

This item is the archived peer-reviewed author-version of:

The civilised self and the barbaric other : ex-rebels making sense of sexual violence in the DR Congo

Reference:

Ingelaere Bert, Wilén Nina.- The civilised self and the barbaric other : ex-rebels making sense of sexual violence in the DR Congo
Journal of contemporary African studies / Africa Institute of South Africa - ISSN 0258-9001 - 35:2(2017), p. 221-239
Full text (Publisher's DOI): <https://doi.org/10.1080/02589001.2017.1311010>
To cite this reference: <http://hdl.handle.net/10067/1429450151162165141>

The Civilized Self and the Barbaric Other
Ex-Rebels Making Sense of Sexual Violence in the DR Congo

Bert Ingelaere^a and Nina Wilén^{b*}

^a *Institute of Development Policy and Management, Antwerp University, Antwerp, Belgium*

^b *Department of Political Science, Université Libre de Bruxelles, Brussels, Belgium*

Abstract

This article addresses discourses on gender and sexual violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Based on discussions with 101 ex-combatants, we seek to answer how former FDLR members make sense of sexual violence by examining prevailing gendered images of Self and Other. This analysis of the mindset of potential perpetrators is part of the puzzle to find preventive measures. The findings demonstrate that ex-combatants attribute overwhelming power to biological “givens” such as “urges”, “basic needs” and “domination” in their interpretation of sexuality. In addition, they differentiate themselves from out-groups - enemy fighters and other nationals, especially Congolese - by attributing the latter with lower degrees of restraint. These insights complicate the existing knowledge on sexual violence in the DRC by demonstrating that a process of *Othering* is at work at the intersection of sex-gender-nation *within* the Congolese warscape. The findings suggest that the theoretical understanding of the phenomenon of sexual violence in war needs to place the notion of intersectionality central stage.

*Corresponding author. Email: nina.wilen@ulb.ac.be

Introduction

This article addresses discourses on gender and sexual violence in the Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). In particular, we seek to answer how ex-combatants of one of the armed groups, the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) make sense of sexual violence by examining prevailing gendered images of Self and Other in their ranks. Much has been written on their use of sexual violence, but very little on their understandings and beliefs about war-related sexual violence.

Most of the literature on sexual violence in Eastern Congo attempts to uncover patterns, explanations or motives for the widespread existence of sexual violence. An important debate in that respect is whether or to what degree sexual violence is used as “a weapon of war”. Other explanations point towards widespread impunity, military indiscipline, opportunism, intoxication as well as superstition and religious belief. We do not aim to test or verify these explanations. Instead, we examine how actors in the conflict make sense of sexual violence: how they *talk* about sexuality, gender and violence in relation to the Congolese warscape. In doing so, we aim to unearth their dominant interpretative framework. This evidently includes the actors’ own explanations for this type of violence, yet, it should be underlined that we do not take these self-reported reasons for granted. Instead, our goal here is to provide an analysis of their interpretations. This includes, given the sensitivity of the topic, reflecting on any denial of involvement in cases of what might be empirically documented as instances of sexual violence. Such an exercise in interpretation also implies attention to what is not said.

We argue that such an undertaking provides important insights into the origins of sexual violence in the Congo. We aim both to contribute to recent calls to pay more attention to the ideational – ideas, beliefs, worldviews, ideology, cognitive structures – in the study of violence since this dimension has been obscured by a dominant focus on economic and situational logics in recent years (Gutiérrez Sanin & Wood 2014; see also Straus 2015) and to add to the increasingly rich literature on intersectionality (Davis 2008; McCall 2005; Shields, 2008) by attempting to explain, rather than just acknowledge the linkages among social identities and how they define and shape one another (Shields, 2008: 304).

Through our focus on ex-rebels, we tap into a rarely solicited source of information. Most of the insights on sexual violence in Eastern Congo are derived from hospital records, documentation by human rights organizations, opinion surveys and interviews with victims. A limited number of studies, whose approach we follow, make use of data systematically

collected among (ex-) combatants: Baaz-Eriksson and Stern's studies with soldiers from the regular Congolese army (FARDC), Kelly's study on the Mai Mai's and the report by Elbert et al. on ex-combatants from multiple armed groups operating in the Kivus (Eriksson Baaz and Stern 2008, 2010, 2013; Kelly, 2010; Elbert et al. 2013). Such an approach aims to understand (possible) perpetrators' interpretation of this type of violence which in turn may produce ideas for more efficient responses and prevention measures.

We recognize the inherent difficulties of talking about sexual violence with actors that barely admit or even completely deny that they have been perpetrators. Yet, we still find it useful to explore this avenue, not to take the ex-rebels' denials and justifications at face value, but to initiate a discussion about gender, sex and violence with a group of actors that do admit to having played a significant role in the conflict in the East of Congo and who are, if not perpetrators, at least observers of sexual violence.

In journalistic accounts of sexual violence from Congo, the perpetrators are often portrayed as violent, barbaric beasts, which represent uncivilized exceptions in modern warfare (Baaz-Eriksson and Stern, 2013: 24-27). This image makes it easy to create a comfortable distance between primarily Western audiences and the African rapist, translated into a modern, civilized Self and a Barbaric Other. The latter points to a subject position that is driven by primordial sexual urges. A process of *Othering* is taking place in order to render endemic sexual violence in the Congo intelligible. In doing so, rape, rapists and, at times, the raped are considered divergent from 'Western' norms and civilized Selves. Such a process implies that, in Congo, norms guiding sexual intercourse and male-female relations are seen as determined by biology and nature. Sex, or the biological and bodily characteristics defining men and women and the relations between them, dominate over gender, the socially constructed roles for men and women regulated by social norms that a society considers appropriate at a given point in time. Such a reading of the phenomenon of sexual violence in the Congo makes a strong connection between the categories of sex, gender and race (Baaz-Eriksson and Stern, 2013: 26). Seen from outside of the Congolese warscape, the bodies that rape and are raped are racialized.

This article argues that this perception is reproduced in the ex-FDLR members' narratives about sexual violence, where they represent the civilized Self and the Congolese (combatants) the barbaric Other. However, we argue that the frame guiding the FDLR's interpretative work connects sex/gender with nationality/ethnicity instead of race. These findings complicate the

existing knowledge on sexual violence in the DRC by demonstrating that a process of Othering in relation to sexual violence is at work *within* the Congolese warscape as well. The relationship among overlapping social categories and their subjective experiences is captured by the notion of intersectionality. The conclusion argues that an intersectional approach will do justice to the complexity of the processes driving sexual violence in war while also being able to conceptually clarify the nature of the phenomenon.

Our main finding is that the FDLR ex-combatants attribute overwhelming power to biological “givens” such as “urges”, “gratification”, “basic needs” “strength” and “domination” in their reading of sexuality. In addition, the ex-FDLR combatants differentiate themselves from out-groups - enemy combatants and other nationals - by attributing lower degrees of restraint to the latter in their exercise of the above-mentioned biological givens, especially in relation to women. The documentation of their involvement in sexual violence¹ suggests this is probably a kind of accusation in the mirror. Instead, their folk understanding of sexual violence and gender relations is used to demarcate Self and Other as friend-enemy, insider-outsider, civilized-barbaric in the social landscape of Eastern Congo’s conflict.

The article is structured as follows. We first provide an overview of the (Eastern) Congolese conflict, with a focus on the phenomenon of sexual violence, giving a rationale for our choice to examine how ex-combatants make sense of sexual violence. We elaborate on what the ex-combatants’ stories tell us and, importantly: what they do *not* tell us. The next section provides an overview of the research design, data collection and analysis. Subsequently, we discuss prevailing images of the perpetrators, victims and the nature of sexuality in the ranks of the ex-FDLR. A final section discusses how the difference between Self and Other is manufactured, the process of Othering, through the notion of restraint of biological givens. The conclusion articulates why it is important to develop a better understanding of how combatants, involved in or closely observing sexual violence, make sense of this phenomenon.

Sexual violence in the Congo

Eastern Congo has become characterized by the presence of numerous armed groups, continuing conflicts and, partly as a result of the former, extensive accounts of sexual

¹ See for instance: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2014/06/10/democratic-republic-congo-ending-impunity-sexual-violence>

violence during the last two decades. The UN report documenting the human rights violations committed during the two Congolese wars states that “between 1993 and 2003, sexual violence was a daily reality from which Congolese women gained no respite” (UN 2010: 318). Despite a formal end to the Congolese wars at the macro-level in 2003, localized violence never ended. To the contrary, it became generalized. As a result of this wide-spread occurrence of sexual violence, Congo at large has been surnamed the “rape capital of the world” by UN officials while journalistic accounts use expressions such as a “rape epidemic” to characterize the situation (NYT 2007).²

It is difficult to define “sexual violence” in war (Cohen et al 2013: 2). The International Criminal Court (ICC) identifies six typologies of sexual crimes: “rape”; “sexual slavery”; “enforced prostitution”; “forced pregnancy”; “enforced sterilization” and “any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity” (ICC 2002a; ICC 2002b), encompassed within a broad category of “wartime sexual violence”. Such a broad category takes into account the fact that perpetrators of wartime sexual violence are not only armed combatants and that victims are not only women but also boys and men. This study, however, focuses mostly on a subset of this encompassing category of “wartime sexual violence”, namely, rape committed by armed combatants whether on male or female victims. We also take into account “sexual slavery” as well as “sexual torture” or “genital mutilation” although the latter are not explicitly mentioned nor defined by the ICC.³

The topic of sexual violence has received more attention during the last two decades, especially in the aftermath of the Bosnian and Rwandan conflicts (Seifert, 1994; Stiglmayer, 1994; De Brouwer and Chu, 2009). The occurrence of systematic and seemingly strategic sexual violence took the topic from the category of unavoidable consequences of war and put it into that of weapons of war (Anderson, 2010). The research on sexual violence has since then encompassed three different key themes; explaining the occurrence (or lack of occurrence) of sexual violence (for example Wood 2006; Cohen 2013); documenting the disproportional risks and harms suffered by women in conflict zones (for example Hynes 2004); and analysing the identity and agency of victims or perpetrators of sexual violence (for example Moser and Clark 2001). The first trend, attempting to explain sexual violence, has divided researchers along two broad themes: those who consider sexual violence to be so systematic and endemic, that it has to be treated as a tool of warfare (for example Carter,

² See also Autessere (2012) on sexual violence as a dominant narrative on the Congo.

³ We assume they can be categorized under the typology “any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity”. Sexual slavery is however considered a crime under the Rome statute and defined under the Elements of Crime, Article 7 (1) (g)-2.

2010) and those who argue that this explanation is simplifying a much more complex reality (see for example: Wood, 2006 & 2008 & 2009; Cohen et al 2013). Although there are some differences of approach, most recognize that sexual violence at times is used strategically, depending on context, perpetrator and victim. The second trend attempting to draw attention to the disproportional risks and harms suffered by women in conflict zones, has been firmly anchored in feminist approaches, emphasizing gendered accounts of violence, often drawing on the notion of “militarized masculinities” or institutional cultures to explain the occurrence of sexual violence during conflict (see for example: Enloe, 2000).

This article has an interest in analysing the identity and agency of victims or perpetrators of sexual violence (such as Moser and Clark 2001) and joins therefore the literature categorized in the third trend. While human rights reports and NGO studies quite regularly describe instances of sexual violence and its victims, relatively few authors examine the perpetrators’ narratives. The reason for this focus on victims may be related to problems in identifying the perpetrators. A study based on the Panzi records states that it is difficult to specify responsibility beyond the generic term “armed combatants” (HHI 2010:34). Human rights organizations also report that the victim’s identification of the perpetrator’s identity needs to be treated with caution (HRW 2002; Amnesty International 2004). A second reason may be the sensitivity of the topic and the reluctance of letting potential perpetrators be heard and/or fear of being associated with the aggressors (Baaz Eriksson, 2013). Therefore, few studies have looked into how non-state armed groups perceive and interpret sexual violence in the Congo, yet these groups remain identified, alongside the Congolese army, as the main perpetrators. Those researchers who have overcome these obstacles have most often focused on the national armed forces (Baaz-Eriksson and Stern, 2009, 2010; 2013), the Mai-Mai, a Congolese militia (HHI, 2009; Kelly, 2010;) or a collection of all armed groups together (Elbert et al. 2013).

This article examines one particular non-state, armed group that is an important player in the Congolese warscape but which has not been examined in-depth so far in relation to sexual violence: FDLR – (Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda). The FDLR was established around the year 2000 and emerged from the remnants of militia, the so-called *Interahamwe*⁴, and the Rwandan Armed Forces (FAR) that fled Rwanda after the 1994

⁴ *Interahamwe* was initially the name of a militia associated with the ruling political party *Mouvement Révolutionnaire National Pour le Développement* (MRND) before and during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. This militia played a major role in the execution of the genocide in Rwanda. During and because of the genocide the label was used for anyone that had participated in the genocide and, in some cases, for all Hutu. Also currently, the FDLR are generally perceived as *Interahamwe*.

genocide after being defeated by the Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA), the rebel movement headed by current Rwandan president Paul Kagame. The organisation behaves as a “State within the State” in the Kivu’s and is experienced as an occupation force by the local Congolese population (Pole Institute 2010: 10). The military strength of the FDLR was estimated at approximately 7,000 forces (and thousands of civilian dependents or sympathisers) in 2007 (Romkema 2007:47) but continued to decline towards an estimated 1,200-1500 forces in 2013 due to losses occurred during military operations, defections and repatriation towards Rwanda (Elbert et al. 2013). The 2009 UN expert report on DRC identified multiple groups responsible for sexual crimes, including the FDLR (UN 2010). Their involvement in sexual crimes is also documented in survey research (Lawry et al 2014). The FDLR or FDLR-splinter groups such as the “Rasta” or “Mongols” have repeatedly been cited as being involved in sexual violence (Rafti, 2006: 15). FDLR combatants have also reportedly staged attacks on civilians, including mass rape, as a response to joint military operations against the rebel group in 2008 (HRW, 2009b; HRW, 2009c: 78-82; NYT 2010).

Our examination of how one of these non-state armed groups, accused of involvement in sexual violence acts, makes sense of the latter, thus complements available insights on how perpetrators understand, interpret and talk about sexual violence.

Methodology

This article is based on research undertaken with ex-FDLR rebels that returned to Rwanda after having spent many years in eastern Congo as combatants. In the period between September and November 2009 several weeks were spent in the demobilization camp ‘Mutobo’ and in a rural sector (hill-village), both situated in northern Rwanda.⁵

The demobilization camp is a transit centre where combatants returning from the DRC need to spend a period of approximately three months before they are re-integrated in their communities of origin throughout Rwanda. During this period, the ex-rebels receive an intense programme of mainly information and re-education activities.⁶ The bulk of the

⁵ Approximately 14 days of interviewing took place in each location. The data collection was supported by La Benevolencija Humanitarian Tools Foundation, an international NGO that focuses on societies and individuals targeted by hate speech resulting in large-scale violence. Permission was granted by the Rwanda Demobilisation and Reintegration Commission (RDRC).

⁶ An analysis of the manual (RoR 2006) used during these Ingando sessions reveals that, although a section is devoted to the discussion of gender policies in contemporary Rwanda, no specific attention is paid to the issue of sexual violence. The influence of the re-education activities on the narratives collected can therefore be considered as minimal, especially since the ex-combatants only recently left the Congolese warscape at the time of the interview. Moreover, the fact that the ex-combatants freely talked about the war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by troops directed by Laurent Nkunda, a rebel leader heading the CNDP (National Congress for the Defence of

interviews were conducted in the Mutobo camp. At the start of the research activities there were 315 persons residing in the camp. This number had increased to 396 at the end of our research period.

The camp commander and personnel facilitated the initial introduction of the researcher.⁷ A former FDLR officer also residing in the camp and with supervising authority over the ex-combatants was appointed as facilitator. It needs to be noted however, that these people – camp commander, camp personnel and supervising FDLR officer – were never present during the interviews and that all of the interviews were conducted in a private place with only the selected group of participants present. These took place in a closed-off room in the demobilization camp or, if the room was not available, in a remote corner on the camp premises. Research was also conducted in a local community in the Northern region. In order to assess (and avoid) the potential influence of the camp environment on the statements of the participants, a significant number of interviews were conducted with ex-rebels who had already finished their three-month period in the camp and returned to their hill of origin. No significant differences were observed when comparing the statements by respondents residing in or outside of the demobilization camp.

Most of the research was done through focus groups. Evidently, discussions in a group-setting on a sensitive topic such as sexual violence need to be handled with care. However, when the objective is to unearth the dominating, hegemonic perspective animating a particular organization, such as the FDLR, it seems important to move beyond the individual perspective in data-gathering. It is precisely the group-setting that facilitates the exploration of a commonly constructed discourse. We do not contest that individual participants might have voiced different viewpoints in case they had been interviewed separately. But our focus lies beyond the individual and with the FDLR as a group of combatants involved in sexual violence. From this perspective, there is no inherent bias in our research set-up. Moreover, other studies on sexual violence in DRC with soldiers or ex-combatants also used group discussions as research instrument (Baaz-Eriksson and Stern, 2009, 2010; 2013; Kelly, 2010; Elbert et al. 2013). Indeed, the group interaction allows the participants to more clearly define their positions, as hearing others' comments may lead to either positive or negative

the People) considered to be supported by the current regime in Kigali further underscores the fact that their return to and presence in Rwanda at the time of the interview did not result in socially desirable responses. The supportive relationship between Nkunda and the Rwandan government is vehemently contested by Rwandan authorities and thus a sensitive topic to openly discuss. See for example the following statement: "Me, I was present when the soldiers of Laurent Nkunda raped 4 women. These women could not walk anymore and we had to transport them to a medical centre to seek treatment". *FGD 'soldiers' – hill – ; 14/11/2009; corporal, male, married, 32 years old.*

⁷ Data-gathering was undertaken by the first author (BI).

exclamations, while also allowing the participants to choose whether to voice an opinion or not (Söderström, 2011:147). It is also argued that the group interview setting enhances the possibility to see (sexual) identity at work (Allen 2005: 53).

The interviews explored the nature of life in general in the Congo and for women in particular, gender relations and sexuality in Congo, the existence, motives and nature of sexual violence, the existence, motives and nature of genital mutilation, the attitudes and reactions towards sexual violence by civilians and armed groups, the reaction within the FDLR movement regarding acts of sexual violence; the image of women and men in Congo, strategies to stop sexual violence.

To avoid alarming participants by asking questions on this sensitive topic, we repeatedly reiterated that we were interested in the phenomenon of sexual violence as such rather than in the identification of individual perpetrators. We approached the ex-combatants as “observers” of the overall war situation and of sexual violence in Congo.

Twenty (20) focus group discussions were organized with 101 participants, in groups of 5 to 10. In the selection of participants, we strove to have variation regarding age, ranks and regions/units where the combatants had served. Officers and soldiers were interviewed in separate groups in order to avoid the influence of authority figures during the discussions. The first author, who is male, conducted or supervised the discussions, assisted by two male Rwandan translators with extensive fieldwork and interviewing experience.⁸ One facilitated the group discussions while the other recorded the statements of the respondents.⁹ Expressions in Kinyarwanda with a specific meaning were separately recorded, discussed afterwards between the researchers involved in the data collection and compared with the translated statements. In doing so, the objective was to identify and clarify specific choice of words or expressions in Kinyarwanda. This process yielded recurring themes which were analysed to produce the following account.

Making Sense of The Perpetrator, the Victim and the Act

⁸ In this case, we are of the opinion that the Rwandan nationality of the research collaborators and the all-male nature of the interview team resulted in less reservation in response regarding the topic of sexual violence. On the other hand, one needs to take into account that this setting also resulted in verbal and non-verbal ‘identity dynamics’ that would have been different in case of involvement of female and/or Congolese interviewers. These are, however, the strengths and limitations accompanying any interview interaction.

⁹ With facilitation we mean the fact of doing an interview while at the same time paying attention to dynamics and the moderation of the conversation.

Ex-FDLR members' interpretations and portrayals of the perpetrator, the victim and the act of sexual violence form the basis for our analysis in the following section. The stories we are analysing do *not* give us material to test theories of sexual violence or draw conclusions regarding the profile of the perpetrators. What we do claim to be able to retrieve from these stories are ideas and beliefs regarding gender, sex and violence of actors that are part of the Congolese warscape. Such insights increase our understanding of the beliefs and norms that underlie the phenomenon of sexual violence. In doing so, we can learn about the origins of its occurrence, especially also its nature, scale and intensity. It should therefore be kept in mind that whereas the interviewed ex-rebels do not speak from the position of perpetrators it does not mean they were and are unrelated to that type of violence. Instead, it is precisely their relatedness and how they make sense of it in all its complexity – for example their own explanations that include denial, silence, justification and blaming others - that needs examination.

The Perpetrator

The FDLR's involvement in sexual violence has been documented. The (ex-) members bear major responsibility both for its scale and its brutality which is testified by the fact that the ICC issued an arrest warrant against longtime FDLR military commander General Mudacamura for war crimes committed under his command, including rape, torture and mutilations.¹⁰ Indeed, all members of the focus groups recognized that there were instances of sexual violence in the East of Congo, where they were based. They admit that FDLR-members were and are involved in these crimes, especially in the more recent period, before their demobilization. In their view, the reason for this is that specific acts of sexual violence became condoned within their ranks.

“(All) Yes, it’s true, there is sexual violence against women in Congo. [...]. (3) I used to be the bodyguard of an [FDLR] officer with the rank of Major and we received a lot of complaints of cases of sexual violence against women. [...] Women often presented themselves to say they had been raped. I’ve seen personally at least 20 cases and at least 5 of them concerned FDLR members.”¹¹

¹⁰ See “ICC: Pursue Case Against Rwanda Rebel Leader,” Human Rights Watch news release, June 1, 2012. And: “Situation in Democratic Republic of the Congo: The Prosecutor v. Sylvestre Mudacamura, Case n° ICC-01/04-01/12”, December 6, 2012.

¹¹ FGD ‘soldiers’ – hill – 13/11/2009; corporal, male, married, 32; (2) corporal, male, married, 28; (3) second lieutenant, male, married, 32; (5) private first class, male, married, 29

“(1) Me, I saw one of the FDLR combatants rape a woman and he was punished by giving him a death sentence. (4) Me, I know the case of someone killed for having raped a Rwandan woman. (1) Of course, there were guys who raped and their acts went unnoticed. Others were boosting about raping women during military operations. (3) Those who raped told their friends only, in private.”¹²

Generally speaking however, the majority of our respondents attributed most of the sexual violence to Congolese soldiers, whereas a few recognized that splinter groups of FDLR such as the ‘Rasta’ and the ‘Mongols’ were also among the worst perpetrators:

“(1) Yes, it [sexual violence] exists. But also, one needs to take into account that Congolese women are easy. Apart from some isolated cases, Rwandans don’t rape. The Congolese military or the MAÏ-MAÏ rape women because they don’t have money to pay for women’s “sexual services”. Rwandans pay the Congolese with whom they have sexual relations, they don’t force them. (2) The Congolese military rape women out of ignorance. (3) Those soldiers are not educated and they do whatever they want.”¹³

“The one [in our ranks] who had committed rape was considered to be someone without value, he did not get other [military] missions. The people who committed these types of acts went to enrol with the MAÏ-MAÏ or the MONGOL because they were cursed in the FDLR.”¹⁴

Apart from the MONGOLS, it was hence the Congolese male (soldier) who was identified as the most common perpetrator of sexual violence. He was described as someone lazy, who let his wife or wives, as he often was seen as a polygamist, do all the work, with little to no respect for women in general.

“In the Congo, the men are polygamous and it is the women who do all the work.”¹⁵

The FDLR members differentiate between the perpetrators of ‘normal’ rapes, which can be resembled to what Eriksson-Baaz and Stern call ‘lust rape’, and the ‘abnormal’ rapes. The ‘lust rape’ is defined as “*the rape when a soldier is away, when he has not seen his women for a while and has needs and no money. This is the lust/need rape [viol ya posa]*” (Eriksson-Baaz and Stern, 2009:495). These rapes usually do not involve more than the perpetrator and the victim and are seen almost as necessary acts for the rapist who needs to follow his

¹² FGD ‘soldiers’ – hill – 13/10/2009; (1) sergeant, male, married, 32; (2) private first class, male, single, 29; (3) corporal, male, married, 34; (4) corporal, male, married, 43.

¹³ FGD “soldiers” – “Mutobo”; 09/09/2009; anonymous.

¹⁴ FGD ‘soldiers’ – hill – 12/11/2009; staff sergeant, male, married, 44 years old.

¹⁵ FGD “soldiers” – “Mutobo”; 08/10/2009; (1) corporal, male, single, 23 years old; (2) private first class, male, single, 32 years old; (3) staff sergeant, male, married, 59 years old; (4) corporal, male, single, 28 years old; (5) corporal, male, married, 25 years old; (6) sergeant, male, single, 26 years old. (This statement was uttered jointly by the group participants).

biological needs. It can also be likened to Enloe's idea of 'recreational rape' (Enloe, 2000). The perpetrators of gang rapes, of sexual violence against children or of genital mutilation, are however understood as different from the others.¹⁶

"All of that [genital mutilation] comes from craziness. I know about the case of a Rwandan woman who was raped by 4 FARDC soldiers and after that ignominy, the soldiers tried to use their bayonets to cut the genital parts. Those who do that are like savage beasts."¹⁷

In contrast to the 'lust' or 'recreational' rape, the aggressors for this type of sexual violence are considered as 'crazy beasts' and hence beyond what can be considered as normal. This, more aggressive sexual violence is often explained by the combatants as the consequence of drugs or alcohol:

"Congolese soldiers are heavy consumers of drugs – hemp – and strong, locally made, liquors and when drunk those military guys attack women. In times of war, there are no laws, it's the law of the strongest that reigns".¹⁸

"The MONGOL's wickedness can drive them anywhere. They take drugs and become like monsters".¹⁹

The link between drugs and especially brutal sexual violence was also put forward by ex-combatants interviewed in Elbert's et al. study (Elbert et al., 2013:31). Here the authors remind us that this link also may function as a justification for immoral behavior, in other words, the perpetrators or the observers of the violence may attempt to explain and/or excuse the act by evoking the use of drugs or alcohol. In this way, the author of the crime can be portrayed as "not in his right senses" while committing the crime. This may both elicit more social acceptance and serve to furnish legal benefits in a possible prosecution.

The combatants' portrayal of perpetrators is hence one that both accentuates the difference between themselves and the other, but also indirectly points out similarities. The differences in the narratives are significant in terms of origin and education. Firstly, the ex-combatants designate the perpetrator as (for the most part) Congolese, rather than Rwandan. Secondly, they depict the Congolese man as someone lazy who lets women do all the hard work, while they (the Rwandan combatants) were seen as more "modern" men who helped their wives in

¹⁶ The existence of genital mutilation has been well documented (Mukwege & Nangini 2009).

¹⁷ FGD 'officers' – "Mutobo"; 05/10/2009, first lieutenant, male, married, 40 years old.

¹⁸ FGD "soldiers" – "Mutobo"; 30/09/2009, private first class, male, single, 26 years old.

¹⁹ FGD 'soldiers' – hill – 12/11/2009, (1) sergeant, male, married, 39 years old; (2) staff sergeant, male, married, 44 years old, (3) sergeant, male, single, 28 years old; (4) corporal, male, married, 44; (5) sergeant, male, married, 36; (6) corporal, male, married, 25 years old. (Statement jointly made by all group participants).

their everyday chores. They underlined their education and observance of gender equality to emphasize the difference between themselves and the Others. The Congolese perpetrators are both distinguished from the Rwandan ex-combatants by their national identity and by their supposed education meaning in this context that they are perceived to be uneducated and uncivilized, which reveals the location of intersectionality for the perpetrators as clearly distant and differentiated from the Rwandans.

Yet, despite these differences, the Rwandans did not deny their own ‘sexual urges’, but argued that they handled them in another way, by paying for a woman rather than sexually abusing her. In other words, they acknowledged the existence of a (male) biological need to be sexually satisfied as a driving force behind sexual violence. This can be compared to Kirby’s description of the “unreason mode” where sexual violence “takes the form of a drive or a bond, biological or social psychological” (Kirby, 2012: 810). The gender identity was thus a commonly shared identity, although the other, intersected identities, in particular the national and education identities, were used to create a distance and a difference. This reflects Shield’s observation that gender is not always the most important social identity as these ex-combatants try to prove, but it is the most pervasive, visible and codified (Shields, 2008: 307) as despite their insistence on difference, they adhere to the same pervasive gender identity, where a certain interpretation of masculinity is codified in the same terms.

This type of reasoning was nevertheless not used when discussing perpetrators of “abnormal” sexual violence, such as child molestation, gang rapes and/or genital mutilation. Here there were tangible efforts to make sure that the line between these “barbarians” and the FDLR combatants was clear, and that they (the combatants) knew right from wrong (i.e. that these rapes were unacceptable). We will come back to these issues of creating distance between Self and Other in relation to (relatively) more violent sexual violence in later sections.

The Victim

The victims, who in the FDLR narratives are understood to be almost exclusively women and girls, are for the majority of cases identified to be Congolese.²⁰ The picture of the Congolese woman painted by the FDLR members is a rather contrast-filled image which displays a person who is both hard-working and capable but simultaneously naïve, uneducated, disrespected and easily manipulated. The description of the Congolese woman as someone

²⁰ The nature of the interview questions did not limit victims to women and girls. Boys and men could be but were hardly mentioned as victims.

who is working hard is linked to the perceived relations between Congolese men and women where the man is seen as lazy. In this image, the Congolese women are understood to be both active and obedient:

“(1) The Congolese woman is the one who is actually in charge of the household, it is she that is taking care of everything (2) The woman takes the man’s role when it comes to the running of the household. The Congolese man doesn’t do anything for the household. (1) In Congo, a woman is without value. A woman’s worth is only visible in bed and apart from that: she’s like a house servant”.²¹

Yet, despite the recognition of her hard work, the FDLR’s interpretation of the Congolese woman is characterized by disrespect. The Congolese woman is seen as someone who is both promiscuous and “cheap”, who has sexual relations with anyone, either because she is “bought” with money or food, or because she is simply “easy” and takes the initiative to have sex.

“Me, I can’t marry a Congolese because they are like prostitutes, they don’t retain themselves, they are not like the Rwandan women”.²²

“(1) For the Congolese, having sex is like a game, everyone does it with everyone. (2) At least 80% of Congolese women have sexual intercourse with no matter whom, without any problem”.²³

Some of the members recognize that the “easiness” stems from the difficulties and shortages experienced by Congolese women, who lack the most basic commodities, whereas others see it as an inherent characteristic of the Congolese women. This can be compared to Higate’s observation that peacekeepers who have sexual relations with local women during missions perceive them as “instrumental in exploiting the biological needs of their clients” (Higate, 2007:107). The social context and hardship are excluded from their interpretations of (sexual) relations, thereby framing the women as active agents and the relations as between equals (Spencer 2005: 171). This understanding of the Congolese women as “easy” complements their image as disrespected. FDLR members maintained that the Congolese woman was uneducated, lacked basic knowledge of her rights, and was mainly used as a “tool” by others. Quite contradictory to the image of the Congolese woman as an active “man-eater” then, from this perspective she was likened to a passive object, rather than a living human being.

²¹ FGD “soldiers” – “Mutobo”; 11/10/2009; (1) corporal, male, single, 32 years old; (2) corporal, male, married, 46 years old.

²² FGD “soldiers” – “Mutobo”; 01/10/2009, corporal, male, married, 28 years old.

²³ FGD “soldiers” – “Mutobo”; 02/10/2009, (1) corporal, male, married, 32 years old; (2) staff sergeant, male, married, 29 years old.

“A woman has almost no rights in the Congo, they are not free. They have no importance in society. You can slap a Congolese woman as you like without any consequence”.²⁴

“In the Congo, a woman does has no value, when you have a woman in the Congo it is like you have a wheelbarrow”.²⁵

Here, Baider’s socio-semantic analysis of the word “woman”, comes to mind, as she shows how comprising adjectives around the noun “woman”, represents a despising attitude, which ultimately results in the representation of the female as nothing more than an object (Baider, 2004: 222). In the ex-FDLR combatant’s narrative, various adjectives served this purpose: ranging from Congolese, through easy, or naïve, to uneducated. Overall, the body of the Congolese woman is equated with the image of Congo as a site to satisfy primary needs:

“It is said that the Congo is like a big restaurant, one can find to eat and to drink easily, and it is also the case for women. As one cannot spend a day without finding to eat in the Congo, similarly one cannot go a day without finding a woman with which one can have sexual intercourse”.²⁶

From these paragraphs, one can create a picture of the victim of sexual violence from the ex-combatant’s perspective as, for the most part, a Congolese woman who is highly disrespected in Congolese society, often treated as a tool or an object with little or no understandings of her rights, yet hardworking and productive. Parallel to this image is a more crude visualization of the Congolese woman as someone promiscuous, who not only agrees to sex for very little compensation, but sometimes even initiates sexual relations: a transgression of the expected behaviour of women for the combatants. On a deeper level, the Congolese women are like food and drinks; she needs to be consumed on a daily basis. In other words, the Congolese women satisfy literal consumption needs. The Congolese woman is therefore juxtaposed and considered radically Other from the Rwandan woman:

“ (All) The Congolese women are easy to manipulate in order to get sex. (2) The Congolese women are direct, if she does not have the time to have sexual relations; she says it clearly, not beating around the bush”.²⁷

The ex-combatants’ quotes emphasize the nationality, gender and sex of the victims yet it is apparent that the national identity is considered as crucial in order to be able to distance the

²⁴ FGD “soldiers” – “Mutobo”; 30/09/2009, private first class, male, single, 26 years old.

²⁵ FGD “soldiers” – “Mutobo”; 30/09/2009, corporal, male, married, 38 years old.

²⁶ FGD “soldiers” – “Mutobo”; 08/10/2009; sergeant, male, single, 26 years old

²⁷ FGD “soldiers” – “Mutobo”; 01/10/2009; (1) corporal, male, married, 28 years old; (2) corporal, male, single, 29; (3) corporal, male, single, 30 years old; (4) corporal, male, married, 40 years old; (5) corporal, male, single, 29 years old.

Congolese women from their “own”, Rwandan women. In other words, the Congolese women are seen to have several subordinate identities: female (gender), uneducated (social class), Congolese (nationality), which together makes it possible for narrators to make them invisible (Shields, 2008:308), or at least as marginal figures in the narratives. It is likely that this depiction of the Congolese women also helps to create distance between perpetrators and victims as well as observers and victims to the point where, even as observers of sexual violence, there is an instant creation of a “Self and Other” perspective, which makes it easier to execute, accept or passively observe sexual violence. We will return to this issue in the conclusion. It is important to keep in mind, as mentioned earlier, that these perceptions should not be taken for granted as “objectively” true but rather as indications of their self-perception in relation to others. This is also the case when examining the “explanations” for the occurrence of sexual violence in the following section.

The Act

Explanations for sexual violence in war have historically been explained by assumed sexual differences between men and women, in particular men’s supposedly enormous biological libido (Seifert, 1996: 35). During periods of war, the isolation from normal social life, and indirectly from women, “forces” men to recur to new solutions in order to remedy sexual urges. The answer to this has traditionally been found in prostitution rings and brothels stationed around military camps. However, when these “solutions” are not provided, the result has been “recreational rapes”, occurring because soldiers are not adequately supplied with accessible women (Enloe, 2000: 109-110). This explanation - coupled with references to the “opportunity explanation”, namely that men are far from normal social controls and norms regulating their behaviour and therefore seize the opportunity to perform sexual violence (Wood, 2006: 322-323) - form the basis for how the ex-FDLR members understand sexuality.

The interviewed ex-FDLR members demonstrate an essentialist or primordial understanding of sexuality based on the idea of biological urges that need to be kept under control by society. In doing so, they make sense of sexual violence by adopting, paradoxically, the argument put forward by early feminist research on gender-based violence (Seifert 1994; MacKinnon 1994). These authors tend to “essentialize” the nature of men. Men are essentially rapists, during war they can more easily live up to their nature.²⁸ Our interlocutors pointed out

²⁸ Although this way of reasoning is problematic to explain sexual violence since it cannot account for the variation in wartime rape (Wood 2006; 2009) it is the dominant mode of thinking to make sense of sexual violence by the ex-FDLR combatants.

that, in times of war, these control mechanisms are absent or can be circumvented. The situation depicted is one of war in which a ragtag of armed groups with hardly any military discipline operates is a fertile breeding ground for acts of sexual violence.

“To rape a woman in the Congo is like leisure for the Congolese military. They [Congolese soldiers] pass a lot of time in combat zones and according to Congolese habits, a soldier needs to have a woman wherever he is”.²⁹

However, the ex-FDLR members articulate a distinction between themselves and others in how to deal with these biological urges in the Congolese context of war. As we will discuss in the next section, they – in their interpretation - restrain these urges and in doing so consider themselves civilized. The Congolese (and some in the FDLR-ranks) do not do so and are therefore perceived as different from them. Overall, they consider the Congolese warscape as a sort of Hobbesian “state of nature”. This becomes clear when they talk about their living conditions in the Congo and when reflecting on the evolution of responses towards rape in their ranks over time. The combination of a war culture, the absence of institutional and authority structures and the fact that they lived in a foreign country made the Rwandan members of the FDLR believe that they lived “an exceptional life”.

“(1) Life did not work in the Congo, there was no drugs for medical care, children did not go to school and even pregnant women could not be cared for. (All) It was an exceptional life in Congo. We lived like animals”.³⁰

The experience of the Congo as a state of nature emerges in the previous quotations. They lived in a space outside the normal, where established societal norms were not only suspended but put upside-down. The ex-FDLR combatants themselves sometimes had the impression to live without rights, “as animals” where the law of biological needs and the most powerful reigns. In this context, their “civilization” was significantly put to the test. This is demonstrated by the fact that discussions with the ex-FDLR members revealed that sexual crimes were initially taken seriously and punished, even with capital punishment. Later, perpetrators of sexual violence were reported to have been given 300 beatings with a stick. Such a punishment would make the perpetrator a “moral” outsider in their ranks. The discussions suggest that internal disciplinary measures to tackle these crimes faded over time, and, as mentioned, the ex-FDLR suggest that perpetrators of sexual crimes would leave their

²⁹ FGD ‘soldiers’ – hill – 12/11/2009, staff sergeant, male, married, 41 years old.

³⁰ FGD ‘soldiers’ – hill – 12/11/2009; (1) sergeant, male, married, 39 years old; (2) staff sergeant, male, married, 44, (3) sergeant, male, single, 28 years old; (4) corporal, male, married, 44 years old; (5) sergeant, male, married, 36 years old; (6) corporal, male, married, 25 years old.

ranks and enlist in splinter-groups after their punishment. This progressive relaxation of rules and norms also reflects the context: Eastern Congo has been characterized by conflict over the past three decades and as such, norms in this area have gradually weakened or been replaced by new norms.

The Difference Between Self and Other: Restraint

In contrast to their Congolese homologues, who the ex-FDLR combatants consider as disrespectful of women in general and in particular during conflict, the ex-FDLR members picture themselves as modern men who understand and appreciate a certain type of gender equality. In their discourses there is a clear attempt to distance themselves from the perpetrators of sexual violence through a process of Othering. Their explanations of the occurrence of sexual violence – including the denial, justification and characterization of the Congolese – reveal their biological understanding of sexual intercourse and man-woman relations and also uncovers the process of Othering that guides their interpretative work.

Yet, this process of Othering is less pronounced when it comes to the so-called “normal” rapes or the “lust rapes”, which are perceived and depicted as the inevitable result of exceptional circumstances, where wives are absent and social norms appear to lose their regulatory influence. In line with their biological understanding of sexuality whereby the man needs women for sexual satisfaction, the distance between Self and Other appears to be remarkably smaller for these types of sexual violence. Latent in these discourses, one may hence perceive a certain shared understanding of the situation in which the perpetrators find themselves while committing this specific type of sexual violence: understood as a “lust rape”.³¹ The perpetrators’ and the ex-combatants’ shared gender identity appears here to be more visible than the national and/or social class identities.

Similarly to what Eriksson Baaz and Stern (2008, 2009) have found in their study of sexual violence within the Congolese army, the FDLR members trace the understanding of this type of rape back to a lack of financial resources, i.e. poverty, as the perpetrators cannot pay for the women. From their perspective, the major difference between themselves and the perpetrators lies in the possibility of paying the woman for sex, and in the absence of financial capacity to do so, in their capacity to restrain themselves. It is hence not a fundamentally different view on sexuality and women that determines the perceived difference in behaviour between the perpetrators and the ex-combatants but rather financial means and self-control, or

³¹ See Eriksson Baaz and Stern (2010: 31) for more on the ‘lust rape’.

- in the case of the rebel group - group discipline. This reasoning evokes parallels with Weinstein's argument of how rebels' use of indiscriminate violence ultimately is determined by rebel groups' internal organization and discipline, rather than external factors (Weinstein, 2006, 198-258). However, the discussion with the FDLR highlighted that the ex-combatants do not locate the origins of this restraint in the organizational structures of their rebellion but rather in a nationalistic or cultural characteristic.

Here it should of course be remembered that the chances of FDLR members expressing any sort of understanding or empathy for perpetrators of sexual violence in the focus groups when these individuals, according to the group's rules, should be punished or excluded, are slim. As Ellemers et al. (2002: 173) have noted, individuals perceived as black sheep in a group are even more prone to severely condemn and judge other black sheep. The ex-combatants' critical discourses on both Congolese soldiers and former FDLR members as "barbaric", "uncivilized", or "crazy", must thus be understood from a broader perspective. FDLR, as one of the most shunned rebel groups, is here attempting to bring other fighters down, thereby indirectly elevating themselves on the ladder of fighters' reputation. This desire to distance themselves from the behaviour of other rebel groups is even more pronounced in discourses relating to particularly brutal rapes, or so-called "evil rapes", where the perpetrator(s) attack children, mutilate or in other ways, excessively torture the victim.³² Here, the former rebels emphasize their understanding of right and wrong by clearly condemning these types of sexual violence:

"When more than 5 individuals attack one woman or when someone who is over 20 years old rapes a little three-year old girl, to me, that is madness".³³

This type of violence, which by the ex-rebels is understood as barbaric, is also often interpreted either as a consequence of drug consumption, or as individuals simply going crazy because they can, because of their power and impunity. This view is concurrent with what other researchers found in their interviews with ex-combatants "many participants see a clear connection between smoking marijuana, 'going crazy' and raping women in the most brutal ways" (Elbert et al. 2013: 30). Yet, as previously stated, these perceived explanations should be seen against the possibility of rebels wanting to "excuse" the behaviour of the perpetrators (or themselves). FDLR members appeared to put forward interpretations of brutal, indiscriminate violence more in line with what Kirby has categorized as "unreason", which

³² For more on 'evil rape' see Eriksson Baaz and Stern (2010: 31-32).

³³ FGD "soldiers" – "Mutobo"; 11/10/2009; corporal, male, single, 32 years old.

we briefly addressed in the section on perpetrators. Kirby's understanding of "unreason" in situations of particularly aggressive sexual violence is promoting a narrative of "the rapist as *certain type of individual*, one empowered to sexual violence by elements of their personality" (Kirby, 2012:810). This is similar to how the FLDR pictures this type of sexual violence, as a phenomenon which is driven more by individual characteristics, than by the context itself. Translated into academic language, the barbaric type of sexual violence such as "evil rape" is attributed to disturbed individuals and thus agent-driven, while the "normal rape" is something encouraged by the context and hence structure-driven.

Conclusion

It has been documented that rumors, prejudices and so-called mythico-histories about people of other ethnic and national identity contribute to the dynamics of genocide, war and large-scale killings in Africa's Great Lakes Region (see for example Malkii, 1995; Lemarchand, 2009; International Alert, 2008). The findings of this article demonstrate the importance of such a perspective to understand the dynamics of sexual violence. A process of Othering is at work at the intersection of categories of sex-gender-nation. This process builds upon dynamics of 'Othering' in the history of Rwanda. The overlap between ethnic and gender categories has been observed in (the build-up to) the Rwandan genocide (Taylor, 1999: 151-179). With ethnic categorization between Hutu and Tutsi as the main binary frame of reference inside Rwanda, it is probable that this process has been reproduced elsewhere in the region and across national boundaries.

Yet, somewhat surprisingly, in the ex-combatants' narratives and understanding of sexual violence, ethnicity is not singled out as an essential factor. Instead, the intersectionality observed in the discourses centers on gender, nationality and social class (here understood as education and, in a broader sense, civility). The ex-combatants' narratives show how they, through their gender identities as males, share common biological urges with other males – in this case perpetrators of sexual violence. However, their other intersecting identities as Rwandans and as "well educated" and "civilized" individuals, make it possible to distance themselves from the "uneducated Congolese".

At a theoretical level, the findings presented here do not point to alternative explanations for the occurrence of sexual violence but highlight the need to systematically take into account

the intersectional dimension of this phenomenon. To make use of intersectionality as a frame through which these discourses can be analyzed helps to understand the connections between individual experiences, social structures and cultural discourses and thus the importance of unpacking intersecting identities (Davis, 2008: 68). Yet, we must be mindful of the specific historical and contextual features of individual identity categories (Shields, 2008: 307). In this case, the violent history between Rwanda and the Congo has evidently played a part in the construction of the identities, just as the current violent context shape the understandings of what is considered “normal” and “exceptional”. Applying an intersectionality perspective has also enabled us to discover how Congolese women, through several subordinate, intersecting identities, become invisible actors in the narratives (Shields, 2008, 308).

Although we have focused on only one of many armed groups, anecdotal evidence suggest that such a process is at work across nationalities and armed groups. Participants in group discussions with Congolese citizens living in the Eastern DRC in 2009 stressed that “rape had not been a Congolese problem until large numbers of foreign militias in the area ‘brought’ the problem to the DRC” (HHI 2009: 22). During a conference on the origins of sexual violence in March 2010 in Goma, many of the Congolese participants in the audience also stated that sexual violence was introduced in their society from the outside, particularly by Rwandans (thus the FDLR).³⁴ These statements indicate that sexual violence would have been imported into Eastern Congo due to the (military) culture of foreign invaders. This suggests that Congolese might claim that it is precisely Rwandan invaders who have brought them the “state of nature”. In fact, it might be the case that other armed actors and nationals make sense of the sex-gender-violence nexus in exactly the same way as the interpretative framework discussed in this article, namely the *Other* (combatants and their dependents) as living in a state of nature, occupied with satisfying basic needs and gratifying biological urges.

Whether these claims are “objectively” true is of little relevance. What matters is the fact they provide an insight into how people make sense of this type of violence. Such an understanding thus opens the realm of the ideational and the intersectional without which important phenomena such as widespread sexual violence remains little understood. Further research needs to explore this issue across nationalities, ethnic affiliations and other social categories in the Congo and in relation to other situations of widespread sexual violence.

³⁴ Observation Conference on “Perceptions et Mécanismes de Réponse Aux Violences Sexuelles à L’Est de La RDC”, organized by REJUSCO, 15-16-17 Mars 2010, Goma, RDC. For a description of the reactions of the Congolese participants towards the studies presented see also Moufflet (2010: 147-150).

Doing so will help to unravel the process that makes widespread and destructive sexual violence thinkable, justifiable and executable.

Reference list

- Allen, L. 2005. Managing Masculinity: Young Men's Identity Work in Focus Groups. *Qualitative Research* 5 (35): 35-57.
- Amnesty International. 2004. *Mass Rape. Time for Remedies*. London: Amnesty International.
- Autessere, S. 2012. Dangerous Tales: Dominant Narratives on the Congo and their Unintended Consequences. *African Affairs* 111 (443): 202-222.
- Baaz, M.E. and M. Stern. 2008. Making Sense of Violence: voices of soldiers in the Congo (DRC). *Journal of Modern African Studies* 46 (1): 57-86.
- Baaz, M.E. and M. Stern. 2009. Why Do Soldiers Rape? Masculinity, Violence, and Sexuality in the Armed Forces in the Congo (DRC). *International Studies Quarterly* 53: 495-518.
- Baaz, M.E. and M. Stern. 2010. *The Complexity of Violence. A Critical Analysis of Sexual Violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)*. SIDA Working Paper on Gender based Violence: SIDA.
- Baaz, M.E. & M. Stern. 2013. *Sexual Violence as a Weapon of War? Perceptions,*

- Prescriptions, Problems in the Congo and Beyond*. London: Zedbooks.
- Baider, F.H. 2004. *Hommes galants, femmes faciles. Etude socio-sémantique et diachronique*. Paris: L'Harmattan.
- Carter, K.R. 2010. Should International Relations Consider Rape a Weapon of War?. *Politics and Gender* 6: 343-371.
- Cohen, D.K. 2013. Explaining Rape During Civil War: Cross-National Evidence (1980-2009). *American Political Science Review* 107 (3): 461-477.
- Cohen, D.K., A.G. Green, and E.J. Wood. 2013. *Wartime Sexual Violence. Misconceptions, Implications, and Ways Forward*. Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace.
- Davis, K. 2008. Intersectionality as buzzword: A sociology of science perspective on what makes a feminist theory successful. *Feminist Theory* 9 (67): 67-85.
- De Brouwer, A and S.K.H Chu, eds. 2009. *The Men Who Killed Me. Rwandan Survivors of Sexual Violence*. Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre.
- Elbert, T., H. Hinkel, A. Maedl, K. Hermenau, T. Hecker, M. Schauer, H. Riedke, N. Winkler and P. Lancaster. 2013. *Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in the Provinces of the Democratic Republic of Congo: Insights from Former Combatants*. LOGiCA, Learning on Gender and Conflict in Africa, Washington D.C.: World Bank.
- Ellemers, N., R. Spears, and B. Doosje. 2002. Self and Social Identity. *Annual Review of Psychology* (53): 161-186.
- Enloe, C. 2000. *Maneuvers, The International Politics of Militarizing Women's Lives*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Gutiérrez Sanin, F. and E.J. Wood, E. 2014. Ideology in Civil War: Instrumental Adoption and Beyond. *Journal of Peace Research* 51 (2): 213-226.
- Harvard Humanitarian Initiative (HHI). 2009. *Characterizing Sexual Violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Profiles of Violence, Community Responses, and Implications for the Protection of Women*. Report. Cambridge: Harvard Humanitarian Initiative & Open Society Institute.
- Harvard Humanitarian Initiative (HHI). 2010. *"Now, The World is Without Me": An Investigation of Sexual Violence in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo*. Report. Cambridge: Harvard Humanitarian Initiative & Oxfam International.

- Higate, P. 2007. Peacekeepers, Masculinities, and Sexual Exploitation. *Men and Masculinities*. 10 (1): 99-119.
- Human Rights Watch (HRW). 2002. *The War Within the War. Sexual Violence against Women and Girls in Eastern Congo*. New York: HRW.
- Human Rights Watch (HRW). 2009a. *Soldiers Who Rape, Commanders Who Condone. Sexual Violence and Military Reform in the Democratic Republic of Congo*. New York: Human Rights Watch.
- Human Rights Watch (HRW). 2009b. *DR Congo: Massive Increase in Attacks on Civilians*, New York: Human Rights Watch.
- Human Rights Watch (HRW). 2009c. “*Vous serez punis*”. *Attaques contre les civils dans l’est du Congo*. New York: Human Rights Watch.
- Hynes, P.H. 2004. On the battlefield of women’s bodies. *Women’s Studies International Forum* (27): 431-445.
- International Alert. 2008. *Words That Kill. Rumours, Prejudice, Stereotypes and Myths Amongst the People of the Great Lakes Region of Africa*. Nairobi: International Alert.
- International Criminal Court. 2002a. Rome Statute, A/CONF.183/9, 1 July 2002.
- International Criminal Court. 2002b. Elements of Crimes, ICC-ASP/1/3(part II-B), 9 September 2002.
- International Criminal Court. 2012. Pursue Case Against Rwanda Rebel Leader,” Human Rights Watch news release, June 1, 2012.
- International Criminal Court. 2012. Situation in Democratic Republic of the Congo: The Prosecutor v. Sylvestre Mudacumura. Case n° ICC-01/04-01/12”, December 6, 2012.
- Kelly, J. 2010. *Rape in War: Motives of Militia in DRC*. United States Institute of Peace (USIP) Special Report 243.
- Kirby, P. 2012. How is Rape a Weapon of War? Feminist International Relations, Modes of Critical Explanation and the Study of Wartime Sexual Violence. *European Journal of International Relations* 19 (4): 797-821.
- Lawry, L., A-M. de Brouwer, A. Smeulders, J.C. Rosa, M. Kisielewski; K. Johnson, J. Scott and J. Wiczorek. 2014. The Use of Population-Based Surveys for Prosecutions at the International Criminal Court: A Case Study of Democratic Republic of Congo”,

International Criminal Justice Review. 24 (1): 5-21.

Lemarchand, R. 2009. *The Dynamics of Violence in Central Africa*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

MacKinnon, C. 1994. Turning Rape into Pornography: Postmodern Genocide. In *Mass Rape: The War Against Women in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, ed. A. Stiglmayer. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Malkii, L. 1995. *Purity and Exile. Violence, Memory, and National Cosmology Among Hutu Refugees in Tanzania*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

McCall, L. 2005. The Complexity of Intersectionality. *Signs*, 30 (3): 1771-1800.

Moufflet, V. 2006. Le paradigme du viol comme arme de guerre à l'Est de la République démocratique du Congo. *Afrique Contemporaine* 227 (3): 119-133.

Moufflet, V. 2010. Les différentes réceptions d'un article ou l'inaudibilité d'une analyse anthropologique. *Altérités*, 7 (2): 136-153.

Moser, C. O. N. and F.C. Clark, eds. 2001. *Victims, Perpetrators or Actors. Gender, Armed Conflict and Political Violence*. London: Zed Books.

Mukwege, D.M and C. Nangini. 2009. Rape With Extreme Violence: The New Pathology in South Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo. *PLoS Medecine*, 6 (12): 1-5.

New York Times. 2007. Rape Epidemic Raises Trauma of Congo War. *The New York Times* 7 October.

New York Times. 2010. At Least 150 Women Raped in Weekend Raid in Congo. *The New York Times* 22 August.

Pole Institute. 2010. *Guerillas in the Mist. The Congolese Experience of the FDLR war in Eastern Congo and the role of the international community*. Goma: Pole Institute.

Rafti, M. 2006. *South Kivu: A Sanctuary for the Rebellion of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda*. Discussion Paper 2006.05. Antwerp: Institute of Development Policy and Management.

Republic of Rwanda (RoR). 2006. *Manuel pour les camps de solidarité et autres formations: service de l'éducation civique*. Kigali: National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC) (manuscript originally in Kinyarwanda - (unauthorized) translation into French by the author's (BI) Rwandan field assistants)

- Rome Statute. 1998. UN Document: A/CONF. 183/9; 37 ILM 1002 (1998); 2187 UNTS 90.
- Romkema, H. 2007. *Opportunities and Constraints for the Disarmament & Repatriation of Foreign Armed Groups in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The Cases of the FDLR, FNL and ADF/NALU*. Washington D.C.: World Bank.
- Seifert, R. 1994. War and Rape: A Preliminary Analysis. In *Mass Rape: The War Against Women in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, ed. A. Stiglmayer. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Shields, S.A. 2008. Gender: An Intersectionality Perspective. *Sex Roles*, 59: 301-311.
- Söderström, J. 2011. Focus Groups: Safety in numbers?. In *Understanding peace research: methods and challenges*, ed. K. Höglund and M. Öberg. London: Routledge.
- Solhjell, R. 2009. *Combating Sexual Violence in the DRC. Towards a Comprehensive Approach*. Report. Oslo : Norwegian Institute of Foreign Affairs.
- Spencer, S.W. 2005. Making Peace: Preventing and Responding to Sexual Exploitation by United Nations Peacekeepers. *Journal of Public and International Affairs* 16:167-81.
- Stiglmayer A. 1994. *Mass Rape: The War Against Women in Bosnia-Herzegovina*,. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Straus, S. 2015. *Making and Unmaking Nations. War, Leadership, and Genocide in Modern Africa*. Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press.
- Taylor, C. 1999. *Sacrifice as Terror. The Rwandan Genocide of 1994*. Oxford: Berg.
- United Nations. 2010. *Democratic Republic Of The Congo, 1993–2003. Report of the Mapping Exercise documenting the most serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law committed within the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo between March 1993 and June 2003, October 2010*.
- Weinstein, J.M. 2007. *Inside Rebellion. The Politics of Insurgent Violence*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wood, E.J. 2006. Variation in Sexual Violence During War. *Politics and Society* 34: 307-340.
- Wood, E.J. 2008. Sexual Violence During War: Toward an Understanding of Variation. In *Order, Conflict and Violence*, ed. S.N. Kalyvas, I. Shapiro and T. Masoud, 321-351. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wood, E.J. 2009. Armed Groups and Sexual Violence: When Is Wartime Rape Rare?. *Politics*

and Society 37: 131-161.