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David Duriesmith, University of Queensland

Georgina Holmes, University of Reading

The Masculine Logic of DDR and SSR in the Rwanda Defence Force

Since the 1994 genocide and civil war, the Rwandan government has implemented an externally funded Demobilisation, Demilitarisation and Reintegration (DDR)/Security Sector Reform (SSR) program culminating in the consolidation of armed groups into a new, professionalised Rwanda Defence Force (RDF). Feminists argue that DDR-SSR initiatives that exclude combatant women and girls or ignore gendered security needs fail to transform the political conditions that led to conflict. Less attention has been paid to how gendered relations of power play out through gender sensitive DDR and SSR initiatives that seek to integrate women and transform hyper-masculine militarised masculinities. This article investigates how Rwanda's DDR-SSR program is governed by an oppressive masculine logic. Drawing on critical studies on men and masculinities and feminist work on peacebuilding, myths and the politics of belonging, it is argued that Rwanda's locally-owned DDR-SSR program places the military and militarisation at the centre of the nation-building program. Through various 'boundary construction' practices, the Rwandan government attempts to stabilise the post-1994 gender order and entrench the hegemony of a new militarised masculinity in Rwandan society. The case study draws on field research conducted in 2014 and 2015 and a discourse analysis of RDF historical accounts, policy documents and training materials.

Key words: DDR, SSR, gender, militarisation, peacebuilding, Rwanda

Introduction

Feminist scholars have argued for the importance of gender inclusivity and breaking the association between masculinity and militarism as a key step towards ensuring that organised conflict does not re-emerge after large-scale violence (Hamber, 2016; Cahn, 2011; Specht, 2013). Within societies transitioning out of civil conflict, two of the most visible stabilisation efforts are formal, externally funded disarmament, demobilisation, and reintegration (DDR) and security sector reform (SSR) programs. DDR, described by the UN as 'an integral part of post-conflict peace consolidation' (UN, 2017), incorporates the capturing, storing and documenting of civilian weaponry in state-sanctioned efforts to

demilitarise civilian populations; assimilate former combatants back into civilian society, and integrate armed groups into a new national defence force (Munive, 2013). SSR takes these efforts further by reconstituting and modernising the national military service (Sedra, 2016). Together, DDR and SSR programs are intended to strengthen political settlements; establish good governance and facilitate sustainable peace (Edmonds et. al., 2009: 31).

Formal DDR-SSR programs have been widely criticised for excluding women and girls, creating gendered insecurity and denying women access to justice (Mckay & Mazurana, 2004; Basini, 2013). However, less attention has been paid to DDR-SSR programs which explicitly address gender, with little to no scholarship focusing on the impact such programs have on masculinities (Specht 2013; Duriesmith 2015). Feminist and Critical Military scholars share a concern that externally funded and implemented DDR-SSR programs perpetuate colonial ideas about civilisational progress (Hills 2015; Mackenzie 2012). Yet, few gendered analyses have examined 'home-grown' DDR-SSR programmes pushed by local elites. This means that current knowledge about DDR-SSR programs has disproportionately focused on the lack of gender sensitivity in external interventions, rather than on how locally-owned DDR-SSR initiatives may be gender-inclusive.

In an attempt to address these gaps, we investigate the masculine logic of Rwanda's gender-inclusive DDR-SSR program. We employ the term 'masculine logic' to refer to the ordering principles that structure a set of imaginative/discursive and material practices that help to rebuild and remilitarise a society after conflict. The notion of logics picks up on McLeod's (2015) contention that peacebuilding interventions which outwardly appear to encourage gender equality can support patriarchal outcomes. We suggest that a masculine logic provides an ordering principle which reinforces the dominance of militarised masculinities while appearing to adopt gender-equitable policies, making it distinct from other processes that lead to militarisation. To explore this logic we focus on the

discursive/imaginative project of Rwanda's DDR-SRR program. We ask: How has the implementation of a gender-inclusive DDR-SSR programs in Rwanda shaped militarised masculinity? Drawing on critical scholarship on men and masculinities, feminist theorising on peacebuilding and feminist research on nation-building, myths and the politics of belonging, we suggest that Rwanda's locally-owned, gender-inclusive DDR-SSR program adheres to an oppressive masculine logic which places the military and militarisation at the centre of the authoritarian government's statebuilding project while appearing to be rights-based and gender-equitable. This process is not just dependent on restructuring heterosexual relations between men and women, as studies examining the construction of gender exclusive DDR-SSR programs suggest, but on restructuring the gender hierarchy between (re-) militarised men/masculinities and between women/femininities.

Foregrounding the agency of Rwandan actors, we argue that 'boundary construction' is a central component of the imaginative/discursive project of the RPF-led government's DDR-SSR program. The RPF draws on Rwandan myths of belonging and combines them with imported gendered myths that underpin externally-funded, gender-inclusive DDR-SSR initiatives to (re)construct the post-rupture gender order. To understand the imaginative/discursive project of DDR-SSR programs, it is essential to remain attentive to how these efforts relate to pre-existing colonial and postcolonial logics of gender. In the case of Rwanda, opposition to two oppositional militarised gender orders are discursively constructed by the RPF: the colonial gender order (dominant until independence in 1959) and the Hutu extremist gender order, which the RPF argues prevailed up to the end of genocide in 1994. Both gender orders are characterised as dependent on transgressive hyper-masculine logics. Through various boundary construction practices, including socialising male and female military personnel to be morally virtuous, disciplined, modern Rwandan soldier-citizens; purging deviant or transgressive masculinities and femininities; purifying ex-

combatants and reconstructing the conjugal order, the RPF regime attempts to discursively re-envision and stabilise the post-rupture gender order. In discussing these dynamics we use the term 'post-rupture' rather than the more common term 'post-conflict' to indicate that the social conflicts which shape Rwanda did not end in 1994. As Lund (2016: 1204) argues 'post-conflict is hardly the definitive end of violence' and the institutions which emerge after ruptures are not free of the institutional debris of the conflicts which shape them.

We chose Rwanda as our empirical case study because of its international reputation for supporting gender equality, including integrating women into public institutions, and because the externally-funded DDR-SSR program forms a central component of a long-standing locally owned national peacebuilding process that claims to disarm, unify and reconcile a polarised population. The article first outlines the theoretical framework of peacebuilding as an attempt to reconstruct the gender order. We then explore the centrality of gendered myths in post-rupture state-building projects, before undertaking a critical gendered analysis of Rwanda Defence Force's DDR-SSR practices. In doing so, we identify trends in how the RPF appropriate Rwandan and externally produced gendered myths to reform the post-rupture gender order. The article concludes with some reflections on how to understand the masculine logic of DDR-SSR programs in light of the Women Peace and Security (WPS) agenda.

Methodology

To analyse the masculine logic behind Rwanda's DDR-SSR program, we triangulate discourse analysis with qualitative interviews. Discourse analysis of Rwandan government policy documents, RDF training manuals obtained from the Ministry of Defence and the work of former RPF colonel and military historian Frank Rusagara was conducted to: a) reconstruct the imaginative/discursive project of Rwanda's DDR-SSR program and b)

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identify trends in how external myths and preexisting Rwandan myths of origin have been appropriated by the RPF to develop contemporary myths about the post-rupture Rwandan nation.. We use Bathes's definition of contemporary myths as cultural activities communicated discursively, visually or as speech acts to convey secular or religious ideology which overtime becomes naturalised as historical reality (Barthes, 1957,142). Since, as Barthes suggests, myths are a 'type of speech' and people can be vehicles of myths, we reflect on the speech acts performed during interviews to ascertain how individual actors engage in constructions of belonging (Barthes, 1957: 107). We observe how RPF/RDF contemporary myths become conveyed or disrupted in the discourse created by the social subjects that work within the post-rupture military institution. Sixty-five depth interviews were undertaken with male and female soldiers, senior RDF staff and trainers and government officials as part of another research project. These interviews took place during four field research trips to Rwanda Military Academy (Gako campus) in Musanse and the Ministry of Defence (MINEDEC), Kigali, Rwanda between February 2014 and December 2015. Interviews were conducted in Kinyarwanda, French or English and undertaken by Georgina Holmes and two European research assistants, with Kinyarwanda translators where required. Kinyarwanda interviews were transcribed into English by three Rwandan nationals.

Rwanda scholars observe that Rwandan research participants practice forms of self-censorship to either avoid appearing to criticise, or to demonstrate support for the official (public) narratives of the RPF (Straus & Waldorf, 2011; Burnett, 2012; Holmes, 2013). We identify these performances as evidence of a soldier's engagement in the politics of belonging and their willingness to (publicly) support the regime's political project. Yet we also reflect on research participant's personal 'desires for attachment' that may influence whether they choose to support or disrupt the DDR-SSR's imaginative/discursive project during the research encounter (Yuval-Davis, 2006: 198). For this reason, we divide the research

participants into two types: those who joined the Rwandan Patriotic Army in the early 1990s -1997 and are older members of the RPF based in Uganda; and new recruits from 1997-2002 (Phase I of the DDR-SSR program) and 2003-2015 (Phase II and III). The RPF-led government discourages the use of ethnicities, Tutsi, Hutu and Twa, and research participants were not asked their ethnicity. Some chose to self-identify with an ethnic group by articulating their families' experiences during the early 1990s, though this approach was not consistently adopted. All research participants provided consent and were informed in advance that their responses would be anonymised.

Peacebuilding interventions and rebuilding the gender order

We first situate DDR-SSR within feminist debates about external peacebuilding interventions. Policy discourse on DDR-SSR has tended to direct its attention towards the participation and protection of women and girls, while quantitative approaches focus on the number of women in DDR-SSR or instances of violence against women (Mobekk, 2010; DCAF, 2006; Bastick 2017). These approaches often fail to capture the relationality of gender, the complex dynamics that shape women's experiences and rarely consider masculinities. When formal DDR-SSR programs fail to do break the association between manhood and militarism, they are rightly criticised for failing to transform the political conditions that led to violent conflict (Umejesi, 2014; Duriesmith, 2017).

Feminist scholars share a concern with critical military studies scholars that the cosmopolitan values underpinning externally funded DDR/SSR programs support a western-centic, neoliberal and expansionist project which require outsider experts to 'civilise' backward, uneducated recipients of the Global South (Elliot, 2004; MacKenzie, 2012; Jowell, 2018). However, to date feminists have focused their efforts on examining how international actors implement DDR/SSR programs. Local elites are perceived to benefit from external

projects, though few gendered analyses have considered how DDR-SSR programs are implemented when elites in power claim ownership of them. This leads to both recognition of agency (for example, of women who join oppressive military organisations) and the denial of agency of elites in power who operate within oppressive global structures.

In African contexts, the civilising mission of DDR/SSR programs may further entrench colonial stereotypes about Africans as inherently violent and in need of being disciplined and re-socialised. Privileging western liberal values, externally implemented DDR/SSR programs aim to transition unprofessional, corrupt African militaries into 'postmodern' militaries and transition hypermasculine, violent and harmful male soldiers into forces for good. This project is expected to support the post-conflict state's (re)entry into the neo-liberal economic system (Mackenzie, 2012). Reinforcing colonial myths about African men and women, these programs often buttress another myth, that the origins and 'act of civilising' is a European-owned invention exported to the Global South (Shilliam, 2012; MacKenzie, 2016).

Emphasising agency, Rwanda scholars have considered how local actors implement the RPF government's DDR-SSR program (Edmonds et. Al., 2009; Rusagara, 2009; Wilén, 2012; Jowell, 2014; Lötscher, 2016). Wilén (2012) examines how the RPF-led government has developed a 'hybrid' form of state-building which, although funded by external actors, foregrounds the ruling party's 'preference for security and stability' over democratic peace. Like feminist scholars, Edmonds et. al. (2009) suggest that the international community's criteria for measuring the success of DDR-SSR practices – namely how professional, efficient and capable the national defence force is in establishing domestic security and stability – ignores localised political tensions. More recently, scholars have examined the imaginative/discursive dimension of Rwanda's DDR-SSR program. Jowell and Perdeková, Rentyens and Wilén (2018) consider how narratives about Rwanda's history have been

leveraged by the RPF to transition from rebel to ruler; restructure and transition the Rwanda Defence Force (RDF) into a modern, Rwandan military, and remilitarise Rwandan society. However, these studies present macro-level analyses that do not account for how gendered power relations operate at the micro-level of both the imaginative/discursive and material/practical projects of DDR-SSR initiatives.

To understand these gendered dimensions, we start from an understanding of war as a site of structural change and contest within or between gender orders and view civil war as an extension of existing struggles over the most privileged position within society (Duriesmith 2014). Societies are organised such that multiple constructions of masculinity and femininity are arranged to create a hierarchical ordering through which individuals' lives are structured. This hierarchy is conceptualised by Connell as the gender order. The gender order is produced and reproduced in the gendered rules, practices and norms of the interconnected institutions that constitute the current 'state of play' in patriarchy (Connell, 1987: 139). Gender relations are structured hierarchically in the gender order, though they are not fixed and can be remade.

Large-scale violence and conflicts with a significant trangressive element may disrupt the existing gender order, creating space for a new ordering of gender to emerge. Debates on how the gender order may change during conflict emphasise the emergence of particularly violent, forms of masculinity and femininity (Duriesmith 2018; White, 2007). This framing obscures the diverse range of configurations of masculinity and femininity which constitute the gender order, and positions violent, transgressive masculinities as hyper-visible in feminist work.

The focus on overt violence neglects how the post-war moment is a site where masculinities and femininities may be discursively and materially reconfigured and the

gender order reconstructed (Duncanson & Woodward, 2016). For Hamber (2016), the reconfiguration of masculinities is a central dynamic in the creation of stable societies after war. The transitional period often entails a shift from masculinity defined by exceptional, overt violence committed by a small group of men to wide-spread everyday violence. The overt violence of political activists in South Africa was rejected in official narratives at the same time as gun ownership, intimate partner violence and violent responses to crime all became more important to mainstream masculinity (Hamber 2016: 20-21). The creation of a new 'everyday' form of South African masculinity is not defined by acts of war, but by militarised acts that remain on the same continuum without producing large-scale disruptions (Cockburn, 2004).

These transformations can be understood through MacKenzie's (2012) concept of the conjugal order, which suggests that externally implemented peacebuilding initiatives attempt to re-establish rules around family, sexuality and legitimate social relations. MacKenzie's understanding of the conjugal order extends the notion of the gender order by detailing how perceptions of security are reliant on intimate relationships. The concept of the conjugal order is not synonymous with Connell's gender order, in that it focuses on normative constructions of heterosexual relationships and does not examine the structural ordering of masculinities and femininities. MacKenzie's emphasis on intimate relationships and how war-time intimate practices may produce a sense of disorder strengthens understandings of how the gender order changes during armed conflict.

Nevertheless, MacKenzie's critique of external DDR-SSR programs concentrate on interventions that fail to consider gender equality and result in policy responses that are directly harmful to women. *Female Soldiers in Sierra Leone* is primarily concerned with the 'illegitimate' sexual relationships of female soldiers during fighting and attempts made by external actors to 'return to normal' by repositioning combatant women in the *demilitarised*

domestic sphere. In Sierra Leone's DDR-SSR program, women are not valued as security actors and are treated as incapable of soldiering. Similarly George (2017), who extends MacKenzie's work, examines how hybridized systems of regulatory authority prioritise the protection of the conjugal order over defending women from violence. Both these cases indicate that when DRR-SSR programs fail to consider gendered security needs they are likely to reinforce oppressive orderings of gender. Because of their focus on women's intimate relationships in cases where gendered insecurity has not been prioritised, MacKenzie and George do not capture how explicit attempts to secure women may facilitate the remilitarisation of society. By exploring the masculine logic behind Rwanda's gender sensitive DDR-SSR program, we show that even when peacebuilding efforts prioritise gender equality they may reinforce oppressive notions of militarised masculinity.

Myths, nation-building and DDR-SSR programs

Reconstruction efforts not only reformulate the basic infrastructure and governmental capacity, they must re-articulate what collective belonging means in the post-rupture society (Burnet, 2013; MacKenzie and Foster, 2017). As Yuval-Davis infers, this may lead to the creation of a specific political project directed at 'constructing belonging in particular ways to particular collectivities' which are 'themselves being constructed' by the project (Yuval-Davis, 2006: p197).

After large-scale organised violence, a period of narrative reconstruction often occurs, as new narratives of belonging may be produced to define the historical context that led to intra-state war. These narratives serve to reconfigure or restore the gender order by (re)positioning 'different categories of social location' and reintegrating community members into the post-rupture society's 'grids of power relations' (Yuval-Davis, 2006: 199). Such imaginings often rely on gendered notions of an idealised gender order. Often, this leads to

the re-entrenchment of oppressive gender hierarchies that either marginalise women's role within the new society or 'circumscribe[e] their presence to passive victims' (Björkdahl & Selimovic, 2015: 165).

It is for this reason that peacebuilding efforts, including DDR-SSR programs, involve a degree of mythologizing. Myths may be used to construct the normative imaginings of what the post-rupture nation state should look like. International peacebuilding efforts tend to be underpinned by cosmopolitan values that emphasise cis-gendered notions of civilised society and idealised gender relations which deify patriarchal masculinities that are perceived to be less violent than the militarised masculinities that fuelled war. The DDR program in Liberia shows that these processes may mobilise myths about 'western' sexualities and heterosexual marriage to 'civilise' unruly configurations of gender among former fighters (Hills, 2015). For Mackenzie, the externally-imposed conjugal order draws on colonial gender myths to reaffirm men's dominant position in society as (militarised) security actors. These externally-driven re-imaginings of the gender order can be seen in the emergence of dominant neo-liberal masculinities, supportive policing masculinities and marginalised soldiering femininities of women who have fought. Therefore, gendered interventions incorporated within DDR-SSR programs should be understood as a form of 'social engineering' reliant on gendered imaginations of peace (Parpart 2016).

Gendered and raced myths are central to nation-building and the politics of belonging. Contemporary myths, often drawn from 'primordial' myths of origin, may stabilise the dynamic process of belonging and naturalise the 'construction of a particular hegemonic form of power relations', which we identify as the gender order (Yuval-Davis, 2006: 199). For Yuval-Davis, 'boundary construction' is a key function of nation-building, where the national community is defined according to 'othered' raced, classed and gendered subjects, who may exist within and outside of the nation state. Mackenzie, Hills and George all demonstrate how

when implementing externally-funded DDR-SSR programs, external actors use myths as a discursive boundary construction practice. In Mackenzie's analysis, international actors construct race boundaries to distinguish between themselves (the 'civilisers') and the Sierra Leoneans in need of 'civilising'. Having reconfirmed the primacy of military men as security actors and (demilitarised) women as domestic workers, the DDR-SSR program transitions society from anarchy to domesticated order and repositions Liberians as belonging to the global neoliberal economic workforce (MacKenzie, 2012). However, we observe that boundary construction practices may also be used by local elites in power, or an emerging elite, to assert their sovereignty after conflict; reposition themselves as agentive subjects within the global neoliberal economic order, and secure ownership of the nation-building process.

Yuval-Davis's theory of the politics of belonging furthers understanding of how gender-inclusive DDR-SSR initiatives may be governed by a logic which privileges masculinity (or a group of masculinities) and secures the hegemony of a particular group of men within the post-rupture gender order. When programs support the establishment of a masculine logic in less overt ways, they are likely to produce different forms of gender order compared to instances where programs are explicitly misogynistic or fail to consider gender at all. As we demonstrate, the RPF's masculine logic explicitly evokes contemporary myths about gender equality as a necessary component of order and peace, while enforcing oppressive intimacies of dominance and subordination through regulating and disciplining martial bodies. The RPF-led government achieves this by mobilising gendered myths about precolonial, colonial, pre-1994 and post-1994 Rwandan society to depict the military as either an enabler or disrupter of successive state-building projects. Yet the RPF also appropriates imported gender myths that reflect the cosmopolitan values of externally-funded DDR-SSR programs.

Case study: DDR-SSR in Rwanda

Timescales of rupture and reconstruction

State-sponsored genocide took place between April and June 1994, four years into a civil war between the armed political movement, the RPF (comprising predominantly Tutsi refugees from Uganda, Tanzania, Zaire and Burundi) and the Mouvement Republican National pour la Democratie et le Developpement (MRND) government, and within a year of the signing of the UN-negotiated Arusha Peace Accords by both parties to the conflict. As has been well documented, the politics of belonging was central to establishing a vision for a pure Hutu nation state. Hutu extremist elements of the MRND government and the political party the Coalition pour la Défense de la République (CDR) used political indoctrination to militarise men, women and children to commit or support genocide against the target groups – Tutsi and moderate/pro-democratic Hutu, who were dehumanised, alienated and categorised as enemies of the state (Holmes, 2008).

The civil war ended when the RPF took Kigali on 4 July 1994 and a state of emergency was declared. Since the RPF were the victors of the civil war, their military wing, the Rwanda Patriotic Army (RPA) took the role of national defence force. The task of repatriating two million Hutus refugees from Zaire and Tanzania included reintegrating former ex-FAR soldiers who had remobilised and were posing a security threat. Thus, the DDR-SSR program became an integral part of the locally-owned peace process.

With funding from UN Development Programme (UNDP), the UK, Netherlands, and Germany, the interim government (originally comprising RPF and pro-democratic opposition parties to Habyarimana's MRND government) established the Rwanda Demobilisation and Reintegration Commission (RDRC) in July 1997. As per the 1993 Arusha peace agreement, the Committee demobilised and reintegrated ex-combatants from the RPA, ex-FAR and

FDLR into Rwandan communities, and established a multi-ethnic national defence force (Wilén, 2012: 1329). From 2002, Rwanda joined the World Bank funded Multi-Country Demobilisation and Reintegration Programme (MRDP), providing a shared regional framework for financing the peaceful integration of ex-combatants from nine central African states between 2002 and 2009 (Verwimp and Verpoorten, 2004: 44). Over three phases, the RDRC's DDR program demobilised around 60,000 ex-combatants, of which some 400 were women (Farr, 2004) and the RPA downsized from 80,000 soldiers at its peak in 2002 to 35,000 in 2009 (Wilén, 2012: 1329). The RDRC incorporated a gender perspective into the national DDR process by ensuring women's needs were accommodated in demobilisation centres; developing community-level counselling activities for women; providing gender-awareness training for staff and monitoring the impact of the DDR program on women (Farr, 2004: 3).

In 2002 the Rwanda Patriotic Army was renamed the Rwanda Defence Force (RDF). In 2007 the RDF and UNIFEM (now UN Women) established a gender desk to integrate a gender perspective into the SSR component of the program (Holmes, 2014; Holmes, 2018; Holmes, 2019). The goals of the harmonised DDR-SSR program were to demilitarise citizens and former combatants; transform military culture to serve the civilian nation state, and provide the structural conditions for enduring peace.

The RPF's imaginative/discursive project

Promoting contemporary myths about Rwanda's independence, leadership and ownership of post-rupture state-building has been integral to constructing the imaginative/discursive project of Rwanda's DDR-SSR program. This boundary construction practice emphasises the primacy of Rwandan agency in 're-civilising' Rwandan society after genocide and war, but rejects the neocolonising intentions of externally implemented peacebuilding initiatives

observed by MacKenzie, Hills and George. Partnerships with international donors are necessary, but must not jeopardise the RPF-government's vision to transition Rwanda into a modern, middle-income state. A senior leader in the Rwanda National Police (RNP) and member of the RPF elite who had fought with the RPA during the civil war explained:

> We like partnerships, but we prefer partnerships that are reliable, partnerships that are predictable… Partners who are going to dictate to us what to do? We don't want those. But those partners who look at our strategic priorities and they focus on those – those partners are our friends. Rwanda has already created a roadmap for its future. If you go to the Ministry of Economic Planning, you will find a chart. What are Rwanda's strategic priorities for the next five years? They are all there. And you will find what Rwanda can afford to provide with those resources. On the same chart, you will find where Rwanda has gaps and only those partnerships who can fill those gaps are welcome. Those are the partners we want.[1]

Rejecting the colonial imaginary of the African un-civilised subject, the RPF constructs a 'post-rupture subjecthood' to portray Rwandans (but more specifically the new elite group in power) as civilised, enlightened beings, existing on a higher plane of consciousness. RPF elites, who also self-identify as survivors, frequently talk about developing a maturity, a sensitivity or awareness after having experienced war and genocide. When asked where Rwandans acquired their 'culture of creating results', the RNP senior leader explained, while emphasising his desire to belong to the Rwanda's new elite group:

> You have heard of fatal accidents where people die. Survivors of those fatal accidents, they become very alert – more alert than anyone else who have not had that experience….1994 was such an experience for us and anyone who has survied that

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[1] Rwanda National Police senior leader, interview with author, 7 June 2014.

kind of situation is more alert than any other person on earth...We came from zero. Zero! And we don't want to go back. And the other thing is we have very, very clear-headed leadership up there and vision. So everyone is very alert.[2]

These contemporary myths are informed by the experience of being abandoned by the international community during the 1994 genocide, as well as the RPF's precarious position during their transition from rebel to ruler in the immediate aftermath of conflict. Yet the contemporary myth of Rwandan enlightenment also reflects the RPF's rejection of the 'idealised imaginary' of 'external actors as necessary saviours' in the post-rupture moment (MacKenzie, 2012: 3) and the myth that all peacebuilding interventions are 'rescue missions for regions that are too devastated and chaotic to initiate their own recovery' (Mackenzie, 2012: 61). Whereas externally-funded DDR-SSR programs emphasise the 'narrative beginnings' of (global) civilisation originating from Europe (Shilliam, 2012: 112), the RPF mobilises ancient Rwandan myths of origin to describe Rwanda's long history of civilisation, while at the same time promoting contemporary myths about Rwandan collective belonging to position the military and militarised soldier-citizens at the centre of developmental progress. As Perdeková et. al (2018) observe, and as Rwandan military historian and former RPF Brigadier General, Frank Rusagara wrote in 2009, the 'process of *Ku-aanda*' saw the expansion of the Rwandan state through military conquests, but also the alleged consolidation of Rwandans and 'Rwandaness' or 'Rwandicity', as 'lose and unstable' clan groups merged into military formations. The military institution is mythologised in Rusagara's discourse as 'an indepensable characteristic of the social order' in the face of 'predatory' strong neighbouring kingdoms (Rusagara, 2009: 9). It is through the process of *Ku-aanda* that

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[2] RNP senior leader, interview with the author, 7 June 2014.

'Rwanda found its "soul"' and 'each man and his male descendants had to belong to a particular military regiment which gave them their social identity' (Rusagara, 2009: xv).

According to Rusagara's interpretation of history, which he gleans from Rwandan customs, folklore and poetry, and the works of western historians such as Newbury and Newbury, Vansina, Lemarchand and Chretien, *Ku'aanda* ended during the era of colonial expansion (1894-1924) when the Belgians systematically eroded the Rwandan army. National self-determination, then, predated the anticolonial movements of the 1950s and 1960s, described by Rusagara as a period of neocolonialism whereupon Hutu were manipulated by German and Belgian colonisers, and later France (Rusagara, 2009: 122). Post-1994 state-building is imaged as a return to the 500-year old, pre-colonial process of *Ku'aanda*, and thus a return to an 'older normal' and militarised social order, in contrast to the normality of disruption and disorder defining the colonial and postcolonial eras. It is against this backdrop that oppositional militarised gender orders are constructed by RPF elites.

Constructing oppositional miliarised gender orders

Two oppositional militarised gender orders: the colonial gender order (dominant up until independence in 1959) and the Hutu extremist gender order, which the RPF argues prevailed immediately prior to and during the genocide, are discursively constructed and rejected by the RPF. In Rusagara's historical account, the military masculinities of the Colonial army, the *Force Publique* and the Hutu extremist-controlled Forces Armées Rwandaises (FAR) are governed by a transgressive, hyper-masculine logic. Having invaded Rwanda in 1896, the *Force Publique*, which later became 'an army of occupation' and police force tasked with maintaining public safety in Rwanda, imported brutality including raping women, stealing livestock and destroying crops. Significantly, Rwandans and Burundians

were 'never recruited to form any part of the *Force Publique*', described as comprising only foreign men from Congo and West and East Africa led by white Europeans (Rusagara, 2009: 79). Later, Belgian colonialists used as a boundary construction practice a system called *Pignet*, which assessed body sizes to determine whether men were fit enough to join the *Garde Territoriale du Rwanda.* This system 'favoured the short and stocky "Hutu" masculine construct to the exclusion of the taller and slender "Tutsi". 'Huti-nising' the force paved the way for the establishment of a new postcolonial Rwandan army in the 1960s, funded and trained by the Belgians and France (Rusagara, 2009: 123). This early Rwandan military force was recruited from Northern Rwanda, a region and people that historically 'were associated with violence and "brutality" (Rusagara, 2009: 158). Thus, Rusagara recounts a singular narrative trajectory in which barbaric violence prevails for 100 years, until the end of the 1994 genocide.

In contrast, the older, pre-colonial army is mythologised as disciplined and governed by 'civilised' gendered codes of war. Since 'killing women and children in war was considered taboo and extreme recklessness', any episodes of SGBV committed by Rwandan soldiers evidence the erosion of national military strength and increasing colonial encroachment (Rusagara, 2009: 16). Here, Rusagara engages in what MacKenzie and Foster term 'masculinity nostalgia', a 'longing for bygone times, or for a set of relationships and experiences associated with the past', and a process that often 'mythologises peace as a time of patriarchal power, authority and gender certainty' (MacKenzie and Foster, 2017: 208). Transgressive, barbaric violence which breaks traditional Rwandan militarised social codes of conduct is considered a colonial invention, and later a neocolonial intervention via French military influence during Habyarimana's 27-year dictatorship. The western myth that Rwandans transgressed to primordial violence during the civil war and genocide is dispelled,

although the RPF do not reject another western (cosmopolitan) myth embedded in external DDR-SSR initiatives that Rwandans transgressed and are in need of being 're-civilised.'

Downplaying RPA violence during the civil war and emphasising Hutu extremist state-sponsored 'genocide as transgression' (Burnet, 2012; Stone, 2004), state-owned narratives about the political climate leading up to 1994 perpetuate the myth of colonial and imperial disorder. Genocide is narrativised as dependent on the homogenous Hutu community committing brutal, transgressive forms of violence, including SGBV on their male and female victims (Taylor, 1999), during an 'apocalyptic, orgiastic' moment of killing (Stone, 2004: 47-8). All Rwandans – whether Tutsi and Hutu survivors who experienced or were forced to commit transgressive violence including 'deviant' sexual acts on their loved ones, or perpetrators who raped, killed, or were complicit in other ways – broke traditional Rwandan societal codes of conduct (Taylor, 1999) and introduced gender uncertainty. These acts created new problematic masculinities and femininities, especially for those Tutsi, Hutu Twa and mixed-ethnicity men who were raped or were forced to engage in taboo sexual acts with relatives. These masculinities are seldom publicly acknowledged by the ruling elite. Asked whether many male survivors had experienced conflict-related sexual violence , a senior Gender Desk representative and major, who had joined the RPA in Uganda in the early 1990s, remarked that they 'had no statistics on men and boys raped during the genocide – it is not in our culture to talk about men and boys being raped, but we know that it happened.[3]

Post-rupture militarised masculinities

Due to the breadth of experiences of conflict both in Rwanda and the East of Congo, Rwanda's DDR-SSR program constructs a new Rwandan military masculinity that is relevant to Tutsi survivors, ex-RPA and ex-FAR soldiers and ex-militia men alike. To achieve this,

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[3] RDF gender desk representative, interview with the author, 4 June 2014.

the RPF appropriates western cosmopolitan myths centering on the 'good male soldier' and the 'female peacebuilder' and draws on mythic constructions of Rwandan heteronormative militarised masculinity and femininity. However, since contemporary myth-creation is historically and contextually grounded, the RPF re-constitutes myths of origin and belonging to fit their interpretation of Rwanda's past as a reflection of Rwanda's present and future trajectory. The new militarised masculinity, identified as the morally virtuous soldier-citizen, embodies dialectically opposed attributes to those of the dangerous, volatile, hyper-masculine Colonial soldier and Hutu extremist, which in RDF discourse are the only visible, problematic masculinities. This construction is compatible with the ideal of the cosmopolitan soldier, thereby enabling the RPF-government to demonstrate they are delivering on several objectives expected of their military assistance funders, including developing a disciplined, 'rapidly deployable' military force 'trained for both combat roles and peacemaking roles' to defend human security (Kronsell, 2012: 77).

Training, depicted as central to *Ku'uanda*, marks the 'return to the older order' of precolonial militarised society. For Rusagara:

> 'socialisation in pre-colonial Rwanda took place in the traditional military schools, *amatorero,* where everyone's discipline and good conduct, bravery and patriotism, honesty and integrity, moral behaviour and even their mannerisms were moulded to make not only a good soldier, but an *impfura y'u Rwanda* [gentleman of Rwanda]' (Rusagara, 2009: 91-2).

During contemporary reintegration training exercises RDF senior officers employ the same discourse as Rusagara to posit that military personnel should be of high moral standing. Reflecting Kagame's repeated call for Rwandans to 'restore their dignity', 'good' male soldiers are disciplined, controlled, professional and loyal to the modern Rwandan state. They

live by the three RDF values of 'honour, patriotism and valour', whereby honour constitutes 'personal integrity', 'strong moral character or strength and adherence to ethical principals' (RDF, 2014a). In a module on military ethics, trainers emphasise that RDF soldiers are morally virtuous, regardless of their involvement in civil war and genocide, and promote the rationale for ongoing socialisation:

> 'Our people are really good, the Rwandans. Very few of the RDF personnel misbehave, but a lot of members of the RDF need a little help through teaching ethics and values. It does not make any difference about the background. If we have faith in them and encourage them…then the RDF will be excellent.' (RDF, 2014)

A key distinction between the morally virtuous RDF soldier-citizen and the deviant, transgressive Colonial soldier/Hutu extremist soldier/militiaman is the RPF's rejection of the misogynist male warrior identity. This can be observed in the RDF's institutional discourse on Women, Peace and Security (WPS). At face value the RDF embraces all priorities of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and its related resolutions, including gendering SSR and enabling a gender equitable distribution of power within the institution. Rwanda's first 1325 National Action Plan (2010-2012), developed during the third stage of the DDR-SSR program, details how state security apparatus should protect women and girls and facilitate women's participation in peacebuilding and conflict prevention. A key priority for the Gender Desk's is combatting SGBV, domestic violence and child violence. Evoking the RPF-sanctioned victim v. perpetrator narrative, a second RDF all-rank training manual suggests that socialising male soldiers to reject the abusive treatment of women is a crucial step towards reconciling and unifying the Rwandan population and curtailing genocide ideology. According to the training manual, SGBV 'creates the violated (Victims) and violators (Perpetrators)' and is 'a cause of insecurity, mistrust and fear amongst the population, which is a key recipe for conflict and attendant insecurity in society'. (RDF, 2014)

Williamson observes that Tutsi men who had experienced a crisis of masculinity during the genocide, 'expressed an aversion to violence in any form' (Williamson, 2016: 43). This crisis of masculinity was dismissed by longstanding RDF military personnel who had served in the RPA during the civil war. However, a 34-year old male captain with a degree in sociology observed that 'gender violations can happen to men and women, but a huge percentage of women are violated'. The captain conceived that 'gender violation [was] not a civilised situation', suggesting that RDF soldiers who commit SGBV engage in regressive violence seen during the 1994 genocide.[4] In exercising discipline and strength of mind (as opposed to just bodily strength), male RDF soldiers are expected to control their sexual urges. While male military personnel talked about being disciplined and respecting women, two relatively senior, married male soldiers responsible for arranging interviews each sent one research assistant flirty text messages, asking if she would like to meet for a drink, thereby disrupting the narrative of discipline promoted in official RDF discourse and in elite interviews.

Constructing the female security actor

Contrary to instances where women are excluded from formal DDR-SSR programs and renegaded to the domestic sphere, the RPF value women as security actors. RPF elites carefully construct a discourse explaining women's integration, again drawing on myths of origin to create new myths about women's role in post-rupture recovery. For Rusagara, women worked alongside the military in 'logistics and support, such as evacuating the dead and casualties and performing various war rituals' in pre-colonial times (Rusagara, 2009: xv). In February 2014, the Minister of Gender mobilised the myth of Ndabaga, a young woman who disguised herself as a man, join the military and exceled as a soldier (before being

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[4] RDF military personnel 49, interview with the author, 5 June 2014.

discovered). Combining this with two contemporary myths the minister explains why women were valued as soldiers in Rwandan society: first for their role in the RPF liberation movement, and second when operating as security actors in the aftermath of genocide. Only one serving soldier interviewed recalled the myth of Ndabaga. Like the Minister of Gender, she was a long-standing member of the RPF elite who had joined the RPA as a 15-year old child soldier alongside her older brothers and parents. However, younger women who joined the military during Phases II and III of the DDR-SSR program, spoke of an alternative contemporary myth circulating within Rwandan society (but not discussed by senior soldiers) that female soldiers were prostitutes or mistresses of male soldiers.

To reconcile these tensions, the RPF draw on the cosmopolitan myth of 'woman as peacebuilder', and downplay women's capacity to be assertive, violent, aggressive, defensive, or hypersexual and Female soldiers are discouraged from exhibiting or utilising their sexuality for personal gain (a trait previously associated with Tutsi women in Hutu extremist propaganda). Instead, women should perform the role of cleansed, professional Rwandan female soldier, adhering to older, traditional conceptualisations of Rwandan femininity (Holmes, 2014; 2018). These conceptualisations suggest that 'civilised' women are naturally meek, modest and unassertive. Pre-war idealised conceptualisations of Hutu extremist masculinity and femininity and Tutsi male/female deviance are reconceptualised as perversions of a monolithic modern Rwandan culture. To belong in the post-rupture society and in the RDF, male and female soldier-citizens must reject the dangerous, hyper-masculine logic of former colonisers and Hutu extremists.

The RPF's masculine logic further plays out by explicitly evoking the cosmopolitan ideal that gender equality is a necessary component of order and peace. Research participants of all ranks and ages referred to gender equality and women's empowerment to draw a temporal distinction between 'old' and 'new' Rwanda. Unlike Rusagara, serving soldiers did

not distinguish between pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial eras. 'Traditional' pre-1994 culture was considered to have been deeply misogynistic and characterised by unjust social relations that oppressed and marginalised ethnic minorities and women across social, economic and political spheres. Rwanda's 'modern culture' was progressive, rejected overt discrimination based on gender, ethnicity and disability, and embraced women's empowerment. Publicly, female soldiers were no longer perceived to be weak but equal partners in a professionalised military workforce. One male Lt. Colonel and former RPA soldier observed that it was 'in [the RDF's] doctrine to operate with women'.[5] An eighteen-year old female private reflected:

> 'Before the genocide, there were no women in the army, but then they saw that women are able and they started to increase the number [of women]'. Women used to think that it is hard and tiring work for men only, but now they see it as a job like any other.'[6]

During interviews, there were instances when male soldiers disrupted the official discourse, challenging the idea that women were equal soldiers. When asked about whether the most senior woman in the RDF, Colonel Rose Kabuye (now retired) was an example of a women excelling at soldiering, a major who had served in RPA in the early 1990s engaged in his own boundary construction practice, highlighting men's physical strength to other and exclude female soldiers:

> Yes, she marched with us [during the civil war]. But she was not marching with us *every day.* But for us, we used to march everyday – 24 hours a day. Women…can work in the government, being politician, she can. She can be a minister…But in the

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[5] RDF military personnel 51, interview with the author, 5 June 2014.
[6] RDF military personnel 15, interview with the author, 12 June 2015.

military, we like them, and we want them to be in the military. But you can't say that you can have 50 per cent women in the military when you go for an operation.

Despite instances where male and female soldiers disrupt the RPF's imaginative/discursive project, the kinds of distinction present in RPF discourse, elite interviews and in the discourse of female soldiers who demonstrate a strong desire to belong in the RDF, mirror in many ways the narratives of progressivism and gender equality evident in the literature on the reformation of militarised masculinity in the global north (Duncanson, 2015). However, the fact that the cosmopolitan soldier identity constructed in Rwanda's DDR-SSR program rejects overt misogyny and SGBV, and that women are valued as security actors should not be mistaken for the rejection of a masculine logic.

Stabilising the post-rupture gender order

Having constructed 'modern', post-rupture militarised masculinities and femininities, the RPF proceeds to reposition social categories to construct the post-rupture gender order and cement the dominance of the new hegemonic masculinity. Several trends are observed which show how the imaginative/discursive project of Rwanda's gender-inclusive DDR-SSR program supports this process, and four types of boundary construction practice are identified: purging deviant masculinities and femininities; purifying 'tainted' men and women; purging 'special needs' groups from the military; and re-establishing Rwanda's conjugal order.

Purging and purifying

In Phase I (1994-1997) all ex-combatants were required to attend the military *ingando* re-education camps (Mgbako, 2005). Male and female ex-combatants who supported the Hutu-extremist hyper-masculine logic were considered particularly transgressive and targeted

for purification and/or purging. Participants received lectures on Rwandan history, politics and society from senior members of the RPF and undertook an intense program of activity including endurance training designed to re-socialise them into new Rwandan society, or into the RDF (Perdeková, 2015). Hutu extremist ex-FAR and FDLR partook in three-month long *ingando* programs, while RPF ex-combatants and ex-FAR soldiers who were not implicated in the genocide and were considered less transgressive, were enrolled in two-week courses (Mgbako, 2005). Like other outcast groups including prostitutes and street children, demobilised male and female ex-combatants were socialised to behave as good citizens and men were retrained and reinserted into traditionally masculine jobs such as mechanics and carpentry (Turner, 2014: 421).

Modern *Ingando* camps were an initiative developed by the RPF in the early 1990s to indoctrinate and militarise Tutsi refugees (Mgbako, 2005; Perdeková, 2015). Contemporary Rwandan *ingando* camps have enabled the ruling elite to reform the armed forces to fit the new social imaginary of a cleansed, professionalised notion of militarised masculinity. Ex-combatants were portrayed as being infected by their 'wickedness' (Turner, 2014: 423), while the *ingando* camps constitute the physical cantonment of fallen men and women quarantined from civilised society until they have been cleansed. The *ingando* camps therefore offered redemption to the 'barbaric' and 'wicked' Hutu ex-combatants, in the form of new performances of civic nationalist masculinity and femininity, and a solution to the harms caused by 'fallen' militarised masculinity during the 1990s. Paradoxically, similar boundary construction practices were used by *génocidaires* in the early 1990s when they attempted to purge society of those who threatened their hegemony. Yet rather than killing men and women whose gender performance challenges the post-rupture gender order, via the DDR-SSR program, they are contained and silenced, remade and offered less powerful places in society.

Purging special needs groups

Focus on 'special needs groups' has emerged as a key component of gender-mainstreaming in DDR processes (Piedmont, 2012; UNDDRRC, 2017) and refers to any person affiliated with armed groups who is not an able-bodied adult man, including emotionally traumatised men, women, child soldiers, the elderly, or disabled. In Rwanda, 8,400 disabled servicemen were demobilised, provided basic financial support, vocational training and medical rehabilitation to encourage their successful reintegration into civilian society. (Edmonds, et al., 2009). The initiative has been touted internationally as a successful example of local ownership and delivery, and has been emulated by other countries in the Great Lakes region (Edmonds, et al., 2009). However, this component of the program, in conjunction with the removal of 'tainted' and fallen men, removes the corrupting presence of those who fail to live up to the myth of the strong, moral, male soldier-citizen, protector of a reformed, dignified and civilised Rwanda.

Re-establishing the conjugal order

The suppression of perceived subversive sexual practices linked to genocide, and the return to older (mythic) respectable heteronormative models of masculinity and femininity establishes the post-rupture conjugal order, which the RPF attempts to stabilise through the policing of RDF soldiers' sexuality and intimate relationships. Such policing is evident in the RDF's prohibition of any form of sexual deviancy including polygamy, SGBV, intimate partner violence, extra-marital affairs, and in the institutionalisation of heterosexual marriage as the appropriate site of sexual liaisons in accordance with Rwanda's 2003 Constitution. Yet the policing of sexuality and intimate relationships mirrors the neocolonial logic of externally implemented DDR/SSR initiatives examined by MacKenzie and George. Via the Gender Desk, the RDF disciplines soldiers who engage in any kind of SGBV, in line with the RDF's gender security policies and offers a marriage counselling service (Holmes, 2014; 2018).

University-educated young male soldiers and reservists who are members of the RPF elite experience particularly high levels of surveillance, as one interviewee explained. Like older generation RPF soldiers, these modern-day *intore* are considered to have 'advanced consciousness in society' and a 'special responsibility' to act as role models. As in ancient times, their status is achieved through engaging in militarised rites of passage, including *Intorero* schooling, considered to be 'advanced *ingando*' (Purdeková, 2015, 188). Yet as potential future leaders, *intore* are 'promoted as an elite group' of males (Turner, 2014: 425-6). These RDF soldiers and reservists are told they will lose their career prospects and social status if they marry the wrong kind of woman, notably women who are not Rwandan, or who exhibit traits that may threaten to destabilise the post-rupture gender order.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people are another othered social category, despite being afforded legal status in Rwanda's 2003 Constitution. Like the RPF-government, the RDF maintains a '"strategic silence" around LGBT rights' (Haste and Gatete, 2015: 6-7), decree sexual orientation a 'private matter', and have not challenged the stigma LGBT soldiers experience. Refusing to recognise gender fluidity and substituting deviant masculinities and femininities which informed the Colonial and Hutu extremist hyper-masculine logics, the DDR-SSR program institutionalises a new model of sexual politics reifying heterosexual couplings and the monogamous family unit within the RDF via. This mirrors MacKenzie's findings, though in Rwanda, it is not a lack of attention to gender inclusivity that has resulted in oppressive trends. Rather, the approach taken to gender integration and prevention of sexual violence has reinforced the RPF's oppressive masculine logic.

Conclusion

Including a gender perspective in all aspects of DDR-SSR programs was formalised as an integral element of the Women, Peace and Security agenda in UNSCR 1325 (2000). It is the possibility of change during the post-rupture moment which WPS policy initiatives have looked to harness to advance gender equality and secure stable peace. Analysis of Rwanda's DDR-SSR program presents a significant conceptual problem for the WPS agenda, which has been widely adopted in feminist work on peacebuilding. We have made the case that although the military component of Rwanda's DDR-SSR program has incorporated a gender perspective by emphasising gendered security needs, integrating women into the armed forces, and consciously rejecting hyper-masculine militarised masculinities, the program has a distinct masculine logic which establishes the post-rupture society's gender order.

Attempts to reforge the conjugal order can be observed in the regulation of sexualities in the RDF; in the policing of sexual intimacies in the private lives of RDF military personnel and reservists, and in the hierarchical arrangement of gender on which the DDR-SSR program has relied. Yet, the modern (civilised) Rwandan male soldier-citizen is not expected to exhibit the kind of overt violent transgression that characterised (uncivilised) militarised masculinities during the genocide and colonial rule. Stable and less overtly violent masculinities are promoted in the gender-inclusive DDR-SSR program, though the RDF has retained the oppressive qualities of militarised masculinity. This does not suggest a successful delivery of WPS objectives, nor the emergence of new, softer militarised masculinities that feminists such as Duncanson (2015) or Bevan and MacKenzie (2012) have considered in other instances.

In light of these findings, some key understandings of demilitarisation put forward in WPS policy and activism are challenged, notably the assumption that including a gender perspective in DDR-SSR programs will lead to a more gender equitable distribution of power

within a new national defence force or will facilitate the demilitarisation of the post-rupture society. Rather, our research concurs with Purdeková et.al (2018) who suggests that the RPF-government's DDR-SSR program is serving to remilitarise Rwandan society.

By conducting a gendered analysis, we highlight how remilitarisation trends occur at the micro-level and in intimate and private spaces. Our analysis also emphasises the need to take a more structural approach to the analysis of the impact of gender-sensitive DDR-SSR programs. If the gendered structural impacts of these programs are not accounted for, then demilitarisation risks following a masculine logic which reinforces the hegemony of the most powerful men in society, while groups of men and women whose potential threatens their existing powerbase are contained and controlled. Without addressing the less overtly destructive components of militarised masculinity within DDR-SSR programs, the WPS agenda risks reinforcing the kind of oppressive gender order which has emerged in Rwanda, rather than challenging patriarchal gender formations per se.

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