



**Gender-based Violence against Men during Armed Conflict - a Case Study
of the Sierra Leone Civil War (1991-2002)**

By

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Declaration

I declare that the following work is my own except where indicated. I declare that this thesis has not previously been submitted for any qualification at any other university. I have acknowledged all sources in the reference list.

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1. Introduction

The road to hell is paved with good intentions

– *Unknown source*

** In 2016, I attended the AIDS Foundation of South Africa (AFSA) 2016 Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) Regional Learning and Sharing conference where I met Grace Chibowa who was employed as a programme officer at Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) in Lusaka. When I engaged her in conversation on the lack of support and resources for men who are victims of gender-based violence and whether or not her organisation would address this issue, her reply was “no”. She continued by telling me that statistics reveal that the majority of victims are women and those would be who their programme was geared towards. When I asked if she knew of programmes that were geared towards men, her answer was “no”. The conversation was circular and her answer for addressing men victims was always that they are a minority in the statistics. Her parting words were, “well, why don’t **you** do it?” thereby passing on the ethical responsibility to me, and absolving herself and her organization of any.*

***During my Honours in 2012, I took a class on Conflict Transformation and Peace Studies when as par the field of Conflict Studies, we started discussing gender-based violence during armed conflict. As with the vast majority of discussions I had participated in before, the sole focus was on women as victims and men as perpetrators. No other demographic was included. I raised the issue of other groups being left out of discussion, and when it came to men who are victims of sexual gender-based violence in particular. There was laughter that came predominantly from the men in the class. When I asked what was funny about it, the only answer that I got from one of the men was that it was just an unusual and sort of ridiculous concept.*

Although I had engaged with gender-based violence research as part of my education, it was my experiences as outlined in the above epigraphs that provided key turning points in the way I thought about the topic. These experiences made me question how victims of different genders were regarded and how they were treated in academia as well as in the field. It made me question how victimhood was constructed, who was “allowed” to be a victim of gender-based violence, and who was worthy of aid. These questions and the subsequent readings I did in trying to answer these questions gave birth to this research where I will address some of these questions.

Gender-based violence with regards to armed conflict and non-armed conflict settings is a constant topic of discussion and research. It is especially present in the field of Conflict Transformation and Peace Studies where acts of violence, who it happens to and why, are scrutinized. This provides valuable data as to how to go about addressing violence before,

during and after conflict. Gender-based Violence has been documented as occurring during armed conflict settings and has been shown to be perpetrated against both genders, with most being perpetrated against women and girl children by men (see Buss, 2009; Cohen, Green & Wood, 2013; Wood, 2009 and Carpenter, 2006). As noted above, there is a bias when it comes to the way in which men who are victims of gender-based violence exist in the imagination, and through that, are treated. It exposes an idealization of victimhood, which in turn impacts on the way in which policies and programmes are shaped as well as the way that men as victims of violence are received.

This research project examines the ways in which the victimhood of men is shaped by scholarship and international fieldworkers in a cycle that feeds the way in which theory and policy around gender-based violence in armed conflict is constructed. This research also takes a critical look at community understandings of violence against men, the way it impacts communities and the ways in which it is dealt with after the armed conflict period by the community. The Sierra Leone Civil War of 1991-2002 will be used as a case study.

The use of Sierra Leone as a case study is not out of expert knowledge of the state, its people or the civil war; but one of scholarly interest in violence on the African continent and as a point to show that gender-based violence against men is not new and the repeated shock and dismissal of gender-based violence against men is therefore inexcusable. Sierra Leone is used as a study to show that the repeated shock at gender-based violence against men is due to a conscious choice to avoid acknowledging that while men perpetuate and benefit from patriarchy, they are also victims of it just as women are. This needs to be acknowledged and acted upon in scholarship, policy and in the field.

Gender-based violence is multifaceted in that it has many forms of expression, different kinds of victims, perpetrators and settings that it occurs within. Unfortunately, current gender-based violence discourse suggests that it is not possible to discuss that multifaceted nature with reference to all genders. Only women are allowed to be subjects of gender-based violence discussion due to factors that will be examined in this research. If gender-based violence is to be truly understood, then it has to be examined in all the different ways that it exists. This means that although the male perpetrator-female victim paradigm is grounded in research, it does not mean that minority experiences with gender-based violence become less important than the experiences of the majority nor less severe. In fact, it should never be about numbers when dealing with an issue that has as deep and wide an impact as gender-based violence. If it

is treated in such a manner, then we are also suggesting that there are those who are more deserving of support than others, that there are people who have more value than others. This kind of thinking creates and preserves victim inequality and can allow many victims to remain isolated and perpetrators to carry on with their crimes unpunished.

Due to research being focused mostly on women, there is very limited direct research on gender-based violence against men during armed conflict (Sivakumaran, 2007, p. 254). Like Sivakumaran did with his paper, some of the sources for this research have nothing to do with this subject, but still provide valuable insight (Sivakumaran, 2007, p. 254). The lack of source material on gender-based violence against men during armed conflict is itself an important source of data and will form an important part of critique later on.

This research project will also address the issue of the social construction of identity and how the individual and the community, through social interaction, draw from one other. This influence of identity will extend to the external perpetrator community as well as the community from which researchers and theorists of Gender-based Violence come. This is to show the extent to which the broader public has an influence in making people more or less vulnerable to gendered violence. If there can be a greater awareness of this, then there can be progress in the way gender-based violence is addressed, putting value in humanity as a whole, as intervention politics purports to do.

2. Background the Sierra Leonean civil war

This chapter provides a succinct background to the Sierra Leone Civil War. It lists some of the actors that participated in the conflict and played the biggest roles. The Sierra Leone Civil War was very complex and had various turning points that are too many to detail here. For that reason, the most pivotal moments will be outlined to show the rationale, direction and conclusion of the war. This is in order to provide a clear and concise context for this research project and the arguments within.

2.1 The actors

Below is a list of most of the actors that impacted on the Sierra Civil War. There are many actors from different governments and regional and international governmental bodies that played defining roles in the Sierra Leone Civil War. Due to the limitations of this research, only the actors present during key pivotal moments of the conflict will be mentioned in the outlining of the war. The rationale behind naming them is to show that the civil war could have come to an end much sooner, if not prevented at all, if there was the political will to do so by regional and international bodies.

Armed Forces Revolutionary Council AFRC

Civil Defence Forces CDF (a private militia group that came into existence after the disbandment of the national army)

Civil Society Organisations CSOs

Community-Based Organizations COMBOs

Economic Community of West African States ECOWAS

Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group ECOMOG

National Patriotic Front of Liberia NPFL

National Provisional Ruling Council NPRC

Non-Governmental Organization NGO

Organisation of African Unity OAU

Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces RSLAF/AFRSL

United Nations UN

United Nations Development Programme UNDP

United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone UNAMSIL

2.2 The events

Sierra Leone is a small former British colony on the coast of West Africa (Kawamoto, 2012, p. 125). Although the country is rich in minerals, forests, agricultural products and marine resources, its claim to fame is in what has been termed “blood diamonds” (Bangura, 2004, p. 13). Despite the country’s sizable diamond reserves, the majority of the population wasn’t able to reap the wealth. Like many African states, the liberalisation process after independence from colonial powers was a “traumatic experience” and only seemed to bring more problems for Sierra Leone (Kabbah, 2012, p. 2) (Conteh-Morgan, 2006, p. 87). The country was plagued by socio-economic and political issues such as corruption and bad governance that led to civil war (Kabbah, 2012, p. 2). According to Kabbah (2012), who was voted into the presidency in 1996 but ousted in 1997, the parties involved in the various conflicts were more concerned with their power struggles and the fight for resources, particularly diamonds than the needs of the people (Kabbah, 2012, pp. 2-3). Much of the violence was infamously “inspired and controlled by Charles Taylor” which led to him being declared a war criminal by the International Criminal Court (Gberie, 2002, p. 3). Taylor was interested in the country’s natural resources, and was responsible for most of the diamonds leaving the country illegally (Kawamoto, 2012).

The instability of the Sierra Leone led to the rise of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), led by Foday Sankoh (United Nations Environment Programme, 2010, p. 11). The group drew many young, disaffected and unemployed men into its ranks who blamed the government for their condition (United Nations Environment Programme, 2010, p. 11). In March 1991, the RUF, assisted by poor state control and backed by “Liberian warlord and later President, Charles Taylor,” started its attacks on countryside towns, as well as diamond mines, challenging then President Joseph Momoh’s failed rule (Kabbah, 2012, p. 2) (Gberie, 2002, pp. 2-3) (United Nations Environment Programme, 2010, p. 13).

In April 1992, the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC), made up of members of the national army, overthrew President Joseph Momoh, effectively dividing the country between the NPRC and the RUF (Kabbah, 2012, p. 1). This predictably did little to improve the conditions in the country as the NPRC was “hardly distinguishable from the rebels in terms of its foraging activities, allowed the war to escalate” (Gberie, 2002, p. 3). After the RUF captured Kono District, the NPRC launched Operation Genesis’ to defeat the rebels” (Gberie, 2002, p. 3). This military action led to the 10 year war that would define Sierra Leone and the diamond trade.

In spite of its violent activity, “the RUF claimed in some of its statements that it wanted ‘genuine democracy’” (Gberie, 2002, p. 3). After intervention by the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) peacekeepers, and opposition to both the RUF and the NPRC by citizens, democratic elections were finally held in 1996 and the RUF was invited to participate (Kabbah, 2012, p. 1) (Gberie, 2002, p. 3). The group refused to participate and instead launched “a campaign of intimidation against would-be voters. Hands and feet were chopped off men, women, children, and even babies” (Gberie, 2002, p. 3). The RUF’s ruthlessness was personified by one of the campaigns that it waged called “Operation No Living Thing” (Kabbah, 2012, p. 4). This campaign, as with many of their campaigns, was marked by mutilation and murder, as well as kidnappings (Kabbah, 2012, p. 4).

When Alhaj Ahmad Tejan Kabbah won the election, he continued efforts towards peace (Gberie, 2002, p. 3). A deal to end the war was signed in Abidjan in November 1996, stating that the war was ending ‘with immediate effect’ (Gberie, 2002, p. 3). Liberia’s involvement in the conflict was left unaddressed (Gberie, 2002, p. 3). Unfortunately, the deal did not lead to lasting stability. In 1997, the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), who allied themselves with the RUF, staged a coup against the Kabbah government, forcing him to flee to nearby Guinea and try to run the government from there (Kabbah, 2012, pp. 3-4) (United Nations Environment Programme, 2010, p. 13). In 1998, Kabbah was restored back into power in Sierra Leone when the rebel forces were driven out of the capital by external Nigerian-led intervention (Gberie, 2002, p. 3).

The RUF made a failed attempt to take over the capital again in 1999 (Gberie, 2002, p. 3). Though they were not successful, 6000 civilians were killed and thousands more were mutilated by the group (Gberie, 2002, p. 4). After this attack, the government signed another peace treaty in Lomé, Togo (Gberie, 2002, p. 4). This agreement went as far as providing “a

blanket amnesty to the RUF, excluding crimes against humanity” and making the RUF a part of the government with cabinet positions (Gberie, 2002, p. 4) (United Nations Environment Programme, 2010, p. 14). RUF leader, Foday Sankoh, was also given the position of vice president and chairman of the Commission for the Management of Strategic Resources (Gberie, 2002, p. 4). This gave the RUF legal access to Sierra Leone’s diamonds, and when the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) intervened, it was met with resistance (Gberie, 2002, p. 4). After British military intervention that quelled the violence, the UN imposed a ban on Liberian diamond sales and travel by Liberian officials, including President Charles Taylor, and tougher sanctions on weapons (Gberie, 2002, p. 4).

Even though the Lomé Peace Agreement had been signed in 1999, the RUF continued to mine for diamonds, with many of the miners being captives (Gberie, 2002, p. 4). Diamonds continued to be smuggled out of the country through Liberia (Gberie, 2002, p. 4). There were also reports suggesting that diamonds were also leaving through UNAMSIL personnel who were trading with RUF personnel and Liberian traders (Gberie, 2002, p. 4). Al Qaeda was named by The Washington Post in 2001 as another buyer of the diamonds (Gberie, 2002, p. 4). The timing of this publication added pressure to ending the war (Gberie, 2002, pp. 4-5).

There is an argument that if southern neighbour Liberia had not been in a state of war, the RUF would not have had such easy access to Sierra Leone’s border, fuelling the civil war in Sierra Leone (Kabbah, 2012, p. 3). The RUF used its territory to mine for diamonds which were used to buy weaponry (Kabbah, 2012, p. 3). A 2000 report by the UN estimated that the RUF had been participating in diamond trade worth between 25 million and 125 million US dollars a year (Gberie, 2002, p. 2). The report also pointed to Charles Taylor and collaborators from Europe and the Middle East, and the role that they have played in contributing to the war (United Nations Environment Programme, 2010, p. 14).

In May 2002, elections were held again (Gberie, 2002, p. 5). This time, the RUF participated, but lost dismally (Gberie, 2002, p. 5). “Interim” leader of the RUF, Issa Sessay, was accused by RUF commanders of keeping the millions made from the diamond trade for himself (Gberie, 2002, p. 5). Although Sierra Leone seemed to be moving forward, the RUF’s combatants were still engaging in battles. Reports released in early 2002 revealed that former RUF and Civil Defence Forces (CDF) combatants had been hired to fight in the Liberian civil war by Charles Taylor and his opponents (Gberie, 2002, p. 5). The reports also indicated that civilian refugees were being targeted for recruitment (Gberie, 2002, p. 5).

This may be due to the lack of income that many of them suffered from after demobilization. Apart from taking part in the Liberian war, many were still engaging in illicit diamond mining. Senesie Baryoh, ex-CDF spokesman, said that this was because “they had nothing else to do”, and “were awaiting the fulfilment of promises from the National Commission for Demobilization and Reintegration of tools and money so that they could engage in new forms of livelihood” (Gberie, 2002, p. 4).

Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of combatants began in 2001 where over 72,000 combatants were disarmed (United Nations Environment Programme, 2010, p. 14). Of these disarmed combatants, “a large number of them children”¹ (Gberie, 2002, p. 1). The end of the war was declared in January 2002 following the completion of the DDR programme, leaving over 100 000 dead and at least 2 million displaced, “including hundreds of thousands of refugees in neighbouring countries” (United Nations Environment Programme, 2010, p.14). Although the war had ended, there was a lot of criticism levied against the international community, claiming that the war would have ended sooner had there been earlier intervention regarding the root causes of the war (Kabbah, 2012, p. 5).

The ten year civil war was a bloody and traumatic to the people of Sierra Leone. It was an event that demanded early intervention event and had a long-lasting impact on Sierra Leone. It served as a test on masculinity, international sympathy, who that sympathy was for and the longevity of that sympathy. The Sierra Leone Civil war continues to have global consequences, but there has been a distinct failure in the analysis applied to the conflict. That failure is the distinct absence of gender analysis in the rationale for the war, its direction and the gendered implications regarding humanitarian intervention. These will be explored in this research.

¹ According to the Sierra Leone Citizenship Act (1973), a child is anyone under the age of 21 (UNICEF, 1996).

3. Literature Review: “Finding” Gender-based Violence against Men in Armed Conflict Situations

3.1. Introduction

The following six readings have been selected to review literature of the past 20 years on the topic of gender-based violence against men during armed conflict. These readings were chosen based on their titles in a search that specifically looked for work on gender-based violence against men during armed conflict. This was to ascertain the amount of material directly available regarding the research subject, and to reveal what current discourse contributed to the study of the topic. Research material on gender-based violence against men during armed conflict has shown itself to be extremely limited through my own interactions with the topic, as well as the interactions of the researchers that will be used in this review. Whilst my focus for this research is on the Sierra Leone civil war, like Sivakumaran (2007), I will be drawing from various studies and fields that, while important, are not directly related to the research topic due to the lack of readily available material (Sivakumaran, 2010, p. 254). Though this may be the case, there are still lessons to be learned from these readings.

- Claire M Renzetti's (2005) paper is titled "Gender-based Violence" and discusses the country-specific nature of new programmes from UNIFEM and their focus on addressing violence against women during conflicts, wars and post conflict situations. It points out the many dangers that women, who make up the statistic majority of victims, face in conflict situations and the need for women to take up more leadership roles in the post conflict processes.
- Jeanne Ward and Beth Vann's (2002) paper titled "Gender-based violence in Refugee Settings" is based on interviews with women who were refugees in Tanzania from neighbouring conflicts and centres on what they need in terms of service provision, especially with regards to implementation. It also discusses how women are most vulnerable due to their subordinate status in society and how programmes have developed over the years to address the issue of violence against women.
- Natalia Linos's 2009 paper titled "Rethinking Gender-based Violence during War: Is Violence against Civilian Men a Problem Worth Addressing?" addresses how gender-based violence against men has been seen as unimportant and how this needs to change. It also discusses the differences between sex and gender and the role that these differences play in gender-based violence along with the social services required to address it in the field.

- The paper by L. Heise, M. Ellsberg & M. Gottmoeller (2002) titled “A Global Overview of Gender-based Violence” is a medically based focus on gender-based violence against women and how it impacts negatively on them physiologically and psychologically as well as socially. The authors also discuss the place that health practitioners have in tackling this problem.
- R. Charli Carpenter is a professor at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst. Her research is focused on politics, gender and advocacy. Her paper 2006 paper titled “Recognizing Gender-based Violence against Civilian Men and Boys in Conflict Situations” directly addresses gender-based violence against men and boys during armed conflict. The author outlines the many ways in which men and boys experience gender-based violence during armed conflict, naming these experiences as being gendered. The author also explains the impact that this has on human security.
- Sandesh Sivakumaran is professor in Public International Law at the University of Nottingham. In his 2007 paper titled “Sexual Violence against Men in Armed Conflict”, he discusses the extent to which men are victims of gender-based violence during armed conflict, as well as the kinds of violence they are subjected to. He also goes into the rationale and social impact of the types of acts of gender-based violence that men are victims of.

3.2. The meaning of “gender-based violence”

Gender-based violence is articulated as violence against women according to the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), who use gender-based violence and violence against women interchangeably (Linos, 2009, p. 1549). Claire M Renzetti (2005) notes that the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) also participates in conflating gender-based violence with violence against women (Renzetti, 2005, p. 1011). This exposes a problem of definition at an organizational and international level.

The paper by Heise, et al., 2002 titled “A Global Overview of Gender-based Violence” shows how researchers also participate in the conflation. The example given below shows a conflation that occurs through omission. It is only in the keywords of the article that the authors make themselves clear that their paper would only be centred on women. Even in the abstract,

referenced below with the keywords of the article, there is no indication of which gender will be the focus, but rather gives the impression of a complete examination of the various aspects of gender-based violence with regards to sexual and reproductive health.

Abstract

This paper provides an overview of the extent and nature of gender-based violence and its health consequences, particularly on sexual and reproductive health.

Keywords: Violence; Women; Gender; Health

(Heise, et al., 2002, p. s5)

The paper noted above gives the impression that Gender-based violence *is* violence against women and no one else. Even Linos (2009) comments on this issue regarding the same paper, noting that “public health literature, has at times addressed gender-based violence as a problem experienced primarily, if not exclusively, by women (Heise, Ellesberg, & Gottmoeller, 2002)” (Linus, 2009, p. 1549). An irony of this is that the authors, Heise, et al., (2002), then continue to write that “despite its high costs, almost every society in the world has social institutions that legitimize, obscure and deny abuse” (Heise, et al., 2002, p. s5). The very paper that the authors have written has contributed to an academically institutionalized denial of gender-based violence against men and other groups, thus obscuring the concept of gender-based violence. The legitimization of gender-based violence as a violence exclusively against women puts men who have been victims of violence in a position where there is a limit to any claims of victimhood. It’s why researchers who investigate violence against men have to constantly defend themselves and provide evidence proving that gender-based violence against men is real and worthy of studying. This is something I’ve had to address multiple times when talking about my research topic.

Another example of conflation comes from Ward & Vann (2002). They note that “violence against women and girls violates several principles enshrined in international and regional human rights law, including the right to life, equality, security of the person, equal protection under the law, and freedom from torture and other cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatment” (Ward & Vann, 2002, p. s13). For these authors, it is not violence that violates international law, but violence against women and girls. Gender-based violence and violence as a whole and the way that it is addressed in national and international law will be addressed in later chapters. Carpenter (2006) reflects on legal protections as well, although arguing for a wider expansion

of them, pointing out that “men deserve protection against these abuses in their own right; moreover, addressing gender-based violence against women and girls in conflict situations is inseparable from addressing the forms of violence to which civilian men are specifically vulnerable” (Carpenter, 2006, p. 83). Disregarding men as victims of gender-based violence and positioning those who investigate it as being dismissive of the plight of women is a tactic that only weakens the fight against the causes of gender-based violence against women. In the case of the Sierra Leone Civil War, it is apparent that patriarchal masculinity fuelled the gendered violence during the armed conflict. This means that any strategy that addresses patriarchy is ultimately also benefitting women. Investigating gender-based violence against men during armed conflict is beneficial to further understanding and addressing the way it happens to women. But this does not mean that research should be conducted only when it helps women. Research that only helps men should also be afforded value the same way that other narrow research does.

The position of Gender-based violence as violence against women erases “gender” as a social construct. Charli Carpenter (2006) reminds her readers of the definition of gender-based violence, asserting that “the violence is gender-based owing to configurations of gender ideas that justify or naturalize it” (Carpenter, 2006, pp. 83-84). The term “gender-based violence” is far more encompassing than how some academics and institutions present it. The predominant account of gender-based violence as a violence against women also perpetuates a female victim, male perpetrator paradigm that Natalia Linos (2009) reflects on, noting that it “is incomplete and potentially harmful to male victims” (Linos, 2009, p. 1549). It is important to talk about the female victim-male perpetrator paradigm and the adverse effects that it has on men and the way in which gender-based violence is framed. This will be reflected on in the upcoming chapters. Recognizing the true meaning of “gender-based violence” gives researchers the ability to address all perpetrators and victims of gender-based violence, making the gender-based violence against men by men as well as gender-based violence against men by women, as was present in the Sierra Leone Civil War, an issue that can’t be dismissed or be made into a sexist and patriarchal joke.

3.3. Gender and Sex

An important concern that was raised during discussions on the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina that occurred from 1992-1995, and is a well-known example of gender-based violence against men during armed conflict, was

the theoretical concern that the current framework used to define gender-based violence may have negative implications for service delivery to male victims of sexual violence and lead to public health research that only examines the experiences of female survivors

(Linos, 2009, pp. 1548-1549).

Health service delivery is very specific to population groups and cannot be generalized. This means that the exclusion of men and other groups from discussion around the effects of gender-based violence will lead to service delivery that is inadequate, if it is present at all. Biological needs, psychological needs and social needs are different from each other, thereby demanding for academics and aid institutions to give them the recognition that they warrant in order for research to be valid and service delivery to be adequate.

That Linos (2009) is the only author to tackle the difference and importance of making a distinction between sex and gender with regards to gender-based violence, shows a weakness in current discourse with regards to how gender-based violence impacts on individuals on a physical and social level. She points out that the two terms are used “without due attention to the fact that they are distinct and may be independent or synergistic determinants of health, with one, neither or both being relevant in a given exposure- outcome association” (Linos, 2009, p. 1549).

3.4. The Purpose of Violence

Violence does not occur without reason, and it is important to examine the connection between violence during conflict and violence during peacetimes. Linos (2009) notes that “...in order to understand violence committed during war, especially the symbolic meaning of acts such as rape, it is necessary to first understand the meaning of similar acts of aggression during peacetime” (Linos, 2009, p. 1549). This can give researchers and humanitarian institutions the tools to be able to intercept and deal with the causes of certain kinds of violence. By “humanitarian”, I mean the ethically driven practice of giving aid to those who are in need of it, whether it is the form of goods or armed protection, driven by our shared humanity. It allows

foresight with regards to prevention and minimization of certain kinds of violence, as well as provide data with regards to offering better psychological and physical care for victims.

In examining Gender-based violence in Croatia and Bosnia–Herzegovina, Maria Olujić in Linos (2009) writes that the purpose of the systemic rape of women was to “‘clean’ women of their ethnic identity and humiliate their male kin” (Linos, 2009, p. 1549). This is a result of the idea that the body, especially a woman’s body, forms part of a nation’s boundary or is the source of membership to the nation the individual is from. If children gain their identity through their fathers, then the act of rape by a perpetrator from another community reduces her body to territory to be claimed, with her rape used as the stake to mark that expansion. The “humiliation” aspect of gendered violence, along with the social norms that construct the pride that is humiliated, forms part of enemy tactics to weaken community morale through attacking what the community sees at its pillars, whether that is through rape of women or men or the slaughter of male children.

Sivakumaran (2010) addresses the lack of available words and terms regarding sexual violence against men, noting that “if sexual violence formed but part of the abuse male survivors faced, they may view it as beatings or torture generally rather than sexual violence or sexual torture in particular” (Sivakumaran, 2010, p. 256). This raises the question, if rape is used as torture, should it be identified as torture or noted as rape? And more importantly: Since rape with regards to women victims is almost always versed as a separate issue even when addressing sexual violence in general how would statistics be affected if rape was categorized as separate from other occurrences of violence against men? This is important to clarify as there are many forms of male sexual violence, besides rape, that are carried out during armed conflicts (Sivakumaran, 2010, p. 256). Another example showing the need for clarity in categorization presents itself with regards to genocidal acts that are perpetrated against men. Sivakumaran (2010) notes that “often times, castration is seen as ‘mutilation’ and rape as ‘torture’” (Sivakumaran, 2010, p. 256). This dismisses castration as a potentially genocidal act, and limits the ways in which men can be seen as a population that is being specifically targeted for acts of violence. Carpenter (2009) echoes this throughout her paper, going deep into the different ways in which men and boys are targeted for violence, thereby emphasizing that men and boys are vulnerable to violence in many different and visible ways. This raises the question if the vulnerability of men and boys is visible, then why is it still not acknowledged? This will be addressed in the next section.

3.5. A Numbers Game: Constructing Hierarchies with Statistics

The conflation of gender-based violence with violence against women has been argued for by some scholars due to statistics indicating that the majority of victims of gender-based violence are women. The common thread in these arguments is that statistics show that the majority of victims of gender-based violence are women, making gender-based violence synonymous with violence against women. This takes for granted the reasons why this is. We already know of the gender inequalities that are a product of patriarchy that result in women being frequently targeted for violence usually of a sexual nature. This is “central to a feminist position that gender-based violence is synonymous to violence against women” (Linos, 2009, p. 1550). It highlights how gender-based violence is synonymous with sexual violence even though sexual violence is a part of gender-based violence and gender-based violence refers to more than just sexual violence.

The kind of violence most perpetrated in any armed conflict is the kind where death is the result. And as stated previously, men are more specifically targeted for that, even civilian military-age men and adolescent boys (Carpenter, 2006, p. 88). That is also gender-based violence. But, as Carpenter (2006) points to a similar issue, even when civilian men and boys do get recognized as victims of gender-based violence, it is generally not given the attention it needs in order to address it in the field (Carpenter, 2006, p. 84). She elaborates on this arguing that the very authors who recognize men as also being victims of rape only mention it in passing “and only to minimize its importance (Carpenter, 2006, pp. 93-94). One of the ways of going about minimizing violence against men is to put a hierarchy to the different acts of violence. Carpenter (2006) notes a Liu Institute report that that does exactly this, making an effort to outline that the vulnerability to sexual violence that women face is worse than the vulnerability to death that men face (Carpenter, 2006, p. 94). As much as it is important to understand the different kinds of violent acts that are perpetrated during armed conflict and the impact that they have, this should not be done so as a way to diminish the suffering of others. It should be done to understand that different genders are impacted differently, and due to this, there needs to be a greater understanding for the impact of that violence and the needs of victims. Men in Sierra Leone were far more likely to be killed than women and that needs to be recognized as

a gender-based violence and a tragedy in its own right. There are no winners when it comes to being a victim of violence.

It is important to conduct data analysis carefully and without bias so as to reveal the intent and direction of the perpetrator, find ways to prevent further assaults and help victims (Linos, 2009, p. 1550). Intent is an important part of gender-based violence. It is what qualifies whether an act of violence can be considered to be gender-based or not. Data needs to be categorized under the common threads that show up rather than what researchers force on it. The problem with this is that data has to be collected in order for it to be analysed. This exposes another problem regarding the use of statistics as the reason for conflating gender-based violence with violence against women. During her fieldwork where she interviewed “humanitarians”, Carpenter (2006) found that many practitioners “were unaware of any data collected that assessed the extent of men’s vulnerability to sexual assault” (Carpenter, 2006, p. 94). This means that there are supporters of the use of statistics to conflate gender-based violence with violence against women who aren’t even aware of the validity, reliability or shortcomings of the statistics that they use to base their arguments. Sivakumaran (2010) addresses the other side that is hardly examined to explain the reason for the lack of data on gender-based violence against men. He notes that in reports on this type of violence

may be buried under a wealth of other information but they are there. They are there in the testimonies of survivors and in the reports of commissions and investigative bodies. They may be hard to find, for survivors will often recall what they witnessed rather than express what they themselves experienced; reports of commissions and investigative bodies will often record the atrocities under the rubric of torture and not sexual violence.

(Sivakumaran, 2010, p. 254).

When lost in the data, gender-based violence against men may be categorized or spoken of in terms other than that of gender-based violence or any of the subcategories of it due to narrow definitions of gender-based violence or ignoring the glaring intent behind the act of violence, amongst other factors. An example of this is how castration is regularly pushed forward as a form of torture, rather than an act of gender-based violence. If an act of violence is not explicitly categorized as an act of gender-based violence in the data, it may not be analysed as such. This is on the fieldworker who is documenting the cases, not the victim who is relaying what happened to them and those around them. The fieldworker has to be trained enough to recognize when acts of violence are gendered ones. The victim reporting on the violence may

be too ashamed or not have the vocabulary to talk about gender-based violence they experienced or witnessed, amongst other contributing factors (Sivakumaran, 2010, p. 255).

There is a danger in depending on numbers and frequencies. This danger lies in making a competition out of the suffering of others, where the “winning” group with the highest numbers have resources given and the “losers” are subjected to dismissal as being not victim enough to have “won” the necessary attention to warrant aid. Why is there always a need to say “not as much compared to women” across literature when it comes to gender-based violence against men? Why is there a need to emphasize one over the other? This goes back to the fear that if men are recognized as victims of gender-based violence and given the necessary attention, it would detract from the struggles of women as survivors of violence (Carpenter, 2006, p. 99). This also stems from the concern that if the parameters were broadened, it would erase the movement that women created to fight violence against women.

According to some, women have ownership of struggles relating to gender-based violence. There is a fear that in giving it the same level of importance as when it happens to women, it would be detracting from the women’s struggle which started off as a struggle against violence perpetrated by men.

“...concerns are sometimes raised that naming gender-based violence against men as such will only draw attention away from women’s issues. As one UNHCR gender-mainstreaming official told me, ‘I recognize our discourse is a bit outdated. But it’s very difficult because as soon as you stop talking about women, women are forgotten. Men want to see what will they gain out of this gender business, so you have to be strategic’”

(Carpenter, 2006, p. 99).

The response to this concern should be to address the system which promotes or allows for that to happen, instead of actively contributing to forcing men and boys who are survivors of sexual violence to the shadows that the stigma of male survivor status or suggestion of homosexuality forces. Sivakumaran (2010) reflects on this as well, arguing that

it may dispel the idea of women solely as victims and men only as perpetrators, resulting in the negation of the idea that women in armed conflict should be viewed through the lens of victims of sexual crimes and the corresponding notion that male victims of sexual violence are emasculated and feminized as a result of the violence” (Sivakumaran, 2010, p. 260).

This would then force the recognition that Gender-based violence has been predominantly understood through a patriarchal lens of which men are always the perpetrators and women always the victims. In no other worldview would the victim/perpetrator, female/male, femininity/masculinity paradigm be so adamantly upheld and any divergence dismissed. It would also challenge claims of trying to understand and end *all* forms of violence.

4. Theoretical framework

This chapter focuses on the theories utilised as a framework for this research. I begin by introducing the theory of Restorative Justice, which has in part led to this research. There has been little work done on sexual violence against men during conflict. The result of this is a lack of theories that directly deal with the issue. But since a major part of this research is on the restoration of the community, a Restorative Justice Research paradigm underlined with a Pragmatist approach will be used.

In the event of any armed conflict, one of the tragedies is the destruction that occurs to the community as a result of the violence and disorder. Armed conflict disrupts any balance in social relations that has been acquired over time or that the community is attempting to acquire. It also has the ability to exacerbate any poor relationships within the community. This can be applied to gender relations as they are usually the most widely affected. When the conflict is officially over, it does not mean that its effects will suddenly stop. The objective of using these theories is to address the immediate aftermath of the conflict as well as the immediate future so that more long-term strategies can take successful root in the affected setting.

4.1. Restorative Justice: An Introduction

Addressing the needs of victims of violence needs to involve addressing the ability of individuals to function within their communities again, and helping communities to function in ways that fulfil their formative ideology, provided that ideology isn't harmful. Restorative justice is a theory or paradigm and practice that not only addresses these needs, but always puts the needs of the victim first in order to help them heal in the ways that they need to. In applying a restorative justice lens, there are important questions that need to be asked, namely what it means to "restore" and what "justice" is? These questions form a vital part in addressing the violence that has been done to individuals and communities. Addressing these questions allows for the transitional period after conflict to be the space in which there can be a new start for victims of violence or help them and affected communities to find positive ways of moving forward.

The meaning of justice is a very subjective and varied one. Jacques Derrida (2005) describes justice as having "complex Latin roots, overloaded with Greek memory" (Derrida, 2005, p. 692). The Oxford Dictionary describes and defines it as "a behaviour or treatment", "the

administration of law in a fair and reasonable way” and “the quality of being fair and reasonable” (Soanes, et al., 2002, p. 489). Under indigenous Canadian and Canadian Mennonite forms of conflict resolution, “justice is sought in terms of reconciliation and the making of peace” (Van Wormer, 2004, p. 5). But the idea of “moving forward” through forgiveness in religious teachings is a common one (Lewis Herman, 2005, p. 576). Legal understandings of justice differ with each legal system which can be based on singular or multiple cultural and religious norms. The assumption though with legal justice is that the one to come out the victor in the adversarial courtroom processes is the one to have obtained justice. One of the founders of the Restorative Justice movement as we know it, Howard Zehr, admits that he had had no interest in victim perspectives in the beginning and had been solely focused on justice for offenders, signalling that some are seen as more deserving of justice than others (Lewis Herman, 2005, p. 579). It also comes down to the simple question of whether or not the people involved, especially those perceived as the victims, feel that the steps that have been undertaken to resolve the conflict have resulted in what they would describe as “justice”.

The word “restorative” is derived from the word “restore”, which means to bring back something from where it was taken, and to repair something into the state that it used to be (Oxford University Press, 2019). In the case of communities and interpersonal relationships, this may not be the best. Consider relationships that were destructive in their previous state. Restoration of a relationship in that kind of instance would be highly detrimental to those that we are trying to help. What shouldn’t be overlooked is that relationships aren’t the only things that can be or are worth restoration. Human dignity is just one of many things that can be lost due to violence, that can be restored to victims, and which underlies many justice movements.

The dictionary meaning of “restorative” is “having the ability to restore health, strength, or well-being” (Oxford University Press, 2019). To have ability suggests being in a position to affect an outcome. With regards to understanding “restorative justice” as a name for a theory, restorative justice is a justice that affects outcomes so that the result is the healing and strengthening of those who are in need of it. In this way, restorative justice suggests a justice that looks to the future and promotes a holistic and sustainable life after being a victim of wrongdoing.

As a theory, there is no single definition for restorative justice (Daly, 2006, p. 135). Instead, there are core elements that have been identified through which analysis and policy can be constructed around. Daly (2006) claims that some of these include having “a more active role

for victim participation in justice decisions”, holding “offenders accountable for their behaviour” and assisting “victims in recovering from crime” (Daly, 2006, p. 135). Judging from this, restorative justice is a paradigm that is focused on social justice, but for Llewellyn & House (1999), it is not simply that. They note that “it is open and flexible enough to apply on a variety of levels and to different contextual imperatives” (Llewellyn & Howse, 1998, p. 20). Through its socially centred core, restorative justice shares characteristics with restitutive justice, corrective justice and retributive justice (Llewellyn & Howse, 1998, p. 21). The authors state that “restitution is often an important part of restorative justice practices” as it “denotes the idea that a gain or benefit wrongly taken or enjoyed should be returned” (Llewellyn & Howse, 1998, pp. 22-23). Corrective justice on the other hand “seeks to correct the inequality created through the interference with the sufferer’s rights” (Llewellyn & Howse, 1998, p. 30). Retributive justice is committed to “establishing social equality between the wrongdoer and the sufferer of wrong” (Llewellyn & Howse, 1998, pp. 31-32). These all come together under restorative justice to provide the best possible outcome at a variety of levels for those who have been victims of violence, while also addressing those who have been perpetrators.

It is clear from the above that restorative justice does not have a singular identity. In an attempt to give clarity, Roche (2006) says that “one way to think of restorative justice is simply as a particular method for dealing with crime that brings together an offender, his or her victims, and their respective families and friends to discuss the aftermath of an incident, and the steps that can be taken to repair the harm an offender has done” (Roche, 2006, p. 217). Zehr & Gohar (2003) describe restorative justice as being made up of a “variety of programs and practices” with a set core of “principles, a philosophy, and an alternate set of ‘guiding questions’ ” (Zehr & Gohar, 2003, p. 3). Just from these two definitions alone, it is clear that restorative justice is very vague and has the ability to turn people away due to its lack of a well-defined identity. In an attempt to simplify this identity, Zehr & Gohar (2003) go on to list what restorative justice is not, basing this on criticisms that have been levelled against it.

- a. “Restorative justice is not primarily about forgiveness or reconciliation” (Zehr & Gohar, 2003, p. 6). There have been many accusations against restorative justice for “forcing” victims to forgive those who have transgressed against them, when this is not the case. Any expectation of forgiveness from the process undermines the

psychological impact that the event that resulted in people assuming the identities of victim or perpetrator produced.

- b. “Restorative justice is not mediation” (Zehr & Gohar, 2003, p. 7). Although mediation and facilitation can occur, it is not always chosen, neither is it always the correct path for a variety of reasons (Zehr & Gohar, 2003, p. 7). Restorative justice is about identifying the needs of the victim, community and offender, and tailoring the processes based on those needs. This means that mediation may be a fitting process for some, but not for others. Even when mediation occurs, it should never be assumed that the parties involved are all on a “level moral playing field” (Zehr & Gohar, 2003, p. 7).
- c. “Restorative justice is not primarily designed to reduce recidivism” (Zehr & Gohar, 2003, p. 8). Part of the hope behind punishment, especially severe punishment, is the offender will be prevented from offending again due to the severity of the punishment that they received. There is research that shows that recidivism can occur in restorative justice programmes, but this should not be the reasoning used to stand against it (Zehr & Gohar, 2003, p. 8).
- d. “Restorative justice is not a particular program or a blueprint” (Zehr & Gohar, 2003, p. 8). There is no “pure” restorative justice model that can be adopted, which is reflected in the vague nature of restorative justice (Zehr & Gohar, 2003, p. 8). This is because there is still much that is being learned about restorative justice and much that is known is a result of experimentation (Zehr & Gohar, 2003, p. 8). This means that in each case, there is an opportunity to build a programme that suits the case best with attention to needs, resources and cultural demands (Zehr & Gohar, 2003, p. 9). The result is that a space is created whereby which involved parties can then take control over what happens before, during and after the process.
- e. “Restorative justice is not primarily intended for “minor” offenses or first-time offenders” (Zehr & Gohar, 2003, p. 9). Research has shown that communities are more welcoming of restorative justice for minor cases, but restorative justice has the most impact in more severe cases (Zehr & Gohar, 2003, p. 9). What needs to be done is an assessment of the case, a look at the core principles of restorative justice and an assessment of whether or not a programme can be tailored to suit the needs of those

involved (Zehr & Gohar, 2003, p. 9). In some cases it can, but in others it cannot and caution needs to be practiced so as not to force a programme to work where it won't (Zehr & Gohar, 2003, p. 9).

- f. “Restorative justice is neither a panacea nor necessarily a replacement for the legal system” (Zehr & Gohar, 2003, p. 10). Restorative justice can only answer adequately to *some* situations (Zehr & Gohar, 2003, p. 10). Zehr and Gohar (2003) argue that “even if restorative justice could be widely implemented, some form of the western legal system (ideally, a restoratively-oriented one) would be as a backup and as guardian of basic human rights” (Zehr & Gohar, 2003, p. 10). What restorative justice provides us with relation to the established criminal justice system is a balance. Criminal justice is more suited to deal with the public aspect of crime, while restorative justice is better suited for the interpersonal aspect of it (Zehr & Gohar, 2003, pp. 10-11).
- g. “Restorative justice is not necessarily the opposite of retribution” (Zehr & Gohar, 2003, p. 11). For those who believe in retribution, Zehr & Gohar (2003) claim that restorative justice and retributive justice “have much in common” (Zehr & Gohar, 2003, p. 59). They note that “a primary goal of both retributive theory and restorative theory is to vindicate through reciprocity, by ‘evening the score’” (Zehr & Gohar, 2003, p. 59). It is important to acknowledge “evening the score”. This is because it falls under justice for many people. So while the way to evening the score may be different, it still exists in order to vindicate the victim.

What can be summarized from this are the ‘Five Principles of Restorative Justice’ according to Zehr & Gohar (2003). Restorative justice:

1. Focuses on harms and consequent needs
2. Addresses obligations resulting from those harms
3. Uses inclusive, collaborative processes
4. Involves those with a legitimate stake in the situation
5. Seeks to put right the wrongs

(Zehr & Gohar, 2003, p. 33)

4.1.1 Shame and Restorative Justice

Part of present-day justice is shame. Shaming individuals is consistent with the need for the offender to be punished for the act that they committed. Today, court cases are televised for the world to see. People are able to publically voice their disapproval over the radio, newspapers and many other mediums, including the internet. The public is able to take sides and even rally in large numbers around their opinions. This means that the public is able to participate in shaming offenders or their actions beyond the local community level. But should offenders be shamed?

John Braithwaite, major contributor to the restorative justice movement, “argued that the expression of community resentment and indignation on behalf of the victim is an essential positive element of crime control” (Lewis Herman, 2005, p. 578). The idea is that if people know that the community disapproves of a particular action, then they are less likely to commit that action. In this way, shame is important. But a distinction between shaming the offender and shaming the act needs to be made. The reason is that in a case of gender-based violence during armed conflict, it is not always the case that the decision to commit the act of violence was willingly made. The act should be shamed, but as to whether or not the person who committed the act should be shamed, that is reliant on the circumstances that led up to the act being committed.

This means that there should also be an understanding of the differences between victim and offender, and that there are times that a person can be both. There also needs to be an understanding that there are cultural interpretations of victim and offender, especially in the case of gender-based violence. It is often the case that those who have been victims of rape are blamed for the attack, that they are responsible for creating the situation that led up to the attack or they are responsible for not fighting back enough. The victims of rape are then also thought of as offenders, and the perpetrators of the rape itself can then also be absolved of any negative associations of the act they committed to the point of not being offenders at all. This is an example of when an intervention needs to be done in order to help a community redefine what victims and offenders are, as well as have a better understanding of violence and the factors that influence it.

4.1.2 Grassroots Justice: Local Community Contributions to Restorative Justice

Restorative justice principles have been present in many religions and cultures around the world (Zehr & Gohar, 2003, p. 10). Indigenous communities have contributed the most to restorative justice practices. It is their indigenous cultural approaches to conflict resolution and community building that most of what can be seen of restorative justice practices are based on. Organized religion and spirituality have also had impact due to also being used as ways of solidifying family and community ties. Special contributors have been from Native American and New Zealand cultures from which landmark *government* programmes were drawn from (Zehr & Gohar, 2003, p. 10) (Roche, 2006, p. 219). The most well-known practices are conferencing and circles, occurring in different variations. These are all based on local ideas of justice and the need for unity of the community.

Conferencing is a process designed to “bring families of victims and offenders together to find their own solutions to conflicts” (Raye & Warner Roberts, n.d., p. 213). It was made a legal part of the justice system in New Zealand in 1989 with the intention of empowering Maori people who were grossly underrepresented by the White New Zealand justice system, allowing them to find their own solutions to conflicts (Raye & Warner Roberts, n.d., p. 213). The conferencing process would take place with the aid of a facilitator provided by the government, an undermining factor in the initial goals of the legalization of the conferencing process (Raye & Warner Roberts, n.d., p. 213). As much as the government has a role to play in local forms of justice, a historical awareness regarding race and other power relations needs to be maintained, otherwise the restorative justice process can be undermined.

Circles are highly spiritual and are “central to many indigenous communities’ approaches to problem solving” (Restorative Practices International, 2012). Circles traditionally involved the community (or important members of the community in unequal societies) coming together to make decisions (Restorative Practices International, 2012). Circles, in a restorative justice setting would require that those who are involved in the act of violence in any capacity come together to solve the issue of the offense that was committed. As in the geometrical shape, there are no opposing sides, reducing the chances of the process being adversarial and promoting a consensus approach to solving the issue at hand.

Whatever official restorative justice processes that have become a part of the legal system, there are still processes that are frozen within culture and can never be made separate from it

or they would lose all that facilitated the restorative state in the first place. These including rebirthing or cleansing ceremonies beyond those of growth milestones, where those who are subject to them undergo the ceremony in order to shed the hurt or sin of the past and come out the other side as members of the community who have no relation to the past self that had taken part in or committed an act that was deemed offensive by the victim or community (Huyse, 2008, p. 14) see (Arnett Jensen, 2015). These ceremonies also allow for victims to gain the confidence to go back into the community without the burden of victimhood.

The importance of restorative justice in relation to gender-based violence that occurs during conflict lies in the ability of restorative justice to look endogenously to the community and assess ways in which the community can heal itself, including individual victims. It encourages a unique approach where if restorative justice is to be respected, the needs of an individual must be put first in a way that would hopefully result in a positive stability being established and they can rebuild their lives.

4.2. Nationalism and Gendered Violence

Nationalism and other beliefs of societal supremacy have appeared as strong drivers for gender-based violence during armed conflict. Through it, gender-based violence occurs during conflict due to the perpetrator's views of the bodies of their victims representing pillars of that society, and through gender-based violence, those pillars can be brought down, thereby destroying that society. The raping of German women during World War 2 was equated with the emasculation of the German people, making perpetrating non-German soldiers, a danger not just to 'pure' German women but the entire German nation (Wigger, 2010, p. 39). The only women who were accepted and protected by German men were those women who were seen as "ready to perform the role of boundary markers and 'gatekeepers' of nation and race" (Wigger, 2010, p. 41). This highlights an "acceptable" idea of what it was to be German. In the former Yugoslavia, "an integral part of many nationalist projects [was] the control of women's reproductive bodies to sustain continuity and 'purity' of the nation" (Drezgić, 2010, p. 958). This means that this kind of nationalism relies on gendered understandings of the human body and its place and function within society. If bodies of the target community can be made "impure", then the target community will become weak or fall apart.

For a particular conflict, nationalism may be applied on two levels: as a driver for the armed conflict itself and as a driver for gender-based violence that occurs during that armed conflict.

This is not to suggest that nationalism as a driver behind gender-based violence cannot or does not occur outside of armed conflicts. For the purposes of this research, it will be applied narrowly with a focus on armed conflict.

4.3. International Humanitarian Legal Theory

International humanitarian legal theory has had a profound influence in the world through the United Nations and serves as a foundation for most recognized policy and aid work. Work like Amy Barrows (2010) with regard to her paper on Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 emphasize the need for critical policy analysis. Often, policy that has been designed to implement humanitarian programmes carry defects that ultimately undermine what it is that it is trying to primarily achieve. This includes fighting patriarchy with patriarchy and patronizing those that aid agencies are trying to help by being the sole source of resources and knowledge.

With regards to this research, my primary framework is that of restorative justice. One of the reasons for this is to study community resourcefulness and empowerment. Using Humanitarian Legal Theory for this particular topic and framework, I will be able to assess how much local and international policy has contributed to strengthening community resources and empowering it, if it has contributed in that way at all.

It will not be possible to implement all these paradigms at the same time as some of them speak to very specific topics. When applied, these paradigms will create insight into the various subtleties of gender-based violence, armed conflict and the impact on the communities that are affected. Most importantly, these paradigms will show how much external interference that is geared towards rebuilding communities in the aftermath of violent conflict contribute to those communities in the long term.

5. Towards A New Theory of Analysing Gender-Based Violence during Armed Conflict

This chapter focuses on the framing of gender-based violence on the African continent, with particular attention to the Sierra Leone Civil War. It pays particular attention to how Sub-Saharan women and men are framed within the feminist rhetoric that has influenced the way in which humanitarian aid is carried out. “Sub-Saharan” is used here in reference to the indigenous people of Sub-Saharan Africa. This is because indigenous Sub-Saharan Africans are the most frequent recipients of humanitarian aid to the point of being the “face” of Africa, poverty, conflict and disease. Sub-Saharan and African will therefore be used interchangeably from here on. Through this, this chapter seeks to develop the basis for a new theory for analysing gender-based violence during armed conflict on the African continent. The aim is to further expose the highly problematic use of a White European and North American centred feminism on the African continent in dealing with gender-based violence. This chapter puts forward a way of addressing gender-based violence using a more appropriate lens that is informed by the settler-colonial history of the continent and the history of the transatlantic slave trade with Freetown as one of the ports of trade. This is in order to challenge and address persisting racist and patriarchal systems of domination, which in turn are systems of oppression due to their hierarchical nature. These unacknowledged oppressions undermine any work that is done with regards to addressing gender-based violence on the African continent.

Discourses around gender-based violence have been primarily influenced by White Western feminism, especially radical feminism. White Western feminism refers to feminism that emanates from North American and Western European contexts that is based on the experiences of White women where their role as beneficiaries of racism and colonialism are not drawn into their account of patriarchy (Maart, 2014). Though this feminism has its applications, it has very little validity in the context of the African continent. On the African continent, colonialism and imperialism, as well as other systems of White domination, have been pivotal parts of the continent’s history, and require centre stage in all theories that are to be applied to any of its related contexts. As shown below, Western feminism does not address these factors and radical feminism dismisses it entirely. This shows complicity on the part of White feminists when it comes to the oppression of the indigenous people of the African continent. In discussions of violence and the African context, this is not acceptable. What is needed is a feminism that will put the history of the continent, issues of race and other persisting and intersecting oppressions well within the context of colonially influenced power relations.

5.1. Radical Feminism and Its Shadow Over Humanitarian Aid

The following section is based on the articles written by Willis (1984), and Murphy and Livingstone (1985). The reason for this is that these papers, written a year apart during an era that was experiencing active engagement with civil rights, each present an understanding of radical feminism, as well as different experiences of the movement's impact on different groups of women. The purpose of using these two articles is to outline what radical feminism is in order to see the way in which it has impacted on humanitarian aid work with regards to gender-based violence during armed conflict.

Renown radical feminist, Ellen Willis, asserts that radical feminism began in the 60's as a political movement that was aimed at ending "male supremacy in all areas of social and economic life, and rejected the whole idea of opposing male and female natures and values as a sexist idea" (Willis, 1984, p. 91). It emerged after a split in ideology of the current feminism of the time, resulting in what radical feminists called the "politico-Feminist" split (Willis, 1984, p. 93). The split was due to the "politicos" pushing forward the notion that capitalism was the source of women's oppression, while the "feminists" insisted that "male supremacy² was in itself a systemic form of domination" (Willis, 1984, p. 93).

Murphy and Livingstone (1985), who offer a negative critique of radical feminism when it is faced with issues of race, summarized radical feminism's basic principles as this:

1. The oppression of women is the most fundamental oppression.
2. The primary commonality of women
3. Patriarchy is totally independent of capitalism
4. Power is personal: of men over women
5. All men are sexist
6. There is an essence of woman and man
7. Separatism is the end or goal of Feminism

(Murphy & Livingstone, 1985, pp. 62-63)

Murphy and Livingstone (1985) use Kate Millet's description of patriarchy, which is that it is a "universal (geographical and historical) mode of power relationships" (Murphy & Livingstone, 1985, p. 62). John Stoltenberg (2000) sees "male supremacy" as the more honest term for "patriarchy", stripping away any grandiose illusions that patriarchs claim such as the protection of women (Stoltenberg, 2000, p. 41). He defines male supremacy as a "social system

² At this point in time, the movement had yet to recognize the nuances to male supremacy brought on by race, nuances which *White* supremacy was responsible for as a system of domination.

of rigid dichotomization by gender through which people born with penises maintain power in the culture over and against the sex caste of people who were born without penises” (Stoltenberg, 2000, p. 41). The use of “caste” emphasizes the hierarchical nature of that dichotomization, alluding to the superiority that patriarchy claims over women. Feminists of the politico-feminist split characterized “penis power” as a “systemic form of domination - a set of material, institutionalized relations” (Willis, 1984, p. 93). Unfortunately, feminist could not extend this analysis to race, which became the foundation for papers like Murphy and Livingstone, and this research. From this, patriarchy can be defined as a system of domination, of men over women.

It is not possible for there to be a single homogenous agreement on what radical feminism is. This is partly due to the fact that radical feminism emerged as a result of ideological disagreement in the established feminism of the New York Radical Women (Willis, 1984, p. 93). If the ideological disagreement, as seen above, presents the ideological seed for radical feminism, then any view that centres itself on the notion that male supremacy is the prime source of women’s oppression, can be viewed as radical feminism. This can be seen in the article by Murphy and Livingstone (1985), who seem to have based their analysis in part on the politico-feminist split.

According to Willis (1984) “the great majority of women who presently call themselves ‘radical feminists’ in fact subscribe to a politics more accurately labeled ‘cultural feminist.’” (Willis, 1984, p. 91). Through this proclamation, Willis suggests that it is not labelling that determines radicalism but rather ideology. She goes on to say that though cultural feminism grew out of radical feminism, cultural feminism is “antithetical” to radical feminism and is “a moral, countercultural movement aimed at redeeming its participants” (Willis, 1984, p. 91). When cultural feminism became the dominant feminism in 1975, the women’s liberation movement changed to the women’s movement (Willis, 1984, p. 92).

Feminism had become a reformist politics, a countercultural community, and a network of self-help projects (rape crisis centers, battered women's shelters, women's health clinics, etc.)

(Willis, 1984, p. 92)

This has continued to be the trend as gender-based violence organizations and women’s clinics are still dominant, with services that include men or are specific to men being a rarity; and organisations that are aimed at dismantling male supremacy itself, rather than its products, being even rarer. Reformism is also still the norm as the majority of campaigns on gender-

based violence have continued to work within the framework of established legal norms rather than push to undermine the current system, which is an entrenched structural and institutional enforcer of racially non-critiqued male supremacy. An example of this is the 16 Days of Activism international campaign that the South African government has participated in since 1998 (Department of Communications, 2014). The objectives of the government as laid out on the website calling violence against women and children a societal issue, but not a patriarchal one (Department of Communications, 2014). Situating gender-based violence as a societal issue rather than a patriarchal one, is very shallow. It mostly situates gender-based violence as only a matter of attitude rather than pointing to deeper structural issues that result in the hierarchy and wider beliefs of male superiority and a right to violence, particularly a right to violence against women. It also does not address the black male face of that violence despite the country's White supremacist history of violence. On the African continent though, it isn't just male supremacy that is being enforced. Most times, it is colonial White male supremacy that still infects the system as colonial-era laws are still in force in many constitutions on the continent. An example of this is the continued preservation of colonial laws on sexuality in the vast majority of the former colonies.

Radical feminism has had a decades-long history with addressing gender-based violence in terms of encouraging dialogue as well as lobbying for legal change. This activism has only benefited a few, as it upheld other systems of domination, such as White supremacy. This White supremacist radical feminist ideology, in terms of what has been proposed by Willis (1984) and Murphy & Livingstone (1985), can be seen reflected in the way in which humanitarian gender-based violence aid and fieldwork is carried out. The ideological strand, "power is personal: of men over women", summarizes the humanitarian approach to gender-based violence during armed conflict (Murphy & Livingstone, 1985, p. 63). This is because in practice, as well as in policy, aid is formulated to protect women from men as men are seen as the perpetrators of not just gender-based violence but violence as a whole. This is proved to be the case throughout this research work. It disregards other power struggles and systems of domination that are concurrently present with the system of patriarchy.

As previously discussed in the Literature Review chapter, statistics show that the perpetrators of gender-based violence are mainly men and that women and children make up the majority of victims. Those same statistics also show that men can and are specifically targeted for violence due to their gender, as also referenced in the Literature Review. During armed conflict, civilian and military men are mostly victims of armed violence, which I argue is gender-based

violence³ like Carpenter (2006) and Sivakumaran (2010). Even though women have been perpetrators of all forms of violence in the same way that men have been in the same setting, the violence that takes place during armed conflict is still due to patriarchal factors. And since men are the wielders, enforcers and beneficiaries of patriarchy as a system of male domination, they are ultimately responsible for the violence that takes place, albeit in varying degrees as power is not shared equally. Men enforce and benefit from patriarchy. This means that as much as men have to be addressed for this support of patriarchy, addressing them as part of dismantling of it as well should still be a goal of feminism.

Patriarchy, as a system of male domination, sets itself to benefit men through the oppression of women and the punishment of those men that do not subscribe to it or enforce it “adequately”. Although patriarchy punishes men who don’t meet its ideological construction of what a man is or should be, depending on the setting, those men still have access to male privilege since they are still men, something that women can never be. All that those men have to do is conform to the ideals that patriarchy as an ideology and social practices that support it as a system of domination has laid out for them.

Radical feminism interpreted patriarchal gender-based violence as “the most fundamental oppression” and as “the primary commonality of women”, disregarding the interrelatedness and uniqueness of oppressions facing women, despite taking from other radical movements that didn’t serve middle-class White women (Murphy & Livingstone, 1985, p. 62). It exposed a White middle-class woman centred experience as the foundation of radical feminism. This is reinforced by Willis who admits that

Though radical feminists did not deny being influenced by the ideas of other radical movements (on the contrary, we often pointed to those continuities as evidence of our own revolutionary commitment), we acted as if it were somehow possible for women to separate their ideas about feminism from their ideas about everything else.

(Willis, 1984, p. 95).

This distances middle-class White women from the ways in which they perpetuate White supremacy and classism, and maintains their identity as victims and never oppressors. It is with this that the idea that White women are equally victims and never willing participants and perpetrators of oppression can be seen to take root. It is also with this idea that White women

³ Armed violence against men is still not treated as a gender-based violence even though gender specific targeting occurs, as referenced in the literature review

are exonerated of their participation in colonialism and other by-products of White supremacy. It suggests that White women were coerced by White men to participate in White supremacy and classism, along with other oppressions, having no agency within the hierarchies that give them power over other women. By positioning themselves as being oppressed in the same way as women of colour⁴ and working class White women, White middle-class women centred the oppressions that they faced as the same oppressions of women all over the world.

The question of why the radical feminist movement was overwhelmingly White and mostly middle class is complex, but one reason is surely that most black and working-class women could not accept the abstraction of feminist issues from race and class issues, since the latter were so central to their lives.

(Willis, 1984, p. 95)

It wasn't that these issues were central to the lives of Black⁵ women, or women of colour for that matter; rather it was that these issues were an interwoven part of their oppression, an oppression that was different from what White middle-class women experienced. White supremacy and classism as hierarchical systems on their own would dictate who led and had the most influence in the movement, as well as who had access to resources within and outside of the movement. These systems of inequality were not being addressed by White middle-class women since they didn't affect them. Their Whiteness and middle-class experiences granted them an expectation to have access to leadership roles of domination over women of colour and dictate the environment and direction of the women's movement. This created an environment within the movement where women of colour and working-class White women had no power or representation, and could therefore not stay out of respect for their own experiences and struggles.

Under radical feminism, if the oppression of women is the commonality of women, then by extension, the commonality of all men is being the beneficiaries and enforcers of patriarchy, which is a system of domination founded on the belief of male supremacy and the oppression of women. This is a simplification of how patriarchy is experienced by both men and women of various racialised identities, and does not critique the effect of racism as a system of

⁴ I use the term "women of colour" here as it is used in the United States as a way of not positioning Whiteness as a norm through the phrasing "women who aren't White". I also use the term as a placeholder, rather than a permanent reference. This is because part of the intent of this research is to move away from depending on non-African scholarship that was never meant for the continent or derived from it.

⁵ Please note that "Black" is used in continuation of the quoted text. It is also used with the understanding that "Black" is a political identity used by the oppressed people of Sub-Saharan Africa and its diaspora in opposition to White supremacy.

domination and oppression, especially when it intersects with gender. These two systems interact with each other to form a system of domination and oppression based on the ideological belief of White male supremacy.

What women like Willis couldn't or wouldn't do is understand or admit to the intersectional way in which various oppressions exist, acting within their own hierarchies while also interacting with one another in a hierarchical form. To admit to this would then force the acceptance that race and class are also factors that cannot be separated from male supremacy, thus forcing the acceptance that it is not male supremacy that is the greatest oppression, but White male supremacy. That it is White male supremacy that is the greatest oppression forces the admittance of White feminists' participation in White supremacy and complicity in oppressing other women. Male supremacy is the greatest oppression only for a certain few women since their Whiteness protects them from racial oppression. It is the hegemonic oppression in *their* lives only. The word "hegemonic" is one that Willis uses herself, although for a different topic of discussion, and is important in that it speaks directly to hierarchies of power, hierarchies that White radical feminists battled to understand when it came to the intersectional lived experiences of women of colour and White working-class women (Willis, 1984, p. 92). It is a word that exposes that we are all oppressed differently. That is why it can be argued and evidenced that Black men do not have the same privilege as White men, as determined by the system of White domination, which then leads to an even more complex understanding of male supremacy. White women are not as oppressed as women of colour and are in fact oppressors of other women through racism and classism. Race and class are of course not the only issues, but are addressed according to the exclusionary failures of radical feminism that Willis puts forward. The irony of this is that Willis admits to the use of the Black-power movement as a model for radical feminism (Willis, 1984, p. 93).

The thieving by White feminists from Black organizations in the way that they organized themselves was without the appreciation for why they organized the way that they did and for what purpose. Agents of White supremacy had adopted the methods used to protest and fight its existence in order to further entrench it. I use "thieving" because even though White feminists could have used the opportunity to learn from Black organizations about issues affecting Black women and use that knowledge to make feminism racially inclusive, they instead used it to bolster their fight in addressing the issues facing White middle-class women, ignoring intersectional experiences (Willis, 1984, p. 93). Thus, it was only White middle-class women who reaped the benefits of the stolen ideas of the Black-power movements. This shows

concern only for the oppressions that White women were facing. This gave feminism not only a White middle-class face, but a White middle-class ideology and intent.

But bell hooks writes that politically conscious White “females” who were a part of the civil rights movement “understood the differences in their status and that of black women”, and that they even kept documentation acknowledging this (hooks, 2000, p. 55). So why is it that when it came to feminism, which was supposed to fight the oppression of all women, was this not reflected? bell hooks argues that “just because they [White women] participated in anti-racist struggle did not mean that they had divested of White supremacy” (hooks, 2000, p. 55). This explains why it was that only the oppression of White women at the hands of men remained the focal point of the movement.

When it came to humanitarian work on the African continent, the framework for it could only be set up by the dominant ideologies of the time: White supremacy under the guise of feminism, accompanied by paternalistic liberalism. These ideologies did not include the ideologies of the African liberation movements that tackled White supremacy, colonialism and imperialism. Thus, humanitarian workers did not have to face their own role in the oppressions on the continent when it came to the design and dispensing of aid. It is because of this that aid work on the African continent via Western agencies, such as the United Nations and Oxfam, has not addressed some of the primary issues pertaining to violence on the continent, particularly when it comes to armed conflict.

I argue that White feminism’s concern over the suffering of sub-Saharan women is not out of solidarity with other women. It is instead to take advantage of the opportunity provided by conflict to infantilize sub-Saharan women in their most vulnerable moment while demonizing sub-Saharan men. This is out of the White supremacist feminist’s ideological need to oppress other races while putting up the façade of facing down patriarchy, when instead fulfilling the objective of upholding racist stereotypes of the violent sub-Saharan man. White feminism sets out to exploit sub-Saharan women in a bid to further entrench White supremacy on the African continent.

The approach to armed conflict on the African continent, that “power is personal: of men over women”, is one that does not place a focus on victims of violence, but rather on assumed dynamics of armed conflict (Murphy & Livingstone, 1985, p. 63). The assumption is that the dynamics that play out in non-armed conflict settings will be the same in armed conflict settings. The supposition is that the patriarchal motives for gender-based violence are the same

as those of the patriarchal “peaceful” environment. Although patriarchy is still an ever-present force in armed conflict, the way in which it plays out in the armed conflict setting is different, and therefore the motives around it and the way in which those motives are achieved change. This will be shown in the following chapter.

The effect of “power is personal: of men over women” can be seen in the way in which fieldwork is carried out, and is reflected in Carpenter’s (2006) finding that men aren’t asked if they have been victims of gender-based violence. It is still rare for men to be asked if they have been victims of sexual violence, as already shown in the Literature Review chapter. This means that statistics on violence against men are not kept consistently. Carpenter (2006) found that the very same humanitarian practitioners who assert that women make up the vast majority of victims of rape, can give no statistics on victims who are men (Carpenter, 2006, p. 94).

This then draws the argument to “emasculatation”. I put it in quotation marks because the word is just a mask for what is really meant. What is really meant is “make into a woman”, which by patriarchal standards, since men are to have power over women,

5.2. Western Feminism and Power

Western Feminism is the dominant feminism, even on the African continent. This may be due to the fact that many African scholars are educated on the topic in Western universities, through Western textbooks. These textbooks are used even on the African continent due to the continued dominance of colonialism even post-independence, where education systems are centred on colonial ideology in an attempt to continue the “civilization” of the continent that the colonial period started. Western feminism’s dominance on the African continent may also be due to the Western feminist scholarship-based training that humanitarian workers receive in order to work in the field, thereby bringing Western feminism to the African continent. Donors contribute to this through giving support to programmes that are based on their adherence to what has been accepted as the best ways in which programmes are to be executed, ways which have been defined by Western Feminism and other Western ideologies. This can be seen in my epigraph on Grace Chibowa in the Introduction. One of the dangers of this is that Western discussion are carried over to the African continent. This means that if discussions on power

as a core component of violence and oppression in the Western scholarship are not held, they will be also be lacking on the African continent from those who adhere to Western scholarship.

Violence is about the power relationship between the perpetrator and their victim, how the perpetrator displays their power over their victim. This goes beyond inter-gender relations, even in the case of gender-based violence. This includes cases of women perpetrating violence against men, and men perpetrating violence against other men. Ratele & Suffla (2011) write that “actual and threatened violence have been shown to be formative elements in the domination by men as a group over women, by some men over other men as a group, as well as in how manhoods are made” (Ratele & Suffla, 2011, p. 264). The victim-perpetrator dynamic and the power inequality that determines it, still exists. Violence as an unequal power dynamic also exists in colonial relationships, the same colonial relationships that have contributed to the entrenchment of unequal power relationships on the African continent. The colonial perpetrator of violence now returns to its victims in the form of what it calls humanitarianism. The power relationship has not changed as the identity of the wielder of power and the identity of the ones who have power exerted over them, has remained the same.

Western feminism has come a long way from its conceptualization in the late 20th century (Willis, 1984, p. 91). In the initial stages of feminism in the 20th century, there was a lot of focus on discussions of power, which were parts of discussions of feminism and why the movement was necessary. As time progressed, the discussions have become far less about power and more about its manifestations. If there are no discussions on power, there can be no understanding of its operation and the ways in which it is used and thus manifests. It diminishes understandings of gender-based violence as an example of a manifestation of power and the role that gender-based violence plays in conflict. At present, the linkages between the two are rarely discussed. Gender-based violence is discussed without power itself being discussed. The manifestation of power is seen as separate from power itself. Through this separation, violence is therefore its own entity and not a manifestation of something else. Gender-based violence is considered as the most important, and perhaps the only valid part. It is not possible to argue that a man who is a victim of gender-based violence wields power, without undermining what gender-based violence is. It is important to recognize the hierarchy that exists due to patriarchy. It is also important to recognize the role that patriarchy plays in making gender-based violence victims of men. Gender-based violence and patriarchy need to be understood as manifestations of power. Power needs to be understood as a generator of inequality, of the wielder of power and the one subjected to that power. Gender-based violence against men is about a perpetrator,

regardless of their gender, having power over men. This includes men as perpetrators as patriarchy does not make all men equal to each other. Gender-based violence is about the acknowledgement of the unequal power that exists between and within genders due to patriarchy and exploiting it in order to dominate the victim in order to cause them harm (Mukamana & Collins, 2006, p. 147).

Radical feminism, and Western feminism in general, is a wielder of power in the context of gender-based violence and by extension, conflict. These feminisms are wielders of power due to their major influence in the design of analytical approaches to gender-based violence and through the application of those approaches in aid programmes. What of the power that is wielded by aid workers, many if not most, of whom are citizens of former colonialist countries that still profit from the exploitation of the continent? These aid workers go into countries that have been painted as savage and violent and in need of civilizing throughout history. The “former” colonizer, upon hearing about the violence, is now in a position to tame and save those they deem in need of saving from the violent Black men they’ve always heard about, in a scene from the racist books they grew up with (Maart, 2014, p. 8). They also wield power over those who are victims and perpetrators alike of the conflict and all the violence that has taken place. This power lies in the ability to decide who they help and how. Power and its disparities manifest in multiple ways in conflict that cannot be dismissed.

5.3. Conceptualizing Gender and Violence: Gender versus Sex

In order to conceptualize “gender-based violence”, it is first important to conceptualize “gender” and “violence” as two separate constructs before examining their interrelationship. These two concepts are rarely interrogated in discussions of gender-based violence, even though “gender-based violence” as a concept is reliant on those concepts that it’s composed of. The failure to uphold the values of those concepts results in an understanding of gender-based violence that is weak, one sided and harmful in its application; and in the post war context, undermines efforts of victim protection.

Violence is an expression of power enacted in many forms that when inflicted cause harm, not just physically, psychologically and socially. Violence is force being used against someone, doing something against a person’s will. Violence is an expression of power that aims to violate

a person in order to dominate them. The purpose of domination is to control the person who is dominated, put them in a position where they are powerless and at the mercy of the dominator. The armed conflict context provides countless examples of violence, the way it is dealt out, to whom and why. The “why” usually has a gender component to it. It is rare that violence during armed conflict is gender non-discriminate. The result of this is the need for specialist approaches that recognize the complexity that gender and sex bring when dealing with violence during armed conflict and the aftermath.

More often than not, even in discussions of gender-based violence, constructs of “gender” and “sex” are used interchangeably, even though they each refer to different aspects of identity. This has led to sex and gender being used in ways other than what they mean. Sex is a physical biological representation of reproductive role and exists regardless of any notions of gender (Seedat & Smith, 2015, p. 100). Gender refers to socially constructed culturally based expectations of behaviour and personality traits in individuals that is usually based on biological sex (Seedat & Smith, 2015, p. 101). These traits are usually categorized into two sexualities: masculinity for males, and femininity for females; and are usually seen as opposites of each other. These categories of femininity and masculinity in turn give us our gendered social classification of girl/woman and boy/man respectively. Because gender is socially constructed, it is socially specific and therefore what is regarded as acceptable for a particular gender in one social grouping, may not be the same in another social grouping. Gender dictates what access each group has to any particular thing in that society, especially power. An example is who has access to violence. Violence is usually seen as the domain of men and is mostly seen as a masculine trait. When women access this domain, they are expected to be in the role of the person who is on the receiving end of that violence. Vulnerability to violence is seen as a feminine trait and the domain of women. Real life evidence of this is in how men who are victims of domestic violence at the hands of women are usually not taken seriously by police (Mvulane, 2008).

Gender has a social impact, and sex has a physical impact. In providing assistance during and after conflict, recognizing the difference between the two is very important. In relation to discussions of violence as well as the treatment, both psychological and physical, the understanding of the meaning, and difference between the two should never be taken for granted. Just as gender influences who is targeted for what kind of violence and why, sex influences the kinds of physiological medical treatment that a survivor may need. Gender and

sex can together determine the kind of psychological support that is needed. Overlooking these specific needs results in untreated wounds, whether they are physical, psychological or social.

It can be summarised that gender-based violence is the committing of harm against another person because of the socially constructed rules, norms and traits expected of them due to their sex. Since to be a man is to be a gendered individual (Ratele, 2008, p. 31), then it is possible for a man to be a victim of gender-based violence.

5.4. Erasure

As alluded to in Chapter 2, the dominant discourse of the Sierra Leone Civil war focuses on telling a succinct political and economic narrative of the war period, but that telling is missing a vital part. That part is the violence that was rampant during the conflict. Although there is mention of “hands and feet being chopped off”, none of the authors engage in an in-depth discussions on the violence that has made the Sierra Leone Civil War such a traumatic and community-destroying event that attained global infamy at the time (Gberie, 2002, p. 3).

Tunde Zack-Williams (2012) in his introduction chapter to *When the State Fails* describes the violence that civilians went through, including the gender-based violence that women and girls suffered, in vague terms (Zack-Williams, 2012, pp. 8-9). Sylvia Macauley (2012) contributes a chapter in the same book and writes that “although a few men were also victims of sexual violence, women were the main targets for sexual assault” (Macauley, 2012, p. 146). Macauley (2012) has found a way, like many others as shown in Chapter 3, of not talking about the gender-based violence that happens to men, especially when it is sexual. The historical narrative featuring the suffering of Sub-Saharan men as victims of gender-based violence has been erased from the narratives of the war, so that only the man as a perpetrator of violence against his people has remained. Erasure happens when evidence for the occurrence of a phenomenon is held up, acknowledged to exist, then cast aside and treated as though it ceases to exist after this acknowledgement. This erasure is a rampant problem in scholarship and in “humanitarian work” by extension since fieldwork is an area for the dissemination and practice of scholarship. I use quotation marks here because although aid work is given the label of “humanitarian”, this does not necessarily mean that it is. Not when there are demographics that are intentionally left out of aid programmes simply because their number of victims aren’t high

enough or they can't be turned into a sympathetic cause. Or worse yet, they aren't even considered as being capable of vulnerability. Thus, not even human⁶. Sub-Saharan men are invulnerable monsters who are only capable of inflicting suffering.

The fact of the matter is that not talking about violence against men won't make it go away, certainly not for those who were and still are affected by that violence. It is instead extremely alienating and provides evidence of not wanting to address issues around violence, especially gender-based violence. The reason for positioning this as erasure rather than absence is because I believe that there is a deliberate maliciousness to the removal of men's suffering from the narrative of armed conflict. The gendered violence that men experience will be put up for display, then quickly deemed as illegitimate and cast aside to never be examined. An unworthy specimen. An unworthy phenomenon. An unworthy cause. An unworthy group of people.

5.5. Western Feminism and the Black Body

Although GBV encompasses violence against boys and girls and men and women, the findings of this report focus almost exclusively on violence experienced by women and girls. The reasons for this orientation are two-fold: first, GBV programming targeting men and boy survivors is virtually non-existent among conflict-affected populations; and second, women and girls are the primary targets of GBV worldwide

(Ward, 2002, p. 4)

⁶ In conversation with Prof Rozena Maart

The above quote is from Jeanne Ward whose work also appears in the Literature Review alongside Beth Vann. This quote comes from a report that she wrote for the Reproductive Health for Refugees Consortium where destitute African refugee women appear on the front cover of the report. The obvious critique of this is that there has been no effort to address the gap in research and literature for this non-existent programming by Ward, but rather a glossing over. In addition, there has been no critical discussion regarding “gender-based violence” by Ward and what it actually means. This comes across as an effort to reduce the seriousness of violence when it happens to men and boys. Another critique and what summarizes this section is the cover photo that is used for the report.



Figure 1: Ward's cover of her report for the Reproductive Health for Refugees Consortium

It is of refugee African women with a primary focus on a very young woman who looks broken. She is looking away from the camera, standing apart from others who are in the background watching her with more animated expressions. The young woman has a very quiet and sad

expression on her face, closed off to the viewer. It is the face of gender-based violence, conflict and displaced persons. The woman who is only worthy of empathy when she has been reduced to nothing but a being of suffering. The broken African woman. And who broke her? Whose violence made her this way? African men, the common face of violence (Ratele & Suffla, 2011, p. 259). No wonder Ward, a White woman, won't take a moment to examine her own foundation for prioritizing the violence against women and dismissing the violence against men and boys. As much as a poor understanding of statistics and fieldwork have a role to play in the exclusion of men as victims from the gender-based violence discussions, racism also needs to be acknowledged. The use of "the broken African women" as a weapon against the legitimisation of research regarding gender-based violence against men is a common one that is seen in research as well as service delivery in refugee and non-refugee settings.

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee Task Force on Gender and Humanitarian Assistance wrote a guide for the humanitarian response to armed conflict titled *Guidelines for Gender-based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Settings: Focusing on Prevention of and Response to Sexual Violence in Emergencies* (2005). This guide serves as an example of the application of theories informing aid work and the way that programme architects fail to contextualize aid and grasp the contradictions that are produced when the female victim/male perpetrator paradigm is not addressed adequately, especially from the standpoint of victims.

The guide further emphasizes the importance of separation of the sexes as ways of protecting victims (Inter-Agency Standing Committee Task Force on Gender and Humanitarian Assistance, 2005, p. 55). With this comes the understanding that men, through violent action, have made victims of women. Therefore, women need to be protected from men and the possible triggering and continued victimization that can come from being around men. This disregards the fact that men can be victims as well as perpetrators of violence. It also disregards the fact that women can be perpetrators of violence. In the context of Sierra Leone, it is estimated that around 30% of armed combatants were women (Macauley, 2012, p. 146). This needs to be considered, especially since demobilization, disarmament and reintegration (DDR) processes do not remove former combatants from the communities, but rather put victims and perpetrators of all sexes in proximity of each other. 30% is a small number compared to 70% majority who are men, but it is not a small number for those who risk experiencing further traumatization. DDR processes are not restorative justice processes as they lack the consent of both perpetrator and victim to be in the same space, and certainly do not involve any of the restorative justice processes that would help the victim and perpetrator to address the incident

that has put them of opposing sides. Cohen (2013) found during a population-based survey women were part of groups that perpetrated nearly one in four incidents of the reported gang rape (Cohen, 2013, p. 384). What would it be like for women victims to share spaces with women they had come to fear for valid reasons? Refugee camps are a temporary to long-term solution to violent situations that provide further opportunities for the unaddressed victimization and demonization of innocent peoples.

If all men are potential rapists as radical feminism argues, then it makes sense from this point of view to group all men together in the refugee camp settings of a conflict or post conflict state (Murphy & Livingstone, 1985, p. 63). In this regard, it is putting “like with like” and there can be no victims. Victimhood is a result of being in a subordinate position without power in a power relationship but since all men wield power, none of them can be victims. Men can be receivers of violence but not victims of it. The same is said in the case of women: women cannot be perpetrators of violence, only victims of it because they do not possess power. Even if a woman was a soldier in the conflict or occupied any role in which she was then committing violence, it does not change her powerless victim status. Women in such situations are therefore seen as having no agency, but are rather manipulated by men in their assertion of patriarchy into participating in and committing acts of violence. It may even be argued that women who engage in violent acts are doing so in an attempt to attain male privilege for themselves. Therefore, if there was no patriarchy, or there were no men, no women would have been put into a position of having to participate in acts of violence in armed conflict. Women are not violent, only men are.

This absolute status that radical feminism adheres to creates multiple issues that it can't address without either claiming an oppressive role over victims of violence and protecting perpetrators; or changing and undermining its own radical stance. It can be argued that the role of radical feminism in violence in general is not the protection of victims but the upholding of its own defining ideology, which is that all men are dangerous and are the sole reason (or for those not as adherent to the ideology: the most important reason) for the oppression of women all over the world. Due to this, it would be easy to argue that if men suffer violence, they are simply victims of their own system of oppression of women. This suggests that whatever violent ill befalls them is deserved and even punishment for their participation in patriarchy. However, this argument provides no critique of the way in which patriarchy affects different masculinities and how armed conflict props up violent masculinities over other kinds. Kopano Ratele (2008) writes on the existence of different African masculinities, saying

African masculinities and men do not grow naturally from the ground, so to say, but are produced in relationship between people, and between individuals and structures; and that there are differences between men, over time, over villages and national borders, and because of their divergent desires, biographies and life developments.

(Ratele, 2008, p. 32)

Drawing from this, there is another contradiction for radical feminism in relation to the field practice that it has inspired. It is either all men are dangerous to women and no man can be a victim, or anyone can be a victim of violence, including men, and boys who grow up to be men. The two viewpoints cannot coexist. This makes radical feminism unsuitable as a driving theory for gender-based violence research and action, especially with regards to humanitarianism and humanitarian aid.

In the refugee camp, or internment camp since it is a prison and place of punishment for men without being labelled as such, men (or males rather since it is through the gendered body that they are placed), are grouped together, the perpetrator of violence is grouped with the potential perpetrator of violence. This is where Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* (1995) needs to be remembered. Humiliation, fear and punishment work together in such an environment. The refugee camp is a modern way of punishing the body and making punishment a spectacle (Foucault, 1995, p. 8). Intentionally or accidentally, the separation of the sexes has resulted in the creation of a spectacle of the victims/potential victims/women and the perpetrators/potential perpetrators/men. It says to the outsider and the people of each camp, "over there are *those* people", whether speaking of the men or the women. This carries a particular burden for men because they are forced to wear the label of "the potential rapist". By virtue of being separated from the women, they are labelled as being potentially dangerous, if not outright dangerous. By virtue of being a men, they are deemed dangerous. The separation from women, reasoned through the male body, is the source of punishment. This is what African men have to face in exchange for the loss of liberty and gain of food and shelter (Foucault, 2001, p. 44). The punishment is being labelled as dangerous by the power that governs the camps. It is a label supplied through the action of the very colonialists whose ancestors had long warned them of the dangerous native man (Maart, 2014, p. 8).

The rhetoric then is as follows: *the "violent African man" as a dehumanized stereotype of who and what African men are, has no greater presence than on the African continent. He is responsible for all the wars, all the rapes and all the deaths. It is through his action, and his*

alone, that there is suffering on the African continent. Poor African women need to be saved from them and who else can do it since African women certainly cannot save themselves? White women and their feminism (Maart, 2014, p. 10)⁷.

This is another power struggle embodied by Western feminism's White supremacy over the African body. It is through this that the African body becomes the Black body: a political entity in the face of White supremacy. Discussions of race have always been lacking in Western feminism and have had to be forced into discussions of feminism. By virtue of Blackness and therefore Black masculinity, there is a perceived danger from Black men. *Black masculinity is dangerous. It is a dangerous masculinity.*

The Black Female Body, female because it is a tool and not of a person, is used to undermine and humiliate the gendered Black Male Body during conflict by those who are established as the enemy. It is "male" instead of "man" because it is a violent entity and not of a person. The Black Female Body then moves to being used to undermine the Black Male Body by those who claim to want to help empower it from being a tool of the subjugation of others, and from being subjugated. When is the Black Male Body going to be situated as one of possible vulnerability? When is the Black Female Body going to be seen as not being a tool for the undermining and subjugation of Black men? Is it not possible to talk about gender-based violence, especially with regards to women as victims, without "throwing the Black Body under the bus"? When is the Black body going to be seen as human?

It is necessary to reposition and reprioritize gender-based violence as a manifestation of power. In the context of the readings employed in this research there has been no discussion of power. It has been diluted to only the physical manifestations. Power and its manifestations cannot and should not be separated. The two need to be discussed together. It is not just about gender or violence or conflict. They are only manifestations of power. Gender-based violence is just another way for power to express itself through and on the body.

The concern of Western feminism is not the dismantling of patriarchy but the triumph of Western feminism *over* patriarchy in order to dominate and hold itself as the new hegemon of oppression. Under this regime, the position of the oppressed Black Body does not change. This

⁷ Maart writes a subverted version of this where White *men* save, but it is still in the same as my analysis in that it shows White supremacy placing itself as a savior rather than a destroyer.

is proved in the way in which radical feminism, the driving force of Western feminism's relationship with gender-based violence, positions race within dialogue, and its views on men.

There is a preoccupation with violent Black men rather than with the protection of victims of violence; and addressing the return of perpetrators of violence to the community, or their shared space with the very people they used to terrorize. This preoccupation defeats the alleged purpose of humanitarianism and any aid that comes with it. If victims are to be aided, the first step would be to start humanizing all those involved and to start reflecting on the idea of "victim" and "perpetrator". In a practical way: how do we go about detaching these stereotypes that have been asserted on Black female and male bodies?

6. Gender Based Violence (against men) - Why and How Does It Happen

This chapter examines the motivations behind gender-based violence against men during armed conflict. It addresses the social conditions and socially influenced expressions of power that place men and boys⁸ at risk of becoming victims of gender-based violence during armed conflict. Products of the social conditions behind gender-based violence, such as political rhetoric, will therefore be avoided. To focus on products such as political rhetoric is to distract as these are only products of the social conditions that encourage or allow for gender-based violence to take place. The social conditions and socially influenced expressions of power that create the situation under which men are specifically targeted for violence during armed conflict is the same as the conditions under which women are specifically targeted, though some of the goals for targeting may be different.

Previous work on patriarchy, and the kinds of masculinities that it informs, provides valuable insight as to why violence is used against men by other men, or by women against men. This work has not been widely translated into the context of armed conflict because of issues such as preconceived notions of what victims of sexual violence look like, which has been previously discussed in the Literature Review. It is therefore important to demonstrate the role that patriarchy plays in creating the conditions that not only allow for gender-based violence against men to occur during armed conflict, but also encourage it.

Armed conflict produces examples of gender-based violence that would usually not occur in non-armed conflict settings. Most of those examples focus on the experiences of women and girls. As previously shown in the Literature Review by Charli Carpenter (2006) and Natalia Linos (2009), men are mostly not asked about any gender-based violence they may have experienced because fieldworkers are not trained to do so due to the “feminist position that gender-based violence is synonymous to violence against women” (Linos, 2009, p. 1550). As also shown in the Literature Review by Sivakumaran (2010), if the victim of violence does not explicitly state their experience as that of violence, then that experience may not be recorded as being a violent one (Sivakumaran, 2010, p. 254). There are certain types of violence that are not seen as being gendered, even though the *motivations* indicate that they are. This is a result of going into a field with the assumption of what gender-based violence is, and what its victims and its perpetrators look like. An example of inappropriate identification is evident when

⁸ The terms “men” and “boys” is not used interchangeably. The focus of this research is on men, with the understanding that boys are targeted because they grow and are socialized into men according to the ideology of the community they are in, as well as the perspectives of the perpetrators. So men ultimately remain the main focus of this study.

examining armed violence against men. The result is the existence of cases where acts of violence are left unrecorded along with the type of violence, who the violence is perpetrated against and why. This leaves a gap in studying and understanding gender-based violence, and violence holistically, which in turn perpetuates undiagnosed gendered violence.

6.1 The Body as a Border, the Body as a Pillar

The adversarial nature of armed conflict means that one community has set its sights on the destruction of another. This destruction means targeting vulnerable components of the opposing community in order to weaken and subsequently destroy it. Community is hard to define and is “largely without specific meaning” (Sociology Guide, 2015). The term “community” can refer to “collections of people with a particular social structure”, “a sense of belonging” or the activities of a collective occurring in a self-contained geographical area (Sociology Guide, 2015). Community can also refer to the presence of a commonality amongst a group of people, possibly with immediate access to each other, such as social interests (Williams, 1985, p. 75). Not all communities function in the same way. Each has its own unique beginning and nuances in terms of culture and relations among its members. It is with this broad definition of “community” that this research is situated in.

A community can have vulnerable aspects to it because it is “a unified political body founded on consensus and commonality” in an “attempt to achieve agreement and unity” (Secomb, 2000, p. 133). This means that if the reason for the commonality is removed, an example being religion, then the targeted community will cease to be, unless it can find another commonality around which it can unify.

The unified political body that is the community, is made up of individual bodies in a metaphysical and physical way. The bodies are physical in that they are solid matter and occupy physical space and can therefore suffer damage or death. The bodies are metaphysical, which means that the community assigns status that defines existence within the community in terms of relationships and what that body contributes to the community. The two bodies coexist with each other as the metaphysical body needs to be hosted by a physical one. In that way, the two can influence each other and define each other’s existence. Due to the identity and importance that both bodies can carry within the community in which they exist, they are able to serve as

pillars around which the community defines itself. Examples of this are leadership roles, protector roles as well as bodies through which community membership can be inherited (Mukamana & Collins, 2006, p. 145).

Due to the value that the community affords to metaphysical and physical bodies, certain members become vulnerable to certain kinds of violence perpetrated directly and indirectly. What the violence aimed at the community attempts to do to the metaphysical body is attack the “consensus and commonality” that binds the community and ultimately destroy it (Secomb, 2000, p. 133). What the violence does to the metaphysical body is undermine the ideology and *raison d'être* of that community. What the violence does to the physical body is remove physical obstacles, acts of resistance and the hosts of the metaphysical bodies. An example of this is if men are viewed as the protectors of the community, then both combatant and non-combatant men are targeted for death. Sometimes, this extends to boys as well since boys are socialized to be men. When constructions of gender are some of the unifying factors of the community or are an important part of the community's identity, then the violence aimed at destroying the community will be gender-based. The way that cultures on either side of the conflict construct male and female bodies in particular, influences how those bodies are treated during armed conflict. This means that cultural ideas that form the foundations of the community are exploited in order to destroy components of the community, if not the community itself. This raises the question: if members of the community are targeted due to the value afforded to them by the community, does the community carry responsibility for the violence against its members? The answer to this is no. The perpetrators of violence carry sole responsibility for the violent acts they commit since *they* are the ones who decided to commit acts of violence.

A unique factor regarding the Sierra Leone Civil War is that the battle lines were drawn in part between those looking for state economic dominance and disenfranchised young men, and the rest of the country. This means that the opposing sides knew the weak points of the other due to being of the same country and therefore similar social structures and cultural beliefs. At the same time, the division into different sides created new unique cultures that informed action and the way that the war would be fought. The implications of this is that it was possible to anticipate that there would be an uprising due to economic and social reasons and gender-based violence due to gender inequality present in the country. It was likely impossible to anticipate that one of the methods of regaining power by these disenfranchised men would be to force

civilian men to participate in the sexual assault of their own family and community members (Oosterveld, 2011, p. 72). Some things are beyond imagination and anticipation.

The dismemberment of people answered to the need for control over the population by the rebel forces. The rationale behind dismembering people was to keep people from voting in the elections (Gberie, 2002, p. 3). This reveals that the RUF knew that it would lose the election and thought coercion was the only way to win. This type of political violence speaks to the belief that the people of the country are political property. To force the people to submit to RUF rule or keep them under the influence of the RUF, violence was used. Dismemberment didn't only keep people from voting, it kept people from joining the ranks of the enemy and fighting. It also kept them from being able to provide for their families since most of the economy was labour intensive, including diamond mining.

There is also a mythology to the use of unusual or unexpected forms of violence. Pumla Gqola (2015) argues that “violent masculinities create a public consciousness in which violence is not just acceptable and justified, but also natural” (Gqola, 2015, p. 152). By being at war, there is already the expectation for the use of violence in many capacities. War, which is arguably a patriarchal act, amplifies or gives permission for the use of violence in order to fulfil objectives (Ratele, 2008, p. 20). This is especially so for the RUF where violence was used for forced conscription of men and boys into their ranks, the kidnapping of women and control of communities. Spectators of the violence are especially “seduced” into mythologizing war-time violence as it is either unusual or generalized, therefore putting anyone at risk of it (Gqola, 2015, p. 152). This is especially true for acts such as the rape of men and forced participation of civilians in acts of sexual assault. The perpetrators, through their usage of that mythologized violence, become mythologized themselves. This enables the mythology of the violence and the perpetrators to be used as a weapon against individuals and communities that are under attack. It allows for easier control of targets and a greater ease of accomplishing goals. The continued use of these types of violent acts demonstrates that the violence is acted out by the perpetrators as a way of further displaying dominance. The following quote by Susan Brownmiller (1975), despite its age, captures this well, stating that

“Rape by a conquering soldier destroys all remaining illusions of power and property for men of the defeated side. The body of a raped woman becomes a ceremonial battlefield, a parade ground for the victor's trooping of the colors. The act that is played out upon her is a message passed between men—vivid proof of victory for one and loss and defeat for the other”

(Brownmiller, 1975, p. 38)

This communication by the perpetrators to the defeated men has a long-lasting psychosocial impact (Mukamana & Collins, 2006, p. 144). Long after the war is over, the community has to see the men who failed to protect them, and the men have to live with failing their responsibilities as men in their families and communities. The trust between the men and the rest of the community is forever damaged and the masculinity of the men will always be in question. These violent acts have successfully and possibly irreparably destroyed the bonds of that community, sending out messages of who the “real” men are: the RUF and its allies; and how power and “legitimate” masculinity is wielded: through violence (Morrell, et al., 2012, p. 20).

6.2 Theory Vs Experience: How Men Experience Gender-based Violence in Armed Conflict Settings

Due to precedent existing in law and research, we are able to define and categorize common acts of violence, even if some definitions and categories are still heavily debated as shown in Chapter 3. Even with decades of precedent, there is still little to no consensus of what gender-based violence is or what it consists of, particularly when talking about sexual gender-based violence. This is further complicated when it comes to armed conflict as many acts of violence that are witnessed and experienced there are not common and have little to no precedent, leaving researchers and lawmakers in a position where they have to learn, understand and interpret as cases are brought to their attention. But this is only if they are *willing* to understand, interpret and learn from these cases.

During the Special Court for Sierra Leone in *Prosecutor v. Moinina Fofana and Allieu Kondewa*, a case targeting the Civil Defence Forces, there were multiple chances for the judges to consider evidence of gender-based violence, but chose not to do so (Oosterveld, 2011, p. 51). This meant that those who do not know the background of the case would not have known that the Civil Defence Forces participated in the perpetration of gender-based violence. Perhaps this has contributed in part to the RUF being the face of gender-based violence during the war. There are repercussions to the exclusion of data such as this: *this group never participated in gender-based violence, this population was never targeted for this type of violence, there is*

little evidence supporting this argument. It excludes experience from what would eventually translate to theory and supports an invalid theory that will be used to invalidate experience.

Doris Buss (2009) notes that “part of the process by which types of harms and categories of victims are rendered invisible or un-seeable is through the act of defining and sorting crimes” (Buss, 2009, p. 155). This is the same as Sivakumaran’s (2010) argument regarding categorizing acts of violence as torture instead of gender-based violence, as well as the inability of victims to speak about certain acts do to shame or lack of vocabulary (Sivakumaran, 2010, p. 256). This means that what the legal system or scholarship views as gender-based violence is extremely limited, if it chooses to view that data at all.

The path to addressing this would be a very long one as victims can’t be simply told that the people they talk to regarding their experiences will not shame them for it. This would not be true. Fieldworkers, researchers and members of the legal system have been shown to be biased and hold prejudices when it comes to gender. It may also be the man is ashamed in himself. There needs to be a concerted effort to reframe victimhood for men in all sectors as something that is real, legitimate and worthy empathy and not ridicule. Scholars and legal personnel that refuse to adjust their ways of thinking need to be addressed if there is going to be change in the way that gender-based violence against men is researched and addressed. If the glimpse of gender-based violence against men that we have seen is anything to go by, then there are many more hidden horrors that need to be addressed.

6.2.1 Sexual violence against men and boys

As previously noted, there is an assumption that men and boys hardly experience sexual violence. This has even been used to dismiss men from being subjects of gender-based violence research. Carpenter (2006) and Sivakumaran (2010), amongst others who have engaged the data, have found that sexual violence does occur to men, but it is usually not classified as such. In order to have a thorough discussion of sexual violence against men and boys, it is important to first define the parameters that inform what sexual violence is. This is quite difficult as there is no singular definition.

Special Rapporteur for the UN Gay McDougall defined sexual violence as “any violence, physical or psychological, carried out through sexual means or by targeting sexuality (McDougall, 1998, pp. 7-8). This violence includes rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution,

forced pregnancy and forced sterilization (Secretary-General, 2014, p. 1). Valerie Oosterveld (2011) outlines the definition of rape used during the Special Court for Sierra Leone as the invasion of the body's orifices with any object or body part; the invasion must have been done under force, threat of force or coercion, done under a coercive environment or to a person who was unable to give consent (Oosterveld, 2011, p. 54). The perpetrator also had to know that what they were doing could or would result in penetration and that their victim did not consent to it (Oosterveld, 2011, p. 54). This outline is part of the four approaches to defining the elements of rape used for the Special Court for Sierra Leone (Oosterveld, 2011, p. 54). This is due to the fact that there is little consensus as to what defines rape in international criminal law (Oosterveld, 2011, p. 54). These elements weren't static and would undergo multiple revisions in an attempt to be more specific, which was important, especially regarding consent (Oosterveld, 2011, pp. 54-55). Through the revisions, the elements were still broad enough to include men and boys.

Rape and sexual mutilation are some of the most common acts of sexual violence against men and boys but, issues around data collection and interpretation may have clouded the types of sexual violence that men and boys face (Carpenter, 2006, p. 94). In one of the cases that Oosterveld (2011) covers, a couple is forced to have sex with each other and their daughter is forced to clean her father's penis afterwards (Oosterveld, 2011, p. 72). This is a clear sexual violation of the woman, girl and man. How many researchers and legal practitioners would view it this way, as all three parties experiencing a sexual violation, rather than the woman and girl? Or worse yet, view the man as a participant in the violation of his partner and daughter? Under radical feminism, "power is personal: of men over women" dictates that the man is not a victim in this, but a perpetrator of violence against his wife and daughter (Murphy & Livingstone, 1985, p. 63). Under radical feminism, the man's vulnerability and victimhood cannot be acknowledged. Under radical feminism, he raped his wife and sexually assaulted his daughter.

Even though rape and sexual mutilation are viewed as some of the most common acts of sexual violence against men, sexual mutilation, as with rape, is still not labelled as such in many cases. It is labelled instead as 'torture' or 'degrading treatment', resulting in only women as being identified as being "in need of protection and psycho-social attention" (Carpenter, 2006, p. 95). Although castration was documented in Sierra Leone, it must be noted that the probable reason as to why it was not common was because the war was not a genocidal one, unlike the war in the Former Yugoslavia, which was a genocidal war and castration of males was rampant

(Oosterveld, 2011, p. 72). Since genocide was not the *raison d'être*, the likely reason for castration was to “feminize” and humiliate the men who were victims of this as well as those watching (Carpenter, 2006, p. 94).

6.2.2 Armed violence against men as gender-based violence

Armed violence is mostly not seen as a gender-based violence. Since the presence of arms underlies the definition of armed violence, it is often taken for granted that there is a social expectation regarding who bears arms and why, as well as who the target is. This is reflected in the state armies of the world as well as other armed groups that participate in wide scale armed conflict. These are predominantly made up of men, even in the most liberal settings. This falls in line with patriarchal ideas of who has the right to wield violence, including its sources. This then qualifies all men as targets for armed violence as the common understanding and expectation is that they are the wielders of violence and therefore need to be killed in order to progress the aims of the perpetrating group which are ultimately about the destruction of the target community (Mukamana & Collins, 2006, p. 142).

Men and boys are also put at risk by the patriarchal view of men as protectors of their communities since they are viewed as the ones who wield violence, and therefore the means to protect. In this way, men and boys are at risk of armed violence because they have the potential to perpetrate violence, as well as protect from it. This means that women and girls, although they are at risk of armed violence by virtue of being members of the targeted community, or members of the armed forces, they are not specifically targeted for armed violence. It is therefore important to note that the targeting of men and boys for attack through armed violence fits with the definition of gender-based violence.

An in-between of the person bearing the arms and the person facing the weapon, is the person who faces the weapon and is made to choose between death, mutilation or torture; and becoming a bearer of arms or another form of violence. Forced conscription as a form of violence has been dominated by literature surrounding child soldiers, but it is important that humanity and vulnerability is extended to men as well.

6.3 Treating gender-based violence against men

The psychosocial nature of gender-based violence demands that the methods of addressing that violence need to be psychosocial as well if victims of that violence are to be adequately assisted. This means addressing the physical, the psychological and the cultural facets of violence. The difficulty for men is that they are not seen as vulnerable to suffering, with armed violence being dismissed as a gender-based violence and the result of being a combatant. They are only seen as being capable of inflicting suffering. The result of this is their erasure from aid programmes except for those that are focused on men as inflictors of violence such as Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration programmes. The first step to addressing men who are victims of gender-based violence is to acknowledge them as being vulnerable to many forms of gender-based violence, then formulate strategies to address their specific needs.

The categories that wounds fall under determine the kinds of services that the survivor and community need in order to be able to heal and be reintegrated if at all possible. Physical wounds can be addressed immediately or over a short-term period, psychological wounds need short term to long-term attention, while social wounds require long-term treatment as attitudes are hard to change (Mukamana & Collins, 2006, p. 144). This all rests on survivors being adequately treated and in time, which they are often not due to factors noted throughout this research, as well as personal financial constraints and other obligations such as looking after family (Human Rights Watch, 2003, p. 50). In a report on the Sierra Leone Civil War, Human Rights Watch writes that

in general the Sierra Leonean health services lack trained and motivated personnel, medical equipment and supplies, drugs, and blood for transfusion. The reproductive health infrastructure, which was poor before 1991, virtually collapsed during the war

(Human Rights Watch, 2003, p. 51)

These compounded issues work fiercely against the ability of survivors to get the help that they need and leaves them to have to struggle on their own. This results in a lower quality of life compared to the already struggling general population trying to rebuild after the conflict.

Physical wounds are the most visible wounds that result from gender-based violence. They can also be the longest lasting as physical scars often remain. This means that even when healed, the survivor and anyone who sees them still has to live with physical reminders of what happened. In the case of men who are survivors of gender-based violence, these are reminders of public humiliation, of a weak masculinity, of an unsecured place in the community. The

physical wounds men often face include the manifestations of armed violence such as gunshots, bomb explosions and any other armaments. These are common and expected wounds of armed violence particularly for those who are thought of as combatants, whether they were willing or not. But these can also affect civilians and when the civilian is a man, there can be doubt as to whether he really is a civilian or just a combatant hoping to gain sympathy or leniency through posing as a non-combatant.

Injuries on men from armaments are expected due to the patriarchal nature of armed conflict, but injuries that result from sexual violence, as previously discussed, are not. Due to this and the difficulties that arise from infrastructure damage and the lack of a developed medical sector prior to the war, specialists that can treat physical injuries that men have are extremely rare, if they exist at all. Genital mutilation and anal injuries would require urological and surgical attention under sterile conditions, requirements that would be difficult to fulfil even before the conflict. The lack of needed attention for these injuries results in long-term physical, emotional and social difficulties for the survivor. Physical wounds, even unseen ones, can have psychological and social implications, such as jeopardizing the survivor's place in the community and damaging their self-worth (Mukamana & Collins, 2006). Just the same, social rejection can affect psychological wellbeing.

Due to the high levels of sexual violence present during the Sierra Leone Civil War, there were many cases of sexually transmitted diseases⁹ (Human Rights Watch, 2003, p. 50). A highly prevalent one that has made the African continent the face of the epidemic is HIV. According to the World Health Organization, 41.9% of personnel from the Sierra Leone Army tested positive for HIV, with 37.5% being women (Human Rights Watch, 2003, p. 50). Another jarring find was that “rates of sexually transmitted diseases among soldiers are two to five times higher than those of civilian populations, and that during armed conflict the rate of infection can be up to fifty times higher” (Human Rights Watch, 2003, p. 50). These types of rates cannot be down to a small group, but indicate not just widespread sexual assault, but also the lack of condom use even in consensual settings. The conflict situation creates a space where personal responsibility and the duty to prevent the spread of sexually transmitted infections are cast aside. It is a lawless space if even peacekeepers are guilty of failing to protect even in this way (Human Rights Watch, 2003, p. 50).

⁹ Due to the age of the source, the term STD (sexually transmitted disease) is still used over STI (sexually transmitted infection)

Psychological wounds are the most difficult to treat even in post-conflict settings. The emotional toil of trauma requires the presence of mental health services. This was nearly impossible after the war as there was only 1 qualified psychiatrist in the whole country (Human Rights Watch, 2003, p. 51). The training requirements for qualifying to practice psychiatry meant that there was no short-term solution for this. The only hope would be that a new generation of mental health professionals would emerge in the post war era to at least contribute to the treatment of the post-traumatic stress that all survivors of the conflict were experiencing. This is important since addressing the psychological impact of the war at a national level is also an opportunity to address the social stigmas that prevail, providing the framework to establish new ways of addressing issues around gender inequality, destructive masculinities, violence and the stigma of victimhood (Ratele & Suffla, 2011, p. 264). This would create more welcoming and supportive communities for survivors to return and reintegrate with.

Addressing trauma would also provide the opportunity to address the cycles of violence that armed conflict starts or contributes to. Hecker, et al (2015) add to the wealth of trauma research with their study on “the associations between exposure to violence, trauma-related symptoms, and distinct subtypes of aggression in a civilian population of refugees from a region of ongoing war and conflict” (Hecker, et al., 2015, p. 452). Their article echoes previous work by noting that the more “potentially traumatic event types” a person experiences, the more they are likely to experience symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Hecker, et al., 2015, p. 448). Untreated PTSD contributes to violence in the post-conflict settings through the cognitive networks that develop to increase survival during violent periods (Hecker, et al., 2015, p. 449). These survival networks help facilitate quick responses to perceived threats, which is unsuited for recovering environments as these responses can be aggressive and inappropriate for the setting (Hecker, et al., 2015, p. 449). If the trauma was treated while it was occurring, then there are chances that a cycle of violence will not be produced (Collins, 2013, p. 80). In the post-conflict setting, the vast majority of the country’s population is suffering from untreated PTSD or related disorders (Ratele & Suffla, 2011, p. 262). For men, they are either willing or unwilling combatants or targets for death. This results in them being the most likely to have cognitive networks that produce aggression, thereby feeding the cycle of violence in the post-conflict setting. It is therefore important that there exists a large community of mental health providers within the country to help treat these disorders in the long-term. Long-term treatment

of these disorders will help the country to recover from conflict and contribute to lasting stability.

7. Humanitarian Law for Humanity

This chapter examines the ways in which men exist within international humanitarian law. This is to see if men are viewed as victims of gender-based violence at all in the wake of the end of the Sierra Leone Civil War. The legal acknowledgement of gender-based violence against men is important because it influences perceptions around gender and victimhood, as well as direct resources towards addressing violence that specifically affects men, thereby addressing all victims of gender-based violence. This chapter will also examine how restorative justice aspects of international humanitarian law impact on community needs for justice through traditional justice processes, and whether men who are victims of gender-based violence can fit in it.

7.1 Gender and International Humanitarian Law

The construction of international humanitarian law is heavily influenced by world disasters and conflicts. In this way, it can be highly reactive due to lack of knowledge and preparation regarding how to address certain situations. It can also be proactive when past events are learned from and policy is constructed to prevent or address any similar future situations. The laws and policies resulting from conflicts can also be negligent because of bias in the field regarding the gathering and analysis of data. The result of this is gaps in law and policy that allows for men who are targeted for violence due to their gender to slip through the cracks and suffer in silence.

According to Médecins Sans Frontières, international humanitarian law “seeks to govern the conduct of hostilities, primarily by alleviating unnecessary suffering in order to prevent conflicts from reaching a point of no return” (Médecins Sans Frontières, n.d.). It does this by putting limitations on the use of arms and military action while also dictating the way in which the needs of non-combatants are addressed (Médecins Sans Frontières, n.d.). This indicates that there is an assumption of innocence of the non-combatant and guilt of the combatant. It makes the non-combatant the victim and the combatant the perpetrator of violence. It makes arms the defining factor of what makes a victim and what makes a perpetrator. This is a precarious position for men as many occupy both positions. Forced conscription is an example of this where unwilling men are forced to be perpetrators of violence, either as part of state armies or as part of rebel forces. The same year that the Sierra Leone Civil War ended, Charli Carpenter (2006) interviewed a UNICEF official who said

We don't protect men from forced conscription. Forced conscription is not a human rights violation. Forced conscription of children is. We will advocate against the recruitment of children. But every government has a right to conscript men unless they have it in their laws that they shouldn't.

(Carpenter, 2006, p. 91)

There are a few exceptions such as when men are running from politically motivated persecution or from a war that has many human rights violations (Carpenter, 2006, p. 91). Unfortunately, even when men manage to desert, they receive little to no sympathy (Carpenter, 2006, p. 92). Even when men are resisting the forces that would make them into perpetrators, they are not afforded the status of victim or of innocence. This does not fall in line with the idea that humanitarian law “seeks to govern the conduct of hostilities, primarily by alleviating unnecessary suffering” (Médecins Sans Frontières, n.d.). How is it possible that the enslavement of men to the ranks of violent groups not a human rights violation? It makes the forced conscription of men and their forced participation in violence acceptable and forces those men to also carry the stigma of violent offenders when they are not. It puts men in a position where their consent is taken away by the forces that conscript them as well as international humanitarian law. This is arguably a means to fulfil the patriarchal belief that men are the wielders of violence and that it is their nature to do so. If it is in their nature to be violent, then it is impossible for them to have innocence. This explains the outpouring of support for young boys who were conscripted in the Civil War and the waning sympathy as the age goes up.

7.2 State Approaches to Restorative Justice: Truth Commissions and Traditional Courts

Jantzi (2004) dedicates a chapter in Zehr and Toews (2004) to the role of the state in restorative justice. He starts off with describing what happened in Haiti in the early 1990's when it collapsed and the country was left without a functioning government (Jantzi, 2004, p. 189). Without a functioning government to govern, police the people and uphold the law, the people took it on themselves to do so (Jantzi, 2004, pp. 189-190). A problem arose when the government became functional again: “local initiatives that had emerged from community ingenuity were replaced rather than incorporated or even used as foundations for the state

system” (Jantzi, 2004, p. 189). The state had in effect undermined what the people had created for themselves and what had been working for them. This type of interaction between the government and its people shows the necessity for collaboration when attempting to address issues affecting the country post-conflict. In the context of the transitional period after conflict, it is necessary for the government to provide avenues for addressing issues in a way that the people feel is adequate in order to not only to make sure justice is served, but to provide the foundations for a long lasting stability.

Truth and Reconciliation Commissions (TRCs) have been state orchestrated attempts at justice in post-conflict societies. They can be considered as a form of restorative justice practice because “they eschew formal prosecution, emphasize the importance of victim participation, and use a hearing process, which is meant to be less stifling than a courtroom, enabling people to choose what they say and how they say it” (Roche, 2006, p. 230). But there is much about TRCs that make them problematic with regards to how much restorative justice they provide as well as whether or not they achieve the goals that they set out to achieve.

The Sierra Leone TRC was established as a response to the amnesty given to violators of human rights by the Lomé Agreement (Schabas, 2004, p. 150). The *raison d'être* for the TRC was to “address impunity, break the cycle of violence, provide a forum for both the victims and perpetrators of human rights violations to tell their story, get a clear picture of the past in order to facilitate genuine healing and reconciliation” (Schabas, 2004, p. 150). The forum nature of the TRC made certain that many victims would feel too much shame to want to relive their experiences publicly, especially men who were victims of gender-based violence. As already raised in chapter 5 and 6 of this dissertation, there is a great expectation for men to be perpetrators of violence and not victims of it. As much as the TRC was a “legitimate and credible forum for victims to reclaim their human worth”, testifying in a public forum would force a man who is a victim to admit to having failed at the societal expectations regarding his gender (Schabas, 2004, p. 151). It would make the TRC process one of public humiliation and possible ostracization for him and a potential stigma for other men who may be suspected of being victims of gender-based violence, particularly that of a sexual nature. A recommendation for addressing this issue in the future is to first educate the people on violence, who it happens to and how to best respond to it and the victims of it. It is important to address issues of identity and shame before engaging in public processes like the TRC.

An unfortunate issue with TRCs is that of its deadlines. The Sierra Leone TRC had to begin proceedings within 90 days of the provisions being made for it in the Lomé Agreement (Schabas, 2004, p. 151). The TRC also had to conclude proceedings in 12 months, but it was concluded in 8 months (Schabas, 2004, p. 151). By giving deadlines for the start and finish of the process, an urgency was given to the TRC, but at the same time it gave the air of expecting the country to take the TRC as the cathartic point through which all grievances would be shed. When it was over, a new page had to be turned and life had to continue.

Another issue with the TRC is that it only addresses the needs of a very select few. Commenting on his survey research of South Africa's TRC, Gibson (2005) says that "the weakness of such a survey is that the complaints of specific local communities are not particularly well represented" (Gibson, 2005, p. 343). This could also be said of the TRC itself. Its centralization meant that it could not deal directly with affected communities and it forced the TRC to only deal with a select number of cases since to investigate every written and unwritten claim centrally would have taken time that the government could not fund.

Jantzi (2004) claims that "the enabling role of the state – in which it provides legal frameworks for restorative justice alternatives and structures to devolve a certain level of responsibility to communities for addressing wrongdoing – constitutes one of its most significant roles in restorative justice" (Jantzi, 2004, p. 191). Traditional courts have been the answer by many states to the need of addressing the drawbacks of state centralized TRCs. They are state supported with the aim of addressing grievances in a local fashion and making more people a part of the post-conflict transitional justice processes. State support means that there is legal framework for traditional courts that would allow for any necessary training and funding, as well as for Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to participate and offer their own services to the process (Jantzi, 2004, p. 193). The use of traditional courts and other traditional justice processes during the post-conflict transitional period has been most common on the African continent. This is most probably due to traditional courts still being part of daily community life outside of armed conflict and its aftermath. This makes traditional courts acceptable to local communities when they are applied.

In Sierra Leone, Fambul Tok was used prior to the war as a local community and family centred way of addressing grievances (Graybill, 2010, pp. 41-42). Due to corruption by local traditional elders and leaders that contributed to the youth disenfranchisement that fed the RUF's ranks, the Sierra Leone government was wary of "relying on traditional structures to help foster

reconciliation” (Graybill, 2010, p. 42). Another factor that made using traditional practices difficult to implement was that “indigenous methods historically have been employed for crimes such as theft, family disputes and rape, but there are no traditional methods for dealing with arson and amputation – two of the major crimes that were committed during the civil war” (Graybill, 2010, p. 43). This is unfortunate because the traditional justice practices of Sierra Leone can be holistic, depending on the dispute, aiming for reintegration of perpetrators and victims back into the community and everyone is asked to contribute towards peace (Graybill, 2010, p. 43). The patriarchal structure of Sierra Leone communities hinders some restorative justice measures as they tend to favour men, even if they are in the wrong or responsible for violent crimes (Graybill, 2010, p. 43).

The problem with state involvement in community practices is knowing just how far in to allow it to interfere (Jantzi, 2004, p. 194). If the state has the resources that communities need, and the legal permission for traditional practices and NGOs to function in the first place, it would be very easy for it to become an overbearing and controlling presence. It would take away the emancipatory and empowering effect of owning experiences and the right to a more personal justice from the communities.

8. Conclusion

In this research, I have argued for a more representative approach to gender-based violence during armed conflict. The biases that researchers and fieldworkers have expressed in their writing, particularly in Chapter 5, is bound to have a negative and extremely harmful impact on victims of violence and further research in the area. Researchers and fieldworkers need to locate their histories of identity, their own subject identities as they enter the research work, and address their racism and complicity in the preservation of racist and specifically “mysandrynoir” approaches to gender-based violence research. When researchers come into a space, they need to account for, and reflect upon, their own identities including their histories and backgrounds, as well as their relationship to the physical space of the research. It is not possible to come into a research field as a blank page devoid of bias. Acknowledging this will help researchers address their complicity and contribute to a broader understanding of violence and the ways in which it occurs.

As has been noted in Chapter 5 that researchers are still following radical feminism’s lead when it comes to addressing gender-based violence. The problem with this is that this involves ostracizing Black men who are victims of gender-based violence and framing all Black men as dangerous perpetrators of violence against women. There is no chance for Black men to be situated as victims within radical feminist logic. For this reason, I argued for a new theory to analyse gender-based violence during armed conflict on the African continent. A new theory that acknowledges the history of the African continent and the “mysandrynoir” that Black men face would provide an opportunity for representative definitions of gender-based violence. It would also not use the suffering of Black women as a tool to support “mysandrynoir”, thereby moving away from addressing violence at the expense of those that violence affects the most. A new theory for analysing gender-based violence during armed conflict would address patriarchy rather than use women’s suffering as another foothold for white supremacy.

White supremacy, as an unspoken ideological base, dressed up as the radical feminist need to protect all women will continue to harm the African continent with its need for “mysandrynoir” and “White saviour syndrome”. This dangerous approach articulated as a theory will continue to position Black men as dangerous savages that Black women need to be protected from. White supremacy through radical feminism, with its forceful strands within Aid organisations such as the United Nations and Oxfam, will continue to position itself as a civilized force coming to the African continent to bring peace to Black women and remove Black men from their social sphere.

This research exposed the lack of adherence to a conceptual understanding of gender-based violence. In doing so, it has successfully defined gender-based violence and used that definition as a support for the foundation of a new theory for analysing gender-based violence. It supports this foundation by providing the conceptual distinctions for gender and sex that facilitate an understanding of the workings of patriarchy in order to end it. The thinly veiled “mysandrynoir” that was exposed through this research demonstrated that the primary concern for researchers and fieldworkers did not lie in the dismantling of patriarchy. Dismantling patriarchy needs to be at the forefront of gender-based violence work. If a theory will not do that, then it has no place in gender-based violence research. It is patriarchy that dictated the start of the war in Sierra Leone and how it was conducted. It is therefore the fall of patriarchy that will result in not just the end of gender-based violence, but the end of violence itself. Patriarchy needs to end, and so our efforts as researchers and fieldworkers need to be directed in a way that would bring that end.

Chapter 2 revealed a quandary faced by many African scholars: the association of Africa with violence and the need to have violence-free discussions because our history is richer than that. Although armed conflict has become synonymous with the African continent, it is important to keep those violent histories in the narrative because there are people still suffering from that violence even in cases where the war is long over. The exclusion of discussions on violence from narratives regarding armed conflict erases the suffering of tens of thousands of people and accomplishes nothing. As such, that violent history is also a foundation for the theories that have arisen from the African continent and aim to address the injustices that have befallen it. This includes the new theory that this research proposes.

Chapter 6 demonstrated the cyclical connection and impact of individual and communal identity. Understanding this cyclical connection is an important part of healing individuals and communities. The cyclical connection provides an opportunity for community and individual engagement that will produce positive results in helping people to redefine gender and all that goes with it. It serves as a reminder that there is always a point of entry for fieldworkers to engage with the people they are supposed to be serving.

This research has argued for humanity. There needs to be humanity in the ways that we address violence. As can be seen in Chapter 4, the Theoretical Framework, this humanity should not just be reserved for victims of violence. It should be extended to those who are perpetrators, or who we assume to be perpetrators. This is so that communities can truly be rebuilt and heal

from the traumas that they have experienced during the armed conflict, as well as address some of the conditions that led to the conflict. Doing so also acts as a preventative measure for any future conflicts, or at least as a way to prevent some of the atrocities that occurred in the past. Humanity towards ourselves as researchers allows us to make mistakes in our theories and applications, and rectify them. Humanity towards our subjects allows us to address people and their experiences instead of focusing on addressing theories. Humanity is what will allow for progress in gender-based violence research, and not at the cost of any vulnerable group.

Addressing violence requires a plan of action, an agenda, for restoring dignity to victims and helping victims to be a healthy part of society, recovering from trauma instead of being abandoned to deal with it on their own. It also requires addressing perpetrators and the environments that they come from or facilitate violent behaviour, so that they do not offend again. Addressing these environments requires addressing attitudes that people hold regarding gender roles, the use of violence and victimhood. This is a difficult undertaking but needs to be done nonetheless. The court systems that have been utilized in the transitional period after the civil war in Sierra Leone have addressed this to an extent, but have still shown that there is a lot of work to be done in creating safe spaces for victims of all genders to speak on their experiences.

A limitation of this research was that it wanted to accomplish more than it had the space for. The lack of space led to the unaddressed link between humanitarian aid, gender-based violence and capitalism. This unaddressed link ties deeply into how race factors into humanitarianism. Although race is addressed in the Chapter 5, there is still a lot of work that needs to be done to tackle the ways in which it factors in the dismissal of men as victims of violence during armed conflict and the profit made in doing so.

Another limitation of this research is that it did not accomplish the goal of sufficiently adding laymen's understandings of gender-based violence and the ways that it occurs. Instead, the lay understandings that are present are mostly theoretical and based on the functioning of patriarchy and communities where it is evidenced. This was an attempt to make up for the lack of first-person voice inclusion while providing a foundation for the motivations behind acts of violence by one community against another.

Undertaking this research has served as a reminder that theorists have an impact in the real world. The result of this is the realization that we cannot treat our work, whether it is theoretical or field based, as something that occurs in a vacuum. Our work impacts on the lives of real

people who are dealing with a lot of difficulty and we have the ability to contribute to making their lives easier. We need to be direct and honest with our intentions as well as be open to address limitations since if we are better at addressing ourselves, then the work we put out improves and starts impacting people the way that we need it to.

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