

Sexualized War Violence: Subversive Victimization and Ignored Perpetrators¹

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Introduction

Since the genocide in Rwanda in 1994 and the wars in the former Yugoslavia during the 1990s, sexualized war violence as a research field has been growing by the day. Most of these studies focus exclusively on the experiences of female victims. This remains an important focus to make visible many girls' and women's war experiences and thereby assuring proper assistance and effective empowerment measures for them in the aftermath of violence and war. Still, the many boys and men who also carry the experience of having been subjected to sexualized war violence are rarely at the centre of attention, or even mentioned, in the literature. Likewise, there is a noticeable absence of thorough research on perpetrators of sexualized war violence. Combined, this leaves us with a grand narrative on sexualized war violence that is based only on the experiences of one category of affected individuals, where male victims are silenced and perpetrators largely ignored.

In this chapter, I will address this gap in current research and focus on male victims, perpetrators and masculinity constructs at play in the direct perpetration of sexualized war violence. Based on a combination of perspectives from masculinity research and research on sexual war violence, I will examine court files from the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) where male sexual violence is among the addressed offences. I will answer the following question: 'How can the interaction between masculinity, sexuality and militarism help increase our understanding of sexualized war violence and its perpetrators?' More specifically, I will look at how these constructs come into play when the victims are male rather than female. The focus of attention might help bring this conversation forward by providing a more inclusive and comprehensive understanding of the complex phenomenon that sexualized war violence is. Through its focus on sexualized war violence as a gendered experience

¹ I am grateful to Inger Skjelsbæk, Liv Finstad, Anne Bitsch, Kjersti Lohne, participants at the Challenging traditions: Victims – perpetrators perspectives panel session at the *41st Annual Conference of the European Group for the Study of Deviance and Social Control* 2013, and the editors and co-authors of this volume for their perceptive comments on earlier versions of this chapter.

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for both perpetrators and victims this chapter addresses both the question of crime as a marker of masculinity and the subversive victimization and emasculation of men and their collectives through the sexualized violence directed at them.

I will continue this chapter with a brief overview of the research field. Then follows a section on the conceptual framework and a presentation of the empirical material and the methods that this study is based upon. In the analysis I apply an idealized typology of perpetrators of sexualized war violence as a framework for illustrating and analysing sexualized war violence directed at male victims. The analysis shows how militarized masculinity constructs can play an important role in an increased understanding of sexualized war violence directed at men, and thereby also in the justifications and rationalizations surrounding this violence.

Current Status of Research Field

Supranational and international criminology focusing on international criminal prosecution and conflict-related atrocity crimes is gaining momentum (see, e.g., Maier-Katkin et al. 2009, Smeulers and Haveman 2008, Hagan et al. 2005). Sexualized war violence, however, has only gained a very limited amount of attention from criminologists, and the overall absence of gender analysis in this emerging criminological subfield is apparent. On the other hand, sexualized war violence as a research field focuses exclusively on this particular type of violence, and primarily – at times unilaterally – analyses its causes and consequences from a gendered perspective. Accordingly, the fields of supranational criminology and sexualized war violence research develop as separate scholarships. I suggest that there is a great potential for mutual benefits in a combination of perspectives, scholarly interaction and debate between the two. Thus, a brief introduction to the research field that sexualized war violence has become might be useful for the reader.

Sexualized violence has been part of warfare to a varying extent and in different forms throughout history. Yet research in the field is a relatively recent undertaking. Susan Brownmiller marked the beginning of a new field of research with her 1975 book *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape*. This research field grew exponentially after the Rwandan genocide and the wars of the former Yugoslavia during the 1990s. As the research area has expanded and its epistemology developed from a rather essentialist outset,² a wide variety of publications have addressed causes and consequences of sexualized war violence on various levels. Most of these focus on female victims. However, more and more legal and scholarly definitions of sexual violence are being articulated in

² According to Brownmiller (1975: 5, 62) rape is ‘nothing more or less than a conscious process of intimidation by which *all men* keep *all women* in a state of fear’, and a victim of war rape ‘is chosen *not* because she is representative of the enemy, but precisely because she is a woman, and *therefore* an enemy’ (emphasis in original). For a detailed account of the different epistemological schools in this research area, see Skjelsbæk (2001).

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such a way that the term is no longer restricted to the act of vaginal rape. Sexual violence is thus understood as a broad repertoire of sexual offences that also includes anal rape, forced fellatio, being forced to rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, sterilization³ and mutilation, forced masturbation and forced nudity. Notably, both male and female victims can be subjected to these acts and both male and female perpetrators can commit them. Still, to date, only a limited number of publications have engaged in thorough examinations of perpetrators' rationales (see e.g., Cohen 2008, Baaz and Stern 2010, Price 2001) or addressed male victims at length (see Sivakumaran 2007, Jones 2006, Zarkov 2001). From a criminological perspective, there are two particularly interesting aspects of these lacunas in research, besides the gravity of the crimes themselves. First, contrary to criminologists' emphasis on deviance in the understanding of peacetime sexual violence and crime in general, perpetrators' participation in mass violence during war – institutionalized, widespread or normalized sexual violence included – might not be deviant at all (for more on this, see Drumbl 2000: 236, Smeulers, 2008). Second, male victims radically counter the idealized and, indeed, feminized understandings of victims and victimhood, as the analysis below will elaborate on.

A particularly dominant perspective within research on sexualized war violence has been the 'continuum of violence'-perspective rooted in feminist research (and feminist movements) on violence against women as such. According to the continuum-perspective, sexualized violence during conflict is primarily understood as a radicalization of the everyday violence and domination women are subjected to in peacetime (see, e.g., Edwards 2004). Without rejecting the continuum of violence-perspective altogether, emerging quantitative and comparative data analyses suggest that it needs to share explanatory leverage with other perspectives. Notably, in her cross-conflict comparative analysis, Cohen (2008: 18) finds that gender inequality in society at large is a poor predictor of sexualized war violence, should war erupt. It is further argued that no other factor, such as ethnic or religious fractionalizations, contraband funding, or the presence of mass killings, alone can account for the prevalence of sexualized war violence (Cohen 2008), or for the variation in which militaries engage in it (Wood 2006). Wood (2006: 326f) holds that male chauvinist attitudes within armed groups and institutions cannot account for the variation in levels of sexualized violence committed by groups during war and between conflicts, as she does not find the attitudes of soldiers to vary significantly between groups and correspondingly to the levels of violence. These studies remind us that sexualized war violence is a complex phenomenon that requires a multi-factorial understanding where the weighting of different variables may differ during and between conflicts.

³ Forced sterilization in conflict settings usually refers to castration and other forms of sexual mutilation. See Sivakumaran 2007: 265. For more on (forced) sterilization and castration practices in peacetime contexts, see Myhre and Thomassen's contribution to this volume in Chapter 5.

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When I ask how conceptions of gender and masculinities can help understand the perpetration of sexualized war violence directed against men in the following analysis, it is with this preceding discussion in mind. There is no one-dimensional or universal explanation of sexualized war violence. It is in the combined contributions from a variety of disciplines and perspectives, and in the nuances, complexities and even the contradictions these produce that sexualized war violence is best understood. Thus, it is not my intention to present militarized masculinity as such as an all-purpose explanation, but to discuss the explanatory values and contributions of masculinity theories, as one approach (out of many) that can shed light on and increase our understanding of this phenomenon.

Militarized Masculinity as Main Conceptual Framework

Arguably, war-induced militarized masculinity is key to the understanding of sexual war violence in general, but also – as the analysis will show – in the understanding of male sexual violence in particular. As with gender more broadly, but also ethnicity and sexuality, I understand the meaning of masculinity to be discursively created and contextually situated. The meanings and importance of gender, ethnicity and sexuality are subjected to continuous, contextual negotiation within and between individuals, groups and larger society (see e.g., West and Zimmerman 1987). It follows that I do not talk about masculine traits or masculinity as something inherently male, but as values and characteristics often ascribed to and associated with manhood or manliness. These may vary and also take on different importance in different contexts and times (see also Lorentzen 2011: 112, Ugelvik 2008, Connell 2005: 35). Emphasizing that the meanings of masculinity are constructed and always in process does not mean that they are less real (West and Fenstermaker 1995). Nor does it preclude that their constitution in a given context might be a tenacious or clingy ideal to transform. When I describe a war induced militarized masculinity I refer to ideals that reflect dominating meanings and aspirations associated with appropriate masculinity by members of armed groups during war. These values may vary between armed forces, battalions, units and individual members, through time and across and within conflicts. However, according to both feminist researchers and military sociologists there are some masculinity ideals associated with military training that are likely to be prevalent within armed forces and particularly during conflict (Higate 2003, Goldstein 2001, Enloe 1993). In the preface to war and during wars, societies in general and militaries in particular typically induce men to fight by the use of normative prescriptions of masculinity, involving responsibility to both protect and attack (see also Ericsson 2011). Military training simultaneously emphasizes physical strength, camaraderie – or loyalty to peers, a competitive orientation and obedience. In and by themselves these traits are both necessary and positive in relation to the tasks and extreme situation the members are preparing for (see Goldstein 2001: 252, Enloe 1993: 52). In addition, military training is argued to

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emphasize heterosexual performance and ‘foster attitudes that are demeaning to women, through training, violent and sexist language, images, jokes, drill chants, songs, etc’ (Breines et al. 2000: 14). In such a military context femininity and homosexuality epitomize the very idea of unmanliness, and thus symbolize what masculinity is not (see also Cockburn and Zarkov 2002: 13).

In wartime and in the run-up to war, the concept of ethnicity – equally understood as socially constructed – and the polarization of in-group/out-group categorization along ethnic lines can become a valuable tool in the hands of leaders as a way to mobilize and induce members of an ethnically collective to fight (Wolff 2006: 33). In conflicts such as the one in Bosnia, where ethnic and/or religious affiliations are separated along the conflict lines, these constructs may also become important defining characteristics of what is considered to be ‘true’ manhood within armed groups. The combination of these traits and values add up to what I denote as militarized masculinity.

War Induced Militarized Masculinity and Sexual Violence

Masculinity is primarily measured ‘in relationship to what is unmanly’ (Lorentzen 2011: 114–115). Ugelvik (2008: 70) argues that masculinity can thereby be demonstrated or proven by reducing the relative masculinity of others. In a context where masculinity matters, an individual’s adherence to masculinity norms and his (or her) manliness may be unstable or directly challenged and needs to be demonstrated time and again. The risk of failing tests of manhood and the associated shame that this entails is key to understanding the ‘man-making process’ (Goldstein 2001: 269).

It is often recognized that masculinity’s importance in a military context is higher than in society as such, as are the risks and costs of failing to demonstrate manliness. During war this relative importance and risk take on even greater significance and may bring masculinity ideals to their extreme (e.g., Jones 2006). In such an environment, sexual violence against men may constitute an effective way to emasculate the victim and symbolically deprive his – ethnically or religiously defined – enemy collective of its masculinity. As in peacetime, being a victim is considered feminine per se.⁴ Thus male victims of sexual violence are subjected to a symbolic feminization process. Many of the antonyms of the defining ideals of militarized masculinity listed above – inability to protect and attack, physical weakness and homosexual performance – can also be ascribed to victims through male sexual violence. Following Ugelvik, the perpetrator through the emasculation of his victim simultaneously demonstrates his inversely proportional and superior masculinity vis-à-vis that of his victim, and also vis-à-vis peers who might otherwise challenge it. In the analysis to come I will apply this theory on a specific empirical material detailing sexualized violence committed against men.

4 See, e.g., Veronica Burcar’s contribution to this book in Chapter 6.

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Empirical Basis

This chapter is based on an empirical material related to the wars in the former Yugoslavia. This is the conflict where male sexual violence has been best documented and most thoroughly investigated, first and foremost by the UN Commission of Experts and through the ICTY (see also Sivakumaran 2007: 265). Out of the 28 final convictions at the ICTY that pertain to sexualized war violence in whole or part, at least seven cases detail sexual violence against men.⁵ Four of these cases include the accused in the direct participation in sexualized offences:⁶ Ranko Češić, Češić (IT-95–10/1),⁷ was convicted for forcing male detainees to perform fellatio on each other. Esad Landžo, Mucić et al. (IT-96–21), was convicted for having laced a burning fuse cord against the genitals of a detainee. The court also established that Landžo forced male detainees to perform fellatio on each other. Milan Simić, Simić (IT-95–99/2),⁸ was convicted for genital beatings and for being present during an interrogation where his peers credibly threatened a male detainee that they would cut off his penis. Finally, Stevan Todorović, Todorović (IT-95–99/1),⁹ was convicted for forcing six male detainees to perform fellatio on each other. It is the court documents related to these court proceedings that form the basis of this analysis. These are freely available at the ICTY website,¹⁰ and I also include some verbatim quotes drawn from these cases in the analysis. Thus, the analysis relates to a particular conflict but is also focused on a particular subset of cases that have been part of the court proceedings at the ICTY. It is important

5 According to the ICTY overview of Crimes of sexual violence at the Tribunal's website (available at <http://www.icty.org/sid/10586>, last accessed 14 October 2013) 29 individuals have been convicted for crimes of sexual violence as of mid-2013. However, one case is under appeal, thus I do not include that here.

6 The other three cases do not include direct participation in the perpetration of sexualized violence on the part of the convicted, but relates to superior and command responsibility in different forms and descriptions of the factual circumstances (*Tadić* (IT-94–1), *Simić* et al. (IT-95–9) and *Stakić* (IT-97–24)). The male sexual violence offences that witnesses described during the proceedings related to these cases are castration (*Tadić*), forcing a male prisoner to rape a detained girl (*Tadić*), rape by forcing a police truncheon in the anus of a detainee (*Simić* et al.), forced fellatio and simulation of fellatio – including forced nudity (*Simić* et al., *Stakić*), and genital beatings and violence (*Simić* et al.).

7 The first time the transcript from a specific court case and a specific date occurs, I will also add a web link in a footnote as I do here: Češić Judgment summary 11 March 2004, available at http://www.icty.org/x/cases/cesic/tjug/en/040311_ei_summary_en.pdf [last accessed 14 October 2013].

8 Simić Judgment summary 17 October 2002, available at http://www.icty.org/x/cases/milan_simic/tjug/en/021017_SimicMilan_summary_en.pdf [last accessed 14 October 13].

9 Todorović Judgment summary 31 July 2001, available at http://www.icty.org/x/cases/todorovic/tjug/en/010731_Todorovic_summary_en.pdf [last accessed 14 October 13].

10 <http://www.icty.org/action/cases/4> [last accessed 14 October 2013].

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to note that these cases comprise a highly selected group of perpetrators both in relation to the conflict in Bosnia and in general. It follows that the analysis is sometimes speculative given the limited empirical material at hand. Yet its purpose is not to offer any generalizable explanation of sexualized war violence directed against men as such, but to highlight and present possible contributing constructs and factors that may help increase our understanding of the phenomenon.

Češić, Simić and Todorović were convicted upon guilty plea arrangements which rendered witnesses' and survivors' testimonies in court unnecessary. Landžo did not enter into a plea arrangement. Thus, many witnesses and survivors were heard during his trial, which has produced an extensive transcript material with more details on the offences he committed and the contexts they were part of than any of the other cases. Thus, Esad Landžo's case is a particularly rich case and it serves as an example throughout the analysis.

In the analysis I present an idealized typology of perpetrators of sexual war violence as a framework for an increased understanding of sexualized war violence directed at male victims. This typology primarily rests on a previous analysis of court transcripts from all cases involving a final conviction on sexual violence at the ICTY (Houge 2008). The similarities between these cases justified the construction of five typical narratives or explanations of perpetrators' participation in sexual war violence that repeatedly manifested themselves in witnesses', victims' and perpetrators' accounts. The five typical narratives are broad enough to capture all variants of explanations available in the ICTY court files and specific enough to make a meaningful distinction between them. The categorization reflects my reading of discursive practices that are relevant to the understanding of sexualized war violence in this material. To facilitate an intelligible presentation of and discussion around these narratives, I have formulated them as five idealized perpetrator categories. *Soldier idealists* refer to soldiers who appear to have committed sexualized violence because they were ordered to do so, and who rationalized their actions accordingly. *Competitors* refer to perpetrators who appear to have raped or committed sexual violence for competitive reasons, while *conformists* capture perpetrators who did not want to or dare to stand out from the behaviour of peers. *Survivors* refer to soldiers or combatants who claim to have sexually violated others because they were threatened to do so, and *opportunists* include those who seemingly raped because war offered the opportunity to do so.

This typology and the narratives it represents are intended to be understood as analytical pegs according to which related variants of arguments on soldier perpetrators' participation in sexualized war violence are thematically clustered. As will become evident, the categories are overlapping. Esad Landžo's case is particularly interesting in this regard, as it illustrates several of the idealized perpetrator categories. Thereby his case also emphasizes that there is no one-to-one relationship between individual perpetrators and these categories. Using Landžo's case to introduce the typology and sexualized war violence directed at men allows me to pay attention to some of the particularities of one specific case,

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while I can also draw parallels across cases and between perpetrators when the available transcripts from other cases allow me to.

Analysis

[Mr Đorđić]: One day Zenga ... told me and my brother: 'Get up'. We got up and ... [h]e ordered us to take off our trousers. First my brother took off his and then he forced me to kneel down in front of my brother and to put into my mouth his genitals. So then he – we changed and while I was holding my brother's sexual organ, he forced us to do that for about two, or three minutes. Then he had to – then I had to get up and my brother had to kneel down in front of me and do the same thing, and all prisoners saw this. It was done in front of all the prisoners.

[Prosecution]: Did Mr. Landžo say anything while doing this to you and your brother?

[Mr Đorđić]: Landžo said to me in front of all the prisoners: 'See what the Serbian brothers and Chetniks are doing. That's what they would do to me too'. Those were the words of Zenga Landžo in front of all the prisoners. (*Mucić et al.* 07.07.1997:4360–4361).¹¹

Competitor

Bosniak Esad Landžo, nicknamed Zenga, was prosecuted in the *Mucić et al.*-case before the ICTY for his various crimes committed against Serb detainees in the Bosnian run Čelebići camp. He served as a guard there and was 19 years old at the time. Landžo's numerous offences committed against Mr Mirko Đorđić included the sexualized violence reproduced in the extract above.¹² The public display in front of the other prisoners probably constituted a vital part of the purpose of the offence. A possible interpretation of the offence is that it was intended to humiliate the victims and ridicule their masculinity by forcing them to take part in a public, homosexual performance. By forcing two adult males to perform fellatio on each other, Landžo demonstrated the utter lack of power of the brother victims, of the detainees that were forced to watch the assault and symbolically also the victims and witnesses' ethnic collective. When Landžo commented 'See what the

11 <http://www.icty.org/x/cases/mucic/trans/en/970707ED.htm> [last accessed 14 October 2013].

12 The sexualized violence illustrated here was not part of the indictment, and thus not part of the sentencing judgment. However, the sexualized violence was detailed in testimonies and referred to in the judgment as factual findings (*Mucić et al.* Judgment 16 November 1998: 436, available at http://www.icty.org/x/cases/mucic/tjug/en/981116_judg_en.pdf [last accessed 14 October 2013]).

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Serbian brothers and *Chetniks*¹³ are doing. That's what they would do to me too' he constructed the offence in ethnic terms – reducing his victims to their ethnic identity, while blaming the victims for his abuse. Criminologists might recognize this as 'denial of the victim' – one of Sykes and Matza's (1957: 668) techniques of neutralization. The offence clearly resembles the sexual violence that Ranko Češić was convicted for. As a member of the Bosnian Serb Territorial Defence Češić forced two male detainees to perform fellatio on each other. The offence took place in public and at gunpoint. These victims were also brothers. It is not uncommon to read about fathers and brothers who are forced to rape their female relatives in publications on sexualized war violence. It is argued that the male family members are forced to rape 'their' women to demonstrate their inability to protect them. Not only do these men fail to protect the women in their family, they are also the ones that inflict the pain and humiliation onto those they are supposed to protect. Through that, they fail to live up to central masculine ideals. Often, the men are killed afterwards with their family members as witnesses. It is likely that the social cohesion of the family is seriously disrupted also if they get to live. When men are forced to perform fellatio on each other, the victims are not only forced to degrade and humiliate each other and take part in their own victimization process – which in and by itself is a feminized process. They are also subjected to a public homosexualizing process, thus they doubly fail the test of manhood. By attacking the trust and cohesion among family members through sexualized violence, perpetrators destabilize what is often among the most stable and fundamental cornerstones in the lives of individual members of a society, and also in society as such. When the offences are committed in public, as all the fellatio cases described here, the perpetrators communicate to witnesses that there are no social codes or norms they are not prepared to break.

In *Tadić*, the first case brought before the ICTY, survivors of the Serb-run Omarska camp described in detail how they were forced by guards to castrate a fellow detainee, FH.¹⁴ First, they were told to lick his naked bottom, suck his penis and hit and bite his testicles. In itself, these were deeply humiliating offences for all the victims. Still, they were not allowed to stop until one of them had bitten off one of FH's testicles. This was all done in front of a group of uniformed men. The two men who were forced to sexually assault and mutilate FH were then told to leave the hangar in which the offence took place. FH was already severely beaten when this happened and was never seen again (*Tadić* Judgment 07.05.1997,

13 The word 'Chetnik' derives from the word 'Četa' (Serb for 'military company'). During the Second World War, nationalist, royalist Serbs formed an army that went under the name 'Četnici'. During and after the wars in the former Yugoslavia the term 'Chetnik' is used as an ethnic insult against Serbs. However, some Serb and Bosnian Serb paramilitary organizations and groups took pride in the term during the wars in the former Yugoslavia, and called themselves Chetniks (see Mønnesland 2006).

14 As FH did not testify himself I have chosen not to use his full name in these reproductions.

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para. 206).¹⁵ With clear parallels to Landžo, the guards around them yelled ‘Look at them, mother, what they are doing to each other. Can you think what they would do to us if they are doing to each other this?’ (*Tadić* 24.07.1996: 4040).¹⁶ Mr Hodžić, a witness to this violence, said that to be present, hear the screams and orders, was the worst thing that ever happened to him in the camp and in his life (*Tadić* 25.07.1996: 4155).¹⁷ The demonstration of powerlessness also affected the rest of the prisoners.

The ordering of fellatio or genital beatings are in themselves manifestations of the perpetrators’ power contrasted with the humiliated, emasculated appearance of the victims. The offences that Landžo, Češić, Simić and Todorović were convicted of, and the infamous castration detailed in *Tadić* above, were committed in the public display of the perpetrators’ own laughing peers. Sexist and homophobic offences may be intended to bolster the masculine self-identity of the entire group of guards and constructed as social glue to build group cohesion. It might also simultaneously function as a means for the perpetrators to demonstrate or establish their personal masculinity status vis-à-vis that of their peers.

Male victims to sexualized war violence are also victimized by being forced to rape women and girls. The reproduction below is in the words of a witness to such an offence in the Serb-run Omarska camp:

[O]n the table put in the corridor rape was prepared of a young girl, and she was being raped by ... MS,¹⁸ an engineer, a Muslim, a respected citizen, a man of my age. They stripped her naked, that girl. They stripped him, forced him to undress, beat him. They wanted him to rape her and he was begging, imploring, saying, ‘She could be my child.’ I am really sorry for the coarse language, but then said to try to do it with a finger. He did that and it hurt her. She was screaming. He then gave it up completely. They beat him. He had a weak heart. In the morning ... I saw MS’s body. (*Tadić* 23.05.1996:1281)¹⁹

When MS, terrified and under threat, raped the girl with his finger, he failed to live up to masculine ideals of courage and ability to protect.

The violence described in the examples above can be understood as a constructed *competition*, corresponding to the idealized perpetrator category of

15 <http://www.icty.org/x/cases/tadic/tjug/en/tad-ts70507JT2-e.pdf> [last accessed 14 October 2013].

16 <http://www.icty.org/x/cases/tadic/trans/en/960724IT.htm> [last accessed 14 October 2013].

17 <http://www.icty.org/x/cases/tadic/trans/en/960725ed.htm> [last accessed 14 October 2013].

18 As MS did not testify himself I have chosen not to use his full name in these reproductions.

19 <http://www.icty.org/x/cases/tadic/trans/en/960523IT.htm> [last accessed 14 October 13].

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competitors. As perpetrators demonstrated the weakness and powerlessness of their victims, they simultaneously demonstrated their conversely proportional masculine and ethnic power. That way, the offences were constructed as a competition in ethnic masculinity, with the ethnic collective of guards on one side, and the homosexualized, emasculated detainees on the other. While serving as a guard in Čelebići, Esad Landžo on one occasion travelled to a nearby town where he came across the corpses of police officers and civilians that had been killed by Serbs. The penises were cut off of the civilians' corpses. Witnessing this made him upset and angry, and when he came back to Čelebići he severely beat one of the prisoners (*Mucić et al.* 28.07.1998: 15087).²⁰ It is possible that Landžo understood the mutilation of his peers as a symbol of an attempt to emasculate his entire ethnic group, upon which he felt a need to restore his ethnic manhood and reclaim his and his ethnic peers' masculine powers. This would contextualize the sexual character of the violence he made several Čelebići-prisoners suffer, and further contextualize this violence as a form of perceived justified revenge. It would also correspond to the narrative of sexual war violence constructed as competition between ethnic masculinities.

Soldier Idealist

While working as a bus boy at a local restaurant at the early phase of war and prior to serving as a guard in Čelebići, Landžo said he was told stories of raped women and girls 'day in and day out' as Bosnian Muslim refugees passed the restaurant (*Mucić et al.* 27.07.1998: 15020).²¹ About his enlisting, he stated:

I am sure that also many other young people wanted to contribute to the defense of our country. It was our duty as the inhabitant citizens of Bosnia-Herzegovina. We didn't want our mothers and sisters to happen [*sic*] what happened to these refugees. (*Mucić et al.* 27.07.1998:15024)

Landžo drew on a concept of protective masculinity, involving men's responsibility to protect 'their' women. Landžo further testified that his commander told him and his peers several times that it was not their job 'to think, but to do and to execute what is being ordered' (*Mucić et al.* 28.07.1998: 15087). He was also told that the prisoners constituted a threat to his survival. Reflecting on his role in Čelebići, Landžo testified:

I ... attempted to be a perfect soldier ... I did believe that I have to execute each and every order, each and every task without complaint, as was said in

²⁰ <http://www.icty.org/x/cases/mucic/trans/en/980728ed.htm> [last accessed 14 October 2013].

²¹ <http://www.icty.org/x/cases/mucic/trans/en/980727it.htm> [last accessed 14 October 2013].

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the beginning. And that is how I understood it. The term of perfect soldier, namely to behave in accordance with the orders and obligations. The perfect soldier is the one who executes all the orders. I tried to keep to that throughout the war ... I really wished to execute the orders of my superiors. (*Mucić et al.* 28.07.1998:15087)

This part of Landžo's testimony corresponds to the idealized perpetrator category of *soldier idealists*. Orders and obedience to authority is a central feature of this category. In his book *On Killing* David Grossman (2009) develops a framework for understanding what factors make a soldier able to kill in wartime. He finds that the most crucial factor for firing a weapon and for killing is 'being told to fire'. Commenting on the disturbing results of the electroshock-experiment of Stanley Milgram in the 1960s – in which the research participants' willingness and compulsion to obey authority is demonstrated – Grossman (2009: 142–143) rhetorically asks: 'If this kind of obedience could be obtained with a lab coat and a clipboard by an authority figure who has been known for only a few minutes, how much more would the trappings of military authority and months of bonding accomplish?' Although Grossman focuses on the act of killing, not sexualized war violence, his point could be relevant when sexualized war violence is committed on orders from superiors. Landžo testified that it was his Deputy Commander who ordered him to force the Đorđić brothers to perform fellatio on each other, and that his superior was present during this and other sexualized offences (*Mucić et al.* 28.07.1998: 15080–15082). He stated that it was his commander who taught him and forced him to round slow-burning fuses around male detainees' bodies, putting one end inside the anus and the other around the penis of the detainees before setting it on fire. This offence was also committed in front of other prisoners. (*Mucić et al.* 07.07.1997: 4358–59, 28.07.1998: 15080–15082). Notably, the Trial Chamber did not accept Landžo's attribution of blame upwards in the command hierarchy (*Mucić et al.* Judgment 16.11.1998: 355–357).

Survivor

Landžo claimed that he was told he would be executed if he did not comply with orders. 'I carried out all the orders out of fear and also because I believed I had to carry, execute them,' he stated (*Mucić et al.* 28.07.1998: 15087–15088). His defence counsel claimed he was a victim of circumstance, forced to do as he did. The defence counsel even went as far as to claim that '[t]he true victim of the aggression in this case is Esad Landžo' (*Mucić et al.* 31.08.1998: 15536). Here, they framed Landžo's participation in war violence as something he needed to do to survive. Relating back to Sykes and Matza's (1957: 667) neutralization techniques, this can correspond to 'denial of responsibility'. Claiming he was threatened to do as he did, Landžo applied a well-known narrative about involuntary rapists that are prevalent in other reports on sexualized war violence from Bosnia. The Trial Chamber did not believe Landžo. Yet his case serves as an introduction to the

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survivor category of idealized perpetrators. The survivors are individuals who are forced by peers or superiors to rape or sexually violate, often accompanied with challenges to their ethnic and masculine performance and accompanied with threats on the survivors' lives. As such, it blurs the line between physical perpetrators and victims. In the previous examples, we have seen how perpetrators framed the violence they subjected their victims to as its own justification, as it 'proved' what the victims would do to them if given the chance. This way, the violence was constructed as a justified revenge or pre-emptive strike, as a symbolic defence against the potential victimization of the perpetrator's in-group. The survivor-argument does not engender any kind of (potential) victimization of members of the perpetrators' in-group to justify violence against members of the out-group. To the contrary, it involves a masculinity ideal of the in-group for which violence need not be justified, but is seen as a virtue per se. Stiglmayer's (1994: 156–159) presentation and recount of the experiences of the Bosnian Serb former soldier Cvijetin Maksimović offers an illustrative example. According to Maksimović, he was forcibly recruited by Serbian soldiers during the war and forced to kill a large number of male Bosnian prisoners at the Luka camp in Northern Bosnia. As he objected, the Serbian soldiers told him 'If you don't butcher them, we'll butcher you'. As he went on to kill the prisoners that his peers brought before him for that purpose, his fellow soldiers asked him 'What kind of a Serb are you?' and told him that he 'wasn't a real Chetnik, not a real butcher'. Then they staged multiple rapes of women as a way for Maksimović to prove that he (at least?) was 'a real man'. According to his own account, Maksimović was very afraid as he raped the girls and women brought before him. Both Maksimović's ethnic and masculine performance was challenged. The soldiers concluded that Maksimović was not a real Serb – he could not be – because he had proven he was not a real man (see also Houge 2008).²² The survivor category resembles the competitor category where victims are forced to rape or sexually violate each other. But where the competitor examples involve forcing prisoners to sexually violate each other, the survivor category refers to offences where peers are forced or threatened to commit sexual violence against prisoners or detainees. Thus, where the competitor category sees sexualized war violence primarily as a constructed competition between ethnically defined collective masculinities, the survivor category frames the sexual violence as a means through which individuals can or must demonstrate their ethnic masculinity vis-à-vis that of their peers within the same ethnic collective.

22 The transcripts of the court proceedings in the *Kunarac et al.* case before the ICTY offer a witness testimony by a rape victim that involves another reference to peer pressure similar to the examples provided by Maksimović in Stiglmayer. After being raped by six soldiers, the perpetrators threw onto her a 15- or 16-year-old unwilling boy and told him to rape her (*Kunarac et al.* 02 May 2000: 2680–2681, <http://www.un.org/icty/transe23/000502ed.htm> [last accessed 14 June 2008]). The transcripts for that date are no longer available at the ICTY website).

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... or Opportunist?

It is worth noting that Landžo never questioned the crimes he committed. In conversation with a psychiatric expert, Landžo said he inflicted ‘pain and suffering on the prisoners for two reasons, first, because he was ordered to do so and, secondly, because he was bored and frustrated.’ (Mucić et al. Judgment 16.11.1998: 404) Landžo further said that he ‘remembers seeing people being beaten and injured and he remembers how somehow that seemed normal because in war one learns not to see others as human beings, but as animals that are always potentially dangerous’. (Mucić et al. 15.07.1998: 14531–14532)²³ Landžo’s comments illustrate how the war environment and repeated violence can alter an individual’s perceptions of what is normal and thereby what is tolerable and acceptable behaviour. Česić and Todorović also made special reference to the war context in their guilty plea statements that are telling in this regard:

Looking back in time after so much time has elapsed since I committed those crimes, there is an enormous difference between my state of mind now and then. Now I would never do the things I did then, the things that took place in a time of euphoria, a time when all human dignity was abolished. (Česić’s statement, reproduced in the ICTY Case information sheet 2004)²⁴

War is hell ... Artillery shells were falling almost daily on the town ... Frequent deaths, the wounding of soldiers, civilians, and children occurred. Attending the funerals of my relatives, friends, and acquaintances was frequent ... [E]vents followed one another at a great speed, and at times, it was very difficult to act wisely. A great deal of fear, panic, fatigue, stress, and at times alcohol, too, influenced my actions. Under those circumstances, I made erroneous decisions and I committed erroneous acts. At the time, I didn’t have sufficient courage or determination to prevent volunteers and local criminals from committing evil ... and for this I feel great remorse. (Todorović’s statement, Todorović 04.05.2001:59–60)²⁵

Fear, stress and propaganda about the enemy others in combination with a war induced, ethnicized and militarized masculinity ideal built on any combination of heterosexism, misogyny and xenophobia may fuel dehumanization processes and render sexualized war violence an option. In the judgment of Landžo, the Trial Chamber concluded that he acted upon his own free will. The Trial Chamber

23 <http://icty.org/x/cases/mucic/trans/en/980715IT.htm> [last accessed 14 October 2013].

24 http://www.icty.org/x/cases/cesic/cis/en/cis_cesic.pdf [last accessed 14 October 2013].

25 <http://www.icty.org/x/cases/todorovic/trans/en/010504ED.htm> [last accessed 14 October 2013].

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further held that the evidence ‘indicates that he took some perverse pleasure in the infliction of great pain and humiliation.’ (*Mucić et al.* Judgment 16.11.1998: 438) The Court thus implied that the war and Landžo’s position offered him with the opportunity to commit violence, corresponding to an *opportunist* category of idealized perpetrators. The opportunity category includes arguments about perpetrators who appear to have raped or committed sexualized violence because war created the opportunity to do so. It not only involves perpetrators who were inclined to commit violence prior to the war, but also suggests that war itself creates the ability to consider situations as opportunities to exercise violence, and other men, women and children as objects for that purpose.

There are many particularities in Landžo’s case that separate him and his violence from the particularities relevant to other perpetrators and cases involving male victims. In the end, the judges took Landžo’s young age, his ‘immature and fragile personality’ and ‘personality traits’,²⁶ the fact that ‘he had no proper military training’ and ‘the harsh environment of the armed conflict’ into consideration before the sentencing judgment (*Mucić et al.* Judgment 16.11.1998: 438). His was the only case where these factors were considered mitigating in sentencing.²⁷ The analysis of his case thus serves the purpose of acknowledging some of the particularities related to one specific offender. By identifying four out of the five explanations related to the idealized perpetrator categories in Landžo’s case alone, this examination shows that the categories are overlapping and should not be used to reduce any one individual perpetrator nor aetiology to any one such category or related narrative. That would be reductionist and ignorant to case specific complexities. By including references and similar examples from other cases brought before the ICTY and elsewhere that involved sexualized war violence directed at men, I have illustrated the transferability of the idealized perpetrator categorization without disregarding the importance of each case’s uniqueness. In short, we have seen that competitor arguments involve notions of ethnic masculinity and xenophobia, soldier idealist-arguments involve obedience, survivor-arguments involve ethnicized masculinity, threats and potential peer pressure, and opportunity-arguments relate to war induced dehumanization processes. For each individual perpetrator, different combinations and weightings of these arguments may apply at different times.

Male vs Female Victims

The perpetrator typology was originally developed based on an empirical material that encompassed a majority of female victims (Houge 2008). At least three differences stand out when the sexualized war violence is separated according to

²⁶ See also *Mucić et al.* Judgment 16 November 1998: 402–404 and testimonies of consulted psychiatrists in court transcripts in *Mucić et al.* 15 July 1998.

²⁷ Landžo was sentenced to 15 years imprisonment, and granted early release in 2006.

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the victims' gender. First, there is a difference in the level of physical proximity between the perpetrator and victim. In this empirical material, perpetrators did not use their own penises to penetrate their victims, as perpetrators did when women were victims. Rather, the sexual violence amounted to forced fellatio between male prisoners, male prisoners forced to rape female prisoners and sexual torture and mutilation. According to Jones (2006: 461) this is representative of most male rapes in the context of war. However, I would caution against applying this as a general rule as that would ostracize male victims with such experiences. The second factor is an extension of the first and relates to the sexual or sexualized aspect of the offences. With female victims it often appears as if perpetrators also considered rape and sexualized violence as a sexual opportunity, often referred to as 'lust rape' in the literature (see, e.g., Baaz and Stern, 2009, Solhjell, 2009). In 2001, Skjelsbæk (2001: 212) said that within the research community on sexualized war violence '[t]here is no consensus as to whether sexual violence is sex with a violent manifestation or whether it is the opposite, i.e. violence with a sexual manifestation.' The present analysis suggests that the latter allegation most accurately captures the violence directed at men in this empirical material. We have seen sexualized war violence directed at men as a way to torture, mutilate and humiliate victims and their ethnically defined collectives. The public display of the violence supports this interpretation. It is somewhat harder to see the violence as induced primarily by sexual desire. The 'perverse pleasure' that the judges related to Landžo's offences included all forms of violence and torture that he committed, not only the sexualized offences. Thus, if his offences were related to desire, it seems more logical to understand it as a desire to inflict suffering as such. The sexualized expression of the offences addressed here may be attributed to a desire to inflict the most deleterious humiliation. However, it might be a combination of both. Third, I have not found clear examples of the idealized perpetrator category of *conformists* in the ICTY court cases concerning sexualized war violence committed against men. The conformist-explanation was present in cases that concerned women. The argument associated with the conformist category is that there is a powerful pressure upon soldiers and others who participate in armed forces to conform to the practices and expectations of the group, even when these do not involve the morally right things to do and also in the absence of orders or threats (thereby different from the survivor category). Perpetrators have reported that both their masculinity and their group solidarity were questioned if they hesitated to rape. Grossman also stresses the meaning of peer pressure. In a military wartime setting, a soldier is part of a group consisting of comrades on which he depends for survival. Group cohesion and loyalty is paramount (see also Cohen 2008). In such an environment, Grossman argues (2009: 149), 'the individual is not a killer ... the group is'. Grossman's argument may also apply on crimes of sexual violence. If the group shames a member by questioning his manliness, it is an effective way of pressuring him into violent actions, perhaps especially sexualized violence when sexuality is so closely linked with masculinity.

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These apparent differences aside, what is transferable across cases with male and female victims and across the idealized perpetrator categories is that hostile and aggressive notions of ethnicity, masculinity and sexuality merge and intertwine. The combination of homophobic and xenophobic attitudes that we have seen did not develop in a vacuum, and cannot be separated from the armed groups and institutions, or from the wider conflict setting, that the perpetrators operated within. Masculine powers were sexualized and ethnicized, and victims were targeted not only as men and women, but also as the ethnically defined enemy that perpetrators measured up against.

Concluding Remarks

In a much-cited article on perpetrators of sexualized war violence, Lisa Price (2001: 223) contended, quoting Tompkins, that '[r]ape is a gender-motivated crime; a one-way street where the risk factor is being female'. She continued: '[w]hatever national, ethnic or geopolitical forces may be at play, the base-line reality of sexual violence in war is that *women* are raped by *men* ...' (emphasis in original) Based on the analysis above, and the presence and prevalence of sexual violence directed against men in so many conflicts,²⁸ it is obvious that Price's base-line reality was itself gender-specific. Concluding the chapter, I will underline its main contributions. First and foremost, it aims at contributing to a better understanding of sexualized war violence directed at men. This focus serves as a reminder that there are more stories about sexualized war violence than the ones that are repeated and reproduced in most publications on the subject. The idealized perpetrator typology and the concept of a militarized masculinity provide a framework through which sexualized war violence can be better understood. The emphasis on a war induced militarized masculinity includes lessons from the continuum perspective, while it also recognizes the specific influence of war on masculinity ideals. Although this chapter does not offer any explanations of sexualized war violence directed at men as such, militarized masculinity is likely to be a contributing factor in its perpetration. It should be clear that sexualized war violence against men is no less of a gendered crime than sexualized war violence committed against women. That said, it would be hazardous to reduce a complex causal relationship to one factor alone. If anything, the case of Esad Landžo illustrates the need for an intersectional approach to understand and address sexualized war violence. Such an approach needs to include gender and its interaction with notions of e.g., ethnicity and sexuality as I have done here. But it could also pay attention to the relevance of dehumanization processes, propaganda measures, obedience, group cohesion –and loyalty, and the relationship between sexualized war violence and other forms of violence committed during war. Although this violence may not be sexualized, it may very well be gendered in similar ways. It follows that there is a

28 See, e.g., Sivakumaran 2007.

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multitude of possible entry points for future criminological studies of sexualized war violence.

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