authorizing/knowingly entering into child/early marriage
59. Women have equal voting rights to men
60. Legal age of marriage, ratio
61. Criminal penalties for sexual harassment exist
62. Employers required to provide break for nursing mothers
63. Constitutional clause on gender nondiscrimination in the constitution
64. Legislation on sexual harassment in public places exist
65. Married women are required by law to obey their husbands

Robustness checks

Model 1.5 – same as Model 1.4 but restricted to active conflict years

Model 1.6 – battle-related deaths instead of binary intensity measure

	(1.5)	(1.6)
Women's inclusion	0.271*	0.237*
	[0.054,0.489]	[0.002,0.473]
Dyad duration (ln)	0.659***	0.553***
	[0.472,0.846]	[0.358,0.748]
War	0.183	
	[-0.350,0.717]	
Battle-related deaths (ln)		0.170[t]
		[-0.017,0.356]
Ethnic	0.387*	0.357[t]
	[0.056,0.718]	[-0.022,0.736]
Weak rebels	-1.364***	-1.108***
	[-1.956,-0.772]	[-1.724,-0.491]
Active groups	-0.035	0.104
	[-0.253,0.183]	[-0.130,0.337]
GDP per capita (ln)	-0.380**	-0.167
	[-0.628,-0.132]	[-0.468,0.134]
Population (ln)	-0.250***	-0.262**
	[-0.388,-0.112]	[-0.420,-0.104]
Democracy	0.698	0.738
	[-0.735,2.131]	[-0.890,2.365]
Women's security	0.130	0.101
	[-0.132,0.393]	[-0.214,0.416]
Women's rights	-0.103	-0.306
	[-0.564,0.357]	[-0.810,0.199]
Time since last negotiation	-0.816***	-0.713***
	[-1.019,-0.613]	[-0.975,-0.452]
Time since last negotiation^2	0.073***	0.0640**
	[0.042,0.104]	[0.017,0.112]
Time since last negotiation^3	-0.002***	-0.002*
	[-0.003,-0.001]	[-0.004,-0.000]
Constant	5.333***	2.610[t]
	[2.914,7.751]	[-0.296,5.516]
AIC	1105.595	834.82
Area under ROC	0.828	0.820
Wald-chi^2	249.69(14)	256.03(14)
Prob > chi^2	0.000	0.000
Log likelihood	-537.797	-402.410
N	1,204	828

95% confidence intervals in brackets

*t p< 0.1, *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001*

Model 1.7 – DV: Mediation
Model 1.8 – DV: Conflict management (negotiation and mediation)

	(1.7)	(1.8)
Women's inclusion	0.437**	0.395***
	[0.135,0.739]	[0.208,0.582]
Dyad duration (ln)	0.156	0.510***
	[-0.159,0.472]	[0.354,0.667]
Conflict	0.798**	0.035
	[0.256,1.340]	[-0.418,0.488]
War	1.131**	0.432
	[0.282,1.981]	[-0.218,1.083]
Ethnic	0.656*	0.544**
	[0.048,1.264]	[0.220,0.868]
Weak rebels	-1.093**	-1.301**
	[-1.863,-0.322]	[-2.129,-0.474]
Active groups	0.0517	0.086
	[-0.109,0.213]	[-0.036,0.209]
GDP per capita (ln)	-0.031	-0.588***
	[-0.547,0.485]	[-0.833,-0.342]
Population (ln)	-0.207	-0.213***
	[-0.468,0.054]	[-0.335,-0.091]
Democracy	0.104	1.092
	[-2.349,2.557]	[-0.100,2.284]
Women's security	-0.269	0.101
	[-0.803,0.264]	[-0.187,0.390]
Women's rights	0.411	0.278
	[-0.328,1.151]	[-0.154,0.711]
Time since last negotiation		-0.705***
		[-0.838,-0.571]
Time since last negotiation^2		0.059***
		[0.035,0.064]
Time since last negotiation^3		-0.001***
		[-0.001,-0.001]
Mediation previous year	3.952***	2.575***
	[2.934,4.971]	[1.528,3.622]
Constant	-0.749	6.457***
	[-5.030,3.532]	[3.931,8.984]
AIC	842.131	1558.527
Area under ROC	0.832	0.851
Wald-chi^2	136.82(13)	388.28(16)
Prob > chi^2	0.000	0.000
Log likelihood	-407.065	-762.263
N	1,761	1,761

95% confidence intervals in brackets
*t p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001*

Model 1.9 – same as Model 1.4 + controls for region

	(1.9)
Women's inclusion	0.374***
	[0.158,0.589]
Dyad duration (ln)	0.637***
	[0.467,0.806]
Conflict	-0.073
	[-0.553,0.408]
War	0.117
	[-0.498,0.731]
Ethnic	0.241
	[-0.099,0.582]
Weak rebels	-1.218***
	[-1.827,-0.609]
Active groups	0.009
	[-0.211,0.230]
GDP per capita (ln)	-0.431**
	[-0.723,-0.138]
Population (ln)	-0.211**
	[-0.360,-0.061]
Democracy	0.850
	[-0.681,2.382]
Women's security	0.038
	[-0.250,0.327]
Women's rights	-0.081
	[-0.564,0.401]
Time since last negotiation	-0.787***
	[-0.976,-0.597]
Time since last negotiation^2	0.050***
	[0.022,0.079]
Time since last negotiation^3	-0.001*
	[-0.002,-0.000]
Middle East	-1.211**
	[-2.032,-0.390]
Asia	-0.355
	[-1.255,0.546]
Africa	-0.543
	[-1.532,0.447]
Americas	-0.744
	[-1.674,0.186]
Constant	5.863***
	[3.082,8.644]
AIC	1431.831
Area under ROC	0.866
Wald-chi^2	558.41(19)
Prob > chi^2	0.000
Log likelihood	-695.916
N	1,761

95% confidence intervals in brackets
t p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Model 1.10 – fixed effects

	(1.10)
Women's inclusion	0.636**
	[0.216,1.057]
Dyad duration (ln)	1.109***
	[0.749,1.469]
Conflict	0.299
	[-0.208,0.806]
War	0.559
	[-0.151,1.270]
Weak rebels	-1.859*
	[-3.475,-0.243]
Active groups	0.225
	[-0.024,0.474]
GDP per capita (ln)	-1.416***
	[-2.221,-0.610]
Population (ln)	-1.395
	[-3.769,0.980]
Democracy	1.499
	[-0.862,3.859]
Women's security	-0.756
	[-1.729,0.218]
Women's rights	1.090**
	[0.266,1.914]
Time since last negotiation	-0.471***
	[-0.628,-0.313]
Time since last negotiation^2	0.036***
	[0.018,0.053]
Time since last negotiation^3	-0.001*
	[-0.001,-0.000]
AIC	813.73
Wald-chi^2	155.65(14)
Prob > chi^2	0.000
Log likelihood	-392.865
N	1,107

95% confidence intervals in brackets
t p< 0.1, *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001

3. Talking with the shameless? Sexual violence and conflict management in intrastate conflicts

3.1 Abstract

To what extent does sexual violence influence the likelihood of conflict management in intrastate conflicts? Despite a growing body of research that explores conflict-related sexual violence, the literature presents little insight on its effects on conflict resolution. Extending feminist IR theory to intrastate conflicts and applying a gender lens to the power to hurt argument, I argue that when rebel sexual violence is public knowledge the likelihood of conflict management increases because the state perceives it as a threat to its masculinity. I systematically test this argument on all intrastate conflict years from 1990 to 2009 using the Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict (SVAC) and the Civil War Mediation (CWM) dataset. The results provide robust support for the argument. This presents an important refinement of traditional rationalist conflict bargaining theories and opens new avenues for the research and practice of conflict management.

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3.2 Introduction

In 2010 the government of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) agreed to peace talks with a local militia called Mai Mai Sheka after the group reportedly perpetrated mass rapes. In the span of three days the group reportedly raped 387 civilians, but did not kill or loot (Autesserre 2012, 217). Faced with this massive sexual violence the government decided to negotiate with the militia. These negotiations, however, did not settle the conflict and violence continued to plague the country in the following years. Some suggest that the DRC government is not an outlier, but that governments are generally more likely to accept peace talks when rebels perpetrate sexual violence that attracts international attention (Autesserre 2012). Why would any government agree to talks under such circumstances? The example of the DRC and the suggested pattern of other governments agreeing to peace talks when rebels perpetrate sexual violence call for a systematic investigation of the relationship between sexual violence and conflict management. Accordingly, this article explores the question: to what extent does sexual violence influence conflict management?

Sexual violence in conflict is now widely recognized as a threat to international security and an increasing number of studies explore its causes and its variation (Alison 2007; Leiby 2009; Wood 2006b, 2009; Cohen 2013a, 2013b, 2016; Cohen and Nordås 2014, 2015; Nordås and Rustad 2013; Karim and Beardsley 2016). Although sexual violence has often been described as strategic[10] and 'rape as a weapon of war' is a dominant narrative (Crawford 2017), this argument does not withstand scrutiny and there is a robust literature on the diverse reasons behind conflict-related sexual violence.[11] At the same time, we know very little about the effects of sexual violence on conflict processes. Only one recent study starts to shed some light on the consequences of sexual violence in conflict by examining the relationship between sexual violence and conflict outcomes started (Chu and Braithwaite 2018). Chu and Braithwaite argue that conflicts involving sexual violence are more likely to end in negotiate agreements

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[10] For example, in 2012 former foreign secretary of the UK William Hague claimed that "more often than not [rape] is carried out not by invading armies but by one group against another: deliberately to destroy, degrade, humiliate and scar political opponents or entire ethnic and religious groups" (Cohen, 2016: 20).
[11] For a comprehensive critique of the 'strategic argument' see Wood (2015) and Cohen (2016)

because actors perpetrating this type of violence are organizationally weak, less likely to secure military victory, and thus more likely to agree on a deal to salvage anything from the conflict. This illustrates that the effects of sexual violence can be distinct from perpetrators' motivations and thus should be examined without conflating observed outcome with underlying intent. In line with this, I focus on the effect of rebel sexual violence without assuming strategic intent. Besides contributing to the nascent literature on the effects of sexual violence, this study more broadly adds an innovative argument to the body of literature examining the effects of civilian victimization on conflict processes and outcomes (Wood and Kathman 2014; Thomas 2014; Fortna 2015).

In drawing on feminist IR theory and bringing together disparate literatures on sexual violence, gender, and conflict management I argue that reports of rebel sexual violence increase the likelihood of mediation because they emasculate the state. This emasculation has two components to it: first, rebel sexual violence demonstrates the state's failure to fulfill its masculine protection responsibility, and second, when it is reported this failure becomes a public humiliation. This two-fold humiliation presents a conflict cost that outweighs the costs of accepting mediation. Thus rebel sexual violence increases the likelihood of mediation. Applying a gender lens constitutes a crucial refinement of traditional rationalist bargaining theories. In drawing on feminist IR theory and positivist methodology this article contributes to the emerging literature bridging these two fields (Karim and Beardsley 2017).

A mediation process offers benefits such as increased legitimacy to non-state actors, while primarily presenting costs to states. Thus a state is likely to resist the inclusion of an intermediary until the associated costs are outweighed by the expected costs of continued fighting. Insurgents hoping to overcome the inherent power asymmetry of civil war usually welcome third party involvement. I contend that when rebel sexual violence is public knowledge the incumbent government perceives it as particularly costly because it threatens its masculinity by exposing its lack of territorial control and inability to protect its citizens. Sexual violence exposes a state's inability to protect its constituents, which presents a conflict cost that outweighs the costs associated with accepting mediation. Mediation accordingly should be more likely when there are reports of rebels perpetrating sexual violence. On the other hand, the asymmetric relationship

between belligerents in civil war essentially grants the state a veto player function and denies rebels the possibility of initiating a mediation process. This means that if there are reports of state sexual violence and rebels call for mediation in response to it, the decision to enter into mediation rests with the government. Thus I expect that if there are reports of state sexual violence it will not affect the likelihood of mediation.

I begin by discussing what factors contribute to mediation onset in civil wars. Then I examine the gendered dynamics underpinning the power to hurt logic, and argue that reports of sexual violence emasculate the government. I quantitatively test my argument using logistic regression models to examine 118 intrastate conflicts drawn from the Uppsala/PRIO Armed Conflict dataset (Gleditsch et al. 2002). The dataset includes 746 conflict years between 1990 and 2009, of these 222 feature a mediation event. Mediation data are drawn from an updated version of the Civil War Mediation dataset (DeRouen, Bercovitch, and Pospieszna 2011). The Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict (SVAC) dataset is used to capture reports of sexual violence perpetrated by the two opposing sides (Cohen and Nordås 2014). The analysis indicates that conflict years in which rebels are reported to perpetrate sexual violence are more likely to see the onset of mediation, while reports of sexual violence by the state have no significant influence. Following the quantitative analysis I discuss Sierra Leone as a crucial case to test the theory.

3.3 Conflict management - mediation onset

Why do conflict parties start to talk?

Peace talks entail costs and benefits for all parties. Potential costs shared by all disputants are signaling weakness and concerns of alienating key external and/or internal constituents (Kaplow 2016). This applies to both inter- and intrastate conflicts. A key difference between inter- and intrastate conflicts, however, is the concern of bestowing legitimacy upon non-state actors. In interstate disputes this is of no concern as both states are legitimate actors. In civil wars, however, the government is the de facto sole legitimate power supposedly with a monopoly of force. Thus the legitimacy costs of engaging in a dialogue fall solely on the government, which aligns with an asymmetry in disputants' motivation to engage in a dialogue (Zartman 1995). Opening a dialogue recognizes insurgents and

grants them legitimacy, which is difficult to obtain on the battlefield alone. Thus they stand to gain significant benefits by participating in an official peace process, while the government suffers the cost of losing its position of being the sole legitimate power (Greig and Regan 2008; Melin and Svensson 2009).

When an intrastate conflict erupts the government should have a military and economic advantage (Gent 2011). Comparing rebel strength to governments' capabilities shows that in 204 intrastate conflicts only approximately 13% of rebel groups are stronger than the government or at least match the government's capabilities (Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan 2013). This capability asymmetry is reflected in the fact that only 9% of conflict episodes end with a rebel victory (Kreutz 2010). Consequently, insurgents generally have a much stronger incentive to engage in peace talks than the government. This also means that if rebels are stronger and have access to resources, mediation can become less likely (Clayton 2013, 2016). Based on this presumed structural advantage, governments are likely to reject insurgent claims and pursue a military rather than a diplomatic solution. This presumed advantage has the potential to become a disadvantage for the government as opening talks with insurgents can be interpreted by them and others as an admission that the government has lost control over its territory and lacks either the resolve or the capabilities, or both, to win the conflict militarily (Kaplow 2016; Melin and Svensson 2009). In effect it signals weakness. This can hurt the government's reputation with key domestic constituents and international partners as well as weaken its bargaining position versa the insurgents. Consequently, the government will only open peace talks if the potential benefits of resolving the conflict outweigh the associated costs of the process (Melin and Svensson 2009).

Theoretically, engaging in talks with the government can present a cost to insurgents as it might alienate foreign donors, or, more importantly, might cause internal splits weakening the group. Empirically, however, there is no evidence to support this. External support for rebels increases the likelihood of talks and domestic hardliners seem to have no effect (Kaplow 2016). The immense asymmetry in terms of legitimacy and military capability enables rebels to frame talks with the government as a success. Put differently, insurgents are not bound by audience costs the same way the government is because rebels can claim that

their actions have forced the government to the table. Hence rebels generally welcome the opening of talks as for them the benefits greatly outweigh the costs.

Why do civil war parties use mediation?

Mediation is a voluntary form of conflict management in which both sides grant an intermediary control over some feature(s) of the peace process. Mediation highlights both benefits and costs of bilateral dialogue. Rebels receive a significant boost in domestic and international legitimacy through the introduction of a third party, while generally experiencing little to no costs. For the state, however, it illustrates both its inability to control its territory and its inability to withstand rebel pressure (Melin and Svensson 2009). Consequently, rebels might interpret acceptance of mediation as a signal that hard bargaining or continued fighting might lead to further concessions, resulting in increased support for rebels or even encouraging new challengers (Toft 2003; Walter 2006a). Admission of an intermediary implies a loss of decisional autonomy for both conflict parties. However, for the incumbent who stands to lose his exclusive grip on political, economic, and/or territorial control, this presents a far more substantial cost than for the challenger. It harbors the chance that mediation results in a flawed agreement for the state. These costs present strong disincentives for the state to engage in mediation.

Nonetheless mediation also offers benefits to governments. Foremost it presents an effective tool to get out of violent conflict (Zartman 1995; Bercovitch and Gartner 2006; Beardsley et al. 2006; Beardsley 2011). Of course the majority of states intend to defeat rebels, however, when defeating insurgents becomes less likely, mediation frequently presents the most effective way of ending the fighting. Yet, this might not be the state's genuine intention. Governments might accept a mediation offer to re-group, collect information, or strike an unsuspecting adversary (Richmond 1998; Beardsley 2010). As conflict parties weigh expected costs against expected benefits of winning, the likelihood of mediation increases as a conflict becomes costlier (Clayton and Gleditsch 2014). Accordingly, studies show that when governments face a serious threat they are more likely to participate in mediations (Clayton 2013, 2016; Clayton and Gleditsch 2014). Put differently, mediation is more likely when the desire to end violent conflict outweighs the costs of mediation. In civil wars the onset of mediation thus depends

on the government's desire for peace balanced against the costs of admitting a third party. For rebels on the other hand the benefits of mediation almost always outweigh the costs. Put differently, the state essentially holds veto power in deciding the onset of mediation.

3.4 Power to hurt and sexual violence

Power to hurt is power to bargain

Civil war constitutes an extreme, violent interaction between the state and an insurgent group. To understand conflict dynamics it is crucial to analyze these dyadic interactions (Cunningham, Skrede Gleditsch, and Salehyan 2009). Studies of dyadic interactions in conflict frequently draw on the notion of power to hurt as power to bargain (Hultman 2007; Wood 2010; Wood, Kathman, and Gent 2012; Wood and Kathman 2014; Thomas 2014). This argument posits that the costs one disputant can impose on the other can be understood as leverage in the bargaining process. The power to hurt argument implies that rebels do not need to win militarily to achieve their objectives; it can be enough to impose high enough costs to force the incumbent to accept an intermediary. The underpinning idea is that the rebels change the state's cost/benefit analysis of continuing the armed conflict. In applying a gender lens I take it one step further. I argue that not even do rebels do not need to win, it is enough to publicly expose the state's inability to protect its citizens from sexual violence by the rebels. The inherent asymmetry between belligerents in civil war with the incumbent as the de-facto legitimate power entails that the power to hurt is a uni-directional mechanism. Put differently, rebels can employ hurtful tactics to force concessions (i.e. mediation) from the state, but the state cannot do the same to rebels.

Recent research corroborates the power to hurt argument by illustrating that relatively stronger rebels presenting a serious challenge to the government are more likely to force it to engage in mediations (Clayton 2013, 2016; Clayton and Gleditsch 2014). Yet, studies also show that even weak rebels can force the government to the negotiating table by targeting civilians and employing terrorist tactics (Thomas 2014; Wood and Kathman 2014). This is successful because targeting civilians improves insurgents' bargaining position by signaling to the incumbent information about resolve and future conflict costs (Wood and Kathman 2014, 686). Yet, not all states are equally cost sensitive, a government's

level of accountability influences to what extent it is susceptible to hurtful tactics (Thomas 2014). Put differently, the more democratic a state is, the more likely the targeting of civilians leads to talks. What has not been addressed is the question if this is also true for sexual violence. One might ask how hurtful is sexual violence to a government?

Power to hurt through a gender lens

Traditional power to hurt reasoning is gender blind and neglects the bodily experiences of people in war, particularly women who are persistently marginalized by the strategic lingo despite their central role in strategic planning (Sylvester 2013, 81). Thus extending feminist international relations theory to civil conflicts offers unique insights on how and why reports of rebels targeting civilians and particularly women are perceived as hurtful to the state. In fact the gendered nature of sexual violence requires feminist IR theory, which is also crucial in illuminating the apparent contradiction of the state perceiving reports of rebel sexual violence as hurtful while perpetrating it itself.

Applying a gender lens to intrastate conflict draws on well-established feminist IR theory that argues that states are gendered (Peterson 1992; Tickner 1992, 2001; Sjoberg 2013). Formal institutions such as states are gendered when they 'are symbolically and ideologically described and conceived in terms of a discourse that draws on masculinities and femininities' (Britton 2000, 420). States fit this pattern as they take on, apply, and propagate masculine behavior and characteristics in defending themselves, their citizens, territory, and identity (Sjoberg 2013). Importantly, a state's masculinity is not uniform, but may take different forms such as 'warrior', 'protector', or 'emancipator' depending on the context (Sjoberg 2013; Karim and Beardsley 2017).

Fundamental to the state's masculinity is the gendered protection norm based on the separation of combatants and civilians along gendered lines (Carpenter 2003, 2005; Sjoberg 2013; Karim and Beardsley 2017). Men are seen as natural protectors that ought to protect supposedly innocent civilians, i.e. women and children who are *beautiful souls* (Elshtain 1987). In line with this states frequently (consciously or not) perceive women as both biological and cultural reproducers rendering women their center of gravity (Peterson 1999). Consequently, states prioritize the protection of women and children (Carpenter

2003, 2005) and their protection is fundamental to a state's masculine identity. Accordingly 'civilian victimization can be read as a proxy for "women," not *as women per se* but in their roles as the (gendered feminine) symbolic center' (Sjoberg 2013, 201 emphasis in the original). Targeting civilians in conflict to hurt the other side as encapsulated by the power to hurt argument thus is fundamentally gendered.

At the same time, however, this does not imply that all victims of civilian victimization have to be female or that the perpetrating agents intend to kill only women (Sjoberg 2013, 202). Equally, or even more important than the victim and the victim's sex, is the actor who fails to protect the victim. The intentional targeting of civilians (read women) is primarily employed to symbolically hurt the presumed protector. A gendered understanding of the power to hurt argument thus posits that victimizing civilians targets the masculinity of one's opponent. Put differently, a failure to protect its women emasculates the state. As Laura Sjoberg puts it, 'intentional civilian victimization is, consciously or not, an attack on the masculinity (and therefore will to fight) of the enemy, carried out by the destruction of the feminine' (2013, 202).

Sexual violence takes on a particular role in embodying the power to hurt mechanism for two reasons: (1) Unlike the killing of civilians, which can be both intentional and unintentional, sexual violence is always committed intentionally, it cannot happen by accident (Mitchell 2004, 50; Anderson 2010, 247), (2) sexual violence is inherently gendered as it draws on the gendered protection norm that renders women the fundamental center of gravity (Carpenter 2003, 2005; Sjoberg 2013; Karim and Beardsley 2017). The silencing of men as victims and survivors of sexual violence contributes to this gendered framing. Sexual violence thus establishes both the literal and symbolic domination and subordination of the other in disarming and feminizing both the direct victim and the state (Eriksson Baaz and Stern 2009). Benard describes how Serbian fighters raped women and children in Bosnia to shame and demoralize Bosnians by 'demonstrating them to be incapable of fulfilling their responsibility to protect vulnerable group members' (1994, 40). To a state this emasculation presents a substantial conflict cost as it fundamentally questions its ability to protect. I contend that sexual violence is so hurtful because it invokes the gendered protection norm to a greater extent than other forms of violence and thereby challenges a core aspect of a state's

masculinity. Whereas violence and death is generally expected in war, sexual violence against women and children is not, which makes it so effective in emasculating governments.

This emasculation of the state is exacerbated when the state's failure to protect its women becomes public knowledge. This sends a powerful signal because it exposes the state's lack of territorial control and inability to protect civilians. Although governments (read elites) might not care about their people being victimized, they do care about having control, their reputation, and projecting strength (Walter 2006b). [12] Rebel sexual violence fundamentally questions the state's power. Thus it is not a concern for citizens that drives government reaction, but it is the perception that the state is 'outmanned' that hurts its pride. This connects to the fundamental self-conception of states that '[lay] claim to the monopoly of legitimate physical violence within a particular territory' (Weber 2004, 33). A feminist lens highlights that power, strength, and control are inherently tied to the gendered protection norm and the masculinity of the state, as masculinity is what defends the nation (Sjoberg 2013, 199; Karim and Beardsley 2017). Constituents frequently select for masculine leadership because they want and expect protection, strength, and power and they challenge leaders if they fail to meet these expectations (Sjoberg 2013, 162). This is reflected in the fact that the executive branch and particularly the defense ministries remain overwhelmingly male-dominated (Barnes and O'Brien 2018). Thus reports of sexual violence are deeply problematic for the state as they amplify its emasculation. Reports of rebel sexual violence expose the state as weak and challenge its legitimacy as protector in demonstrating its 'incapacity to fulfill the fundamental masculine function of protection' (Sjoberg 2013, 239). Thus it is a two-step process that emasculates the state: (1) the failure to protect its women, (2) the public knowledge of its failure.

The conflict in the Côte d'Ivoire that erupted in 2002 illustrates important aspects of this argument including that military and civilian leadership might differ

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[12] I acknowledge that it may matter which civilians are targeted. Sexual violence against ethnic minority civilians may not matter to the incumbent (if he is himself not of the same ethnicity). That is, the government's masculinity is not necessarily undermined by public knowledge of a failure to protect *those* civilians. I contend, however, that the state's masculinity is bound to its ability to maintain territorial integrity, its protective role, and sole control over the means of violence. Empirically, the data also do not permit such a fine-grained analysis.

in their responses to sexual violence. On 19 September, the rebellion led by the Mouvement Patriotique de Côte d'Ivoire (MPCI) assaulted three major cities Bouaké, Korhogo, and the capital Abidjan. While the government quashed the rebellion in Abidjan the same day, the rebels successfully captured Bouaké and Korhogo. In the course of this, MCPI fighters perpetrated rapes and abducted women into sexual slavery (Amnesty International 2007). The Defense Minister initially ruled out negotiations, which illustrates that militaries' reaction to such public humiliations might be a desire to fight even harder and to defeat the rebels – to prove their strength and virility – rather than engage in talks, i.e. backing down, which could be seen as being weak, as a further feminization. However, Prime Minister N'Guessan offered talks pledging to protect his citizens: "Ivory Coast has not forgotten them, Ivory Coast has not abandoned them" (Rousseau 2002). On 14 October, President Gbagbo condemned rape in the rebel-held territory calling for the international community to send observer missions to the rebel zones and offering full cooperation and the opening of a dialogue (Peytermann 2002). The talks mediated by the foreign ministers from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) contact group officially began on 17 October in Lomé, Togo (McCathie 2002).

A similar gendered dynamic is at play when governments do not want to negotiate with terrorists for fears of appearing weak (Abrahms 2006; Fortna 2015). So why would emasculation prompt talks? I contend that there are multiple factors shaping this decision. Firstly, the inherently gendered nature of sexual violence triggers the gendered protection norm, which is fundamental to the masculine state identity, to a greater extent than for example one-sided violence because sexual violence invokes the image of women and children in need of protection (Carpenter 2003, 2005). As a result their protection, i.e. cessation of hostilities and thereby an end of the state's ongoing emasculation, becomes more important than retaliating. Secondly, rebel sexual violence does not occur in a vacuum, but in the context of an already costly conflict. Thus reports of sexual violence present an additional conflict cost, rather than the only conflict cost. Thirdly, the ongoing conflict itself illustrates that the state at this point has been unable to win militarily. Moreover as descriptive data show states are actually more likely to perpetrate sexual violence than rebels in a given conflict year (see Table VI). Put differently, states often try and fail to demonstrate strength and

virility through fighting. For example, in the Nepalese civil war that erupted in 1996, a succession of governments did not attempt peace talks with the Maoist rebels until 2001, the first year the Maoists were reported to perpetrate sexual violence. In the three years leading up to the 2006 Comprehensive Peace Agreement that ended the armed conflict, the Maoists were reported to have perpetrated sexual violence (Lanz and von Burg 2017). Fourthly, the feminine response of accepting talks is short-lived while the conflict and sexual violence otherwise could drag on for months or years. Thus the current and potential future costs of a prolonged emasculation outweigh the limited costs of a feminine response in accepting talks. Although the government will have to live with the legacy of rebel sexual violence, a successful mediation process would allow the government to shape the narrative to its favor. Put differently, the government could portray itself as the one who brought peace, stability, and possibly even reconciliation, which would mitigate the legacy of violence. Accordingly, my first hypothesis is:

Hypothesis 1: Mediation is more likely when there are reports of rebel sexual violence.

Although states and rebels are equally likely to perceive it as hurtful when it is known that the other side victimizes their constituents, the asymmetry between the two sides leads to different effects on conflict management. Mediation requires the consent of both conflict sides, yet the asymmetry in terms of political legitimacy affords the government veto power regarding the onset of mediation, meaning if it is not willing to talk, there will be no talks. Rebels might call for mediation when the government perpetrates sexual violence against civilians that expect protection from rebels, but they do not have the political legitimacy or authority to actually initiate a mediation process without the government's consent. The power to accept an external mediation offer lies in the hands of the government. Related to the state's role as the sole legitimate political power is not only the implicit belief that it needs to fulfill a protective function, but importantly also the belief that it has a monopoly of force and only it is entitled to use violence. Sexual violence by the state thus ought to be seen in the context of social and structural power relations (Meger 2016). This also means that sexual violence by

the state itself can be in accordance with the state's understanding of existing power relations and in fact expresses them. Violence is the state's prerogative and its use is contingent on the state's approval (Weber 2004, 33). Put differently, part of the state's masculinity is a sense of entitlement to do as it pleases: to rape, loot, and pillage. Accordingly, I do not expect that reports of state sexual violence increase the likelihood of mediation.

Hypothesis 2: Reports of state sexual violence do not affect the likelihood of mediation.

Masculinity is not uniform and some governments adhere to more militarized masculinities than others. Hence not every government will respond to a perceived emasculation by engaging in mediation to end the conflict. A highly masculinized state such as for example a military regime would be more likely to see violence as the appropriate response and seek retaliation, especially as the conflict became more gendered and violent. The reaction of the Côte d'Ivoire Defence Minister ruling out talks with the rebels highlights the diverging effects that sexual violence might have on different types of leadership. Accordingly, I expect mediation to be less likely when rebels are reported to perpetrate sexual violence in conflicts against military regimes.

Hypothesis 3: Mediation is less likely when rebels are reported to perpetrate sexual violence in conflicts against military regimes.

3.5 Methodology

To test these hypotheses I draw on a mixed method approach using both systematic analysis and a crucial case study of Sierra Leone. For the systematic analysis I use the Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict (SVAC) dataset (Cohen and Nordås 2014), and the Civil War Mediation (CWM) dataset (DeRouen, Bercovitch, and Pospieszna 2011). Originally the unit of analysis of the CWM is conflict episode, whereas the SVAC dataset contains data on all conflict years from 1989 to 2009. To combine these datasets with their different units of analysis I manipulate both datasets. I split each conflict episode in the CWM into conflict years and coded the missing years (2005-2009) and I aggregate the SVAC data to conflict side per

year, meaning that the incumbent government, pro-government militias, and supporting states comprise side A, 'the state', and that the rebel group(s) and supporting states comprise side B, 'the rebels'.

After matching the datasets the unit of analysis is conflict year. I limit the analysis to the post-Cold War period from 1990 to 2009, which includes 746 observations. Besides compatibility, a further benefit of using conflict years rather than conflict episodes is that it enables me to account for the variation in sexual violence over the course of a conflict and its effect on the likelihood of mediation onset. Mediation onset, the dependent variable, is binary. Therefore I use logistic regression models to estimate the likelihood of a mediation attempt in a conflict year. To account for a potential lack of independence of observations from the same country I cluster the standard errors by country.

Dependent variable

I adopt the definition proposed by the CWM of mediation as 'a process of conflict management where disputants seek the assistance of, or accept an offer of help from, an individual, group, or state, or organization to settle their conflict or resolve their differences without resorting to physical force or invoking the authority of law' (Bercovitch, Anagnoson, and Wille 1991, 8). The dependent variable is a dichotomous variable that captures if a mediation process started in a conflict year (0 = no mediation 1 = mediation). Adhering to common practice mediation is only coded 1 for the year of the onset and as missing for subsequent calendar years if the process continues (Clayton 2013). This prevents counting one process multiple times and the analysis is confined to the onset of mediation. Of the 746 conflict years included, 222 featured mediation. I do not include a measurement if the mediation process was concluded. Generally, mediation efficacy is difficult to define relying only on a binary measure of whether a settlement is reached or not (DeRouen, Bercovitch, and Pospieszna 2011).

Table V. Mediation onset

Mediation	Frequency	Percentage
0	524	70.24
1	222	29.76
Total	746	100

Independent variables

Sexual violence can take any of seven distinct forms (rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, forced sterilization/abortion, sexual mutilation, and sexual torture) and is coded for every actor in a conflict year. The SVAC dataset includes three prevalence scores based on the three sources, State Department reports (SD), Amnesty International reports (AI), and Human Rights Watch reports (HRW) for each observation. For my analysis I aggregate these three prevalence scores to one score that takes on the value of 1 if there was any sexual violence reported for any of the three sources (prevalence scores 1, 2, and 3) and 0 if there was none in Model 2.1 and Model 2.2. Combining these three measures allows me to establish that sexual violence by either side is in fact public knowledge, while guarding against potential uncertainty in the reported prevalence. It is difficult to reliably identify the prevalence of sexual violence in conflicts. Hence researchers caution against using SD, AI, and HRW reports for quantitative analysis (Davies and True 2015, 2017). The binary variable therefore indicates if the failure to protect was public knowledge, rather than simply if either side failed to protect its constituents. For Model 2.2 I nonetheless disaggregate the measure to distinguish between reports of some sexual violence and reports of widespread or systematic sexual violence. This analysis allows me to examine if the hypothesized relationship holds across reported levels of sexual violence.

Data are available for 716 out of 746 conflict years. There is a pronounced asymmetry between reported sexual violence by states and rebels (Table VI). States are reported to use at least some sexual violence in 318 (44.5%) out of 716 conflict years. Rebels on the other hand are reported to use sexual violence in less than 20% of all included conflict years, 133 out of 716.

Table VI. Reports of sexual violence by states and rebels (% in parentheses)

		States		
		0	1	Total
Rebels	0	362 (50.56)	221 (30.87)	583 (81.42)
	1	36 (5.03)	97 (13.55)	133 (18.58)
	Total	398 (55.59)	318 (44.41)	716 (100)

For H3, to determine if a government is a military regime, I draw on autocratic regime data (Geddes, Wright, and Frantz 2014). This enables me to distinguish between four different types of autocratic regimes: party regime, monarchy, personalist regime, and military regime. My sample includes 113 conflict years in 12 different military regimes ranging from Algeria to Myanmar. To examine this hypothesis I construct an interaction term multiplying *rebel sexual violence* with *military regime*. When testing for the effect I thus include both component variables as well as the interaction term *Rebel sexual violence x Military Regime* as is standard practice.

Controls

Sexual violence in conflict now frequently attracts international attention. States and advocacy groups might bring to bear their normative and material influence to force the government into mediated talks. One potential avenue of influence is foreign aid (Carey, Colaresi, and Mitchell 2015). Democratic donor countries might attempt to hold receiving countries accountable for human rights abuses, while autocratic regimes are less likely to care about human rights abuses (Carey, Colaresi, and Mitchell 2015). The onset of mediation might not be driven by the government's own desire to end the conflict (and thereby sexual violence), but by the extent of the government's sensitivity to democratic donors. As reports of sexual violence are the crucial factor for donor states rather than the identity of the perpetrator, this implies that substantial foreign aid from democratic donors might prompt mediation if there are reports of sexual violence perpetrated regardless of the perpetrator's identity. Hence I control for the sensitivity to foreign democratic aid. To assess this I use Carey, Colaresi & Mitchell's measure for

democratic aid dependency: 'the natural log of the sum total of aid received as a proportion of the recipient's gross domestic product' (2015, 858).

I also control for factors that have been shown to influence the onset of mediation. Conflict duration presents one way of conceptualizing costs of fighting and has been linked to the onset of mediation (Filson and Werner 2007; Greig 2001). Accordingly, I include duration measured in years and duration squared to account for potential effects of conflicts' longevity on the likelihood of mediation. Besides conflict duration, studies show that conflict intensity can shape conflict parties' choice of accepting mediation (Melin and Svensson 2009). Hence, I include the UCDP measure for intensity (0 = conflict years resulting in 25-999 battle-related deaths; 1 = at least 1,000 casualties).

Parallel conflicts can influence the likelihood of mediation both positively and negatively. Multiple conflicts demand the state to divide its attention and resources, which should improve the rebels' relative position and increase the likelihood of mediation. Or, multiple conflicts might enlarge the recognition costs connected to accepting mediation, which should reduce the likelihood of mediation. To account for both options I include a binary variable that indicates whether there are parallel conflicts in a country conflict year (0 = no parallel conflict; 1 = parallel conflicts).

Civil conflicts that draw in neighboring countries threaten to destabilize regional security and present a particular concern to the international community. As a result internationalization of conflict frequently leads to attempts to contain or manage the conflict through mediated talks. Accordingly, I account for the type of conflict (0 = civil war; 1 = internationalized civil war).

Similarly, if there is a conflict in a neighboring country the international community might place greater emphasis on conflict management to stop a further destabilization of the region. Hence I include Carey, Colaresi and Mitchell's (2015) dichotomous variable (0 = no conflict in neighboring countries; 1 = conflict in at least one neighboring country) to account for the effect of a conflict in a neighboring country on the likelihood of mediation.

Studies show that when governments face strong rebels capable of challenging core government interests mediation becomes more likely (Clayton 2013, 2016; Clayton and Gleditsch 2014). To control for this I use a measure of relative rebel strength from the Non-State Actor Database (Cunningham, Gleditsch,

and Salehyan 2013). I convert the five-point scale to a binary measure that estimates a rebel group's strength in relation to the government (0 weaker than the government, 1 = at parity with or stronger than the government).

To account for the possibility that mediation onset is forced through civilian victimization via lethal force rather than sexual violence I include a control for non-combatant deaths. With rebel and state one-sided violence respectively, I measure the impact of lethal violence against civilians on the likelihood of mediation using the natural logarithm of number of civilian deaths based on the UCDP One-sided Violence dataset 1.4-2016 (Eck and Hultman 2007).

As democracies tend to be more peaceful than other forms of government I use the Polity IV data to include a democracy dummy (0 for a PolityIV score < 6; 1 for a Polity IV score ≥ 6) to control for the possibility that whether a state is a democracy influences the chances of mediation. Lastly, research indicates that high economic development fosters peace by helping reduce resource scarcity and improving institutional stability (Doyle and Sambanis 2000). Hence I include the natural logarithms of GDP per capita and population size as controls.

3.6 Results

The logistic regression model results are reported in Table VII (parameters shown are logistic regression coefficients). The results offer support for all three hypotheses. All other things being equal, mediation is more likely when rebels are reported to perpetrate sexual violence compared to when there are no reports of rebel sexual violence; government sexual violence shows no significant association with mediation onset; and mediation is less likely when rebels are reported perpetrating sexual violence against a military regime.

Amongst the control variables relative rebel strength has a significant impact on the chances of mediation. In line with my theoretical expectations and previous studies rebel strength is a significant predictor for mediation onset, i.e. when rebels are at parity with or stronger than the government, mediation is more likely (Clayton 2013, 2016). One-sided violence, regardless of which side is perpetrating it, does not show a significant association with mediation onset. This supports the notion that rebel sexual violence is particularly hurtful and thus has a unique effect on a government's inclination of accepting mediation.

I also control for democracy, population size, GDP per capita, and sensitivity to international pressure via democratic foreign aid. The natural logarithm of the population size shows a negative association with the onset of mediation, meaning the bigger a country's population the less likely mediation. Of the country-based control variables only democratic aid has a positive and significant effect on the likelihood of conflict management. This offers support to the notion that international pressure increases the likelihood of mediation. To further examine the relationship between sexual violence and international pressure I run interaction analyses. The interaction terms are all insignificant indicating that the effect of foreign aid on mediation onset is not connected to sexual violence and that the influence of international pressure and the influence of rebel sexual violence on mediation onset are independent of each other (see Appendix B for tables).

In Model 2.2 I disaggregate the measures of sexual violence to examine if the effect persists across reported levels of sexual violence. In this model I distinguish between reports of some sexual violence and reports of widespread/systematic sexual violence by the rebels or the government. The results show that the effect indeed holds for both reported levels of sexual violence. This also indicates that the results are neither driven by the majority of cases (83) in which rebels are reported to perpetrate some sexual violence nor the minority of cases (50) in which rebels are reported to perpetrate widespread or systematic sexual violence. Similarly, reports of government sexual violence remain insignificant regardless of the reported scale.

Examining *H3* Model 2.3 shows that rebel sexual violence generally has the expected positive, statistically significant relationship with mediation onset. Whereas military regimes show no statistically significant relationship with mediation onset, i.e. they are not significantly less or more likely than other governments to engage in mediation. Importantly, however, the interaction term *Rebel sexual violence x Military regime* shows a negative, statistically significant association with mediation onset. This offers supports for *H3* that mediation is less likely when rebels perpetrate sexual violence in conflicts against military regimes.

Table VII. Logistic regression models 2.1 - 2.3 (DV = mediation onset)

	(2.1)	(2.2)	(2.3)
Rebel SV	0.754**		1.031***
	[0.200,1.308]		[0.441,1.622]
Gov't SV	0.130		0.151
	[-0.393,0.654]		[-0.383,0.685]
Some rebel SV		0.706*	
		[0.135,1.276]	
Widespread rebel SV		0.908*	
		[0.131,1.685]	
Some gov't SV		0.139	
		[-0.379,0.657]	
Widespread gov't SV		0.068	
		[-0.781,0.916]	
Military regime			0.355
			[-1.008,1.718]
Rebel SV x Military regime			-3.586*
			[-6.355,-0.817]
Duration	0.058	0.058	0.052
	[-0.059,0.176]	[-0.061,0.177]	[-0.064,0.168]
Duration^2	-0.001	-0.001	-0.001
	[-0.005,0.002]	[-0.005,0.002]	[-0.005,0.002]
Intensity	-0.100	-0.095	-0.066
	[-0.753,0.553]	[-0.748,0.558]	[-0.696,0.565]
Parallel conflict	0.510	0.510	0.477
	[-0.306,1.326]	[-0.310,1.331]	[-0.366,1.320]
Type of conflict	0.530	0.493	0.316
	[-0.336,1.397]	[-0.407,1.394]	[-0.473,1.104]
Neighbor civil war	-0.152	-0.148	-0.269
	[-0.835,0.532]	[-0.836,0.541]	[-0.957,0.419]
Rebel strength	1.506**	1.511**	1.465**
	[0.376,2.635]	[0.392,2.631]	[0.385,2.545]
Rebel one-sided violence	0.001	-0.003	-0.009
	[-0.113,0.115]	[-0.120,0.113]	[-0.118,0.100]
Gov't one-sided violence	0.030	0.035	0.035
	[-0.088,0.149]	[-0.0784,0.149]	[-0.081,0.151]
Democracy	0.645	0.658	0.839*
	[-0.208,1.497]	[-0.200,1.516]	[0.019,1.659]
Democratic aid	0.175*	0.175*	0.134^t
	[0.020,0.331]	[0.0208,0.330]	[-0.008,0.276]
Autocratic aid	-0.044	-0.044	-0.051
	[-0.134,0.046]	[-0.134,0.047]	[-0.143,0.040]
GDP per capita (ln)	0.332	0.336	0.155
	[-0.132,0.795]	[-0.134,0.806]	[-0.324,0.633]
Population (ln)	-0.628***	-0.625***	-0.666***
	[-0.970,-0.286]	[-0.962,-0.288]	[-1.008,-0.324]
Constant	7.975**	7.922**	8.811***
	[2.822,13.13]	[2.859,12.99]	[3.675,13.95]
AIC	620.378	624.121	600.321
Area under ROC	0.759	0.759	0.778
Wald-chi^2	75.48(16)	75.51(18)	85.16(18)
Prob > chi^2	0.000	0.000	0.000
Log likelihood	-293.189	-293.060	-281.160
N	564	564	554

95% confidence intervals in brackets
*p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001

Logistic regression coefficients in raw form are difficult to interpret. They only provide substantial information on the direction and significance of the relationship, which in line with my argument is positive and significant, i.e. reports of sexual violence by rebels increase the likelihood of mediation. To provide further insight I present quantities of interest in the form of first differences as substantive effects based on Model 2.1 (Figure 2). The first difference plot shows changes in the predicted probability for mediation as the predictors move from minimum to maximum, while holding all else equal. In Model 2.1 rebel sexual violence is a dichotomous variable, i.e. it shows the change in the predicted likelihood between no reports of rebels perpetrating sexual violence and reports of rebels perpetrating sexual violence. The likelihood of mediation increases by 13% when rebels are reported to perpetrate sexual violence. The results strongly support the argument that public knowledge of the state's inability to protect its citizens from sexual violence by rebels increases the likelihood of mediation as the government seeks a way out of the hurtful conflict. In line with this, the plot also shows the substantive effect that rebel strength has. Conflict years in which rebels are at least at parity with the government are 30% more likely to see the onset of mediation. Democratic aid also has a substantive effect; a change from the lowest amount of foreign aid from a democratic country to the highest amount increases the likelihood of mediation by 22%.

Figure 2. First difference plot for change in likelihood of mediation onset – Model 2.1 (95% confidence intervals)

	First difference [95% CI]
Rebel SV*	0.13 [0.02, 0.26]
Gov't SV*	0.02 [-0.05, 0.11]
Duration	0.47 [-0.27, 0.96]
Duration squared	-0.04 [-0.32, 0.80]
Intensity*	-0.01 [-0.09, 0.09]
Parallel conflict*	0.08 [-0.04, 0.20]
Type of conflict*	0.09 [-0.04, 0.27]
Neighbor civil war*	-0.02 [-0.12, 0.07]
Rebel strength*	0.30 [0.07, 0.55]
Rebel OSV	0.01 [-0.15, 0.19]
Gov't OSV	0.08 [-0.10, 0.40]
Democracy*	0.11 [-0.02, 0.26]
Democratic aid	0.22 [0.05, 0.43]
Autocratic aid	-0.05 [-0.18, 0.09]
Population (ln)	-0.59 [-0.80, -0.31]
GPD per capita (ln)	0.24 [-0.09, 0.62]

User set first differences change as: min max.
Variables with a * are discrete - FD is a change from 0 to 1.

To fully understand the substantive effects of the interaction between rebel sexual violence and military regimes I also provide the first difference plot for Model 2.3 (Figure 3). As indicated in Table VII reports of rebel sexual violence in general maintain a positive and statistically significant relationship with mediation onset. However, when rebels are reported to perpetrate sexual violence in a conflict against a military regime it shows a statistically significant negative association with mediation onset. In such a case the likelihood of mediation onset is 14% less likely. Rebel strength and democratic aid show the same pattern of substantively increasing the likelihood of mediation. Figure 3 also shows that democratic countries are more likely to engage in mediations, further underscoring the importance of regime type.

Figure 3. First difference plot for change in likelihood of mediation onset – Model 2.3 (95% confidence intervals)
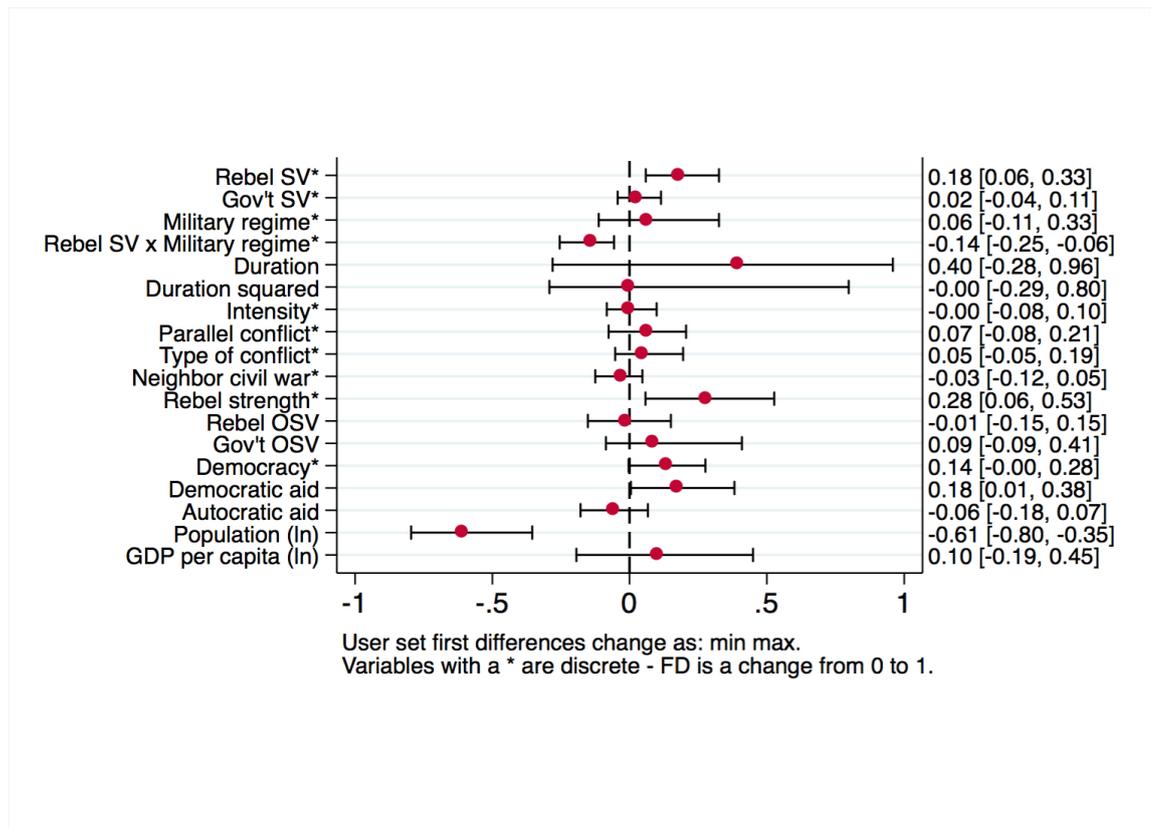
Robustness checks

To ensure the robustness of my findings, I run the principal models with different specifications and controls (see Appendix B for all tables). The introduction of control variables could insert a bias (Clarke 2005), therefore I run first a model limited to the independent variables rebel sexual violence and state sexual violence. This presents the same pattern as the principal models, positive and significant coefficient for reports of rebel sexual violence ($p < 0.001$) and an insignificant coefficient for reports of state sexual violence.

Theoretically, it is possible that when a government accepts mediation, thereby appearing weak, it reduces its ability to deter rebels from perpetrating sexual violence. I address this potential endogeneity by running models with lagged independent variables. The analysis shows the same pattern, positive and statistically significant coefficient for reports of rebel sexual violence ($p < 0.05$) and an insignificant coefficient for reports of government sexual violence.

To control for further endogenous effects of mediation, i.e. mediation while not succeeding in ending the conflict prompting a new mediation in the following

year, I include a dichotomous variable indicating whether there was mediation in the previous year (0 = no mediation in previous year, 1 = mediation in previous year). I run models using the same specifications as in Model 2.1 and Model 2.2. As expected mediation in the previous year is a significant predictor of mediation onset ($p < 0.001$), the binary measure of reports of rebel sexual violence is significant at the 0.1-level ($p = 0.089$). The analysis of the disaggregated measure of rebel sexual violence shows that if mediation occurred in the previous year, a renewed mediation onset is more likely when there are reports of widespread rebel sexual violence ($p < 0.05$), but not for lower levels of reported sexual violence. This is in line with the costly nature of mediation and the power to hurt argument. Once mediation has failed in the previous year, it takes a bigger cost, i.e. reports of widespread sexual violence, for the state to agree to mediation again.

The descriptive analysis shows rebel sexual violence is reported in less than 20% of all conflict years under investigation. This implies the possibility that a small number of conflicts in which rebels are reported to perpetrate sexual violence might bias the results. Thus I run the models after excluding the five conflicts with the highest number of years featuring reports of sexual violence.[13] The main results remain robust ($p < 0.01$).

Military interventions can substantially alter the balance of power and conflict costs. This can influence the type and level of violence, for example, biased interventions are associated with increasing levels of sexual violence (Johansson and Sarwari 2017) as well as the duration and outcome (Linebarger and Enterline 2016). Hence I run a robustness check controlling for biased interventions using data from Johansson and Sarwari (2017). Interventions do not show a statistically significant relationship with mediation onset and the association between rebel sexual violence and mediation remains unchanged.

Previous work on civilian victimization shows that terrorist attacks increase the likelihood of peace talks (Thomas 2014). To further examine this logic I replace rebel one-sided violence with measures of terrorist attacks in civil wars (Polo and Gleditsch 2016). Terrorist attacks do not show a statistically significant relationship with the onset of mediation. However, results for rebel sexual violence remain virtually unchanged. This offers further support to the argument that rebel

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[13] The five excluded conflicts exhibiting the highest number of years featuring reports of rebel sexual violence are: Burundi, Sudan, Uganda, India's Kashmir conflict, and Sierra Leone.

sexual violence is uniquely costly and thereby facilitates the onset of mediation compared to other forms of civilian violence that could be hurtful to the state.

In line with previous work (Thomas 2014), the main results show that the type of government matters for the onset of talks. To ensure that this is not simply a matter of autocratic governments being less cost sensitive and that military regimes are different to other autocratic regime types, I also run models interacting rebel sexual violence with *democracy* and replace *military regime* with *personalist regime*. The democracy interaction term is insignificant suggesting that democratic accountability does not influence if reports of rebel sexual violence lead to mediation. In a personalist regime the dictator's reputation is directly bound to his/her ability to offer protection and guarantee safety, meaning public reports of rebel sexual violence are personal humiliations. As a result I expect a personalist regime to be more susceptible to the emasculation effect of reported rebel sexual violence. The interaction term is positive and statistically significant at the 0.1-level (p = 0.08), suggesting that mediation is more likely when rebels are reported to perpetrate sexual violence in conflicts against personalist regimes. Taken together these results strongly support the emasculation argument.

3.7 Evidence from the Sierra Leone civil war (1991-2002)

The civil war in Sierra Leone is a crucial case for the proposed theory because the rebels' widespread perpetration of rape makes it the most likely case to observe the causal link between sexual violence and mediation onset. The evidence illustrates that the civilian government explicitly drew on the gendered notion of protecting vulnerable groups to justify its decision to hold peace talks with rebels, although they had brutalized civilians, unlike the temporary military regime, which hired a mercenary company to fight the rebels. A close examination of the temporal variation in sexual violence also helps address potential problems of reverse causality in the statistical analysis. The case study relies on data from a multitude of sources, including speeches by the President of Sierra Leone, data of violations reported by the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Gohdes and Ball 2010), memoires, international a organization and NGO reports.

Summary of the war
The civil war in Sierra Leone erupted in 1991 when the Revolutionary United

Front (RUF) supported by Liberian rebel-leader Charles Taylor attacked areas around the eastern border with the goal of overthrowing the one-party state and holding multiparty elections. In 1992 disaffected soldiers staged a coup that overthrew the government and installed the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) led by Captain Valentine Strasser with the primary goal of stopping the rebels. The military regime of the NPRC failed to stop the rebels and in the mid-1990s the RUF started controlling diamond-rich regions as they closed in on the capital Freetown. In response the NPRC hired the mercenary company Executive Outcomes to fight the RUF. In 1995, the Sierra Leone Women's Movement for Peace emerged as a crucial civil society actor that helped create the conditions for democratic elections (Kaldor and Vincent 2006). In 1996, relying on Executive Outcomes the NPRC established enough stability to hold elections that elected a civilian government, which signed an ECOWAS-mediated peace agreement in Abidjan in November 1996. In 1997, however, the side-lined military staged another coup exiling President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah to establish the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) and inviting the RUF to join them under the leadership of Johnny Paul Koroma. The same year an ECOMOG peacekeeping mission liberated Freetown and re-established President Kabbah's civilian government. In January 1999, still controlling large portions of the country the RUF launched what is now remembered as the 6 January invasion. The Civil Defence Forces and ECOMOG troops ultimately repelled the assault, but the two-week siege resulted in the highest numbers of reported rapes of the conflict and thousands of deaths. In July 1999, the government and the RUF signed a peace agreement mediated by ECOWAS leaders in Lomé, Togo. Despite continued instability over the next two years, this proved to be a fundamental step towards the official end of the war in 2002.

Wartime sexual violence and mediation

Analysis of data obtained from the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission demonstrates that while lethal and sexual violence seem to be correlated, the highest number of killings was reported in the first year of the war 1991, and the peak in reported rapes in 1999 (Figure 4).[14] This difference of

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[14] Data obtained from Anita Gohdes and Patrick Ball (2010) Benetech/ABA-CEELI/Human Rights Data Analysis Group database of violations reported by the

incident numbers suggests that the effects of lethal and sexual violence might also differ. While sexual violence was reported in every year of the conflict, analysis shows two distinct peaks with large increases during two of the most intense years of the conflict: 1995 and 1999. In both cases the civilian government initiated mediation processes following peaks of rebel sexual violence (Figure 5). In 1995 intensive civil society mobilization, especially from women, was influential in creating conditions for democratic elections and impressing upon the NPRC the need to engage in a mediation process (Hayner 2007; Kaldor and Vincent 2006). Whereas the NPRC sought to win by all means including hiring mercenaries, the democratically elected government in 1996 signed the ECOWAS-mediated agreement, which nonetheless failed to stabilize the country.

Throughout 1998 the government attempted to defeat the rebels on the battlefield, rejecting the notion of peace talks. This abruptly changed after the RUF offensive in January 1999, in which rebels raped and abducted thousands of girls and women (Hayner 2007). The offensive was widely regarded as the 'most intensive and concentrated period of human rights violations' in the civil war (HRW 1999). Throughout the offensive rebels perpetrated widespread sexual violence including individual and gang rape, sexual assault with objects, and sexual slavery. This sparked a strong response from international organizations (HRW 2001). Under pressure from the international community, faced with relatively strong rebels, and its weakness exposed, the government renewed its peace efforts.

Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission. As per the user agreement for the TRC dataset, I note that: "These are convenience sample data, and as such they are not a statistically representative sample of events in this conflict. These data do not support conclusions about patterns, trends, or other substantive comparisons (such as over time, space, ethnicity, age, etc.)" Similar to Dara Cohen (2016) I do use the data – combined with the other sources – to draw such conclusions.

Figure 4. Comparison of number of sexual violence and killing incidents
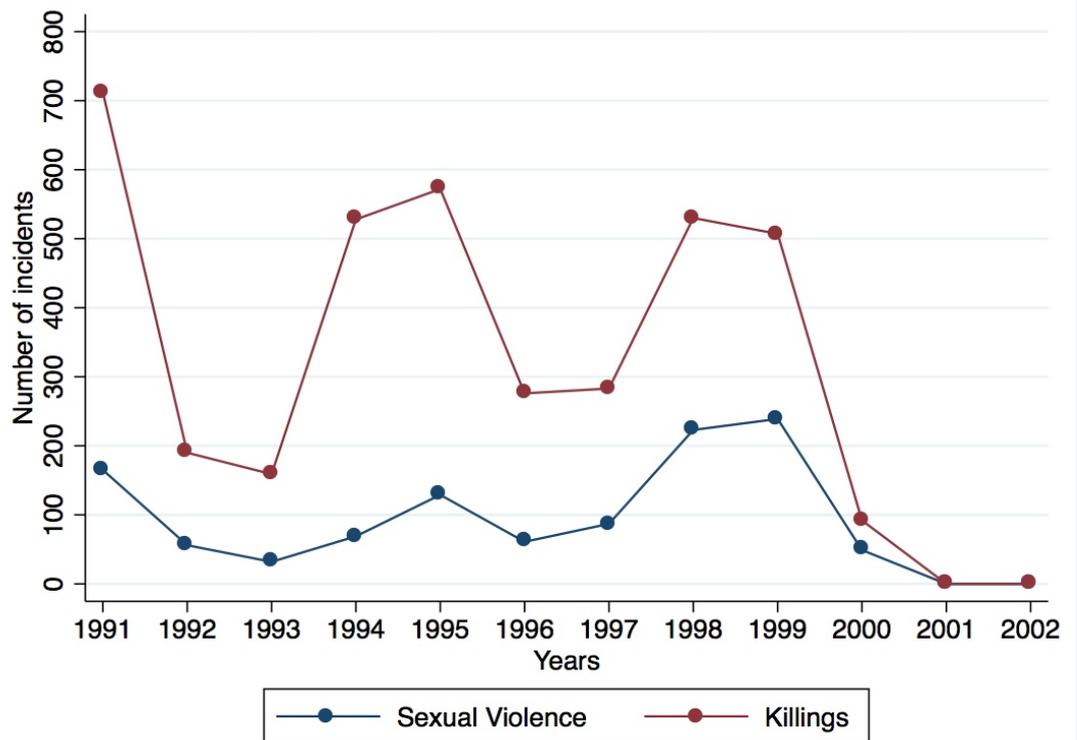
Figure 5. Incidents of RUF sexual violence
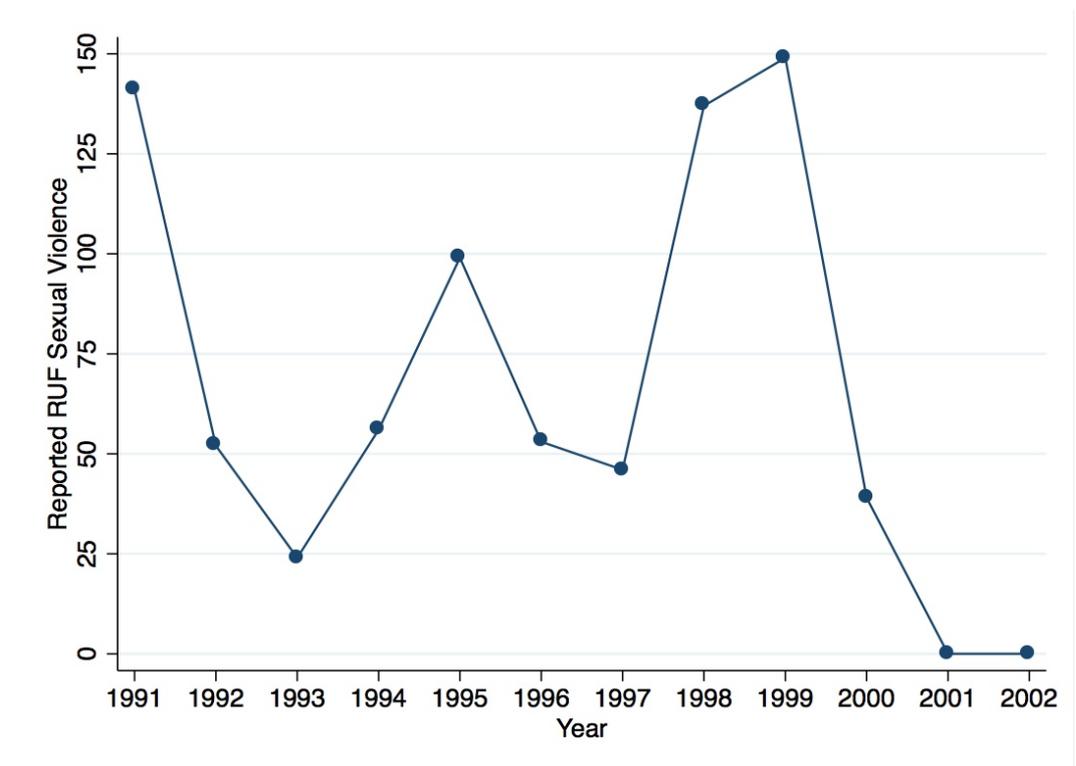
Two weeks after RUF invasion of Freetown and throughout the following months President Kabbah repeatedly addressed the nation and the RUF calling for peace talks. His speeches reminded citizens of the 'heinous barbarity' of the RUF, explicitly addressing the traumatizing rapes and the calls for surrender from government supporters. Carefully treading the line justifying both use of force and peace talks, the President above all stressed the importance of protecting citizens and finding a long-term solution: "Let me reassure you that while security and protection of our citizens have been and continue to be our primary concern, especially during the past few weeks, Government has never, ever abandoned the search for a peaceful settlement of the conflict" (Kabbah 1999a). He appealed to the RUF to free abducted children, emphasizing their status as innocent civilians. Such calls for the protection of vulnerable groups, i.e. women and children, are deeply gendered (Carpenter 2005) and serve to reinforce the paternal protector position of the government (Young 2003). In these speeches the invasion of Freetown was a constant reminder of how the RUF had exposed the government's weakness and inability to protect its citizens:

"This is why we appeal to the RUF, their allies, arms suppliers, and supporters, to immediately release our children, including those whom they abducted during their invasion of our capital in January this year. We say to them: PLEASE, LET OUR CHILDREN GO! RELEASE THEM IMMEDIATELY!" (emphasis in the original Kabbah 1999b)

The widespread sexual violence during the two-week siege intensified international pressure for a peaceful resolution. Starting in late January 1999, regional, international actors such as the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Sierra Leone, and civil society actors including the Inter-Religious Council and Women's Movement lobbied both President Kabbah and RUF leader Sankoh to negotiate (Okai et al. 2014). In May, ECOWAS-mediated talks began in Lomé, Togo, which ended in the July agreement. President Kabbah took an 8-year old girl whose mother had been murdered and who had an arm amputated by rebels with him to the signing ceremony, a gesture that reminded the people of Sierra Leone of the horrors of the civil war and his role as their protector in ending the atrocities (Penfold 2012, 151). Observers deemed Kabbah sincere and righteous, but politically inexperienced and weak (sic!) for relenting to international pressure to accommodate RUF demands (Penfold 2012). Human Rights Watch held the lenient amnesty provisions in the Lomé agreement responsible for creating an atmosphere of impunity (2001). Importantly, however, the timeline clearly shows that neither the mediation nor the agreement caused the sexual violence.

3.8 Discussion

This study contributes to both the expanding body of literature focusing on mediation in civil wars and sexual violence in armed conflict. It provides robust evidence in support of the principal theoretical argument and the hypotheses derived from it. Mediation is more likely when rebels are reported to perpetrate sexual violence because public knowledge of this victimization threatens the state's masculinity by exposing the government's lack of control and power. Accordingly, the state seeks to stop the conflict and thereby the sexual violence via mediation. This finding supports preceding work that shows that governments respond to the victimization of their citizens (Thomas 2014; Wood and Kathman 2014). This study provides more evidence of the importance of analyzing the

dyadic interactions within conflicts and the value of detailed disaggregated data in furthering this cause. It also fills an important gap in our understanding of how sexual violence affects the outcome of civil wars (Chu and Braithwaite 2018) and the role of sexual violence in conflict more generally.

This ties into the policy relevance of this article. The findings appear to indicate a perverse incentive structure whereby rebels benefit from perpetrating sexual violence, while not supporting the notion that international pressure is more influential in conflicts in which belligerents use sexual violence. Yet, the results also show that third party interventions do take place in response to abuses by rebels. This indicates a general willingness to intervene in the face of severe human rights abuses, particularly when perpetrated by rebels, which highlights the need to pay more attention to states' abuses. The dominant narrative of sexual violence as a weapon of war really gained international prominence over the past decade after the UN Security Council passed resolution 1820 in 2008, which explicitly named sexual violence as an instrument of war (United Nations 2008). As this study is limited to conflicts up to 2009 it will be important for future studies to examine what effect this increased attention has on the prevalence of sexual violence and if there is an unanticipated effect of exacerbating sexual violence by rebels (Autesserre 2012; Meger 2016). It also highlights the importance of gendered analyses of conflicts and strengthens calls for greater gender sensitivity in mediation efforts (O'Reilly and Ó Súilleabháin 2013).

Identifying the best moment for a diplomatic intervention is crucial to its success (Greig 2001). Reports of rebel sexual violence seem to be an important indicator of 'ripeness' as conflict management and negotiated agreements are significantly more likely (Chu and Braithwaite 2018). Potential intermediaries thus should pay close attention to international reports of sexual violence by rebels and coordinate their mediation offers accordingly to maximize the chances of initiating a process. Although conflict management cannot and should not be equated with 'ripeness' or conflict resolution, often reaching the table is a critical first step towards comprehensive resolution.

3.9 Appendix B

Independent Variables

The SVAC dataset (Cohen and Nordås 2014) defines sexual violence as (1) rape, (2) sexual slavery, (3) forced prostitution, (4) forced pregnancy, (5) forced sterilization/abortion, (6) sexual mutilation, and (7) sexual torture. This does not exclude the existence of female perpetrators and/or male victims. Excluded are acts that do not go beyond verbal sexual harassment, abuse or threats, including sexualized insults, forced nudity, or verbal humiliation. A descriptive analysis shows that there are only 13 observations for rebels perpetrating massive sexual violence, hence I merge categories 2 and 3, making it a three-point ordinal measure (0 - no sexual violence reported, 1 - some sexual violence reported, 2 - widespread/massive sexual violence reported).

Frequency table for different sexual violence variables

values	Rebel SV dummy	State SV dummy	Rebel SV 3-pt ordinal	State SV 3-pt ordinal	Rebel SV 4-pt ordinal	State SV 4-pt ordinal
0	584	398	584	398	584	398
1	133	318	83	232	83	232
2	-	-	50	86	37	66
3	-	-		-	13	20
-99	284	284	284	284	284	284

Dependent Variables

Mediation. This variable is dichotomous, indicating for each conflict year if a mediation effort started: 0 = no mediation, 1 = onset of mediation.

The Civil War Mediation dataset (DeRouen, Bercovitch & Pospiezna, 2011) defines mediation as 'a process of conflict management where disputants seek the assistance of, or accept an offer of help from, an individual, group, or state, or organization to settle their conflict or resolve their differences without resorting to physical force or invoking the authority of law' (Bercovitch, Anagnoson & Wille,

1991: 8). I coded the missing years (2005-2009) based on a Lexis-Nexis search for each country conflict year. Search words included: mediation, peace talks, negotiation, and ceasefire talks.

Robustness Checks

Model 2.3 – Logistic regression without controls

	(2.3)
Rebel sexual violence	1.077***
	[0.605,1.548]
Government sexual violence	-0.038
	[-0.462,0.386]
Constant	-1.064***
	[-1.545,-0.583]
AIC	850.29
Area under ROC	0.580
Wald-chi²	20.30(2)
Prob > chi²	0.000
Log likelihood	-422.45
N	716

95% confidence intervals in brackets
*p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001*

Model 2.4 – Lagged independent variables

Model 2.5 – Logistic regression including control for mediation in previous year

Model 2.6 – Logistic regression including ordinal measure of sexual violence, control for mediation in previous year

	(2.4)	(2.5)	(2.6)
Rebel SV (lag)	0.984*		
	[0.199,1.769]		
Gov't SV (lag)	-0.336		
	[-0.928,0.256]		
Rebel SV		0.496^t	
		[-0.075,1.067]	
Gov't SV		0.224	
		[-0.330,0.778]	
Some rebel SV			0.460
			[-0.100,1.021]
Widespread rebel SV			0.976*
			[0.094,1.858]
Some gov't SV			0.343
			[-0.245,0.930]
Widespread gov't SV			-0.301
			[-1.154,0.552]

Duration	0.051	-0.007	-0.006
	[-0.086,0.187]	[-0.113,0.100]	[-0.114,0.102]
Duration^2	-0.001	0.000	0.000
	[-0.005,0.003]	[-0.003,0.003]	[-0.003,0.003]
Intensity	-0.046	0.093	0.113
	[-0.791,0.700]	[-0.551,0.736]	[-0.549,0.775]
Parallel conflict	0.710	0.375	0.353
	[-0.189,1.609]	[-0.401,1.152]	[-0.430,1.136]
Type of conflict	0.545	0.936*	0.893*
	[-0.532,1.623]	[0.117,1.754]	[0.011,1.774]
Neighbor civil war	0.019	-0.044	-0.013
	[-0.770,0.808]	[-0.705,0.616]	[-0.681,0.654]
Rebel strength	2.028*	0.950t	0.918t
	[0.428,3.628]	[-0.042,1.942]	[-0.068,1.904]
Rebel one-sided violence	-0.010	-0.070	-0.087
	[-0.133,0.113]	[-0.186,0.045]	[-0.204,0.030]
Gov't one-sided violence	0.040	-0.007	0.019
	[-0.109,0.190]	[-0.121,0.107]	[-0.095,0.134]
Democracy	1.153*	0.473	0.496
	[0.034,2.272]	[-0.299,1.245]	[-0.257,1.248]
Democratic aid	0.229*	0.161t	0.163t
	[0.022,0.437]	[-0.020,0.342]	[-0.017,0.343]
Autocratic aid	-0.092	-0.036	-0.032
	[-0.210,0.027]	[-0.135,0.064]	[-0.128,0.063]
GDP per capita (ln)	0.290	0.225	0.226
	[-0.294,0.874]	[-0.190,0.639]	[-0.193,0.644]
Population (ln)	-0.792***	-0.462**	-0.448**
	[-1.180,-0.405]	[-0.790,-0.134]	[-0.770,-0.125]
Mediation previous year		2.837***	2.936***
		[2.344,3.329]	[2.421,3.451]
Constant	10.25***	5.120*	4.831*
	[4.155,16.35]	[0.416,9.824]	[0.202,9.460]
AIC	452.379	508.114	508.669
Area under ROC	0.790	0.849	0.856
Wald-chi^2	86.09(16)	329.34(17)	364.69(19)
Prob > chi^2	0.000	0.000	0.000
Log likelihood	-209.189	-236.057	-234.334
N	413	564	564

95% confidence intervals in brackets

t p < 0.1, *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001

Model 2.7 – Logistic regression, limited sample that excludes five conflicts featuring highest number of years with reports of sexual violence

Excluded conflicts

Country	Old UCDP conflict ID	Number of years featuring rebel SVAC in dataset	Percent
Burundi	90	10 out of 16	60
Sudan	113	15 out of 20	75
Uganda	118	14 out of 18	78
India (Kashmir insurgency)	169	12 out of 20	60
Sierra Leone	187	8 out 10	80

	(2.7)
Rebel SV	0.929**
	[0.278,1.579]
Gov't SV	0.095
	[-0.442,0.631]
Duration	0.026
	[-0.097,0.148]
Duration^2	-0.000
	[-0.004,0.003]
Intensity	-0.360
	[-1.152,0.432]
Parallel conflict	0.639
	[-0.146,1.423]
Type of conflict	1.029*
	[0.139,1.920]
Neighbor civil war	-0.450
	[-1.267,0.367]
Rebel strength	1.278*
	[0.130,2.426]
Rebel one-sided violence	0.012
	[-0.132,0.156]
Gov't one-sided violence	0.016
	[-0.115,0.148]
Democracy	0.805^t
	[-0.042,1.651]
Democratic aid	0.119
	[-0.024,0.261]
Autocratic aid	-0.018
	[-0.108,0.071]
GDP per capita (ln)	0.186
	[-0.305,0.677]
Population (ln)	-0.603***
	[-0.939,-0.267]
Constant	8.132**
	[3.037,13.23]
AIC	524.874

	Area under ROC	0.772
	Wald-chi^2	76.60(16)
	Prob > chi^2	0.000
	Log likelihood	-245.437
	N	486

95% confidence intervals in brackets

t p < 0.1, *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001

Model 2.9 – Logistic regression including interaction of sexual violence and democratic aid

Model 2.10 – Logistic regression including interaction of rebel sexual violence and democratic aid

Model 2.11 – Logistic regression including interaction of state sexual violence and democratic aid

	(2.9)	(2.10)	(2.11)
Conflict SV	0.139		
	[-1.055,1.333]		
Conflict SV x Democratic aid	0.150		
	[-0.167,0.467]		
Rebel SV	0.560t	0.928*	0.668*
	[-0.060,1.180]	[0.005,1.852]	[0.131,1.204]
Rebel SV x Democratic aid		-0.064	
		[-0.365,0.237]	
Gov't SV	-0.310	0.139	-0.561
	[-1.387,0.767]	[-0.378,0.655]	[-1.759,0.636]
Gov't SV x Democratic aid			0.255
			[-0.163,0.674]
Duration	0.059	0.060	0.058
	[-0.058,0.175]	[-0.059,0.178]	[-0.057,0.173]
Duration^2	-0.001	-0.001	-0.001
	[-0.005,0.002]	[-0.005,0.002]	[-0.005,0.002]
Intensity	-0.072	-0.118	-0.077
	[-0.738,0.594]	[-0.760,0.524]	[-0.740,0.586]
Parallel conflict	0.525	0.506	0.464
	[-0.269,1.320]	[-0.317,1.328]	[-0.348,1.276]
Type of conflict	0.569	0.503	0.542
	[-0.273,1.412]	[-0.371,1.377]	[-0.300,1.384]
Neighbor civil war	-0.140	-0.133	-0.130
	[-0.819,0.539]	[-0.847,0.580]	[-0.788,0.528]
Rebel strength	1.507*	1.504**	1.473*
	[0.344,2.670]	[0.371,2.636]	[0.337,2.609]
Rebel one-sided violence	-0.005	0.004	-0.006
	[-0.122,0.112]	[-0.111,0.120]	[-0.119,0.107]
Gov't one-sided violence	0.030	0.031	0.026
	[-0.091,0.152]	[-0.088,0.150]	[-0.093,0.146]
Democracy	0.650	0.643	0.677
	[-0.201,1.500]	[-0.212,1.498]	[-0.163,1.517]
Democratic aid	0.133	0.189*	0.136t

	[-0.040,0.305]	[0.001,0.378]	[-0.021,0.293]
Autocratic aid	-0.039	-0.044	-0.041
	[-0.129,0.051]	[-0.134,0.046]	[-0.132,0.050]
GDP per capita (ln)	0.321	0.337	0.336
	[-0.147,0.790]	[-0.131,0.805]	[-0.124,0.796]
Population (ln)	-0.641***	-0.630***	-0.670***
	[-0.967,-0.316]	[-0.973,-0.286]	[-0.989,-0.352]
Constant	8.295***	7.957**	8.814***
	[3.404,13.18]	[2.797,13.12]	[3.972,13.66]
AIC	622.155	622.153	618.849
Area under ROC	0.764	0.759	0.765
Wald-chi^2	80.94(18)	76.48(17)	78.89(17)
Prob > chi^2	0.000	0.000	0.000
Log likelihood	-292.077	-293.077	-291.425
N	564	564	564

95% confidence intervals in brackets
$t\ p < 0.1$, $*p < 0.05$, $**p < 0.01$, $***p < 0.001$

Model 2.12 – Logistic regression including interaction of rebel sexual violence and democracy

Model 2.13 – Logistic regression including interaction of rebel sexual violence and personalist regime

	(2.12)	(2.13)
Rebel SV	0.868*	0.334
	[0.142,1.594]	[-0.373,1.041]
Gov't SV	0.125	0.123
	[-0.401,0.651]	[-0.421,0.666]
Democracy	0.702	0.869
	[-0.232,1.635]	[-0.047,1.785]
Rebel SV x Democracy	-0.363	
	[-1.593,0.867]	
Personalist regime		0.027
		[-0.948,1.001]
Rebel SV x Personalist regime		1.096^t
		[-0.130,2.323]
Duration	0.057	0.054
	[-0.061,0.174]	[-0.067,0.174]
Duration^2	-0.001	-0.001
	[-0.005,0.002]	[-0.005,0.002]
Intensity	-0.097	-0.015
	[-0.752,0.558]	[-0.644,0.613]
Parallel conflict	0.504	0.518
	[-0.304,1.313]	[-0.312,1.348]
Type of conflict	0.494	0.445
	[-0.408,1.395]	[-0.312,1.202]
Neighbor civil war	-0.158	-0.303
	[-0.838,0.522]	[-0.996,0.390]

	(2.13a)	(2.13b)
Rebel strength	1.508**	1.446*
	[0.368,2.648]	[0.339,2.552]
Rebel one-sided violence	-0.001	-0.016
	[-0.116,0.114]	[-0.130,0.100]
Gov't one-sided violence	0.027	0.007
	[-0.090,0.144]	[-0.106,0.120]
Democratic aid	0.175*	0.141*
	[0.021,0.328]	[0.004,0.278]
Autocratic aid	-0.046	-0.051
	[-0.134,0.043]	[-0.144,0.042]
GDP per capita (ln)	0.329	0.207
	[-0.135,0.794]	[-0.273,0.686]
Population (ln)	-0.623***	-0.657***
	[-0.959,-0.288]	[-1.004,-0.310]
Constant	7.886**	8.651**
	[2.858,12.91]	[3.461,13.84]
AIC	621.923	609.162
Area under ROC	0.761	0.770
Wald-chi²	79.26(17)	92.82(18)
Prob > chi²	0.000	0.000
Log likelihood	-292.962	-285.581
N	564	554

95% confidence intervals in brackets
t p < 0.1, *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001

Model 2.14 – Logistic regression including intervention control

	(2.14)
Rebel SV	0.789**
	[0.215,1.363]
Gov't SV	0.113
	[-0.433,0.660]
Duration	0.056
	[-0.063,0.175]
Duration²	-0.001
	[-0.005,0.002]
Intensity	-0.100
	[-0.762,0.561]
Parallel conflict	0.533
	[-0.337,1.403]
Type of conflict	0.434
	[-0.519,1.387]
Neighbor civil war	-0.148
	[-0.861,0.564]
Rebel strength	1.524**
	[0.387,2.662]
Rebel one-sided violence	0.016
	[-0.097,0.129]
Gov't one-sided violence	0.039
	[-0.083,0.160]
Democracy	0.688
	[-0.184,1.560]
Democratic aid	0.166*

	[0.006,0.326]
Autocratic aid	-0.034
	[-0.123,0.055]
GDP per capita (ln)	0.344
	[-0.116,0.803]
Population (ln)	-0.624***
	[-0.972,-0.275]
Intervention	0.013
	[-0.431,0.456]
Constant	7.894**
	[2.666,13.12]
AIC	601.800
Area under ROC	0.759
Wald-chi^2	72.21(17)
Prob > chi^2	0.000
Log likelihood	-282.900
N	548

95% confidence intervals in brackets

*t p < 0.1, *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001*

First difference plot based on Model 2.13 – Interaction of rebel sexual violence and personalist regime (90% confidence interval)

Rebel SV*	0.05 [-0.03, 0.16]
Gov't SV*	0.02 [-0.04, 0.10]
Personalist regime*	0.01 [-0.09, 0.13]
Rebel SV x Personalist regime*	0.21 [0.01, 0.45]
Duration	0.42 [-0.23, 0.94]
Duration squared	0.00 [-0.27, 0.75]
Intensity*	-0.00 [-0.07, 0.07]
Parallel conflict*	0.08 [-0.03, 0.18]
Type of conflict*	0.07 [-0.02, 0.20]
Neighbor civil war*	-0.04 [-0.12, 0.03]
Rebel strength*	0.27 [0.08, 0.49]
Rebel OSV	-0.01 [-0.15, 0.11]
Gov't OSV	0.04 [-0.08, 0.27]
Democracy*	0.15 [0.02, 0.27]
Democratic aid	0.18 [0.03, 0.37]
Autocratic aid	-0.06 [-0.18, 0.04]
Population (ln)	-0.61 [-0.78, -0.39]
GDP per capita (ln)	0.14 [-0.12, 0.46]

User set first differences change as: min max.
Variables with a * are discrete - FD is a change from 0 to 1.

4. Sexual violence and conflict recurrence

4.1 Abstract

To what extent does sexual violence influence the likelihood of conflict recurrence? Despite a substantive body of research that explores conflict recurrence, the literature has largely neglected the role rebel group dynamics. I address this gap arguing that rebel sexual violence in inactive periods is associated with a greater risk of conflict recurrence. Specifically, building on research that shows an association between recruitment and rape as a socialization method during civil war, I contend that when rebels perpetrate sexual violence in inactive periods it indicates ongoing mobilization efforts. I derive four observable implications from this argument, which I systematically test on all intrastate post-conflict years from 1989 to 2015 using the updated Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict dataset and the Armed Conflict Termination dataset. The results provide robust support for the argument that rebel sexual violence increases the likelihood of an escalation of violence and conflict recurrence. This presents an important addition to the state-centric conflict recurrence literature and opens new avenues for the research and practice of conflict resolution.

4.2 Introduction

In 1990, the Movement of the Democratic Forces of the Casamance (MFDC) pursued an armed struggle for an independent region in Senegal. At the end of May 1991 the group signed a ceasefire agreement, however, the peace did not last. The group was fraught with internal rifts and substantial parts of the MFDC renounced the agreement. While some laid down their arms, a faction of the MFDC called Front Sud resumed fighting in September 1992. The interim 'peace' period, May 1991 – September 1992, and particularly the months leading up to the conflict recurrence were marked by widespread sexual violence by MFDC members. In its annual country report on human rights the US State Department noted that the MFDC frequently raped women in attacks on villages in the first half of 1992. Why did the MFDC perpetrate sexual violence in this 'peace' period? Is it actually a 'peace' period if a group perpetrates sexual violence? And how is the sexual violence connected to the return to active conflict? The example of the MFDC raises a number of questions and calls for a systematic investigation of the relationship between sexual violence and conflict recurrence. Accordingly, this article explores the question to what extent does rebel sexual violence in inactive periods influence the likelihood of returning to armed conflict?

Conflict-related sexual violence is a critical issue of human security and related research has grown substantially in recent years. Studies have primarily focused on explaining causes of sexual violence during armed conflict. A few studies have started to investigate the effects of sexual violence during active conflicts (Chu and Braithwaite 2018; Hultman and Johansson 2017; Kreutz and Cardenas 2017), however, we still know very little about the effects of sexual violence after the fighting officially stops and its effects on the durability of peace.

Conflict recurrence presents a common threat to human security, stability, and development and has generated a substantial body of literature. Research has focused primarily on structural factors that shape the likelihood of renewed conflicts such as lootable resources and good governance (Hegre and Nygård 2015; Rustad and Binningsbø 2012; Walter 2004, 2015). Recent research has begun investigating the role of rebel group characteristics, such as the use of child soldiers and group fragmentation (Haer and Böhmelt 2016; Rudloff and Findley 2016). However, in comparison to the structural factors we still know surprisingly little about how rebel groups' organizational dynamics influence conflict

recurrence. Hence this paper offers a significant contribution to both the conflict recurrence and sexual violence literature in demonstrating that rebel sexual violence in inactive conflict periods is associated with a greater risk of escalating violence and conflict recurrence.

Building on Dara Kay Cohen's research that shows an association between recruitment and rape as a socialization method during civil war (Cohen 2013a, 2016, 2017), I argue that rebel sexual violence in inactive conflict years indicates that groups' continue to mobilize and recruit fighters. Reports of sexual violence in inactive conflict periods demonstrate that an identifiable group continues to exist and is capable of perpetrating violence at a detectable level. Additionally, I contend that sexual violence is a sign of mobilization because recruits perpetrate sexual violence to build trust and social cohesion within the group, which increases a group's capability and military effectiveness. Hence I argue that conflicts are more likely to recur when rebels maintain and build capabilities through perpetrating sexual violence in inactive conflict years. Therefore I expect that rebel sexual violence during inactive conflict years is associated with the subsequent escalation of lethal violence and conflict recurrence.

The rest of the article proceeds as follows. First, I briefly define active and inactive conflict and review the literature on conflict recurrence and conflict-related sexual violence. Second, I develop my theoretical argument that when rebels perpetrate sexual violence in inactive periods it indicates ongoing mobilization efforts and derive observable implications from it. Third, I turn to an empirical test of my argument. For this I use categorical choice and count models to examine the escalation of violence and conflict recurrence in intrastate post-conflict years in 121 conflicts across 70 countries drawn from the 2015 version of the Uppsala/PRIO Armed Conflict Termination dataset (Kreutz 2010). Data on sexual violence come from an updated version of the Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict dataset (Cohen and Nordås 2014). The results indicate that the escalation of violence and return to active conflict is more likely when rebel groups perpetrate sexual violence in inactive periods. I conclude by discussing the implications for policy and future research.

4.3 Previous research

Conflict recurrence

In keeping with the dominant approach in systematic conflict research, I adopt a narrow violence-based definition of armed conflict that distinguishes between active and inactive (or post-conflict) years based on yearly levels of lethal violence between state and non-state actors (Kreutz 2010). A conflict is deemed active when it fulfills three criteria '(1) a stated incompatibility (government and/or territory), (2) organized groups of which at least one is the government of a state, and (3) armed activity resulting in at least 25 deaths, all of which must be observed in a given calendar year' (Kreutz 2010, 244). According to this definition a conflict (temporarily) ends or is considered inactive when violence falls below the threshold of 25 battle-related deaths in a calendar year.

The risk factors that render countries vulnerable to armed conflict in the first instance are also associated with recurring conflicts because armed conflict exacerbates the underlying economic and political problems (Fearon and Laitin 2003; Rustad and Binningsbø 2012; Weinstein 2007; Walter 2004; Hegre and Sambanis 2006; Quinn, Mason, and Gurses 2007). Accordingly, the majority of the conflict recurrence literature focus on structural factors that shape opportunities for conflict such as natural resources, geography, good governance, state size and capability (Hegre and Nygård 2015; Mason et al. 2011; Quinn, Mason, and Gurses 2007; Rustad and Binningsbø 2012; Walter 2004, 2015). This state-centered focus on the flipside means that the literature pays little attention to the role of rebel group capabilities for conflict recurrence.

Only recently has research on organizational legacies of conflict gained traction (Zukerman Daly 2012). Research shows that ex-combatants often maintain close ties to each other (Humphreys and Weinstein 2004, 2007; Nussio and Oppenheim 2014; Pugel 2007; Wiegink 2015). In particular combatants who participated in more abusive acts accrue anti-social capital that goes hand in hand with greater in-group bonding and greater distrust of the state (Humphreys and Weinstein 2007; Nussio and Oppenheim 2014). However, these close ties and anti-social capital do not always lead to the resumption of conflict. It takes entrepreneurs and interlocutors who offer selective incentives and re-activate networks (Themnér 2013). This research shows how abusive behavior creates lasting ties and highlights the importance of organizational dynamics and legacies.

However, so far there has not been a systematic cross-national analysis of the relationship between violent organizational legacies based on abusive behavior and conflict recurrence. I fill this gap, arguing that when rebel groups perpetrate sexual violence in inactive conflict years, it indicates ongoing mobilization and capability building efforts, which increase the likelihood of an escalation of violence to levels of active armed conflict. This presents a valuable contribution to our understanding of how organizational dynamics can influence the likelihood of conflict recurrence (Kaplan and Nussio 2018; Nussio and Oppenheim 2014; Themnér 2013; Zukerman Daly 2012).

Conflict-related sexual violence

Until recently, rape in and after conflict has been overwhelmingly treated as an unfortunate, but expected, if not inevitable, side effect of war – a means for victors to exact their revenge and dominance over the other side (Card 1996; Seifert 1996). Another common narrative is the use of sexual violence as a weapon, tool, or tactic of war (Crawford 2017). However, there is little evidence of commanders ordering combatants to rape (Cohen 2016; Wood forthcoming). Put differently, there is very little support for the notion that rebel sexual violence during, let alone after armed conflict, presents a coordinated effort to fight the state by other means. It is more plausible that combatants have more opportunities to perpetrate sexual violence in the aftermath of conflict. War causes the breakdown of social and political order, the weakening of social norms, and results in opportunities to literally loot, rape, and pillage (Goldstein 2001, 335; Wood 2008). Following internal conflict states are often limited in their capacity to enforce order and provide good governance (Hegre and Nygård 2015; Walter 2015). In other words, the lawless nature of war and its aftermath exposes some men's latent desire to rape and enables them to pursue it, if there is a lack of control, accountability, and norm enforcement (Butler, Gluch, and Mitchell 2007).[15] However, following this argument, individuals, not the group, commit sexual violence in inactive years for personal motives without any connection to the logic and dynamics of the political conflict. Hence, according to this argument, rebel sexual violence in inactive

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[15] On the other hand, when leadership exerts significant influence on its members, prohibits sexual violence and rigorously enforces punishment of any transgressions, it can effectively curtail it, such as in the case of the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka (Wood 2009, 149).

periods should have no (or even a negative) effect on the likelihood of violence returning to levels of armed conflict.

In contrast, recent research considers sexual violence a practice resulting from social interactions rather than individual desires or organizational policy (Wood 2014, forthcoming). As a practice, sexual violence emerges out of group dynamics of combatants imitating the behavior of other group members rather than following individual impulses or commanders' orders (Wood 2014, forthcoming). Research in psychology, military sociology, and history illustrates that social pressure is particularly strong in extreme situations such as combat, which facilitates the emergence of violent group practices (Brown 2000; Muñoz-Rojas and Frésard 2004; Wood 2009). Based on this understanding sexual violence across active and inactive years indicates that the group not only continues to exist, but also that it has retained combatants socialized in practices of sexual violence, which they continue to carry out making them part of the socialization process of new recruits.

Groups frequently use violence to integrate new recruits, to provide structure, and to maintain social order within the organization (Humphreys and Weinstein 2008). Sexual violence takes on a particular role as a socialization method within armed organizations' repertoire. Socializing recruits frequently includes rituals designed for them to prove their masculinity, to suppress their identity and emotions, as well as feminize 'others' (Goldstein 2001; Whitworth 2004). For example, a study of the Canadian Airborne Regiment found members building loyalty and friendships through participating in humiliating and sexualized rituals (Winslow 1999).

Sexual violence is frequently a performative act. Co-perpetrators and the family members of victims are the audience and the victim becomes a 'medium' for the perpetrator's display of superiority and masculinity (Benard 1994; Franklin 2004; Maedl 2011; Sanday 2007). Such displays bond perpetrators of gang rape and lead to an increase in mutual respect for each other (Franklin 2004). In line with this, studies of gang rape in peacetime in South Africa and Cambodia show that perpetrators experience social bonding effects (Jewkes and Sikweyiya 2013; Wilkinson, Bearup, and Soprach 2005). Dara Kay Cohen's systematic analysis of rape during civil wars illustrates that groups that forcibly recruit fighters and lack internal cohesion are more likely to perpetrate gang rape (2013a, 2016, 2017). The

perpetration as well as the boasting afterwards communicates idealized 'norms of masculinity, virility, brutality, and loyalty', which facilitates the bonding among group members (Cohen 2017, 704). At the same time, this does not imply that perpetrators or commanders consciously decide to perpetrate sexual violence for the purpose of socialization. Rather than explicitly hoping to forge social bonds, the perpetration of sexual violence evolves from the group dynamics and individuals' need to bond (Cohen 2017; Wood forthcoming).

4.4 Rebels in inactive conflict periods

When a conflict becomes inactive the armed group does not immediately cease to exist. Regardless of how the conflict becomes inactive, if it is a temporary retreat, a peace agreement, or even in the case of military defeat, no group simply vanishes. The continued existence of group structures and former fighters ensures that there is an organizational legacy that facilitates the resurgence of violence (Zukerman Daly 2012). Put differently, retaining organizational structures grants groups the capacity to resume fighting. This is one of the reasons negotiated settlements are considered less stable than military victories (Wagner 1993, 255; Quinn, Mason, and Gurses 2007). The same is true for conflicts that do not officially end in a victory or agreement, but merely fail to reach the threshold of active armed conflict (Kreutz 2010). Considering a conflict inactive because violence has fallen below the 25-battle-related death threshold, implicitly acknowledges that all actors are still around (Kecskemeti 1958).

Ex-combatants often maintain close ties with each other. Sexual violence plays an important role in this. Ex-combatants, who were forcibly recruited and perpetrated widespread sexual violence, such as fighters in the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in Sierra Leone, the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) or RENAMO in Mozambique, choose not to return to their home communities because of real, experienced, perceived, or anticipated stigmatization and instead maintain close relationships with other former fighters (Humphreys and Weinstein 2004; Pugel 2007; Wiegink 2015). Ex-fighters of these groups report close friendships and choose to live in close proximity with other each other and former commanders, which provides them with a sense of belonging, political influence, as well as physical and economic security (Humphreys and Weinstein 2004; Pugel 2007; Wiegink 2015). In line with Cohen's argument of rape as a

socialization method (2013a, 2016, 2017), these examples illustrate the powerful bonds that perpetrators of violence, particularly sexual violence, share.

Integrating new fighters

When a conflict becomes inactive, whether it is because of a defeat, temporary retreat, or a peace agreement, it is usually associated with an attrition of fighters, even if ex-combatants maintain friendships and networks. Hence, groups that seek to resume fighting need to recruit and integrate new members. This presents the challenge of having to maintain existing members and ensuring that old and new members form trust and build social cohesion. Building on research that shows an association between recruitment and rape as a socialization method during civil war (Cohen 2013a, 2016, 2017), I use sexual violence as an indicator for rebel group mobilization in inactive conflict years. Specifically, I argue that lethal violence is more likely to reach levels of active conflict again when rebels maintain and build capabilities through perpetrating sexual violence in inactive conflict years.

Rebels face obstacles recruiting and integrating new combatants in inactive conflict periods. Depending on its strength, organization, and resources a group might attract new combatants using incentives such as political influence, a community to belong to, physical and/or economic security and benefits, or it has to rely on coercion (Eck 2014; Humphreys and Weinstein 2008; Weinstein 2007). Irrespective of how members are recruited, the influx of new fighters requires efforts to develop social cohesion to ensure military effectiveness. Commanders need to find a way to forge social ties that enable old and new members to work together effectively. The conditions of inactive conflict years limit armed groups in their use of traditional ways of building social cohesion and creating bonds among combatants such as boot camp drills. Group-based sexual violence during war presents a possible alternative to traditional ways of producing social cohesion for a group of strangers because it helps perpetrators form bonds of loyalty that replace fear and mistrust (Cohen 2013a, 2016, 2017). Extending this argument to inactive conflict periods I posit that rebel sexual violence is a socialization method that increases capability and military effectiveness, and thus indicates that a group is mobilizing fighters and building capabilities.

To function effectively armed groups require some level of social cohesion, loyalty, and trust. In light of the potential sacrifices required of combatants, they need to trust the fighter next to them to 'have their back' (Siebold 2007). Social cohesion helps strangers to develop bonds where they are lacking, to develop trust between individuals who otherwise might be hostile to each other, and to develop a sense of common purpose that increases loyalty to the group (Cohen 2017). Studies identify three primary methods of building cohesion in military units: (1) training, exercises, and drills, all intended to indoctrinate and imprint the importance of chain of command and following orders (King 2006); (2) facing and overcoming shared threats (Kenny 2011); and (3) rituals, including initiation rites and hazing that 'breaks down the individual and replaces it with a commitment to and dependence on the institution of which [one is] now a part' (Whitworth 2004, 155). Non-state armed groups in inactive periods, however, cannot rely on the full range of these traditional means of building cohesive military units. In particular the first two options might not be viable for groups in inactive conflict periods. There are three primary reasons for this: (1) following a defeat or the decision to reduce violence, an armed group most likely does not have the resources to engage in time- and cost-intensive training exercises; (2) following a negotiated settlement, any large-scale mobilization by a former rebel group would arguably constitute a violation of the agreement and prompt a militarized response negating the group's potential surprise advantage; and (3) by definition there is little to no fighting in the inactive periods, thus rebel groups cannot build cohesion through shared battle experiences. Violent rituals, however, remain a viable option to effectively build cohesion for armed groups in the context of inactive years.

Public and stigmatizing group-based violence, i.e. sexual violence, thus presents one method to develop trust and loyalty in armed groups that cannot rely on traditional means of building cohesion. I argue that sexual violence is particularly useful in inactive periods because the stigma associated with it regularly prevents both female and male survivors to come forward making it easier to hide from domestic and international observers than killings or other forms of violence. Former rebels or new recruits often lack readily identifiable markers such as uniforms and thus might be mistaken as criminals or bandits.[16] In

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[16] This is also an issue for data reliability in coding sexual violence by rebel group members in the post-conflict period

other words, sexual violence in inactive years enables rebel groups to integrate new recruits and create social cohesion largely without detection and importantly without eliciting a government response.

Gearing up for renewed conflict

Sexual violence helps groups integrate and socialize old and new members into cohesive and militarily effective units. I argue that sexual violence in inactive periods indicates, not just that a group continuous to exist, but that it is actively recruiting, mobilizing, and building capabilities, which increases the risk of conflict recurrence. Key here is that sexual violence does not cause the recurrence. It is an indicator that a rebel group is integrating and socializing new fighters, i.e. rebel mobilization and capabilities building, and it is this increase in rebels' capacity that is associated with subsequent higher levels of lethal violence and a return to armed conflict. Based on this discussion of the role of sexual violence in inactive conflict periods and its socialization effects, I derive four observable implications from the theoretical argument: (1) conflict recurrence is more likely when sexual violence in the inactive period is a continuation of rebel groups' wartime practices; (2) the more recent rebel sexual violence is the more likely a conflict is to recur; (3) rebel sexual violence in inactive years increases the likelihood of conflict recurrence; and (4) rebel sexual violence is associated with an increase in fatalities the following year.

The subsiding of violence does not signal the end of a group. Instead it might indicate ongoing negotiations, a tacit agreement of non-engagement, dwindling rebel strength, or a strategic retreat in the face of a superior state apparatus. Importantly, subsiding violence does not mean that the underlying incompatibility is resolved; it might actually be more entrenched than before. Therefore, rebels might want to resume the armed conflict. Inactive years thus are a time when rebels regroup and recruit new members. I argue that the perpetration of sexual violence indicates such recruitment and mobilization efforts, particularly when sexual violence in the inactive conflict period is a continuation of rebel groups' wartime practices. The continuation of sexual violence indicates a group's efforts of building social cohesion among old and new members, which in turn increase the likelihood of conflict recurrence.

Hypothesis 1: The likelihood of conflict recurrence increases when rebels are reported to perpetrate sexual violence during active and subsequent inactive conflict periods.

When rebels sign a negotiated agreement to terminate an active conflict, but refuse to comply with subsequent DDR programs, they effectively retain both group structure and membership. If groups use the ensuing inactive period to mobilize, recruit, and socialize additional combatants through sexual violence, a quick return to levels of active conflict becomes more likely. Put differently, mobilization efforts accelerate the return to conflict, meaning if sexual violence is indeed a proxy for mobilization efforts, we should see a temporal relationship between sexual violence and conflict recurrence. The example of the rebel group Forces Nouvelles (FN) in the Côte d'Ivoire illustrates the dynamics at play. After the end of hostilities in the 2000s, former fighters of the FN essentially established themselves as the de-facto authority in the western region Dix-Huit Montagnes. These fighters, who later fought in support of Alassane Ouattara in the 2010/11 conflict, refused to participate in UN DDR programs and perpetrated sexual violence throughout the inactive conflict period (HRW 2010). A 2010 HRW report released just months before the country relapsed into active conflict again detailed how attacks including group rape by ex-FN combatants increased substantially from 2008 onwards (HRW 2010). Survivors reported that armed men raped as many as 20 women in one instance, and one survivor of a gang rape in January 2010 described a group of ten attackers: "They took the women one by one [off the truck] into the bush and did what they wanted with them—they raped them. There were many attackers, I think about 10" (HRW 2010, 32). Put differently, the FN was able to fight on behalf of Ouattara at the end of 2010 and into 2011 because they had not only maintained the group throughout the inactive period, but also had continued to integrate and socialize new fighters through the perpetration of gang rapes in the buildup to the election and the ensuing conflict. Similar to the opening example of the MFDC, the Côte d'Ivoire case highlights the short time between the reported sexual violence and the conflict recurrence. Accordingly, I hypothesize that conflict recurrence is more likely the more recent a group is reported to have perpetrated sexual violence.

Hypothesis 2: The likelihood of conflict recurrence increases the more recent reports of rebel sexual violence are.

Conflicts frequently involve multiple non-state actors. Groups left out of peace agreements might decide to spoil the process (Nilsson 2008; Stedman 1997) by cooperating and merging with other groups to resume the conflict. Alternatively groups might be in talks with the government and withdraw from the process to merge with another group wanting to continue fighting. In such a context, sexual violence helps old and new members to forge social bonds, creating units cohesive enough to be militarily effective. The example of the Shan State Army – South (SSA-S), the armed wing of the Restoration Council of Shan State in Myanmar, illustrates how this can contribute to the escalation of violence from inactive to active conflict. The SSA-S conflict with the Myanmar government was deemed terminated because of low levels of activity in 2003 and 2004. Despite this apparent inactivity, the group was reported to have perpetrated rapes and conscripted child soldiers throughout the years 2003 to 2005. The conflict erupted again in December 2005 after the SSA-S had incorporated troops from the Shan State National Army (SSNA). Once the conflict officially resumed there were no more clearly identified reports of sexual violence by SSA-S members. Put differently, in a period of combat inactivity, recruitment, and integration of fighters from another group, rebels perpetrated rape.

Rebel groups often consist of multiple factions and suffer from internal rifts, which can lead to splintering of groups (Bakke, Cunningham, and Seymour 2012). Fragmented groups become a danger to sustaining peace and make conflict recurrence more likely (Rudloff and Findley 2016). The splintering of a group usually means that the hardliner faction requires new fighters to compensate losing 'moderates'. To be militarily effective enough to resume the fight, the group needs to create social cohesion among old and new members. I argue that sexual violence, similar to when groups merge, can help splinter groups forge units cohesive enough to be militarily effective out of old and new members. Another example besides the MFDC in Senegal is the rebel group Union of Democratic Forces for Unity (UFDR) in the Central African Republic. In 2006, after almost four years of inactivity, fighting erupted again when former supporters of Francois Bozize broke away from his government to form the UFDR. In the post-conflict

years former pro-Bozize and remnants of other insurgency groups were repeatedly reported to have perpetrated sexual violence. Leading up to the eruption of fighting in the fall of 2006, the US State Department Human Rights report states that 'kidnappings by unidentified armed groups increased during the year' and that 'unidentified armed groups – thought to be common criminals and remnants of insurgency groups from previous conflicts, including former pro-Bozize combatants from Chad – continued to attack, kill, rob, beat, and rape civilians and loot and burn villages in the north' (2007, 2). Similarly, the rebel group the Convention of Patriots for Justice and Peace (CPJP) that formed in 2009 to continue fighting the government after the UFDR signed a peace agreement with the government consisted largely of former UFDR members. Again sexual violence persisted in the preceding inactive period between 2006 and 2009.

Hypothesis 3: The likelihood of conflict recurrence increases when rebels are reported to perpetrate sexual violence in the preceding inactive period.

The logic of sexual violence as a method of socializing recruits is derived from research on rape during war. The socialization is supposed to increase social cohesion and military effectiveness. This suggests that the conflict might become more deadly in the subsequent year because the group has greater capacities. I argue that the socialization effect is not confined to times of active conflict, but also present in inactive periods. Hence I expect that if groups perpetrate sexual violence, we should observe a subsequent increase in lethal violence regardless of whether it is an active or inactive conflict year. Accordingly, I hypothesize that rebel sexual violence is associated with an increase in fatalities in the following year.

Hypothesis 4: Rebel sexual violence is associated with an increase in fatalities the following year.

4.6 Methodology

Analysis

I use the UCDP Conflict Termination dataset (Kreutz 2010) and an updated version of the Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict (SVAC) dataset (Cohen and Nordås 2014). The Conflict Termination dataset includes the start and end dates as well as means of termination of armed conflicts. Based on these dates the dataset offers multiple conflict episodes for a conflict fought over the same incompatibility. An episode starts when a dispute fulfills the UCDP criteria for armed conflict: '(1) a stated incompatibility, (2) organized groups of which at least one is the government of a state, and (3) armed activity resulting in at least 25 deaths, all of which must be observed in a given calendar year' (Kreutz 2010, 244). An episode ends when an active conflict year is followed by an inactive year. Based on this I create a dataset that includes all inactive years following an active conflict year between 1989 and 2015. Accordingly, the unit of analysis is inactive conflict year. Conflict recurrence, the dependent variable, is coded as 1 if a conflict over the same incompatibility starts again after one or multiple inactive years and 0 otherwise. Consecutive years of ongoing conflict are dropped from the analysis. Because of the dichotomous nature of the dependent variable for three of the four hypotheses I use logistic regression models in these cases to estimate the likelihood of a conflict resuming in a given inactive conflict year. To examining the escalation of lethal violence hypothesis I use a count model. The best estimate of conflict deaths is an over-dispersed count variable, therefore I use a negative binomial regression model.[17]

After taking missing values for sexual violence in inactive years into account (not missing values of control variables though) the sample includes 2,048 inactive conflict years and 144 peace failures in 121 conflicts across 70 countries. To control for the effects of time since the last active conflict year I include cubic polynomials (Carter and Signorino 2010).[18] To account for a potential lack of

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[17] There is no theoretical reason to assume that certain observations will always be zeros, hence I use a negative binomial regression model rather than a zero inflated model.

[18] Cubic polynomials accommodate nonproportional hazards and outperform traditional methods of accounting for temporal dependence such as time dummies while performing as well as splines or autosmoothing procedures (Carter and Signorino 2010). Other studies employ similar approaches, e.g. Haer and Böhmelt (2016) and Kreutz (2010)

independence of observations from the same country, I cluster the standard errors by country.

Independent variable

To analyze the influence of rebel-led sexual violence on the likelihood of conflict recurrence I use the SVAC dataset (Cohen and Nordås 2014), which includes data on all active conflict years from 1989 to 2015 and the first five inactive years following an active year. In the SVAC dataset sexual violence encompasses seven distinct forms: rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, forced sterilization/abortion, sexual mutilation, and sexual torture.

The SVAC dataset presents prevalence scores (0 = no sexual violence reported, 1 = isolated sexual violence, 2 = widespread sexual violence, 3 = massive sexual violence) for three sources, State Department reports (SD), Amnesty International reports (AI), and Human Rights Watch reports (HRW). I combine the three scores to create a dummy variable that takes the value of 1 if the rebel side was reported to have perpetrated sexual violence for any of the three sources (prevalence scores 1, 2, and 3) in a given year. Based on this I create four dummy variables to indicate who perpetrates the sexual violence (government or rebels) and if it was an active or inactive year. As the example in the Central African Republic illustrates, reliably identifying perpetrators and prevalence of sexual violence in conflict settings is difficult. Furthermore, researchers warn against using SD, AI, and HRW reports to construct ordinal scales for quantitative analysis (Davies and True 2015, 2017). Thus using a binary variable to capture the effect of sexual violence avoids these potential problems and uncertainties regarding the scale of sexual violence and in effect functions as the most conservative estimate of sexual violence in the post-conflict period.

Based on the dummy variables indicating sexual violence in inactive years I create a variable for government and rebels to indicate if the respective side perpetrated sexual violence during any of the inactive years between active conflict years. For example, in the conflict between the Government of Comoros and the MPA/Republic of Anjouan, the fighters belonging to the latter reportedly perpetrated sexual violence in 2000, three years after hostilities had officially ended. This means the explanatory variable is coded 0 for the first two years of inactivity and 1 for all inactive years starting in 2000.

The descriptive statistics (see Figure 6) show that government forces are more likely to perpetrate sexual violence in inactive periods than rebels, which is in line with findings of reported sexual violence during active armed conflict (Cohen and Nordås 2014). Overall rebel groups are reported to perpetrate sexual violence in 31 inactive conflict periods in 19 countries and 20 different conflicts. In the majority of inactive conflict periods neither the government nor the rebels are reported to perpetrate sexual violence.[19]

Figure 6. Percentage of inactive periods with reported sexual violence

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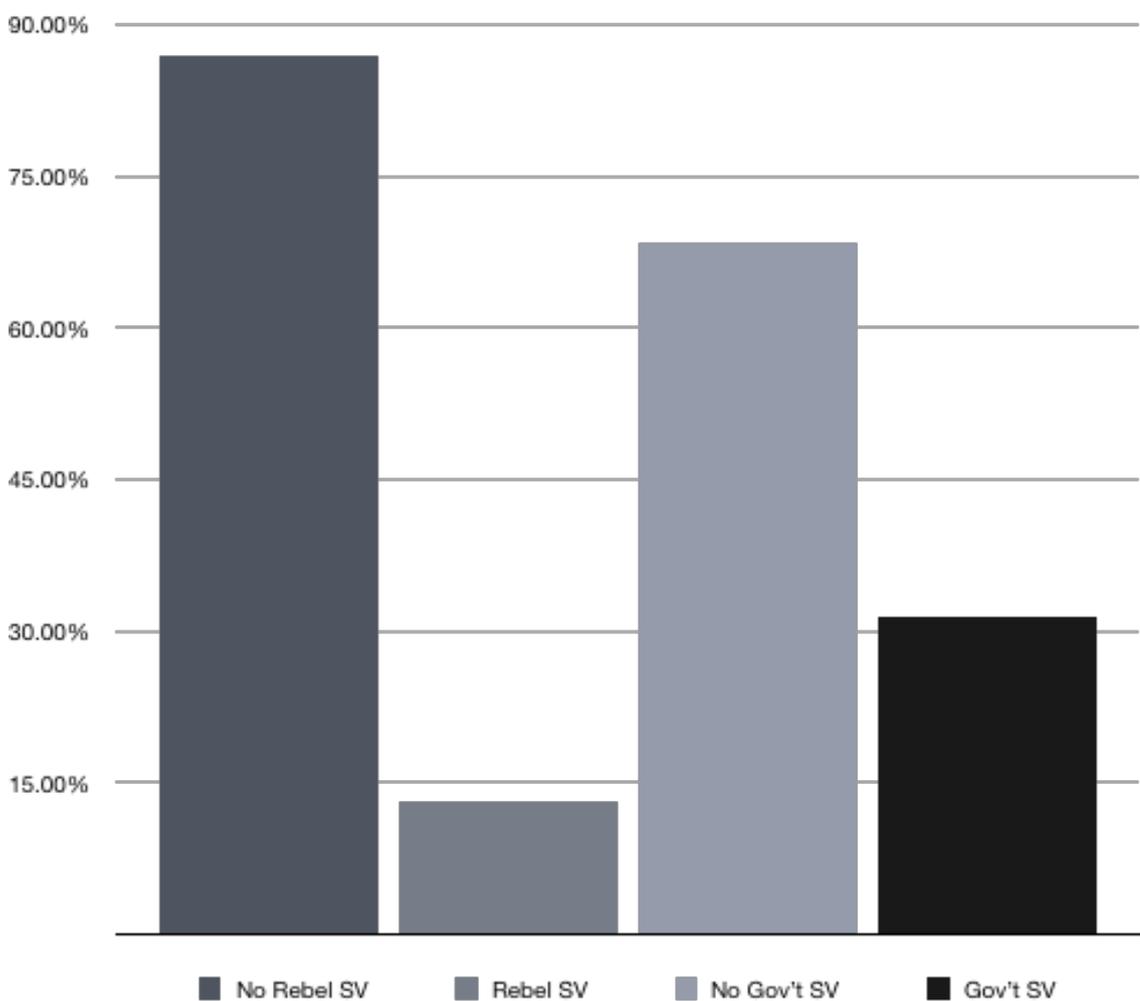
[19] The low number of instances of rebel-led sexual violence is most likely an underestimation. This is a result of the combination of the conservative coding rules of the SVAC dataset, which requires the clear identification of three components (conflict, actor, and year), and the context of inactive conflicts in which the identification of (former) combatants is often difficult because they might be perceived as 'mere criminals and bandits'.

To alleviate concerns that sexual violence presents the continuation of fighting by other means I run bivariate correlations between rebel sexual violence in inactive years and measures of lethal political violence based on the UCDP GED data (Sundberg and Melander 2013). The results (see Table VIII) show no relationship between rebel sexual violence and different measures of levels of political violence in inactive years.

Table VIII. Correlational matrix

	Rebel sexual violence	Best estimate of deaths	Government deaths	Civilian deaths
Rebel sexual violence	1.000			
Best estimate of deaths	0.099	1.000		
Government deaths	0.092	0.866	1.000	
Civilian deaths	0.124	0.678	0.652	1.000

Controls

Inactive years, particularly if there was no official termination of the conflict via military victory or negotiated agreement, might see continued violence below the 25 battle-related death threshold, which might quickly escalate to levels of armed conflict again. Accordingly, I include the yearly lagged natural log of the best estimate of deaths based on the UCDP GED dataset (Sundberg and Melander 2013).

The outcome of a conflict is influential for the likelihood of conflict recurrence (Mason et al. 2011; Quinn, Mason, and Gurses 2007). For rebel-led sexual violence to occur in active years, an identifiable group has to exist. This implies that military victories that effectively destroy insurgencies are much less likely to see rebel-led sexual violence after the cessation of lethal violence. Different conflict outcomes present different socio-political contexts as well as different structural restraints and opportunities. Hence I include a nominal variable indicating how the previous active conflict period ended to control for its effects when examining the relationship between rebel-led sexual violence and recurrence. Outcome has three categories: (0) Military victory is the reference category, (1) negotiated agreement, (2) the battle-related deaths fell below the threshold of 25.

Previous studies have also identified conflict issues such as ethnic mobilization and underlying incompatibility as important factors in the onset,

duration, and termination of conflicts (Toft 2003, 2010). Thus I include incompatibility to control for the possibility that underlying conflict goals affect the likelihood of recurrence (Quinn, Mason, and Gurses 2007). Ethnic conflicts are believed to be particular brutal, hard to resolve, and long-lasting (Kaufmann 1996). To control for the possibility that ethnicity is a factor influencing both conflict-related sexual violence and renewed conflict I include a dummy variable that takes on the value of 1 if the conflict was considered an ethnic conflict (Kreutz 2010).

Conflict characteristics shown to influence the likelihood of conflict recurrence include conflict costs such as conflict duration and prior fatalities (Walter 2004). Research also shows that the post-conflict environment affects the likelihood of conflict recurrence. For example, studies shows that peacekeeping operations are effective in prolonging the duration of post-conflict peace and reducing one-sided violence (Fortna 2003a, 2003b, 2004; Hultman, Kathman, and Shannon 2013). Thus I include a dummy variable to control for the potential effects of a UN peacekeeping operation with a robust mandate. The variable takes on the value of 1, if there was a UNPKO with a robust mandate in the country in the year, and 0 otherwise.

Good governance and government capacity are influential in regards to conflict and conflict recurrence (Hegre and Nygård 2015; Walter 2015). Hence I include the V-Dem polyarchy measure of democracy (Coppedge et al. 2017), economic performance (natural log of GDP per capita), and large populations (natural of log population size). To control for the possibility that both sexual violence and conflict recurrence are associated with natural resource conflicts, I include a binary variable based on Siri Rustad and Helga Binningsbø's work (2012).

I also control for group characteristics that might relate to their organizational legacy and capability to resume fighting. Conflicts involving weak groups are more likely to drop below the threshold of 25 battle-related deaths, which also makes them more likely to recur, because weak groups are incapable of forcing a decisive conflict outcome. Hence I include a binary strength measure that takes the value of 1 if the group was deemed weaker or much weaker than the government in the preceding active conflict episode (Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan 2013). Having a recognized non-armed, political wing might indicate

strong organizational networks that could facility mobilization for resumed fighting. Similarly, prior mobilization capability might indicate strong networks on which groups could draw in inactive conflict periods. Thus I include a binary measure each for the existence of a legal political wing and high mobilization capacity during the last active conflict period (Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan 2013).[20]

4.7 Results

To test *H1* – that conflict recurrence is more likely when rebels are reported to perpetrate sexual violence during both the active conflict episode and subsequent inactive period – I combine the dummy variables for active and inactive years to create a nominal variable with four categories for each side. The reference category (0) is when a side perpetrates sexual violence during the conflict period but not in the following inactive years; the main category of interest is (1), when rebels are reported to perpetrate sexual violence during both active and subsequent inactive years. The other two categories are: (2) no sexual violence reported during active, but in subsequent inactive years; and (3) no sexual violence reported during active or during subsequent inactive years.

In line with my expectations, Model 3.1 shows a statistically significant association between rebels continuing sexual violence and conflict recurrence (see Table IX, parameters presented are the logistic regression coefficients). When rebels start to perpetrate sexual violence in the inactive period after not having perpetrated it in the preceding active period, the association with conflict recurrence is just above the 10 percent level. In terms of the control variables the results show that conflict terminations by low levels of activity are positively associated with conflict recurrence; negotiated agreements do not reach conventional thresholds of statistical significance. This means that, when accounting for the perpetration of rebel sexual violence, the durability of peace following negotiated agreements is not significantly different from that of military victories. In other words, only conflict episodes deemed terminated when fighting drops below the 25 battle-death threshold are at greater risk of recurrence. Government-led sexual violence does not show a significant relationship with

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[20] If there are multiple groups active in the preceding conflict episode I adopt the highest measure for the conflict.

conflict recurrence. The duration of the previous conflict episode and the number of fatalities in the preceding year show no significant associations with conflict recurrence. None of the other control variables (ethnic conflict, incompatibility, resource conflict, population size, GDP per capita) show a statistically significant relationship with conflict recurrence. Surprisingly, UN peacekeeping operations with a robust mandate also do not show a statistically significant relationship with conflict recurrence. However, this should be interpreted cautiously because mission size or composition might be important factors for UNPKO efficacy.[21]

To test *H2* – that the likelihood of conflict recurrence increases the more recent reports of rebel-led sexual violence are – I create a variable that measures the time in years between the last reported sexual violence and the conflict recurrence. In Model 3.2, I use this measure to examine *H2*. The sample size is reduced because the model only takes active and inactive conflict episodes into account in which there were reports of rebel sexual violence.[22] The relationship is close to the 0.05 threshold of statistical significance (p = 0.057) and is negative, i.e. the more recently rebels reportedly perpetrated sexual violence the more likely is conflict recurrence.

Table IX. Logistic regression models 3.1 – 3.3 (DV = recurrence)

	3.1	3.2	3.3
Continued rebel SV	0.935* [0.047,1.823]		
Onset rebel SV	1.123 [-0.241,2.487]		
No rebel SV	0.092 [-0.797,0.981]		
Continued gov't SV	0.195 [-0.597,0.988]		
Onset gov't SV	0.084 [-0.755,0.924]		
No gov't SV	0.156 [-0.544,0.857]		
Rebel SV in inactive period			1.015*

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[21] Even though Table IX does not show the coefficients, I also include cubic polynomials to control for peace duration, which are statistically significant indicating nonlinear temporal dependence

[22] There is no theoretical reason to assume a non-linear relationship between the time since last sexual violence and conflict recurrence; hence I do not include polynomials in this case. This model suffers from selection bias because if there are no reports of sexual violence, the conflict episode is excluded from the sample. Thus the results should be interpreted with caution.

			[0.219,1.811]
Gov't SV in inactive period		0.041	0.065
		[-1.075,1.157]	[-0.489,0.619]
Rebel SV in active period			-0.140
			[-0.799,0.520]
Gov't SV in active period			-0.039
			[-0.553,0.476]
Time since last rebel SV		-0.132^t	
		[-0.269,0.004]	
Negotiated Agreement	0.578	-1.066^t	0.596
	[-0.357,1.513]	[-2.250,0.118]	[-0.314,1.506]
Low level activity	1.134*	-0.807	1.137*
	[0.243,2.024]	[-2.419,0.806]	[0.245,2.029]
Best estimate fatalities (lag ln)	-0.012	-0.091	-0.014
	[-0.188,0.165]	[-0.257,0.075]	[-0.190,0.162]
Conflict duration (ln)	0.110	0.339	0.107
	[-0.167,0.386]	[-0.243,0.920]	[-0.164,0.377]
Ethnic	0.032	1.349*	0.021
	[-0.484,0.548]	[0.106,2.593]	[-0.490,0.532]
Incompatibility	-0.096	-0.019	-0.101
	[-0.680,0.488]	[-1.321,1.283]	[-0.677,0.476]
Resource conflict	0.157	0.801	0.144
	[-0.316,0.631]	[-0.190,1.791]	[-0.321,0.609]
Robust mandate	-0.037	-0.208	-0.038
	[-0.547,0.473]	[-1.136,0.719]	[-0.534,0.458]
Population (ln)	0.083	-0.143	0.084
	[-0.096,0.263]	[-0.601,0.316]	[-0.096,0.264]
GDP (ln)	-0.119	-0.046	-0.117
	[-0.329,0.091]	[-0.599,0.508]	[-0.328,0.093]
Democracy	-0.693	0.000	-0.716
	[-1.730,0.344]	[-2.530,2.531]	[-1.761,0.329]
Weak rebels	0.448	0.745	0.422
	[-0.185,1.080]	[-0.243,1.732]	[-0.209,1.052]
Legal political wing	0.377	0.524	0.375
	[-0.152,0.907]	[-1.065,2.113]	[-0.149,0.899]
Mobilization capacity	0.053	-0.154	0.031
	[-0.297,0.403]	[-1.018,0.709]	[-0.297,0.359]
Constant	-3.968*	-1.641	-3.690*
	[-7.343,-0.592]	[-9.360,6.078]	[-6.655,-0.725]
AIC	741.060	258.225	737.377
Area under ROC	0.787	0.767	0.787
Wald-chi^2	138.24(23)	21.25(16)	117.78(21)
Prob > chi^2	0.000	0.169	0.000
Log likelihood	-346.530	-112.112	-346.689
Cubic polynomial	✓	X	✓
N	1,726	475	1,726

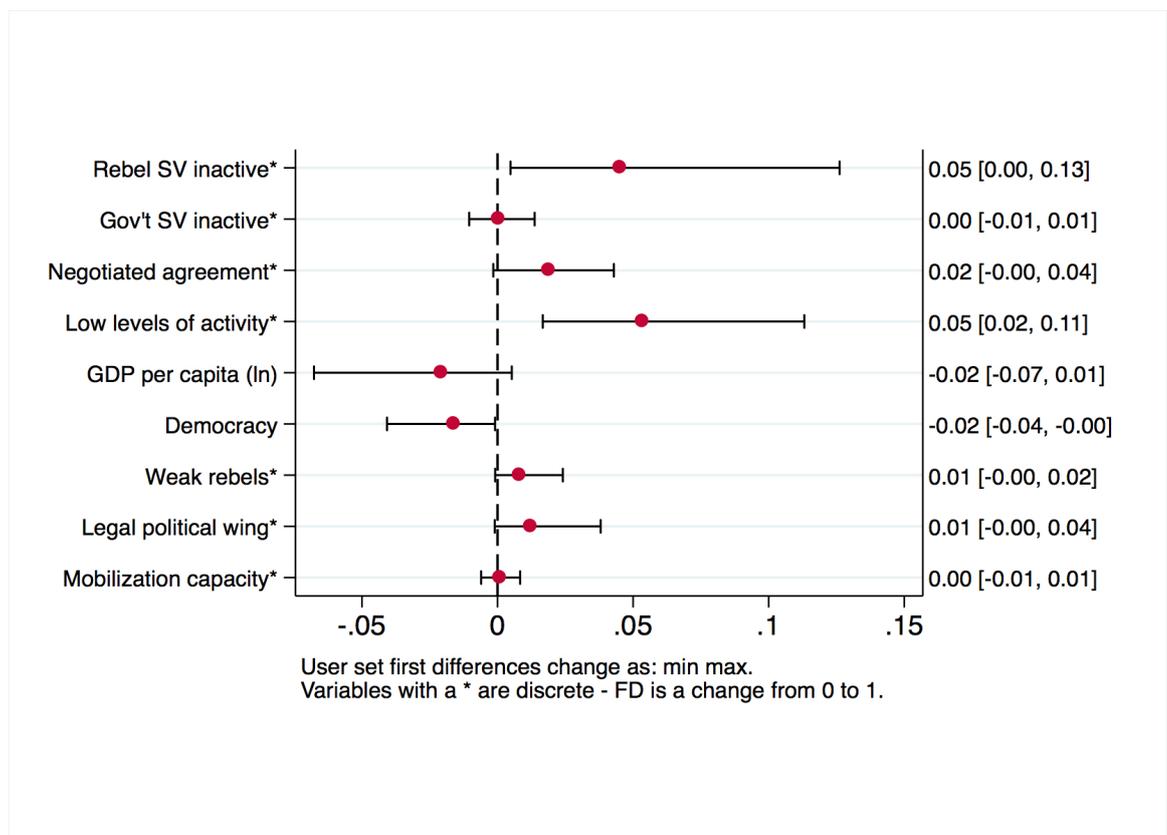95% confidence intervals in brackets
t p < 0.1, *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001

To test *H3* – that conflict recurrence is more likely when rebels are reported to perpetrate sexual violence in the inactive conflict period – I run Model 3.3 (Table IX). The results show support for my hypothesis. Rebel SV in inactive conflict years has a positive statistically significant relationship with conflict

recurrence. Put differently, when rebels perpetrate sexual violence after a conflict is deemed 'terminated' it is associated with an increased likelihood of renewed active conflict.

To better understand the substantive effects of rebel-led sexual violence on the change from inactive to active conflict I present a first difference plot for the change in probability for conflict recurrence based on Model 3.3 (Figure 7).[23] The probability of relapse into conflict increases by 5% if there are reports of rebel sexual violence in the inactive period.

Figure 7. First difference plot (90% confidence interval)

Rebel SV inactive*	0.05 [0.00, 0.13]
Gov't SV inactive*	0.00 [-0.01, 0.01]
Negotiated agreement*	0.02 [-0.00, 0.04]
Low levels of activity*	0.05 [0.02, 0.11]
GDP per capita (ln)	-0.02 [-0.07, 0.01]
Democracy	-0.02 [-0.04, -0.00]
Weak rebels*	0.01 [-0.00, 0.02]
Legal political wing*	0.01 [-0.00, 0.04]
Mobilization capacity*	0.00 [-0.01, 0.01]

User set first differences change as: min max.
Variables with a * are discrete - FD is a change from 0 to 1.

To test *H4* – that rebel sexual violence is associated with an increase in fatalities the following year – I use the best estimate of conflict-related deaths based on the GED data as the outcome variable. The analysis covers both active and inactive years, providing a robust test of the mobilization argument both within and outside of active conflict. To prevent the outliers of Rwanda and Bosnia from biasing my results, I impose an upper limit of 5,000 yearly fatalities.

The results show a statistically significant association between rebel sexual-violence and an increase in overall deaths in the following year even when

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[23] Figure 7 is based on Model 3.3 but only displays a selection of variables.

controlling for rebel strength and mobilization capacity (p = 0.98). Coefficients in negative binomial regression models are difficult to interpret. I use Long and Freese's (2014) listcoef command to facilitate the interpretation. This shows that the substantive effect of rebels perpetrating sexual violence is a 40% increase in the expected overall death count in the next year. As one would expect deaths in a year show a significant relationship with deaths in the previous year and robust UN PKO mandates are associated with conflict years that see more deaths, i.e. more severe conflicts are more likely to see UNPKO deployment. Moreover, longer conflicts, ethnic conflicts, territorial conflicts, and resource conflicts all are associated with higher numbers of fatalities. A higher democracy score is associated with lower numbers of fatalities. Weak groups as well as groups with high mobilization capabilities are associated with more fatalities.

Table X. Negative binomial regression - Model 3.4 (DV = best estimate of deaths)

	(3.4)
Rebel SV (lag)	0.338[t]
	[-0.062,0.739]
Gov't SV (lag)	-0.079
	[-0.366,0.207]
Best death estimate (lag)	0.568***
	[0.515,0.621]
Duration (ln)	0.311***
	[0.175,0.447]
Ethnic	0.894***
	[0.567,1.221]
Incompatibility	0.491**
	[0.170,0.813]
Resource conflict	0.332*
	[0.068,0.596]
Robust mandate	0.634*
	[0.136,1.133]
Population (ln)	0.010
	[-0.078,0.098]
GDP (ln)	0.137[t]
	[-0.018,0.292]
Democracy	-1.397***
	[-2.067,-0.726]
Weak rebels	1.252***
	[0.874,1.631]
Legal political wing	0.011
	[-0.310,0.331]
Mobilization capacity	0.351**
	[0.114,0.587]
Constant	-1.414
	[-3.337,0.509]
lnalpha	1.576
	[1.495,1.657]

alpha	4.834
	[4.457,5.242]
chibar^2 (01)	320,000
Prob >= chibar^2	0.000
LR chi^2	565.35(14)
Prob > chi^2	0.000
Log likelihood	-5,847.475
N	1,374

95% confidence intervals in brackets
t p < 0.1, *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001

Robustness checks

Control variables can bias estimates (Clarke 2005). Accordingly, the first robustness test is to examine the relationship between independent and dependent variable without the inclusion of control variables. The results show the expected positive relationship between rebel-led sexual violence in inactive periods and conflict recurrence. This relationship also holds when accounting for time since last active conflict without introducing further control variables.

To control for the possibilities that government-led sexual violence is a symptom of general government repression and that this affects conflict recurrence, I include a variable from the V-Dem data measuring the level of civil society repression (Coppedge et al. 2017). To ameliorate potential simultaneity problems of conflict recurrence and repression, I run Model 3.3 with lagged measures of government repression. The relationship between rebel-led sexual violence and conflict recurrence remains significant. Similarly, lagging the level of democracy does not affect the results.

Research shows that increasing women's political representation prolongs the peace after negotiated agreements (Shair-Rosenfield and Wood 2017). Thus I run robustness checks that include variables that control for women's security as well as societal and political empowerment and participation. The inclusion of these controls has no significant influence on conflict recurrence. The effect of the main explanatory variable remains unchanged: rebel sexual violence in inactive periods continues to be significant. When including these additional controls in Model 3.4, rebel sexual violence is no longer statistically significant in relation to the subsequent escalation of lethal violence. Instead the results show a statistically significant relationship between number of fatalities and women's security in society, the more secure women are the lower the number of fatalities. This finding

is in line with earlier work on gendered inequality and intensity of intrastate conflicts (Caprioli 2005; Melander 2005b) and speaks to the importance of patriarchal practices discussed in chapter 2.

To ensure that the results are not driven by cases in which the inactive period is long and conflict recurrence is unlikely, I run Model 3.3 limiting my samples to cases with an inactive period of longer than 15 years. Rebel sexual violence continues to be statistically significant for conflict recurrence. To control for the alternative that the results are driven by quickly recurring conflicts, I exclude conflicts with inactive periods shorter than five years. Rebel sexual violence retains statistical significance (p = 0.049), but preceding conflict termination through low level of activity does not. Put differently, when violence subsides below the 25 battle-related deaths for five consecutive years, the likelihood of conflict recurrence is statistically no different from military victories, which are deemed the most stable outcomes.

I also run Model 3.3 excluding the five conflicts with the most inactive years featuring rebel sexual violence.[24] Rebel sexual violence continues to be statistically significant for the recurrence of conflict. Similarly, I run a robustness check excluding conflicts with more than four recurrences.[25] In this model, both rebel sexual violence (p = 0.078) and low level activity (p = 0.057) both have a statistically significant relationship at the 0.1-level.

To further examine the temporal effects of rebel sexual violence on conflict escalation I run Model 3.4 with rebel and government sexual violence lagged by three years, five years, and seven years. After seven years there is no longer a statistically significant relationship between rebel sexual violence and fatalities in the conflict.

4.8 Discussion

This study contributes to both the burgeoning body of literature on conflict-related sexual violence and conflict recurrence. It provides robust support of the relationship between sexual violence in inactive years and subsequent conflict recurrence. Theoretically the paper builds on firmly established research of how

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[24] These conflicts are in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Georgia, the Republic of Congo, the Central African Republic, and Côte d'Ivoire
[25] These conflicts are in Iran, Senegal, Angola, and India.

sexual violence functions as a socialization tool when dealing with an influx of new fighters (Cohen 2013a, 2016, 2017). Accordingly, the findings support the argument that rebel groups that mobilize fighters and build social cohesion among new recruits through the perpetration of sexual violence in inactive years are more likely to resume fighting.

The paper addresses an important gap in our understanding of how sexual violence affects conflict dynamics. I show that sexual violence increases the expected death count in the following year by 40%. This supports previous work on conflict-related sexual violence that argues that it increase social cohesion and military effectiveness (Cohen 2013a, 2016, 2017). It also contributes to the literature on the effects of sexual violence on conflict dynamics more broadly (Chu and Braithwaite 2018). The article also highlights the importance of remaining vigilant in inactive conflict periods to prevent belligerents' human rights abuses, particularly sexual violence, that might lead to greater violence.

More generally, this article challenges the notion of the 'post-conflict' period. Explicitly, the findings pose larger theoretical questions: should we consider conflicts as 'terminated', when one or both sides continue to mobilize and perpetrate sexual violence, or human rights abuses more generally, after the fighting stops? Can we consider a country at peace, if armed actors continue to victimize civilians? Is the absence of lethal violence enough to constitute a negative peace? How would our approaches to conflict resolution and prevention differ, if our understanding of what constitutes 'post-conflict' changed? These questions provide potential avenues for future research in how we can build lasting peace.

This connects to the policy relevance of this article. Besides the profound normative argument to prevent sexual violence during and after conflict, this article shows that both states and the international community have strong security-based incentives to prevent conflict-related sexual violence. In linking the previously separately considered problems of conflict recurrence and sexual violence, this article further challenges the predominant narrative of sexual violence as a weapon of war and calls for changes and improvements to national and international prevention efforts. In line with this, the findings call for more attention to the gendered organizational dimensions of violence and conflict. Concrete steps to improve prevention of both sexual violence and subsequently conflict recurrence include greater use of gender advisors in peace processes,

greater inclusion of civil society and women's organizations, inclusion and implementation of gender provisions in peace agreements, as well as a early warning systems that monitor human rights abuses in inactive conflict periods. In light of the enormous humanitarian and socio-economic consequences of both sexual violence and recurring conflicts, strengthening local and global observers to improve prevention and mitigation efforts becomes crucial.

4.9 Appendix C

Robustness checks
Model 3.5 – without any controls

	(3.5)
Rebel SV in inactive period	1.012**
	[0.328,1.696]
Constant	-2.767***
	[-3.086,-2.448]
AIC	985.192
Area under ROC	0.551
Wald-chi²	8.41(1)
Prob > chi²	0.004
Log likelihood	-490.596
N	2,050

95% confidence intervals in brackets
*p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001

Model 3.6 – same as Model 3.3 with lagged controls for democracy, corruption, and civil society repression

Model 3.7 – same as Model 3.3 with controls for women's security, inclusion, and rights

Model 3.8 – same as Model 3.3 excluding inactive periods longer than 15 years

Model 3.9 – same as Model 3.3 excluding inactive periods shorter than 5 years

	(3.6)	(3.7)	(3.8)	(3.9)
Rebel SV in inactive period	1.023*	1.085*	1.057*	1.982*
	[0.198,1.848]	[0.233,1.937]	[0.193,1.921]	[0.009,3.954]
Gov't SV in inactive period	0.057	-0.034	-0.026	0.242
	[-0.513,0.627]	[-0.638,0.571]	[-0.557,0.504]	[-1.337,1.822]
Rebel SV in active period	-0.106	-0.193	-0.207	0.620
	[-0.798,0.585]	[-0.888,0.502]	[-0.881,0.467]	[-1.069,2.309]
Gov't SV in active period	0.043	0.043	0.069	-0.790
	[-0.495,0.582]	[-0.524,0.610]	[-0.490,0.627]	[-2.728,1.149]
Negotiated Agreement	0.611	0.747	0.438	0.149
	[-0.276,1.499]	[-0.236,1.729]	[-0.535,1.412]	[-2.082,2.380]
Low level activity	1.065*	1.269**	1.134*	1.024
	[0.144,1.987]	[0.352,2.186]	[0.229,2.039]	[-1.072,3.120]
Best estimate fatalities (lag ln)	-0.015	0.018	0.125	1.718***
	[-0.196,0.166]	[-0.167,0.202]	[-0.048,0.297]	[0.927,2.508]
Conflict duration	0.081	0.099	0.066	0.664*

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
(ln)	[-0.190,0.352]	[-0.170,0.367]	[-0.190,0.321]	[0.148,1.180]
Ethnic	-0.032	0.027	0.111	0.148
	[-0.545,0.482]	[-0.483,0.536]	[-0.378,0.600]	[-1.328,1.624]
Incompatibility	-0.134	-0.149	-0.117	1.549
	[-0.736,0.468]	[-0.743,0.446]	[-0.654,0.421]	[-0.108,3.205]
Resource conflict	0.208	0.130	0.148	-0.437
	[-0.313,0.729]	[-0.385,0.646]	[-0.350,0.647]	[-2.238,1.364]
Robust mandate	0.025	0.021	0.016	2.546**
	[-0.492,0.541]	[-0.616,0.657]	[-0.509,0.542]	[0.726,4.365]
Population (ln)	0.085	0.082	0.019	0.126
	[-0.095,0.266]	[-0.119,0.282]	[-0.141,0.179]	[-0.254,0.506]
GDP (ln)	-0.121	0.097	-0.139	0.266
	[-0.321,0.080]	[-0.191,0.385]	[-0.360,0.082]	[-0.310,0.842]
Democracy		-0.352	-0.611	-1.279
		[-1.863,1.160]	[-1.654,0.433]	[-3.502,0.945]
Weak rebels	0.382	0.351	0.662	0.030
	[-0.256,1.020]	[-0.321,1.023]	[-0.012,1.335]	[-1.456,1.515]
Legal political wing	0.424	0.309	0.457	-1.133
	[-0.150,0.998]	[-0.299,0.916]	[-0.021,0.936]	[-2.724,0.458]
Mobilization capability	0.063	0.051	0.099	0.528
	[-0.270,0.397]	[-0.308,0.410]	[-0.243,0.441]	[-0.300,1.355]
Corruption index (lag)	-0.489			
	[-1.866,0.887]			
Democracy (lag)	-0.305			
	[-2.690,2.080]			
Civil society repression (lag)	-0.160			
	[-0.552,0.231]			
Women's security		-0.149		
		[-0.589,0.290]		
Women's rights		-0.210		
		[-0.728,0.307]		
Women's inclusion		-0.213		
		[-0.677,0.250]		
Constant	-3.425*	-5.861**	-5.385***	-13.01*
	[-6.278,-0.572]	[-9.703,-2.019]	[-8.454,-2.315]	[-24.23,-1.783]
AIC	739.764	708.752	671.369	196.680
Area under ROC	0.789	0.793	0.788	0.890
Wald-chi²	134.70(23)	148.42(24)	107.59(21)	133.99(21)
Prob > chi²	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Log likelihood	-345.882	-329.376	-313.684	-76.340
Cubic polynomial	✓	✓	✓	✓
N	1,726	1,611	1,386	986

95% confidence intervals in brackets
t p < 0.1, *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001

Model 3.10 – same as Model 3.3 excluding five conflicts with most inactive years that featuring rebel sexual violence

List of conflicts: DRC (UCDP ID 283), Liberia (UCDP ID 341), Georgia (UCDP ID 392), Congo (UCDP 408), Central African Republic (UCDP ID 416), Côte d'Ivoire (UCDP ID 419)

Model 3.11 – same as Model 3.3 excluding conflicts with more than four conflict recurrences

List of conflicts: Iran (UCDP ID 338), Senegal (UCDP ID 375), Angola (UCDP ID 387), India (UCDP 421)

	(3.10)	(3.11)
Rebel SV in inactive period	1.455**	0.790t
	[0.520,2.389]	[-0.090,1.671]
Gov't SV in inactive period	0.039	0.229
	[-0.531,0.609]	[-0.334,0.793]
Rebel SV in active period	-0.554	-0.180
	[-1.396,0.288]	[-0.872,0.511]
Gov't SV in active period	0.166	-0.059
	[-0.389,0.722]	[-0.669,0.551]
Negotiated Agreement	0.733	0.369
	[-0.231,1.697]	[-0.598,1.336]
Low level activity	1.203*	0.929t
	[0.239,2.168]	[-0.028,1.887]
Best estimate fatalities (lag ln)	-0.014	0.014
	[-0.202,0.174]	[-0.176,0.203]
Conflict duration (ln)	0.090	0.195
	[-0.189,0.369]	[-0.074,0.464]
Ethnic	0.077	0.417
	[-0.457,0.610]	[-0.161,0.995]
Incompatibility	-0.079	0.157
	[-0.686,0.529]	[-0.478,0.792]
Resource conflict	0.169	-0.098
	[-0.345,0.683]	[-0.596,0.401]
Robust mandate	0.588	0.202
	[-0.237,1.412]	[-0.332,0.737]
Population (ln)	0.080	0.121
	[-0.116,0.275]	[-0.0825,0.324]
GDP (ln)	-0.080	-0.058
	[-0.292,0.133]	[-0.289,0.172]
Democracy	-0.835	-0.885
	[-1.877,0.206]	[-2.057,0.288]
Weak rebels	0.368	0.174
	[-0.404,1.140]	[-0.445,0.794]
Legal political wing	0.375	-0.107
	[-0.149,0.899]	[-0.800,0.585]
Mobilization capability	0.026	-0.102
	[-0.326,0.378]	[-0.443,0.238]
Constant	-3.913**	-4.673**
	[-6.728,-1.097]	[-7.777,-1.569]
AIC	681.413	644.488
Area under ROC	0.796	0.776
Wald-chi^2	118.23(21)	108.77(21)

Prob > chi²	0.000	0.000
Log likelihood	-318.707	-300.244
Cubic polynomial	✓	✓
N	1,633	1,654

95% confidence intervals in brackets

t p < 0.1, *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001

Model 3.12 – same as Model 3.4 with controls for women's security, inclusion, and rights

Model 3.13 – same as Model 3.4 with 3 year lag

Model 3.14 – same as Model 3.4 with 5 year lag

Model 3.15 – same as Model 3.4 with 7 year lag

	(3.12)	(3.13)	(3.14)	(3.15)
Rebel SV (lag)	0.256			
	[-0.161,0.674]			
Gov't SV (lag)	-0.044			
	[-0.334,0.246]			
Rebel SV (3 yr lag)		0.561*		
		[0.128,0.995]		
Gov't SV (3 yr lag)		-0.235		
		[-0.565,0.095]		
Rebel SV (5 yr lag)			0.635**	
			[0.158,1.112]	
Gov't SV (5 yr lag)			-0.198	
			[-0.542,0.146]	
Rebel SV (7 yr lag)				0.356
				[-0.190,0.901]
Gov't SV (7 yr lag)				-0.182
				[-0.548,0.185]
Best estimate fatalities (lag ln)	0.593***	0.591***	0.651***	0.743***
	[0.538,0.648]	[0.532,0.651]	[0.585,0.717]	[0.666,0.820]
Conflict duration (ln)	0.304***	0.503***	0.651***	0.714***
	[0.165,0.443]	[0.346,0.660]	[0.499,0.803]	[0.561,0.867]
Ethnic	0.848***	1.273***	0.905***	1.173***
	[0.503,1.194]	[0.913,1.632]	[0.532,1.277]	[0.751,1.595]
Incompatibility	0.108	0.572**	0.922***	1.089***
	[-0.247,0.463]	[0.225,0.918]	[0.563,1.282]	[0.717,1.461]
Resource conflict	0.004	0.422**	0.877***	0.955***
	[-0.302,0.309]	[0.131,0.714]	[0.546,1.208]	[0.610,1.301]
Robust mandate	1.137***	0.700*	-0.344	0.436
	[0.584,1.691]	[0.160,1.240]	[-0.979,0.292]	[-0.248,1.120]
Population (ln)	0.056	0.027	-0.025	0.003
	[-0.040,0.152]	[-0.068,0.122]	[-0.121,0.072]	[-0.103,0.110]
GDP (ln)	0.426***	0.303***	0.135	0.374***
	[0.213,0.639]	[0.124,0.482]	[-0.035,0.306]	[0.170,0.577]
Democracy	-1.150*	-1.861***	-1.005**	-1.460***
	[-2.139,-0.162]	[-2.585,-1.137]	[-1.763,-0.248]	[-2.288,-0.632]
Weak rebels	1.055***	1.872***	1.865***	2.058***
	[0.657,1.453]	[1.452,2.292]	[1.420,2.310]	[1.561,2.555]

Legal political wing	-0.050	-0.016	0.097	0.513*
	[-0.372,0.272]	[-0.378,0.347]	[-0.268,0.462]	[0.113,0.912]
Mobilization capability	0.309*	0.352**	0.357*	0.681***
	[0.068,0.550]	[0.097,0.607]	[0.082,0.631]	[0.393,0.970]
Women's security	-0.355**			
	[-0.598,-0.111]			
Women's rights	-0.273			
	[-0.607,0.062]			
Women's inclusion	-0.141			
	[-0.383,0.102]			
Constant	-3.505**	-3.981***	-3.641***	-6.880***
	[-5.788,-1.222]	[-6.127,-1.836]	[-5.736,-1.546]	[-9.362,-4.398]
lnalpha	1.549	1.715	1.710	1.796
	[1.465,1.632]	[1.628,1.802]	[1.615,1.805]	[1.695,1.898]
alpha	4.706	5.557	5.530	6.027
	[4.329,5.116]	[5.093,6.063]	[5.030,6.080]	[5.445,6.671]
chibar^2 (01)	300,000	280,000	210,000	190,000
Prob >= chibar^2	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
LR chi^2	554.26(17)	523.56(14)	580.15(14)	548.47(14)
Prob > chi^2	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Log likelihood	-5,511.023	-5,002.050	-4,328.155	-3,786.897
N	1,299	1,314	1,249	1,177

95% confidence intervals in brackets

*p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001

5. Conclusion

5.1 Summary

One overarching question motivates this research: To what extent do gendered aspects of society and violence influence conflict resolution in intrastate conflicts? To fully examine this question I divide the question into three more specific questions: First, to what extent do gender relations in society influence the likelihood of nonviolent conflict management? Second, to what extent does sexual violence influence the onset of mediation in intrastate conflicts? And third, to what extent does sexual violence influences conflict recurrence? Although I develop a specific argument to address each question, these arguments share a gender lens that combines different strands of feminist IR theory and mainstream rationalist theorizing. This gender lens foregrounds the previously overlooked gendered dynamics underpinning conflict resolution in intrastate conflicts.

I argue and find that negotiations are less likely in countries in which patriarchal gender relations manifest in the violent marginalization and exclusion of women. I draw on Bordieu's practices to explain how women's exclusion in society shape state behavior at the macro-level, which presents an important theoretical contribution (Bourdieu 1977, 1990). Permeating all levels of society, practices connect and shape both individuals and formal government institutions, thereby influencing modes of governing, which includes dealing with armed conflict. Specifically, I find that the likelihood of negotiations increases from below 5% when men most severely exclude women from public life to 35% when women participate more fully in public life. These figures underscore the substantive positive effects that increased women's inclusion could have on conflict resolution efforts.

In this thesis, I also argue that public reports of rebel sexual violence increase the likelihood of mediation. Specifically, I contend that reports of rebel sexual violence expose the government's inability to fulfil its masculine protection of vulnerable populations, i.e. women and children, and that this presents a conflict cost that outweighs the costs of accepting mediation. I show that rebel sexual violence substantively increases the likelihood of mediation onset and draw on the crucial case of the Sierra Leone civil war to test the theoretical argument. The RUF's massive sexual violence renders the Sierra Leone civil war the most likely

case to observe the causal link between sexual violence and mediation onset. Using a variety of sources I illustrate the important role of the gendered protection in influencing government policies and the onset of mediated talks.

Lastly, I argue that rebel sexual violence in inactive conflict years indicates mobilization efforts and thus is associated with higher chances of conflict recurrence. I draw on Dara Kay Cohen's work, which shows that rape during civil war helps groups create bonds of trust and overcome low internal cohesion (Cohen 2013a, 2016, 2017). Building on this, I contend that rebel sexual violence in inactive years enables rebel groups to build capabilities and thus increases the likelihood of conflict recurrence. I identify four observable implications that follow from this argument and illustrate that rebel sexual violence substantively facilitates the escalation of violence.

In this thesis, I draw attention to the deeply gendered nature of structural, organizational, and conflict process factors, to then theoretically argue and empirically illustrate how these influence conflict resolution efforts. I highlight feminist IR theories' relevance and explanatory power in the context of intrastate conflicts. Applying a gender lens, I pose new questions, provide fresh perspectives, and present important insights. In asking and addressing these questions I firmly establish a gender lens's value in illuminating previously unseen patterns and causal relationships that are fundamental to conflict resolution efforts in intrastate conflicts. The arguments and findings of this thesis present important implications for both future research and policy makers, which I outline below.

5.2 Future research

In this thesis I demonstrate that combining feminist IR theory and systematic analysis helps us detect and understand previously overlooked patterns. This combination produces unique insights into all stages of a conflict cycle from bilateral talks to the inclusion of intermediaries and the relapse into fighting. More generally, feminist IR theory offers new theoretical concepts, approaches, and arguments to traditional mainstream conflict research, which is critical for the latter to continue to evolve and remain relevant. Put differently, the merging of these subfields has the potential to produce creative and counter-intuitive research. In line with this and based on the findings of this thesis, I outline a potential future research agenda.

In introducing practices as a measurable concept I open up the possibility of a new research agenda that combines statistical analysis with theoretical arguments previously thought to be unobservable. The concept of practices enables researchers to make norms and beliefs tangible and analyzable to a greater extent. This could facilitate research of a wide range of issues from gendered socialization to political systems. One concrete avenue for future research could be examining the temporal and spatial diffusion of practices across countries and conflicts. For example, in West Africa, particularly in the conflicts in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire, combatants of previous wars often fought as mercenaries in subsequent conflicts in neighboring countries. Sexual violence was a prominent feature in all three conflicts and the respective governments repeatedly blamed foreign fighters for such violations. Thus, future research might examine the question to what extent practices of sexual violence diffuse from conflict to conflict.

Building on the findings of this thesis, another potential avenue for future research is to conduct qualitative case study research to trace the causal mechanisms. Whether it is through single or comparative case studies, it is important to test the theoretical argument through in-depth qualitative research to complement the statistical findings. Process tracing in particular would enable researchers to examine the causal pathway of the effects of sexual violence and actors' responses to it in a complex environment where outcomes cannot be solely explained by one or two independent variables (George and Bennett 2005). Such research would aim at understanding how leaders and combatants perceived the violence perpetrated by the other side, how it shaped their view of the conflict as well as their understanding of the other side and themselves, and consequently their decisions. Such a research project would entail archival work as well as qualitative interviews to trace the individual links of the causal mechanism on the micro-level and to rule out competing arguments.

This thesis finds that rebel sexual violence has strong effects on conflict resolution efforts. This raises the question, what role does sexual violence by state forces play and how does the international community react to it? Research by Lisa Hultman and Karin Johansson shows that in terms of peacekeeping deployment the identity of the perpetrator does not play a significant role (2017). At the same time, there might be other ways governments are held accountable such as

sanctions and reduction of aid from democratic donor countries. Accordingly, future research should explore what role conflict-related sexual violence plays in shaping international sanctions, trade relations, and economic and humanitarian aid donations.

This thesis has opened up the research into temporal effects of sexual violence. However, there still is a lot to learn. I show that sexual violence takes on a particular role in conflict. It not only targets the direct victims, but also the masculinity of the belligerent who fails to protect its constituents. Considering my findings, future research should explore to what extent sexual violence affects long-term stability, economic development, institution building, and trust in others and the government. In other words, how does sexual violence affect the relationship to fellow citizens and the government, particularly in cases where the government is the sole reported perpetrator of sexual violence?

These questions are particularly pertinent in the context of conflicts along ethnic lines. For example during fighting in South Sudan, Dinka combatants perpetrating rape in recent years rationalized and justified their actions as revenge for Nuer men raping Dinka women and girls in 1991 (Amnesty International 2017, 25). This highlights the long-lasting effects of sexual violence and the potential for such incidents to be used to mobilize for revenge and renewed conflict. In line with recent research on the role and importance of revenge in civil wars (Balcells 2010, 2017), this calls for an in-depth look at the dynamics of revenge and to what extent sexual violence functions as cause, catalyst, excuse, and/or justification.

5.3 Policy implications

Unwilling to give war a chance (Luttwak 1999), conflict resolution efforts in the form of negotiations and mediations present the most promising approach to ending and preventing armed conflicts. This thesis presents a number of insights for policymakers and practitioners in the field of conflict resolution. In general, the thesis highlights the importance of paying attention to the different explicitly and implicitly gendered aspects of intrastate conflict. Applying a gender lens brings into focus the gendered nature of violence; the gendered dynamics between conflict parties; and the gendered aspects that underpin armed groups' mobilization. Thus, to effectively manage and resolve intrastate conflicts,

policymakers and practitioners alike need to engage with and address these gendered aspects.

Furthermore, this thesis' findings and the following policy implications speak to core pillars of the WPS agenda: women's inclusion and participation, protection of women in conflict, and the prevention of violence. In 2000 the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1325 calling for women's participation in peace and security governance, the protection of women, and prevention of violence. Since then seven additional resolutions (1820, 1888, 1889, 1960, 2106, 2122, and 2242) have cemented the WPS agenda. In line with these core pillars of the WPS agenda I highlight six specific policy implications arising from this research.

First, the thesis highlights that previously neglected gendered aspects such as patriarchal gender relations in society are influential in shaping conflict management choices. Policymakers and practitioners often focus on armed actors' capabilities, the intensity of fighting, and the costs of conflict. In illustrating that the exclusion of women from public life is associated with a smaller likelihood of negotiations, the thesis draws attention to practices of subordination and exclusion. Understanding that fundamental societal norms and practices are important factors that influence conflict management efforts in intrastate conflicts is critical to improving policymakers' approaches. The implication for policymakers and practitioners is clear: practices of subordination, exclusion, and oppression present impediments to nonviolent conflict resolution. Arguably, this can be extended beyond gender to other sources of oppressive hierarchies such as class and race. Hence, in line with the WPS agenda's call for increased women's participation policy makers ought to strive to implement programs that counter marginalizing practices and dismantle oppressive hierarchical structures. Concrete examples include legislative changes to patrilineal inheritance and property laws, increased access to sexual and reproductive health services, and the implementation of quotas to ensure women's inclusion in all spheres of public life.

Second, such hierarchical relations, particularly patriarchal gender relations, are by definition deeply entrenched. They tend to change slowly and often only incrementally. Importantly, however, they do change and on a global scale there has been a significant improvement of women's security, women's rights, and women's inclusion over time (Karim and Hill 2018). Furthermore,

although it might not be quick, norms and practices are susceptible to change and manipulation from the outside (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998). Accordingly, the policy implication is that building sustainable peace requires a comprehensive, long-term approach that recognizes the importance of gender relations within a society. The findings in this thesis strongly support pursuing and implementing feminist policies rooted in values of equality, care, empathy, nonviolence, and respect. At the same time, it is important to refrain from an instrumental approach of considering gender relations as a tool or objective in the pursuit of peace. Equality in terms of women's inclusion, women's rights, and women's security is a fundamental human right. It should be pursued as such.

Third, the results show that diplomatic interventions in the form of mediation are more likely when rebels are reported to perpetrate sexual violence. This indicates a general willingness of the international community to intervene diplomatically when confronted with explicitly gendered human rights abuses, which corroborates other research indicating that the deployment of peacekeeping missions is more likely when conflicts feature sexual violence (Kreutz and Cardenas 2017; Hultman and Johansson 2017). However, the findings also suggest a pro-government bias in the interventions. Government forces are far more often reported to perpetrate sexual violence, yet, my findings show that this does not increase the likelihood of a diplomatic intervention by a third party. In light of the prevalence of government abuses and considering the WPS agenda's focus on protection of women and prevention of violence, it is crucial that the international community finds an effective way of addressing state sponsored abuses.

Fourth, the findings indicate that sexual violence might be an important indicator for 'ripeness'. The implication being that potential intermediaries should pay close attention to news reports of rebel sexual violence and coordinate their diplomatic efforts accordingly to maximize the chances of initiating a process. Reaching the table is a critical first step towards comprehensive resolution. Hence understanding the influence of rebel sexual violence on a government's decision process to come to the table is crucial for international actors. Recent research corroborates the notion of sexual violence as an indicator for ripeness. Tiffany Chu and Jessica Maves Braithwaite (2018) show that negotiated agreements are more likely when both sides in a conflict perpetrate sexual violence arguing that the perpetration indicates that they are organizationally weak, less likely to win

militarily, and thus more likely to sign a deal to avoid further costly stalemate and salvage at least something from the conflict. This suggests that while rebel sexual violence gets a government to the table, it is the latter's indisposition that ensures that an agreement is signed. Combined these findings underline the importance of sexual violence to conflict resolution efforts, which policy makers and practitioners can leverage to maximize the likelihood of having their mediation offers accepted.

Fifth, in illuminating the short- and long-term consequences of sexual violence the findings underscore the need for greater sensitivity and self-awareness of international actors. While any nonviolent conflict management efforts are generally preferable to continued fighting, this can also be problematic because the involvement of a third party elevates a rebel group's status and grants it legitimacy. The involvement of intermediaries thus might inadvertently reward rebels for bad behavior and contribute to a perverse incentive structure. Put differently, rebels might see perpetrating rape as a tactic to gain access to the negotiating table and international recognition. This entails the danger of further entrenching the dominant narrative of 'rape as a weapon of war' (Crawford 2017), which fails to reflect the robust body of research examining the diverse reasons and motivations underpinning conflict-related sexual violence (Wood 2014; Cohen 2016; Baaz and Stern 2009, 2013, 2018). In combination with the increased international attention to conflict-related sexual violence in the last decade (e.g. UN Security Council resolutions 1820, 1960, 2106), this has the potential to exacerbate the perpetration sexual violence (Autesserre 2012; Meger 2016). In other words, the onset of mediated talks in response to sexual violence might have the unintended consequence of making sexual violence an attractive tool for other rebel groups, thereby proliferating the sexual violence generally. Thus, policy makers and practitioners ought to be aware of, reflect on, and consider the potential consequences how explicitly and implicitly gendered features of conflicts are shaping their decisions and what long-term consequences could result from their involvement.

Sixth, the observed relationship between sexual violence, conflict management, and conflict recurrence highlights the importance of paying attention to the gendered organizational dynamics of armed groups and their impact on conflict processes. These findings thus challenge policy makers and practitioners

to intensify their efforts to prevent conflict-related sexual violence during combat and after the official cessation of hostilities to prevent conflict recurrence. Furthermore, they present a call to make more and better use of gender advisors in peace processes, to increase civil society and women's organizations' participation in peacebuilding, and to strengthen the gender dimensions in peace agreements as well as security sector reform and DDR programs. Another concrete step would be increased monitoring and prosecution of human rights abuses during and after conflicts to curb, prevent, and pre-empt further violations.

The inherent complexity of intrastate conflicts precludes any mono-causal explanations for how, when, and why conflict resolution might start, stop, or succeed. There are structural, organizational, and conflict process factors that all contribute to these. This thesis demonstrates that these factors are inherently gendered; it shows that a gender lens offers new perspectives to mainstream conflict research, which can help detect previously overlooked patterns and relationships; it underscores that effective conflict resolution requires an understanding of the gendered influences in intrastate conflicts; it highlights the importance of sex-disaggregated data; it illustrates that systematic analysis and feminist IR theory are compatible; it underlines benefits of bridging these two approaches; and it calls for further exploring the potential synergies of such research. This thesis identifies gender as an integral component to understanding intrastate conflicts and resolution efforts in them, demonstrating that going forward a gender lens will be indispensable for both researchers and practitioners.

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