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Intersectionality

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Volume 11 Issue 1 2021:
Introduction

*"Intersectionality was a lived reality before it became a term." (*Crenshaw, 2015, n.p.)

This Issue of the Interdisciplinary Journal of International Studies (IJIS) focuses on **'Intersectionality'**. For this Issue, we have welcomed articles that address intersectionality in any point of the research. The idea of focussing an Issue on 'Intersectionality' came as a result of extensive discussions among the editing team and colleagues from the Department of Politics and Society. We have experienced that the notion of Intersectionality is often discussed as a concept, a theory, a method or a case study by some means or another.

Therefore, it seemed obvious that we should focus a whole Issue on this with the hope to receive articles that challenge us and provide us with new perspectives. We have tried below to offer an introduction to the term of Intersectionality, and an explanation of how we, the editing team, understand it, but also how this Issue's authors discuss it.

The term intersectionality was coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1991) to describe the specific situation of Black women, who were not only marginalized because of their gender, but also because of their race. The ways in which these 'categories of differences' (Davis, 2008) or 'identity markers' – race and gender - are intersecting is forming a specific situation for the individual at hand (Davis, 2014). Crenshaw criticises identity politics because the homogenisation of the category of women ignores that personal identity and experiences are created simultaneously by several other social categories, and therefore, they become relational and inseparable. As a result, these intersections must be examined in order to gain a more rounded understanding of a specific group, topic or problematic.

Since then, intersectionality has been applied to other identity markers, such as "sexual orientation, class background, able-bodiedness, national belonging" (Davis, 2014, p. 22). Due to its universalist perspective, intersectionality has been developed and adapted to different fields and disciplines.

A person's specific intersectional position is defining how they are socially privileged or oppressed, as each identity marker is connected to power structures (Atewologun, 2018). Intersectionality can therefore be used to describe the overlapping and simultaneity of different (discriminatory) categories and how these are influencing the individual's experiences. In a racist, patriarchal, heteronormative society, white straight cis men have an easier access to power than BIPoC queer women. Apart from individual lives, the social practices, institutional arrangements and cultural ideologies are also influenced by these power relations between intersections (ibid.).

The purpose of this issue is to show the importance of intersectionality for international studies. To understand international relations and power politics, it is important to consider all forms of oppression and inequalities. Intersectionality either used as a method, a theoretical framework or an empirical case provides an approach that takes into account all the characteristics that influence an individual's standing in society as well as their ability to take influence within the society. Furthermore, a motivation was to show the multifarious ways in which intersectionality can be applied in research and to give a more nuanced understanding of the concept and its use. According to Wendy Smooth (2013), intersectionality encourages recognition of the differences that exist *among* groups, moving dialogue beyond considering only the differences *between* groups. Therefore, she suggests that intersectionality not only offers a platform to understand the individual level but also how systems of oppression maintain hierarchy.

Smooth's argument on intersectionality is clearly shown throughout Sørensen and Coessens article. The article uses a multi-level approach to examine what role women play in peacebuilding and conflict resolution in the Acholi ethnic group of northern Uganda, concluding that women's role is vital. Using the case study of Betty, they have shown how gender is "not only the missing piece of the puzzle within peacebuilding but is also one of the key challenge's women are faced with" (Sørensen and Coessens, 2021, p. 16).

Porziella in her article with title illustrates how individuals from the same oppressed group - migrants - face different inequalities and privileges - LGBT community. She strongly problematizes the phenomenon of 'homelesseness' for LGBT migrants, both physical and emotional. 'Homelesseness' is experienced with a feeling of isolation as the individuals face both the exclusion because of their LGBT identity but also because of the fact that they are migrants. Nevertheless, Porziella also addresses the positive outcome that contexts and spaces provided by

LGBT organisations may provide to LGBT migrants, resulting in a deconstruction of their 'homelessness' and instead finding a 'home'.

The effects of conflict-related sexual violence on kinship networks are analysed by Czarniawska, Jensen, Berger, Souza and Zaker. The article zooms in on the situation of Rohingya refugees from Bangladesh. The authors argue that the notions of purity and "undamaged" women and girls are present within the cultural values of this community. In this context, the authors conclude that Rohingya women who have suffered conflict-related sexual violence are victimized twice: first by experiencing sexual violence during conflict, and secondly by the community's stigmatisation and restrictions post-conflict. Through an intersectional lens, it is argued how the women experiencing sexual violence in this community are stigmatized and marginalized both by them being women and by them being refugees.

The contribution by Andersen, Mikkelsen & Palomo focuses on the situation of immigrant Latin American women in the USA. The article addresses the shocking reports of women being forcibly sterilized in the Irwin County ICE detention center. By taking an intersectional approach, they argue that the intersectional position of immigrant Latin American women is correlated to their vulnerability to forced sterilization. Delving into the history of eugenics in the US, the authors also employ Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to investigate the impact of negative right wing discourses on the vulnerability of marginalized women in relation to practices of forced sterilization.

Collectively, the four articles provide a productive contribution to the IJIS and the Department of Politics and Society. Engaging in important discussions and understandings of current developments, we hope that this issue will offer food for thought and open further debates.

Furthermore, this Issue features an essay from Schröder, in which the author takes a provocating standpoint, arguing that queer people have a higher mobility inside the 'Heterosexual Borderlands'. However, the author demonstrates that this mobility is dependent on the subject's intersectional position.

Notes on Editors

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Through Using a Multi-Level Approach, What Role do Women Play in Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution in the Acholi Ethnic Group of Northern Uganda?

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Abstract

Northern Uganda is home to the Acholi people, the predominant ethnic group of the region. The northern region of Uganda has been impacted the most by the civil war the country faced from 1981-1986 and, thereafter, the 20-year war with the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) that spanned from 1986-2006. Using such conflict-settings as a predisposition, this article aims to examine the role of Acholi women in peacebuilding and conflict resolution through a Social Ecological Perspective approach. In adopting a gendered perspective to analyse a vital area within peace studies, this article uses a multi-level approach in examining what role women play in peacebuilding and conflict resolution in the Acholi ethnic group of northern Uganda.

Keywords: Conflict resolution; Peacebuilding; Gender; Ecological Perspective Approach

Introduction

In terms of impact, representation and the discourse surrounding peacebuilding and conflict resolution, gender plays a central role. Studies show that women are disproportionately affected by conflict but are the least represented in peacebuilding (Wittkopp, 2009, p. 23). That is why this paper draws on Jennifer Ball's (2019) *Women, Development and Peacebuilding in Africa: Stories from Uganda*, as it documents case studies of Ugandan women who have been integral parts of peacebuilding within their communities. The case studies amplify Ugandan women's voices within peacebuilding and conflict resolution, from top-down and bottom-up spaces, and highlights the challenges of women in the field, as well as their successes.

Inspired by the cases, this paper aims to add a contribution to the area of gender within peacebuilding and conflict resolution through using the multi-level Social Ecological Perspective (SEP) approach, which will enable a gender analysis on multiple levels for a more holistic understanding of the case in its context. Moreover, this article is based on one of Ball's (2019) in depth case studies on an Acholi woman named Betty Bigombe. Building on this qualitative data, an analysis of gender in peacebuilding and conflict resolution will be made in the context of the Acholi ethnic group of Northern Uganda. Therefore, the research question is, "through using a multi-level approach, what role do women play in peacebuilding and conflict resolution in the Acholi ethnic group of Northern Uganda?". Methodologically speaking, the case study of Betty will be examined in its context and will be generalised to add to the current literature on gender, peacebuilding, and conflict resolution (Punch, 2014, p. 122).

Uganda's Conflict Settings and Current Leadership

Uganda gained independence in 1962 and did not initially have a civil war afterward. However, the first president, Edward Mutesa, was overthrown by Milton Obote in 1966, which started 20 years, referred to as Obote I, of "tyranny and oppression; corruption; black marketeering, and economic collapse; tribalism, violation of human rights and civil war" (Leggett, 2001, p. 32). In 1980, a period called Obote II lasted until 1985 under the rule of Idi Amin. Uganda, after that, had an ongoing civil war from 1981-1986, preceded by another 20 years of war from 1986-2006 between the Ugandan government and the LRA (p. 15). During the various wars, and during colonial times, Uganda suffered immense human tragedy and experienced extreme violence, which still has consequences on its society today (Ball, 2019, p. 13).

The current president Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, who has been in power since 1986, took the country's leadership position by force with his party, the National Resistance Movement (NRM). Museveni was officially elected president in 1996, again in 2000, 2006 and 2011 (Ball, 2019, p. 13). Although Museveni's leadership ended the civil war and saw an end to Joseph Kony's LRA in 2006, he is a controversial figure as he has changed the Ugandan constitution to remain in power for so long (p.14).

Theoretical Framework

Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution

To define the principal terms used in this paper; peacebuilding and conflict resolution, Galtung's (1996) conflict triangle will be used. There is a difference between peacekeeping, peacemaking, and peacebuilding. Peacekeeping decreases the levels of damaging behaviour, and peacemaking tries to change mindsets through facilitation and negotiation. Moreover, peacebuilding "tries to overcome the contradictions which lie at the root of the conflict through processes of demilitarisation, democratisation, development, and justice" (p. 2).

Gender and Peacebuilding

Looking at peace with a gender perspective moves towards the concept of 'positive peace', which seeks to reduce or remove all types of violence, but also the major causes of conflict in the future. Thus, positive peace can be defined as peace with justice for all. Even though the egalitarian vision of positive peace represents equality between regional and ethnic groups, it has undervalued the equality between the genders (Björkdahl & Selimovic, 2016, p. 182). Additionally, less attention is paid to the agents of peace and more on the institutions that are supposed to embody peace. When using a gender perspective on peace, it enables one to rethink the agents concerning peace and who the individuals are at the forefront of peacebuilding in a post-conflict context. While women might not have high positions in institutions, interact with the formal transitional processes or have proper education within peace resolution, they are active in their own lives and communities to build a peace that is supported in the everyday and tackle "the causes and the injustices of the conflict" (p. 186).

Women as Natural Peacebuilders?

There is a critical point to be made in the assumption that women are natural peacebuilders. Kouvo and Levine (2008) tackle this 'women and peace orthodoxy' (p. 363). In assuming that women are natural peacebuilders, there is an element of reproducing and perpetuating this

orthodoxy. This generally accepts the notion that there is an inherent division in gender roles where men serve at the institutional level and function at higher levels, thus having more power and status, as opposed to women, who are restrained to the domestic and community levels (p. 364). This is a crucial point to keep in mind when discussing gender and peacebuilding, and thereof women's role in peacebuilding. It would otherwise defeat the purpose of including women in the process if they are only limited to fulfilling certain roles.

Charlesworth (2008) argues that such orthodoxies assume women "(1) are 'natural' peace-makers and peace-builders; (2) suffer comparatively more during conflict; (3) should participate in peace processes because of their supposed natural affinity with peace; and demands that (4) gender should be mainstreamed but equates gender only with women" (p. 364). Even if women do have higher positions, for example in government, their influence is still limited. Bjarnegård and Melander (2013) add more nuance to this issue by noting that "[t]he suggestion that more women in parliament will lead to fewer armed conflicts runs the risk of being forwarded as an oversimplified solution to a complex problem" (p. 558).

Socio Ecological Perspective

The Socio Ecological Perspective (SEP) is an analytical tool that examines a specific context at four distinct levels (macro, exo, meso, and micro) and how they interplay with each other. It can be defined as "the study of people in embedded environments and the reciprocal influence between human behaviours and multiple environmental contexts" (Dorjee, 2013, p. 7). The framework can be used in different domains as it covers various aspects as it allows the analysis to focus on several levels, which provides a broader understanding of the situation (p. 7). Furthermore, the SEP is a multi-level approach that enables us to comprehend deeply rooted assumptions of a situation.

The macro-level analysis pays attention to "the history, values, beliefs, and ideologies of a culture interactants' conflict perspectives and behaviours" (Dorjee, 2013, p. 7). It deals with the broadest aspects of the case that enable it to be framed in a relevant context to better understand the other levels. The exo-level focuses on the influence of different recognised institutions, their procedures, and policies on the actions and reactions of people, therefore analysing how individuals interact with groups that have institutional power and influence over them. Next, the meso-level analysis looks at the impact of "immediate groups and organization" on the situation and its various actors, such as their workplace, neighbourhood community or extended family

members (p. 7). Finally, the micro-level analysis, which can be considered the more personal level, examines both "intrapersonal and interpersonal levels of interpretation and communication manifested in the actual conflict settings" (p. 7). The combination of these multi-contextual level analysis facilitates a more inclusive and holistic understanding of various conflict situations and the position of individuals within them compared to more conventional methods of case study analysis.

Furthermore, the SEP includes "parallels, discontinuities, and cross-level effects" (Dorjee, 2013, p. 8). When looking at magnitude and direction, parallels demonstrate the relationships between concepts and issues that share similarities at different levels, whereas discontinuities show the differences in the concepts and issues on different levels. The parallels and discontinuities are essential in the SEP analysis in that they add more nuances to the analysis by comparing the findings from the different levels and, furthermore, illustrating how the different levels interact with one another and are deeply connected. Finally, cross-level effects observe the "inter-relationship between the macro and micro levels' factors" (p. 8). The cross-level effects have three types: top-down, bottom-up, and interactive. From the macro, exo, meso to the micro level, the "top-down effects" indicate how the larger institutional actors influence the intercultural conflict stance. Even though the next effect isn't as dominant in the literature, the "bottom-up effects" remain important and focus on how lower levels will have an impact on higher levels. Finally, the "interactive effects" refer to how some effects at one level can influence the outcomes on other levels (p. 8).

Analysis

Macro-level

Uganda is an East African country comprising of 43.9 million people (Ball, 2019, p. 11). Data from 2018 shows that Uganda's Human Development Index (HDI) is 0.528 and has a Gender Inequality Index (GII) of 0.531, ranking it 127th out of 162 countries according to its GII (UNDP, 2019, p. 3). Uganda has improved these values consistently over time. However, socio-economically, there are still vast inequalities and poverty, mostly affecting its northern region (p. 15). Uganda lies in a region with bordering countries that have continuous conflicts, such as Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Kenya, which has impacts on its national security. The northern part of Uganda, which borders the DRC and South Sudan, is particularly troubled with conflicts and insecurity, in part due to its volatile northern neighbours.

Uganda is highly culturally diverse, encompassing over 43 languages, and has numerous ethnic groups (Otiso, 2006, p. 17).

Uganda has been known for a turbulent political history categorised by "acts of brutality, reprisals, military coups, and bush warfare" (Inder, 2009 p. 7). Since the 2006 elections of President Museveni, Uganda has achieved more stability, prosperity, and power. Museveni has developed the central, southern, and western parts of Uganda and reconstructed their economies and government facilities, thus improving health care and educational services. The northern part of Uganda has been excluded from this development and still faces ongoing conflicts and extreme poverty (Ball, 2019, p.14). Due to such long-lasting divisions, Uganda is a politically unstable country due to continuous conflicts in the north.

Norms and values, as well as policies and political processes, regulate war and peace in an Acholi context as they determine the roles of men and women in their society. Fighting in war on the field is perceived as a man's job, whereas women are viewed as passive actors "who only step in to sing of the heroism of the men" or encourage men to put down their arms and stop the conflict (Angom & Brauch, 2018, p. 17). This perception of men and women is how many societies look at the involvement of women regarding peace and conflict. Women's identities are constructed as mothers and guardians of culture, which in turn, implicitly indicates that they are victims, therefore justifying various uses of power and violence against women or to protect them (p. 18). Therefore, it is difficult for women to be taken seriously as legitimate actors, capable of acting on higher levels, within peacebuilding.

In saying that, there are women peacebuilders in positions of influence and power in Uganda. However, there is a different playing field for them. "When viewed from a comparative African perspective, Uganda today is a leader in advancing women's rights, in spite of the continuing challenges" (Tripp, 2002, p. 6). From bottom-up struggles to top-down efforts, Ugandan women have been at the frontline of fighting for gender equality and resolving conflicts (p. 8). In 1995, the NRM ensured that the Ugandan constitution was gender-sensitive and introduced affirmative action for women to support their political participation on multiple levels (Ball, 2019, p. 17). Therefore, Ugandan women are heavily involved in peacebuilding and conflict resolution, but still face many challenges in the field due to their gender.

Exo-level

According to Björkdahl and Selimovic (2016), there is a need to implement a gendered perspective in peace studies to create an understanding of peace that is more inclusive, grounded, and realistic to the actual situation women face. Therefore, it is important to mention the Security Council Resolution (SCR) 1325 because women in the northern region have suffered immensely due to the long-drawn conflict. Sexual violence, abuse, rape, human rights violations, and dehumanization are just a few examples of what women have been subjected to (Ekiyor & Wanyeki, 2000, p. 24). SCR 1325 has brought these violations to the attention of the Ugandan Government and how to address them in future programs, initiatives, plans, and laws (p. 24). Additionally, the resolution has been used in Uganda as an "advocacy tool for the involvement of women in peace talks between the Government of Uganda and LRD" and as a vital "tool to train women on the importance of their involvement in peace processes" to work towards positive peace (p. 24). Finally, we want to emphasize how crucial the creation of this resolution was towards improving the position of women within peace and security in countries all over the world. Knowledge of SCR 1325 remains low in communities where women, who were victims of the LRA, had no awareness of the resolution and what it stands for (p. 25).

The Peace, Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP) was created to enhance sustainable Socio-economic development for northern Uganda with four specific objectives and "seven overarching principles which cut across all development interventions", including elimination of gender-based violence, gender equity, and inclusion, public awareness, and sensitisation (Government of Uganda, 2015). It was created as a strategy and planning framework to improve the region and provide the Government and other actors with a "good framework for post-conflict recovery and development with a mechanism for joint planning, coordination, and resource mobilisation" (Government of Uganda, 2015, p. 14). Additionally, PRDP touches upon various elements brought up in SCR 1325 and has worked closely with OHCHR, UNDP, and UN Women to address human rights violations and sexual and gender-based violence in the conflict areas.

Meso-level

The meso-level illustrates the different actors that have impacted the peace processes in the northern region of Uganda. This includes actors that have been there from the beginning, such as the Government of Uganda and the mediators, or actors that have been added during the process, such as the Uganda Women's Coalition for Peace. In having women part of the

negotiations, they can ensure that their voices are heard, and needs are considered. The post-conflict transitional phase can be viewed as a "window of opportunity" for the improvement of their position and rights within society, and gender relations and not return to the "status quo" before the conflict, thus working towards a positive peace (Chinkin, 2003, p. 11; Meintjes, 2002, p. 64).

The meso-level highlights that during the peacebuilding process, various actors can be involved, which can potentially lead to some groups being overlooked or overshadowed. Hence, it is crucial to emphasize the importance of applying a feminist or gender perspective to peace to make it visible at various levels in accordance with the theoretical context (Björkdahl & Selimovic, 2016). To achieve positive peace, there is a need to aim for an inclusive and realistic perspective of peace. Therefore, peace processes should include women as we argue that it will enhance the inclusiveness and sustainability of the process. We believe that the more groups and actors are involved, included, and represented in peace processes, the better the implementation will be (Anderlini, 2007, p. 79). We do recognize that a certain limit needs to be maintained of how many actors are involved within the security discourses as the negotiations can be complex and long-lasting. However, if each group is represented, their voices can be heard even with "limited space". According to Björkdahl & Selimovis (2016), by including "women as a category of identity within security discourse" and integrating gender as a tool of analysis, this will decrease the silences of women in peacebuilding, which will lead to diminish the "dominance of masculine universalism" (p. 187).

Micro-level

Women in peacebuilding and conflict resolution have a hard time being accepted and recognized in the field. One example is Betty Bigombe, who is a woman in leadership in Northern Uganda, who faced challenges in her efforts to attempt peace talks with the LRA leader Joseph Kony. Bigombe is a prominent figure in Northern Uganda as she is known for communicating with Kony to stop the atrocities the group inflicted on Northern Uganda in the 1990s (Angom & Brauch, 2018, p. 152). Her decision to initiate peace talks through negotiation, as opposed to violence, were taken on by herself and were not supported by the Ugandan government, at first (p. 153). Bigombe served as the Minister of State for Pacification of Northern Uganda, Resident in Gulu from 1993 to 1998. In that time, she worked with communities to encourage local families to urge their rebel sons to give up being part of the LRA and come home (p. 154).

When Bigombe first acted on her initiative to negotiate with Kony and understand the motives of the LRA better, her community perceived her as “a woman venturing in men’s affairs of war” or “a woman trying to end a war between men” (Angom & Brauch, 2018, p. 153). The Ugandan government's primary approach to dealing with the LRA rebels was to meet them with punishment and violence. This approach, Bigombe thought, would be better replaced with negotiation and peace talks, and thereafter had trouble convincing the government, the army leadership, and people in her community of it. Even in a position of power as the Minister of State for Pacification of Northern Uganda, Bigombe still faced difficulties being accepted within conflict resolution and peacebuilding as a woman with a more ‘feminine’ approach (p. 154). Bigombe’s approach was finally accepted after she risked her life by meeting Adek, Kony’s middleman, who acted as a medium between Bigombe and Kony. She got the Ugandan government's approval of her peace talks mission after gaining a certain level of trust from Kony and made tangible progress the government favoured (p. 155).

After Betty’s initial efforts to achieve the peace talks that gained the LRA’s trust, the process was planned, but during the talks, Kony was not present. The LRA argued that the chosen venue was too heavily policed, which threatened the success of the negotiations. Bigombe phoned Kony independently and arranged to go with her team, without military protection, to carry on the talks with the LRA at Kony’s preferred venue, thus risking her life. The following day, the situation had calmed down, and the talks continued, with Kony delivering a long speech. It is said that Kony told Bigombe that he would like to see the end of the rebellion of the LRA and did not state any conditions. He only asked that the government further facilitate the peace process, ensure that the rebel children were welcomed back into the communities and were educated, and give him six months to gather the members of the LRA to part take in the peace process (Angom & Brauch, 2018, pp. 154-155).

Bigombe drove these negotiations, and peace talks out of her belief that words were a better way to achieve peace than violence, through a positive peace approach. “Bigombe began her efforts with a fact-finding tour, talking to people, eating with them, and attending local burial ceremonies and crying with them. Her approach helped build confidence among the people affected by the conflict and demonstrated that women could be powerful participants in conflict resolution” (Angom & Brauch, 2018, p. 156). The outcome of the 1994 peace talks, headed by Bigombe, resulted in the Acholi people having more security. The Rebels ‘came out the bush’ and were free to work within the village and the government army, illustrating how Bigombe’s

efforts lead to people trusting each other more (p. 155). The actions of Betty's approach have had a significant impact on various communities in conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Furthermore, Bigombe's case study depicts how, as an Acholi woman with a high-level government job, she still faced challenges as a woman with a positive peace approach, but was able to overcome such barriers, thus setting an example for other women in the field.

Parallels, Discontinuities and Cross-level Effects

We have seen at the macro-level that fighting, war, conflict resolution, and peacebuilding continues to be perceived as a man's job within the Acholi community (Angom & Brauch, 2018, p. 17). However, through the case study at the micro-level, we have seen a discontinuity in that women can and have taken a very active, top-down role in peacebuilding and conflict resolution and did not fall into the "stay at home" or "grassroots" categories. We find it important to highlight that Betty is a particular case and is more of an exception of women involved in peacebuilding within the Acholi community (Call, p. 97). Therefore, we acknowledge that the number of women engaged in peacebuilding, especially at higher levels, remains low globally (Angom & Brauch, 2018, p. 12).

Peacebuilding is seen as a masculine field with a general belief that "those who did not make war should have nothing to do with the making of peace" (Björkdahl & Selimovis, 2016, p. 187). This approach, as seen through a gender perspective, represents the exclusion of women and the presence of men, especially the position men and women hold in nations, institutions, and processes, and "the expectations associated with the roles of women and men" (p. 187). From the exo-level, we have seen that resolutions and declarations remain a very 'institutionalized' and 'top-down' approach, which continues to emphasize these masculine and feminine stereotypes. Through the creation of SCR 1325, however, the aim was to highlight the importance of having women within the peace discussions and have their voices heard. Through the example of Betty, we can see a parallel between the exo-level and their micro-level actions. The implementation of SCR 1325 demonstrates this in their work to advance their position within their communities, but more specifically within peacebuilding.

Through the support given by community leaders, various associations, programs, resolutions, and members of society, women can work towards achieving peace and establishing a more peaceful and sustainable future that considers their needs in a post-conflict situation. With this support, Betty was able to achieve and maintain a high-level municipal job and not remain

'stuck' at the domestic and grassroots levels. This emphasizes that women can indeed hold higher positions in peacebuilding while using non-violent, peaceful approaches, and respecting the cultures of the communities. SCR 1325 has allowed to recognize the impact of conflict on women, but also to show the position women should having to build sustainable peace. Therefore, we believe that the micro-level and the actors at the more national and local levels involved provide us with a better understanding of Acholi women's role within peacebuilding.

Conclusion

Acholi women have been involved in peacebuilding and conflict resolution, within top-down and bottom-up spaces, but their work and influence remain challenging. Gender is not only the missing piece of the puzzle within peacebuilding but is also one of the key challenge's women are faced with. By implementing a gender perspective within peace studies, it has allowed a broader and more inclusive definition of peace. The SEP framework enabled us to present a new way of viewing gender within the field through a holistic, multi-level approach. Thus, by applying a gender perspective through this framework, we have been able to analyse Betty's position at various levels within peacebuilding and put her case in a greater context.

Through the analysis at the various levels, we showcased the importance of having women in peacebuilding and post-conflict resolution, as well as their challenges. The analysis of Betty's case highlighted how Acholi women are key actors in peacebuilding, especially at the micro-level where Betty had taken a very active, top-down approach that reflected the reality of the situation on the ground. Through the analysis of Betty's case, and her positive peace approach, we conclude that women play a key role in peacebuilding and conflict resolution within the Acholi ethnic group's northern region of Uganda, albeit their challenges, such as falling into the 'woman as natural peacebuilders orthodoxy' and not being taken seriously, even at higher, top-down levels. Moreover, there is still a long way to go in integrating women even further within the different levels of peacebuilding and conflict resolution to ensure long lasting peace.

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LGBT migrants and refugees' search for home: An intersectional struggle

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Abstract

Migration is, in many ways, a search for home. Independently from its cause, migration is a process that has to do as much with 'uprooting' one's home as with 'regrounding' it. However, migration is not experienced in the same way by everyone: LGBT migrants face increased risks related to their sexual orientation and gender identity. Particularly, I maintain that, in their host countries, LGBT migrants and refugees are exposed to the phenomenon of 'homelessness': ostracised from ethnic and migrant communities because of their queer identity, and isolated from the local LGBT communities because of their migrant/refugee status. However, I display how LGBT migrants can combat this process by finding home and sense of belonging within collective frameworks, such as in the spaces provided by NGOs. In this article, I therefore highlight the intersectional struggle of LGBT migrants in their search for home, focusing on the de/construction of 'home/lessness'.

Keywords: migration; LGBT; intersectionality; home/lessness

Introduction

In recent years, the topic of LGBT migration has started to receive more attention, not only in academia and research, but also in campaigning and mainstream media. In particular, the focus has been on aspects such as the increased dangers and forms of victimisation experienced by LGBT migrants and refugees[1] throughout their migration journeys (cf. Freedman et al., 2017; Jansen & Spijkerboer, 2011), as well as in refugee communities (cf. Kivilcim, 2017; Myrttinen et al., 2017), and on the difficulties of the asylum-seeking process, during which LGBT asylum-seekers are asked to provide 'proof' of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity (cf. Danisi et al., 2020; Held, 2019; Dustin, 2018; Ayoub & Paternotte, 2014). At the same time, however, not as much attention has been dedicated to the concepts of 'home' and 'homelessness' in relation to LGBT migration, despite findings suggesting that LGBT migrants and refugees tend to struggle particularly in this regard: one of their major issues is that of feeling unsafe inside reception centres, leading many to live on the streets (cf. Torrisi, 2017; Women for Refugee Women, 2020). At the same time, many LGBT migrants experience extreme isolation, an 'emotional homelessness' in which they are unable to create for themselves a sense of belonging to their host community, and therefore to develop a new concept of home and family in the country where they are seeking asylum, on account of their double ostracization from both ethnic and migrant communities because of their queer identity, and from local LGBT communities because of their migrant/refugee status (cf. Wimark, 2019). In this article, I focus on the topic of LGBT migration through the concepts of 'home' and 'homelessness', arguing that an intersectional perspective is required to understand the specific experiences of LGBT migrants and refugees. I therefore ask:

> How can intersectionality help us understand LGBT migrants and refugees' experience of 'home' and 'homelessness'?

I have chosen to approach this topic by focusing on the Italian context, not only because of this country's role as a bridge to Europe, but also because of its current social and political environment. Migration has become one of the main political battlefields, and, in recent years,

[1] "At UNHCR we say 'refugees and migrants' when referring to movements of people by sea or in other circumstances where we think both groups may be present. We say 'refugees' when we mean people fleeing war or persecution across an international border. And we say 'migrants' when we mean people moving for reasons not included in the legal definition of a refugee. We hope that others will give thought to doing the same. Choices about words do matter." (Edwards, 2016). Throughout this article, I will apply this same principle, referring to both 'migrants' and 'refugees' to encompass all possible experiences of migration.

populist leaders have been building their following around their anti-immigration stance. This has rendered the Italian context a particularly interesting case because "being a laboratory for populism, Italy has been and is a laboratory for citizen mobilization against right-wing populism" (Campani, 2019, p.187): if, on one hand, Italy has seen an increase in right-wing populism, on the other hand, it has also seen a 'bubbling up' of social movements, activist networks, non-governmental organisations, cultural associations, and informal citizen groups interested in social justice issues. Furthermore, in recent years Italian LGBT associations have developed projects and practices aimed specifically at LGBT migrants and refugees, from helpdesks providing psychological and legal assistence, to meeting groups and even housing programs, such as the state of the art project of 'Casa Caterina' in Bologna, "the first protected home in Europe for transgender refugees and asylum seekers" ('MIT Italia-Chi siamo – WordPress', n.d.).

The analysis will focus firstly on 'homelessness', both physical and emotional, displaying how it is constructed by the LGBT migrants, and secondly, on how they can find 'home' and belonging in the collective frameworks provided by NGOs and activist networks. Here, the importance of an intersectional perspective will be highlighted, thus allowing me to answer my research question.

Methodology

This article relies on primary data collected through semi-structured qualitative interviews carried out with LGBT migrants and refugees. The subjects to interview were identified through "snowball sampling" (Bryman, 2012, pp.202-203): after establishing initial contact with various organisations, I relied on them to provide me with the contacts of LGBT migrants and refugees who might be interested in participating in my research.

The data collected was then organised and processed through the software NVivo. Within the software, I created 'nodes' in which to categorise the various instances where 'homelessness', 'home', and 'belonging' were addressed by the research participants. The interview transcripts were therefore analysed through this framework. This process has indeed been interpretative, and therefore subjective in some ways. Nonetheless, I maintain that these categorisations have contributed to the creation of a useful framework through which to approach and structure the analysis.

Theoretical Framework

In order to approach the topic of 'home' and 'homelessness' in relation to LGBT migrants and refugees, this article's theoretical framework relies on three main theoretical approaches: intersectionality, queer diaspora, and politics of belonging.

In particular, intersectionality, first theorised by Black feminist scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989), provides the main lens through which this research can be carried out, as it lays down the groundwork for understanding oppression at the intersection of different categories. Brah and Phoenix refer to intersectionality

> "as signifying the complex, irreducible, varied, and variable effects which ensue when multiple axis of differentiation – economic, political, cultural, psychic, subjective and experiential – intersect in historically specific contexts. The concept emphasizes that different dimensions of social life cannot be separated out into discrete and pure strands." (2004, p.76).

By approaching the topic of LGBT migration and home/lessness intersectionally, then, I seek to acknowledge and emphasise the multifaceted and complex nature of LGBT migrants and refugees, and therefore to look at how this complex nature is addressed by organisations and projects which are aimed at them. More specifically, intersectionality here functions analytically as a research paradigm, because of its benefits of simultaneity, complexity, irreducibility, and inclusivity, meaning that it deals with multiple analytical categories at the same time, that it manages to capture experiential and structural complexity, that it does not reduce oppression to one main aspect or category, and that it is inclusive, making visible those groups that tend to be overlooked in hegemonic feminist theory (Carastathis, 2014, pp.307-309). In this article, I therefore acknowledge the intersecting identities of LGBT migrants on the axis of sex, gender, sexuality, migrant/refugee status, and ethnicity/nationality, however, I am not interested in highlighting one above the others, but rather, I focus on how these intersections impact their experience of finding home and belonging, and on how the organisations working with LGBT migration can also apply intersectionality to create state of the art practices.

As for queer diaspora and politics of belonging, each of them serves to address a specific aspect discussed throughout this article. The former, queer diaspora, defined by Fortier as the

intersection between theories of diaspora and queer theories, serves to conceptualise the sense of emotional and physical 'homelessness' experienced by LGBT migrants and refugees, as it "constitutes a rich heuristic device to think about questions of belonging, continuity, and solidarity in the context of dispersal and transnational networks of connection" (2002, p.184). Through queer diaspora, it becomes possible to define the undefinable and to think about community "in terms of difference, dispersal, disconnection, diversity, and multilocality" (ibid., p.192) rather than exclusively in terms of commonality.

Thus, while queer diaspora allows us to conceptualise and analyse 'homelessness', the latter, politics of belonging, theorised by Yuval-Davis (2006; 2011), serves on the other hand to focus on sense of belonging and therefore on 'home' and how it is constructed. According to Yuval-Davis, when 'belonging' becomes problematised, such as due to forced displacement, 'politics of belonging' emerges by exercising power and constructing boundaries focusing on the inclusion/exclusion of individuals and social categories. Thus, the politics of belonging are concerned with maintaining and reproducing boundaries of belonging, with resisting those who seek to challenge these boundaries, and with the "struggles around the determination of what is involved in belonging" (ibid., p.20). Within the context of this article, politics of belonging is utilised to approach the empirical data and highlight how the construction of a sense of belonging and of 'home' in LGBT migrants and refugees happens, focusing on how this category gains 'power of' their life and migration path when involved in the activities of LGBT organisations.

Constructing Homelessness

This section analyses how the LGBT migrants and refugees interviewed discuss their migrant experience in relation to the concepts of 'home/lessness', focusing on their construction of both physical and emotional homelessness.

For instance, one interviewee, Joy, identifies one main issue of being an LGBT migrant hosted in a reception centre, which, in theory, should provide a 'home' for her:

> It's just like taking you out of [country of origin], where you know that gay people are not accepted… and putting you back with the same [people you were escaping from]. The place changed. The emotion... my mindset stayed the same. Nothing changes for

> you personally because it's just like... If you don't have the courage, then you are not free to be who you want to be.

The kind of homelessness she experiences is therefore physical, as the reception centre does not represent a 'safe home'. Instead, the proximity to her fellow nationals forces her back into the situation she had been trying to escape from by seeking refuge in Italy. This is a paradox that many, if not all, LGBT migrants and refugees have to face: when placed in a migrant reception centre, the categories of migrant/refugee and sex are usually the only ones taken into account. However, this lack of a more intersectional understanding on behalf of the asylum system places individuals in danger, as it fails to acknowledge the existence of LGBT migrants, the victimisation they can experience in relation to their sexual orientation and/or gender identity, and therefore that being accommodated with fellow nationals is not beneficial, but dangerous. Later in the interview, Joy explicitly addresses this, discussing how LGBT migrants and refugees are in need of a "different kind of help" precisely because of their intersecting identities, relating to her specific experiences as a black, migrant, lesbian woman.

Another interviewee, Maruf, a transgender man who was hosted in a reception center with other men, expressed similar criticism of the migrant reception centres' ability to provide a 'home': even though his identity was respected by the Italian asylum system, as he was provided accommodation according to his gender identity rather than his biological sex, he still felt in danger, afraid that the other residents would find out about his transgender status. He therefore concluded that living in the reception centre felt more like a prison: in this sense, then, he experienced a form of homelessness since, while the accommodation did provide shelter, it failed at giving him the intimate space and privacy needed to feel safe and comfortable, 'at home'. Analysing his case intersectionally, one can argue that part of his struggle derives from the ways in which the asylum system has dealt with his axis of oppressions, prioritising some above the others: while respecting his gender identity, his transgender status has been erased, thus exposing him to increased dangers.

The interviewees also addressed in various ways the emotional aspect of homelessness, for instance by expressing a longing for family and a place where to belong. Recounting her experience with finding love inside a reception center, Joy told me:

> I met my girlfriend actually in the camp and it got to a point where they started telling us things like 'you can't let the rest of the girls know you are together'. They were trying to separate us and they transferred her to a very far city. Just to keep us apart. And at that moment I was wishing that... I wish there was camps for gay people, specifically lesbians. Then I would have been happy.

In Joy's case, her attempt at finding love and building an 'emotional home' in the reception centre was quickly obstructed by the reception system itself, which first imposed secrecy upon her lesbian relationship, and, subsequently, tried to break it off entirely by keeping the two women apart. This event precipitated Joy into a deep emotional homelessness, leading her to wish for a place reserved for people like her, where to belong and live truthfully without any of the consequences which she has had to endure attempting to live as a black, migrant, lesbian woman. Similarly to the examples addressed above, intersectionality plays an important role, as emerges from Joy's own words: in the asylum system she is perceived only as a woman and a migrant, while her identity as a lesbian is actively erased. This is particularly problematic, as it is through her lesbian identity that she finds belonging, amongst other lesbians as well as within the broader LGBT community.

Although these were only a few examples, I have experienced, throughout the interviewing process, that the LGBT migrants and refugees therefore not only can relate to 'homelessness' as a concept, but can operationalise it themselves and utilise it to address their particular situation, relating it to their intersecting identities as members of the LGBT community, as migrants/refugees, as ethnic minorities. In Joy's words, for instance, it is possible to observe how she conceptualises her experiences as a lesbian refugee through the lens of homelessness, or, referring to my own theoretical approach, of queer diaspora. In particular, Joy is pushed to inhabit the "diaspora space" (Brah, 1996, p.209) because the queer narrative of "migration as emancipation" (Fortier, 2002, p.186) has failed her: moving out by migrating has not emancipated her, instead it has isolated her, as she has been rendered extraneous to her ethnic network because of her lesbian identity, and alien to the mainstream Italian LGBT community because of her body marked as 'Other': migrant, racialised, different. Hers is, thus, a homeless condition. Similarly, other interviewees' experiences in asylum centres evidence a discomfort in having to share a living space with their fellow nationals, not necessarily because of a past negative incident, but also because of generalised anxiety and fear surrounding their LGBT identity, particularly in the context of their ethnic and cultural background.

However, in most interviews, the exploration of this sense of homelessness, both physical and emotional, led to discuss also 'the other side': home. Therefore, while the LGBT migrants and refugees recounted the difficulties and struggles that they have faced, constructing 'homelessness', they also talked in a more positive light about their current situation, often in relation to the sense of belonging and home that they have been able to find through the LGBT organisations that welcomed them.

Finding Home and Belonging

This section analyses some instances in which the LGBT migrants and refugees illustrate their "homing processes" (Ahmed et al., 2003, p. 9) through which they are able to reconstruct a sense of home, safety and belonging for themselves. This allows them to escape, or at least alleviate, their 'homelessness'.

One interviewee, Omar, explained in this way the relationship that he has established with his LGBT migrant group:

> When we're [at the LGBT organisation's headquarters] there's no difference, we're all equals. Sometimes when we're at [coordinator]'s home it's like our home […] it's like a family. […] It doesn't end there, we can go get coffee together, we eat together and so… it's family. It's a family.

In his statement, Omar highlights the "homing processes" (Ahmed et al., 2003, p.9) carried out by the group, which transform it into a family: spending time together in and outside the organisation's offices, eating together, meeting up for coffee. They are small, everyday, insignificant gestures, and yet, the meaning that is attached to them is greater, allowing Omar to feel a sense of belonging and, in many ways, to find 'home'. Furthermore, he highlights that, within the shared space of the LGBT organisation, 'they are all equal': this does not signify that their differences are erased, but rather, that their different identities are all cherished, without one axis being placed above the other, an approach reminiscent of the "careful attention to working within, through and across cultural differences" of proto-intersectional feminism (Brah & Phoenix, 2004, p.79).

Similar feelings were echoed by Joy:

> When I joined [LGBT migrant group] I really felt the connection because I saw people that relate to me, something that I can relate to because it's like a family. We are trying to elevate one another and trying to help one another. We have the same goal and we have the same vision.

She therefore acknowledges a sort of euphoria in relation to meeting 'people like her', i.e. in recognising and actualising the self through the other – what Yuval-Davis calls "the dialogical construction of identity" (2011, p. 16) – and in establishing a connection that she never imagined available for her. Her newfound community 'feels like a family' because of the understanding of mutual support in fighting the same battles to achieve a united goal. Like Omar above, Joy's words refer to a familiar setting where differences are understood and then set aside, while commonalities and shared goals are prioritised.

These examples thus show how LGBT migrants are able to build an 'emotional home' for themselves by engaging with local LGBT organisations, and the connections that they establish contribute to liberate them from their 'homelessness'.

Another aspect of belonging has to do with what Yuval-Davis calls "the performative dimension" of the construction of belonging (2011, p. 15), which I have been able to observe in the LGBT migrants and refugees interviewed when discussing the topic of Pride: from eagerly looking forward to Pride month, to making personalised Pride t-shirts and buying all the rainbow merchandise sold by the LGBT organisations. Indeed, Pride provides an opportunity to both construct a sense of belonging, and proudly display it through meaningful symbols that signify belonging, such as rainbow-striped flags and clothing items. An important event for the LGBT community, Pride, in and of itself, is about belonging, about finding one's own community, about getting together as a large, loud, colourful family. It is not surprising then that LGBT migrants and refugees have so wholly embraced Pride events: being at Pride reinforces their sense of belonging, and, through their participation, they make themselves visible and known within the local LGBT communities, rejecting their liminal and homeless condition as migrants and refugees, and instead fighting for, and finding, home and belonging as lesbian migrant and refugee women, as gay migrants and refugees, as transgender migrants and refugees.

Ultimately, then, I argue that LGBT migrants and refugees can deconstruct their 'homelessness' and instead find 'home' through the contexts and spaces provided by LGBT organisations that address this particular issue both by acknowledging the specific experience of migration of LGBT migrants and refugees, and through a focus on sense of belonging, by facilitating "homing processes" which entail "the reclaiming and reprocessing of habits, objects, names and histories that have been uprooted – in migration, displacement or colonization" (Ahmed et al., 2003, p.9). As I have displayed, these processes are remarkably ordinary actions: sitting together in someone's living room, having dinner, and then going out to get coffee; opening up to the other members of the LGBT migrant group; connecting to the people in the organisation by sharing the same goals and aspirations; wanting to offer to other LGBT migrants the same help received. Therefore, I highlight the importance for the organisations to work intersectionally to understand the multiple and specific struggles of LGBT migrants and refugees, as well as to recognise the need for home and family and provide ways for "homing processes" to take place, by creating safe and welcoming environments, by implementing 'good practices' that seek to tackle the LGBT migrants' 'homelessness', and by taking on a 'from below' rather than an 'institutional' approach. Referring to Yuval-Davis' politics of belonging (2011): to define belonging one must create boundaries of inclusion and exclusion, however, in this case, the focus is on the intersectional, inclusionary power exercised in the re-creation of home and family within the Italian LGBT community.

Conclusion

With this article, I have sought to focus on the topic of LGBT migration through the concepts of 'home/lessness', displaying how LGBT migrants and refugees construct their sense of homelessness as both a physical and emotional condition, and, subsequently, how they can instead find home and belonging within the organisational spaces and contexts provided by LGBT associations. I have approached this subject arguing in favour of an intersectional perspective, displaying the intersectional approach adopted by the LGBT migrants and refugees themselves to describe their lived experiences, and the inclusive and intersectional practices implemented by the LGBT organisations offering support to migrants. As I have shown, these practices allow LGBT migrants and refugees to escape their homelessness and find an 'emotional home' by providing the necessary conditions for the establishment of meaningful relationships related not necessarily to a physical space, but to a collective framework that acknowledges and values the different, intersecting identities that exist under the umbrella of 'LGBT migrant'.

While the development of a sense of belonging within organisational contexts contributes to improve the situation of LGBT migrants and refugees and to alleviate their sense of homelessness, a number of issues remain, that should also be addressed through further research and the development of targeted practices. Specifically, the issue of physical homelessness, of a lack of safe and secure accommodation for LGBT migrants and refugees, remains pressing, and yet difficult to solve. The existing exceptional cases, however, such as the few projects providing specific accommodation for transgender migrants and refugees, are laying down the groundwork for the development of future projects to follow. Furthermore, this signifies that, even more so, the LGBT organisations' physical space becomes the essential locus for LGBT migrants and refugees to re-construct home, even if only for a few hours a week, as it represents for many the only physical space where they can exist fully and comfortably in their identities.

Another issue that remains unsolved is that of the alienation from migrant/ethnic networks experienced by LGBT migrants and refugees. As Wimark denotes, these networks "help refugees along the road through Europe as well as within the new country [and] assist with information about the new society, accommodations, finding work and creating stability and social attachments in the new country" (2019, p.8). However, ethnic networks rely on cis- and heteronormative values, and those who express non-normative sexual desires and perform gender 'incorrectly', as is the case for LGBT migrants, cannot access the resources provided by them. In my own research, no interviewee has been able to address ways to reconcile with ethnic networks. On the other hand, some proposed the idea that ethnic networks have lost their intrinsic value, as more and more LGBT migrants in need of support turn to LGBT networks instead, and, more importantly, as they create new LGBT migrant networks that are able to address both the alienation from ethnic communities, and the issues within Western-centered LGBT communities.

In conclusion, for future developments within research, I envision perspectives on LGBT migration and home/lessness that are intersectional, that center bottom-up approaches, the establishment of new solidarity networks and of collective frameworks, and that understand the voices of LGBT migrants and refugees as those of experts in the field.

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Effects of Conflict-related Sexual Violence on Kinship Networks

Case of Rohingya Refugees in Bangladesh

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Abstract

With the outset in feminist theory on wartime rape (Brownmiller, 1975) this paper illuminates how kinship networks are affected by conflict-related sexual violence. Following feminist scholars, we argue that conflict-related sexual violence is intended to damage communities by destroying their cohesion. An analysis of kinship relations of Rohingya refugees from Bangladesh indicates that members of the community post refuge struggle to protect the conjugal order (MacKenzie, 2010) and social norms related to family and marriage. Attempting to avoid the shame and stigmatisation of sexual violence, kinship networks are being reevaluated to protect the family's honour. This is done for example by shunning survivors or making use of corrective measures like child marriage and restrictions on women's movement. Thus, when a community is subjected to conflict-related sexual violence, women are victimized twice: first through the experience of sexual violence during conflict, then by stigmatisation and restrictions post-conflict.

Keywords: kin networks; conflict-related sexual violence; kinship; conjugal order; Rohingya refugee

Introduction

Although the focus on wartime rape might have increased during the 20th century, the phenomenon is as old as war itself (Gottschall, 2004). Feminist scholars (see Brownmiller, 1975; Stiglmayer, 1994; Sajor, 1998) were the first to investigate and hypothesise wartime rape with a theoretical approach. They addressed the phenomenon, not as a crime motivated by sexual passion, but rather as an instrument of social power. As in the times of peace conflict-related sexual violence comes from the unequal gender relations and the desire of a male perpetrator to exert dominance over his (female) victim which is exacerbated by military culture and war (Enloe, 1998; Kelly 2000; Gottschall, 2004). Most of the contemporary scholars adopt one of the two perspectives based on the first feminist research of wartime rape: opportunistic or weapon of war. Supporters of sexual violence as a crime of opportunity during war believe that it happens because of the perpetrators' desires or due to mythologist masculine group identity, hence sexual violence happens because the perpetrator is a man and/or a soldier (Kirby, 2012; Megar, 2016).

In the second understanding, conflict-related sexual violence is seen as strategic due to the devastating effects it has on an affected society: the spreading of terror and the humiliation of the enemy (Anderson, 2010; Bastick, Grimm & Kunz, 2007; Leatherman, 2011). Conflict-related sexual violence becomes a strategic tool of warfare (Allen, 1996; Kamal, 1998; Littlewood, 1997), like bombs, bullets or propaganda, and is an effective tool of genocide because it can affect the afflicted culture in its possibilities to reproduce and remain coherent. Women who have been subjected to conflict-related sexual violence can face many challenges: they suffer from physical or psychological injuries, they can be abandoned or disowned by their families and husbands, or in some cases, they die during the assault or following injuries afflicted during the assault - all of these scenarios lower a community's ability to grow through reproduction (Allen, 1996).

In this paper, we are not going to investigate the motives or intent behind (see Allen, 1996; Brownmiller, 1975), nor forms of (see Cohen, 2013; Wood, 2009) conflict-related sexual violence, which has already been explored by many researchers. Instead, we are going to focus on one of its long-lasting effects. That is a community and family degradation suffered by the survivors. To do this, we will examine the concept of conjugal order (MacKenzie, 2010), as well as anthropological understandings of kinship (Tjørnhøj-Thomsen, 2004; Yanagisako and

Collier, 1987), and contest it with the survival statements of Rohingya women and girls, as well as other members of the Rohingya community from the camps of Bangladesh.

Here we would like to acknowledge the popular criticism of conceptualising rape as a weapon of war, especially regarding the intention behind conflict-related sexual violence. Maria Eriksson Baaz and Maria Stern (2013) in their critical review of the concept note, that "One problematic aspect of the discourse of Rape as a Weapon of War is that it somehow assumes the existence of a uniform universal military strategy that is shared by all military/armed groups in all contexts, in which rape is construed as (somewhat) inherently and objectively strategic" (p. 65). Many researchers have pointed out that there can be many reasons for conflict-related sexual violence which are not part of the "rational war machine" which the discourse within strategic rape implies (p. 85). As Jonathan Gottschall (2004) argues, it is important not to confuse the consequences of conflict-related sexual violence with its intentions, even if the results may be welcomed by the perpetrators either way. We have no way of determining the reasons behind the conflict-related sexual violence during the genocide against the Rohingya, but the consequences are many. It could be argued that the Myanmarese army succeeds in its attempt at genocide, not in the traditional, direct sense, but indirectly, as a type of second-degree genocide, where the whole society is left traumatised and unable to continue living as they used to.

Methodology and theoretical framework

For decades, the Rohingya, Muslim minority from Myanmar, have been persecuted and marginalised by the authorities and civilians (Zarni & Cowley, 2014). With the destruction of hundreds of Rohingya villages, which started in August 2017, the conflict escalated and led to a mass exodus of the Rohingya to neighbouring Bangladesh (Ware & Laoutides, 2019). Many reports (see Amnesty International, 2018; MSF, 2017; MSF, 2018; OHCHR, 2018) document allegations of genocide, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. In September 2019, Human Rights Council (OHCHR) published a report on sexual and gender-based violence in Myanmar, which stated that the use of rape during the 2017 "clearance operations" (p. 19) against Rohingya was "methodical and systematic" (p. 19) with "genocidal intent to destroy the Rohingya people" (p. 23). Hence, this article considers the atrocities, which happened to women in Myanmar in 2017 and 2018, as part of the tools of war, and the use of rape by the Myanmarese army as a weapon of war.

This allows an understanding of conflict-related sexual violence not only as an experience in survivors' lives but also as an occurrence with an intent to affect kinship networks and whole communities. Furthermore, this approach emphasises the exploitation of cultural and normative gender beliefs of the whole community (Meger, 2016). Therefore, we set our research question as follows: *if the goal of wartime sexual violence is to destroy the coherence of the survivors' community, how does it achieve that?* Furthermore, *what are the effects of it on the kinship networks and survivor's family?*

This paper is based on a group project written in 2018 for which secondary data of Rohingya women's experiences of conflict-related sexual violence,[2] as well as gender-based violence in the refugee camps in Bangladesh were collected. Data was then systematically analysed, with the presumed understanding of the interconnectedness between the pre and post refuge violence, and five different themes connected to and enabling gender-based violence emerged: 'Women's physical trauma'; 'Women's mental trauma'; 'Women's social trauma'; 'Camp structure and humanitarian aid', and 'Gender dynamics.' In this article, we will focus on social trauma and gender dynamics, and use the following theoretical concepts to understand the dynamics which are created post-conflict. The theoretical analysis will be supported with quotes from the Rohingya community.

Conjugal order

In her research Megan MacKenzie (2010) explores post-conflict reintegration for victims of conflict-related sexual violence in Sierra Leone. She creates a new framework from which to consider why rape is so often used as a tool of war or conflict. MacKenzie (2010) argues that the disorder that conflict brings reveals the intense effort necessary to protect what she calls "the conjugal order" (p. 205). Conjugal order is not only the institution of marriage but also the broader social norms associated with marriage and the family. This includes the privilege of heterosexual sex and the assumption that sex within marriage is always consensual. What the disruption of the conjugal order in conflict times underlines is the conjugal order's general importance in society in areas such as stability, security and family life post-conflict. This process occurs for example when Myanmarese soldiers rape Rohingya women and thereby violate

[2] Additionally authors want to note that even though this article in concerned with sexual violence perpetrated against women and girls, it must be acknowledged that men and boys are also victims of sexual violence (for the information concerning Rohingya see WRC, 2018).

patriarchal norms that define women as the property of men, sex within marriage as sacred, and the control of women as a marker of masculine power and identity.

Following MacKenzie (2010), the concept of the conjugal order will be used to better understand the difficulties survivors and their families experience post-conflict. It is important to understand these impacts in the context of the conjugal order because conflict-related sexual violence can be understood as an assault on the entire family unit, as well as a tool of disruption of family ties. To broaden this context and deepen our understanding of the impact of conflict-related sexual violence on family relations understandings of kinship will be added to our analysis.

Kinship

Kinship is a study concerning human connections and disconnections (Tsing & Yanagisako, 1983). As the feminist anthropologist Tine Tjørnhøj-Thomsen (2004), explains: "kinship is not an isolated institution" (p. 152) as it is connected to other comprehensive socialites and social processes. Family dynamics are unfolded and regulated in public spaces and reflect on the sociality of their families. Kinship, thus, establishes connections to community life and the formation of social norms (Tjørnhøj-Thomsen, 2004). For anthropologists Sylvia Junko Yanagisako and Jane Fishburn Collier (1987), kinship is part of a social system of inequality organising social behaviour. They present social systems as constituted of dynamic processes where systems and actors influence each other. In asking what social processes are at play in creating the social systems, we can uncover the dynamics realising cultural meanings and social consequences of actions. Therefore, the study of kinship would help in understanding the actions of the Rohingya community as a whole: "Instead of asking how rights and obligations are mapped onto kinship bonds, thus assuming the genealogical grid, we need to ask how specific societies recognise claims and allocate responsibilities" (Yanagisako and Collier, 1987, p. 35).

Analysis

The Rohingya culture is highly influenced by religious beliefs and traditional practices. Gender segregation is common among Rohingya, mainly due to the importance of upholding purdah, which is based on a belief that women should not be seen by strangers, and if they need to leave the home they are usually required to wear a burka. Marriage is crucial for women as it is how they can achieve social and economic security, as they are discouraged from working. Girls are considered ready to marry a couple of years after their menstruation starts. Once they are

married, they become the responsibility of the husband and his family. In Myanmar marriage used to be a family decision, however, in the camps families were separated and the extended family lost their central role in decision making. Women generally have little influence on main household or life decisions, and are mainly responsible for daily chores, while the husbands have to provide for the family (ISCG, 2017; Leigh, et al, 2020).

As previously mentioned, conflict-related sexual violence is used to create disorder in the relationships that are traditionally formed by marriage and paternity laws, which is part of the tactical advantage for conflict-related sexual violence as a strategy of war. Mackenzie (2011), following Brownmiller, argues that conflict-related sexual violence is an expression of "institutionalized power hierarchies as well as a signifier of embedded social norms related to masculinity and femininity" (p. 207), which makes it an effective tool in war and conflict to create disorder to kinship relations. In patriarchal societies like the Rohingya, a woman's virtue does not only reflect her dignity and morality but also their family's and the larger kin networks (Huong, 2012). Rohingya men fear stigmatisation because women have been raped, as a female family member recounts: "This is a very horrible moment for us. Men are very angry, very angry. They always say, 'We are not able to save our girls. And this is our fault.' They always blame themselves" (as cited in WRC, 2018). The message included in conflict-related sexual violence is that the women who have been raped are impure, stripped of their femininity and that the men are stripped of their masculinity for not being able to protect them (MacKenzie, 2011).

This comes from a constant search for the true and authentic - an ideology of authenticity, where kin members strive to become "the right wife", "the right husband" and "the right family" (Tjørnhøj-Thomsen, 2004, pp. 144-5). At the same time kinship serves as a moral system of expectations and obligations, which the individuals may find hard to live up to. As a result, the strive for an unachievable, yet expected, ideal leads to paradoxes and conflicts in the conjugal relationship (Tjørnhøj-Thomsen, 2004). Thus, in the ideal conjugal relationship of the Rohingya, the wife is perceived as ideal, has she only had sex with her husband, and the husband is perceived as ideal, so long he has an "undamaged" wife. Hence, to fully realise the effects of conflict-related sexual violence, it is important to start by examining marriage patterns among Rohingya in the camps of Bangladesh.

Marriage as a corrective measure

It is hard to reliably estimate the prevalence of child marriage among Rohingya pre-displacement, however, reports indicate that they were uncommon due to the local authorities strictly enforcing national marriage laws, which forbade marriage under the age of 18 and polygamy. To get married in Myanmar Rohingya had to acquire a marriage license, which was a costly and long process, while for the initial 18 months of their stay in Bangladesh new coming Rohingya were not aware of the marriage laws in the country (Leigh, et al, 2020). Child, early and forced marriage as well as polygamy is not a new phenomenon among Rohingya, and the latter has increased in Bangladesh. However, polygamy and child marriage are not only a cultural incitement, but instead an adaptation to poverty, partly brought on by long-term state persecution (ISCG, 2017). The experience of exile pushed it to the extreme and became a means of survival, as a Rohingya father explains:

> "Of course if I'd stayed in Rakhine I would wait to marry [away] my daughter. I was a farmer with three acres of land. I [would have fed her] with what I have in my house or extended family and neighbours would help. Here we can't do that" (as cited in MacGregor & Ratcliffe, 2017).

Added value to marrying off your daughters young is protection from the accusation of inappropriate behaviour or being a survivor of rape, thus, this could be a possible explanation for the increase of prevalence of child marriage in the camps in Bangladesh in comparison to Myanmar (ACAPS, 2019; Leigh, et al, 2020). Child marriage has become a form of corrective measure, meaning an action that can be done to realise a common ideal (Yanagisako & Collier, 1987), to prevent an "impurification" of what is considered to be "real Rohingya", thus, this corrective measure become a new norm. Considering that even in the relative safety of the camp girls and women are still subjected to sexual and gender-based violence as well as are at risk of trafficking, parents increasingly see child marriage as a form of protection from damaging their daughter's and in extend family's reputation (ACAPS, 2019; Guglielmi et al., 2020; Leigh, et al, 2020). A Rohingya girl explains reasons for not waiting longer to get married: "They will call me a useless, bad woman. And the community will think I'm sleeping with other men" (as cited in Rashid & Caller, 2019). A child bride becomes an ideal solution for the despair of trying to save the family's dignity.

Before the genocide, women generally experienced barriers to freedom of movement and access to and control over resources (Toma, et al., 2018). In the camps, women's movement is restricted due to a variety of factors, including camp structures, traditional practices and increased social control. A high number of women in the camp are still upholding the traditional practices of purdah. Women's restricted mobility is also linked with concerns about gender-based violence and women's feelings of lack of safety. These fears are materialized both from social concepts and perceptions of women's vulnerability as well as from actual danger based on their previous experiences of gender-based violence both in their homes in Myanmar and during the genocide (Toma et al., 2018; Sang, 2018).

All the measures, which are taken to protect women, are keeping them away from male non-kin members. That implies that men, if not seen in the context of kinship, are understood to be a threat to the idea of women's "purity." Corrective measures in the case of Rohingya, mostly in the form of restrictions, are mainly placed on women to avoid rape, rather than on men to avoid inflicting rape:

> "The men feel very scared about this happening again [family members subjected to rape]. The impact is very bad. They feel it can happen at any time again. Most of the men do not allow women to go outside because of this reason, to go to the bathroom or the market. Even using the washroom, the men dig a hole inside, a washroom inside [of the shelter]" (Rohingya women as cited in WRC, 2018, p. 30)

When talking about their society's cultural values, the Rohingyas account for the social processes and corrective measures: Women can keep or be kept safe from "damage," through marriage, through restrictions on women's interactions with non-kin men, through limiting women's movement inside the camp and limiting their movement outside the refugee camp. Through all the corrective measures, the ideal wife and the ideal future wife are thus restricted to the small-spaced area of her home. Without the safety of a familiar community, this also implies that the only men with whom the women can "safely" interact in the camp are kin members.

In this logic, it is not surprising that women strive to get married, as a Rohingya woman explained: "Marriage is what is expected of women. (...) It is tied up with honour; not being married brings shame" (as cited in Williams, 2018). So long a woman is unmarried, she is exposed

to the threat of "impurifying" non-kin men. As a "real" wife is understood to be a "pure" wife, a married woman is perceived as "pure" and is thus "safe from damage" in the eyes of the judging society members, unless they are informed otherwise, like in the case of women raped in Myanmar. The idea of men as rapists generates corrective measures, which do not restrict men from inflicting rape, but rather generate a societal idea that any man can rape any woman, so long they are not close relatives. By ignoring the existence of domestic violence and marital rape girls are being put further in danger since married adolescent girls in the camp in Bangladesh are statistically more in danger of becoming a victim of gender-based violence than unmarried girls (Guglielmi et al., 2020). This further confirms and strengthens conjugal order: heterosexual sex is once again granted to men by the institution of marriage (MacKenzie, 2010). However, in some cases, family members cannot deny conflict-related sexual violence, and the society members have to adapt.

Disruption of kin network

Knowledge of survivors' experiences in the community can cause tears in kinship relations, for example when husbands physically distance themselves from their wives, as well as from their expectations for and their obligations to their wives. A pregnant woman raped in Myanmar described her husband's reaction: "My husband said he will abandon me. 'A non-Muslim raped you' he said and threatened to leave me" (as cited in Associated Press, 2017, 2:02). In Myanmar, Rohingya could only remarry after a formal divorce or the death of their spouse. Divorce was highly regulated, however, in Bangladesh divorce laws are perceived as laxer by Rohingya and divorces are more common (Leigh, et al, 2020), thus, the husband has the power to end the conjugal connection, should he find it necessary.

The focus on the fact that it not only was another man, but also a non-Muslim who had raped his wife, implies that the concern of "impurification" does not have to revolve a disruption of a biological decent-line by strange genes, but could be a concern of the symbolic character of the rape. The idea of what rape entails makes him reconstruct his relatedness to his conjugal partner, and this can justify cutting kinship ties. If a husband disconnects his marital ties, the woman has lost her protection from the dangerous society, leaving her with the option of following the oppressive constraints, as the only way of feeling safe and of protecting her "purity." As the constraints limit her freedom of movement outside the home and limit her communication with men, the woman quickly becomes isolated from society.

According to Yanagisako and Collier (1987) societies are created out of social relationships and shared values, where values indicate that people either live up to the values of society and are rewarded, or fail to live up to them and are punished. A good illustration can be found in the following statement from Rohingya women:

> "Many assume that my husband was killed by the Myanmar army while I was pregnant (...), but those who know me shun me, which causes me so much grief. My eldest daughter is married and lives in another camp, and her husband forbade her from visiting me. I haven't seen her for almost a year" (as cited in Alsaafin, 2018).

This is in line with MacKenzie's (2011) argument that victims of conflict-related sexual violence experience trauma twice; first the conflict-related sexual violence itself and then the stigmatisation. Research conducted by Nicole Fox (2011) among Rwandans also shows, that concerning kinship ties, there were two primary consequences for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence. The first is isolation from the family and strained relationships with family members and the second is the inability to discuss the trauma of conflict-related sexual violence. We see here how the social organisation in the form of ideals and the actions realising those social ideals determines how people define and practice relatedness (Tjørnhøj-Thomsen, 2004).

Exclusion from kinship ties not only entails missing kin-relations, but also an exclusion from the community, which is observable in the case of Rohingya kin-systems. Kinship, according to Tjørnhøj-Thomsen (2004), is vital for feelings of identity and for organising exchanges of care, support and knowledge. Tjørnhøj-Thomsen (2004) emphasises that people are not first and foremost individuals who then do relations, but that people become individuals through the relations they have with others. This well addresses the conditions of the life of the Rohingya women: Being cut out of relationships, excludes the women from being identified as members of the Rohingya community as they lose rights to family and community support. This makes safe navigation of the camp life for women almost impossible, as the harsh conditions of life in the camp both put the woman at risk of not living up to either ideal of purity or a woman's place in the community, exclusion from membership of the "real" Rohingya is very likely.

Knowledge and taboo

Rohingya women after the experiences of conflict in Myanmar want to get married and be part of the society in the camp, however, the consequences of the sanctions of exclusion are

something the Rohingya women are well aware of. For unmarried women with children, these societal norms are especially hard to fulfil, because their reputation is already considered damaged, as the rape puts a strain on their whole future: “I want to get married. I can’t do that if I have a baby” (as cited in Beech, 2018), says one of the survivors, who was left with a child. To protect families from shame, Rohingya girls and women, who survived sexual violence, are often forced to marry their attackers. However, survivors from Myanmar, especially pregnant ones, cannot do that, thus, they are considered damaged, and unless their family pays someone else to marry them, they are unmarriageable (Leigh, et al, 2020). A Rohingya community leader in one of the camps explains that the Rohingya view survivors of conflict-related sexual violence as a disgrace. This means that survivors are often forced to spend their days inside their tents to hide their stories and to prevent the social stigma (Alsaafin, 2018).

To protect themselves from the exclusion from the community women withhold information about their experiences if they can, as one Rohingya woman explains:

> “We don’t know what happens to those that manage to survive [rape] because they are ashamed and afraid. Maybe some of the girls are here [in the camp] too but they don’t talk about it. They don’t want to share their stories because if they get into an argument, people will use the rape to shame them, to use it against them. They are unmarried and poor and it is difficult to get married after you are raped” (as cited in MSF, 2018).

However, though the taboo saves the women from consequences of exclusion, withholding this knowledge has its consequences too; As the physical and psychological harm of the rape is still very real, the women do not receive the support they need, as they many times do not wish to reveal what they have endured.

It has become evident that knowledge of rape, whether or not one share it and with whom, has an important impact on the women’s kinship relations, as well as on the continuance of gender-based violence. As Nguyen Thu Huong (2012) explains:

> “Through exposure to such sanctions and – more commonly – the threat thereof, women and girls (...) are constantly reminded of their ‘proper’ behaviour. Women (...) know the rules all too well and more often than not actively contribute to upholding these gendered social and sexual norms” (p. 48-9).

This can lead to numerous associated consequences, among others, economic issues and concentration problems in school, which further limits options for education (Fox, 2011).

Conclusion

In many cases, survivors of conflict-related sexual violence are being stigmatised openly by the community and their family members (Fox, 2011; MacKenzie, 2010). In the case of Rohingya, conflict-related sexual violence highlighted the idea of purity of "undamaged" women and girls, as opposed to females who have been raped or have had premarital sex. As cultural values apply to all members of society, both men and women think it is an ideal that the woman is "undamaged." The community alienates the women while they need the support the most. As a consequence, Rohingya women are exposed both to physical and mental trauma through their experiences in Myanmar, but also to the exclusion from their families and community while living in the hostile camp environment. Moreover, they have to live under restrictive socio-cultural norms where being raped is seen as a shame. Similar notions of purity and damage have been previously noticed in the case of surviving women in Sierra Leone where one consequence for conflict-related sexual violence survivors is that girls from specific areas are assumed to have been attacked, and are therefore generally known to be "spoiled" (MacKenzie, 2010).

Even though the literature on conflict-related sexual violence is growing there are still big gaps in the research into its long-lasting effects. Though in many cases the kinship ties in the form of obligations and expectations were cut due to conflict-related sexual violence, there are examples of how kin members try to reconstruct the relatedness to one another against the restrictive socio-cultural norms. For example, a Rohingya girl, who was abandoned by her family after getting pregnant as a consequence of the events in Myanmar, recounts how her brother contacts her despite their parents' prohibition: "I don't want him to get in trouble because of me (...) He knows I like snacks, so he brought them. I think he still loves me even though he is ashamed of me" (as cited in Beech, 2018). Hence, future research into how kinship networks are rebuilt after experiences of conflict-related sexual violence would be beneficial.

While many Rohingya people hope to one day go back to Myanmar, reassurance that they will be kept safe has not been given. So far, the attempts at repatriating the Rohingya have gone nowhere, and the recent fall of Aung San Suu Kyi after the military coup in February 2021 does not offer much hope for the Rohingya. When Aung San Suu Kyi came to power in 2015, the hope was that she could finally give the Rohingya rights like other citizens in Myanmar, but

instead, the military carried out violent attacks under her watch, which she later defended before the International Courts of Justice in The Hague. However, the man now in charge of Myanmar, General Min Aung Hlaing, is the commander who led the ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya in 2017 (Ellis-Petersen & Rahman, 2021). While the new leader of Myanmar insists that the re-patriation of Rohingya from Bangladesh can continue as planned and promises change (Dhaka Tribune, 2021), the suffering of the Rohingya people is still ongoing. That is why now more than ever it is important to talk about the effects of violence on survivors and their families lives and ask ourselves a question: How can we understand the consequences of the violence and turn it into better support for survivors.

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Forced Sterilization of Immigrant Women in US Detention Center

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Abstract

This article addresses the reports of immigrant Latin American women being forcibly sterilized in the Irwin County ICE detention center through an intersectional approach and by using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) on data retrieved from news articles from the past six years and sources on the history of the practice of forced sterilization. How are these women vulnerable to this kind of abuse? The results indicate that immigrant Latin American women are in fact vulnerable to forced sterilization because of their position within the intersecting inequalities of gender, race and status, but that it is exacerbated by the negative discourses by the political elites and media (re)produce about them.

Keywords: intersectionality, CDA, forced sterilization, USA

Introduction

In September of 2020 a nurse, Dawn Wooten, filed a report in which she denounced "staggering negligence" (Treisman, 2020) in following the safety protocols in place to avoid the spread of the virus in the Irwin County Detention Center in Georgia, USA, where she had been working during the first outbreak of novel coronavirus covid-19 in the spring and summer. The facility, owned by the private prison company LaSalle Corrections, is currently still being used by the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) as a place to effectively incarcerate immigrants, mainly from Latin American countries, who were caught either crossing the border or living in the US illegally (ibid.).

Nurse Wooten (represented by the Government Accountability Project: a whistleblower protection organization and Project South: a social justice advocacy group) has had her declaration incorporated into a 27-page complaint by a coalition of human rights groups. It was then filed with the DHS Office of Inspector General, on behalf of Wooten and immigrants detained at the facility (ibid.).

Despite the main focus of the report being the unsafe conditions in which the detainees were kept during the first part of the pandemic, the most disturbing information to come out of nurse Wooten's report was not just the fact that precautions against the spread of a deadly virus were not being taken. It was the allegation of what was happening to the women who sought treatment by the facility's gynecologist, dr. Mahendra Amin, who were instead being, either violently, or unknowingly forcibly sterilized (Washington & Olivares, 2020).

An independent investigation was launched following the report which later confirmed that the procedures performed on a still unknown total number of women (of at least 57 that we know of as of October 2020) were "unnecessary", "overly aggressive" and "in the uniform absence of truly informed consent" (ibid.). The victims reported receiving unwanted medical procedures, and many of them were not even sure which procedures exactly they had undergone (ibid.). Some also reported that they were left bloody, still bleeding and/or badly bruised after the operations. The operations performed on the unknowing women include tubal ligations, hysterectomies (surgical removals of the uterus), and injections of the birth control drug Depo-Provera (known to have dangerous side-effects) (ibid.). There was no evident reasoning behind the procedures, or anything that seemed to justify the high number of them. As one last grim detail: we know that Amin was referred to by staff and detainees as the "uterus collector" (ibid.).

Several of the women who got operated on would later be deported and, after ICE stopped sending patients to Amin (5 weeks after the independent investigation had concluded) the women in the detention center declared that none of them had received any further gynecological care (ibid.).

The women subjected to this inhumane procedure were all marginalized and that is what made them vulnerable to this kind of treatment in the first place: of being poor, undocumented, immigrant women from Latin America. These intersecting inequalities, the ones due to gender, race and class, together with efforts by conservative media outlets and spokespeople contribute to the climate and environment that allows, and encourages, damaging attitudes and actions against them. By using intersectionality as an analytical approach towards the social inequalities that affect these women, while emphasizing the contexts of place and time of the power relations perpetrated by the discourse set forward by the media and political elites, we also consciously apply it to a case that is relative to gender based violence, because the "complex inequalities" interacting with each other, we believe, fall into the category of "widespread uncriminalized violence against women and minoritized ethnic and national groups [that is] de facto condoned by the state" (Walby, 2009, p.192).

This whistleblower report restarted the conversation on the US's long and tragic history of eugenics and forced sterilization. A history that more than just repeating itself, seems to only be continuing into the present with new and sometimes subtler ways to bring about older and more malign beliefs and convictions, making this case relevant to understand how the women who were forcibly sterilized. We here use the term "forced sterilization" because none of the women who went through the procedures had given informed consent to it. The systemic nature of forced sterilization is "…fundamentally a violation of the prohibition on discrimination…" (Patel, 2017, p. 10) and considered an exploitative act towards these women in which an authority figure forced them into sterilization where the women either consented to a procedure without understanding it, under duress, invalid consent was given or not obtained (Patel, 2017, p. 2).

In this article, after a brief presentation of the case and history of the broader eugenics/historical discourse background, a sample of articles from prominent US media outlets will provide the data relevant to the current discourses surrounding the victims. We selected and analysed the most influential strategies that frame discursive models of immigrant Latin American Women as "cognitive and ideological manipulations" (van Dijk, 2015, p. 473) using Critical Discourse

Analysis. Finally the current findings will be compared to the historical ones in order to analyze the correlation between the victims' social position within intersecting inequalities and the discourses currently surrounding them.

Brief historical overview of eugenics in the US

To better understand the reasons behind forced sterilization of marginalized women, as in our case, we must first delve briefly into the history of the beliefs and practices that have come to be known as eugenics, and later neo-eugenics.

While the idea of using selective breeding to create a better offspring dates back to ancient Greece, the origins of the eugenics movement as it is known today come from early 1900s Europe, specifically the United Kingdom, and were directly inspired by Charles Darwin's theories of evolution and natural selection (Levine & Bashford, 2010). Francis Galton, the man credited with having first developed this research, called it "eugenics" from the Greek word "eu" meaning "good" and the suffix -genēs which means "born" (ibid.).

The popularity of eugenics made it across the Atlantic very early on, with the first eugenic policies being implemented in the US in the early 1900s (ibid.). Although starting out with so called "positive eugenics", which meant encouraging reproduction between those perceived to be "genetically desirable", the movement in the US quickly turned to so-called "negative eugenics", which aimed to eliminate the presence of people who were considered physically, mentally and even morally undesirable through sterilization and/or segregation (ibid.). Early eugenics policies in the US include the anti-miscegenation laws which criminalized interracial marriages (ibid.). For the most part, in the early 20th century, the people most impacted by negative eugenics practices were women deemed unfit to bear and/or raise children under the definition of being "feeble-minded" (ibid.). Since it would have been too high a cost for the government to maintain these women inside institutions (such as mental hospitals) until they were no longer of child-bearing age, the easiest solution was to sterilize them and then let them out into society (ibid.). Emblematic of this is the 1927 case of Buck v Bell, in which a petition was filed to sterilize the then 18-year-old Carrie Buck, because she allegedly posed a threat to society, on the grounds that she was "feeble-minded within the meaning of the law" (Lombardo, 2008, p. 104), as was her mother and as would be her child (ibid.). So, with the sentence "three generations of imbeciles is enough" the Supreme Court ultimately ruled that compulsory

sterilization of the "unfit" was for the "health and protection of the State" and it has, to this day, never been expressly overturned (Lombardo, 2008, p. 169).

The eugenics movement then lost some of its popularity after World War II, due to it being extensively used by the Nazis, but it never truly disappeared. It would start to veer more towards "social engineering" as a response to the social anxieties of the times, such as concerns about welfare, Mexican immigration and the civil rights movement, and would be based on the conviction that even broader "defects", such as poverty, were genetically transmitted and should be targeted and stopped (Kluchin, 2009, pp. 10, 20). This shift, together with advancements in birth control technology and application would define the next era for the movement, which would be called "neo-eugenics" (ibid.).

Significant Historical Discourses

As it turns out, a precedent for what is happening today can be found in the not-too-distant past, we therefore chose to look at historical discourses around victims of forced sterilization from the 1950s-1970s. To do so we used the chapter "Sterilizing "unfit" Women" in Rebecca M. Kluchin's book *"Fit to be Tied: Sterilization and Reproductive Rights, 1950-1980"* (2009). The reason to look closer at these decades was because an important change happened in the demographic of who was getting forcibly sterilized: there was a rise from "only" 23% of these women being black to 64% (Kluchin, 2009, pp. 73-74, 94). The cause of this was a combination of the 1964 Civil Rights Act that granted people of color access to federal programs, such as welfare, and the emergence of government funded family planning (ibid.). This meant that women of color then came much more into contact with healthcare personnel who believed in eugenics (ibid.). This also meant the emergence of negative discourses towards women of color that reinforced the neo-eugenic thinking of the time, two of which we will be the main focus: the "welfare queen" and the "pregnant pilgrim" (Kluchin, 2009, pp. 74-75, 84-85).

The "welfare queen" was the idea that black women were promiscuous, hypersexual and deliberately having children out of wedlock to take advantage of the welfare system instead of having to support themselves by finding a job (Kluchin, 2009, pp. 75-76). It painted a picture of black women being inherently dishonest and undeserving of welfare, an image that was portrayed both in articles, political statements, and even "scientific research" of the time (Kluchin, 2009, pp. 76-77, 80-82). The discourse of the "welfare queen" mirrored the eugenicist thinking of the time, where "scientific" and "biological" factors were used to claim that people of color were

inferior [to white people], that women of color were seen to have bad traits and values that their children would inherit and be taught as well (ibid.). Those very children were thought to inevitably grow up to be "lazy" "immoral" and just as "bad" citizens as their mothers (ibid.). The women of color who were receiving welfare were seen as "unfit" and representing "un-American values" and therefore preventing these women from reproducing and performing sterilization was almost perceived as an act of patriotism (Kluchin, 2009, pp. 76-77, 84).

The discourse of the "pregnant pilgrim" builds on the one about the "welfare queen" and came about a bit later. It started to take hold in the late 60s and early 70s, when there was a rise in immigration from Latin American countries (Kluchin, 2009, pp. 84-85). An image of pregnant Latin American immigrants crossing the border to have their children in the US in order to make them eligible for welfare, emerged. Suddenly immigrant Latin American women were linked to several issues, including overpopulation (ibid.).

The base of both these negative discourses was rooted in the same racist and eugenicist ideals that women of color were "taking advantage" of a welfare system they were not entitled to- and it was then used as an excuse to take away their reproductive rights. (Kluchin, 2009, pp. 91-94, 101-106).

Contemporary Right-wing Political Discourses

To critically examine contemporary discourses and their role towards immigrant Latin American women, we used Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) on US right-wing anti-immigration political discourses (re)produced by politicians and media. Specifically, we analyze five online national news articles published by four different news sources within the last six years. We selected articles containing statements from influential right-wing politicians, such as a statement by Donald Trump in which he expressed how "The United States has become a dumping ground for Mexico" (Walker, 2015).

Understanding that "via repeated political or media discourse about similar events, and via specific discourse moves of generalization, they may condition the generalization and abstraction of specific mental models to more general structures of knowledge and ideology..." (van Dijk, 2015, p. 473), we acknowledge the powerful role of politicians and the media in framing immigrant Latin American women in a negative light. The articles' (re)production of discourses illustrate how US politicians and media's "...language use produces and legitimates racism..."

(Bryman, 2016, p. 562) and other inequality by creating a negative discursive model of the women (van Dijk, 1993, p. 258-259). Based on a constructivist understanding of the power discourses pose, the CDA lets us understand and expose the social inequality that the women are exposed to because of a generalized negative perception of immigrant Latin American women (Juul & Pedersen, 2012, p. 406; Suurmond, 2005, p. 19; van Dijk, 2015, p. 466). The approach therefore has a strong attribute in its aim of describing dominant discourses roles in manufacturing concrete models and by exploring social inequality (van Dijk, 1993, pp. 258-259). While being aware that we are dealing with complicated power dynamics, the choice of analysis "… is not motivated by the wish to picture these elites as the villains in the simplistic story of social inequality, but rather to focus on the unique access of these elites to public discourse, and hence on their role in the discursive management of the public mind" (van Dijk, 1993, p. 280).

The CDA findings identified some strategies used by right-wing politicians and media which through prejudice and stereotyping (re)produce discourses based on a generalized negative model of immigrant Latin American women. Specifically, three overall and interlinked discourses to how models of immigrant Latin American women are framed have been identified based on the analysis.

(I) Discursive strategic usage of "us" and "them" is significant. This dichotomous rhetoric creates a structure in the political discourses that frame Latin American immigrants by generating a negative representation of "them" by systematically associating "them" with cultural differences in contrast to "us", with "us" being perceived as positive holders of "American values" (van Dijk, 1993, pp. 258-259). The discursive negative model of Latin American women expressed through an inferior "them" is identified as communicative discrimination, an instance of discourse dominance, which generates inequality and social injustice based on racism (van Dijk, 1993, p. 260).

(II) Latin American immigrants, in general, are framed as an economic burden, as lazy and undeserving of welfare. They are presented as a burden to the American society by being framed as incapable of being self-sufficient and therefore expected to be welfare-dependent. This is coupled with a negative discourse that frames Latin American immigrants as reproducing "un-American values", such as laziness and unwillingness to support themselves, thus being seen

as undeserving welfare recipients, and presenting them as taking advantage of the US welfare system, which would make them an economic threat.

(III) Immigrant Latin American women are perceived as the source of the above-mentioned problems because of their alleged “hyper fertility”. Latin American women are framed both as pregnant immigrants that, by giving birth to welfare-dependent citizens, could lead to a potential bankruptcy of the welfare system, alleging that these women and their reproductive systems are being perceived as the “core of the issue”. The term “anchor babies” can also be found as intertwined in the discourse. It refers to children born to non-citizen mothers that give birth in countries with birthright citizenship laws, and who would then be able to help their mother, and other family members, to become legal residents or citizens. This discursively frames immigrant Latin American women's reproductive capabilities as a socio-economic threat, presenting them as cause for future “burdens” on the US welfare system.

Our findings have thus shown how conservative political discourse, ingrained in racism and neo-eugenic ideals, impacts immigrant Latin American women by defining them as a harmful “them” to a good, American, “us”, by postulating that they will take advantage of a system they are not entitled to and that it is in their nature to do so.

Comparison of Historical and Contemporary Discourses

By looking at the past we can see how discourses concerning women of color played a role in justifying forced sterilization. In the contemporary discourses, we see how many of the same aspects as the historical discourses can be directly traced to the present. The framing of immigrant Latin American women as an inferior “them” to the superior, American “us” remains largely unchanged. Immigrant Latin American women are still being described as wanting to take advantage of US welfare using their children to do so, they are being painted as not having the so-called “good values” of American taxpayers and instead bringing “bad” values into US society. The negative model of Latin American immigrants being an economic “burden” on society, receiving welfare while being perceived as undeserving of, is clearly seen in both the historical and contemporary discourses. A small change has been identified with the “pregnant pilgrim”, as the discourse has revived with new terminology, namely “anchor babies”, however the idea is roughly the same, being that they come to the US and give birth there in order to “exploit” the welfare system and infiltrate American society.

This echoes the neo-eugenic opinions of the past, the very same opinions that were used as an argument for forced sterilization in the 50s to 70s. While we cannot say this for sure, it is very likely that the same social patterns play a role in the treatment of the women at the ICE center. They are being described as inferior dishonest people in the discourses, so they are treated as such in the detention center.

Acknowledging the existence and persistence of eugenics, the negative discourses that we have identified in specific historical moments, and the contemporary conservative narrative around Latin American women, makes a compelling argument for them being vulnerable to this kind of treatment - I.e. being kept in "prisons" and being forcibly sterilized - especially because these women are already at the intersection of various inequalities, mainly: gender, race and social status, which already makes them vulnerable to other different forms of systemic oppression and violence. Recognizing the role of authoritative figures and media in constructing discourses on Latin American women and how these create an environment that might result in forced sterilization abuse (Gutiérrez, 2008, pp. 75-77). In this specific case the systemic oppression manifests in actual physical and medical violence, and we argue that it is a result of all of these different factors converging.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we argue that these women's position at the intersection of gender, race and social status and the negative discourses surrounding them, indeed correlate to them being vulnerable to forced sterilization in a situation of incarceration. We have found that the negative discourses surrounding the women were directly related to different inequalities intersecting: the "them" vs. "us" is related to their "inferior" race, the "dependent on welfare" is related to their social status and them "having babies to take advantage of welfare" is related to gender.

The fact that the intersecting categories that the immigrant Latin American women are positioned within, which are reflected in and (re)produced through discourses, leads directly to their position of vulnerability to forced sterilization. This leads us to think that underlying "eugenics values" are still very much present in people's attitude towards certain groups of people, and some of the most targeted groups remain poor people, immigrants and women.

While the right-wing political discourses are not explicitly stating that these women should be sterilized, the neo-eugenic thinking is still detectable and indirectly contributing to the abuse of

these women. If these patterns keep reproducing undetected, history will continue to repeat itself.

Author's note

Latest developments

Not long after we had already concluded conducting our research, a 160 pages class-action lawsuit was filed and published on the 21st of December 2020 on behalf of 35 women against the ICDC, ICE and dr. Amin (Oldaker et al. v. Giles et al., 2020). The lawsuit informs of the living conditions at ICDC, describing forced sterilization as part of a broad pattern of discrimination, institutionalized abuse, violence and medical negligence experienced by the women at ICDC (ibid.). It denounces that in 2018 multiple women reported Dr. Amin's abusive actions verbally and in writing to the ICDC administration and ICE, but have nonetheless continued sending the women to be mistreated by Amin, until a few weeks after the whistleblowing in September 2020 (ibid.). This has received attention and been addressed by the Committees on Immigration & Nationality Law, Bioethical Issues, Health Law, International Human Rights and Sex & Law which "Call for Measures to Ensure Health, Human Rights and Public Health Protections for Detained Immigrant Women" (The Association of the Bar of the City of New York, 2021).

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Essay: Heterosexual Borderlands

Author: Rieke Schröder

Introduction

As a queer person, I often encounter invisible frontiers in my everyday life. Here, I refer to these as situated within heterosexual borderlands, through which, I argue, queer people navigate with a higher mobility than straight people. In most spaces, a cis gender identity - consistent with the gender assigned at birth - and heterosexual orientation is automatically assumed. Adrienne Rich (1980) describes this with the term *compulsory heterosexuality*, stressing how it is considered obligatory for a subject to be cis-heterosexual. When a subject deviates from this, for example when they have a trans or nonbinary gender identity, when their sexuality is homosexual, bisexual or pansexual, they can be described as *queer*. While this term used to be a slur, it has been re-appropriated by the queer community within the last decades. Being queer goes hand in hand with being expected to perform a *coming out*. Pick a label, come to Pride, and get asked the same questions - over and over again. Straight people seem fascinated by anything non-straight and will expect information about the way you love, live and have sex.

Such an outing is often described with the metaphor of *coming out of the closet*. This metaphor mirrors the assumption that the subject concerned had previously kept their queerness a secret, behind a closed door. The closet as an epistemic piece of furniture is positioned at the vague border between *being* heterosexual or queer. In the book *Epistemology of the Closet* Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick (1990) has shown how the closet functions "as a publicly intelligible signifier for gay-related epistemological issues" (Sedgwick, 1990, p.14). C*oming out of the closet* is visualising the closets existence for straight people. Thus, Diana Fuss (1991) argues: "*the first coming out was also simultaneously a closeting*" (Fuss, 1991, p.4).

How does it feel to realise that a piece of furniture, big and bulky and full of prejudices and ideas about how and whom people should love, has been acquired unnoticed? That is a question for 'the straights' out there. I propose here that it is not great to consume unconsciously in times of sustainability and wokeness, and to be stuck in a borderland from which other queer cosmopolitans can navigate in and out. The heterosexual borderlands are not territorial or spatial but

epistemic, that is, anchored in our thoughts and perceptions. Nevertheless, crossing these borders, or realising that we are stuck in them, can lead to a similar feeling of displacement or uprooting as crossing national borders can. But more on that later.

Outing is out

Criticism of the idea of having to perform an outing is anything but new. Diana Fuss (1991) argued already in 1991 that the performance of a coming out reinforces the hierarchical position of cis-heterosexuality. Heterosexual people never have to come out as just that, but queer people do. If cis-heterosexuality were no longer assumed to be the only 'normal' identity, then coming out as such would be an abstruse idea. And, suprise: it is!

Queer theorist Judith Butler (2006) demonstrates in her book *Gender Trouble* that heterosexuality is just as much a performance as homosexuality or queerness. The difference here is made by the power relations that, as already described, present cis-heterosexuality as the only 'normal'. All of us perform our sexuality and gender identity differently, according to the space we are navigating through. This is for instance mirrored in the way we dress or speak, which differs if we are at work or at a party. When are we authentic, then? This might not be as relevant as we are taught to believe.

However, the perspective from within the closet is a unique one. Is a person who is still in the closet still part of the heteronormative realms? If I don't tell the straights around me that I no longer see myself as part of their crew, then I am not yet outed. But for myself I have already dared to take a step out of the heterosexual borderlands, in the sense that I am much more conscious about the way in which I perform my sexuality and gender identity.

In countless films and series that have queer characters, the narrative of coming out is told repeatedly, so that it almost resembles a self-fulfilling prophecy. What is striking is that being white is almost set as a prerequisite for a character to be queer. Yet queer BIPoC were at the forefront of the 1969 Stonewall protests that gave rise to today's Pride movement (James, 2019).

But race and ethnicity are not the only intersecting identity markers that influence how (in)visible and (in)credible a subjects' queerness is. An (assumed) non-belonging to the nation state at hand generally renders queerness invisible, as the perception is that ''all the immigrants are heterosexual'' and ''all the queers are citizens'' (Luibhéid, 2004, p.233 in Lewis & Naples,

2014, p.912). Thus, the situation is distinct for queer refugees, who are asked to proof their queerness when applying for asylum. For men, being perceived as Muslim entails expectations of a stereotypical masculine gender performance, as their (perceived) belonging to Islam renders them hyper visible as perpetrators and homophobes (Tschalaer, 2020).

Although coming out is often portrayed like a one-time event, in reality it looks different: Basically, people expect me to be straight - and justify this with my appearance, my behaviour, or not at all, since this is the only 'normal' sexuality and gender identity. The straights around me build up the closet again and again and again, have it ready in all situations - when going for a walk, at parties, in classes. This prompts me to have to get out of the closet again and again and again. Tired of this perpetual coming in and out of the closet, I began to ask myself whether one could not simply smash the closet to pieces.

Goodbye binaries

I am not alone in this deconstructive approach. Butler (2006) and other queer theorists aim to question the simplified, binary division of the world. People are described as cis / trans, heterosexual / homosexual, straight / queer, in / out. Often, we understand these binary pairs as either / or. But, as so often with simplifications: They don't work, they don't go far enough. For example, when is a person no longer heterosexual? When they have sex with the ‘same sex’ once? When they are poly and have several relationships, even though only with the ‘opposite sex’? Or is it enough to love each other - as far as possible as a heterosexual couple - freed from the constraints of patriarchy?

It is (at least) just as complicated for queer people. Being bisexual is especially exhausting here - yes, really, it is a thing, not a phase! And being in a relationship with a cis man as a bisexual cis woman does not invalidate your queerness. Besides, queer people are not in or out of the closet. Even if you make as many insinuations as possible and conform to all queer clichés, there will still be Sabine and Thorsten out there who thought you were a fellow heterosexual. And who then want to hear the story of your outing, with as many dirty details as possible, and hopefully some tears. To then be able to say: Love is love! Excluding non-liberal, queerer subjects in this statement, of course. Where does this straight fascination with queerness come from? Isn't it much more fascinating that people are never attracted to more than 'the other' gender? I mean female straights, hello, have you all seen womxn before? Seriously?

Borders revisited - Queer mobility

Back to my initial hypothesis: straight people live in their self-imposed heterosexual borderlands, from which they do not move - often unconsciously - throughout their lives. I, as a queer person, can decide to stay in a heterosexual space and not address my queerness, I stay inside the closet. Of course, this does not apply equally to all queer people, but as a white femme lesbian/queer, I have rarely experienced people assuming that I am non-straight.

And when I want to, I leave the heterosexual borderlands, through the back door of the closet, and enter the queer spaces where I can be at home. Can I be ascribed a higher mobility here? In the book *Boderlands*, Michel Agier (2016) refers to people who can go back and forth across a border as border dwellers, attesting them a cosmopolitan privilege through their increased freedom of movement. Even if Agier is more concerned with territorial borders, this consideration is also interesting for the epistemic realm of heterosexual borderlands. For straight people can also enter queer spaces, but they will never feel as at home here as we queers do. And their mobility in queer spaces is certainly more restricted than ours.

Don't get me wrong, I'm not trying to belittle or negate decades of oppression of queer people here. Instead, I am proposing a new reading of queer mobility that can also explain the straight fragility that queers often encounter when coming out.

Emplacing straights

So as soon as straight people realise that the narrow border areas in which they move are fenced off by themselves, and we queer people transgress easily beyond the borders, this could lead to a feeling of emplacement. Emplacement here means a compulsive placement in the heterosexual borderlands. Julie Chu (2006) shows how this sense of forced placement is another form of displacement, i.e., eviction or expulsion from an area. Chu argues “the ultimate form of displacement was seen and experienced as the result of *immobility*, rather than physical departure from a “home”” (Chu, 2006, p.397).

Experiencing immobility - due to their sexuality or gender identity - is a fairly new experience for most straights. We queers, on the other hand, already use a different world map for orientation in the geographical borders of the world. *The Sexual Orientation Laws in the World* map by ILGA World (2020) shows us where we should travel, and where who we love or how we live our gender is enough to put us at risk of imprisonment or even death penalty. Here I would

like to explicitly emphasise that the discourse that declares Western European countries safe havens for all queer people negates the reality that is lived here as well. The heterosexual borderlands I am talking about here also exist in Germany and Denmark.

When straight people are suddenly confronted with these heterosexual borderlands, through which we queers have been navigating since time perpetually, they realise that their own comfort, their sleepwalking in the (hopefully) more progressive and advanced queer agenda dreamland is causing them to fall behind. Leave the safety of your normative cis-heterosexuality behind dear straights, stop building closets and let's blur the lines.

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