

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation:

POLITICAL ELITE COMPETITION AND
THE POST-CONFLICT STATUS OF WOMEN

Taylor Vincent, Doctor of Philosophy, 2025

Dissertation directed by:

Professor, Kathleen Gallagher Cunningham,
Government and Politics

My book project research focuses on the status of women in post-conflict societies. Despite substantial international and local efforts to improve the status of women after civil wars end, we see enormous variation in outcomes – with great strides for women’s rights and gender equality made in states such as Liberia and Sierra Leone, and tepid progress in Chad and Sri Lanka, for example. I propose a novel theory of the role of electoral politics plays in explaining variation in gender equality outcomes in states emerging from civil conflict. I argue that electoral legislative competition amongst political elites, often a mix of incumbent and new actors mobilized by conflict, drives their incentives to address gender equality reform in post-conflict contexts as they seek to win the votes of the electorate, particularly women. To evaluate this argument, I first use cross-national, observational data to establish a relationship between elite political competition and women’s rights. I find a positive and statistically significant relationship between increased electoral competition and higher women’s rights levels, even when accounting for alternative mechanisms of supporting women’s rights. I complement this analysis by examining how elite competition has impacted expansion of inheritance rights and citizenship rights with a qualitative case study of Nepal. In this chapter, I use qualitative evidence including fieldwork interviews, newspapers, academic articles, and policy reports to demonstrate my causal theory to demonstrate how political competition has been a significant mechanism for securing gender equality outcomes in Nepal. Lastly, I examine barriers to the expansion of gender equality outcomes in post-conflict states by examining cases when domestic political competition incentivizes elites to shirk accountability for gender-based war crimes during post-conflict politics. Overall, my book project addresses a critical challenge for global politics today and speaks to literature on gender and security, post-war political reform and politics more broadly.

POLITICAL ELITE COMPETITION AND THE POST-CONFLICT STATUS OF
WOMEN

by

Taylor Vincent

Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Maryland, College Park, in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
2025

Advisory Committee:

Professor Kathleen Gallagher Cunningham, Chair
Professor Kyle Beardsley
Professor Johanna Birnir
Professor Calvert Jones
Professor Michael Woldemariam

© Copyright by
Taylor Vincent
2025

Dedication

To my mother, Terrie, whose sacrifices, love, and support has made this journey possible. I love you forever.

Acknowledgements

As I write these acknowledgements, words cannot begin to express how grateful I am for everyone that has helped me conclude this journey at the University of Maryland.

I am eternally grateful to my dissertation committee Drs. Kathleen Gallagher Cunningham, Kyle Beardsley, Johanna Birnir, Calvert Jones, and Michael Woldemariam. I have learned so much about myself, research, and how to be a better scholar from each of you. Thank you for constantly challenging and supporting me. To my chair, Kathleen, without your endless encouragement and faith in me, I would have never made it across the finish line. Thank you for constantly reading new drafts, offering positive comments when I needed them most, and always showing me pictures of Loki when I needed them. I hope to pass on your kindness and mentorship skills to my future students. To Kyle, without your support and encouragement I never would have made it through my master's program at Duke University nor through my doctorate. Thank you for always being kind, supportive, and willing to speak with me over the years. To Johanna, your sharp insight has challenged me to be a better and more inquisitive scholar. To Calvert, your feedback has been invaluable to make me think more critically about my work and opened my mind to new directions for my work. To Mike, your kindness and support to think more deeply about my case study was invaluable.

I am incredibly grateful for my colleagues that have shown me kindness and support at every step of my journey. Thank you to every academic who has read my work, provided comments, been a kind face at various conferences and workshops. To Dr. Sabrina Karim, for including me in the Gender and Security Sector Lab at Cornell and opening doors for me that I

did not know could exist for me. Your brilliance and mentorship have improved my research, allowed me to travel the world, and meet new friends and colleagues. Your support has helped me reach new heights in my career; I hope to pay your generosity, faith in young scholars and mentorship forward. I cannot wait to continue working together in the future. To Dr. Priscilla Torres thank you for your endless support, willingness to answer my questions, and shared love for the Arctic Monkeys. Without your friendship, I would have never made it through graduate school; I am forever indebted to you.

I have received so much support from all parts of my life in graduate school. My family have always been my biggest cheerleaders in life, and I am so thankful to have these supportive people in my life. To my mother, Terrie Vincent, thank you for being there for every high and low in my life; I hope I have made you proud and I owe you everything. To my best friends – Aaron, Maddie, Michelle, and Saran – thank you all for being there for me; I love you all more than you know. To all my friends at Maryland, in particular, Tori, Lizzie, Brittany, Oja and Madie, thank you for the years of constant help, support, laughter, and love. I could not name all my colleagues and friends at Maryland, Duke, and beyond that have always been there to cheer me on, chat in the Grad Lab, and offer advice.

To my partner, Addo Mantey, you have my life better, funnier, and filled with love. Without your constant encouragement and corny jokes, I would not have been able to finish this dissertation. I am so thankful for you.

Table of Contents

Dedication	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Table of Contents	v
List of Tables	vii
List of Figures	viii
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Why Study Women’s Status after Civil War?	4
Women’s Grassroots Mobilization as Agents of Change	9
Gender Equality Efforts at the International-Level	14
Summary of Argument	18
Contributions and Implications	19
Plan for the Dissertation	21
Chapter 2: Advancing Women’s Status in Post-Conflict States	24
Elites in Postwar States	25
Post-Conflict Political Competition Mechanism	27
Countervailing Forces of Former Armed Actors	37
Chapter 3: Post-Conflict Legislative Competition and Women’s Rights	39
Dependent Variable	40
Independent Variable	42
Control Variables	44
Results	47
Robustness Checks	51
Additional Control Variables	58
Conclusion	63
Chapter 4: Political Competition on Gender Equality Outcomes in Postwar Nepal	65
Methodology	66
Structural Harm and Women’s Security	70
Dependent Variables	72
Independent Variable	77
Conflict in Nepal	79
Postwar Nepal	81
Women in Postwar Nepal	83
Inheritance Rights	88
Postwar Advances in Inheritance Rights	89
Discussion	93
Citizenship Rights	94
Intersectional Nature of Citizenship Rights in Postwar Nepal	94
Discussion	102
Alternative Mechanisms	103
Women’s Representation	103
International Aid	105
Gendered Beliefs and Stereotypes	107

Conclusion	108
Transitional Justice and Gender.....	111
A Gendered Role of Amnesties	113
Political Competition, Amnesties, and Sexual Violence	116
Northern Ireland’s Legacy and Reconciliation Bill	122
Cross-National Research Design	127
Independent Variables	128
Dependent Variables	131
Control Variables	132
Results	134
Amnesties and Gender Outcomes	137
Conclusion	147
Chapter 6: Conclusion.....	149
Summary of Findings.....	149
Policy Implications	150
Extensions of Theoretical Argument	151
Expanding to Non-Conflict Contexts.....	151
Expanding on Intersectional Identities.....	152
Patriarchal Backlash.....	152
Role of Rebel Governance	154
Appendices.....	156
Bibliography	181

List of Tables

Table 3.1: Illustrative Example of Women’s Rights Scores and Status.....	42
Table 3.2 VDEM Competition.....	48
Table 3.3: VDEM Competition-Lag Models	53
Table 3.4: Pearson’s Correlation Scores Across Measures of Independent Variables.....	56
Table 5.1: Political Competition and Post-Conflict Justice.....	135
Table 5.2: Post-Conflict Sexual Violence.....	138
Table 5.3: Post-Conflict Sexual Violence by Amnesty Type	
Table 5.4: Post-Conflict Mobilization and Amnesty	140
Table 5.5: Post-Conflict Justice and Amnesty	142
Table 5.6: Post-Conflict Representation and Amnesty	145

List of Figures

Figure 1.1: Women's CSO Participation Rates.....	12
Figure 3.1: Levels of Women's Rights 1990-2020.....	41
Figure 3.2: Global Rates of Political Competition in 2019.....	43
Figure 3.3: Women's Rights Coefficient Plot.....	50
Figure 3.4: Marginal Effect of Political Competition on Women's Rights	50
Figure 3.5: Interactive Effect of Women's CSO Participation (Top) and UN Intervention (Bottom) on Women's Rights	54
Figure 4.1 Level of Political Competition in Nepal 2006-2020.....	78
Figure 5.1: Histogram of Post-Conflict Justice.....	128
Figure 5.2 Bar Plot of Post-Conflict Justice Amnesties	130

Chapter 1: Introduction

International action surrounding women in conflict came to a head in the aftermath of human rights abuses against women and the activism of women seeking to end conflict following intense civil wars in the 1990s. After the United Nations (UN) 1995 Beijing World Conference on Women, the international community pivoted to acknowledging that women and girls were distinctly affected by conflict, and began prioritizing women's rights and inclusion in peace and security processes (Friedman 2003; Kreft 2017; Dulal 2020). The international community clamored around the notion that "women's rights are human rights," a call to arms largely attributed to then-First Lady Hillary Clinton. In the years that followed, there was a rise in initiatives aimed at addressing how women are disproportionately affected by conflict such as United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR) 1325 and 1820,¹ the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) Agenda, and the promulgation of National Action Plans (NAPs) by domestic governments - all of which demonstrate that gender equality issues have become a salient area of post-conflict politics. The experience of women in post-conflict Sierra Leone highlights both the successes and shortcomings in the promotion of women's status.

During Sierra Leone's high-intensity civil war from 1999 to 2002, fought primarily between the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and the government, women often bore the brunt of violence. Sexual violence, abduction, and "bush marriages"² were widespread throughout the

¹ UNSCR 1325 is the first UN resolution that establishes how conflict affects women and girls disproportionately, calls for armed actors to refrain from violating women's rights and wartime sexual violence, and affirms that women and girls be involved in conflict prevention, management, and resolution processes. UNSCR 1820 condemns sexual violence as a tool of war and declares sexual violence in conflict as a crime against humanity.

² Bush marriages are marriages, often coerced or forced, between civilian women and male rebel fighters. Women often became fighters within the RUF through this practice (Coulter 2011).

conflict, perpetrated largely by the RUF, despite the group's rhetoric about pursuing gender equality (Marks 2013). Women were not only victims of the conflict; many also became RUF soldiers and committed acts of violence, including rape, against civilians (Cohen 2013; Cullen 2020). Under the RUF, gender issues - such as sexual behavior - were heavily regulated through the group's power structures and the formal and informal laws of rebel governance (Marks 2014).

Outside of the fighting, women were active participants in the economic, social, and political life of the conflict period. Civilian women engaged in commercial trade to provide basic commodities - often working with rebels or operating within enemy territory – and frequently at great personal risk (Aning 1998). Women's groups contributed by developing micro-credit schemes for women, providing basic farming equipment, and organizing peace marches. Women were also involved in peacebuilding efforts through diplomatic negotiations. For example, the head of the RUF's women's section, Madam Kallon, was an effective negotiator who argued that the RUF's political stance could support rhetoric around economic improvement in Sierra Leone after the war (Aning 1998). However, women were not seriously involved in the Lome peace process in 1999, despite a clause in the peace agreement for women's role in the post-conflict reconstruction process.³

Women have made uneven gains in the postwar period. The failures of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) programs to adequately address women's needs are well documented (MacKenzie 2009; Cullen 2020). Women also faced sexual exploitation and abuse by UN peacekeepers. Despite the United Nations' norms on gender equality and the

³Sierra Leone.” 2025. 1325 National Action Plans (NAPs). <http://1325naps.peacewomen.org/index.php/sierra-leone/>.

mission's explicit mandate to protect civilians, the UN mission made little long-term effort to implement gender equality and women's empowerment programs (Nduka-Agwu 2009). In the post-conflict period, women in Sierra Leone continue to face systemic issues such as female genital mutilation, limited decision-making power within households, and low rates of land ownership (McFerson 2012). However, women have made some progress in advancing gender equality. They played a pivotal role in pressuring the military government to hold elections (Aning 1998). The establishment of the Special Court for Sierra Leone and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) enabled the prosecution of war crimes and human rights violations, providing a platform for women to testify about their experiences (Cullen 2020).⁴ Additionally, the Sierra Leone Police's Domestic Violence Unit was restructured into the Family Support Unit, with a mandate to investigate domestic violence—a model that later inspired police reform in post-conflict Liberia (Sesay and Suma 2009; Jingushi 2015). Several gender-focused laws were enacted in the post-conflict era, including legislation on anti-human trafficking, child rights, domestic violence, forced child marriage, and gender equality and empowerment (Akinsulure-Smith and Smith 2012; M'Cormack-Hale and Ibrahim 2023). Yet, despite these advancements in legal protections and access to justice, women in Sierra Leone continue to face significant challenges in achieving autonomy and freedom from harm. This illustrative case demonstrates that a rising tide does not rise all boats. While certain aspects of women's status can improve significantly after civil war, progress in other areas may lag behind - or even regress. This dissertation addresses this variation and seeks to answer a central question: why do we see variation in women's status after civil war?

⁴ Three out of seven commissioners for the TRC were women (Sesay and Suma 2009).

Why Study Women's Status after Civil War?

Post-conflict periods are times of social transformation, much like other critical political transitions such as decolonization, state independence, or revolution. As such, they present key opportunities for advancing women's status. Neatly summarizing the obstacles women face in postwar societies, (True 2012, 143) states, "Women remain a marginalized group in many post-conflict economies and societies despite the reality that they have become heads of households as a result of both the death or disappearances of their spouses and the economic austerity practices after war." She goes on to argue that understanding gender-based violence in post-conflict states requires looking beyond legal procedures and political institutions.

War has the potential to reshape women's experiences in ways that challenge entrenched gender hierarchies and traditional gender roles. In the aftermath of conflict, women can seize opportunities that may not have been available otherwise, using these moments to advance women's rights and broader empowerment efforts (Karam 2000; Fuest 2008; Anderson 2015; Tripp 2015; Kirby and Shepherd 2016; Hughes 2009; Chingono 2015; Berry and Rana 2019; Agerberg and Kreft 2020; Reid 2021; Yadav 2021). "The holding of peace talks, constitutional reform processes, and truth and reconciliation tribunals are all post-conflict opportunity structures through which women can assert their demands. Thus, where conflicts end with the government vanquishing a rebel force, there is little if any impetus for peace talks, hence less opportunities for women to assert their interests," (Tripp 2015, 19). (Webster, Chen and Beardsley 2019; Webster et al. 2020) argue that both inter-state and intra-state conflicts can disrupt social institutions through various macro-level mechanisms,⁵ creating opportunities for

⁵They posit several mechanisms including militarization, perceived threats of armed violence, demographic shifts, labor shifts, role shifts, and regime change.

positive shifts in gender and ethnic hierarchies over time. These shifts carry substantial implications for transformative change in the postwar period.

Moreover, a growing body of related literature—largely focused on country case studies - examines the gendered impacts of the legacy of wartime violence, demonstrating that this critical period can reshape social and political institutions in ways that facilitate gender equality in post-conflict states (Hadzic and Tavits 2019; Lazarev 2019; Østby, Leiby and Nordås 2019; Koos 2018; Koos and Lindsey 2022; Tripp 2010). This literature emphasizes the transformative nature of conflict and highlights the numerous pathways through which variation in women’s status after war can be understood. Civil conflict can serve as a catalyst for women to engage in politics and confront gender inequalities that might otherwise remain entrenched in the pre-war status quo—whether through participation in the war effort, peace activism, assuming roles as heads of household, or direct battlefield experiences.

In this project, I explore the status of women as a politically salient identity group relative to men and the general population after war.⁶ Following (Goldstein 2001), I define gender as a social construct of behaviors and roles assigned to men and women, built upon the performance of masculinity and femininity, consistent with constructivist understandings of identity. While feminist international relations theory has moved away from dichotomous views of gender and sex, this dissertation adopts an approach aligned with positivist literature, utilizing a gender binary framework consistent with widely available cross-national quantitative data (Sjoberg, Kadera and Thies 2018). The concept of women’s status offers a more objective measure for

⁶ Recent research suggests addressing gender and sexual minorities is more appropriate under different theoretical paradigms and logics, and therefore outside of the scope of this project. See for more (Sjoberg, Kadera and Thies 2018; Hagen 2022; Loken and Hagen 2022).

understanding women's standing in society, rather than relying on the normative framework of gender equality, which may vary depending on the actor or context.⁷

As demonstrated by the brief discussion of Sierra Leone's postwar landscape, women's status is a multifaceted concept. In this project, I define women's status in terms of policies that elevate women's socio-political position within the gender hierarchy and broader society—that is, women's ability to navigate society autonomously; policies that advance women's socio-political status in both the public and private sphere. These policies specifically target women as a function of their gendered identity—for example, laws that grant women the ability to seek divorce on equal terms with men or enable women to hold positions in peace negotiations. While this project focuses primarily on policies enacted by national governments, it acknowledges that policies promoting women's status can also originate from informal, local, and community levels of governance.

There is a growing body of research that links gender and the policy making process (Kittilson 2010; Krook 2025) which suggests that gender plays a distinct role in agenda-setting power of politicians which can lead to changes in women's status. At the macro-level, women's status in society has been linked to broad cultural changes driven by modernization (Inglehart and Norris 2000; Inglehart, Norris and Welzel 2002; Inglehart and Norris 2003). More recent literature has examined additional macro-level factors that contribute to improvements in women's political status such, including ideology, electoral systems, the diffusion of gender quota adoption, and a history of women's enfranchisement (Matland 1998; Reynolds 1999;

⁷ I argue, and demonstrate throughout this project, that a reductive form of gender equality focusing on indicators such as labor force participation rate, a common metric of gender equality, does not fully capture the complexities of gender equality (Bose 2015; Bowen, Hudson and Nielsen 2015; Htun and Weldon 2018). These conceptions and measures of gender equality are not necessarily useful comparisons cross-nationally and cross-regionally, as a vast majority of women in the Global South are not in the formal economy and this data is not consistently reported.

Siaroff 2000; Norris 2006; Su and Chen 2025); international and transnational influences also impact the advancement of women's political status (Krook 2006; Lloyd 2006; True and Mintrom 2001; Zwingel 2012; Hughes and Tripp 2015; Mageza-Barthel 2015).

Women's position in society affects their advancement in politics (O'Brien and Rickne 2016) and legislative behavior (Barnes 2016; Alem'an et al. 2025), and gender can shape policy priorities (Goetz 1998; Kittilson 2008; O'Brien and Piscopo 2019; Barnes and O'Brien 2025).⁸ For example, research has focused on how gender quotas, as tools to increase women's representation, shape policy outcomes (Clayton et al. 2019; Clayton 2021; Clayton and Zetterberg 2021; Franceschet and Piscopo 2014; Westfall and Chantiles 2016). However, advancing women's status can be a fraught process, as legislatures are gendered institutions (Waylen 2009; Kittilson and Schwindt-Bayer 2012), female candidates can experience gender bias by voters (Barnes, Branton and Cassese 2017; Blackman and Jackson 2021; Folke, Rickne and Smith 2021), and party leadership (Baturu and Gray 2018; Cheng and Tavits 2011; Ono and Endo 2024). While women's legislative representation is not the primary focus of this study, the role of gender in policymaking can influence levels of women's political representation, their status in the workplace, and the gender-related policies that advance. This dissertation broadly examines the status of women post-conflict, with an analytical focus on the conditions under which policies that advance women's status are likely to be adopted. It does not seek to predict the occurrence of women's formal political representation – which has been addressed by other scholars—nor does it analyze the policy preferences or actions of female legislatures.⁹

⁸ For more literature on substantive representation see (Celis et al. 2008; Celis and Childs 2008, 2012; Wängnerud 2009; Erzeel and Celis 2016).

⁹ In the quantitative analysis, I am unable to identify the legislators that were a part of the decision-making process or passed each specific policy.

This dissertation understands women's status among two dimensions, women's rights and women's security, in line with Karim and Hill (2024).¹⁰ Women's rights refer to the legal entitlements that enable women to exercise their political rights and foster empowerment, including suffrage, the ability to inherit property, the right for unmarried women to become heads of household, and equal pay. These rights are closely linked to policies, as they are often formally established or changed through government actions and shaped by gendered institutions such as legislatures. Such changes have the potential to transform state-society relationships.

Women's security is the freedom from structural harms for lives of everyday women. Looking beyond concepts solely related to physical violence (i.e. rape and intimate partner violence), women's security focuses on the inequality over power, resources and opportunities that women experience (Karim and Hill 2024). Policies that shape women's security influence appropriate gender roles, women's status in society, and protections from everyday harms—such as domestic violence, unemployment, and women's ability to make meaningful decisions in their lives. I move beyond viewing women's security solely as physical autonomy and freedom from violence—such as protection from domestic abuse, rape, or access to abortion—and instead adopt a broader framework. This framework encompasses women's autonomous decision-making across multiple domains, including finances, mobility, education, and more, alongside physical autonomy.

Together, women's rights and women's security help us understand women's ability—relative to men—to exercise autonomy and decision-making power in both the public and private spheres. I argue that the domestic political landscape is a key strategic environment for

¹⁰ Women's political inclusion, women's physical bodies in the public sphere (i.e. the formal economy, education, political office etc.) as understood by Karim and Hill (2024) is another measure of women's status of gender equality but is largely outside the scope of this study.

explaining variation in, and improvement of, women's status in post-conflict societies. This project focuses on political competition among elites as the primary mechanism driving advances in women's status at the domestic level. Political competition is conceptualized as elites vying to mobilize voters and increase electoral turnout, particularly among women, which in turn promotes progress on women's rights and security.¹¹ By investing resources to engage this salient constituency, political parties that champion women's status through legislation enhance their legitimacy, capability, and competence in the postwar political arena - both in the eyes of domestic and international actors - thereby fostering their political survival. The role of postwar elites as "gatekeepers," to advancing women's de jure rights and status in the public sphere is often under-explored in the post-conflict literature. I situate this argument within two key mechanisms identified in the gender and conflict literature to explain the adoption of gender reforms after conflict: women's grassroots mobilization and international pressure.

Women's Grassroots Mobilization as Agents of Change

Non-violent grassroots mobilization is a key factor in understanding policy success (Stephan and Chenoweth 2008; Manekin and Mitts 2022). The literature consistently finds that women's movements are effective advocates for the adoption policies that support the improvement of women's status, such as domestic violence laws and legislative gender quotas, in a variety of contexts (Baldez 2002; Basu 2005; Deiana 2016; Hughes, Krook and Paxton 2015; Htun and Weldon 2018; Moghadam 2020; Phelan and True 2022).¹² Women's movements are argued to be successful in influencing policy adoption through strategies such as issue

¹¹ This conceptualization of political competition is consistent with the empirical measurement from Coppedge et al. 2022 used throughout this project.

¹² Non-violent grassroots mobilization is a key factor in understanding policy success (Stephan and Chenoweth 2008; Manekin and Mitts 2022).

framing, forming alliances, and engaging with the state (Goetz and Jenkins 2018). Htun and Weldon (2012) contend that strong, autonomous women's movements predict government action on violence against women legislation as civil society organizations can challenge the established social order, imagine new forms of social organization and mobilize support. Women's movements can also operate under different frameworks to achieve their goals. For example, the concept of "rightful resistance", describes how contentious politics can be pursued within official norms and channels by those in authority, while simultaneously exploiting divisions among power holders (O'Brien 1996). On the other hand, in Guatemala, women's movements adopted a "politics of patience" approach, pursuing violence against women legislation gradually over many years (Beck 2022).

Women's movements have been widely recognized as a key mechanism for advancing the status of women after conflict. Women have played leading roles in peace movements, democratization efforts, and the push for political rights, demonstrating effectiveness in bringing about change (Medie 2013; Hughes and Tripp 2015; Tripp 2015, 2016; Htun and Weldon 2018; Phelan and True 2022; Zulver 2022). For example, women in Sri Lanka were at the forefront of demanding justice during and after the war by protesting in Tamil areas heavily affected by the conflict,¹³ mobilizing to locate detained and disappeared men, and challenging traditional norms that sought to exclude widows from participating in the public sphere (Wood 2008). Similarly, feminist organizations in post-conflict Algeria successfully advocated for reforms to the penal code, criminalizing sexual harassment in 2004, and pushed for amendments to the National Code in 2005, allowing Algerian women to pass citizenship

¹³ Sri Lanka's Conflict-Affected Women: Dealing with the Legacy of War. 2017. Brussels, Belgium: International Crisis Group. Asia Report. <https://www.crisisgroup.org/asia/south-asia/sri-lanka/289-srilankas-conflict-affected-women-dealing-legacy-war> (April 2, 2023).

to their children when marrying non-Algerian men (Moghadam 2020).

However, the effectiveness of women's movements in post-conflict contexts remains debated. The level of women's participation in women's movements - or civil society more broadly - is not constant over time. Figure 1 illustrates women's participation rates in civil society organizations as a proxy for involvement in gender-based movements in post-conflict Rwanda, Chad, and Algeria, using data from the Varieties of Democracy dataset (Coppedge et al. 2022). This measure is ordinal, scaled from 0 to 4, capturing the extent to which women are prevented from participating in civil society organizations. In this subsample of states, 0 indicates women are almost never prevented, 1 means frequently prevented, 2 means about half the time, 3 rarely, and 4 almost never prevented. The figure demonstrates that women's participation in civil society varies over time and across countries that experienced intense civil wars. Generally, women face fewer barriers to participation after war, but their involvement fluctuates. Rwanda, despite its reputation for high descriptive representation of women, does not consistently support women's participation in public life; women face barriers to civil society engagement most of the time under its tightly controlled autocratic regime. Algeria shows the most pronounced fluctuation, with a sharp decline in women's participation in the 2010s as the government curtailed civil liberties. In Chad, civil society participation remains relatively flat following multiple civil wars, with women frequently facing barriers to engagement.

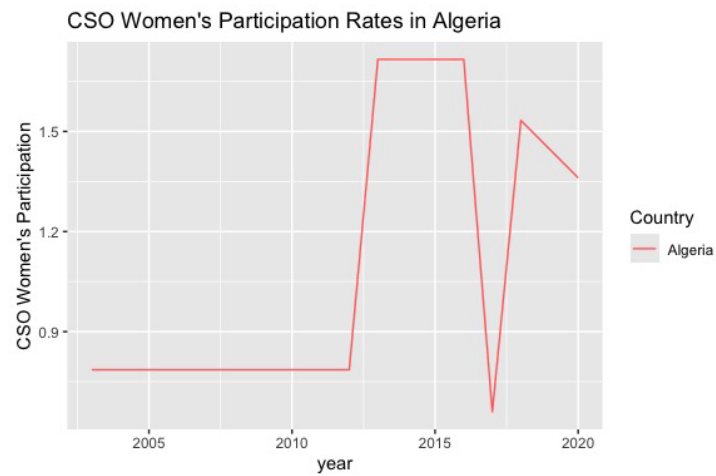
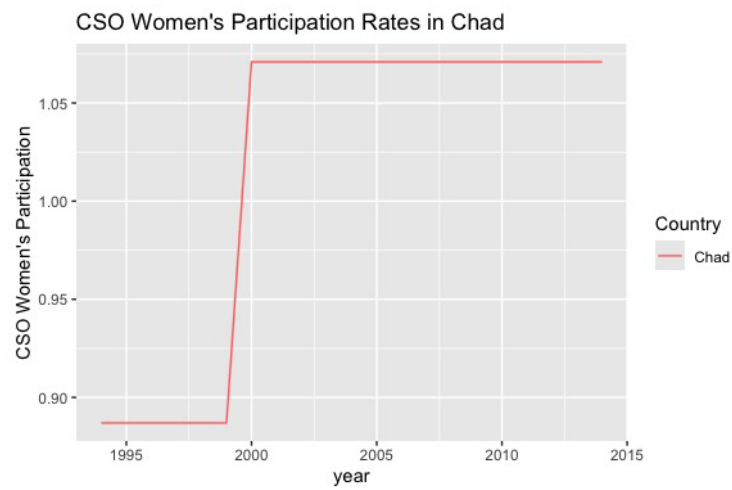
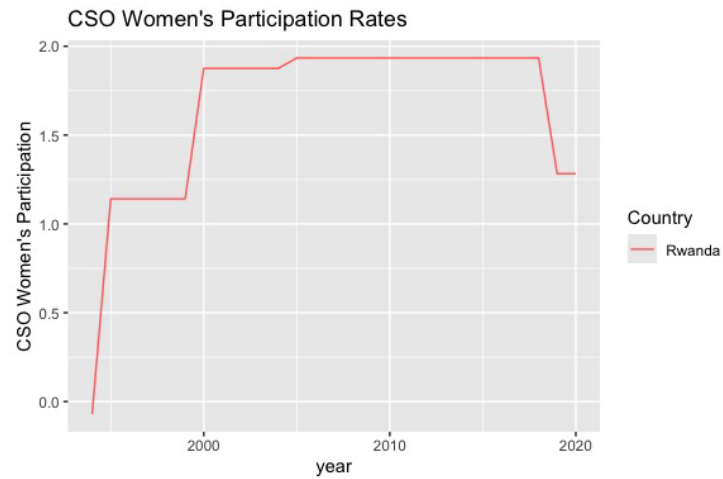


Figure 1.1: Women's CSO Participation Rates

While there are many instances of significant and impactful mobilization by women during and after conflict, scholars have also shown that women's movements often struggle in the long run to achieve their goals - particularly during the policy implementation stage (Anyidoho, Crawford and Medie 2021) or when they lack a charismatic leader (Zulver 2022), a particular concern in post-conflict contexts. In Nicaragua, for example, the women's movement lacked internal cohesion around feminist aims, such as changing men's attitudes and behaviors, resulting in uneven gains for women (Molyneux 1984). Moreover, the strength and autonomy of women's movements can make them vulnerable to co-optation by the state, as seen in Liberia (Debusscher and De Almagro 2016) and El Salvador (Silber and Viterina 2009; Demeritt, Nichols and Kelly 2014). In Mozambique, Frelimo - the ruling party – viewed women as a key voting bloc to capture, drawing on its wartime rhetoric supporting socialist ideals of women's emancipation. In the post-conflict period, Frelimo leveraged women's civil society organizations to carry out state functions and used women's rights discourse to consolidate party power, rather than to simply support or oppose civil society (Lorch and Bunk 2016).¹⁴ Women's movements are not necessarily unified in their goals or approaches. Rather, they are often heterogeneous in preferences and tactics, representing only a subset of women's values and demands. As such, they are not always explicitly feminist or progressive in orientation.

Moreover, changes in women's status can also occur without gender-based mobilization. Htun and Weldon (2010) find that gender policy reforms can occur even when women's representation in government is low and women's movements are weak, suggesting that women's mobilization alone cannot fully account for the variation in women's postwar

¹⁴ Frelimo also used their women's wing, Organization of Mozambican Women, as a recruitment tool for the party and bolster their political power (Lorch and Bunk 2016).

outcomes. Although the power of women's movements has been well documented, they often struggle to achieve long-term success and cannot fully account for all the changes in gender reforms after war.

Gender Equality Efforts at the International-Level

Scholars have also identified external pressure from international actors as a key mechanism for explaining improvements in women's status after civil war. Postwar Liberia serves as an exemplary case of how international engagement can enhance protections for women and promote gender equality. The United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), the largest and longest-running multidimensional peacekeeping operation ever mandated, is widely regarded as a success. Its presence has been associated with positive gender-related outcomes, including improvements in maternal health and family planning (Gizelis and Cao 2021; Bove et al. 2022). Internationally supported reforms in Liberia sought to address women's issues, particularly those related to sexual violence. Liberian police officers were trained to handle sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) (Medie and Walsh 2021; Karim 2020). Special Court E was established in Monrovia to prosecute sexual violence cases (Medie 2020). Additionally, the Armed Forces underwent extensive reform with the assistance of the United States (Clarke 2008).

Beyond direct action by international organizations (IOs), scholars have asserted that the transmission of international norms helps explain the expansion of gender equality rhetoric and laws by domestic governments and grassroots activists (True and Mintrom 2001; Hughes, Krook and Paxton 2015; Krook and True 2012; Huber 2019). IO's play a role in this; Medie (2015) demonstrates that the top-down approach of international organizations facilitated the rise of international norms surrounding women's rights and justice in Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire. Recent work has described the international incentives for autocracies to adopt women's rights, suggesting that this phenomenon is not necessarily limited to states seeking to democratize or led by feminist regimes (Donno and Kreft 2019; Donno, Fox and Kaasik 2022; Bjarnegård and Zetterberg 2022; Bush and Zetterberg 2021). For example, after Peru's decades-long low-intensity conflict, President Alberto Fujimori utilized internationally popular gender

policies to bolster his democratic image. Specifically, he adopted measures to combat domestic violence and increased women's descriptive representation in politics and security forces, while simultaneously implementing a mass forced sterilization program among women as a population control measure (Boesten 2006; Schindler 2010).

Normative, financial, and political pressure from international actors and IOs such as the UN, election watchdog groups, and transnational advocacy groups create incentives for national governments to address women's rights and security issues by adopting and implementing gender equality norms - particularly in the wake of UNSCR 1325 and 1820 and WPS (Finnemore 1993; Mansfield and Pevehouse 2008; Mageza-Barthel 2016; Matanock 2020; Kroeger and Kang 2022). These actors can influence states by indirect mechanisms such as providing legitimacy to domestic governments, third party monitoring, and "naming and shaming" campaigns. For example, UNSCR 1325 has led to an increase in references to women in peace agreements involving the UN (Bell and O'Rourke 2010). WPS Agenda has driven normative changes, including the increased involvement of women in peace negotiations. Recent research has found that female ex-combatants can shape peace negotiations and help secure gender-inclusive provisions in peace agreements (Thomas 2024). Ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination has had an overall positive impact on women's rights (Cole 2013; Hunt and Gruszczynski 2019). Donor-supported reforms have also led to increased representation of female judges in Haiti (Tøraasen 2022) and cabinet ministers across Africa (Kroeger and Kang 2022).

However, a top-down approach to gender equality is not without its drawbacks. Concerns have been raised that the international community's focus on sexual violence may come at the expense of broader women's empowerment and other gender-based issues (Meger 2016; Aroussi 2017). Carpenter (2005) argues that while gender essentialism (i.e. frames that view women in narrow terms such as vulnerable civilians and as mothers) can attract the attention and resources of the international community, it may also reinforce mainstream gender roles and gender identity, thereby excluding more marginalized identities and communities. There are concerns about the international community's focus

on sexual violence at the expense of women's empowerment and other gender-based issues (Meger 2016; Aroussi 2017). Kindervater and Meintjes (2017) argue that donor-led initiatives can be driven prevailing trends in international development and humanitarian intervention, which can hinder long-term social transformation due to their focus on specific issues such as reproduction and gender-friendly budgets. International actors can also reinforce victim hierarchies, thereby disadvantaging out-group women (Debusscher 2014; Berry 2018). Medie (2020) demonstrates that international actors have been influential in the diffusion of international norms of women's justice in Africa since 2000, but their role alone cannot explain the implementation of international norms without considering the dynamics of domestic actors and conditions.

Peacekeepers, one of the most prominent interventions by the international community, also have a mixed impact on women in post-conflict. Numerous studies have found that peacekeeping is effective in ending conflict and preventing civilian deaths in general (Fortna 2004; Howard 2007; Hultman, Kathman and Shannon 2013, 2014; Walter, Howard and Fortna 2020). More recent literature has placed doubt that peacekeeping's effectiveness at supporting "bottom up" peace in Liberia (Mvukiyehe and Samii 2021), preventing local violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo (Autesserre 2009), and deterring criminal violence (Di Salvatore 2019). Some research highlights the international community's unevenness in living up to its normative goal of achieving gender equality. IOs have varied effectiveness in promoting human security more broadly (Murdie 2014), and there remains a lack of focus on sexual violence in mediated peace negotiations despite UNSCR 1820, which could have implications for sustainable peace (Jenkins and Goetz 2010). Peacekeeping missions themselves have perpetuated sexual exploitation and abuse (True 2012; Karim and Beardsley 2017; Beber et al. 2017; Moncrief 2017), which can weaken their legitimacy and their ability to ensure post-conflict security actors for former belligerents and the security of women. Gizelis (2021) argues

that UNMIL undermined the strength of horizontal networks that facilitated peacebuilding efforts by focusing on supporting hierarchical ties and elite networks. Disrupted networks by UNMIL facilitated the permeation of traditional gender roles in certain areas of Liberia through local customs. This suggests that IOs also have difficulties in promoting the security of women after conflict.

Angola provides a clear example of the tensions between peacekeeping and supporting women's outcomes. (Dzinesa 2004) describes multiple weak peacekeeping missions in Angola during the 1990s that failed to bring about durable peace, especially when compared to other contemporaneous UN missions. These missions also did not capitalize on the momentum of UNSCR 1325, which was ratified in 2000. Prior the conflict, women had access state welfare provisions such as maternity pay and access to state-run nurseries. However, changes in international influence through macro-economic policies increased women's vulnerability after the war (Pupavac 2005). Additionally, Angola failed to secure external financial support to promote civil society and support non-governmental organizations that support women's policies (Tripp 2015).

An extensive literature identifies ways in which women's status can be improved from the grassroots and international level. However, the role of national-level politics is often overlooked in efforts to understand the advancement of women's status. Domestic politics - particularly the decisions of political elites to champion and implement policies that support women's status - is central to advancement women's status in post-conflict contexts. Existing explanations often focus on the role of women's groups as agents of change. However, in the absence of strong women's movements, progress on women's issues can still occur when women are a salient constituency in electoral politics. Second, existing explanations diminish the role of

political party formation, often former rebel groups, operating in a fragile political environment alongside established, incumbent political parties as new salient actors that did not exist prior to conflict in a context marred by instability and uncertainty. These political parties must face a new political landscape where they are seeking to govern and face novel forms of competition with one another in a post-conflict context.

Summary of Argument

In this dissertation, I argue that improvements in the status of women in postwar states are largely driven by the actions of domestic elites. These elites face costly and strategic decisions about whether to support ideas and reforms that advance women's status in post-conflict contexts. While some elites endorse gender equality because of their ideological and normative beliefs, or political expediency, others may actively resist its implementation based on strategic political calculations. Most post-conflict settings are characterized by competition among emerging elites, who may include former regime officials, members of rebel organizations, or leaders of newly formed political movements. This political competition among nascent parties is a key factor influencing the willingness and ability of elites to promote women's status in post-war contexts.

In more competitive electoral systems, elites have strong incentives to court women as a key constituency, leveraging their mobilization capacity of women and networks for their electoral advantage. This creates motivation for elites to advance women's status by codifying legal rights and protections and addressing structural inequalities. The positive effects of gender reforms can be further amplified by domestic grassroots activism and international pressure to tackle gender issues. By promoting women's status, elites can enhance their legitimacy and be perceived as effective leaders in an uncertain and evolving postwar political environment,

gaining an electoral edge over rivals. By capitalizing on the increasing salience of gender and securing support from this politically significant constituency, elites tap into a vital source of political power and strengthen their competitiveness in electoral politics.

Contributions and Implications

Until recently, understanding the relationship between political competition and gendered outcomes have been under-explored. Scholars have demonstrated how competition is likely to lead to political change, prominently through expanding suffrage to women, given politicians' beliefs about women's votes and the degree of mobilization by women, has largely been researched in the West (Barnes 2020; Corder and Wolbrecht 2006; Teele 2014, 2018, 2020, 2024; Skorge 2021; Weeks 2018; Wolbrecht and Corder 2020). We know less about the relationship between gender and political competition outside of the Global North¹⁵ and in post-conflict states.

This dissertation builds on the growing literature on postwar outcomes for everyday women (Wood 2008; True 2012; Tripp 2015; Lazarev 2019; Stavrevska 2020; Yadav 2021; Lindsey 2022) and expand the focus on women's security beyond the narrow scope of sexual and gender-based violence, which has been a large focus on the literature. Research on women's status in postwar states is growing but often remains limited by differing subfield methodological and theoretical approaches in International Relations and Comparative Politics. To the author's knowledge, there is little work that separates dimensions of women's status and demonstrates how various dimensions do not necessarily correlate. Most existing literature on gender and

¹⁵ Coffe and Bolzendahl (2011) argue that there is little work on understanding patterns of political participation outside explain individual-level identity salience. Posner (2017) argues that individuals will activate identities based on what will generate the greatest payoff in a given situation to understand material and non-material benefits.

conflict tends to focus primarily on women's political representation or sexual violence. I seek to expand this scope by examining multiple measures of women's status in post-conflict states, thereby advancing our understanding of their varied trajectories.

I build upon the literature on gender and politics, which has traditionally focused on women's inclusion in both formal and informal political spheres—ranging from various forms of political participation, such as voting and protesting, to descriptive representation in formal institutions. This dissertation contributes to the gender and politics literature by examining: 1) how everyday women's status is shaped by the legacies of conflict, and 2) how political parties seek support from politically salient constituencies—namely, women. This project moves beyond emphasizing female legislators' ability to substantively represent women's issues, offering a broader understanding of how political parties more generally influence women's status in contemporary post-conflict states.

Questions about women's status are also highly relevant to the literature on civil war. While a large body of work has examined how women participate in and are affected by ongoing civil wars, a growing number of studies focus on gender dynamics in post-conflict states. Compared to wartime, we know far less about how the legacies of civil war shape women's political engagement and their ability to advance their status. This dissertation aims to deepen our understanding of how structural and political barriers can be overcome to improve women's status, and how party politics can serve as a crucial avenue for advancing women's rights in the post-war context. This project also raises nuanced questions such as: Under what conditions do women's groups work with female parliamentarians to advance women's rights? How do rebel-turned-political parties use gender equality ideologies in their policy platforms to court women voters? How do gender hierarchies shape women's security? Furthermore, this

dissertation produces several policy implications. I argue that the international community should place greater emphasis on encouraging domestic governments to make long-term investments in gender equality, rather than relying primarily on civil society or international actors to exert pressure. Domestic governments are influenced both by domestic electoral dynamics and by the international community's normative agenda on gender equality. The theoretical and empirical findings of this dissertation suggest that multiple strategies must be pursued simultaneously to achieve tangible advancements in women's status and to firmly establish norms of gender equality.

Plan for the Dissertation

In Chapter 2, I present the central theory of this project. In fragile and uncertain post-conflict political systems, elites are acutely aware of the legitimacy and reputational concerns posed by both domestic constituencies and the international community. Their primary focus is on maintaining their winning coalition and ensuring political survival. One way to address these concerns is by supporting reforms that advance women's standing in society. This is especially likely in contexts where gender issues are highly salient—such as through grassroots mobilization by women's groups or the prevalence of conflict-related sexual violence. In such cases, elites are more inclined to adopt gender reforms in the years immediately following the end of war to maximize electoral support. In competitive elections, elites adopt these reforms to consolidate a stronger base of support, provided these reforms do not alienate key segments of their selectorate. In sum, I argue that domestic political competition between elites created incentives for reforms around women's status.

To test the first part of the argument, I conduct a cross-national empirical test of my central hypothesis, in Chapter 3. I argue that in postwar states with high levels of political

competition, we are more likely to see an increase in women's rights. I find that states with higher rates of political competition are more likely to pass women's rights legislation. I include several model specifications to check the sensitivity of my findings and find that both legislative and executive competition lead to higher levels of women's rights in post- conflict states.

In Chapter 4, I expand on my cross-national findings to understand the dynamic process of expanding women's status in post-conflict states. This chapter presents a case study of women's security along two dimensions - inheritance rights and citizenship rights – with a case study of postwar Nepal. I demonstrate the process of advancing policies in these dimensions was pivotal in codifying women's security (defined as freedom from structural harm) to improve women's status. I find that advancement inheritance and citizenship rights took different paths due to varying levels of political competition over each issue and the role of external actors placing pressure on political parties.

Chapter 5 addresses the barriers to progress for women's status even in contexts of high political competition. The legacy of conflict, in this case, conflict-related sexual violence, can create important disincentives for political parties from advancing women's status, as elites also have incentives to shield some potential supporters from accountability for wartime atrocities. I examine the role of postwar amnesty agreements curtailing women's status, along numerous dimensions, with a cross-national quantitative analysis. I find that elites will shield themselves from accountability at the expense of rank-and-file perpetrators of conflict-related violence. These findings suggest that women's security in post-conflict states is directly affected by the inclusion and form of transitional justice mechanisms in competitive political environments.

I conclude my findings and directions for future research in Chapter 6.

Chapter 2: Advancing Women's Status in Post-Conflict States

As outlined in the introduction, changes in women's status can emerge from two broad mechanisms: bottom-up pressure of grassroots mobilization and top-down influence of international actors. I present a novel theory arguing that the level of competition faced by domestic politicians shapes their incentives to support women's progress in the post-conflict contexts. Post-conflict context periods offer windows of opportunity where new domestic elites work to solidify their support bases. Specifically, electoral competition among postwar elites serves as a key mediating factor for the rise of women's status in post-conflict states. I focus on political competition over policies in institutionalized settings, such as the national legislature, rather than temporary or informal settings such as tribal governance, transitional governments, or patronage politics.¹⁶

The Postwar Context

Civil wars are disruptive events, often centered around struggles for control of the central government. They create windows of opportunity for political parties to (re)establish their ideologies and capture new constituencies in their bids to win elections and maintain power. Civil conflict is characterized by violent clashes among armed actors competing for resources, territory, and seats of power, often leaving civilians caught in the crossfire, displaced, and at risk of violence. As armed groups cease widespread violence and lay down their arms, these actors

¹⁶ I acknowledge that these processes and resulting actions can have a variety of downstream effects that can disproportionately affect women, and demonstrate clear signals to constituencies about their priorities *and* ability to effectively govern.

must reintegrate into peacetime society—either as civilians who previously perpetrated violence, as individuals facing demands for justice, or as political actors striving to provide stability and change within the state. Civilians frequently find themselves in vulnerable positions, seeking shelter, employment, and security as they rebuild their lives, with women and girls often among the most vulnerable. Consequently, the end of civil conflict presents a critical opportunity to appeal to women voters during a period of extraordinary political reshuffling.

The post-civil war period presents a crucial opportunity for advancing women's status. Several scholars argue that after conflict, women can seize windows of opportunity to promote women's rights and broader empowerment that would otherwise remain inaccessible (Anderson 2015; Tripp 2015; Kirby and Shepherd 2016; Hughes 2009; Webster et al. 2019, 2020). Civil conflict creates openings for women - especially given their participation in the war effort, whether through activism, assuming roles as heads of households, or fighting on the battlefield - which can serve as a catalyst for political engagement and addressing gender issues that might otherwise remain at pre-war levels. However, the role of postwar elites as “gatekeepers” to advancing women's de jure rights and status in the public sphere is often overlooked in the post-conflict literature.

Elites in Postwar States

Political elites, particularly those deeply affected by and/or participants of the conflict as armed actors, can shape rhetoric, public opinion, and set political priorities after war. In a sufficiently open political environment such as we often see after conflict, elites also shape the landscape for policies and reforms (Waylen 2009). Their position makes them well-poised to address women's status in society in the aftermath of conflict, for both their own political benefit and the benefit of women.

Political elites have control over the political levers to facilitate legislative and institutional change and will attempt these actions at their own behest when it is politically efficacious to do so, given a reasonable amount of certainty that the backlash (i.e. electoral, rhetorical, or otherwise) will be minimal. This pressure to enact pro-women reforms will exist regardless of their ideological preferences and regardless of whether elites are conservative or feminist.¹⁷ For example, legislators are integral for providing funding to creation of gender ministries, the creation and implementation of female police units, changes to family law, and other sorts of initiatives that would foster gender equality efforts. Htun and Weldon (2018) find that political parties, particularly left-wing parties, can be important in passing certain types of policies – including status policies that affect class such as abortion policy.

I define political elites as incumbent and non-incumbent politicians engaged in formal politics, including legislators, heads of government, and bureaucrats. After civil war, elites may come to power through various pathways. At times, pre-conflict incumbents retain some positions of power. Rebel leaders often transition their groups into political parties and participate in conventional politics (Matanock 2017). Additionally, individuals may be mobilized to enter politics based on their experiences during the conflict and the conflict resolution process. Regardless of their origin, I assume that elites are rational actors primarily concerned with securing support from their selectorate in line with their political party's goals, aiming to ensure their own political survival. These elites are heterogeneous in terms of experience, ideology, and partisanship, which influences their priorities regarding the advancement of women's status.¹⁸ I

¹⁷ Elites used state feminism (Mazur and McBride 2007) to access international systems, co-opt activists and groups, support their own ideology, and as a tool to deal with political competition (Lorch and Bunk 2016).

¹⁸ I am agnostic about the gender of political elites, but there is reason to believe that gender of political elites may affect the gender gap in political participation (Barnes and Burchard 2013) affect their preferences given that female politicians may have different policy priorities than men (Hughes et al. 2019) and demonstrate different legislative behavior practices (Barnes 2016). In many states women often become a part of the political elite, such as

also assume that elites face some degree of political competition and hold diverse preferences.¹⁹

Their baseline positions on gender issues depend on how central these issues are to their ideology, constituency, and postwar governance strategy. Furthermore, not all actors are involved in peace settlement processes, creating potential selection bias - some elites may be more attuned to addressing gender issues depending on their proximity to the conflict and its importance in the conflict resolution. This study focuses on elites in post-conflict states after the formal end of conflict, whether through clear victory, negotiated settlement, or cessation of widespread violence.

Post-Conflict Political Competition Mechanism

Political competition along social cleavages has a long history in Comparative Politics as an explanatory variable for various outcomes around ethnic identity.²⁰ Political competition drives ethnic identification (Birbir 2007; Birbir and Satana 2022; Eifert et al. 2010), ethnic mobilization (Bates 2019), the occurrence of and response to political violence (Cederman et al. 2013; Toha 2017; Wilkinson 2006) and support for ethnic parties (Chandra 2007; Elischer 2013), democratic resilience in Eastern Europe (Rovny 2023), and the number of political parties in African democratic elections (Mylonas and Roussias 2008). Moreover, exposure to violence, even outside of the context of civil war, can also lead to ethnic group mobilization and ethnic

legislators, high-level bureaucrats and judges, as seen in post-conflict states such as Rwanda, Peru, Nepal, and Ethiopia. Brannon (2023) argues that African rebel parties may run female candidates in order to signal a break from the status quo and manipulate female stereotypes about peacefulness. In an unpublished book manuscript, Hilary Matfess finds that female candidates in rebel-to-party transformations have little impact on African post-conflict parties' views on inclusion and participation in formal politics.

¹⁹ Liou and Musgrave (2016) address this issue in Gulf States, demonstrating how antisocial programs, programs supportive of women's rights, are a tool to accommodate winning coalitions. Valdin (2019) demonstrates how male elites strategically decide to increase women's presence in politics when it benefits their political survival.

²⁰ To explain individual-level identity salience, Posner (2017) argues that individuals will activate identities based on what will generate the greatest payoff in a given situation to understand material and non-material benefits.

voting (Hadzic et al. 2020). While racial, ethnic, and religious identities are not the only fault lines for political competition, they remain salient drivers of political outcomes.

Gender identity functions as a cross-cutting identity cleavage rather than a coinciding one, unlike ethnic identity (Htun 2004). I assume that gender identity becomes salient when identification and mobilization around gender identity would generate the greatest pay-off for individuals (i.e. seeking demands or campaigning to women), relative to other identities such as ethnicity. Furthermore, mobilization around gender identity can increase political competition and advance gender-based political outcomes, especially in post-conflict contexts where gender salience is high through women's various forms of participation in and exposure to conflict.

Research on gender and politics suggests that gender is a salient political identity, operates in distinct ways in within gendered institutions, and that women are an important constituency of voters.

Gender and electoral politics are intimately linked. At the individual-level, existing work has shown that women and men have comparable rates of party membership and vote at largely similar rates (Alexander and Coffé 2018), but in some contexts women make different party choices than men (Wolbrecht and Corder 2020) and this can vary by class (Morgan-Collins and Natusch 2022). Women's political participation related to mobilization (Beckwith 2001; Cascio and Shenhav 2020; Waylen 2007; Weldon and Htun 2013), various forms of institutionalized forms of political participation (Coffe and Bolzendahl 2011; Prillaman 2021), and participation in political parties (Childs 2008; Barnes 2016) has also received wide attention in the literature. At the candidate-level, electoral competition (the number and quality of candidates) impacts electoral fortune (Barnes et al. 2017) women political candidates face distinct gendered barriers

in getting elected to national legislatures due to party politics (Bernhard et al. 2021; Clayton et al.; O'Brien and Piscopo 2018).

Transitions to peacetime governance are fraught with uncertainty for political parties with fragile political arrangements and the threat of conflict recurrence. Most civil conflicts end with a military win or a negotiated settlement (Walter 1997, 2009; Balcells and Kalyvas 2014), often resulting in fragile environments rife with information asymmetries and commitment problems as former warring parties attempt to build trust. In many cases, rebel groups become political parties rather than dying out after conflict,²¹ but recent research suggests that this is a challenging endeavor and that rebel-to-party transformation fails to sustain themselves in the long-run (Zaks 2025). As such, even conflicts with explicit power-sharing or rebel wins face distinct challenges creating adequate governance structures and assuaging civilians concerns over stability. Several factors have been associated with greater post-conflict stability, including when individuals have higher quality of life and access to political participation, in addition to economic aid and third-party intervention (Walter 2004), post-conflict justice processes (Loyle and Appel 2017), and concrete power-sharing can lead to more stable environments (Hartzell and Hoddie 2003). These findings suggest that assurances of security through policies and negotiations can provide security in some instances, but this is a difficult task for former warring parties to achieve.

Government and/or incumbent parties will often seek to distance themselves from a wartime government after conflict ends, aiming to be seen as a legitimate government that is unlikely to return to violence.²² Given the challenges rebel parties face in transitioning from armed groups to peacetime governing actors, they must secure some level of public support to

²¹ For more see, (Ishiyama 2014; Huang 2016; Manning and Smith 2016; Daly 2019).

²² Government actors, however, may still use violent tactics in the postwar era in highly competitive states against armed opposition groups in post-conflict states, and are active during election periods (Raleigh and Kishi 2020).

facilitate this shift. Consequently, they use whatever tools are available to appeal to and maintain their conflict-era political base in postwar electoral politics.²³ For example, the RUF won the conflict in Sierra Leone in 2002 and transitioned into a political party, but failed to win seats in competitive multi-party elections in 2002 winning less than 2% of the vote. Instead, the incumbent Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) retained its position as the ruling party. The SLPP maintained access to state resources and institutions and the RUF's party was unable to gain popular support and legacy of the party's violence during the war harmed their political fortunes (Kandeh 2003).

Political parties operating in a competitive environment will seek to build and sustain a peacetime base of support, via patronage and services, as they contend with other parties in multi-party contests. One such base of support that postwar elites can benefit from is women's electoral support. Women are often active participants in politics and public life during and after war. As such, women are potentially a rich resource for mobilization and pool of potential voters that elites can benefit from.

Anecdotal evidence from post-conflict cases confirms that women are politically engaged during these periods and that political parties are attentive to this engagement. For example, civil society organizations (CSOs) in Nepal have worked to support the adoption and implementation of a NAP after the adoption of UNSCR 1325 and 1820. Nepal was the first country in South Asia to adopt a NAP in 2011, with the government worked closely with the CSOs to consult on the policy process. CSOs were instrumental localizing NAP across Nepal, spearheading initiatives during implementation and maintain consistent monitoring and evaluation (Lyytikäinen and

²³ Dresden (2017) finds that wartime capabilities of rebels to promote populism and mobilize networks effects their de facto level of electoral competitiveness in the postwar era, rather than their military capabilities. Similarly, Zaks (2025) argues that rebel groups' structural legacy and organizational ideology impacts their ability to transform into a political party.

Yadav 2022), and were able to use the narrative around 1325 to make substantive changes such as the removal of discriminatory laws in the country code (Barrow 2009). Alianza de Mujeres Tejedoras de Vida, a women's group in Colombia, was able to use and refine its past experiences operating during the conflict to mobilize politically after conflict, despite increased gendered acts of violence against them (Zulver 2021).

One of the most notable examples of women's political engagement post-conflict is the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition, which succeeded in increasing women's representation and advancing policies that supported women's interests (Cowell-Meyers 2014). Similarly, internal reforms in El Salvador fostered inter-party competition and helped build electoral support for the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) (Manning 2007). Specifically, the women's wing of the FMLN sought to end gender discrimination in the party (Luciak 1999). Women also play a crucial role in post-conflict settings when they have been involved in conflict resolution processes, as political elites continue to face pressure to address war-related grievances and mobilize politically salient constituency groups to support new governing institutions.

Elites have an opportunity to court women voters after civil war and leverage women's networks to mobilize electoral support. In the aftermath of conflict, both international and domestic actors closely monitor the transition to peace, observing how elites work to promote stability. When gender issues are highly salient during wartime, they often remain at the forefront of political agendas in the post-conflict period. We see evidence of this in Nepal where political parties "were competing with each other to showcase how inclusive they were in order to get sympathetic votes," (Yadav 2021, 456).

I make two key assumptions about female voters in post-conflict states. First, women hold heterogeneous political preferences. While women may mobilize and identify along gender-based lines, they are not a monolith.²⁴ Second, I assume a general tendency among women to support pro-women political reforms in response to the shifting gender hierarchies and roles that arise due to conflict. The experience of war heightens women's concerns for safety and decision-making power, allowing them, as a collective identity group, to align their preferences around women's issues. This does not imply that women will necessarily support feminist or progressive agendas; rather, they may back policies that assist heads of households, mothers, or women in more traditional roles.

Gender-based mobilization has been well studied and documented in the literature suggesting that women can be co-opted into being a mobilized and engaged voting bloc outside the context of conflict recovery.²⁵

There is evidence that women's networks that develop in wartime continue to be relevant after war ends. For instance, women's peace activism was widely credited as ending the civil war in Liberia with women going as far as locking armed actors' leaders in a room to reach a negotiated settlement to end the conflict (Adjei 2021). These networks later mobilized to support Ellen Johnson Sirleaf's election as Liberia's first female president in 2005 (Bauer 2009), contributed to strengthening the country's rape laws, and helped establish a gender crime unit within the police as well as a criminal court for gender issues (Medie 2020). Women's

²⁴ The preferences of women will vary by a number of factors such as age, religion, education, employment, experience with conflict, access to formal politics and many others.

²⁵ While it is hard to get cross-national evidence on voting turnout, men and women to turnout at roughly the same rates in the aggregate, but when the data broken down by country, voter registration rates among sub-Saharan African women are largely similar (Coffe and Bolzendahl 2011), but voter turnout by women is generally lower than men (Solijonov 2016), but this does not take into consideration the structural barriers that inhibit women from participating the political process.

mobilization efforts can be an important tool to post-conflict elite survival in the immediate aftermath of conflict. Elites may also use women's political activism to increase women in political parties and shore up women's wings to increase women's public-facing participation in politics, capitalizing on the gender salience of the conflict and international gender norms for their political advantage.

For example, Ugandan women participated as combatants at high rates during the civil war, and the women's movement remained active and coordinated after the conflict, making women instrumental to securing President Yoweri Museveni's electoral victory (Tripp 2001; Donno and Kreft 2019). This political engagement led to the passage of a gender quota and domestic violence law (Ahikire and Mwiine 2019). However, women leaders were also cultivated and co-opted in by the National Resistance Movement (NRM) despite the women's movement maintaining some level of autonomy in an electoral autocracy (Tripp 2001).²⁶ Advancing women's policies proved advantageous in both Liberia and Uganda, as ruling parties could tap into grassroots activism, which in turn spurred policy changes that bolstered their political success.

Post-conflict states are often closely monitored by the international community and typically seek to secure or maintain external support. For instance, the TPLF's humanitarian wing in Ethiopia actively sought foreign aid to bolster domestic legitimacy and political control, which subsequently influenced their governance practices (Matfess 2022). Consequently, elites have strong incentives to advance women's status as a signal of alignment with international priorities on gender equality. Following the adoption of UNSCR 1325 and the associated increase in women's participation in peace processes, post-conflict elites can enhance their

²⁶ Uganda has had multi-party elections since 2006, despite NRM dominance in the legislature.

international credibility by promoting women's political involvement. The adoption of gender quotas, for example, has been linked to signaling adherence to global norms in both democratic and non-democratic regimes, and even corresponds with increased support among US citizens for foreign aid provision (Bush and Zetterberg 2021). Transnational activism has a significant impact on the adoption of national gender quotas advancing women's status (Hughes and Tripp 2015) and the diffusion of gender mainstreaming in state bureaucracies (True and Mintrom 2001) suggesting that national politics has a distinct role in gender-responsive policy adoption. For instance, the NATO office in Sarajevo was instrumental in pushing gender-sensitive security sector reform in Bosnia-Herzegovina through a naming and shaming campaign, supporting implementation of UNSCR 1325 and its NAP, alongside the Ministry of Defense (Rošul-Gajić 2016).

Tripp (2019) argues that bilateral and multilateral donors such as the UN and European Union were large influences on women's rights adoption in the Maghreb. Doing fieldwork in Algeria, she finds that the government sought to gain international support by putting high symbolic importance on advocating for women's rights after the civil war. Further, IOs are important in the aftermath of conflict as well considering the role that international actors have in enforcing and monitoring domestic agreements (Matanock 2020).

Advancing women's policies is seen a boon for domestic elites as it can attract foreign aid, particularly for preferred groups at the top of the victimhood hierarchy such as high-status ethnic, sexual, or religious groups (Berry 2017, 2018), while also allowing political cover for strong control over civil society (Gready 2010) and in some cases allow the international

community to turn a blind eye as seen in Rwanda (Abbott and Malunda 2016).²⁷ This can shore up political support for governing political parties as they are seen as effective leaders able to interact with the international community and enact gender-friendly policy in line with international norms and policies in a fragile context.

The theoretical mechanism proposed here operates primarily at the level of political elites, but we can reasonably assume that policy outcomes will largely reflect elite behavior, all else being equal. Specifically, political elites in more competitive environments are incentivized to support pro-women policies to broaden their electoral base. Political parties leverage their mobilization resources and networks—such as women’s wings, collaboration with civil society organizations, and targeted campaigning—to secure women’s votes on gender-related issues. Advancing gender reforms helps elites maximize personal and political benefits, including retaining power and enhancing legitimacy and credibility with both domestic and international audiences, especially in uncertain and insecure political environments. In contexts where incentives to prioritize women’s status are stronger, we should expect more progress in women’s status compared to less competitive settings. This is not to imply that all gender reform initiatives will succeed, as countervailing forces (discussed in the next section) may impede progress. Nevertheless, greater efforts in these policy areas are likely to produce more substantial advances, all else being equal.

This leads to the first testable implication:

Hypothesis 1a: In post-conflict societies, the greater the level of elite competition, the greater progress there will be in women’s status.

²⁷ Rwanda’s status as a “developmental authoritarian” states may allow the government to avoid condemnation for curbing civil liberties and a more open political system due to its improved economy and stability in the region (Matfess 2015; Ngcayisa 2021).

Hypothesis 1a suggests an independent effect of competition on women's status. Women form a large and potentially important support in post-conflict settings as women can and do engage politically in new ways when conflict has disrupted gender hierarchies and social structures. It is also possible that elite competition may have an additional conditioning effect on the role of international pressure and grassroots women's mobilization. The pressure exerted by these two forces may fall of deaf ears if elites do not see clear benefits from responding to them. Thus, leading to the following testable implications:

Hypothesis 1b: The positive effect of international pressure around women's status will be greater in more competitive environments.

Hypothesis 1c: The positive effect of civil society mobilization women's status will be greater in more competitive environments.

Given this argument, we may also expect to see different rates of progression for women's status over time due to changing incentives for political elites. In the immediate period after conflict, elites will be seeking to capitalize on momentum and political good will by enacting policies, such as domestic violence and gender quotas laws to be seen as legitimate actors by domestic and international audiences. As postwar states stabilize, we should expect to decreased attention women's status if elites feel they do not need to rely on support of a women's bloc, do not need to co-opt opposition parties and activist groups to stay in power.²⁸ This suggests that elites may struggle to prioritize and implement support for women's status in the long-run as elites have fewer incentives to work proactively to address women's status. We should expect to see greater

²⁸ In Northern Ireland women acted as peacebuilders during conflict, established the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition as an umbrella party supporting human rights equality, but descriptive representation of women in politics remains low in the country (Cowell-Meyers 2014). Moreover, the women's party In Liberia, interactions between international actors and civil society organizations sometimes led to contentious relationships between both types of actors, inaction and attempts to be co-opted by the government (Debusscher and De Almagro 2016) and competition (Gizelis 2021).

gains for women's security in the short-run, but this will likely stagnate over the long-run. Thus, that leads us to the hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: Progress on women's security measures is likely to decline after an initial surge post conflict.

Countervailing Forces of Former Armed Actors

The discussion and hypotheses have thus far focused on factors that incentivize elites to pursue pro-women policies to secure and maintain power. However, these dynamics are not occurring in a vacuum and there is an important support base unique to post-conflict environments that may exert a countervailing force to these incentives.

In many conflicts, both rebel and state forces have perpetrated conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV), predominantly against women. Calls for redress and accountability are common at the termination of war. Recent work has investigated impunity (Sellström 2015; Binningsbø and Nordås 2022) and accountability for sexual violence (Loken et al. 2018; Lee 2022). Nordås and Cohen (2021) argue there is much to learn about the role of impunity related to accountability for CRSV.²⁹ For example, following the Peruvian insurgency, the TRC recommended prosecution for crimes against humanity, but the judiciary has yet to act upon this recommendation. Prosecution of the Peruvian armed forces were contentious, hard to follow through on, and sexual violence cases were often ignored (Boesten and Fisher 2012).

Despite the heightened gender salience in conflicts marked by high levels of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV), elites may choose not to address these issues at the state-level, instead framing them as “private matters” or relegating them to the past. This is often a strategic

²⁹ See recent work from Arjona (2014) and Rickard and Bakke (2021) on how the legacies of conflict and wartime institutions effects accountability generally in postwar contexts more generally.

decision to avoid backlash from powerful actors such as former or current armed forces—whether state or rebel-affiliated. Pursuing accountability through transitional justice mechanisms like trials, purges, or amnesties risks alienating key supporters and thereby undermining elites’ electoral advantages. Thus, while holding conflict actors to account could win over certain constituents (i.e. women and the families of victims), it could hurt elite support among other constituencies that have aligned itself with the party members (i.e. male perpetrators and culpable political leaders). Failure to address CRSV can lead to worse outcomes for women in the post-conflict space with a normalization of violence against women and disenfranchisement women from participating in public life.

Given these countervailing incentives for elites to support pro-women policies and perhaps shield other groups from accountability for CRSV, elites can pursue actions that nominally support women, but allow them to retain other supporters. One such strategy involves the design and implementation of transitional justice mechanisms that address war grievances yet shield key allies. Political elites often craft these mechanisms to target rank-and-file perpetrators through post-conflict amnesty agreements—common tools in transitional justice. These amnesties come in various forms—limited, conditional, and unconditional—each differing in the scope of individuals they cover and thereby signaling to domestic and international audiences who is deemed culpable for CRSV. By selectively applying these mechanisms, elites can strategically navigate the tension between demonstrating accountability and maintaining crucial political alliances. This leads to the following testable hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3: In post-conflict societies, the effect of competition on women’s status will lower in when there was wartime sexual violence.

Chapter 3: Post-Conflict Legislative Competition and Women's Rights

This chapter examines how political elite competition affects women's status in post-conflict states. I previously argued that political competition drives support for advancing women's status in such contexts. In competitive environments, political parties have strategic incentives to court women voters, leverage their mobilization capacity to boost credibility and legitimacy, and align themselves with international norms. In this chapter, I establish a link between domestic political competition and the postwar development of women's rights. Women's rights serve as a benchmark for legal protection in post-conflict societies and more directly reflect elite political priorities and behavior regarding women's status.

This chapter tests this argument using cross-national quantitative evidence from a dataset of post-conflict states spanning 1990 to 2020. I show that political elite competition has a clear effect on women's rights in post-conflict states—a domain especially likely to be influenced by the behavior of domestic political elites. I find a positive relationship between increased elite competition and women's rights, even when accounting for alternative mechanisms of advancement, such as women's movements and international pressure.

Quantitative Analysis

To evaluate my hypothesis, I examine 61 post-conflict states from 1990 to 2020 using ordinary least squares (OLS) models. The unit of analysis is the post-conflict country-year, which includes states that experienced conflict ending after the Cold War. This period is selected due to the rise in civil wars and increased international attention to gender equality efforts. The universe of cases was established by including only states that experienced civil or internationalized civil wars, as defined by the Uppsala Conflict Data Program's (UCDP) Conflict

Termination Dataset, which was used to construct the sample (Kreutz 2010), and to only include the post-conflict years available for those states.

To create the dataset, I qualitatively assessed when widespread, major conflict ceased - whether through an outright victory, a negotiated settlement, a reduction in conflict intensity below the UCDP threshold, or another form of resolution. The final year of war is included in the dataset to capture the outcome and intensity level during the last year of active fighting. States exit the dataset either when large-scale conflict recurs or at the endpoint of 2020. For example, the Algerian civil war, which began in 1991, started to wind down with the signing of an amnesty law in 2000, despite the continued activity of splinter groups and lingering violence in subsequent years. In my sample, the war is coded as ending in 2003, following the death of Antar Zouabri—the leader of the Armed Islamic Group of Algeria, one of the main rebel groups—in 2002, and the UCDP’s designation of the end of the dyad in 2003. Algeria remains in the dataset through 2020. I exclude certain cases from the dataset, such as conflicts that occur outside a state’s own borders (e.g., the United States and al-Qaeda) or where protracted conflict remains constant without a clear cessation (e.g., ongoing separatist violence in India). A full list of cases can be found in Tables 3.4 and 3.5 in the Appendix.

Dependent Variable

The key dependent variable of interest, *women’s rights*, measures the legal structures in place to protect women’s political rights, but does not capture enforcement or on-the-ground conditions. This variable, from (Karim and Hill 2024), reflects the existence of formal legal protections rather than their implementation. It includes indicators such as the presence of domestic violence legislation, whether married women can confer citizenship on their children

on equal terms with men, and women's suffrage.³⁰ From a theoretical perspective, using an index of women's rights allows us to assess the general status of women, rather than relying on specific measures that may apply only to certain subgroups—such as maternity leave, which primarily affects cisgender women of childbearing age. An index is advantageous over other measures that may be static, follow a linear progression, or are not consistently tracked by countries over time. Methodologically, indicators such as labor force participation or fertility rates are more readily available in the Global North, but may not accurately reflect the conditions of women in the Global South, where many women work in the informal economy or engage in domestic labor that is often unmeasured. An index-based approach enables broader cross-national comparisons of women's status and helps address potential gaps or limitations inherent in single-measure indicators.

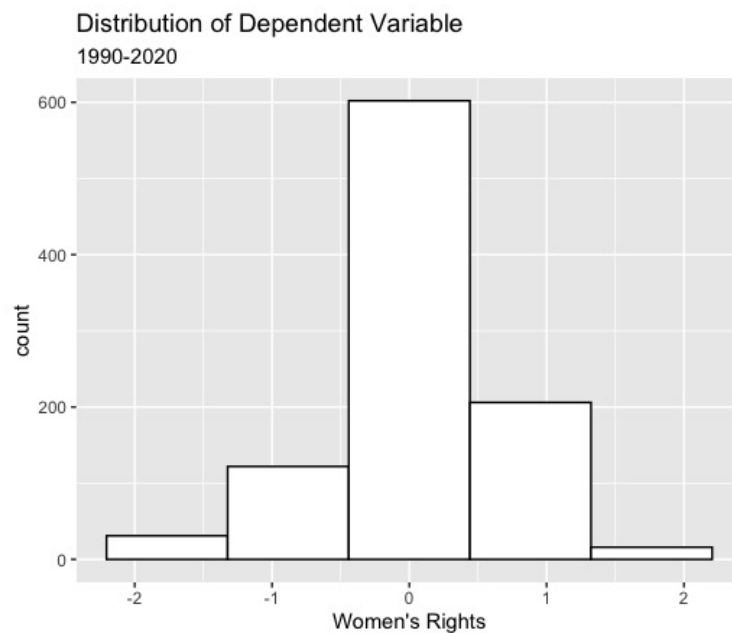


Figure 3.1: Level of Women's Rights 1990-2020

³⁰ For details on what concepts are captured in the variable see: www.womanstats.org.

In this sample, different levels of women's rights, measured at the country-year, can be seen in Figure 2. *Women's rights* are separated into four categories of rights based on the variable's interquartile range. 51.1 % of the sample has a women's rights score between -0.2 and 0.7. In this sample levels of women's rights ranges from -1.95 to 1.58 with a mean of 0.07; higher scores suggest higher levels of women's rights in each country. There is also variation within countries which suggests women's rights changes over time in post-conflict states which can be seen in Table 2. In this figure, I chose three countries - Somalia, Mexico and Spain - that at various points have the lowest, mean, and highest levels of women's rights in the sample. I also include some information on the status of women's rights for each country during this time to provide some context about women in each country.

Country	Year	Women's Rights Scores	Status of Women's Rights
Somalia	1991	-1.95	High illiteracy rates; Abortion allowed to save a woman's life; High fertility rates; Persistent practice of female genital mutilation
Mexico	2017	0.07	High rates of gender-based violence; Low maternal mortality rates; Laws criminalizing revenge pornography and marital rape
Spain	2014	1.41	Legalized abortion; Legalized prostitution; High rates of female political representation; Citizenship laws support married and unmarried women

Table 3.1: Illustrative Example of Women's Rights Scores and Status

Independent Variable

The primary independent variable, *political competition*, can be measured in several ways, including incumbent turnover, vote share margins, or the number of effective parties. However, cross-national data for these indicators—especially in developing or post-conflict

states—can be difficult to obtain. To gauge the level of elite competition, I use Varieties of Democracy Dataset’s (VDEM) variable *party competition across regions*, which captures the level of support for major parties that earned over 10% of the vote (Coppedge et al. 2022). Political competition exclusively on major political actors with the capacity to influence women’s rights, rather than smaller parties with limited political leverage or simply the total number of parties in a state. Compared to other measures, Coppedge et al. (2022) offer a more dynamic and nuanced view of electoral competition. This ordinal variable, converted into an interval variable by VDEM’s measurement model, is coded as a 0 if most major parties are competitive in only one or two regions of the country, 1 if most major parties are competitive in certain regions but not others, or 2 if most major parties are competitive in most regions of the country. A global map of political competition rates in 2019 can be found in Figure 3.2 where the measure is left-skewed suggesting that most states in the sample are politically competitive across regions; political competition has a mean of 0.6.³¹

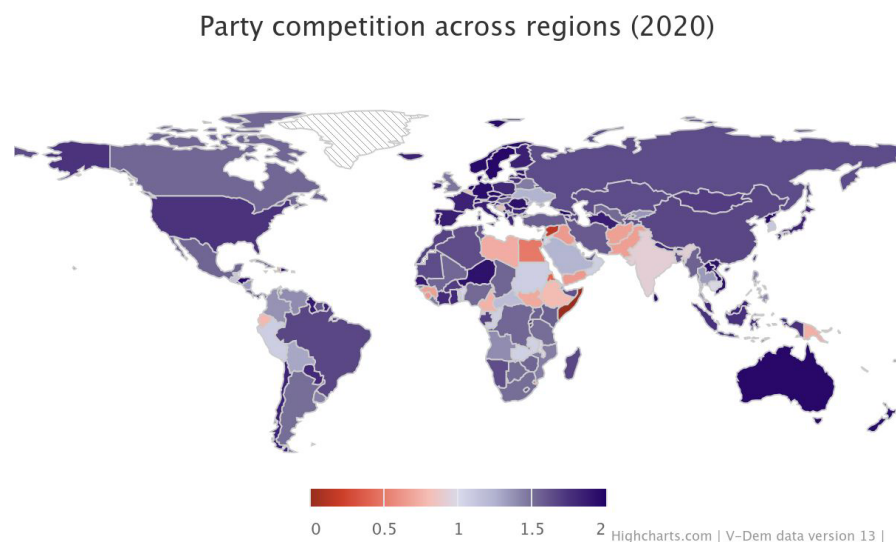


Figure 3.2: Global Rates of Political Competition in 2019

³¹ I include a figure of the change in party competition across African countries between 1990 and 2021 in Figure 3.3, and a density plot in Figure 3.4 to further demonstrate the variation of this variable, which can be found in the Appendix.

Competition between political parties also has gendered implications, making it an important explanatory variable in questions related to gender and politics. Teele (2024) finds that political parties in Sweden maintain geographic strongholds shaped by demographics and gendered patterns of mobilization during elections. This has substantive implications for understanding how political parties allocate resources and engage women's networks for political gain, particularly in post-conflict contexts where gender issues are highly salient. While alternative measures are useful for studying political competition, they are limited in the type of information they convey. For example, effective number of parties is a commonly used metric, but it provides little insight into how parties compete for votes on the ground. Nor does it capture regional variation in party strength or reflect the dynamic nature of electoral competition. Similarly, Cruz, Keefer and Scartascini (2021)'s Database of Political Institutions (DPI) measure for electoral competition captures electoral outcomes and the legal status of political parties. This measure does not capture the more dynamic information about legislative processes - where political parties are likely to expend resources during campaigning and better capture the strategic decision making for elites to spend their time and need to compete for votes in postwar contexts.

Control Variables

I include control variables for other factors that could encourage elites to embrace women's rights in postwar states. First, the presence of international actors may influence women's rights. With conflict mediators, peacekeepers, donors, and human rights organizations operating in-country, dispensing aid, and with a keen eye on elites, domestic actors may face pressure to adopt gender reforms. To capture this, I control for *UN Intervention*, a binary variable indicating whether the UN was involved in the country through mediation, observation, and

peacekeeping (Daly 2021). To account for the presence of women's movements, I include a proxy for women's political participation in civil society organizations – *CSO participation* – from (Coppedge et al. 2022). This ordinal variable converted into an interval measure, scaled from 0-4, captures whether women are prevented from participating in civil society organizations; higher scores suggest that women have fewer barriers to participating in civil society organizations.

Second, there are several institutional factors that could affect the status of women's rights. Existing literature has found that proportional representation (PR) electoral systems as a key factor in promoting women's political representation (Paxton, Hughes and Painter 2010; Hughes 2011; Kennedy, Pierson and Thomson 2016; Teele 2022). Increased women's representation is likely to affect the willingness of political elites to adopt legislation that improves—or potentially undermines—women's security. Additionally, Cammett and Malesky (2012) argue that closed-list PR systems tend to produce better post-conflict outcomes, fostering longer periods of peace and stability. I control for the *electoral system* by controlling for whether a state is a PR system or not using data from VDEM. This measure from is coded as a 0 for a majoritarian system, 1 for a PR system, 2 for a mixed electoral system, and 3 for other (i.e. single-non transferable voting or limited voting). I also create a variable, *regime type*, as democracies may be more likely to promote civil rights and liberties, including promoting and protecting women's rights relative to autocracies. This measure from (Cruz, Keefer and Scartascini 2021) is measured as a 0 for a closed or electoral autocracy, and a 1 for a liberal democracy.

Given the increased attention to women in conflict after the 1995 Beijing Conference

and the emergence of the WPS Agenda through UNSCR 1325 adopted in 2000, I include a binary control variable, *post-2000*, to account for the increased international attention towards gendered issues. Htun and Weldon (2018) emphasize the importance of public service provision, as it determines the resources available for social welfare policies that promote gender equality, particularly those addressing class dynamics. I code for *GDP per capita* to capture the ability of the state to provide resources and support for women in post-conflict states which comes from VDEM and *foreign aid*, the logged foreign development assistance and aid a state receives, which comes from the World Bank.

In addition, a measure is included to capture conflict-related factors. I take an average of the best battle-death variable from the UCDP Battle Deaths dataset (Davies et al. 2025) to create a *battle deaths* measure. I calculate an average of battle deaths per conflict year by summing the annual battle death estimates across all actors during wartime and dividing by the number of conflict years. For example, in Algeria, I summed the estimated battle deaths from 1991 to 2002 and divided by the number of conflict years, resulting in an average of 643 battle deaths per year. This average is then applied uniformly to each post-conflict year that Algeria remains in the sample. I further account for center-seeking, secessionist conflicts to see if conflict based on the control of the state impacts women's rights in post-conflict states. I code *incompatibility* as a 1 if the conflict was centered on demands for control of the government and 0 if the conflict was driven by territorial claims within a state; this also comes from (Davies et al. 2025).

Finally, I code for *coup attempt*. Coup attempts can be disruptive, and potentially violent events, that can lead to changes in governments. This hand-coded variable is measured as a 0 for when no coup was attempted in that conflict-year, a 1 if a coup is attempted or successful in that

year, and is coded as a 2 for the post-conflict-years in the aftermath of a coup-attempt. For example, the 1992 coup attempt in Venezuela is coded as a 1 due to two unsuccessful coup attempts in 1992 by the forces of Hugo Chavez, and the coup-attempt variable is coded as a 2 from 1993-2020.

Results

Table 3.2 includes three sets of results to evaluate the central hypothesis. In the first column is a simple bivariate analysis, which only includes the independent variable of the hypothesis. The second column shows the effects of the full set of control variables, and the third column includes an additional potential confounding variable.

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>		
	Women's Rights		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Competition	0.282*** (0.016)	0.160*** (0.012)	0.148*** (0.013)
CSO Participation		0.320*** (0.019)	0.349*** (0.022)
UN Intervention		−0.020 (0.059)	0.005 (0.060)
GDP/capita		0.010*** (0.003)	0.011*** (0.003)
Electoral System		−0.115*** (0.015)	−0.079*** (0.016)
Post-2000		0.096*** (0.028)	0.033 (0.030)
Foreign Aid		0.044*** (0.013)	0.077*** (0.014)
Regime Type		0.168*** (0.027)	0.173*** (0.029)
Incompatibility		0.111*** (0.022)	0.084*** (0.024)
Battle Deaths		0.00005*** (0.00001)	0.0001*** (0.00002)
Leftist Party			0.078*** (0.030)
Constant	−0.086*** (0.019)	−1.468*** (0.246)	−2.192*** (0.271)
Observations	1,012	914	815
R ²	0.246	0.627	0.647
Adjusted R ²	0.245	0.623	0.642
Residual Std. Error	0.548 (df = 1010)	0.349 (df = 903)	0.347 (df = 803)
F Statistic	328.659*** (df = 1; 1010)	151.909*** (df = 10; 903)	133.828*** (df = 11; 803)
<i>Note:</i>			*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 3.2 VDEM Competition

Model 1 shows a positive and statistically significant coefficient for political competition, suggesting that increased political competition is correlated with higher levels of women's rights in the sample. In Model 2, after including a range of control variables, political competition

remains statistically significant, consistent with theoretical expectations. Consistent with existing literature, CSO Participation increases the likelihood of women's rights increasing in post-conflict states, lending support to H1c. Interestingly, the relationship between UN Intervention and women's rights is negative and statistically insignificant. This finding suggests that the presence of international actors hampers the development of de jure rights. While UN missions are known to reduce violence and foster negative peace, they be less effective at fostering positive peace. UN interventions often disrupt existing institutions and primarily focus on immediate conflict resolution and cessation of violence, rather than broader objectives such as supporting civil and human rights, which require distinct strategies and resources;³² this sheds doubt on support for Hypothesis 1b. Turning to the control variables, we see that GDP/capita, foreign aid,³³ democracies, territorial conflicts, and the number of battle-deaths all contribute to higher women's rights. These results all suggest that the legacies of conflict and domestic factors are crucial to understanding the development of women's rights. The coefficient plot and marginal effects plot for Model 2 are shown in Figures 3.3³⁴ and 3.4. In Figure 3.4, we see a consistent and positive effect of political competition on women's rights across the range of values for women's rights.

³² Gizelis (2009) argues that UN peacebuilding efforts are more successful when women already have high levels of female empowerment, but are more likely to fail when women have poor social standing relative to men, suggesting that UN peacekeeping missions may likewise be less equipped to support women's empowerment in the short-term.

³³ This lead to preliminary conclusions that foreign aid could align with theoretical arguments that international norms influence women's rights such as (Bush and Zetterberg 2021) and Dietrich et al. (2025) that argue that donor states interact with democratic and autocratic states differently.

³⁴ This figure includes country-level fixed effect whereas the regression in Table 2 does not include country-level fixed effects.

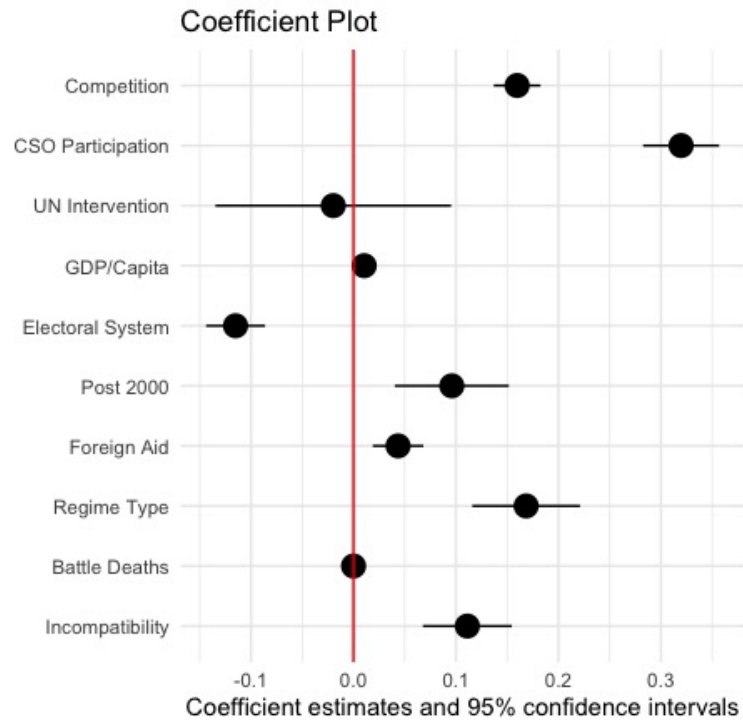


Figure 3.3: Women's Rights Coefficient Plot'

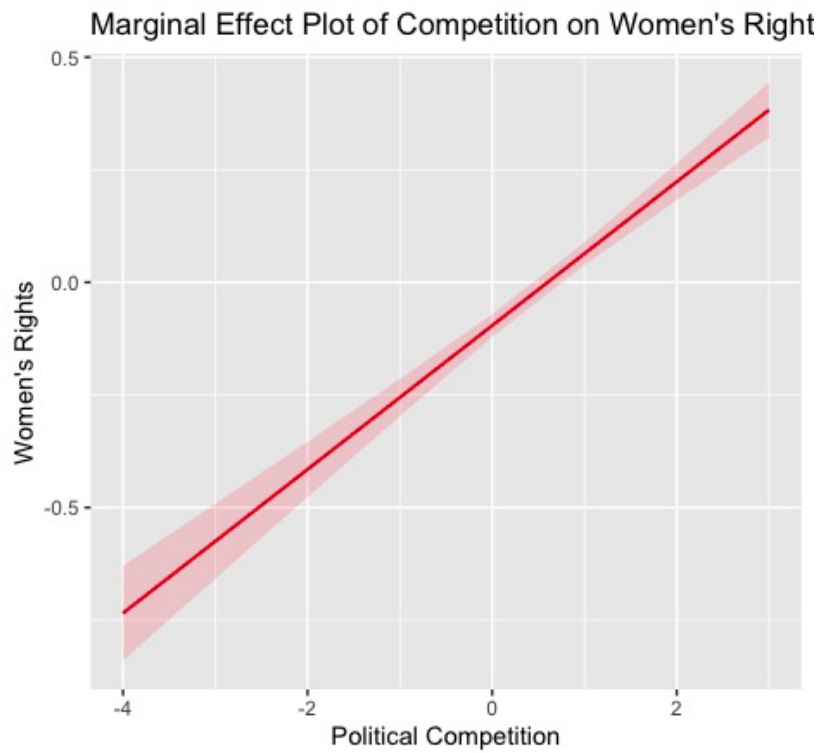


Figure 3.4: Marginal Effect of Political Competition on Women's Rights

Given the likelihood of women's rights expansion to be a political objective of left-wing parties, I include an indicator variable for Leftist Party from the DPI dataset in Model 3. Htun and Weldon (2018) find that left-wing parties are important in the advancement of certain types of gender policies. We see that there is a positive and statistically significant result, suggesting that partisanship is a clear indicator of women's rights improving. This finding contrasts with Hughes and Tripp (2015) who argue that the effect of left-wing parties dissipates after the Cold War on women's representation, suggesting that left-wing parties may no longer be a strong driver of women's advancement. In sum, consistent with H1a, the results show that levels of women's rights are higher when there is increased political competition.

To check the robustness of these findings, I account for issues related to cross-sectional data. In Table 3.6 of the Appendix I include fixed effects at the country-level to account for unexplained heterogeneity among post-conflict states to account for omitted variable bias. I find relatively consistent results, but we also see a loss of significance for CSO participation and UN Intervention but the variables remain in the expected direction. Second, I also include a model with country-level clustered standard errors to account for unexplained variation in women's rights that may be correlated across time, found in Table 3.7 of the Appendix, and find consistent results with Table 3.2 as well. Accounting for both fixed-effects and clustered standard errors lends continued support for H1a.

Robustness Checks

I conduct a battery of robustness tests to demonstrate the strength of my findings by providing additional dependent, independent, and control variables, as well as additional model specifications. All tables for robustness checks can be found in the Appendix.

As conflict-affected states are devastated by war, it often takes time for political rights to come to materialize and influence conditions on the ground. I account for time in two ways. First, in Table 3.3, I account for this with a lagged independent variable at the 1-, 2- and 5-year marks to examine delayed effects. The results continue to support H1a and H1c. Although the size of the coefficient decreases over time, we can see the durability of the positive and statistically significant effect. Second, I examine how prolonged periods of post- conflict peace may support women's political rights. Extended peace allows political parties to shift attention away from conflict-related "hard security" issues such as demobilization of warring parties, resuscitating infrastructure, and the economy, and toward other broader policy domains, including gender reforms. The results of this analysis, shown in Table 3.8, are based on two binary variables, 5 Years PC and 10 Years PC; indicating whether a state, once it has entered the sample, has avoided conflict recurrence for at least five or ten years, respectively. These findings suggest that the duration of peace positively influences women's rights, and that political actors may benefit from addressing gender issues early in the post-conflict period, particularly in competitive political environments. These findings lend support to Hypothesis 2.

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>		
	Women's Rights		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Competition, t-1	0.154*** (0.012)		
Competition, t-2		0.150*** (0.012)	
Competition, t-5			0.140*** (0.013)
CSO Participation	0.331*** (0.019)	0.340*** (0.020)	0.362*** (0.021)
UN Intervention	-0.046 (0.059)	-0.047 (0.062)	-0.041 (0.093)
GDP/capita	0.009*** (0.003)	0.008*** (0.003)	0.006** (0.003)
Electoral System	-0.112*** (0.015)	-0.114*** (0.015)	-0.110*** (0.017)
Post-2000	0.085*** (0.029)	0.077** (0.031)	0.073* (0.039)
Foreign Aid	0.043*** (0.013)	0.037*** (0.013)	0.037** (0.015)
Regime Type	0.154*** (0.027)	0.143*** (0.027)	0.109*** (0.030)
Incompatibility	0.108*** (0.022)	0.109*** (0.023)	0.108*** (0.026)
Battle Deaths	0.00005*** (0.00001)	0.00005*** (0.00001)	0.0001*** (0.00001)
Constant	-1.451*** (0.252)	-1.318*** (0.260)	-1.288*** (0.296)
Observations	868	822	689
R ²	0.635	0.640	0.647
Adjusted R ²	0.630	0.635	0.641
Residual Std. Error	0.343 (df = 857)	0.340 (df = 811)	0.336 (df = 678)
F Statistic	148.839*** (df = 10; 857)	143.871*** (df = 10; 811)	124.098*** (df = 10; 678)
<i>Note:</i>			*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 3.3 VDEM Competition – Lag Models

My argument positions political competition as a mediating factor in existing theoretical frameworks, which emphasize the role of women's civil society organizations and international

actors in advancing women's rights in post-conflict states. I test this assumption by examining potential interactive effects between political competition and these two factors.³⁵ The results for the interactive effect assumption can be found in Table 3.9 of the Appendix. In the top panel of Figure 3.5, there is no evidence of an interactive effect between CSO participation and political competition on women's rights.

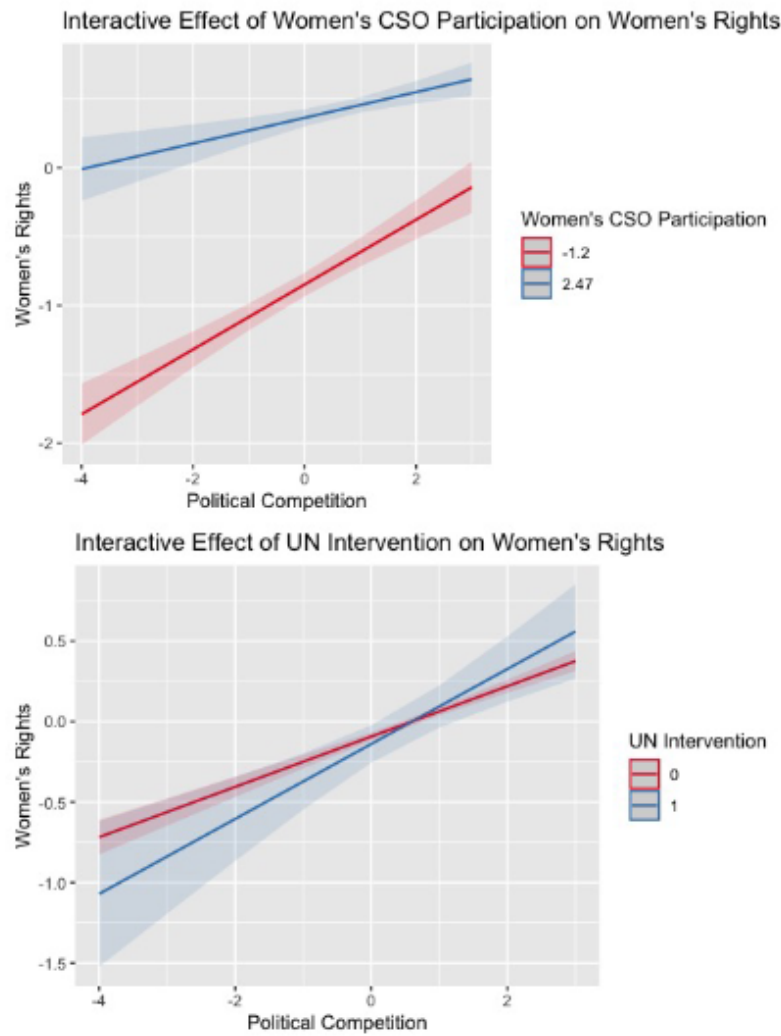


Figure 3.5 Interactive Effect of Women's CSO Participation (Top) and UN Intervention

³⁵ Given the continuous nature of CSO Participation, I center the mean of the variable for greater ease of interpretation for an interaction effect with two continuous independent variables.

Across varying levels of political competition, higher and lower levels of women's civil society participation both appear to be associated with increases in women's rights. However, the lines do not intersect, indicating the absence of an interactive effect, contrary to theoretical expectations. Interestingly, the slope for high levels of political competition is relatively flat, suggesting a potential ceiling effect in which the influence of women's CSO participation may diminish as competition intensifies. Alternatively, this pattern may indicate a curvilinear relationship between participation and competition. These findings raise questions about the robustness of hypothesis H1c.

When testing the interactive effect of international actors and political competition on women's rights, seen in the bottom panel of Figure 3.5, we see that presence of UN intervention at various levels of political competition has a small but positive conditional effect on women's rights across varying levels of political competition. International intervention influence in both low and high levels of political competition; however, the interaction is negative and insignificant as seen in Table 3.9. The strength of intervention's effect may be limited to addressing conflict resolution and fostering negative peace, rather than postwar political issues such as promoting women's rights and status. Consistent with earlier analyses, this result reinforces the view that political competition exerts an independent effect on women's rights in post-conflict states, rather than being significantly conditioned by the presence of international or civil society mechanisms. This finding warrants further exploration in future research.

Even though CSO participation and UN intervention have substantive relationships with the advancement of women's rights, the results of the statistical analysis in the previous section emphasize that political elite competition plays a significant and independent role. Further, the statistical analysis in the previous section suggests that political elite competition between

political parties influences the levels of women's rights in post-conflict states, it is possible that alternative measures of the independent and dependent variables could elucidate differential findings.

Independent Variables	Pearson's Correlation Score
Political Competition and Effective Number of Parties (VDEM)	0.23
Political Competition and Legislative Competition (DPI)	0.32
Political competition and Executive Competition (DPI)	0.29

Table 3.3 Pearson's Correlation Scores Across Measures of Independent Variables

The strength of my findings are tested against alternative measures of political competition. I show correlation table between all measures of the independent variables in Table 3.3. First, I replicate the base model using effective number of parties, in Table 3.10 of the Appendix using data from VDEM. Effective number of parties, measure is coded as -1 if there is no legislature, 0 if there are no parties (including cases where parties are officially banned), 1 if there is one party (including cases where other parties are officially banned), and 2 if there is more than one party in the legislature. Most of the states in the sample, about 84%, have a score of 2 with a mean of 1.73. VDEM's data availability which only covers states in the sample until 2008. I extend the data using the latest available score through 2020 for post-conflict states in the sample. The results are consistent with previous models, though effective number of parties has a slightly smaller coefficient and is statistically significant providing evidence that political competition better captures the dynamic efforts of political parties to compete for votes sub-nationally.

Second, I include alternative measures of legislative and executive competitiveness using measures from the DPI dataset. In this dataset, *legislative competitiveness* captures the ability of political parties to secure seats in the legislature. Similarly, *executive competitiveness* as an

additional measure of competition given the strength and prevalence executive branches in post-conflict regimes. I converted the categorical measures for both branches of government, into a binary measure of 0 for a low competitive branch of government, and 1 for a more competitive branch.³⁶ The results for alternative measures of the independent variable in Table 3.11 of the Appendix. *Legislative competitiveness* shows a strong effect predicting increases in women's rights, suggesting that the legislature may be the appropriate venue to understand women's rights in post-conflict states. I also find support for the influence of *executive competitiveness* in both bivariate and multivariate model specifications. However, the findings indicate that political party competition within the legislature exerts a clearer and more direct effect on the level of women's rights than competition within the executive. Overall, these results provide continued support for hypotheses H1a and H1c.

Given the complexity of measuring women's rights and cross-national availability, I use an index variable in the main statistical analysis to test my argument. However, alternative measures may reveal that not all dimensions of women's rights are equally affected by political competition. I test my argument on alternative measures of women's political rights using variables from VDEM that would likely be impacted by political competition: *women's suffrage*, *gender quotas*, and *property rights*. The results lend continued support to my theory; the regression analysis can be found in Table 3.12.³⁷ The results in Model 1, on women's suffrage, are null, given that universal suffrage had already been achieved in most countries by the 1990s. In contrast, the models for *gender quotas* and *property rights* show both positive and statistically significant results. These findings reinforce the appropriateness of using an index to make

³⁶ Competition was coded as a 1 if in a multiparty contest, the largest party won more than 75% of the seats or if the largest party won less than 75% of the seats, otherwise it was scored as 0 (no legislature, unelected legislature, elected 1 candidate, 1 party had multiple candidates).

³⁷ For more on how these variables are coded, see the VDEM codebook.

generalizable claims about women's rights in a cross-national context. They also highlight that not all components of women's rights - and by extension, women's status - necessarily covary across countries or respond uniformly to political dynamics such as elite competition.

Additional Control Variables

Political systems may exert a distinct influence on the advancement of women's rights in post-conflict states. In certain contexts, legislative bodies may lack autonomy from the executive and function as extensions of presidential or ruling authority—particularly in durable single-party dominant or personalist regimes, such as those in Cambodia and Tajikistan. Regime types play a potentially important role in shaping a state's commitment to women's rights. Democracies may be more inclined to align with international gender norms and adopt legal protections for women, while authoritarian regimes often restrict both political and civil liberties, resulting in slower or more uneven progress on women's rights. Figure 3.5 presents a jitter plot showing the distribution of *regime type* and *political competition*, illustrating that competitive elections vary independently of regime type across states.³⁸ In Table 14 I create a subsample of post-conflict states to only include those coded as closed or electoral autocracies and remove the regime type variable from the model specification. Here, we continue to see a positive relationship between *political competition* and *women's rights* in support of H1a. This result shows that regime type and political competition are not correlated with one another and we should expect, in line with existing literature such as (Donno and Kreft 2019; Peksen 2019; Tripp 2023), that autocratic states vary in electoral competitiveness and have incentives to advance women's rights alongside democratic states.

³⁸ For more on competitive authoritarian states see (Brancati and Snyder 2013; Brownlee 2007; Levitsky and Way 2010; Gandhi and Lust-Okar 2009; Morse 2012).

Conflict dynamics may further exacerbate the likelihood of women's rights being adopted and I include a variety of model specifications to address how conflict may shape women's status. First, I control for *conflict intensity*, using UCDP's measure of conflict intensity, a binary variable that is coded as 1 for minor conflicts, (25 and 999 battle deaths per year), and 2 for full-scale civil wars (1,000 or more battle-deaths in a given year). As shown in Table 3.14 of the Appendix, *conflict intensity* is statistically insignificant and not correlated with an increase of women's rights; only 86 of the post-conflict years in the sample are after high-intensity conflicts, which may explain this unexpected finding that the violence associated with conflict drives changes in gender hierarchies and women's rights after war.

Second, in Table 3.15 of the Appendix, I include several control variables from UCDP to examine whether the form of conflict termination influences the issues that are addressed in the post-conflict period. For example, rebel victors, particularly by revolutionary groups, may lead to greater advancement of women's rights compared to negotiated settlements. Second, in Table 3.15 of the Appendix, I include several control variables from UCDP to examine whether the form of conflict termination influences the issues that are addressed in the post-conflict period. For example, rebel victors, particularly by revolutionary groups, may lead to greater advancement of women's rights compared to negotiated settlements or government victories. This series of models includes three outcomes: *peace agreement*, *government win*, and *rebel win*. Model 1 shows that the presence of *peace agreements* statistically decreases the likelihood of advancement of women's rights and is statistically significant. This finding may be driven by the slow growth of gender-sensitive settlements and actors seeking to make sure "hard" security issues (i.e. power-sharing and disarmament), are addressed during negotiations over gender reforms. In Model 2, *government wins* show a positive but statistically insignificant relationship

with women's rights. By contrast, Model 3 finds that *rebel wins* are positively associated with higher levels of women's rights in post-conflict states, significant at the 0.1 level. This finding suggests that rebel wins may provide opportunities to break with the political status quo, potentially enabling more progressive reforms in gender relations than government-led transitions. However, due to the relatively small number of post-conflict years following rebel victories (N = 72), a more detailed subsample analysis is not feasible here. Nevertheless, comparing the post-conflict trajectories of government- versus rebel-won conflicts remains a promising area for future research, particularly through the use of descriptive statistics and qualitative case studies.

Third, I examine how the substance of conflicts shapes women's rights. Specifically, I ask whether center-seeking conflicts, those seeking control of the government, are more likely to lead to greater improvement of women's rights than territorial conflicts. In Table 3.16 of the Appendix, I test this relationship using the *incompatibility* variable on women's rights from (Davies et al. 2025). For easier interpretation, I recode this variable as 0 for territorial conflicts and 1 for government-based conflicts. In Model 1, the results show that government conflicts increase the likelihood of women's rights advancement, suggesting that the nature of conflict itself - namely those seeking power of the government rather than those seeking territory - has an impact on improving women's status in competitive environments.³⁹ In sum, conflict dynamics play a meaningful role in shaping post-conflict gender outcomes. Both the cause and the outcome of war appear to matter for improving women's rights. However, the analysis also

³⁹ This finding could align with Cunningham (2014) that more undivided disputes among self-determination are more likely to get concessions from the state, suggesting that unified aims over the government can lead to a more transformational period for women.

shows that high-intensity conflict is not a necessary condition for progress in women's status, pointing instead to the political nature and aftermath of conflict as more influential factors.

I also examine how transitions to peace following violent coups may influence the development of women's rights. In Table 3.17 of the Appendix, Model 1 focuses on a subsample of post-conflict states that experienced a violent coup or coup attempt. Model 2 expands the analysis to the full sample, including a binary variable for coup attempts to compare states with and without such events. In both models, *political competition* remains a statistically significant predictor of women's rights advancement in post-coup states. Additionally, Model 2 shows a positive and statistically significant coefficient for *coup attempts*, suggesting that violent events beyond civil wars can serve as catalysts for changes in women's rights. This finding highlights an important area for further research into how different types of violent political transitions affect gender equality.

Further, increased gender salience in post-conflict politics may help explain the expansion of women's rights. This expansion is often driven by transnational advocacy networks and evolving international norms on gender. Consequently, political parties may be more inclined to improve women's status in alignment with these international norms to signal their commitment. To account for the role of norms diffusion, I include an interaction model between gender quotas and political competition in Table 3.18 of the Appendix. Gender quotas support the inclusion of women in public life and changes to state-society relations. VDEM's *gender quota* is an ordinal variable measured on a 0-4 scale for whether there is no national-level gender quota in place, whether a gender quota exists for all parties with no, weak or strong sanctions, or if there are reserved seats in the legislature for women. For this measure, I collapse all forms of a gender quota to be coded as 1 and a lack of a national-level quota to be coded as 0 for ease of

interpretation. In this model, I do not find a statistically significant relationship between *gender quota* and *political competition*. This could be driven by several factors, such as persistent patriarchal norms within legislatures may stifle gender quotas from leading to substantive representation or how descriptive representation does not clearly map onto substantive change for women. This suggests that norms diffusion may have a small effect on women's rights in post-conflict states, rather than one that boosts women's political rights. However, I turn to conflict-related sexual violence as a potential contributing factor to advancing women's status.

While the diffusion of gender norms may not directly spur the expansion of women's rights, a common explanation for the increased attention to gender issues in post-conflict states is the occurrence and heightened awareness of conflict-related sexual violence. I examine how the prevalence of gendered violence influences the advancement of women's rights in these settings. We should expect that wartime sexual violence could lead to improvements in women's rights during the post-conflict period. Using data from Cohen and Nordås (2014) I capture how wartime and post-conflict sexual violence impacts women's rights expansion in post-conflict states.⁴⁰ This data is collected at the actor-year level to address the various war and post-war actors that use sexual violence. I aggregate the data to the country-year level to reduce the number of conflict actors in the dataset. In Model 1, *sexual violence* is an ordinal variable, scaled from 0 to 3, measuring the magnitude of sexual violence.⁴¹ I also include *conflict year*, to capture whether sexual violence occurred during wartime to address wartime levels of perpetration; it is coded as 1 for an active conflict-year and 0 otherwise. In Model 2 I include *post-conflict SV*, a

⁴⁰ The post-conflict states in the sample are constrained by data availability in the (Cohen and Nordås 2014) dataset.

⁴¹ or more details on how this variable is measured see (Cohen and Nordås 2014).

binary variable for whether sexual violence occurred in a post-conflict year in the five years after the dyad ends per UCDP.

In Table 3.19 of the Appendix, I present the results for how the prevalence of sexual violence impacts women's rights expansion in post-conflict states. Wartime sexual violence in politically competitive states is correlated with lower levels of women's rights. Post-conflict sexual violence also decreases the likelihood of women's rights, although statistically insignificant.⁴² These findings are in line with Lee (2022) which suggests that governments are more likely to perpetuate sexual violence and therefore less likely to address women's rights after enacting gendered harms, and leaders are not willing to take responsibility for or punish those culpable for wartime abuses, but will address postwar gendered violence and increase postwar women's rights and status.

Additionally, I disaggregate the data by the perpetrator of wartime sexual violence in Table 3.20. From the existing SVAC variable on actor type, I create two binary variables state-perpetrated and rebel-perpetrated to differentiate between the actor responsible for sexual violence. Models 1 and 2 report a negative, statistically significant coefficients for state-perpetrated and rebel-perpetrated sexual violence. These findings suggest that the gendered legacy of conflict affects future levels of women's rights.

Conclusion

There is a relationship between women's movements and the influence of international actors in supporting women's rights after civil war in the gender and conflict literature.

⁴² In Model 1, I use the US State Department data as a more conservative estimate of sexual violence perpetration in order to be confident in the results. (Lee 2022).

However, existing studies have largely marginalized the role of domestic political elite in this process. The literature has not fully explored the role of “meso-level” actors such as legislators, bureaucrats and heads of state, that must contend with their own preferences for supporting gender equality efforts after conflict.

This study presents cross-national evidence to show that there is a relationship between political competition and women’s rights in post-conflict states. Consistent with the theoretical expectations presented here, political competition has a positive relationship with women’s rights in post-conflict states. Although women’s movements have a clear positive effect on women’s rights, international actors (i.e UN intervention) generally exhibit a negative relationship with the likelihood of women’s rights increasing. I find support for Hypotheses 1a and 2, mixed support for Hypothesis 1c, and no support for 1b. This suggests that alternative approaches to women’s rights have disparate likelihoods of being effective across all issue areas of gender equality, in line with (Htun and Weldon 2018). Moreover, this study is motivated by the idea that women’s rights may shift in relation to other forms of gender equality after civil war, but this effect is short-lived.

An area of future work could further explore how political competition affects different aspects of women’s security. Karim and Hill (2024) offer a cross-national index for women’s security, a more granular measure could more directly demonstrate this relationship. Second, more directly demonstrating how conflict-era actors, ex-combatants, impact gender equality reforms, and women’s security could illustrate a more causal relationship than is possible here. Third, taking a more intersectional approach to demonstrate how other identities such as ethnicity, class, and religion impact women’s security could illuminate why we see such variation in gender equality outcomes.

Chapter 4: Political Competition on Gender Equality

Outcomes in Postwar Nepal

War has the potential to upend traditional gender roles and, in some cases, catalyze the advancement of women's status. As previously argued in this dissertation, in some postwar states women can experience greater advancement of rights and rates of political participation. In other cases, barriers to advancement are marked by a reassertion of traditional gender norms, relegating women to the private sphere and witnessing a rise in gender-based violence after conflict. Existing literature highlights grassroots women's activism and mobilization, the involvement of international actors, and the diffusion of international norm as key mechanisms driving gender equality in post-conflict settings. I argue that political competition is an additional and underexamined mechanism influencing variation in gender outcomes after war. More specifically, I contend that domestic political elites play a critical role in advancing gender equality through their engagement in electoral competition and pursuit of political survival. Political competition reduces the likelihood of backlash against pro-women policies, and embracing such policies allows political parties to strategically appeal to women as a voting bloc.

In this chapter, I use process tracing to show how political competition influences women's security in the postwar Nepal context. I focus on two salient dimensions of women's security: inheritance and citizenship rights. I find that inheritance rights were framed primarily as a women's rights issue and initially advanced more rapidly, but progress eventually stagnated due to limited political competition between parties on the issue. In contrast, citizenship rights were framed as addressing both gender and ethnic minority inclusion, which led to broader

political mobilization and more inclusive policy adoption. This case study shows that not all aspects of women's security improve at the same rate within states, adding nuance to our understanding of how women's status evolves in post-conflict states. Specifically, it highlights that rights do not always move in tandem and that some are more likely to advance than others depending on domestic contextual factors—chief among them, political competition. While this case study cannot capture the full complexity of gender outcomes across all post-conflict contexts or the implementation of reforms in practice, it offers valuable insight into the political processes that shape gender reforms after conflict.

Methodology

I use the qualitative method of process tracing to demonstrate the causal mechanism of my theory. Process tracing can provide inferential leverage by looking at events over time rather than a singular moment in time, in contrast to quantitative data (Collier 2011).⁴³ Placing doubt on King, Keohane and Verba (2021), (Lijphart 1971; Gerring 2006, 2017; Levy 2008; Mahoney 2010) argue that process tracing can be a useful and distinctive form of qualitative methods, and can aid in causal inference (Geddes 2003; Bennett and Checkel 2015; Waldner 2015; Beach 2017).

In this chapter, I demonstrate the causal processes at play, the decision-making process of domestic elites to address women's security, with a single case study; I do not seek to make claims about universal generalizability (Lijphart 1971). I use fieldwork interviews of civil society members, politicians, academics, and a journalist conducted in 2022, 2024 and 2025, and secondary sources including newspapers, academic journals, and policy reports.

⁴³ For more on the value of combining quantitative and qualitative methods see (Gerring 2017; Seawright 2016).

I select on the key independent variable, political competition, to choose a post-conflict case for this chapter (Collier and Mahoney 1996; Geddes 2003). To identify a relevant sample of postwar cases, I focus on states in the post–Cold War era that have experienced at least ten years of negative peace since the end of civil conflict. Gender issues have become a central focus of post–Cold War conflict termination and resolution discourse and policy, particularly since the 1990s. This period saw a significant increase in the adoption of gender-related policies at both national and international levels. Milestones such as the 1995 Beijing Conference, UNSCR 1325 which made gender a salient factor in conflict resolution, peace processes, and statebuilding by the international community. This has led to the widespread adoption of National Action Plans at the domestic-level,⁴⁴ an increased presence of women in politics, and legislation to support gender equality in public and private spheres.

I present evidence showing that political competition affects women’s security in postwar Nepal. Gender-based issues have been important in Nepalese politics prior to, during, and after the civil conflict. Nepal experienced a 10-year intense civil war from 1996-2006 led by the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist). The war centered around class- and caste- based discrimination as a focal point of the Maoist’s wartime political agenda. Gender issues also became salient within the Maoist movement, shaping their recruitment strategies, political goals, and governance practices. During the war, Nepal had a moderately active women’s movement (Tamang 2009; Malla 2011),⁴⁵ and women played multifaceted roles—not only as victims of violence (Malla 2011) but also as active participants and perpetrators (Mehrl 2023). The Maoists’ ideological emphasis on gender equality and the significant involvement of women

⁴⁴ NAPs are protocols for domestic governments to localizing the WPS agenda and are strategies to address issues such as women’s participation in peacebuilding, protections from human rights violations, and access to justice.

⁴⁵ The women’s movement has been characterized as less active and captured less attention than other wartime women’s movements that occurred in Liberia and Colombia.

in the conflict suggest that gender would remain a salient political cleavage in the post-conflict period.

Nepal experienced relatively low international involvement during the war and subsequent negotiation process. The country received a minimalist United Nations (UN) peacekeeping political mission, UN Mission in Nepal (UNMIN),⁴⁶ which was mandated to focus on monitoring, disarmament and demobilization efforts, assisting with the 2007 elections, and overseeing the implementation of the peace agreement. At the height of UNMIN's presence, the civilian component comprised almost 700 civilians (Suhrke 2011), a small contingent compared to other peacekeeping missions deployed at this time period such as Burundi and Haiti.⁴⁷ Nepal has a strong international development sector and civil society participation in the country. Nepal remains one of the poorest countries in the region due to its reliance on foreign aid and being susceptible to the whims of international donors (Kernot 2006). Fieldwork interviews with scholars and practitioners suggest that these donor preferences significantly influence national development priorities and the programming of civil society organizations.

Since the end of the war and the transition from the monarchy, Nepal has exhibited relatively high levels of political competition⁴⁸ in the post-conflict era (Malla 2011; Ishiyama and Widmeier 2013). Nepal is now considered a democratic, multi-party regime with a mixed electoral system in the lower chamber of the legislature, combining first-past-the-post and

⁴⁶ Fieldwork interviews in Nepal suggested that UNMIN did not have a strong effect on the transition into a post-conflict state, however numerous UN offices exist and operate in the country.

⁴⁷ Suhrke (2011) argues that India's support for the peace process and preferences for a modest UN mission, and the Maoists were adamant against a foreign troop peacekeeping force due to Nepal's tradition of deploying peacekeepers to missions, as factors contributing to the smaller peacekeeping operation.

⁴⁸ My measure of political competition, in line with the cross-national section of my dissertation, focuses on political parties expending resources sub-nationally. However, I am unable to measure female vote share in Nepal due to a lack of disaggregated reporting by Nepal's Electoral Commission.

proportional representation (PR) elements. Federalism was introduced several years after the end of the conflict and became a feature of elections starting in 2017. Following the war, the Maoists transitioned into a formal political party - the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Centre) (CPN-M) - and have been part of the postwar governing coalition since 2008, although their share of seats in the National Assembly has fluctuated over time.⁴⁹ These developments suggest that Nepal is a particularly useful case study for examining the influence of political competition on gender outcomes. In the postwar context, the Maoists must operate within coalition politics, address national-level political issues in the legislature, and compete for votes across a politically and ethnically diverse country.

I selected the case of Nepal for several reasons. Theoretically, Nepal is an under-studied case in the gender and conflict literature of the post-Cold War period, especially when compared to more frequently analyzed cases such as Rwanda or Bosnia-Herzegovina. Importantly, Nepal has experienced sufficient temporal distance from its civil war to allow for meaningful analysis of post-conflict developments in women's status - unlike more recent conflicts such as those in Colombia or the Tigray region of Ethiopia, which have not yet seen a full decade of negative peace. From a practical standpoint, Nepal was a feasible case for fieldwork. As a non-Nepali speaker, I was able to conduct research through personal connections, and many elites and members of civil society organizations spoke fluent English, which facilitated interviews and improved on-the-ground accessibility.

However, there are important limitations to this study given my own positionality and research constraints. This analysis relies exclusively on English-language sources and interviews conducted with fluent English speakers, both in the United States (virtually) and Nepal.

⁴⁹ For a table of CPN-M's vote share since 2008 see the Appendix in Table 4.1.

Furthermore, scholarship has identified other mechanisms also found that women's civil society participation/women's movements and international actors as important mechanisms for addressing women's rights in post-conflict states.⁵⁰ Nepal experienced a weaker women's movement⁵¹ which championed women's rights, alongside a significant presence of international and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) engaged in postwar reconstruction and development. These factors make Nepal a compelling case to observe multiple mechanisms at work. While acknowledging that these alternative explanations are also present, this study highlights the independent and enduring influence of political competition shaping women's security over time.

Structural Harm and Women's Security

In this study, I focus on structural issues related to women's status, women's security, which I conceptualize as freedoms from everyday harm as the central dependent variable.⁵² Recent scholarship has increasingly emphasized the importance of understanding how structural harm⁵³ affect women's lives in the long-term following conflict. These harms can be (re)constructed during the postwar period, including after peace agreements are signed and initial elections held. Structural harm can describe an inequality of power, resources, and life opportunities (Karim and Hill 2024), impacting women's autonomy and agency, as well as their everyday decision-making power, ability to make household decisions, and independence (Mukherjee et al. 2011; Bowen, Hudson and Nielsen 2015; Rai, True and Tanyag 2019; Farmer

⁵⁰ In a previous cross-national quantitative analysis I find that political competition operates an both an additive and complementary pathway towards increased women's rights in post-conflict states.

⁵¹ The women's movement has been characterized as a top-down process that is centralized in the Kathmandu area, with women in at the grassroots levels isolated from the feelings and perceptions of change(Malla 2011).

⁵² For more detailed explanation see (Karim and Hill 2024).

⁵³ For more on structural harm see (Galtung 1969).

et al. 1996). While broad, women's security, can thus be understood as freedom from these forms of structural harm, which are often perpetuated by entrenched social hierarchies. Examples include limited access to healthcare or education, pervasive gender-based violence, and barriers to exercising political rights. These issues are especially salient for ordinary women in conflict-affected states and are particularly important to assess in the extended aftermath of war.⁵⁴

In post-conflict settings, structural harms are often codified into law, embedded in multiple branches of government, and reinforced by prevailing social norms. While international relations scholarship has emphasized gender-based violence (Meger 2016), women's political representation and inclusion obscures some of the realities of women in the aftermath of civil war. Even when gendered violence is widespread during conflict and women become more visible in public life, such narratives offer a limited lens on the varied and complex experiences of women in post-conflict societies. Importantly, not all women in these contexts are.

In post-conflict settings, structural harms are often codified into law, embedded in multiple branches of government, and reinforced by prevailing social norms. While international relations scholarship has emphasized gender-based violence (Meger 2016), women's political representation and inclusion obscures some of the realities of women in the aftermath of civil war. Even when gendered violence is widespread during conflict and women become more visible in public life, such narratives offer a limited lens on the varied and complex experiences of women in post-conflict societies. Importantly, not all women in these contexts are survivors of sexual violence or participants in elite-level politics. Yet all women are tasked with rebuilding

⁵⁴ For more on struggles of achieving everyday peace see (Mac Ginty 2014; Berry 2015, 2017; Stavrevska 2020).

their lives - seeking employment, accessing public services, and navigating aks redefined gender roles—each of which carries distinct gendered implications.

Dependent Variables

In this study, I look at two types of women's rights that directly impact women's security outcomes in two domains that are salient in Nepal: inheritance and citizenship rights. Both fall under the broader category of family law, which governs women's agency and autonomy, regulates access to essential resources, and oversees aspects such as marriage, divorce, and the transfer of property across generations.⁵⁵ Codifying and accessing women's ability to inherit property and exercise their agency as full citizens of the state enables women to exercise their agency and be autonomous actors in everyday life. These rights are salient in many post-conflict states, but Nepal offers a useful case to understand how the development of these rights are impacted by political competition.

Inheritance Rights

Inheritance rights are the legal rights to own, buy, sell, and inherit property and land.⁵⁶ They are essential for women's economic security as they allow women to accumulate wealth, exercise decision-making capabilities, improve social mobility, and reduce financial dependence on men (Duflo 2012).⁵⁷ Economic security is particularly salient in post-conflict settings where women often become heads of households due to losing male relatives to conflict, changing gender roles allowing women to work outside of the home (Joireman and

⁵⁵ For more on gender and family law see (Hudson, Bowen and Nielsen 2011; Bowen, Hudson and Nielsen 2015; Htun and Weldon 2015).

⁵⁶ I use the terms "property" and "inheritance" interchangeably throughout this chapter. I do not disentangle the ability for women to solely and/or jointly own property or land, both of which have implications for female decision-making, agency and autonomy.

⁵⁷ For more on how gender equality, markets, and women's economic well-being intersects, see (Elias and Rai 2015; Htun, Jensenius and Nelson-Nuñez 2019; Peksen 2019; Brul'e 2020; Bhalotra, Brul'e and Roy 2020).

Meitzner Yoder 2016; Yadav 2021), and in agrarian states where a large portion of income comes from agricultural production (Agarwal 1994). For instance, inheritance rights have played a central role for displaced families in postwar Liberia, where widowed women initially lacked legal recourse to reclaim their prewar homes until property rights legislation was enacted in 2003 (Mohan 2011). Similarly, in Kenya, securing inheritance rights enhanced women's bargaining and decision-making power, which correlated with improved education and health outcomes and reductions in gender-based violence (Harari 2019). In Nepal, women's landownership positively influences women's empowerment by increasing household bargaining power and redirecting resources towards women's preferences (Mishra and Sam 2016).

The inability of women to earn or access inheritance rights can have many negative effects for women's autonomy and agency. Duflo (2012) describes how a lack of codified property rights leads to lowered decision-making power which impacts not just women, but the entire family. "...the lower position of women directly results in inefficient investment, and this is not corrected by the transfer of property rights within the household, which might secure the claim of the household vis-à-vis the lineage or the village, but at the expense of weakening women's positions within their own households." In Nepal, a significant gap persists between women's participation in the agricultural economy and women's land ownership and has increased as men enter non-agricultural work in urban areas (Mishra and Sam 2016). The adoption of formal inheritance rights can also be seen as a threat to social stability by men, as women largely rely on customary law and institutions to secure property rights in rural areas. Izumi (2007) argues that property grabbing, where an individual is forcibly removed from their home, is a form of gender-based violence given the force used to be evicted and the struggle to survive with dignity.

Inequalities in both the mechanisms and enforcement of property acquisition lead to varying levels of women's status depending on their position within social hierarchies. Gaddis, Lahoti and Swaminathan (2022) find that men are more likely to own property than women and that persistent property ownership gender gaps are strongest among disadvantaged groups. They argue that legal reforms are a potential mechanism to address this issue, suggesting a role for political elites as a key actor to address inheritance issues. Women must be strategic in how they use different strategies to claim or preserve property rights throughout their lifecycles (Pradhan, Meinzen-Dick and Theis 2019). These authors show that structural barriers to claiming inheritance rights vary depending on women's marital status, and are further complicated by intersecting identities such as ethnicity and caste.

Inequalities in land ownership in terms of class, caste, and gender in Nepal, and South Asia more broadly, have been long standing issues (Karki 2002).⁵⁸ Put another way, "Land ownership is a key indicator of identity, power, wealth, and political access. Yet up to 25% of Nepal's population estimated to be landless or near-landless: the bottom 47% of agricultural households control only 15% of agricultural land; the top 5% control more than 37%," (Wickery 2010, 932-933). Property rights and land are embedded in social relations and are deeply important in rural economies as land is less likely to be sold and visibly increases status, but land ownership for marginalized people - women - can improve livelihoods and bargaining power (Agarwal 1994; Allendorf 2007; Pradhan, Meinzen-Dick and Theis 2019). Inheritance rights are an important facet of women's security and addressing vulnerability, an issue that is particularly salient in South Asia.

⁵⁸ In the 1990s, land rights movements forcibly occupied unclaimed land and forests, leading to violently suppression tactics by Nepalese state forces (Karki 2002).

Citizenship Rights

Citizenship rights establish national identity and define an individual's relationship and sense of belonging to the state. Given the disruptive nature of conflict, citizenship can be used as a tool for states to (re)establish authority, belonging, and status.⁵⁹ Citizenship has been an important issue in countries emerging from conflicts such as Rwanda, Liberia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina as states seek to (re)design political and legal systems.⁶⁰ Citizenship can be understood as "... the way the political community is construed, and regulate the link between individuals and the state. It is a relationship of reciprocity, as it includes the rights and duties that are attached to membership," (Džankić 2015, 528). In a study of Nepal, (Pant and Standing 2011, 410) argue that citizenship goes beyond legal paperwork, but views citizenship as "... a way of understanding equality of participation and rights in other institutions including household and community." This suggests that citizenship has, alongside gendered implications, citizenship distinct implications for state-society relations, and the very structure of the state. Expanded citizenship rights allow women to negotiate their power and agency in a variety of public and private spaces in the same ways as men, which may be particularly important in upending the gendered status quo in patriarchal and highly unequal societies.⁶¹

The foundation of citizenship rights allows women to access other political rights and fully participate in society, including access to government services, voting, and broader forms of inclusion within the state. Citizenship rights can also lead to tensions between intersectional identities, influencing how individuals access the state and their sense of belonging.⁶²

⁵⁹ For more on gender and citizenship see (Seely et al. 2013; Walby 1994; Waylen et al. 2013; Yuval-Davis 1997).

⁶⁰ Citizenship and belonging has been integral to the postwar development of Bosnia-Herzegovina and has even led to novel and complex restructuring of its political system (Džankić 2015; Kapić 2015; Merdzanovic 2017).

⁶¹ For more gender and citizenship see (Walby 1994).

⁶² Tripp (2016) discusses how intersectional identities can lead to varying forms of feminism that can either highlight equality or differences between different identities due to historical differences.

Consociational peace processes in deeply divided societies such as Bosnia-Herzegovina and Northern Ireland illustrate these tensions, revealing trade-offs in post-conflict progress. As (Deiana 2016, 102) notes, “. . . these solutions also entailed a trade-off whereby the peace process has led to the entrenchment of ethno-nationalism in the broader social and cultural discourse underpinning citizenship. I argue that this trade-off engenders a further unexpected outcome whereby consociational solutions produce a notion of citizenship which is not only explicitly ethnicised but also implicitly gendered.” In other words, citizenship impacts all identities of an individuals, but also threatens the status quo of society making it a contentious place of negotiation in post-conflict societies.

Citizenship rights are a salient issue in Nepal for women and children, particularly those of discriminated social classes. Only 77% of children have their births registered despite it being law in Nepal and 59% of children received their birth registration before their first birthday despite this being required by law.⁶³ Urban development has led to gendered issues about access to equal resources to clean water and sanitation, and gender-based differences in discrimination; Madhesi women face harassment, while Madhesi men face police persecution in informal settlements (Butcher 2021).

In sum, I argue that inheritance and citizenship rights are key areas for understanding how civil war is a critical juncture for the advancement of women’s security. Inheritance rights enable women to assume the responsibility of heads of household and transcend gender roles. Citizenship rights impact women’s ability to engage with the public sphere and exercise decision-making within the household.

⁶³ Nepal 2019: Birth Registration. 2019. UNICEF.
<https://www.unicef.org/nepal/media/16186/file/Nepal%20MICS%20Sta%20%20Birth%20Registration.pdf>.

Independent Variable

The independent variable of interest is political competition among political parties in Nepal. Political competition is essential to cultivating democratic norms and consolidating democratic governance; however this can be a fraught process in the aftermath of civil conflict (Ishiyama and Batta 2011; Ishiyama 2014; Dresden 2017), and ripe for conflict recurrence. Political competition is vital to addressing women's issues and political parties are concerned with women as a voting base and a group with the ability to mobilize their networks in electoral politics. For example, in Uganda the ruling party the National Resistance Movement (NRM) was increasingly responsive to voter concerns in the post-conflict era with multiparty elections. The Uganda Women Parliamentary Association (UWOPA), along with several other coalition partners sought to pass a domestic violence bill in the early 2000s. UWOPA was key to the eventual passage of a (later watered down) domestic violence bill and gaining the support of key actors of civil society, the bureaucracy, and importantly, the president and the NRM (Wang 2013). Knowing that the NRM was sensitive to multiparty elections, the coalition sought to mobilize rural women voters to gain popular support for a domestic violence bill (Ahikire and Mwiine 2019). In other words, political parties are influential actors with a vested, strategic interest in supporting women's security in post-conflict states within competitive party systems, and are not immune to political pressure to adopt gender reforms by voters and actors in the domestic political system. It is therefore reasonable to argue that inter-party competition between political parties will be an important driving force in women's issues being addressed within the legislature at the national level. Political parties place extensive resources to mobilize supporters, strengthen political ideologies and political socialization among party members, and increase the pool of potential recruits for future elections.

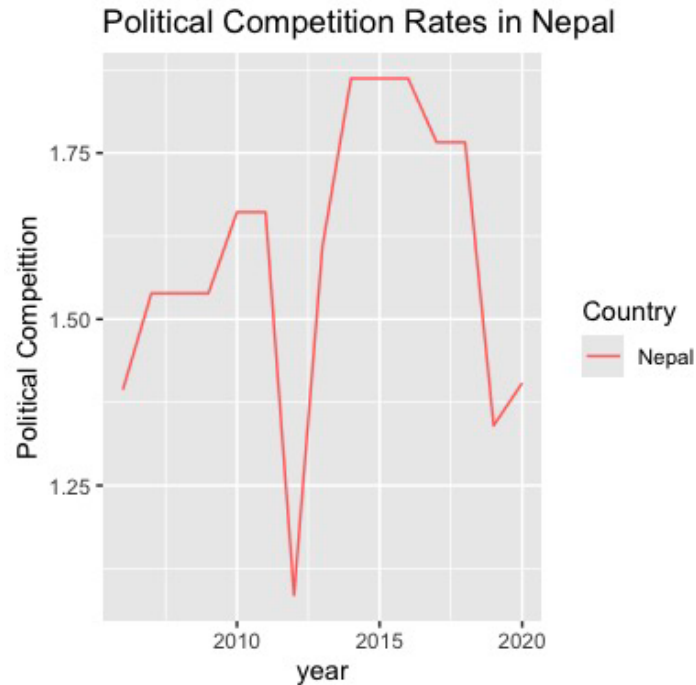


Figure 4.1: Level of Political Competition in Nepal 2006-2020

Political competition is a feature of Nepalese politics. In Figure 7, we see that political competition, measured as how major political parties expend resources across regions within a country, is in line with previous chapters. Here we see that political competition has varied in the post-conflict period, but has remained relatively high suggesting that political parties are spending time and resources regarding inter-party competition and are actively courting voters. Nepalese parties have engaged in all sorts of democratic and undemocratic political activities, including holding youth rallies,⁶⁴ nationwide campaigning and canvassing, as well as unauthorized use of vehicles, obstructing campaigns and vote buying (Hamal 2024).⁶⁵ Malla (2011) argues that all political parties have a student wing due to politically active

⁶⁴ Poudel, Purushottam. 2025. "Deliver First, Rally Later, Observers Tell Ruling CPN-UML." The Kathmandu Post. <https://kathmandupost.com/politics/2025/04/16/deliver-first-rally-later-observers-tell-ruling-cpn-uml>.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

young men and women in college students that are funded by political parties, and are incredibly active during election periods. Student unions have been known to have bitter rivalries including violence and destruction of property during campaigning. Further, parties must be sensitive to gender issues in Nepal both internally and externally. Most political parties have women's wings (Haug, Aasland and Dahal 2009), and parties are legally required to be sensitive to gender and people with disabilities when campaigning.⁶⁶ While, I cannot access voting patterns by gender in Nepal, understanding the positions and activities of political parties on women's issues will be helpful in understanding how much political will they are willing to spend on certain topics.

In the next section, I provide a background on the conflict in Nepal and its postwar development to address women's security.

Conflict in Nepal

The roots of the Nepalese civil war, also known as the People's War, start in the early 1990s. In 1990, the Nepalese royal family was under pressure from a mass movement of activists to bring about democracy and multi-party elections in Nepal, which resulted in King Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev signing a new constitution to allow multi-party elections, ending the Panchayat system,⁶⁷ and transitioning to a constitutional monarchy. Despite this concession from the King, continued political instability led to the outbreak of civil conflict in 1996. The Maoists were the main rebel group of the conflict, originally a splinter faction of communist parties with

⁶⁶ CARTER CENTER ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION TO NEPAL'S NOV. 19, 2013, CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY ELECTION. 2013. The Carter Center. <https://www.cartercenter.org/resources/pdfs/peace/democracy/Carter-Center-Nepal-Preliminary-Statement-112113.pdf>.

⁶⁷ The Panchayat system was Nepal's political system that gave all governance capabilities to the King as an absolute monarch.

the primary objective of ending all forms of discrimination and advocating for equality. The Maoist movement quickly developed into a conflict against the monarchy launching a guerrilla-style war (KC, Van Der Haar and Hilhorst 2017; Huang 2016; Yadav 2021). Initially a slow and low intensity conflict, the war led to more than 13,000 fatalities, more than 1,000 missing people, and by the end of 2004 had displaced more than 50,000 people (Malla 2011). The war largely affected the poorest and most rugged areas of Nepal (Do and Iyer 2010). Women were vulnerable to many different forms of violence such as rape, sexual assault, illegal arrest, and kidnapping (Malla 2011).

The Maoists primarily focused on addressing caste-based oppression, ending gender discrimination became a significant part of their political agenda. Up to 40% of the Maoist army were women who took on various combatant and non-combatant roles at all levels of the movement; women were perpetrators of violence in both mixed-gender units and women-only units (Mehrl 2023).⁶⁸ The Maoists claimed a gender-equal ideology as a means of wide recruitment for the war (Mehrl 2023; Subedi 2013), mobilized women from excluded castes as they “strengthened the level of awareness of these groups and empowered them by providing them skills training” (KC, Van Der Haar and Hilhorst 2017, 180), and led campaigns on important social issues such as domestic violence and alcoholism (Malla 2011).⁶⁹ While the Maoists purported support for gender equality and women’s rights, the group also used women as a tool of social control and as a way to consolidate power through non-coercive rebel governance. For instance, as a means to be seen as progressive, modern and scientific, the

⁶⁸ Numbers for women’s inclusion varies greatly, with UNMIN stating there were only about 20% women as combatants but the Maoists said that was roughly 1/3. (Tamang 2009).

⁶⁹ Alcohol abuse was a prevalent issue in Nepal. Under Maoist rebel rule, men were punished more quickly than they would have been under Nepali courts, leading to improved feelings of security for rural women (Malla 2011).

Maoists allowed rebel marriages, widows to re-marry, and inter-caste marriages as a means of breaking societal taboos, and did not restrict reproduction unlike other rebel groups such as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam in Sri Lanka (Giri 2023; Matfess 2023). Building upon their wartime rhetoric and activities, the Maoists pursued women's rights in the lead up to peace talks (Tamang 2009). She describes how during the 2001 and 2003 peace talks the Maoists sought women's rights, an end to human trafficking, and constitutional safeguards for women's representation in all institutions and sectors, such as education and health.

It was not until the spring of 2006, after a series of missteps by the King, that led to him accepting the Maoist-Seven Party Alliance (SPA) agreement. The SPA was an alliance of incumbent, dominant political parties formed in late 2005 that all agreed to end autocratic rule in Nepal and restore democracy through elections (Huang 2016). The agreement eventually led to the signing of Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA); women were notably missing from several rounds of peace negotiations at the end of the conflict (Berry and Rana 2019).

Postwar Nepal

As the Maoists transitioned into a political party after signing the CPA, they took the lead in constructing political arrangements. The CPA outlined a variety of objectives for postwar Nepal to transition into peacetime with mixed success. The CPA established an interim government, outlined how elections would be conducted, and established the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction which managed peace negotiations/agreements, and oversight for national commissions and local committees.⁷⁰ Under the CPA, the first postwar elections committed

⁷⁰ Thapa, Lily, and Deon V. Canyon. 2017. The Advancement of Women in Post-Conflict Nepal. Daniel K. Inouye Asia Pacific Center for Security Studies.

parties to democracy by establishing a mixed electoral system of a first-past-the- post and PR system.

The first postwar elections, to form the first Constituent Assembly (CA) were contentious after being delayed twice due to tensions about the inclusion of marginalized communities in politics, a tense security situation, and difficulties in forming a government due to constant disagreement by political parties (Tamang 2009; Hall 2011; Upreti 2012). The CA was responsible for establishing a new constitution and parliamentary duties, but after four years the CA could not finalize a new constitution due to debates about the federal structure of the government (Kanel 2014); a new constitution was adopted in 2015. The Maoists sought to incorporate non-elites, increase awareness campaigns, and bring in new leaders borne out of the conflict to contest in elections (Bhusal et al. 2020). However, this was not always felt equally among the excluded groups. The Dalits, a historically marginalized and discriminated caste, were able to co-opt the Maoist guerrilla movement at the local-level to oppose caste discrimination. This did not last long as Dalits felt co-opted by the Maoist movement, which was largely composed of high-caste individuals, in the movement's goal of state power (Bownas 2015).

The donor community has a strong level of influence in postwar Nepal, with aid flows from various development partners sending in almost \$1 billion USD in 2010. However, the international community was dismayed by the lack of progress in Nepal. For instance, the UK Permanent Representative to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights was dismayed by the progress on addressing human rights abuses during the war, and the UN Secretary-General cited polarization and division between and among political parties as a source of concern (Hall 2011). A stalemate between political parties led to the end of UNMIN in 2011, a short-term political mission focused on demobilization of the Maoist and Nepali armies (Hall

2011; Upreti and Shivakoti 2018). This sentiment was reiterated during fieldwork interviews with civil society organization members regarding UNMIN and transitional justice efforts. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission⁷¹ is accountable only to political parties, rather than the victims of conflict-related human rights abuses.⁷² This suggests that while Nepal has seen marked improvement in certain areas, politics plays a notable role in postwar political development, hampering justice, and an effective transition to peace.

Women in Postwar Nepal

Given the high participation rate of female combatants, civilian victimization, and gender-based violence, addressing the needs of women was paramount after the war. Yet, women were notably sidelined and largely excluded from postwar reconstruction and peacebuilding efforts in Nepal (Giri 2021).⁷³ While women were not present during the signing of the CPA, women were included in the drafting of the 2007 Interim Constitution which has been credited as a fairly progressive from a gender-sensitive perspective (Yadav 2023).

Grassroots efforts to address women's security issues were a feature of Nepal's civil society landscape due to the country's robust political participation through civil society and NGOs. For example, discrimination against widows became a point of contention, and grassroots organizations mobilized to reduce the stigma surrounding widowhood. Their actions led to changes in traditional gender roles, allowing widows to be active in the public sphere and enter the formal economy after the loss of their husbands (Yadav 2021). Despite these early successes, women's groups faced significant barriers. Constrained by Nepal's patriarchal beliefs, women's

⁷¹ The TRC was established in 2015 to investigate wartime human rights abuses and crimes against humanity and currently has over 63,000 pending cases many of which have seen little movement.

⁷² Interview, female and male NGO workers, Kathmandu 2022.

⁷³ Ironically, Nepal was the first South Asian country to adopt a National Action Plan on gender, due to the strong influence of international discourse on gender mainstreaming in peacebuilding efforts (Giri 2021).

groups failed to clarify their positions on issues and approved decisions made by men (Malla 2011). Gendered stereotypes are prevalent among male leadership in NGOs, even those that implement internal and external gender mainstreaming initiatives, despite awareness of the issue.⁷⁴

Women were able to make significant gains in political representation in Nepal. The Interim Constitution established that all state agencies have a gender quota of 33% of women's representation. In the first postwar election in 2008, women's political representation increased with the adoption of gender quotas in the national legislature and led to a "critical mass" of women in national politics and active participation by women voters.⁷⁵ Women's descriptive representation rose from 5 to 33 between 2006 and 2008 with dozens of castes being represented as well; this number dropped to 8 percent in 2017 elections due to the gender quota being mandatory at the candidate-level and not for elected seats (Yadav 2023).⁷⁶ Yadav argues that gender mainstreaming initiatives spearheaded by political parties led to an increase of descriptive representation. "Because of the strong social inclusion discourse at the time, political parties were competing with each other to showcase how inclusive they were in order to get sympathetic votes. As a result, women who would never have imagined being in such high-level political positions became [CA] members in the first CA election," (Yadav 2021, 456).

Political parties were also productive in the legislature on addressing women's issues. Several legislative bills were passed including the Gender Equality Act (2006), the Human Trafficking Act (2007) to provide support and care for women, the Nepal Peace Fund was

⁷⁴ Interview, female NGO worker, Kathmandu 2022.

⁷⁵ Malla (2011) show that in public opinion surveys in the 1990s show that younger people and women were more attracted to leftist parties in Nepal. Women made up 53% of the electorate in the 2008 CA elections, outnumbering men (Kanel 2014).

⁷⁶ The 2017 elections were the first under the newly ratified 2015 Constitution and the first federal elections in Nepal.

established to complete projects towards reintegration and peacebuilding, and the establishment of local Peace Committees.⁷⁷ Female parliamentarians worked to address provisions on maternity leave, vocational training, and raising awareness about health and hygiene for women and girls (Adhikari 2022). Further, the women's wing of the Maoist political party, the All Nepalese Women's Association (Revolutionary) (ANWA-R) has been active in mobilizing women at the local level, and pursuing gender discrimination policies such as child marriages, polygamy, domestic violence and preventing menstruating women from having to sleep outside (Tamang 2009; Matfess and Loken 2024).

War shifted gender hierarchies for women in Nepal (KC, Van Der Haar and Hilhorst 2017; KC 2025) allowing women to take on new positions in society, but not for all women. A quote from a member of the Nepali Congress from a rural district of Nepal, demonstrates the struggles that women faced. "Those who died have become martyrs of the Maoist or the state, however the women who survived are dying is crushed under various burdens," she said (Malla 2011, 63). Gender roles have shifted after conflict to improve women's status, but women still face issues when it comes to such as discrimination, financial dependency, human trafficking, and gendered stereotypes.⁷⁸ Widowed women struggled to take care of their families as heads of households after the war and faced financial struggles. Several fieldwork interviews identified how women's position in social hierarchies can impact women in varied ways. Women face many issues, for example, women in rural areas are particularly vulnerable to child marriage, mobility for Muslim girls is notably restrictive, workplace discrimination and sexual harassment,

⁷⁷ Thapa, Lily, and Deon V. Canyon. 2017. *The Advancement of Women in Post-Conflict Nepal*. Daniel K. Inouye Asia Pacific Center for Security Studies.

⁷⁸ Interview, female, former NGO organizer and now political official, Kathmandu 2022.

and communities shield punishment from gender-based violence leading to a culture of impunity.^{79 80}

Female members of the Maoist movement faced distinct challenges, compared to non-combatant women, in the aftermath of the conflict. In wartime, women experienced the strongest changes in gender roles, but faced the most difficulty adjusting to peacetime life regarding their livelihood and returning to the prewar status quo for traditional gender roles (KC, Van Der Haar and Hilhorst 2017). In the postwar period, ex-combatant women faced distinct structural barriers to re-integrate back into society and civilian life (Upreti and Shivakoti 2018; Giri 2021; KC 2025). KC (2019) argues that a lack of a gender-sensitive disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration program led to issues of reintegration for women. At the end of conflict, female ex-combatants were either forced to retire or enter a process of reintegration into the armed forces which often took years. Further, she argues that the reintegration process provided housing for ex-combatants, but also led to a postwar baby boom. The Maoists developed a system that gave mothers and their children a place to live and monetary allowances, but mothers were either structurally pushed out of the military as leaving children with family members was no longer seen as socially acceptable so they raised children without a support system (Brunson 2021).

Although the conflict increased women's representation and women's issues were at the forefront, women still faced discriminatory norms, insecurity, and displacement. "Women are disproportionately involved in informal labor, unpaid care work, and subsistence agriculture, with limited access to financial resources, skills training, and formal employment. Even when employed, they often face a significant gender pay gap and lack control over income and

⁷⁹Interview, female NGO worker, Kathmandu 2022.

⁸⁰ Interview, female and male academics, virtual, 2025.

assets.”⁸¹ Hill-origin victim groups and upper castes tended to dominate discussion about victims’ needs, received more aid and pensions, and Maoist women were not entitled to compensation (Berry and Rana 2019).. Economic insecurity was a strong concern for women, particularly among female-headed households and widows. High caste widows had to leave their marital property and return back to their ancestral homes, while lower caste women did not have that particular form of discrimination they still faced financial insecurity (Berry and Rana 2019).

In sum, this overview of the Nepalese postwar context suggests that women’s status is uneven. Nepal’s efforts to reach the Millennium Development Goals related to gender issues have likewise seen strong progress with increased enrollment rates in education, literacy rates, and formal sector wage employment (Marit and Aasland 2016). Conflict victims claimed that grassroots efforts of transitional were co-opted by elite (Berry and Rana 2019). Discriminatory attitudes persist in Nepal, and have also led to an increased risk of women experiencing intimate partner violence (Ghimire and Samuels 2017; Clark et al. 2018; Thakuri et al. 2020).⁸² While peacebuilding efforts and transitional justice mechanisms were formally in place, everyday women felt little efficacy in going through these efforts as they were not fully functional institutions, and a narrow focus on formal inclusion without an equal focus on everyday, structural concerns for women.

Political parties vying for power have a role to play in how gender equality efforts manifest in postwar politics. In the following section, I demonstrate the political process for how women’s rights are secured to support women’s status. Here, I show the gendered barriers women face present in this process, and how political competition either facilitated or hampered

⁸¹ Interview, female NGO worker, Kathmandu 2022.

⁸² Family Matters.” 2023. The Kathmandu Post. <https://kathmandupost.com/editorial/2023/10/18/family-matters>.

the process of advancing women's status. I use inheritance rights and citizenship rights as issue areas to demonstrate this argument.

Inheritance Rights

Inheritance rights were an area of contention in Nepalese life, prior and during the conflict. Nepalese women's activists and civil society organizations advocated for an amendment for equal rights to inheritance for wives and daughters without limitation, duration of marriage, or age; this was also a feature of political party manifestos, particularly by the Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist-Leninist, throughout the 1990s (Pandey 2002).⁸³ In response to a series of Supreme Court cases brought by activist lawyers, the Ministry of Women and Social Welfare drafted a bill to address equal inheritance rights. The bill was eventually passed law by legislature in 2002 as the 11th amendment to the 1990 Constitution after years of stalling in the legislature, disagreements by the Nepali Congress, and finally gained support from the ruling party (Pandey 2002; Subedi 2009; Poon et al. 2016).

Previously, inheritance laws were governed through a mix of formal and customary law. This change allowed unmarried women to inherit, but succession to familial property was still limited by age and marital status. Despite this advancement, custom and tradition still played a role in limiting women's access to property due to social taboos surrounding widowhood. By custom, widows were not entitled to share of deceased husband's property. The Muluki Ain (the national criminal and civil code at the time) applies to all citizens, however customary law derived from Hindu beliefs affects widows, and women more generally, in varying degrees (Poon et al. 2016; Singh and Jha 2024). This amendment was not welcomed by all. The change

⁸³ Pandey (2010) outlines that in the National Code, influenced by Hindu law, prior to the 2002 amendment, women's property rights were limited to fits and bequests, particularly leaving divorced women without property or alimony.

was seen as a threat to family integrity and family relationships. Media campaigns were launched against the amendment that argued women should not be allowed “double inheritance” from both their father and husband (Poon et al. 2016, 395). Although the change still benefited men, this was the foundation for women to accumulate wealth and increase property ownership.

While the 11th Amendment was a major step forward for women, inheritance and property rights continued to develop in Nepal. The control of land was a particular focus on Maoist rhetoric and behavior during the war, which is largely characterized as an agrarian revolution. In the Tarai region, the Maoists seized and redistributed land while in the hill districts, where landholdings were smaller, they aimed to “develop collective farming and revolutionize the production relations,” (Wickeri 2010, 965). The attacks were usually violent and included bombings, beatings, and killings, leaving people homeless and unable to return to their property or villages. Tens of thousands of people, both landlords and more often ordinary tenants were terrorized and displaced as a result of the conflict,” (Wickeri 2010, 965-966).

Postwar Advances in Inheritance Rights

In the postwar era, property rights remained contentious as political parties and non-state actors sought to rebuild society, and the Maoists worked to transform a wartime political agenda into a peacetime governance strategy in an unsettled multi-party democracy. Further, the use and ownership of land and property was particularly salient for women after the war.

Almost 500,000 women became war widows who struggled to obtain property owed to them (Poon et al. 2016) and struggled to understand and access their rights after war. Exemplifying how widowhood and structural issues created issues for women, a staff member of Women for Human Rights, a Kathmandu-based NGO focusing on widowhood, said, “And then there was the period where . . . a single woman faces a lot of violence. This happens mentally,

physically, and verbally. She is facing violence in all three areas and, while doing so, she is at zero level. She is unable to think clearly. Her mental state will be very weak and she will not be able to make out what is a right. She will not be able to comprehend that she has rights within her family,” (Poon et al. 2016, 400). The enforcement of inheritance rights is outside the scope of this analysis, barriers to inheritance rights were a salient issue for women’s security in a tumultuous period.

Women had to navigate inheritance issues also conditional their status as a wartime non-combatant or combatant (Giri 2021). “A majority of the women non-combatants who were interviewed shared that due to Nepal’s patriarchal society the markets still remain masculine (dominated by men); hence, it is difficult for women who are not protected by men. This can be seen from the experience of the Tamang widow above, who was denied rights to her dead husband’s property by her in-laws and suffered from the fear of social prejudice and retribution,” (KC, Van Der Haar and Hilhorst 2017, 183). This suggests that women faced different, complex issues based on the status of their marriage and connection to the conflict.

Organizations connected to the political parties and non-state actors played an important role in campaigning for equal property rights. “From 6th National Plan to today’s 3 year’s Interim Plan, 2064, all have emphasized to eliminate existing gender discriminatory legal provisions including women’s equal property right in order to multi party democratic system, the Government of Nepal has been ratifying various international instrument of human rights convention. In this connection Nepal has enacted the Nepal Treaty Act, 1990 that prefers under section 9(1) to the international human rights provisions if there is contradiction with the provision of domestic laws,” (Subedi 2009, 51). The Nepal Treaty Act made international law a

part of Nepalese law and legally bound the state to providing equal inheritance rights for women in line with international conventions.

Seeking to address land issues, a series of bills passed parliament in the years immediately following the People's war. "Land reform was a central goal for the CPA, which encourages equitable redistribution of land, and was echoed by the Interim Constitution provision committing the state to pay compensation for compulsory acquisition of property for public purposes and ending feudal land ownership," (Wickeri 2010, 991). The Three-Year Interim plan defined scientific land reform and established targets for the government. In 2006, the Lands Act was amended to allow wives and daughters to inherit tenancy, but this was still plagued by enforcement issues⁸⁴ (Poon et al. 2016). In 2007, due to the Gender Equality Act,⁸⁵ an amendment to the Interim Constitution forbade land ownership discrimination based on gender, allowing women to jointly own land with their husbands and removed the "unmarried" requirement for daughters to inherit land (Mishra and Sam 2016). Further, the Interim Constitution formally improved inheritance rights for women by setting penalties for failure to transfer property to widows, but was poorly implemented (Poon et al. 2016).⁸⁶

The government established a High Level Land Commission in 2008, to work on grant reform, a 50% discount on transaction fees when land is purchased by women or other disadvantaged group members, and sought to fully digitize land certificate system (Wickeri 2010). The High Level Commission's first leader was Maoist leader with no experience in

⁸⁴ Rajin Rayamajhi, the legal officer for Women for Human Rights (WHR) said she only knew four widows that had successfully pursued and gained rights to property via the courts (Poon et al. 2016).

⁸⁵ Pun, Weena. 2014. "Daughters to Get Equal Share of Parental Property."

<https://kathmandupost.com/miscellaneous/2014/11/24/daughters-to-get-equal-share-of-parental-property>.

⁸⁶ Pandey (2010) outlines how reducing transfer policies for land was instrumental for increasing property ownership among women.

and reform and faced repeated leadership changes due to political disruptions in 2009. The commission reached baseline agreement on the general principle of reform in 2010. “In an interview in April 2010, the new Chair of the High Level Land Reform Commission said that consensus between the twelve members had been reached on the need to identify truly landless people, to provide for the purchase and distribution of Guthi (religious) land, to institute policies for the support of Dalits and other disenfranchised groups, and to provide for joint ownership of land between men and women,” (Wickeri 2010, 994). However, returning seized land and property remains a politically sensitive issue in the years right after the war; redistribution and return of seized property are at odds due to provisions within CPA and Interim Constitution (Wickeri 2010). This suggests that while the Maoists initially struggled to translate the rebel-to political party agenda, in time they were eventually able to reach consensus to address land reform with the other parties.

The national legislature was not the only important actor in ending gender-based discrimination against Nepali women. The Supreme Court has been an influential actor in addressing inheritance rights in Nepal in the postwar era (Subedi 2009) and has become progressively bolder by invalidating legislation (Toulmin 2009; Pandey 2010). After 2002, the Court began more intense dialogue between the government and legislature and took a more interventionist stance to move away from discriminatory traditions and customs, leading to more property rights cases reaching the court (Toulmin 2009). In a landmark case in 2005, lawyers challenged the Muluki Ain’s chapter on inheritance for daughters, marking the first important decision on property rights in the post-war era Toulmin (2009). The Supreme Court acknowledged a patriarchal bias in Nepali society and that there were two different statutes for women in Nepal, one of unmarried daughters living in their father’s home, and wives living with

their husbands. However, the Court argued that the government was responsible for addressing the issue of gender equality as it was beyond the purview of the court. In other words, the Court (re)-enforced gender hierarchies in postwar Nepal and shifted responsibility to the legislature for addressing gender discrimination cases. A 2011 case was filed against the discriminatory provision⁸⁷ but the Court ultimately upheld the law.⁸⁸ However, the Muluki Ain was planned to be removed and replaced with a Civil Code. The new civil code proposed equal inheritance between sons and daughters regardless of marital status.⁸⁹

Discussion

Political competition in Nepal played a role in the development of inheritance rights in the postwar period. Political parties - aware of the landlessness issue, redistribution efforts necessary to promote stability, and external pressure from activists - led to the rhetorical support of ending gender discrimination in post-conflict Nepal. In the early years after war, political parties had to negotiate to reach agreements on inheritance rights despite a majority of seats being held by the Maoists in the first postwar election and losing seats in the following elections. This suggests that the Maoists still sought to be legitimate governing partners during this transitional, insecure period, but there seems to be a lack of contention and contestation between political parties on how inheritance rights should be addressed over time.

Shifting constellation of political actors influences the development of rights to ensure their own political survival and advantage in the postwar era. “The political parties and

⁸⁷ Pun, Weena. 2014. “Daughters to Get Equal Share of Parental Property.”

<https://kathmandupost.com/miscellaneous/2014/11/24/daughters-to-get-equal-share-of-parental-property>.

⁸⁸ “Inherited Wealth.” 2014. The Kathmandu Post. <https://kathmandupost.com/editorial/2014/11/25/inherited-wealth>.

⁸⁹ Pun, Weena. 2014. “Daughters to Get Equal Share of Parental Property.”

<https://kathmandupost.com/miscellaneous/2014/11/24/daughters-to-get-equal-share-of-parental-property>.

politicians have treated [women] only as the 'Vote Banks'. It is observed that women are treated as the ornamental showpieces or the auxiliary force," (Malla 2011, 154). Women are not seen as a particularly salient voting bloc regarding inheritance rights, therefore maintaining the gendered status quo, and why there has been little advancement on inheritance rights after 2010. Political parties are instrumental in promulgating inheritance rights, but later shared responsibility for adjudicating rights with the judiciary as democracy consolidated and Nepal moved away from the postwar context.

Citizenship Rights

Citizenship has been a controversial topic in Nepalese politics. Prior to the People's War, the 1990 Constitution outlined the process to get the legal documentation for citizenship which placed burdens on women. During the conflict, citizenship issues were brought before the Supreme Court in 2005 by female Dalit activists to provide citizenship identification cards for every child.⁹⁰ Lazo (2003) describes how the process for obtaining citizenship men was relatively straightforward, but less so for women. Women needed to confirm that their birth was registered, a bureaucratic hurdle in and of itself, and needed support from either their father or husband. Since war's end, changes to legislation and the Constitution, rising nationalism, party politics, and political mobilization complicated the issue further.

Intersectional Nature of Citizenship Rights in Postwar Nepal

There were several early achievements advancing citizenship rights, notably with the adoption of the Citizenship Act of 2006 and 2007 Interim Constitution in the years immediately

⁹⁰ Lal, Abha. 2020. "Nepal's Citizenship Battles." <https://www.himalmag.com/reportage/nepals-citizenship-battles-2020>.

following war's end. The 2006 law, a marked improvement from previous citizenship laws, led to citizenship being conferred by descent from parents, rather than achieved through patrilineal kinship moving towards a more inclusive model of citizenship. This became one of the few successful areas championed by female parliamentarians in the postwar era, but female parliamentarians still struggled to get the law passed. They often found it difficult to make alliances across parties on women's issues due to party politics, but were successful when it came to the citizenship law (Adhikari 2022).

Other marginalized identity groups also saw advancements towards citizenship rights at this time. Gender minorities were recognized by the first time in 2007, allowing for recognition of their citizenship rights.⁹¹ Political mobilization by the Madhesi, a historically marginalized and discriminated ethnic group, primarily located in the southern region of Nepal, Tarai, bordering India, around this time also led to changes (Pudaisani 2017). The Madhesi movement sought a “time-bound, one-time distribution of citizenship by birth for permanent residents in 2007 to address the well documented history of denial of citizenship papers to the community.”⁹² This led to nearly 200,000 Madhesi with the ability to claim citizenship, much to the chagrin of conservative politicians what argued that this would allow Indians to claim Nepali citizenship and threaten the demographic composition of the country.⁵⁰ They also sought changing the descent provision for children to acquire citizenship through either the mother or father (Pudaisani 2017).

This improvement of citizenship rights was not felt equally, however. The new law still did not provide citizenship equally if a parent is of a foreign nationality (Pant and Standing 2011;

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

Richardson et al. 2016), making citizenship difficult to obtain parents of mixed nationality marriages, refugees, and single mothers to pass on citizenship.⁹³ Under this law, women faced issues about low awareness of the process, bureaucratic hurdles, and discriminatory behavior as they tried to apply for citizenship; compounding issues for unmarried, minority, and rural women. An Oxfam consultant stated that, “The current system of identification of women through their husband violates women’s human rights,” (Laczo 2003,78), emphasizing the gendered differences of citizenship rights. Additionally, the law still allowed continued discrimination against the Madheses with a clause that anyone testifying for citizenship that was deemed “suspicious” could be investigated; according to Lal, being labeled “suspicious is synonymous with “Indian” in popular discourse.⁹⁴

During the first CA convened in 2008, charged with writing a new Constitution within two years, the National Assembly drafted a new Constitution that sought to address the gender bias of existing citizenship rights. The process became delayed as the mandate to write the Constitution was extended several times, leading the Supreme Court to reject future extension until the the CA set up elections (Richardson et al. 2016). There was optimism about the progress of women’s rights under the CA, as the fundamental rights committee was charged with creating the first draft of fundamental rights, including citizenship rights, was chaired by a woman (Kanel 2014). However, she was overridden by male leaders that proposed an even more discriminatory and restrictive provision than the Interim Constitution (Kanel 2014).

⁹³ “Nepal Citizenship Law ‘Biased’ against Women.” 2014. Al Jazeera. <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2014/9/12/nepal-citizenship-law-biased-against-women#:~:text=In%202011%2C%20FWLD%20won%20a,government%20has%20not%20been%20responsive.>

⁹⁴ Lal, Abha. 2020. “Nepal’s Citizenship Battles.” <https://www.himalmag.com/reportage/nepals-citizenship-battles-2020>.

A proposed amendment to the 2006 law was utilized by political parties to ensure their dominance over Madhesi activism and support rising nationalism.⁹⁵ The High Level Task Force, under the first CA, recommended constitutional provisions in November 2010, specified that a child would automatically be granted Nepali citizenship only if both parents prove they are Nepali citizens, as opposed to a more flexible provision only one parent needing to be a Nepali citizen. The 2010 draft legislation was seen as potentially discriminatory and would create an issue of statelessness within Nepal.⁹⁶ Human rights observers were concerned the draft legislation would be at odds with international law and would be discriminatory towards men and women with partners of non-Nepal citizenship, and would be a problem for children down the line;⁹⁷ others claimed that this provision would harm single mothers, refugees, trafficked women, and women without support from their husbands or fathers to obtain citizenship papers.

Despite support from 28 parties,⁹⁸ this recommendation of the High Level Task force drew dissent from many CA members, particularly women, and led to a lack of agreement on citizenship provisions.⁹⁹ Madhesi political parties felt that the citizenship policies would be harmful and discriminatory to Madhesi women who often take part in cross-border marriages.¹⁰⁰ Political parties took strong stances about the wording of citizenship in the 2015

⁹⁵ In the 2008 election, the Madhesi Janadhikar Forum (MJF) were the fourth largest party with Madhesi parties making up a significant proportion of the CA. Madhesi and Tharus were sidelined in the Constitution process and none of the major Madhesi parties signed the Constitution, leading to a small share of seats in the Parliament despite being over half the country's population (Deysarkar 2015).

⁹⁶ Nepal: Broaden Citizenship Provisions." 2011. Human Rights Watch.
<https://www.hrw.org/news/2011/01/14/nepal-broaden-citizenship-provisions>.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Shrestha, Sabin, and Subin Mulmi. 2016. Legal Analysis of Citizenship Law of Nepal. Forum for Women, Law and Development.

¹⁰⁰ Aryal, Mallika. 2016. "Native Daughters: The Battle to Secure Matrilineal Citizenship Rights in Nepal." The Caravan. <https://caravanmagazine.in/lede/native-daughters-matrilineal-citizenship-rights-nepal>.

Constitution. “At the outset, Adhikari (Bharat Mohan Adhikari, a senior leader of the Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML) and former finance minister) appears to support gender equality in giving citizenship saying: ‘mother and father should both have the constitutional right to give citizenship to their children’ ... But he later clarifies that he is calling for a provision whereby both parents have to be Nepali but the child can acquire citizenship in the name of either parent. This, Adhikari says, is necessary to prevent an influx of “foreign bhanja-bhanjis.”¹⁰¹ He goes on to say that being flexible on citizenship would put nationality in danger, citing the example of Fiji (Pudaisani 2017). When the first CA was dissolved it was categorized as a disputed issue to be picked up again later. This suggests that party politics were superior to individual or group-based coalitions in addressing citizenship rights. Further, this suggests that citizenship rights were not framed as women’s issues but rather an issue of national identity.

Citizenship rights remained salient after the interim governments ended in the courts¹⁰² and national legislature. The second CA elections in 2013 brought in a new coalition of parties - Nepali Congress became the ruling party with the Maoists losing 147 seats coming in third - and a new Constitution in 2015. During this period, the issue of citizenship was passed around subcommittees and protested by civil society members and those without citizenship in and around Kathmandu (Richardson et al. 2016).¹⁰³ At this time citizenship was not just an issue

¹⁰¹ Bhanja-bhanjis is a commonly used term to refer to a man’s female siblings’ children. In this context, it means the children of Nepali women married to Indian men (Pudaisani 2017).

¹⁰² A Supreme Court ruling in 2011 support citizenship being passed through the mother or father to confirm citizenship to their children, but it has been poorly enforced and is even harder to enforce in non-urban areas Richardson et al. (2016). “In 2011, [the Forum for Women, Law and Development] FWLD won a landmark verdict from the Supreme Court. The court granted Sabina Dhami, a young girl whose father could not be identified, Nepali citizenship. While the case should have set a precedent for other similar cases, the government has not been responsive.” “Nepal Citizenship Law ‘Biased’ against Women.” 2014. Al Jazeera. <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2014/9/12/nepal-citizenship-law-biased-against-women#:~:text=In%202011%2C%20FWLD%20won%20a,government%20has%20not%20been%20responsive>.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

about addressing gender biases in the Constitution and society, but one that would impact concerns of migration, globalization, statelessness, and geopolitics; all of which factored into how the citizenship amendment was written (Yadav 2018).

The proposed changes would also require a waiting period for nationalization for non-national women married to Nepali men for seven years when there was previously no waiting period. At a meeting of the Inter-Party Women's Alliance in 2015, Chairman of the Political Dialogue and Consensus Committee (PDCC) and Maoist party member, Baburam Bhattarai, said that the ruling coalition, Nepali Congress and CPN-UML, has failed to address women's rights in the constitution.¹⁰⁴ "Nepal's ruling party Nepal Communist Party (NCP)¹⁰⁵, which has an overwhelming presence in the Parliament, has defended the bill on grounds of 'national interest'. As one NCP lawmaker stated, she was a citizen first and a woman second. This has been the tenor of much of the conversation around this bill, which remains dominated by conservative political forces. The ethnocentric notion that Madhesis are the threat is often implied, if not explicitly stated."¹⁰⁶ Further, Lal argues, that supporters of the bill argued as an alternative to citizenship, similar to a permanent residency, would operate in place of citizenship papers. Lal further mentions citizenship papers are required for tasks such as buying SIM card to applying for government jobs, leaving foreign women married to Nepali men vulnerable and financial dependent on their husbands.

¹⁰⁴ "Women Politicians Should Press for Their Rights: BRB." 2015. The Kathmandu Post.

<https://kathmandupost.com/national/2015/01/06/women-politicians-should-press-for-their-rights-brb>.

¹⁰⁵ The political party is also known as the Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist–Leninist), was formed in 2018 as a merger between the Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist–Leninist) and Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Centre), but the party was dissolved in 2021 after a court ruling.

¹⁰⁶ Lal, Abha. 2020. "Nepal's Citizenship Battles." <https://www.himalmag.com/reportage/nepals-citizenship-battles-2020>.

Activism and mass mobilization continued to play an important role in pursuing citizenship rights during debates surrounding the 2015 Constitution. Citizenship in the Name of Mother (CITNOM), a youth network worked on citizenship issues, organized protests at critical points of the decision-making process and forced a “victim’s network” to advocate for citizenship through mothers (Pudaisani 2017, 141). Women’s activists hosted “sleep-in” protests in Kathmandu, bringing together dozens of groups to protest in 2015.¹⁰⁷ Minority and women’s leaders in the government publicly critiqued the proposed citizenship provision, including the female leader of the Maoists, Shashi Shrestha, and Ang Kaji Sherpa, the former General Secretary of Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalists.¹⁰⁸

This led to divergent frameworks to address the proposed ban by activists. Protests by women’s rights activists have centered on ability of women to pass citizenship to their children and the gendered implications of naturalization provisions, while Madhesi rights concerned with the sexism the naturalization waiting period and women in cross-border marriages financially and socially vulnerable.¹⁰⁹

It wasn’t until the 2015 earthquake that led the four major coalition parties to reach consensus on all contentious issues. “A month after the earthquake, the four top political parties adopted the 16-point agreement resulting in the consensus of all the contentious issues. The citizenship provisions remained unchanged and the restrictive ‘Father AND Mother’ provision was included in the preliminary draft of the Constitution (13).”¹¹⁰ The

¹⁰⁷ Women Activists Continue Citizenship Protests; Demand for ‘or’ Provision.” 2015. The Kathmandu Post. <https://kathmandupost.com/valley/2015/08/08/women-activists-continue-citizenship-protests-demand-for-or-provision>.

¹⁰⁸ Rai, Dewan. 2015. “Hundreds Rally in Capital against ‘Inequalities.’” The Kathmandu Post. <https://kathmandupost.com/valley/2015/06/30/hundreds-rally-in-capital-against-inequalities>.

¹⁰⁹ Lal, Abha. 2020. “Nepal’s Citizenship Battles.” <https://www.himalmag.com/reportage/nepals-citizenship-battles-2020>

¹¹⁰ Shrestha, Sabin, and Subin Mulmi. 2016. Legal Analysis of Citizenship Law of Nepal. Forum for Women, Law and Development.

parties proposed the restrictive version of the citizenship provisions of the Constitution, requiring both parents to have Nepalese citizenship to confer it to their children. When the draft Constitution was sent for public consultation, the public overwhelmingly supported a more flexible provision and led to the provision being changed to the more inclusive wording. In recent years, the amendment to the Citizenship Act has been debated in parliament in 2018¹¹¹ and 2019.¹¹² The bill was later postponed until 2020.¹¹³ In 2020, the State Affairs and Good Governance Committee, which has had 140 meetings on the bill by this time,¹¹⁴ endorsed an amendment bill that would include a provision that foreign women married to Nepali men will have to wait seven years to acquire naturalized citizenship, and despite opposition from Nepali Congress, Rastriya Janata Party, Nepal and Samajbadi Party, the bill was still supported by the ruling party, the Nepal Communist Party.¹¹⁵

Here, we see that granting citizenship rights to aid the marginalized Madhesi movement, would both threaten the status quo, supporting a Nepali nationalist stance, as well as undercut women's rights for women that married foreign men and their children. Efforts from minority political parties, public pressure led to changes and the provision being changed.

¹¹¹ Joint Submission to the Human Rights Council at the 23rd Session of the Universal Periodic Review. 2021. Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion. [https://files.institutesi.org/UPR37 Nepal.pdf](https://files.institutesi.org/UPR37%20Nepal.pdf).

¹¹² 70 Gurung, Tsering. 2019. "Debate over Nepali Women's Right to Pass on Citizenship to Children Reignites as House Committee Holds Discussions on Controversial Provisions." The Kathmandu Post. <https://kathmandupost.com/national/2019/03/07/debate-over-nepali-womens-right-to-pass-on-citizenship-to-children-reignites-as-house-committee-holds-discussions-on-controversial-provisions>. Pradhan, Sanjay. 2019. "Indian Nepalis Alarmed by Citizenship Amendment Bill." Nepali Times. <https://nepalitimes.com/news/indian-nepalis-alarmed-by-citizenship-amendment-bill>. Rai, Bhrikuti. 2019. "Citizenship Debate Has Reached Another Low, Rights Activists Say." The Kathmandu Post. <https://kathmandupost.com/national/2019/09/12/citizenship-debate-has-reached-another-low-rights-activists-say>.

¹¹³ The amendment became a part of the national debate in 2022 and 2023 leading to protests, a constitutional crisis and public debates. Karki, Shristi. 2023. "Nepal's Citizenship Amendment Bill Explained." Nepali Times. <https://nepalitimes.com/here-now/nepal-s-citizenship-amendment-bill-explained>.

¹¹⁴ Pradhan, Tika R. 2020. "Ruling Party for Allowing Naturalized Citizenship to Foreign Women Married to Nepali Men Only after Seven Years." The Kathmandu Post. <https://tkpo.st/3eY13W>.

¹¹⁵ Ghimire, Binod. 2020. "Women Rights Organisations Urge Human Rights Council to Take up Issue of Women's Equality in Citizenship Rights." The Kathmandu Post. <https://tkpo.st/2DssbFa>.

Discussion

After the war, citizenship rights came to the fore to evoke a sense of national identity within the context of a heterogeneous society coming out of war. Citizenship rights were also a way to address geo-political tensions with India and align with the Nepalese government with its international commitments to support gender equality (Pudaisani 2017). Despite Madhesi being a marginalized political constituency, political parties were pushed by other forces to address citizenship issues. In 2017 six Madhes ethnic parties merged into one umbrella party to foster greater political power in national politics rather than being perceived as regional parties, suggesting that party politics matters in advancing identity-based status.¹¹⁶

The women's movement did not seem to coalesce on the issue unlike ethnic minority movements such as the Madhesi, or the queer community.¹¹⁷ "This area of law represents the biggest failure of the women's movement in Nepal, notwithstanding the numerous successes in litigation. This outcome can be explained only by the intersectional nature of these claims between the demands of non-national groups (women) and potentially national groups (Madhesi). In fact, inside the courtroom the claims have been treated purely as gender-based discrimination claims, but the litigation has never touched upon the political reasons behind the discriminatory nature of Nepal's citizenship framework." (Toulmin 2009, 547). The issue with citizenship law is that not treated as a gendered nor ethnic issue due to geo-political tensions with India and the small, but powerful force of Madhesi mobilization and political power and this is why the women's movement has had the least amount of success here. The framing of issues and

¹¹⁶ "Six Madhes-Based Parties under One Umbrella." 2017. The Kathmandu Post. <https://kathmandupost.com/national/2017/04/21/six-madhes-based-parties-under-one-umbrella>.

¹¹⁷ Manandhar, Asmita. 2019. "Is Nepal's Progressive Queer Rights Movement Bracing for a Setback?" <https://kathmandupost.com/national/2019/03/31/is-nepals-progressive-trans-rights-movement-bracing-for-a-setback>. Khadgi, Ankit. 2020. "A Group of Activists Strives to End Forced Imposition of the Third Gender Label." The Kathmandu Post. <https://tkpo.st/2ITDnNX>.

operating within gendered institutions has a clear impact on pursuing women's security. The framing of issues as cross-cutting cleavages has distinct impacts on how and which policies are pursued in post-conflict societies.

Alternative Mechanisms

Women's Representation

While not within the scope of this project, female descriptive representation likely also influenced the trajectory of women's inheritance rights. While descriptive representation has dramatically increased postwar, the translation to substantive gender policy has been a reoccurring issue. "Because of the dependence of women politicians upon the patronage and support of senior male politicians in party and their political vulnerability, a decade long experience of women in the legislature shows that they have not been able to develop sufficient confidence or capacity to push through the women friendly legislations like Women's Inheritance Bill or Reproduction Rights Bill. Neither have they been able to espouse the agenda different from male counterparts aimed at restoring the health of dysfunctional political system," (Malla 2011, 154). For instance, female parliamentarians of the ruling party pushed against the citizenship bill but were unable to amend the language of the bill to be gender neutral to prevent gender discrimination.¹¹⁸

The literature on women's substantive representation is growing and less developed than descriptive representation (Wängnerud 2009; Celis and Childs 2012). What literature exists suggests that women are able to promote women's interests but to mixed success. Clayton (2021) demonstrates that gender quotas are often have a positive effect on women's rights and Nepal is

¹¹⁸ Pradhan, Tika R. 2020. "House Panel Endorses Bill to Amend Citizenship Act amid Objections from Three Parties." The Kathmandu Post. <https://tkpo.st/2YTtiira>.

no exception. Female parliamentarians are a crucial aspect of the trajectory of women's rights in Nepal. "Rekha Sharma (Minister of General Administration) said, 'the first CA was strong in women's issues. No one would have dared to say no to any of the women's agenda but it is different now. Women are not allowed to organize for women's issues. All main political parties have internal disputes. Women have not been able to come as strong as it was in the first CA,'" (Yadav 2018, 83). However, improved substantive representation was not a panacea to women's rights advancement.

Purohit (2022) argues that bureaucrats resist female politicians' ability to implement policy because they believe women are less instrumental to their own career advancement and are lack skills (competence, mobilization power, and low quality networks) for their jobs. Htun and Weldon (2018) find that women's representation could have a weaker effect on substantive policy changes that we expect. Htun and Weldon (2012) argue that feminist movements are critical to addressing social policy, parties can matter for certain things. Institutions have an important play to play, but their gendered nature may have limited ability to advance women's rights. In line with the analysis here, bureaucratic resistance, particularly at the local-level, and a weaker influence of women's representation led to minimal movement of inheritance and citizenship rights in the post-conflict era.

Despite some male politicians urging female parliamentarians to address issues of citizenship rights,¹¹⁹ female parliamentarians often felt sidelined to bring up women's issues in committee meetings when their political party does not support the issue (Adhikari 2022). This suggests that institutional sexism plays a significant role in pursuing women's security.

¹¹⁹ Women Politicians Should Press for Their Rights: BRB." 2015. The Kathmandu Post. <https://kathmandupost.com/national/2015/01/06/women-politicians-should-press-for-their-rights-brb>.

Similarly, women's wings in Nepalese politics have similarly been sidelined by political parties that have a tight grip on institutional design and agenda-setting power.¹²⁰

International Aid

Nepal has a high level of development assistance from the international community. During the 2019-2020 fiscal year, largely in part to the Covid-19 pandemic, foreign aid increased nearly 27% to \$ 2 billion dollar accounting for 23% of the national budget. The Asian Development Bank, World Bank, and International Monetary Fund are the largest donors in Nepal, followed by bilateral donors the United States, United Kingdom and India.¹²¹ Minimalist UNMIN later led to low levels of internationally-driven reforms given the focus on election assistance and monitoring the implementation of the peace agreement.

The international community has been active in advancing women's status in postwar Nepal. For instance, the British government has been an active partner in postwar development and has funded the establishment and training of paralegal committees throughout Nepal to address issues of gender-based violence.¹²² However, there has been extensive critique of the international community and its peacebuilding efforts, with competition between international non-governmental organizations (even between UN agencies), political officials using kinship networks to staff local NGOs receiving significant foreign aid, and a disconnect between implementing partners and local politics (Miklian, Lidén and Kolås 2011). For instance, water development projects in Nepal were found to re-produce and exacerbate gendered inequalities in

¹²⁰ Khatiwada, Nishan. 2023. "What Good Are the Sister Wings of Nepal's Political Parties?" The Kathmandu Post. <https://kathmandupost.com/politics/2023/03/28/what-good-are-the-sister-wings-of-nepal-s-political-parties>.

¹²¹ Prasain, Sangam. 2021. "Annual Foreign Aid to Nepal Surged 26.87 Percent to \$2 Billion Last Fiscal Year." The Kathmandu Post. <https://tkpo.st/39QjnGw>.

¹²² Fighting for Women's Rights in Nepal: Equalities Minister Lynne Featherstone Meets the Women Who Are Helping Their Communities. 2011. Government of the United Kingdom. Case Study. <https://www.gov.uk/government/case-studies/fighting-for-womens-rights-in-nepal>.

Nepal despite the effort of gender mainstreaming in postwar development projects by internationally funded projects (Leder, Clement and Karki 2017).

The international community is incredibly active in pressuring the government. For instance, UN experts expressed concerns about the citizenship bill in 2020 seeking to push the government to align itself with international conventions that Nepal is a party to, seeking to pressure the government to uphold its human rights commitments; the prime minister's office dismissed the letter.¹²³ The United Kingdom threatened to cut aid to Nepal if the government did not address endemic corruption 2015.¹²⁴

Tamang (2009) describes how foreign aid was integral in developing 'consciousness' of marginalized groups in the post-conflict era. However, Tamang also describes how foreign aid and development have been high in Nepal since the 1950s and how NGOs became a powerful source of service provision over international actors. This suggests that international aid and development have been a constant feature of Nepalese life pre- and post-conflict, limiting how much impact that would have on political development. Furthermore, "Compared to Janajati and Dalit women, Madhesi women have not been as successful in pushing their agendas via NGOs. The scope and activities of NGOs and civil society in the Madhes are comparatively smaller because of the historical neglect by the state and foreign aid-giving agencies, (Tamang 2009, 71)." This suggests that even with increased awareness of marginalized issues, international attention does not necessarily lead to development for all minority identity groups.

¹²³ Giri, Anil. 2020. "UN Rapporteurs Concerned over Proposed Citizenship Law." The Kathmandu Post. <https://tkpo.st/3kQ37sk>.

¹²⁴ Sharma, Bhadra. 2015. "Nepal Risks UK Aid Cut for 'Endemic Corruption.'" The Kathmandu Post. <https://kathmandupost.com/miscellaneous/2015/03/28/nepal-risks-uk-aid-cut-for-endemic-corruption>.

Gendered Beliefs and Stereotypes

Progressive changes to women's status could be driven by persistent gendered beliefs and stereotypes, such as misogyny and the patriarchy that maintain a gender hierarchy subordinating women's status relative to men (Hunnicuttt 2009; Manne 2017). Gendered beliefs, perceptions about women's identities relative to men, and appropriate gendered behavior for men and women that can lead to more or less flexible gender roles (Karim and Hill 2024). Gendered beliefs and stereotypes hurt women in the workplace. "In many settings, including workplaces, women are often addressed with informal or diminutive terms like 'Didi' or 'Bahini' (sister) regardless of their professional standing or seniority, while male colleagues, even junior ones, are addressed with respectful titles like 'sir'. There's often an underlying assumption that men are inherently more senior or capable."¹²⁵

In 2008, a law proposed to pay men to marry widows was dismissed after widespread protests as widow remarriage is considered sinful among higher castes (Poon et al. 2016).¹²⁶ This suggests that gendered stereotypes are important to the public and, but also sticky and hard to change despite Maoists and women's groups working to reduce stigma around widowhood. Fieldwork interviews in 2022 suggest that gendered beliefs have yet to cause widespread change, suggesting that this sentiment did not increase nor decrease in the postwar era.

¹²⁵ Interview, female academic, virtual, 2025.

¹²⁶ Societies where religion and state are closely intertwined are harder places to advance family law (Htun 2003; Htun and Weldon 2015). While, the intersection between religion, gender, and ethnicity are not within the scope of this analysis, the strong influence of Hinduism on state-society relations in Nepal likely impacts the development of family law.

Conclusion

In previous chapters I have argued that increased political competition among political parties, leads to greater outcomes for women's rights. Political parties, faced with a competitive and fragile environment, will seek to ensure their political survival in contexts where gender is salient and seek to shore up female supporters. This chapter builds upon this argument showing how the process of political competition plays out in postwar Nepal in the development of women's rights, and its implications for women's security. As shown here, political competition not only played a role in advancing women's rights and security, but demonstrating variation in these outcomes within Nepal when we consider the intersectional nature of Nepalese society. Women are marginalized in Nepalese society, whether through their status as widows, ex-combatants, or ethnic minorities. High-caste, married women face the fewer structural barriers to accessing improved status in Nepal, relative to other women of different intersecting identities.

Regarding inheritance rights, political parties faced little competition to address women's rights as it was largely framed and pursued as a gendered issue, but this led to little movement past the 2007 amendment to the Interim Constitution demonstrating that competition can lead to substantial and quick, but short-lived window of opportunity. In examining the development of citizenship rights, different political identities pursued citizenship rights in different ways, leading to increased political mobilization and pressure on political parties to take a more inclusive approach to advancing citizenship rights. Despite increased identity-based representation and a focus on addressing discriminated minorities in politics (Goetz and Jenkins 2018), this often left lower status women disadvantaged (Raja 2023), leading to challenges in advancing citizenship rights for all women.

The law is not a panacea for addressing the inadequacies of citizenship rights, the amendments to the Citizenship Act and court cases were more progressive and effective than they otherwise would be without pressure and mobilization from women's rights, Madhesi activists, and political influence. This process has been long and arduous and driven by the majority and ruling party despite strong opposition.

This work lends increased support that in post-conflict states, actors use political issues and legal rights to both re-establish, re-enforce social hierarchies and cleavages (Hamal 2024), and presents limitations towards a rights-based perspective on postwar reconstruction.

While the Election Commission of Nepal does not report voter turnout by gender, the evidence here suggests support for the argument that women were an important constituency in advancing women's rights and security. Furthermore, this case study shows that women's interests are not a monolith and that intersectionality plays a role in mobilization for women's rights, as well as in how political parties respond to mobilization and pursue their political agenda.

Chapter 5: *Conflict Legacies as Barriers to Advancing Women's Status*

Previous chapters of this dissertation have argued that elites have incentives to advance women's status in post-conflict states as they vie to compete over women's votes and seek the political benefits to be seen in line with international norms and advocacy by domestic groups. However, elites may have different (or even competing) incentives to address policies in the post-conflict era. This chapter examines how the legacy of conflict can lead to poor outcomes for women even when political competition is high. In particular, I examine how the legacies of conflict can create worse outcomes for women when gendered harms took place during conflict, namely when conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) has occurred. I argue that political competition has distinct barriers to women's security in post-conflict contexts.

In states emerging from civil war where CRSV has occurred, political competition can drive elites to address wartime abuses in ways that preclude themselves from punishment while maintaining the appearance of seeking accountability and justice. I argue in more competitive environments, elites will be more likely to adopt post-conflict transitional justice (TJ) mechanisms - post-conflict amnesty agreements - to shield themselves from wartime abuses and choose mechanisms that target rank-and-file perpetrators.¹²⁷ However, in low-competitive regimes, elites will apply weak transitional justice mechanisms to address CRSV to shirk accountability for addressing past violence while limiting harm to their political standing and survival. In other words, elites will apply measures that leave flexibility in how actors can be held accountable for war crimes domestically. We should expect a limiting effect for women when amnesty agreements are in place. While competitive politics increase the ability for women

¹²⁷ In this dissertation, I am only focused on domestic transitional justice mechanisms and not international mechanisms.

to advance their status, when amnesty agreements are adopted they reduce women's security by fostering a culture of impunity, gendered harms, and continued violence towards women.

Anecdotal evidence for the causal theory is shown with an illustrative case study of policy process surrounding Northern Ireland's Legacy and Reconciliation Bill. I test this argument using the Binningsbø et al. (2012) dataset on post-conflict justice. I find mixed support for my argument. The adoption of transitional justice mechanisms in post-conflict contexts leads to varying outcomes for women. The adoption of post-conflict amnesty agreements leads to higher rates of post-conflict sexual violence, while improving other measures of women's status - access to justice, descriptive representation, and political mobilization. However, support for this finding depends on the type of amnesty agreement put in place. These findings suggest that the legacies of conflict, transitional justice mechanisms, may encourage conflict resolution and resolving political issues, but can induce gendered harms.

Transitional Justice and Gender

Following mobilization by female activists and international tribunals after the conflicts in Rwanda and Yugoslavia, and the passage of UNSCR 1820 - which established sexual violence as a weapon of war and a crime against humanity—individuals could be prosecuted in accordance with international humanitarian law under the Rome Statute.¹²⁸ This paved the way for conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) and other gendered harms to be addressed as part of the conflict resolution process. Transitional justice (TJ) has been formative in addressing gender justice in post-conflict states. For example, gender-related issues have been included in the mandates of truth commissions in Haiti, Sierra Leone, and East Timor (Aoláin 2009) and

¹²⁸ For more on gender, conflict, and international law see (Barrow 2010).

Northern Ireland (O'Rourke and Swaine 2017). While international law provides mechanisms to address CRSV and this has been widely explored, the role of TJ in supporting women-friendly outcomes in the post-conflict period remains under-studied and under-theorized. (Bell and O'Rourke 2007).

TJ refers to formal and informal procedures implemented by a group or institution of accepted legitimacy around the time of a transition out of an oppressive or violent social order, for rendering justice to perpetrators and their collaborators, as well as to their victims (Kaminski, Nalepa and O'Neill 2006).¹²⁹ TJ can include mechanisms such as criminal tribunals, trials, purges, truth commissions, reparations, and amnesty, and can be used in isolation or in combination with one another.

Recent work has demonstrated how the legacies of conflict and wartime institutions affects accountability in postwar contexts (Arjona 2014; Rickard and Bakke 2021). Existing work discusses the gender implications of transitional justice that may not lead to uniformly better outcomes for women (Aoláin 2009) and how transitional justice and accountability are important for women particularly in the aftermath of CRSV (Betts, Carlson and Gisvold 2000; Dunn 2017; Krasniqi, Sokolić and Kostovicova 2020; Lee 2022). Sikkink et al. (2024) examine trends in gender and transitional justice and argue that gender-attentive TJ efforts are rooted in the efforts of women's movements in the 1980s and '90s that pushed for mechanisms to prevent violence against women. They find that gender-attentive TJ mechanisms, specifically truth commissions, reparations, and trials have increased since the 1990s and focus primarily on physical harms. They do not investigate amnesties as having potentially gendered effects. However, despite the advent of transitional justice, women often experience high levels of

¹²⁹ For an overview of the literature on transitional justice, see (Vinjamuri and Snyder 2015).

political exclusion, experience a reversion back to traditional gender norms, and persistent violence. Taken together, scholarship has found that how TJ is practiced and re-enforced in the post-conflict period is also central to post-conflict gendered outcomes. However, there is little work that centers how domestic politics can influence the process of addressing TJ and its gendered implications in post-conflict contexts.

A Gendered Role of Amnesties

Amnesty agreements have increased as a popular form of justice since the 1990s over other mechanisms such as truth commissions, and amnesties often occur after civil war (Mallinder 2008; Freeman 2009; Vinjamuri and Snyder 2015). Amnesties are defined as “an extraordinary legal measure whose primary function is to remove the prospect and consequences of criminal liability for designated individuals or classes of persons in respect of designated types of offenses irrespective of whether the persons concerned have been tried for such offenses in a court of law,” (Freeman 2009, 13). Amnesty agreements can vary in their scope and conditions taking on various forms such as blanket, conditional, and/or individualized amnesties. Blanket amnesties cover a wide swath of actors that calls for the unconditional removal of all legal liability for their actions. Conditional amnesties are selective in who they target and the crimes they address. Whereas individual amnesties will target individual actors for their particular crimes.¹³⁰

Amnesties are subject to the “peace versus justice debate,” in how they can potentially enact justice or exonerate perpetrators for war-related crimes (Mallinder 2008; Dancy 2018). In other words, some scholars argue that amnesties foster cultures of impunity, while on the other hand they allow for conflict resolution and restoring order. Mallinder (2008) criticizes this debate

¹³⁰ For more detailed description of forms and the scope of amnesties see (Freeman 2009; Mallinder 2008).

suggesting that amnesties are often coupled with other forms of transitional justice such as truth commissions and purges. Moreover, she argues that amnesty agreements do not necessitate impunity by their nature as legal instruments (Mallinder and McEvoy 2011), leading to complicated patterns in understanding how accountability and amnesty laws operate (Payne, Lessa and Pereira 2015).

Amnesties play a powerful role in the dynamics of conflict resolution. Daniels (2020) argues that when formal amnesties are put in place, the information asymmetry creates a credible commitment that makes negotiations for conflict termination more likely, which would not occur when informal amnesty is offered. She finds some support as conflicts move to low-intensity conflict when amnesty is offered to some groups giving the state the upper hand with fewer groups to fight. This has implications for the strength of armed groups to address justice for CRSV as they transition into the postwar era. Other scholars have begun to understand how the specifics of amnesty agreements impact conflict outcomes. Dancy (2018) argues that the timing and design of amnesty agreements play a crucial role in whether amnesties can help end civil conflicts. This may explain why rebel and governments choose to agree to them and can explain why amnesties may not lead to pacifying effects after wars end. Childers (2014) examines how blanket amnesties specifically, can make conflict relapse more likely since the lack of accountability increases desire for revenge. He argues that psychological motivations can lead to future conflict relapse due to victims being unable to reach re-equilibration for harms at the hand of perpetrators. For instance, an unconditional 2009 amnesty deal and a corollary that included a disarmament, demobilization, and re-integration program in the Niger River Delta has led to discontent among civilians and continuance of violence by ex-combatants in the region leading to protests, looting, and sexual violence (Aghedo 2013).

Amnesty agreements have significant implications for the ability of armed actors to address justice for CRSV as they transition into the postwar period. In particular, amnesty agreements can enable armed actors to evade accountability for CRSV. For instance, blanket amnesties have been consistently adopted by the South Sudanese government, leading to the incorporation of non-state actors into the state military, the Sudan People's Liberation Army, to absolve security forces of war crimes. This has, in effect, rewarded perpetrators and allowed continued violence against opposition groups, despite these actors being implicated in violations of international law.⁵ UNSCR 1820 excludes amnesty agreements, including blanket or conditional agreements, from covering CRSV (Buchanan et al. 2012; Jenkins and Goetz 2010). This aligns with a deterrence logic to prevent CRSV by maintaining the threat of International Criminal Court (ICC) prosecution (Kirby 2015). Broache and Kore (2023) cast doubt on ICC prosecution being an effective threat to deter CRSV. Aroussi (2016) critiques the WPS agenda for permitting impunity in cases of sexual violence. She argues that such impunity is driven by masculinized perceptions of accountability, where the fear of sanctions or punishment is minimal, and the international community's narrow focus on sexual violence as merely a weapon of war fails to encompass the broader spectrum of gender-based harms.

However, amnesty agreements are often seen as favorable options by mediators seeking to quickly resolve the conflict (Jenkins and Goetz 2010). Yet, very few amnesty agreements address sexual violence directly (Mallinder 2018), which can lead to poor gender-related outcomes. In conflict-affected states that experienced CRSV and where armed actors agreed to amnesty agreements, armed actors may continue to perpetuate CRSV in the post-conflict period (Lindgren 2011). Binningsbø and Nordås (2022) argue that amnesty agreements signal cultures of impunity (lowering the perceived cost to engage in sexual violence) and foster

permissiveness during conflict, particularly among rebel groups. In contrast, trials are thought to deter sexual violence through the threat of punishment. In a cross-national study of civil wars, they find support for the signaling mechanism and find a relationship between amnesty agreements and subsequent sexual violence. However, Binningsbø and Nordås (2022) focus on in-conflict amnesty agreements and CRSV, but not the postwar implications of amnesty agreements. For example, amnesty agreements have been central to conflict resolution outcomes in postwar Algeria. A proposed amnesty agreement for wartime sexual violence during Algeria's civil war was highly contested by women's group. However, the adoption of the amnesty agreement helped President Abdelaziz Bouteflika's government enact future policy goals. The agreement was seen as a way to address the conflict-era crimes and allowed him to enact his agenda to further integrate the country into the Western world after decades of isolation (Moghadam 2010). Over time, Algeria experienced weaker political opposition from Islamist groups and enacted fewer women-friendly policies compared to other countries in the region (Tripp 2019), suggesting that amnesty agreements led to worse outcomes for women by seeking widespread absolution of war-related crimes. Limited large-N work examines how amnesty agreements, as a form of transitional justice, impact post-conflict gendered outcomes.

As demonstrated with the case of Algeria, conflict provides a new window of opportunity for governments transitioning out of conflict to either address CRSV or shirk accountability for war crimes depending on the political context. A lack of strong competition opposing Bouteflika's government enabled him to use an amnesty agreement to distance himself from the war and govern in the postwar era.

Political Competition, Amnesties, and Sexual Violence

Political leaders are strategic in how they choose different forms of TJ. States with more

powerful leaders may opt for more targeted versions of amnesties related to certain individuals or crimes to limit widespread domestic prosecution or prosecution for international crimes (Vinjamuri and Snyder 2015). Amnesty deals can be particularly in more competitive regimes in times of political uncertainty.¹³¹ For example, Nalepa and Powell (2016) argue that strong international criminal tribunals can deter leaders from peacefully giving up their power in autocracies and they will only do so when faced with a strong opponent willing to give them amnesty.

First, leaders strategically decide to address conflict-era abuses with TJ mechanisms. There have been notable limits to peacemaking efforts in Nepal as investigative bodies into war crimes have not produced many results (Berry and Rana 2019). Rausch (2017) finds that low levels of political will among elites to address accountability as it would target high- ranking members of the political and security classes in Nepal. Similarly, Sri Lanka created weak investigative measures in response to mass atrocities committed during its civil war to avoid accountability from the international community (Cronin-Furman 2020). A description of the Sri Lankan political environment highlights this contention.

“Driven by competing political agendas, the UNP-SLFP [United National Party- Sri Lanka Freedom Party] coalition government has developed no coherent response to charges by the “joint opposition”, led by Former President Rajapaksa, that transitional justice measures are part of a pro-separatist, anti-national conspiracy. This political opposition has encouraged resistance from the military and security-related bureaucracy, which remains unwilling to assume responsibility for wartime abuses. These officials are particularly afraid that some of them could

¹³¹ Nalepa (2010) demonstrates how political parties may be uncertain how transitional justice mechanisms can affect culpable parties and this can impact the timing and veracity of parties to address transitional justice in post-Communist states.

be tried before a special court, potentially with foreign judges,”(International Crisis Group 2017).

Second, elites may not consider these issues worth addressing at the state-level, but refer to them as “private matters” or issues of the past. Political leaders may prefer to “look forward” when addressing gendered issues, rather than risk implicating themselves or their potential supporters for wartime abuses.¹³² Lee (2022) finds that high levels of sexual violence are associated with more legislative accountability. However, leaders are more likely to adopt judicial mechanisms of accountability to distance themselves in the face of accountability for the international community. Devolving accountability to lower levels of government or to non-state institutions can foster a culture of impunity and hamper women’s security in the post-conflict period.

Postwar Nepal is a useful example of how transitional justice mechanisms work in practice. Aguirre and Pietropaoli (2008) argue that TJ mechanisms in Nepal were strong on paper in line with a rights-based framework, but in practice was vague in how to accomplish its goals leading to weaker TJ mechanisms. Fieldwork interviews from Nepal suggested that the central government does not have the political will to address conflict-era abuses and views these as issues of the past with politicians no longer an appetite to address these issues. Nepal’s Human Rights Commission established after the conflict has collected significant information about conflict-era abuses such as gender-based violence, but has done little to hold actors to account. In 2015, Nepal’s Supreme Court rejected an amnesty provision that would absolve perpetrators of human rights abuses and pushed against political parties “who wanted the

¹³² In a study of public attitudes towards TJ, Samii (2013) demonstrates that this sentiment may also be prevalent among civilians who want to “forgive and forget” due to uncertainty driven by partisan competition over postwar power balances should be institutionalized in Burundi.

commissions to work according to their convenience,” said a Dinesh Tripathi, a lawyer representing war victims.¹³³ Previously, Maoist and opposition parties alike supported legislation that would shield themselves from accountability.¹³⁴ ¹³⁵Like Sri Lanka, some argue that holding elites accountable in Nepal for conflict abuses would remove political elites from office which could harm their legitimacy, trustworthiness, and political fortunes.

Amnesty is an important TJ mechanism that can either facilitate or obstruct accountability for wartime violence. Specifically, it is a legal tool used by actors to remove liability for offenses. Even in conflict-affected states characterized by high political competition, where one might expect improvements in women’s rights, and by extension, their security and status, the use of amnesty by postwar governments as a form of TJ can undermine accountability for wartime abuses. When implemented without complementary TJ mechanisms, amnesty agreements can significantly limit victims’ access to justice, leaving them with little recourse and reinforcing impunity.

Amnesty agreements can allow political elites to be seen as legitimate actors pursuing justice, as well as credible governing actors securing stability in the postwar era, particularly among other political elites. This may be seen as politically beneficial when addressing wartime sexual violence, allowing leaders to avoid direct accountability while maintaining the appearance of reconciliation. However, amnesty agreements can also foster a system of impunity that persists in the post-conflict context. They may normalize violence against women - both physical

¹³³ Adkin, Ross. 2015. “Nepal Supreme Court Rejects Amnesty for War Crimes.” Reuters. <https://www.reuters.com/article/world/nepal-supreme-court-rejects-amnesty-for-war-crimes-idUSKBN0LV0CF/#:~:text=Nepal%27s%20Supreme%20Court%20has%20rejected%20the%20possibility,for%20human%20rig>

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ A new transitional justice law was passed in 2024 that still leaves an accountability gap for war-related issues. Nepal: New Transitional Justice Law a Flawed Step Forward. 2024. Amnesty International. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/08/nepal-new-transitional-justice-law-a-flawed-step-forward/#:~:text=A%20previous%20attempt%20at%20a,a%20wider%20crisis%20of%20impunity>.

and nonphysical - while reinforcing social stigma towards victims, contributing to under-reporting, and perpetuating a lack of accountability for gender-based crimes. Collectively, these dynamics result in poorer outcomes for women and undermine efforts to advance gender justice after civil war.¹³⁶

Elites have incentives to use amnesty agreements to contain the fallout of post-conflict electoral punishment. Namely, amnesty agreements can signal impunity for wartime actors as they can distance themselves from conflict-era abuses, particularly gendered abuses that are condemned by domestic and international audiences. Amnesty agreements are designed by conflict victors, often the incoming government and elites, and can use TJ to target specific individual and groups to seek punishment. Similarly, amnesty agreements may be used to shield elites from domestic punishment within TJ processes. Elites can use TJ processes to evade accountability for gendered harms by targeting rank-and-file perpetrators of war crimes and distancing themselves from wartime abuses, rather than targeting and purging leadership to be seen as competent leaders addressing wartime abuses, in the eyes of domestic and international audiences. In other words, TJ mechanisms have a conditioning effect on political competition in post-conflict states, which affects gendered outcomes. Amnesty agreements can create dangerous conditions for women by lowering the cost of individuals to engage in gendered harms, such as engaging in post-conflict sexual violence and maintaining structural harms towards women, thus lowering women's security and stifling women's safety and access in public life. This leads to the following testable hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3: The adoption of transitional justice mechanisms will lower women's status

¹³⁶ Gathering evidence for wartime sexual violence can be a fraught process as demonstrated by discounted testimony from women in Sierra Leone (Kelsall and Stepakoff 2007) and a disconnect between parallel institutions to address sexual violence in Liberia and Sierra Leone (Seelinger 2014).

in post-conflict states.

We should expect to see higher rates of post-conflict sexual violence against women in countries that adopt post-conflict amnesty agreements. In line with (Lee 2022; Binningsbø and Nordås 2022), these judicial mechanisms do not address past violations in order distance themselves from perpetuating violence. Amnesty agreements that absolve war crimes lower the cost of perpetuating violence in the postwar period. When armed actors re-integrate into civilian life, they may be more likely to continue violence in the post-conflict period by committing sexual violence against women whether that be within or outside of the home. This result would be in line with literature that finds women face a continuum of violence after conflict (Cockburn 2004; Boesten 2017). In other words, the legacy of gendered harms, and signal of impunity for gender-based violence with the adoption of amnesty agreement should lead to higher rates of violence against women in the post-conflict era. This leads to the following testable hypothesis:

Hypothesis 4a: Post-conflict amnesty agreement adoption should lead to higher rates of physical violence towards women.

Amnesty agreements also impact women in non-physical ways, affecting their status and security, particularly in conflicts with gendered dimensions. Armed actors often espouse gender ideologies, including gender components to their political platforms and incorporate women into different levels of their ranks (Asal et al. 2013; Thomas and Bond 2015). Furthermore, due to the windows of opportunity created by conflict, women often take up new positions in the home and public life, becoming breadwinners, activists, and politicians (Webster, Chen and Beardsley 2019; Webster et al. 2020). After war, these shifts can alter social hierarchies incorporating more women into the broader electorate and making them a considerable political force. Shifts in gender hierarchies can also lead to changes in gender norms which politicians may or may not

respond to. When these evolving norms push for accountability, elites are more likely to be unresponsive—especially if such demands threaten their political fortunes. Consequently, in more competitive political environments, we should expect that impunity granted through post-conflict amnesty agreements can undermine women’s ability to pressure (male) elites into fostering norms of gender equality. Viewing CRSV as “crimes of the past” may reinforce gendered beliefs and attitudes about women, lowering the perceived cost of misogyny and patriarchal attitudes, and hampering women’s inclusion in public life. The adoption of amnesty agreements may also reduce women’s ability to mobilize around the issue, diminish rates at which women seek justice through the legal system, and hinder female politicians from overcoming partisan divides to caucus across party lines on women’s issues—all of which contribute to lower levels of women’s participation across various facets of public life. This leads to the following testable hypothesis:

Hypothesis 4b: Post-conflict amnesty agreement adoption should lead to lower rates of women in public life.

The United Kingdom’s (UK) government’s passage of a Legacy and Reconciliation Bill to address the Troubles in Northern Ireland presents a useful illustrative example of how states can shirk accountability for conflict-era violence.

Northern Ireland’s Legacy and Reconciliation Bill

In Northern Ireland, women’s insecurity remains relatively low considering high women’s political mobilization during the conflict and high levels of international attention after

the decades-long conflict. During The Troubles,¹³⁷ most literature focused on violence by the United Kingdom (UK) state actors and non-state paramilitary forces towards nationalist communities including the killing and kidnapping of men, but little on the gendered harms that women faced. Women faced various forms of CRSV during the conflict such as sectarian killings, threats and acts sexual violence and harassment, forced strip searches, the detention of mothers with children, and physical harm during home raids (Swaine 2023).¹³⁸ However, these harms have been difficult to document in Northern Ireland.

In nearly 30 years since the end of the conflict, women still face difficulties. Women in Northern Ireland received little attention in TJ efforts. There has been little recognition of CRSV that took place in the conflict or reparations as a source of TJ for CRSV (O'Rourke and Swaine 2017), low levels of political inclusion and status in public life (Pierson 2018), and high rates of gendered harm, including intimate partner violence (Doyle and McWilliams 2020; Swaine 2023). A recently passed bill may continue to undermine women's security and status in Northern Ireland.

In 2023, the UK government passed the Legacy and Reconciliation Bill which would stop prosecutions for alleged killings by militants and British soldiers during the Troubles. Despite policing and justice issues being under the powers of Northern Ireland after the Good Friday agreement, "the decision generally to enact the [Legacy Bill] was made unilaterally by the British government," without meaningful consolation processes (Clenaghan 2023, 35). The bill has been opposed by all the main Northern Irish political parties,¹³⁹ victims groups, and civilians

¹³⁷ The Troubles were a low-intensity, ethno-nationalist conflict based largely in Northern Ireland that lasted from the 1960s until the signing of the 1998 Good Friday Agreement.

¹³⁸ Swaine (2023) argues that a distinct typology is necessary for classifying the different and varied forms of gendered and sexual harms that women faced during the Troubles.

¹³⁹ Previously, Northern Irish parties have been split over how to address TJ (Lawther 2013).

as it would reduce access to justice¹⁴⁰ - over 1,000 cases are still under investigation as of 2018.¹⁴¹

The Legacy Bill that could potentially shield perpetrators of violence from accountability by offering conditional immunity.¹⁴² The bill could prevent accountability for British government collusion during the Troubles which has been challenged by state actors such as by Royal Ulster Constables (RUC), a militarized police force that enforced British rule in Northern Ireland (Clenaghan 2023); the RUC was dissolved in 2001 and replaced by the Police Service of Northern Ireland. The Bill also has implications for victims of sexual violence. The bill originally would provide immunity British veterans that engaged in sexual violence and sexual intimidation as tools of intimidation during the Troubles. The bill was criticized by left-wing parties that fought for government concessions to exclude sexual offense from being included in

¹⁴⁰ Hui, Sylvia. 2024. "Northern Ireland Judge Rules That Amnesty Law for 'the Troubles' Breaches Human Rights." AP News. <https://apnews.com/article/northern-ireland-troubles-amnesty-law-379371a807f5257566946e9b59b71964>.

¹⁴¹ Winters, Rose. 2018. "New Figures Reveal Scale of Unsolved Killings from the Troubles." The Detail. <https://www.thedetail.tv/articles/new-figures-reveal-scale-of-unsolved-killings-from-the-troubles>.

¹⁴² Joint Committee on Human Rights. Legislative Scrutiny: Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Bill. London: UK Parliament. House of Lords and House of Commons Committee. <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/jt5803/jtselect/jtrights/311/report.html>.

O'Neill, Adrian. 2022.

"Northern Ireland Legacy Legislation Lacks Support of the People It Is Supposed to Serve." The House. <https://www.politicshome.com/thehouse/article/northern-ireland-legacy-legislation-lacks-support-of-the-people-it-is-supposed-to-serve>.

Lawther, Cheryl. 2024. "Labour and Legacy: An Opportunity to Re-Centre Conflict Related Sexual Violence?" <https://qpol.qub.ac.uk/labour-and-legacy-an-opportunity-to-re-centre-conflict-related-sexual-violence/>.

Northern Ireland Legacy Bill: Victims' Rights Sacrificed to Shield Perpetrators. 2022. Amnesty International UK. <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/press-releases/northern-ireland-legacy-bill-victims-rights-sacrificed-shield-perpetrators> (September 23, 2023).

the Bill; a large opponent of the bill is Mairia Cahill, a former member of parliament, that claims to have been raped by a Provisional IRA member as a teenager.^{143 144}

Cahill was not the only opponent of the bill. An Ulster Unionist politician spoke for his party saying that everyone should be held accountable by the law - including, terrorists, police officers, soldiers, civilians or, politicians - suggesting that bill has large-scale implications for those who may have been complicit in wartime abuses including political and military elites (Clenaghan 2023). Spokesperson for the Democratic Unionist Party, a pro-British party in Northern Ireland, called the bill “abhorrent,” and a member of Sinn Fein accused the British government of being “cynical and cruel.”¹⁴⁵ Once passed, the bill faced opposition and potential legal challenges from both the Irish government as well as victims groups taking the case to European courts.¹⁴⁶

The law’s conditional immunity from prosecutions were violations of the European Convention on Human Rights and would “not contribute to reconciliation in Northern Ireland,” said Justice Adrian Colton.²² Instead of the courts addressing defendants accused of claims, a new independent commission, the Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery (similar to South Africa’s TRC) would investigate crimes, granting former militants and soldiers that cooperate immunity from prosecution, and new civil claims inquests over the

¹⁴³ Wheeler, Richard. 2022. “Sex Offenders Face Exclusion from Troubles Immunity Bill as Minister Bows to Pressure; Burns Accepts Labour Amendment after Warnings That Plans Faced Defeat.” Belfast Telegraph. <https://advance-lexis-com.proxy-um.researchport.umd.edu/api/document?collection=news&id=urn%3acontentItem%3a65TH-NV31-JCBW-N3T3-00000-00&context=1519360&identityprofileid=GPVCB651713>.

¹⁴⁴ Deeney, Niall. 2022. “Move to Close ‘Amnesty for Rapists’ in Troubles Legacy Bill Welcomed by Mairia Cahill.” News Letter. <https://advance-lexis-com.proxy-um.researchport.umd.edu/api/document?collection=news&id=urn%3acontentItem%3a65S4-6PV1-F15H-23F3-00000-00&context=1519360&identityprofileid=GPVCB651713>.

¹⁴⁵ Lawless (2023).

¹⁴⁶ Troubles Legacy Act: Ireland Takes Human Rights Case against UK.” 2023. BBC. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-67769920>.

Troubles would be banded. Reporting suggests the UK government is seeks to lead commemorative efforts such as collecting oral histories from the public in reconciliation efforts, but this effort is seemingly undermined by the Legacy Bill.¹⁴⁷

UK veterans groups supported the legislation as it would decrease the likelihood of prosecution of British troops that served in Northern Ireland²⁴. However, the Legacy Bill has been condemned by all major political parties in Northern Ireland, Catholic and Protestant churches, human rights organizations, and the UN.¹⁴⁸ UN experts said the bill would hamper access to justice, preclude information discovery, reparations for victims, and introduce a, “low threshold ... for granting immunity and the lack of review mechanisms would be tantamount to a de-facto amnesty scheme.”¹⁴⁹ The bill was condemned by the campaign manager for Amnesty International UK. “The bill is a disturbing interference in the justice system. It is clear the government has not shifted from its plan to sacrifice victims’ rights to shield perpetrators. Access to justice for serious crimes will be permanently removed in ‘Troubles’ related cases,” said Grainnne Teggart.

Party politics came to the fore in the face of legal troubles for the bill. The then leader of the conservative, unionist Northern Irish party, the Ulster Unionist Party, Doug Beattie said the Irish government’s decision was a political opposition tactic to score points ahead of an election

¹⁴⁷ Mallinder, Louise. 2023. “Amnesty for Troubles-Related Crimes to Become Law – Why Many People in Northern Ireland Oppose the Bill.” <https://theconversation.com/amnesty-for-troubles-related-crimes-to-become-law-why-many-people-in-northern-ireland-oppose-the-bill-213029>.

¹⁴⁸ Lawless, Jill. 2023. “Despite Opposition, Britain Passes Law to Curb Prosecutions for Northern Ireland ‘Troubles’ Violence.” AP News. <https://apnews.com/article/northern-ireland-troubles-reconciliation-prosecutions-legacy-51ca9c0e29b9dbd4dbfa12082f6cf2a5>. “Council Of Europe Criticises UK Amnesty Bill For N.Ireland Unrest.” 2023. Agence France Presse. <https://www.barrons.com/news/council-of-europe-criticises-uk-amnesty-bill-for-n-ireland-unrest-d63d210>. “Northern Ireland Troubles Bill.” Amnesty International UK. <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/ni-troubles>.

¹⁴⁹ Rights Experts Urge UK to Redraft Controversial Northern Ireland Bill. 2022. UN News. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/12/1131742>.

year.¹⁵⁰ The Northern Irish political system had been in turmoil in the years leading up to the bill¹⁵¹, while the British parliament has been under relatively strong control of the Conservative Party from 2010-2024. The Labour Party, now the UK ruling party, has vowed to repeal the bill in 2024.

This illustrative example demonstrates that elites may avoid adopting gender-friendly reforms to avoid facing the repercussions of accountability for perpetuating conflict-related violence and curbing civil liberties. UK political leaders selectively chose among transitional justice mechanisms that would maintain their electoral position and support British, male veterans from prosecution. Wartime accountability could hurt their advantage at the ballot box via transitional justice mechanisms such as trials and purges, and may rely on using amnesties and low enforcement truth commissions as a way of shirking accountability for wartime violations. In particular, this bill effects women and their ability to seek justice for gendered harms in a society has made tepid efforts to address CRSV, where a culture of denial and silence is rampant (Lawther 2013; Graff-McRae 2017).

The theoretical argument presented here is tested with a cross-national quantitative analysis of amnesty agreements and outcomes for women.

Cross-National Research Design

Building off previous findings in this dissertation, I argue that TJ mechanisms may have

¹⁵⁰ Troubles Legacy Act: Ireland Takes Human Rights Case against UK.” 2023. BBC. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-67769920>.

¹⁵¹ Mallinder, Louise. 2023. “Amnesty for Troubles-Related Crimes to Become Law – Why Many People in Northern Ireland Oppose the Bill.” <https://theconversation.com/amnesty-for-troubles-related-crimes-to-become-law-why-many-people-in-northern-ireland-oppose-the-bill-213029>.

a conditioning effect on political competition in post-conflict states. Even in the face of increased gender salience and political competition which should drive improved security for women, TJ can interfere with the development of improvement by elites seeking their own political survival in post-conflict states. I focus on post-war domestic accountability mechanisms that took place between 1990-2016.

Independent Variables

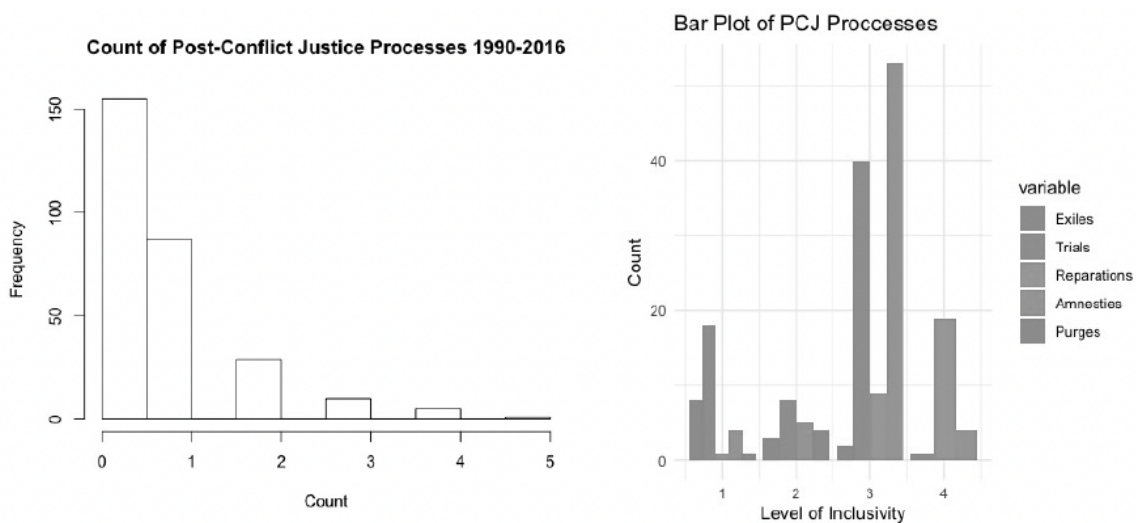


Figure 5.1: Histogram of Post-Conflict Justice Processes (Left) and Bar Plot of Post-Conflict Justice Processes

To measure amnesties, I use data from Binningsbø et al. (2012) on post-conflict justice (PCJ) in post-conflict states from 1990-2016. The data disaggregates TJ mechanisms by the range of actors affected: individuals, elites, specific groups/subgroups, and the general group/community (categories 1-4 respectively). As seen on the left side of Figure 8, PCJ processes are common in the post-Cold War Era. PCJ processes also vary by type and this data includes five main types of processes: exiles, trials, reparations, amnesties, and purges. The right side of Figure 8 shows a histogram of all PCJ processes and the scope of their target. Elites in Category 2 are more likely to go through trials which often target specific people or groups or to be exiled, but overall amnesty targeting specific groups is more likely. Here we see that when

PCJ's affect a larger group of actors, Categories 3 and 4, less coercive measures are taken such as amnesties, reparations, and trials. PCJ processes that have narrower scopes, or in other words less inclusive in category 1, are more likely to take on a variety of actions suggesting that elites are very careful in how they design PCJ processes and which is likely to vary depending on the strategic environment elites face at the end of war. In this analysis, I focus on amnesties in post-conflict states as a form of TJ that could affect gendered outcomes. Amnesties vary in their scope of actors they target. Understanding the scope of the target can provide information about whether amnesty agreements target certain actors such as rank and file vs. elites, or all conflict actors, though the amnesty process. In Figure 9, Binningsbø et al. (2012) code amnesties into three types: limited, conditional, and unconditional (i.e. blanket amnesties). Limited amnesties apply to certain types of actions or crimes. Conditional amnesties target certain types of actions (for example, rebels that surrendered or combatants that admitted guilt). Finally, unconditional amnesties are granted without stipulations for all actions that took place during conflict. In Figure 9 we see that unconditional amnesties occur more often than limited or conditional amnesties implying that amnesties are a useful method of transitioning to peacetime governance, but also a tool to shirk accountability for conflict-related crimes.

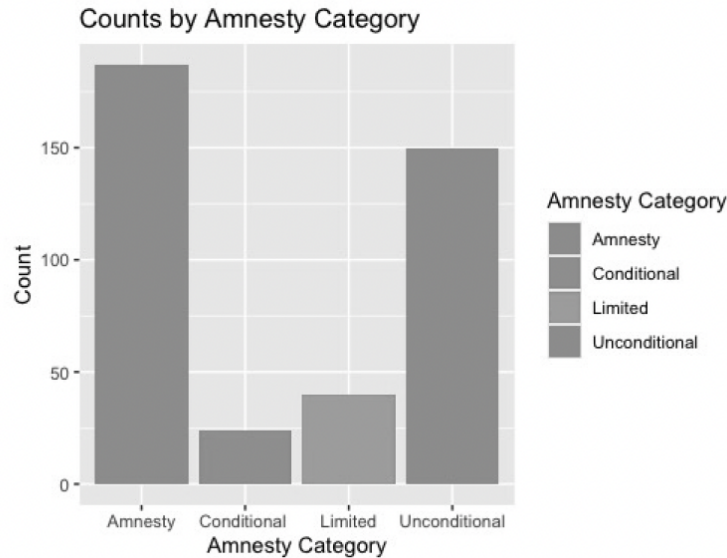


Figure 5.2: Bar Plot of Post-Conflict Amnesties

I argue that unconditional amnesties are the widest form of amnesties as they do not target specific actors enabling elites to handwash accountability for elites as well as rank- and file actors. I expect that these amnesties will be used in less competitive regimes. On the other hand, conditional and limited agreements are more targeted forms of accountability that can include specific groups such as rebel groups, leaders of the military, or individuals that claim legal culpability for wartime crimes. The data from (Binningsbø et al. 2012) is not detail the specifics of each amnesty agreement we can reasonably infer the breadth of the amnesty agreement in each category.

I evaluate the hypotheses with quantitative evidence on political competition, amnesties, and CRSV. To measure political competition, I use the same measure from Chapter 3. *Political competition* is a continuous variable from (Coppedge et al. 2022). This variable captures the level of support for major parties that earned over 10% of the vote. This ordinal variable, converted into an interval variable by VDEM's measurement model, is coded as a 0 if most

major parties are competitive in only one or two regions of the country, 1 if most major parties are competitive in certain regions but not others, or 2 if most major parties are competitive in most regions of the country.

Dependent Variables

I use a number of dependent variables to demonstrate how amnesties can affect women's status in post-conflict states. In terms of women's physical status free from harm, I include a binary indicator, *post-Conflict SV*. This measure coded by (Cohen and Nordås 2014) captures whether sexual violence occurred in the five years following the end of conflict, coded as a 1, otherwise as a 0. This measure is the most accessible and commonly used cross-national measure of post-conflict sexual violence, but does present limitations. *Post-Conflict SV* does not allow us to temporally determine how sexual violence changes in form or over time in the aftermath of violence to determine, nor does it differentiate sexual violence by perpetrator limiting our understanding of patterns of sexual violence in the post-conflict period.

I also include three non-physical measures of women's status using data from (Coppedge et al. 2022). Non-physical measures of women's status will enable discussion for how amnesties affect structural barriers to equality between men and women. I measure women's ability to participate in civil society (*mobilization*), to demonstrate how women's capacity to participate in the public sphere may be affected due to continued violence and perpetuated norms of misogyny and re-enforcement of patriarchal norms. I also include a measure of women's equal access to justice, (*access to justice*). This measure captures whether women are able to equally, securely, and effectively access justice without risk to their personal safety, relative to men. Due to elite competition, elites may make it more difficult for women to seek justice for CRSV. Mobilization and access to justice, are ordinal, converted to interval by the measurement model. Finally, I

include a measure for women's descriptive representation in the legislature (*representation*). Elites may inhibit women's participation in formal politics by re-enforcing norms of gender-based violence reducing the supply of women seeking to make a change in politics by supporting hostile environments and cultures of impunity, and reducing likelihood of women being effective legislatures to address gender-based violence. This measure is an interval, from low to high (0-1).

Control Variables

I include two binary measures of wartime sexual violence, rebel CRSV and state CRSV, as control variables to account for post-conflict levels of gendered salience, these variables come from Cohen and Nordås (2014). To create these measures, I disaggregate the actor- type variable into two categories. *State SV* include actors such as special police, special units, treasury police, presidential guards, presidential units, and security forces as representatives of the state, where *Rebel SV* are rebel and insurgent actors in the conflict. CRSV should mobilize domestic and international groups to address wartime sexual violence as well as to advocate for laws to protect against future cases of sexual violence against women.

To address conflict dynamics, I include measures *battle deaths*, *UN Intervention*, and the *conflict outcome*. In more intense conflicts, we should expect to be more disruptive to the lives of women, likely including increased exposure to violence and women's participation in the war effort in various ways, and increasing the need for post-conflict transitional justice mechanisms. To measure *battle deaths*, I take an average of the best battle-death estimate for all of the conflict-year battle deaths across all actors during wartime, this data comes from the UCDP Battle Deaths dataset (Davies et al. 2025). I also account for the role of the international community. In the aftermath of war, the international community is likely to be invested in the

peace process and the creation of TJ mechanisms. Elites are likely to prefer handling accountability domestically rather than facing potential prosecution from international tribunals and thus more likely to design more favorable transitional justice mechanisms. Therefore, I control for the presence of *UN Intervention*, this data comes from (Daly 2021). Conflict outcomes may also impact what elites are in power to shape TJ mechanisms, I create two binary variables capture whether a conflict resulted in a *government win* or *rebel win*.

Given the increased attention to women in conflict after the 1995 Beijing Conference and the emergence of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda with UNSCR 1325 adopted in 2000, I include a binary control variable, *post-2000*, to account for the increased international attention towards gendered issues.

Foreign aid may drive the priorities of elites to seek post-conflict reforms that signal that elites are concerned with women's issues and are viable international partners. I include *foreign aid*, the logged foreign development assistance and aid a state receives, using data from the World Bank.

Finally, I control for *electoral system* by including a variable for whether a state has a PR system or not using data from VDEM. This measure from is coded as a 0 for a majoritarian system, 1 for a PR system, 2 for a mixed electoral system, and 3 for other (i.e. single- non-transferable voting or limited voting). Women's issues are more likely to be pursued and advanced under proportional representation systems (Paxton, Hughes and Painter 2010; Hughes 2011; Teele 2022) which is likely to impact the likelihood of the political elite adopting legislation that would improve or harm women's security, as well as the number of women in the legislature that may address women's issues.

Results

In Table 5.1, I explore whether political competition makes different forms of amnesty agreements more likely to occur in the post-conflict period. I create an ordered factor, amnesty, which contains the three options for a post-conflict amnesty - none, limited, conditional, and unconditional amnesty - in order of how inclusive the pool of individuals the amnesty covers. Using an ordinal logit model, I find that there is no relationship between political competition and different forms of post-conflict amnesties. Model 1 is a simple bivariate model and Model 2 contains a full battery of control variables. Both models suggest that increased political competition leads to more inclusive forms of political amnesty but are statistically insignificant. The estimated marginal mean for political competition (-3.52) is far below the cut point for the None-Low category (3.5), providing evidence that political competition is not statistically significant and places doubt on the role of political competition influencing amnesties when elites shirk accountability for CRSV. Interestingly, *rebel SV* and *state SV* in Model 2 is statistically significant, suggesting that CRSV does impact amnesty agreement adoption.¹⁵²

¹⁵² Due to post-conflict amnesty agreements being rare events and concerns about an imbalanced dependent variable, I conduct a rare events logistic regression and find similar results to Table 5.1.

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	Amnesty (Ordinal Logit)	
	(1)	(2)
Competition	0.119 (0.157)	0.210 (0.177)
Rebel SV		1.053* (0.560)
State SV		1.299*** (0.417)
Gov Win		-0.538 (0.491)
Rebel Win		-1.207*** (0.054)
Battle Deaths		-0.0002** (0.0001)
Post-2000		-1.584*** (0.357)
UN Intervention		0.811 (0.578)
Foreign Aid		0.005 (0.020)
Electoral System		-0.028 (0.207)
Observations	1,099	978
<i>Note:</i>	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01	

Table 5.1 Political Competition and Post-Conflict Justice

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>
	Post-Conflict SV
Any Amnesty	−0.478 (0.760)
Rebel CRSV	2.557*** (0.550)
State CRSV	4.383*** (0.583)
Competition	−0.483** (0.194)
Gov Win	−1.319* (0.729)
Rebel Win	−0.418 (1.483)
Battle Deaths	−0.0005 (0.0005)
Post-2000	−0.304 (0.468)
UN Intervention	2.837*** (0.815)
Foreign Aid	0.299 (0.238)
Electoral System	0.766*** (0.268)
Constant	−11.342** (4.704)
Observations	978
Log Likelihood	−81.362
Akaike Inf. Crit.	186.724
<i>Note:</i>	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.2 Post-Conflict Sexual Violence

In Table 5.7 of the Appendix, I also include a binary model of whether any form of amnesty increases the likelihood of a any type of post-conflict amnesty occurring, using logistic regressions. Model 1 includes a simple bivariate model in which the dependent variable is *Any Amnesty*, whether any form of amnesty agreement occurs in the post-conflict period is coded as a 1 and otherwise 0, and political competition. Models 2 and 3 include interactive terms for whether rebel and state-perpetrated sexual violence occurs, respectively. Similarly, I find no relationship between political competition and post-conflict amnesties.

Together, these but this does paint an interesting picture. Political competition in general does not tell us much about the likelihood of political amnesties occurring. They could be driven more by political-decision making and the threat of international amnesties which would not be suited for this empirical strategy. Perhaps the type and content of the amnesty deal matters. Amnesty agreements for low-status perpetrators, rank-and-file soldiers, may lead to positive outcomes for women, while elite impunity may lead to more mixed outcomes for women and post-conflict societies more broadly.

Amnesties and Gender Outcomes

Next, I turn to a series of models to test if in contexts where CRSV occurred, amnesty agreements can create barriers to women's outcomes in the post-conflict period despite increased political competition. In Table 5.2, using a logistic regression, *Any Amnesty*, a binary indicator of whether a post-conflict amnesty agreement is in place, decreases the log odds of sexual violence occurring in the post-conflict period, but is insignificant; the odds ratio tell us that an amnesty agreement, of any form, decreases the odds of post-conflict sexual violence occurring by a factor of 0.62. Unsurprisingly, rebel SV and state CRSV increase the likelihood of post-conflict sexual violence occurring. Political competition reduces the likelihood of post-conflict sexual violence

occurring and is statistically significant. Political competition decreases the odds of post-conflict sexual violence occurring by a factor of 0.62. This suggests that political competition can reduce women's security in post-conflict contexts, but when post-conflict amnesty agreements are in place, this can undermine that relationship harming the physical safety of women.

In Table 5.3 we unpack how different types of amnesty deals can influence the likelihood that post-conflict sexual violence occurs. Using logistic regression models, we see a positive relationship between post-conflict sexual violence for limited and conditional agreements and post-conflict sexual violence in Models 1 and 2, suggesting that narrower forms of amnesty agreements lead to more post-conflict sexual violence. The results suggest there is a negative relationship between unconditional amnesties and post-conflict sexual violence occurring that is likewise statistically insignificant. *Rebel CRSV* and *State CRSV* are both positive and statistically significant, showing that the legacy of violence impacts women's post-conflict status and makes them more likely to experience post-conflict violence. A negative relationship continues between competition and post-conflict sexual violence, and is statistically insignificant across all three models. These findings could be driven by rank-and-file perpetrators not being punished by these forms TJ processes and violence continuing in the post-conflict period consistent with the work of (Østby, Leiby and Nordås 2019; Wimpelmann 2019; Svallfors 2021). Together, these findings lead to weak support for Hypotheses 3 and 4a.

Next, I turn to non-physical measures of women's status to demonstrate how amnesty deals affect women's status in more indirect ways through their participation in public life; all

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>		
	Post-Conflict SV		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Limited Amnesty	0.858 (1.374)		
Conditional Amnesty		1.083 (1.951)	
Unconditional Amnesty			-0.463 (0.892)
Rebel CRSV	2.536*** (0.547)	2.515*** (0.547)	2.561*** (0.551)
State CRSV	4.321*** (0.573)	4.320*** (0.572)	4.356*** (0.576)
Competition	-0.487** (0.193)	-0.490** (0.193)	-0.481** (0.194)
Gov Win	-1.186* (0.708)	-1.199* (0.706)	-1.296* (0.724)
Rebel Win	-0.259 (1.458)	-0.288 (1.449)	-0.387 (1.477)
Battle Deaths	-0.0005 (0.001)	-0.0005 (0.0005)	-0.0005 (0.0005)
Post-2000	-0.245 (0.474)	-0.260 (0.471)	-0.273 (0.468)
UN Intervention	2.858*** (0.808)	2.833*** (0.803)	2.838*** (0.814)
Foreign Aid	0.305 (0.240)	0.288 (0.239)	0.297 (0.239)
Electoral System	0.778*** (0.268)	0.754*** (0.267)	0.763*** (0.268)
Constant	-11.551** (4.735)	-11.165** (4.721)	-11.338** (4.714)
Observations	978	978	978
Log Likelihood	-81.388	-81.414	-81.426
Akaike Inf. Crit.	186.776	186.828	186.853
<i>Note:</i> *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01			

Table 5.3 Post-Conflict Sexual Violence by Amnesty Type

models use ordinary least squares regression due to the continuous nature of the dependent variables. Recent work has shown that CRSV can have mobilizing effects and increase political participation (Koos 2018; Gonz'alez and Traunm"uller 2024; Lindsey and Koos 2024). In Table 5.4, I consider how amnesty deals affect women's mobilization efforts given their ability to participate in civil society. We could expect that in states that experience sexual violence, women are more likely to mobilize and campaign to address CRSV, prevent future abuse (Medie 2013; Beck 2022; Zulver 2022), and mobilize within their communities (Lindsey and Koos 2024). In this model, *any amnesty* is negative and statistically insignificant. Amnesty deals, irrespective of their form, decrease mobilization efforts which decreases the likelihood of women's civil society participation in the post-conflict period. Higher levels of competition increase the likelihood of mobilization and participation of women in public life and is spurred by rebel-wartime sexual violence and dampened by state wartime perpetrators. When examining the different forms of amnesty agreements that spur women's mobilization in Table 5.8 of the Appendix, we see that *limited* and *conditional amnesty* agreements, agreements that are more targeted in actors they include, support increased mobilization, but are statistically insignificant in Models 1 and 2. However, *unconditional amnesties* reduce women's mobilization rates and is statistically significant in Model 3, providing evidence for Hypotheses 3 and 4a. When all

perpetrators of crimes can shirk accountability with unconditional amnesty agreements, this

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>
	Mobilization
Any Amnesty	−0.083 (0.105)
Rebel CRSV	0.401*** (0.104)
State CRSV	−0.171** (0.077)
Competition	0.283*** (0.018)
Gov Win	−0.008 (0.054)
Rebel Win	−0.752*** (0.084)
Battle Deaths	0.0002*** (0.00001)
Post-2000	0.111** (0.050)
UN Intervention	0.253** (0.103)
Foreign Aid	0.002 (0.020)
Electoral System	−0.157*** (0.025)
Constant	0.952** (0.402)
Observations	978
R ²	0.339
Adjusted R ²	0.331
Residual Std. Error	0.624 (df = 966)
F Statistic	45.036*** (df = 11; 966)
<i>Note:</i>	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.4 Post-Conflict Mobilization and Amnesty

harms women's abilities to participate in society without fear of harm; this is particularly notable in light of recent literature about a backlash to women's participation in the public sphere (Krook

2020). These findings suggest that conflict-related violence can harm women's desire and ability to engage in the public sphere and consequently advocate for women's needs.

Moreover, amnesty agreements can harm the ability of women to seek justice for conflict-related violence and shake their faith in state institutions. Exposure to wartime violence can affect citizens' perceptions of the police (Blair and Morse 2021) and can undermine prospects for peace (Arriola et al. 2021). Lack of criminal justice, acknowledgment, and discrimination can lead to a lack of justice for CRSV which can permeate into the postwar era (Manjoo and McRaihtt 2011). For instance, in Guatemala, state-sponsored violence was widespread in the conflict, but many perpetrators were not prosecuted and remained employed with the state, coupled with police corruption, there is a lack of procedures for dealing with domestic cases which can be perceived as "private matters" to be dealt with outside of the state justice system (Manjoo and McRaihtt 2011).

In Table 5.5, we turn to women's ability to access justice in the same way that men can.

Any Amnesty is negatively associated with access to justice, but the coefficient is statistically insignificant. *Rebel CRSV* is positively correlated with increased access to justice whereas *State*

CRSV is negatively correlated with women's access to justice. However, *political competition* is

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>
	Access to Justice
Any Amnesty	−0.083 (0.125)
Rebel CRSV	0.375*** (0.124)
State CRSV	−0.438*** (0.091)
Competition	0.374*** (0.022)
Gov Win	0.172*** (0.064)
Rebel Win	−0.718*** (0.099)
Battle Deaths	0.0002*** (0.00002)
Post-2000	0.015 (0.059)
UN Intervention	−0.235* (0.121)
Foreign Aid	−0.018 (0.024)
Electoral System	−0.263*** (0.029)
Constant	0.457 (0.475)
Observations	978
R ²	0.352
Adjusted R ²	0.345
Residual Std. Error	0.739 (df = 966)
F Statistic	47.706*** (df = 11; 966)
<i>Note:</i>	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.5 Post-Conflict Justice and Amnesty

negatively correlated with women's access to justice. This could suggest that women are less inclined to reach out to the state to seek justice after facing state-sanctioned violence during war.

I unpack how different forms of amnesty agreements may impact access to justice for women in Table 5.9 in the Appendix. Some forms of accountability may drive women to the criminal justice institutions as a fruitful endeavor when other methods of justice may not be advantageous to women, similar to (Lazarev 2019). Against theoretical expectations, *limited amnesties* decrease the likelihood that women can access justice in the same way as men in Model 1 and is statistically significant at the 0.1 level. *Conditional amnesties* are correlated with higher levels of women's access to justice suggesting that under narrower forms of transitional justice, women can better seek justice for grievances. However, in societies with more sweeping forms of accountability and forgiveness for past war crimes as seen in Model 3, women are less likely to access justice in the same way as men when unconditional amnesties are in place, although statistically insignificant. This finding suggests that weak TJ mechanisms can foster cultures of impunity and structural barriers for women. While this is counter to theoretical expectations presented here, these results suggest that unpacking the relationship between amnesty agreement design and equal access to justice to design is worthy of further research with more nuanced data and qualitative research on women's access to justice. These results sheds some doubt on Hypotheses 3 and 4b.

Finally, I examine how women's descriptive representation is affected by amnesty agreements. Post-conflict amnesty agreements may drive women away from the state and public life due to structural harms and concerns of safety, and consequently away from participating in formal politics. In the face of CRSV and amnesty agreements that do not bring gender justice to the fore alongside a lack of accountability, elites may not find formal politics – a patriarchal and

gendered institution in it of itself - as a viable option for improving women's status and security. Table 5.6 shows a negative relationship between *any amnesty* and *representation* suggesting amnesties harm women's inclusion in political life, in line theoretical expectations, although statistically significant. There is a positive relationship between *political competition* and *representation*, in line with a long line of literature on post-conflict descriptive representation (Byrne and McCulloch 2012; Hughes and Tripp 2015; Tripp 2015; Shair-Rosenfield and Wood 2017). Interestingly, *Rebel CRSV* is correlated with higher levels of women's descriptive representation and *State CRSV* is correlated with lower representation rates. Looking at different forms of amnesty agreements in Table 5.10 in the Appendix, we see that all three forms of amnesty agreements are correlated with lower rates of women's descriptive representation. This suggests that sweeping amnesty deals push women away from the state and discourage women to participate in politics. Together, looking at non-physical forms of women's security, structural barriers preventing women from being autonomous in public life, lend general support to Hypotheses 3 and 4b.

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>
	Descriptive Representation
Any Amnesty	-0.032 (0.030)
Rebel CRSV	0.091*** (0.030)
State CRSV	-0.037* (0.022)
Competition	0.101*** (0.005)
Gov Win	-0.041*** (0.015)
Rebel Win	-0.120*** (0.024)
Battle Deaths	0.00002*** (0.00000)
Post-2000	0.104*** (0.014)
UN Intervention	-0.023 (0.029)
Foreign Aid	0.008 (0.006)
Electoral System	0.003 (0.007)
Constant	0.443*** (0.114)
Observations	978
R ²	0.363
Adjusted R ²	0.355
Residual Std. Error	0.176 (df = 966)
F Statistic	49.979*** (df = 11; 966)
<i>Note:</i>	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.6 Post-Conflict Representation and Amnesty

Conclusion

In sum, I show that amnesty deals, as a form of transitional justice, generally harm women's status in post-conflict states. Overall, I see that transitional justice mechanisms are correlated with lower levels of women's physical safety as well as discouraging them from participating in political life providing weak support of Hypotheses 3, 4a, and 4b. Results imply that the form of amnesty deal matters when we consider women's status in post-conflict states. Unconditional amnesties seem to be linked to worse outcomes for women. Wider forms of accountability may foster cultures of impunity that seek departures from the war period rather than justice for conflict-related harms that can lead to gendered harms and exclusion of women from public life. Moreover, these results provide evidence to corroborate the broader theoretical argument that even in the face of increased political competition, women may still face barriers in the post-conflict space due to the legacy of political violence.

The findings here suggest that there is some form of relationship between amnesty agreements can harm to women in post-conflict states. Elites may be influenced by other factors and conditions that are not captured here, such as the political decisions about whether to target fellow elites versus rank-and-file actors for CRSV, or international transitional justice measures such as prosecution by the International Criminal Court for sexual violence. Political elites may be far more strategic and political in the design and adoption of amnesty agreements as they relates to gender-issues - an area that warrants further exploration.

Weak statistical findings may also be driven by the low number of post-conflict justice amnesty agreements in place for this cross-national empirical strategy. Alternative model specifications or alternative data sources for political amnesties, could be useful in future work. Weak findings may also be driven by using CRSV as a blunt and narrow measure of gendered

harm. A quantitative single country-case study with more fine-grained data and qualitative work may be able to refine findings here. Future work could look at how transitional agreements are designed to specifically look at how gender is addressed within Weak statistical findings may also be driven by the low number of post-conflict justice amnesty agreements in place for this cross-national empirical strategy. Alternative model specifications or alternative data sources for political amnesties, could be useful in future work. Weak findings may also be driven by using CRSV as a blunt and narrow measure of gendered harm. A quantitative single country-case study with more fine-grained data and qualitative work may be able to refine findings here. Future work could look at how transitional agreements are designed to specifically look at how gender is addressed within post-conflict agreements. Datasets such as Bell and Badanjak (2019),¹⁵³ which on the design of peace agreements and their-gender and amnesty-related components may help clarify how central women's issues are during the transitional period. More fine-grained data on how the design of peace agreements - where many amnesty agreements originate - could provide more nuanced insights into how elites may limit accountability during the negotiation and drafting stages of these agreements.

¹⁵³Louise Mallinder and Daniel Shaw (2024), Amnesties, Conflict and Peace Agreement Database, Version 2, Peace and Conflict Resolution Evidence Platform (PeaceRep) and Queen's University Belfast <https://peaceagreements.org/amnesties/>

Chapter 6: Conclusion

The normative goals of gender equality and the improvement of women's status have been a mainstay in international politics since the end of the Cold War. Expanding women's rights and enhancing women's security are avenues for advancing their status, achieved by codifying legal protections and enabling women to exercise autonomy and decision making in their lives. This dissertation builds on existing literature that examines the conditions for improved women's status in post-conflict states by arguing that domestic factors are central in explaining variation in women's advancement.

Summary of Findings

In Chapter 2, I outline my theoretical argument for explaining variation in women's status following the end of civil wars. I present a theory identifying the conditions under which political parties are more likely to advance women's rights as a means of improving their status in post-conflict states. Specifically, I argue that electoral political competition influences political parties to view women as a valuable pool of voters and a helpful mobilization base for rallying political support in post-conflict states.

In Chapter 3, I provide quantitative evidence for my findings. I show that electoral political competition has a robust, positive effect on women's rights improving in a sample of post-conflict states. These results remain robust even when accounting for alternative mechanisms for alternative mechanisms of rights advancement, such as women's civil society participation and UN intervention.

Chapter 4 explores the process by which political parties advance women's rights in a postwar context. Drawing on fieldwork interviews and qualitative evidence, I present a case study of women's inheritance and citizenship rights expansion in postwar Nepal. I demonstrate

that political competition was a key driver of the advancement of both sets of rights. This analysis also reveals that variation in rights expansion can occur within states, as differing levels of political competition across issues are shaped by varying levels of issue salience.

Chapter 5 demonstrates that even in postwar states with high levels of political competition, significant barriers to advancing women's rights and security may persist. I argue that postwar transitional justice mechanisms can shield elites from domestic accountability for past grievances, thereby harming women across multiple dimensions. In particular, political amnesties serve as a tool for elites to avoid accountability for wartime actions—most notably the use of conflict-related sexual violence—in order to evade electoral punishment and ensure political survival. I find limited evidence suggesting that, even in highly competitive political environments, postwar amnesties are associated with negative outcomes for women. Overall, transitional justice can produce unintended consequences that undermine women's status, often at the expense of providing meaningful justice for wartime harms.

Policy Implications

First, this research finds that domestic political elites play a critical role in postwar gender politics and should be recognized as key actors in the adoption and implementation of gender equality reforms. This finding has significant implications for conflict resolution, peacebuilding, and conflict prevention efforts in post-conflict states. Importantly, we must critically assess the depth of elites' commitments to gender equality, as rhetorical support or symbolic appointments of women are insufficient to drive meaningful change.

Second, while the focus on sexual violence has contributed significantly to our understanding of women's status in postwar contexts, it offers a limited perspective on the broader dimensions of gender equality. Given this narrow scope, it is essential to expand the

analysis of how conflict and postwar politics affect women across various domains. This dissertation demonstrates that different indicators of women's status do not always move in the same direction and should therefore be disaggregated to gain a more comprehensive understanding of gender equality in post-conflict states.

Third, the WPS agenda represents an important and foundational shift in conflict and peace processes. However, more work is needed to ensure that women's specific harms are addressed in the design and implementation of war termination efforts. While including women in peace negotiations and adopting gender quotas are vital steps, the international community and national governments must also consider how peace processes produce downstream effects on the everyday lives of women. Paying attention to the "mundane" and long-term aspects of postwar recovery is essential—not only for women but for society as a whole—as communities rebuild after conflict.

Extensions of Theoretical Argument

I argue there are several areas where my argument could be expanded and tested empirically for future research.

Expanding to Non-Conflict Contexts

Competition has been relevant in understanding post-conflict politics in this dissertation. Post-conflict societies offer a window of opportunity for women to make claims on gendered issues that would be unlikely to occur otherwise. However, a long literature in comparative politics has found that other windows of opportunity can occur such as independence movements, post-communist states, and revolutions (Tanner 2020; Tavits 2008; Zielinski 2002).¹⁵⁴ Findings in

¹⁵⁴Tunisia: Parliament Should Back Gender Equality in Inheritance: Government-Approved Draft Law Sent to Chamber. 2018. Human Rights Watch.

Chapter 3 suggests that it is not just civil conflict but other disruptive but disruptive events - such as coups - that can alter gendered hierarchies. Future research could explore how political parties perceive women as a key constituency during other critical junctures, such as following independence movements or the collapse of the Soviet Union, and how this affects patterns of political competition and gender reform.

Expanding on Intersectional Identities

Chapter 4 highlighted that the advancement of women's status does not occur uniformly. Women's identities and social positions - such as marital status, class, ethnicity, and religion - have distinct implications for how political elites engage with potential women's constituencies, as illustrated in the case of Nepal. For instance, in the United States, gender is not always the most salient identity; class, race, and party affiliation often play a more prominent role in shaping political identity (Wolbrecht and Corder 2020). Examining how elites navigate and balance multiple intersecting identities in competitive political environments opens new avenues for understanding the development of women's security. Relatedly, future research could investigate the conditions under which political elites frame issues using gender-based appeals, as opposed to other ideological or identity-based frames, when targeting women voters.

Patriarchal Backlash

Existing literature has connected hegemonic masculinity and the patriarchy to political violence.¹⁵⁵ Pressure from above and below alone does not suggest however, that gender equality is easy to accomplish in post-conflict states. Despite international actors and a strong women's

[https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/12/04/tunisia-parliament-should-back-gender-equalityinheritance#:~:text=\(Tunis\)%20-%20Tunisia's%20parliament%20should,urgent%20action%20on%20the%20measure.](https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/12/04/tunisia-parliament-should-back-gender-equalityinheritance#:~:text=(Tunis)%20-%20Tunisia's%20parliament%20should,urgent%20action%20on%20the%20measure.)

¹⁵⁵ See (Tickner et al. 1992; Davies and True 2015; Bjarnegård et al. 2023) for more.

movement, and female politicians, a gender equality bill meant to establish gender quotas in Liberia failed to be adopted twice by the legislature and was only adopted 17 years later in 2022 (Debusscher and De Almagro 2016).¹⁵⁶ Changing reforms related to issues such as land reform, citizenship, ability to work in the formal economy can have the ability to shape family and communal relationships, and the broader social order that can be contentious. Women's rights advocates, and in particular female politicians, can also experience backlash for seeking to uproot social hierarchies and institutions by supporting women's security.

This issue is particularly relevant to women's security in conflicts with salient gendered dimensions. Armed actors often adopt ideological stances that include gender components in their political platforms and sometimes integrate women into their ranks. Moreover, during conflict, women frequently assume new roles in both the household and public spheres - becoming breadwinners, activists, and even politicians. In the postwar period, these shifts can alter social hierarchies, incorporating more women into the broader electorate and making them a significant political force that elites must engage with.

This backlash effect has been observed in post-conflict states that attempt to reform prewar institutions, household structures, and cultural practices (True 2012; Berry and Lake 2021; Yadav 2021; Zulver 2021). This backlash can be seen in a variety of different ways from disenfranchisement and subversion of the legal system, to being excluded from formal political decision-making to more extreme tactics such as being subjected to gender-based violence. "The drive to preserve traditional gender roles by preventing women as women from exercising their political rights means that while violent acts may be experienced at a very personal level, even

¹⁵⁶Yates, David. 2022. "Liberia: Weah's CDC Adopts 40% Women Quota" Daily Observer. May 30, 2022. <https://www.liberianobserver.com/liberia-weahs-cdc-adopts-40-women-quota>

between a husband and wife, their implications are much broader, communicating the general message that women as a group should not take part in politics,” (Krook 2017, 82).

We can expect to see this backlash in certain environments such as more inegalitarian societies, dominated by patriarchal attitudes, as well as in ethno-national states. Women’s organizations that were quite successful in Bosnia-Herzegovina found it difficult to make gains in a post-war space given that these organizations challenged the ethno-nationalist rhetoric of political elites (Berry and Lake 2017); similar examples have been seen in Algeria and Mozambique (Tripp 2015), and in Burundi and Yugoslavia (Reilly 2002).

Backlash can cut both ways. Elites in Nepal experienced backlash from women activists when an anti-trafficking law was proposed to ban women from traveling internationally¹⁵⁷; the proposed law was later dropped. The threat of potential backlash is also a key constraint for supporting of reforms to address women’s security.

Role of Rebel Governance

A quickly growing literature has studied how rebel governance affects a number of outcomes during war (Loyle et al. 2023), opening new avenues for future research. The legacy of rebel rule has spurred much research on how it affects household economics (Ibáñez et al. 2024), political mobilization (Berman, Clarke and Majed 2024), electoral mobilization (Haass and Ottmann 2022), and ex-leader authority (Martin, Piccolino and Speight 2021), and political attitudes (Martin, Piccolino and Speight 2022), demonstrating that the legacy of conflict permeates in various ways in the post-conflict period. Many conflicts also have rebel organizations that are capable of adjudicating violent acts with highly institutionalized rebel

¹⁵⁷ Budhathoki, Arun. 2021. The Guardian. February 17, 2021.
<https://www.theguardian.com/globaldevelopment/2021/feb/17/nepalis-protest-ridiculous-ban-women-travelling-abroad-trafficking>.

governance structures that present a different venue for dealing with women's status. Huang (2016) found that 37% of the rebel groups create 'law' and 'order' institutions, suggesting that institutionalized rebel governance is common and varied across conflicts.¹⁵⁸ Rebel governance also affects post-war statebuilding and development (Liu 2022). Robust rebel governance institutions can undermine post-conflict gains as parallel or local-level institutions can be seen as viable alternatives to state governance institutions Ginsburg (2019); Lazarev (2019) which may permeate into postwar politics and political behavior. Emerging work has begun to examine the role of gender and sexual violence in rebel governance (Arjona 2014; Israelsen 2018; Gowrinathan and Mampilly 2019; Gilbert 2021; Giri 2023, 2025; Sawyer, Bond and Cunningham 2021). Examining the legacies of rebel governance may uncover variation in women's appetite for engaging with postwar governments on gendered issues and may uncover varying patterns for women interacting with local versus national policymakers.

¹⁵⁸ Examples of highly institutionalized rebel groups include the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front in El Salvador, the Kurds in Iraq, the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front in Ethiopia, and the National Resistance Army in Uganda (Huang 2016).

Appendices

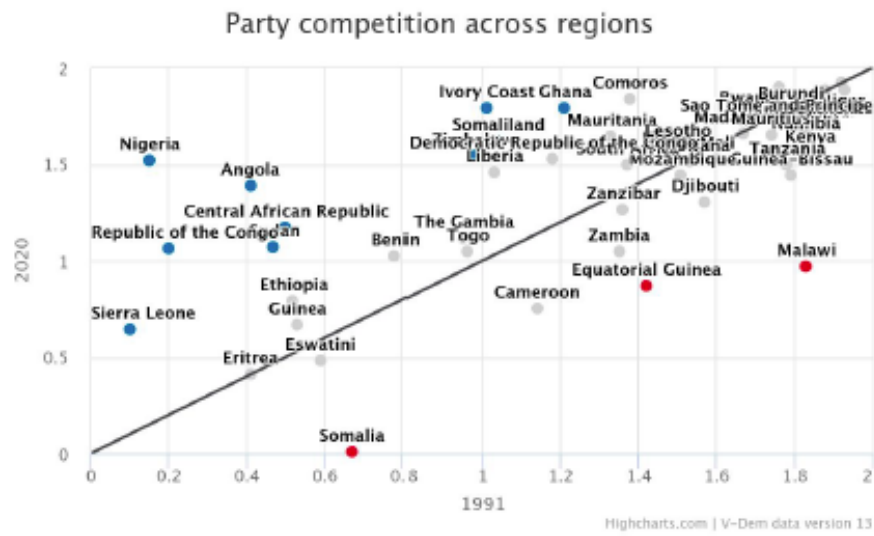


Figure 3.3 Political Competition Across Africa post-Cold War

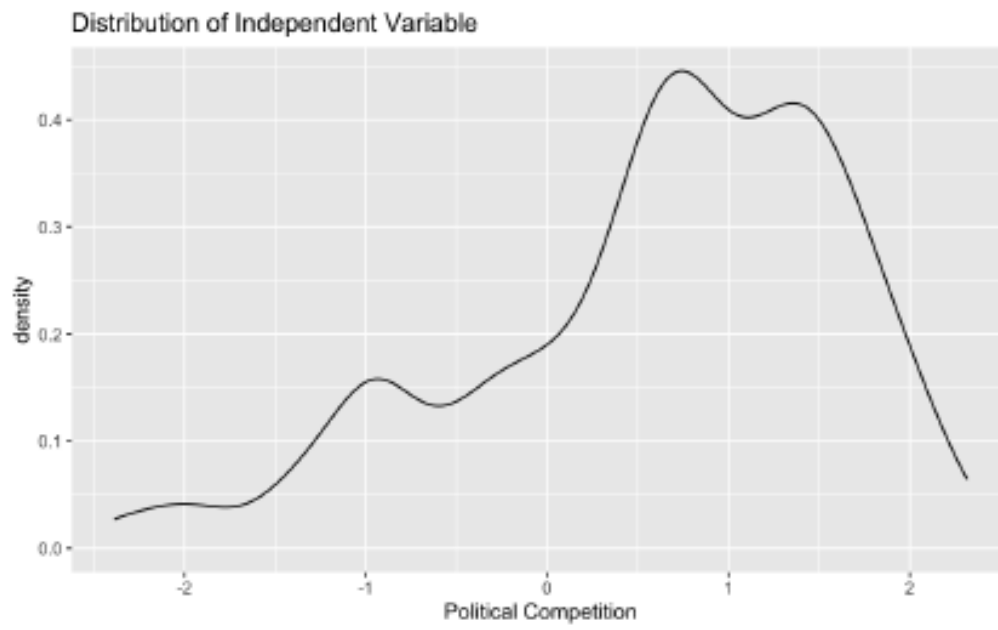


Figure 3.4 Density Plot of Political Competition

Country	Year Enter	Year Exit
Algeria	2003	2020
Angola	2002	2020
Azerbaijan	1994	1996
Azerbaijan	1998	2013
Azerbaijan	2017	2020
Bangladesh	1991	2004
Bangladesh	2006	2020
Bosnia-Herzegovina	1995	2020
Burundi	2006	2013
Burundi	2015	2018
Cambodia	1998	2020
Central African Republic	2013	2017
Chad	1994	2014
China	2008	2020
Colombia	2016	2020
Comoros	1997	2020
Congo	1993	1996
Congo	2000	2020
Croatia	1995	2020
Djibouti	1994	2020
Democratic Republic of Congo	2001	2004
Democratic Republic of Congo	2008	2010
Democratic Republic of Congo	2014	2015
Egypt	1998	2013
El Salvador	1991	2020
Eritrea	1997	2020
Georgia	1993	2020
Guatemala	1995	2020
Guinea	2001	2020
Guinea-Bissau	1999	2020
Haiti	2004	2020
Indonesia	1991	1996
Indonesia	1999	1999
Indonesia	2005	2020
Iran	2001	2004
Iran	2011	2015
Israel	2013	2020
Ivory Coast	2004	2009
Ivory Coast	2011	2020
Jordan	2016	2020
Laos	1990	2020
Lebanon	1990	2020

Table 3.4 Table of Cases in Dataset

Country	Year Enter	Year Exit
Lesotho	1998	2020
Liberia	1990	1999
Liberia	2003	2020
Malaysia	2013	2020
Mali	1990	2006
Mali	2010	2011
Mauritania	2010	2020
Mexico	1994	2020
Moldova	1992	2020
Mozambique	1992	2012
Mozambique	2014	2017
Nepal	2006	2020
Nicaragua	1990	2020
Niger	1992	2006
Niger	2008	2014
Nigeria	2004	2008
North Macedonia	2001	2020
Peru	1999	2006
Peru	2010	2020
Russia	1991	1993
Russia	1996	1998
Rwanda	1994	2020
Senegal	2011	2020
Serbia	1992	1997
Serbia	1999	2020
Sierra Leone	2001	2020
Somalia	1990	1997
Spain	1991	2020
Sri Lanka	2001	2004
Sri Lanka	2009	2020
Tajikistan	1998	2004
Tajikistan	2009	2009
Tajikistan	2011	2020
Trinidad and Tobago	1990	2020
Tunisia	2016	2020
Uganda	1992	1993
Uganda	2007	2020
United Kingdom	1991	1996
United Kingdom	1998	2020
Uzbekistan	2000	2020
Venezuela	1992	2020
Yemen	1994	2007

Table 3.5 Table of Cases in Dataset

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>
	Women's Rights
Competition	0.113*** (0.026)
CSO Participation	0.156*** (0.038)
UN Intervention	0.040 (0.041)
GDP/capita	0.025*** (0.006)
Electoral System	-0.005 (0.028)
Post-2000	0.134*** (0.024)
Foreign Aid	0.016 (0.015)
Regime Type	0.180*** (0.026)
Incompatibility	0.089* (0.046)
Battle Deaths	0.0002*** (0.00004)
Observations	914
R ²	0.330
Adjusted R ²	0.286
F Statistic	42.179*** (df = 10; 857)
<i>Note:</i>	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 3.6 VDEM Competition – Fixed Effects

	Model 1
(Intercept)	−1.47*** (0.25)
Competition	0.16*** (0.01)
CSO Participation	0.32*** (0.02)
UN Intervention	−0.02 (0.06)
GDP/Capita	0.01*** (0.00)
Electoral System	−0.12*** (0.01)
Post-2000	0.10*** (0.03)
Foreign Aid	0.04*** (0.01)
Regime Type	0.17*** (0.03)
Incompatibility	0.11*** (0.02)
Battle Deaths	0.00*** (0.00)
*** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$	

Table 3.7 Clustered Standard Errors Model

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	Women's Rights	
	(1)	(2)
Competition	0.160*** (0.011)	0.160*** (0.012)
CSO Participation	0.317*** (0.019)	0.316*** (0.019)
UN Intervention	0.013 (0.058)	−0.004 (0.058)
GDP/capita	0.011*** (0.003)	0.010*** (0.003)
Electoral System	−0.106*** (0.015)	−0.106*** (0.015)
Post-2000	0.035 (0.031)	0.045 (0.031)
Foreign Aid	0.052*** (0.013)	0.045*** (0.012)
Regime Type	0.156*** (0.027)	0.169*** (0.027)
Incompatibility	0.126*** (0.022)	0.120*** (0.022)
Battle Deaths	0.00004*** (0.00001)	0.00004*** (0.00001)
5 years PC	0.128*** (0.027)	
10 years PC		0.106*** (0.027)
Constant	−1.674*** (0.248)	−1.504*** (0.245)
Observations	914	914
R ²	0.636	0.634
Adjusted R ²	0.632	0.629
Residual Std. Error (df = 902)	0.345	0.347
F Statistic (df = 11; 902)	143.285***	141.770***
<i>Note:</i>		
*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01		

Table 3.8 VDEM Competition – Duration of Peace Model

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	Women's Rights	
	(1)	(2)
Competition	0.189*** (0.015)	0.156*** (0.012)
CSO Participation	0.330*** (0.019)	0.321*** (0.019)
UN Intervention	-0.031 (0.058)	-0.046 (0.061)
GDP/capita	0.011*** (0.003)	0.011*** (0.003)
Electoral System	-0.098*** (0.016)	-0.116*** (0.015)
Post-2000	0.092*** (0.028)	0.096*** (0.028)
Foreign Aid	0.047*** (0.013)	0.044*** (0.013)
Regime Type	0.161*** (0.027)	0.167*** (0.027)
Incompatibility	0.115*** (0.022)	0.113*** (0.022)
Battle Deaths	0.00004*** (0.00001)	0.00005*** (0.00001)
CompetitionXCSO	-0.039*** (0.013)	
CompetitionXUN		0.077 (0.053)
Constant	-1.541*** (0.246)	-1.471*** (0.246)
Observations	914	914
R ²	0.631	0.628
Adjusted R ²	0.627	0.624
Residual Std. Error (df = 902)	0.348	0.349
F Statistic (df = 11; 902)	140.294***	138.463***
<i>Note:</i>	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01	

Table 3.9 Interactive Effects of Political Competition on Women's Rights

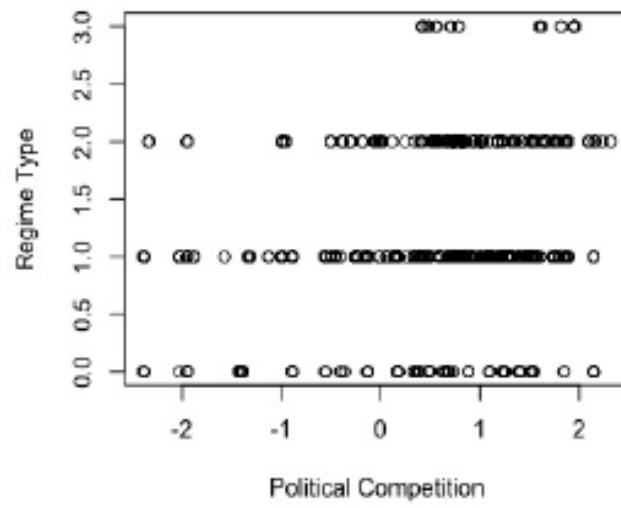


Figure 3.5 Jitter Plot of Regime Type and Political Competition

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>
	Women's Rights
Effective Number of Parties	0.121*** (0.018)
CSO Participation	0.410*** (0.019)
UN Intervention	-0.111* (0.063)
GDP/capita	0.008*** (0.003)
Electoral System	-0.105*** (0.016)
Post-2000	0.051 (0.031)
Foreign Aid	0.044*** (0.014)
Regime Type	0.140*** (0.029)
Incompatibility	0.100*** (0.024)
Battle Deaths	0.00002** (0.00001)
Constant	-1.634*** (0.267)
Observations	914
R ²	0.569
Adjusted R ²	0.565
Residual Std. Error	0.375 (df = 903)
F Statistic	119.434*** (df = 10; 903)
<i>Note:</i>	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 3.10 *Effective Number of Parties and Women's Rights*

Table 17: DPI Competition

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>			
	Women's Rights			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Leg. Competition	0.669*** (0.057)		0.240*** (0.044)	
Exec. Competition		0.550*** (0.047)		0.173*** (0.036)
CSO Participation			0.421*** (0.022)	0.418*** (0.022)
UN Intervention			0.012 (0.065)	-0.034 (0.064)
GDP/capita			0.010*** (0.003)	0.010*** (0.003)
Electoral System			-0.037** (0.017)	-0.055*** (0.017)
Post-2000			0.012 (0.032)	0.010 (0.032)
Foreign Aid			0.170*** (0.031)	0.166*** (0.031)
Regime Type			0.083*** (0.014)	0.087*** (0.014)
Incompatibility			0.078*** (0.025)	0.091*** (0.025)
Battle Deaths			0.0001*** (0.00002)	0.0001*** (0.00002)
Constant	-0.558*** (0.053)	-0.412*** (0.042)	-2.541*** (0.286)	-2.534*** (0.287)
Observations	884	884	815	815
R ²	0.136	0.132	0.598	0.595
Adjusted R ²	0.135	0.131	0.593	0.590
Residual Std. Error	0.574 (df = 882)	0.575 (df = 882)	0.371 (df = 804)	0.372 (df = 804)
F Statistic	139.017*** (df = 1; 882)	134.352*** (df = 1; 882)	119.496*** (df = 10; 804)	117.918*** (df = 10; 804)

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 3.11 DPI Competition

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>		
	Suffrage (1)	Gender Quotas (2)	Property Rights (3)
Competition	-0.000 (0.000)	0.130*** (0.042)	0.198*** (0.019)
CSO Participation	0.000 (0.000)	0.292*** (0.069)	0.417*** (0.031)
UN Intervention	0.000 (0.000)	-0.275 (0.216)	-0.045 (0.097)
GDP/capita	-0.000 (0.000)	0.020** (0.009)	0.031*** (0.004)
Electoral System	0.000 (0.000)	0.016 (0.052)	-0.218*** (0.023)
Post-2000	-0.000 (0.000)	0.370*** (0.103)	0.010 (0.046)
Foreign Aid	0.000 (0.000)	0.374*** (0.044)	0.020 (0.020)
Regime Type	0.000 (0.000)	-0.159 (0.097)	0.364*** (0.044)
Incompatibility	0.000 (0.000)	-0.413*** (0.081)	0.294*** (0.036)
Battle Deaths	-0.000 (0.000)	0.00005 (0.00003)	-0.00001 (0.00001)
Constant	2.000*** (0.000)	-7.022*** (0.861)	-0.299 (0.387)
Observations	942	942	942
R ²	0.500	0.204	0.542
Adjusted R ²	0.495	0.195	0.537
Residual Std. Error (df = 931)	0.000	1.287	0.578
F Statistic (df = 10; 931)	93.098***	23.858***	110.013***
<i>Note:</i>		*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01	

Table 3.12 Political Competition on Alternative Measures of Women's Rights

Table 19: Autocratic Competition

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>
	Women's Rights
Competition	0.179*** (0.016)
CSO Participation	0.290*** (0.026)
UN Intervention	-0.023 (0.066)
GDP/capita	0.004 (0.004)
Electoral System	-0.125*** (0.018)
Post-2000	0.135*** (0.036)
Foreign Aid	0.061*** (0.017)
Incompatibility	0.078*** (0.029)
Battle Deaths	0.0001*** (0.00002)
Constant	-1.785*** (0.323)
Observations	570
R ²	0.622
Adjusted R ²	0.615
Residual Std. Error	0.362 (df = 560)
F Statistic	102.203*** (df = 9; 560)
<i>Note:</i>	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 3.13 Autocratic Competition

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>
	Women's Rights
Competition	0.158*** (0.012)
CSO Participation	0.321*** (0.019)
UN	−0.021 (0.059)
GDP/capita	0.010*** (0.003)
Electoral System	−0.116*** (0.015)
Post-2000	0.098*** (0.028)
Regime Type	0.164*** (0.027)
Foreign Aid	0.045*** (0.013)
Incompatibility	0.122*** (0.023)
Battle Deaths	0.00005*** (0.00001)
Conflict Intensity	−0.013 (0.061)
Constant	−1.481*** (0.255)
Observations	910
R ²	0.629
Adjusted R ²	0.625
Residual Std. Error	0.349 (df = 898)
F Statistic	138.691*** (df = 11; 898)
<i>Note:</i>	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 3.14 Political Competition Women's Rights – Conflict Intensity

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>		
	Women's Rights		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Competition	0.150*** (0.011)	0.160*** (0.012)	0.156*** (0.012)
CSO Participation	0.354*** (0.019)	0.319*** (0.019)	0.328*** (0.019)
UN	-0.006 (0.057)	-0.020 (0.059)	-0.011 (0.059)
GDP/capita	0.009*** (0.003)	0.010*** (0.003)	0.011*** (0.003)
Electoral System	-0.121*** (0.014)	-0.115*** (0.015)	-0.111*** (0.015)
Post-2000	0.092*** (0.027)	0.097*** (0.028)	0.094*** (0.028)
Regime Type	0.194*** (0.026)	0.170*** (0.027)	0.174*** (0.027)
Foreign Aid	0.028** (0.012)	0.044*** (0.013)	0.052*** (0.013)
Incompatibility	0.068*** (0.022)	0.114*** (0.022)	0.098*** (0.023)
Battle Deaths	0.0001*** (0.00001)	0.00004*** (0.00001)	0.00004*** (0.00001)
Peace Agreement	-0.213*** (0.028)		
Gov. Win		0.017 (0.033)	
Rebel Win			0.094* (0.054)
Constant	-1.124*** (0.244)	-1.486*** (0.247)	-1.644*** (0.264)
Observations	913	913	913
R ²	0.650	0.628	0.629
Adjusted R ²	0.646	0.623	0.624
Residual Std. Error (df = 901)	0.339	0.350	0.349
F Statistic (df = 11; 901)	152.372***	138.091***	138.768***

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 3.15 Political Competition Women's Rights – Conflict Outcomes

<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	Women's Rights
Competition	0.160*** (0.012)
CSO Participation	0.320*** (0.019)
UN Intervention	−0.020 (0.059)
GDP/capita	0.010*** (0.003)
Electoral System	−0.115*** (0.015)
Post-2000	0.096*** (0.028)
Foreign Aid	0.044*** (0.013)
Regime Type	0.168*** (0.027)
Battle Deaths	0.00005*** (0.00001)
Incompatibility	0.111*** (0.022)
Constant	−1.468*** (0.246)
Observations	914
R ²	0.627
Adjusted R ²	0.623
Residual Std. Error	0.349 (df = 903)
F Statistic	151.909*** (df = 10; 903)
<i>Note:</i>	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 3.16 Center-Seeking Conflicts and Women's Rights

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	Women's Rights	
	(1)	(2)
Competition	0.172*** (0.012)	0.161*** (0.012)
CSO Participation	0.372*** (0.020)	0.367*** (0.019)
UN Intervention	-0.078 (0.062)	-0.077 (0.059)
GDP/capita	0.013*** (0.003)	0.013*** (0.003)
Electoral System	-0.087*** (0.016)	-0.110*** (0.015)
Post-2000	0.117*** (0.030)	0.096*** (0.029)
Foreign Aid	0.039*** (0.013)	0.044*** (0.013)
Incompatibility	0.159*** (0.024)	0.137*** (0.023)
Battle Deaths	0.00005*** (0.00001)	0.00005*** (0.00001)
Coup Attempt		0.044** (0.021)
Constant	-1.469*** (0.261)	-1.505*** (0.252)
Observations	810	914
R ²	0.624	0.613
Adjusted R ²	0.619	0.608
Residual Std. Error	0.359 (df = 800)	0.356 (df = 903)
F Statistic	147.296*** (df = 9; 800)	142.841*** (df = 10; 903)

Note: ... *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 3.17 Political Competition Women's Rights – Coups

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>
	Women's Rights
Competition	0.175*** (0.013)
Gender Quota	0.116*** (0.032)
CSO Participation	0.325*** (0.019)
UN Intervention	-0.005 (0.058)
GDP/capita	0.010*** (0.003)
Electoral System	-0.110*** (0.015)
Post-2000	0.075*** (0.029)
Foreign Aid	0.044*** (0.013)
Regime Type	0.166*** (0.027)
Incompatibility	0.123*** (0.023)
Battle Deaths	0.00003*** (0.00001)
CompetitionXQuota	-0.089*** (0.026)
Constant	-1.487*** (0.252)
Observations	914
R ²	0.634
Adjusted R ²	0.629
Residual Std. Error	0.347 (df = 901)
F Statistic	129.904*** (df = 12; 901)
<i>Note:</i>	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 3.18 Interactive Effects of Political Competition and Gender Quotas on Women's Rights

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	Women's Rights	
	(1)	(2)
Competition	0.160*** (0.012)	0.158*** (0.012)
CSO Participation	0.322*** (0.019)	0.321*** (0.019)
UN Intervention	-0.026 (0.059)	-0.011 (0.059)
GDP/capita	0.010*** (0.003)	0.010*** (0.003)
Electoral System	-0.117*** (0.015)	-0.113*** (0.015)
Post-2000	0.092*** (0.028)	0.095*** (0.028)
Foreign Aid	0.047*** (0.013)	0.045*** (0.013)
Regime Type	0.157*** (0.027)	0.166*** (0.027)
Incompatibility	0.106*** (0.022)	0.112*** (0.022)
Battle Deaths	0.00004*** (0.00001)	0.00004*** (0.00001)
Conflict Year	0.040 (0.071)	
Wartime SV	-0.149** (0.061)	
Post Conflict SV		-0.095 (0.059)
Constant	-1.519*** (0.246)	-1.485*** (0.247)
Observations	914	914
R ²	0.631	0.628
Adjusted R ²	0.626	0.624
Residual Std. Error	0.348 (df = 901)	0.349 (df = 902)
F Statistic	128.492*** (df = 12; 901)	138.570*** (df = 11; 902)
<i>Note:</i>		*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 3.19 Political Competition and Sexual Violence on Women's Rights

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	Women's Rights	
	(1)	(2)
Competition	0.160*** (0.012)	0.158*** (0.012)
CSO Participation	0.321*** (0.019)	0.325*** (0.019)
UN Intervention	-0.028 (0.059)	-0.026 (0.059)
GDP/capita	0.010*** (0.003)	0.010*** (0.003)
Electoral System	-0.118*** (0.015)	-0.117*** (0.015)
Post-2000	0.090*** (0.028)	0.088*** (0.028)
Foreign Aid	0.046*** (0.013)	0.046*** (0.013)
Regime Type	0.158*** (0.027)	0.161*** (0.027)
Incompatibility	0.106*** (0.022)	0.109*** (0.022)
Battle Deaths	0.00004*** (0.00001)	0.00004*** (0.00001)
Conflict Year	-0.013 (0.064)	-0.042 (0.055)
State-Perpetrated	-0.102* (0.057)	
Rebel-Perpetrated		-0.115* (0.065)
Constant	-1.490*** (0.247)	-1.510*** (0.247)
Observations	914	914
R ²	0.630	0.630
Adjusted R ²	0.625	0.625
Residual Std. Error (df = 901)	0.348	0.348
F Statistic (df = 12; 901)	127.843***	127.827***
<i>Note:</i> *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01		

Table 3.20 Political Competition and Sexual Violence by Actor on Women's Rights

Year	Seats
2007	83
2008	220
2013	80
2017	53
2022	32

Table 4.1 CPN-M Legislative Vote Share 2007-2022 Note: 2007 Elections were transitional elections under the Interim Constitution. Data comes from Inter-Parliamentary Union.

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>		
	Any Amnesty		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Competition	0.123 (0.157)	0.226 (0.179)	0.255 (0.195)
Rebel SV		1.805*** (0.499)	
CompetitionXRebel		-0.378 (0.382)	
State SV			2.150*** (0.436)
CompetitionXState			-0.592 (0.440)
Constant	-3.356*** (0.196)	-3.565*** (0.227)	-3.748*** (0.253)
Observations	1,099	1,099	1,099
Log Likelihood	-171.478	-166.570	-161.058
Akaike Inf. Crit.	346.955	341.140	330.115
<i>Note:</i> *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01			

Table 5.7 Political Competition and Post-Conflict Justice

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>		
	Mobilization		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Limited Amnesty	-0.009 (0.210)		
Conditional Amnesty		0.258 (0.257)	
Unconditional Amnesty			-0.176 (0.117)
Rebel CRSV	0.396*** (0.104)	0.392*** (0.104)	0.406*** (0.104)
State CRSV	-0.178** (0.077)	-0.178** (0.076)	-0.167** (0.077)
Competition	0.283*** (0.018)	0.282*** (0.018)	0.284*** (0.018)
Gov Win	-0.007 (0.054)	-0.006 (0.054)	-0.009 (0.054)
Rebel Win	-0.749*** (0.084)	-0.748*** (0.084)	-0.754*** (0.084)
Battle Deaths	0.0002*** (0.00001)	0.0002*** (0.00001)	0.0002*** (0.00001)
Post-2000	0.117** (0.049)	0.118** (0.049)	0.106** (0.050)
UN Intervention	0.251** (0.103)	0.252** (0.103)	0.258** (0.103)
Foreign Aid	0.002 (0.020)	0.001 (0.020)	0.001 (0.020)
Electoral System	-0.156*** (0.025)	-0.156*** (0.025)	-0.157*** (0.025)
Constant	0.942** (0.402)	0.960** (0.402)	0.970** (0.402)
Observations	978	978	978
R ²	0.339	0.339	0.340
Adjusted R ²	0.331	0.332	0.333
Residual Std. Error (df = 966)	0.624	0.624	0.623
F Statistic (df = 11; 966)	44.951***	45.089***	45.262***
<i>Note:</i> *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01			

Table 5.8 Post-Conflict Mobilization and Amnesty Forms

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>		
	Access to Justice		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Limited Amnesty	-0.440* (0.248)		
Conditional Amnesty		0.247 (0.304)	
Unconditional Amnesty			-0.077 (0.139)
Rebel CRSV	0.374*** (0.123)	0.366*** (0.123)	0.375*** (0.124)
State CRSV	-0.440*** (0.090)	-0.445*** (0.091)	-0.440*** (0.091)
Competition	0.375*** (0.022)	0.373*** (0.022)	0.374*** (0.022)
Gov Win	0.173*** (0.064)	0.174*** (0.064)	0.173*** (0.064)
Rebel Win	-0.722*** (0.099)	-0.714*** (0.099)	-0.717*** (0.099)
Battle Deaths	0.0002*** (0.00002)	0.0002*** (0.00002)	0.0002*** (0.00002)
Post-2000	0.019 (0.058)	0.022 (0.058)	0.016 (0.059)
UN Intervention	-0.243** (0.121)	-0.236* (0.121)	-0.235* (0.122)
Foreign Aid	-0.018 (0.024)	-0.019 (0.024)	-0.018 (0.024)
Electoral System	-0.264*** (0.029)	-0.262*** (0.029)	-0.263*** (0.029)
Constant	0.462 (0.475)	0.465 (0.476)	0.459 (0.476)
Observations	978	978	978
R ²	0.354	0.352	0.352
Adjusted R ²	0.346	0.345	0.345
Residual Std. Error (df = 966)	0.737	0.738	0.739
F Statistic (df = 11; 966)	48.086***	47.737***	47.687***
<i>Note:</i> *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01			

Table 5.9 Post-Conflict Access to Justice and Amnesty Forms

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>		
	Descriptive Representation		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Limited Amnesty	-0.042 (0.059)		
Conditional Amnesty		-0.024 (0.073)	
Unconditional Amnesty			-0.043 (0.033)
Rebel CRSV	0.089*** (0.029)	0.089*** (0.029)	0.091*** (0.030)
State CRSV	-0.039* (0.022)	-0.039* (0.022)	-0.037* (0.022)
Competition	0.101*** (0.005)	0.101*** (0.005)	0.101*** (0.005)
Gov Win	-0.040*** (0.015)	-0.040*** (0.015)	-0.041*** (0.015)
Rebel Win	-0.119*** (0.024)	-0.119*** (0.024)	-0.120*** (0.024)
Battle Deaths	0.00002*** (0.00000)	0.00002*** (0.00000)	0.00002*** (0.00000)
Post-2000	0.106*** (0.014)	0.106*** (0.014)	0.103*** (0.014)
UN Intervention	-0.025 (0.029)	-0.024 (0.029)	-0.022 (0.029)
Foreign Aid	0.008 (0.006)	0.009 (0.006)	0.008 (0.006)
Electoral System	0.003 (0.007)	0.003 (0.007)	0.003 (0.007)
Constant	0.441*** (0.114)	0.437*** (0.114)	0.446*** (0.114)
Observations	978	978	978
R ²	0.362	0.362	0.363
Adjusted R ²	0.355	0.355	0.356
Residual Std. Error (df = 966)	0.176	0.176	0.176
F Statistic (df = 11; 966)	49.890***	49.832***	50.063***

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.10 Post-Conflict Representation and Amnesty Forms

Bibliography

- Abbott, Pamela and Dixon Malunda. 2016. "The promise and the reality: Women's rights in Rwanda." *African Journal of International and Comparative Law* 24(4):561–581.
- Adhikari, Aashiyana. 2022. Substantive representation of Women Parliamentarians and gender equality in Nepal. In *Substantive representation of women in Asian parliaments*. Routledge pp. 206–225.
- Adjei, Maxwell. 2021. "Ending Civil War through Nonviolent Resistance: The Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace Movement." *Journal of International Women's Studies* 22(9):19–35.
- Agarwal, Bina. 1994. "Gender and command over property: A critical gap in economic analysis and policy in South Asia." *World development* 22(10):1455–1478.
- Agerberg, Mattias and Anne-Kathrin Kreft. 2020. "Gendered Conflict, Gendered Outcomes: The Politicization of Sexual Violence and Quota Adoption." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 64(2):290–317.
- Aghedo, Iro. 2013. "Winning the war, losing the peace: Amnesty and the challenges of post-conflict peace-building in the Niger Delta, Nigeria." *Journal of Asian and African studies* 48(3):267–280.
- Aguirre, Daniel and Irene Pietropaoli. 2008. "Gender equality, development and transitional justice: The case of Nepal." *The International Journal of Transitional Justice* 2(3):356–377.
- Ahikire, Josephine and Amon Mwiine. 2019. Contesting ideas, aligning incentives: The politics of Uganda's Domestic Violence Act (2010). In *Negotiating Gender Equity in the Global South*. Routledge pp. 67–87.
- Akinsulure-Smith, Adeyinka M and Hawthorne E Smith. 2012. "Evolution of family policies in post-conflict Sierra Leone." *Journal of Child and Family Studies* 21:4–13.
- Alemán Eduardo, Tiffany D Barnes, Juan Pablo Micozzi and Sebastian Vallejo Vera. 2025. "Gender, Institutions, and Legislative Speech." *Comparative Politics* 57(2):219– 241.
- Alexander, Amy C and Hilde CoffÅLe. 2018. "Women's political empowerment through public opinion research: The citizen perspective." *Measuring Women's Political Empowerment across the Globe: Strategies, Challenges and Future Research* pp. 27–53.
- Allendorf, Keera. 2007. "Do women's land rights promote empowerment and child health in Nepal?" *World development* 35(11):1975–1988.
- Anderson, Miriam J. 2015. *Windows of opportunity: How women seize peace negotiations*

- for political change*. Oxford University Press.
- Aning, Emmanuel Kwesi. 1998. "Gender and civil war: The cases of Liberia and Sierra Leone." *Civil Wars* 1(4):1–26.
- Anyidoho, Nana Akua, Gordon Crawford and Peace A Medie. 2021. "The role of women's movements in the implementation of gender-based violence laws." *Politics & Gender* 17(3):427–453.
- Aolain, Fionnuala Ni. 2009. "Women, security, and the patriarchy of internationalized transitional justice." *Human Rights Quarterly* 31(4):1055–1085.
- Arjona, Ana. 2014. "Wartime institutions: a research agenda." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 58(8):1360–1389.
- Aroussi, Sahla. 2016. 'Women, Peace and Security': Addressing Accountability for Wartime Sexual Violence. In *Gender, Governance and International Security*. Routledge pp. 88–105.
- Aroussi, Sahla. 2017. "Women, peace, and security and the DRC: time to rethink wartime Sexual violence as gender-based violence?" *Politics & Gender* 13(3):488–515.
- Arriola, Leonardo R, David A Dow, Aila M Matanock and Michaela Mattes. 2021. "Policing institutions and post-conflict peace." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 65(10):1738–1763.
- Asal, Victor, Richard Legault, Ora Szekely and Jonathan Wilkenfeld. 2013. "Gender ideologies and forms of contentious mobilization in the Middle East." *Journal of Peace Research* 50(3):305–318.
- Autesserre, Severine. 2009. "Hobbes and the Congo: frames, local violence, and international intervention." *International Organization* 63(2):249–280.
- Balcells, Laia and Stathis N Kalyvas. 2014. "Does warfare matter? Severity, duration, and outcomes of civil wars." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 58(8):1390–1418.
- Baldez, Lisa. 2002. *Why women protest: Women's movements in Chile*. Cambridge University Press.
- Barnes, Mariel J. 2020. "Divining Disposition: The Role of Elite Beliefs and Gender Narratives in Women's Suffrage." *Comparative Politics* 52(4):581–601.
- Barnes, Tiffany. 2016. *Gendering legislative behavior*. Cambridge University Press.
- Barnes, Tiffany D and Diana Z O'Brien. 2025. "Gender and Leadership in Executive Branch Politics." *Annual Review of Political Science* 28.

- Barnes, Tiffany D, Regina P Branton and Erin C Cassese. 2017. "A reexamination of women's electoral success in open seat elections: The conditioning effect of electoral competition." *Journal of Women, Politics & Policy* 38(3):298–317.
- Barnes, Tiffany D and Stephanie M Burchard. 2013. "'Engendering' politics: The impact of descriptive representation on women's political engagement in sub-Saharan Africa." *Comparative Political Studies* 46(7):767–790.
- Barrow, Amy. 2009. "'[It's] like a rubber band.' Assessing UNSCR 1325 as a gender mainstreaming process." *International Journal of Law in Context* 5(1):51–68.
- Barrow, Amy. 2010. "UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820: constructing gender in armed conflict and international humanitarian law." *International Review of the Red Cross* 92(877):221–234.
- Basu, Amrita. 2005. Women, political parties and social movements in South Asia. Number 5 *UNRISD Occasional Paper*.
- Bates, Robert H. 2019. Modernization, ethnic competition, and the rationality of politics in contemporary Africa. In *State versus ethnic claims: African policy dilemmas*. Routledge pp. 152–171.
- Baturo, Alexander and Julia Gray. 2018. "When do family ties matter? The duration of female suffrage and women's path to high political office." *Political Research Quarterly* 71(3):695–709.
- Bauer, Jacqui. 2009. "Women and the 2005 election in Liberia." *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 47(2):193–211.
- Beach, Derek. 2017. Process tracing methods in the social sciences. In *Oxford research encyclopedia of politics*.
- Beber, Bernd, Michael J Gilligan, Jenny Guardado and Sabrina Karim. 2017. "Peacekeeping, compliance with international norms, and transactional sex in Monrovia, Liberia." *International Organization* 71(1):1–30.
- Beck, Erin. 2022. "The Long-Term Struggle for Violence against Women Legislation: The Guatemalan Women's Movement and the Politics of Patience." *Politics & Gender* 18(4).
- Beckwith, Karen. 2001. "Women's Movements at Century's End: Excavation and Advances in Political Science." *Annual Review of Political Science* 4(1):371–390.
- Behl, Natahsa. 2014. "Situated Citizenship: Understanding Sikh Citizenship through Women's Exclusion." *Politics, Groups, and Identities* 2(3): 386–401.
- Bell, Christine and Catherine O'Rourke. 2007. "Does feminism need a theory of transitional

- justice? An introductory essay." *The International Journal of Transitional Justice* 1(1):23–44.
- Bell, Christine and Catherine O'Rourke. 2010. "Peace Agreement Database." *Transitional Justice Institute*. <http://www.transitionaljustice.ulster.ac.uk>.
- Bell, Christine and Sanja Badanjak. 2019. "Introducing PA-X: A new peace agreement database and dataset." *Journal of Peace Research* 56(3):452–466.
- Bennett, Andrew and Jeffrey T Checkel. 2015. *Process tracing*. Cambridge University Press.
- Berman, Chantal, Killian Clarke and Rima Majed. 2024. "From victims to dissidents: Legacies of violence and popular mobilization in Iraq (2003–2018)." *American Political Science Review* 118(1):213–234.
- Bernhard, Rachel, Shauna Shames and Dawn Langan Teele. 2021. "To emerge? Breadwinning, motherhood, and women's decisions to run for office." *American Political Science Review* 115(2):379–394.
- Berry, Marie E. 2015. "When "bright futures" fade: Paradoxes of women's empowerment in Rwanda." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 41(1):1–27.
- Berry, Marie E. 2017. "Barriers to women's progress after atrocity: Evidence from Rwanda and Bosnia-Herzegovina." *Gender & Society* 31(6):830–853.
- Berry, Marie E. 2018. *War, women, and power: From violence to mobilization in Rwanda and Bosnia-Herzegovina*. Cambridge University Press.
- Berry, Marie E. and Milli Lake. 2017. "Thematic Review: Gender Politics after War: Mobilizing Opportunity in Post-Conflict Africa." *Politics & Gender* 13(2):336–349.
- Berry, Marie E and Milli Lake. 2021. "Women's Rights After War: On Gender Interventions and Enduring Hierarchies." *Annual Review of Law and Social Science* 17:459–81.
- Berry, Marie E and Trishna R Rana. 2019. "What prevents peace? Women and peacebuilding in Bosnia and Nepal." *Peace & Change* 44(3):321–349.
- Betts, Wendy S, Scott N Carlson and Gregory Gisvold. 2000. "The post-conflict transitional administration of Kosovo and the lessons-learned in efforts to establish a judiciary and rule of law." *Mich. J. Int'l L.* 22:371.
- Bhalotra, Sonia, Rachel Brule and Sanchari Roy. 2020. "Women's inheritance rights reform and the preference for sons in India." *Journal of Development Economics* 146:102275.

- Bhusal, Bhishma, Michael Callen, Saad Gulzar, Rohini Pande, Soledad Artiz Prillaman, and Deepak Singhania. 2020. "Does Revolution Work? Evidence from Nepal's People's War." *Center for Effective Global Action* 14(116). doi:[10.26085/C3S886](https://doi.org/10.26085/C3S886).
- Binningsbø, Helga Malmin, Cyanne E Loyle, Scott Gates and Jon Elster. 2012. "Armed conflict and post-conflict justice, 1946–2006: A dataset." *Journal of Peace Research* 49(5):731–740.
- Binningsbø, Helga Malmin and Ragnhild Nordås. 2022. "Conflict-Related Sexual Violence and the Perils of Impunity." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 66(6):1066–1090.
- Birnir, Johanna K. 2007. *Ethnicity and Electoral Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Birnir, Johanna K. and Nil Seda Satana. 2022. *Alternatives in Mobilization: Ethnicity, Religion and Political Conflict*. Cambridge University Press.
- Bjarnegård, Elin, Anders Engvall, Srisompob Jitpiromsri and Erik Melander. 2023. "Armed Violence and Patriarchal Values: A Survey of Young Men in Thailand and Their Military Experiences." *American Political Science Review* 117(2):439–453.
- Bjarnegård Elin and Pår Zetterberg. 2022. "How autocrats weaponize women's rights." *Journal of Democracy* 33(2):60–75.
- Blackman, Alexandra Domike and Marlette Jackson. 2021. "Gender Stereotypes, Political Leadership, and Voting Behavior in Tunisia." *Political Behavior* 43(3):1037–1066.
- Blair, Robert A. and Benjamin S. Morse. 2021. "Policing and the Legacies of Wartime State Predation: Evidence from a Survey and Field Experiment in Liberia." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* p. 002200272110130.
- Boesten, Jelke. 2006. "Pushing Back the Boundaries: Social Policy, Domestic Violence and Women's Organisations in Peru." *Journal of Latin American Studies* 38(2):355–378.
- Boesten, Jelke. 2017. "Of exceptions and continuities: Theory and methodology in research on conflict-related sexual violence." *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 19(4):506–519.
- Boesten, Jelke and Melissa Fisher. 2012. Sexual violence and justice in postconflict Peru. JSTOR.
- Bose, Christine E. 2015. "Patterns of global gender inequalities and regional gender regimes." *Gender & Society* 29(6):767–791.
- Bove, Vincenzo, Jessica Di Salvatore, Leandro Elia and Roberto Nisticò. 2022. Mothers at

peace: post-conflict fertility and United Nations peacekeeping. Number 2022/126
WIDER Working Paper.

- Bowen, Donna Lee, Valerie M Hudson and Perpetua Lynne Nielsen. 2015. "State fragility and structural gender inequality in family law: An empirical investigation." *Laws* 4(4):654–672.
- Bownas, Richard A. 2015. "Dalits and Maoists in Nepal's civil war: between synergy and co-optation." *Contemporary South Asia* 23(4):409–425.
- Brancati, Dawn and Jack L Snyder. 2013. "Time to kill: The impact of election timing on postconflict stability." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 57(5):822–853.
- Brannon, Elizabeth L. 2023. "The election of former rebel women." *Journal of Peace Research* p. 00223433231200923.
- Broache, MP and Juhi Kore. 2023. "Can the International Criminal Court prevent sexual violence in armed conflict?" *Journal of Human Rights* 22(1):78–93.
- Brownlee, Jason. 2007. *Authoritarianism in an Age of Democratization*. Cambridge University Press Cambridge.
- Brule, Rachel E. 2020. "Reform, representation, and resistance: The politics of property rights' enforcement." *The Journal of Politics* 82(4):1390–1405.
- Brunson, Jan. 2021. Reproduction through revolution: Maoist women's struggle for equity In post-development Nepal. In *The Routledge Handbook of Anthropology and Reproduction*. Routledge pp. 137–149.
- Buchanan, Cate, Adam Cooper, Cody Griggers, Lira Low, Rita Manchanda, Rebecca Peters and Antonia Potter Prentice. 2012. "From clause to effect: including women's rights and gender in peace agreements." Geneva, Switzerland: The Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue.
- Bush, Sarah Sunn and PÅNar Zetterberg. 2021. "Gender quotas and international reputation." *American Journal of Political Science* 65(2):326–341.
- Butcher, Stephanie. 2021. "Differentiated citizenship: The everyday politics of the urban poor in Kathmandu, Nepal." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 45(6):948–963.
- Byrne, Siobhan and Allison McCulloch. 2012. "Gender, Representation and Power-Sharing in Post-Conflict Institutions." *International Peacekeeping* 19(5):565–580.
URL: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13533312.2012.721990>
- Cammett, Melani and Edmund Malesky. 2012. "Power sharing in postconflict societies:

- Implications for peace and governance.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 56(6):982–1016.
- Carpenter, R Charli. 2005. ““Women, children and other vulnerable groups”: Gender, strategic frames and the protection of civilians as a transnational issue.” *International Studies Quarterly* 49(2):295–334.
- Cascio, Elizabeth U and Na’ama Shenhav. 2020. “A century of the American woman voter: Sex gaps in political participation, preferences, and partisanship since women’s enfranchisement.” *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 34(2):24–48.
- Cederman, Lars-Erik, Kristian Skrede Gleditsch and Simon Hug. 2013. “Elections and Ethnic Civil War.” *Comparative Political Studies* 46(3):387–417.
URL: <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0010414012453697>
- Celis, Karen and Sarah Childs. 2008. “Introduction: The descriptive and substantive representation of women: New directions.” *Parliamentary Affairs* 61(3):419–425.
- Celis, Karen and Sarah Childs. 2012. “The substantive representation of women: What to do with conservative claims?” *Political Studies* 60(1):213–225.
- Celis, Karen, Sarah Childs, Johanna Kantola and Mona Lena Krook. 2008. “Rethinking women’s substantive representation.” *Representation* 44(2):99–110.
- Chandra, Kanchan. 2007. *Why ethnic parties succeed: Patronage and ethnic head counts in India*. Cambridge University Press.
- Cheng, Christine and Margit Tavits. 2011. “Informal influences in selecting female political candidates.” *Political Research Quarterly* 64(2):460–471.
- Childers, Jacob. 2014. “Amnesty, Revenge, and the Threat of Conflict Relapse.” *international criminal law review* 14(6):1095–1122.
- Childs, Sarah. 2008. *Women and British party politics: Descriptive, substantive and symbolic representation*. Routledge.
- Chingono, Mark. 2015. “Women, war and peace in Mozambique: The case of Manica Province.” *African Journal on Conflict Resolution* 15(1):107–130.
- Clark, Cari Jo, Gemma Ferguson, Binita Shrestha, Prabin Nanicha Shrestha, J Michael Oakes, Jhumka Gupta, Susi McGhee, Yuk Fai Cheong and Kathryn M Yount. 2018. “Social norms and women’s risk of intimate partner violence in Nepal.” *Social science & medicine* 202:162–169.
- Clarke, Yaliwe. 2008. “Security Sector Reform in Africa.” *Feminist Africa* (10):49–66.
- Clayton, Amanda. 2021. “How do electoral gender quotas affect policy?” *Annual Review of*

Political Science 24(1):235–252.

Clayton, Amanda, Cecilia Josefsson, Robert Mattes and Shaheen Mozaffar. 2019. “In whose interest? Gender and mass–elite priority congruence in Sub-Saharan Africa.” *Comparative Political Studies* 52(1):69–101.

Clayton, Amanda, Diana Z O’Brien and Jennifer M Piscopo. N.d. “Women Grab Back: Exclusion, Policy Threat, and Women’s Political Ambition.” Forthcoming.

Clayton, Amanda and PÅNar Zetterberg. 2021. “Gender and party discipline: evidence from Africa’s emerging party systems.” *American Political Science Review* 115(3):869–884.

Clenaghan, Deirbhile. 2023. “A Barrier to Transitional Justice: Critique of the Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Bill 2022.” *Trinity CL Rev.* 26:12.

Cockburn, Cynthia. 2004. “The continuum of violence.” *Sites of violence: Gender and conflict zones* pp. 24–44.

Coffe, Hilde and Catherine Bolzendahl. 2011. “Gender gaps in political participation across sub-Saharan African nations.” *Social indicators research* 102:245–264.

Cohen, Dara Kay. 2013. “Female Combatants and the Perpetration of Violence: Wartime Rape in the Sierra Leone Civil War.” *World Politics* 65(3):383–415.

Cohen, Dara Kay and Ragnhild Nordås. 2014. “Sexual violence in armed conflict: Introducing the SVAC dataset, 1989–2009.” *Journal of peace research* 51(3):418–428.

Cole, Wade M. 2013. “Government respect for gendered rights: The effect of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women on women’s rights outcomes, 1981–2004.” *International Studies Quarterly* 57(2):233–249.

Collier, David. 2011. “Understanding process tracing.” *PS: political science & politics* 44(4):823–830.

Collier, David and James Mahoney. 1996. “Insights and pitfalls: Selection bias in qualitative research.” *World politics* 49(1):56–91.

Coppedge, Michael, John Gerring, Carl Henrik Knutsen, Staffan I Lindberg, Jan Teorell, Nazifa Alizada, David Altman, Michael Bernhard, Agnes Cornell, M Steven Fish et al. 2022. “VDEM Dataset v12.”.

Corder, J Kevin and Christina Wolbrecht. 2006. “Political context and the turnout of new women voters after suffrage.” *The Journal of Politics* 68(1):34–49.

Coulter, Chris. 2011. *Bush wives and girl soldiers: women’s lives through war and peace in Sierra Leone*. Cornell University Press.

- Cowell-Meyers, Kimberly B. 2014. "The Social Movement as Political Party: The Northern Ireland Women's Coalition and the Campaign for Inclusion." *Perspectives on Politics* 12(1):61–80.
- Cronin-Furman, Kate. 2020. "Human rights half measures: Avoiding accountability in postwar Sri Lanka." *World Politics* 72(1):121–163.
- Cruz, Cesi, Philip Keefer and Carlos Scartascini. 2021. "Database of political institutions 2020." Inter-American Development Bank: Washington, DC, USA .
- Cullen, Laura C. 2020. "Female combatants and the post-conflict process in Sierra Leone." *Journal of International Women's Studies* 21(2):114–125.
- Cunningham, Kathleen Gallagher. 2014. *Inside the Politics of Self-determination*. Oxford University Press.
- Cunningham, Kathleen Gallagher, Reyko Huang and Katherine M Sawyer. 2021. "Voting for militants: Rebel elections in civil war." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 65(1):81–107.
- Daly, Sarah Zukerman. 2019. "Voting for victors: Why violent actors win postwar elections." *World Politics* 71(4):747–805.
- Daly, Sarah Zukerman. 2021. "Political life after civil wars: Introducing the Civil War Successor Party dataset." *Journal of Peace Research* 58(4):839–848.
- Dancy, Geoff. 2018. "Deals with the devil? Conflict amnesties, civil war, and sustainable peace." *International Organization* 72(2):387–421.
- Daniels, Lesley-Ann. 2020. "How and when amnesty during conflict affects conflict termination." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 64(9):1612–1637.
- Davies, Sara E and Jacqui True. 2015. "Reframing conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence: Bringing gender analysis back in." *Security Dialogue* 46(6):495–512.
- De Mesquita, Bruce Bueno, Alastair Smith, Randolph M Siverson and James D Morrow. 2005. *The logic of political survival*. MIT press.
- Debusscher, Petra. 2014. "Gender mainstreaming on the ground? The case of EU development aid towards Rwanda." *Gender mainstreaming on the ground* .
- Debusscher, Petra and Maria Martin De Almagro. 2016. "Post-conflict women's movements in turmoil: the challenges of success in Liberia in the 2005-aftermath." *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 54(2):293–316.
- Deiana, Maria-Adriana. 2016. "To settle for a gendered peace? Spaces for feminist grassroots

- mobilization in Northern Ireland and Bosnia-Herzegovina.” *Citizenship Studies* 20(1):99–114.
- Demeritt, Jacqueline HR, Angela D Nichols and Eliza G Kelly. 2014. “Female participation and civil war relapse.” *Civil Wars* 16(3):346–368.
- Deysarkar, Sarbari. 2015. The Madesi Citizenship and the New Constitution: Emerging Questions. In *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*. Vol. 76 JSTOR pp. 686–692.
- Di Salvatore, Jessica. 2019. “Peacekeepers against criminal violence—unintended effects of peacekeeping operations?” *American Journal of Political Science* 63(4):840–858.
- Dietrich, Simone, Daniela Donno, Katharina Fleiner and Alice Iannantuoni. 2025. “The Politics of Gender Mainstreaming in Foreign Aid.” *International Studies Quarterly* 69(2):sqaf033.
- Do, Quy-Toan and Lakshmi Iyer. 2010. “Geography, poverty and conflict in Nepal.” *Journal of peace research* 47(6):735–748.
- Donno, Daniela and Anne-Kathrin Kreft. 2019. “Authoritarian institutions and women’s rights.” *Comparative Political Studies* 52(5):720–753.
- Donno, Daniela, Sara Fox and Joshua Kaasik. 2022. “International incentives for women’s rights in dictatorships.” *Comparative Political Studies* 55(3):451–492.
- Doyle, Jessica Leigh and Monica McWilliams. 2020. “What difference does peace make? Intimate partner violence and violent conflict in Northern Ireland.” *Violence against women* 26(2):139–163.
- Dresden, Jennifer Raymond. 2017. “From combatants to candidates: Electoral competition and the legacy of armed conflict.” *Conflict management and peace science* 34(3):240–263.
- Duflo, Esther. 2012. “Women empowerment and economic development.” *Journal of Economic literature* 50(4):1051–1079.
- Dulal, Tulasa Devi. 2020. “Gender mainstreaming: Policies at the national and international level.” *Journal of Population and Development* 1(1):192–203.
- Dunn, Holly. 2017. “The transitional justice gap: Exploring ‘everyday’ gendered harms and customary justice in South Kivu, DR Congo.” *Feminist Legal Studies* 25(1):71–97.
- Džankić, Jelena. 2015. “The politics of inclusion and exclusion: Citizenship and voting rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina.” *International Peacekeeping* 22(5):526–544.
- Dzinesa, Gwinyayi Albert. 2004. “A comparative perspective of UN peacekeeping in Angola

- and Namibia.” *International Peacekeeping* 11(4):644–663.
- Eifert, Benn, Edward Miguel and Daniel N Posner. 2010. “Political competition and ethnic identification in Africa.” *American journal of political science* 54(2):494–510.
- Elias, Juanita and Shirin Rai. 2015. “The Everyday Gendered Political Economy of Violence.” *Politics & Gender* 11(2):424–429.
- Elischer, Sebastian. 2013. *Political parties in Africa: Ethnicity and party formation*. Cambridge University Press.
- Erzeel, Silvia and Karen Celis. 2016. “Political parties, ideology and the substantive representation of women.” *Party Politics* 22(5):576–586.
- Esparza, Diego and John Ishiyama. 2021. “Born to run: where rebel parties participate in post-conflict local elections.” *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties* pp. 1–20.
- Farmer, Paul et al. 1996. “On suffering and structural violence: A view from below.” *DAEDALUS-BOSTON MASS-* 125:261–283.
- Finnemore, Martha. 1993. “International organizations as teachers of norms: the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization and science policy.” *International organization* 47(4):565–597.
- Folke, Olle, Johanna Rickne and Daniel M Smith. 2021. “Gender and dynastic political selection.” *Comparative Political Studies* 54(2):339–371.
- Fortna, Virginia Page. 2004. “Does Peacekeeping Keep Peace? International Intervention and the Duration of Peace After Civil War.” *International Studies Quarterly* 48(2):269–292.
- Franceschet, Susan and Jennifer M Piscopo. 2014. “Sustaining gendered practices? Power, parties, and elite political networks in Argentina.” *Comparative Political Studies* 47(1):85–110.
- Freeman, Mark. 2009. *Necessary evils: Amnesties and the search for justice*. Cambridge University Press.
- Friedman, Elisabeth Jay. 2003. Gendering the agenda: The impact of the transnational women’s rights movement at the UN conferences of the 1990s. In *Women’s studies international forum*. Vol. 26 Elsevier pp. 313–331.
- Fuest, V. 2008. “‘This is the Time to Get in Front’: Changing Roles and Opportunities for Women in Liberia.” *African Affairs* 107(427):201–224.
- Gaddis, Isis, Rahul Lahoti and Hema Swaminathan. 2022. “Women’s legal rights and gender

- gaps in property ownership in developing countries.” *Population and Development Review* 48(2):331–377.
- Galtung, Johan. 1969. “Violence, peace, and peace research.” *Journal of peace research* 6(3):167–191.
- Gandhi, Jennifer and Ellen Lust-Okar. 2009. “Elections under authoritarianism.” *Annual review of political science* 12(1):403–422.
- Geddes, Barbara. 2003. *Paradigms and sand castles: Theory building and research design in comparative politics*. University of Michigan Press.
- Gerring, John. 2006. *Case study research: Principles and practices*. Cambridge university press.
- Gerring, John. 2017. “Qualitative methods.” *Annual review of political science* 20(1):15–36.
- Ghimire, A and F Samuels. 2017. “Understanding intimate partner violence in Nepal through a male lens.” Policy brief. London: Overseas Development Institute .
- Gilbert, Victoria. 2021. “Sister Citizens: Women in Syrian Rebel Governance.” *Politics & Gender* 17(4):552–579.
- Ginsburg, Tom. 2019. “Rebel use of law and courts.” *Annual Review of Law and Social Science* 15(1):495–507.
- Giri, Keshab. 2021. “Do all women combatants experience war and peace uniformly? Intersectionality and women combatants.” *Global Studies Quarterly* 1(2):ksab004.
- Giri, Keshab. 2023. “Rebel Governance of Marriage and Sexuality: An Intersectional Approach.” *International Studies Quarterly* 67(2):sqad028.
- Giri, Keshab. 2025. “Intimacy, Progressive Politics and Maoist Insurgencies in South Asia.” *Civil Wars* pp. 1–26.
- Gizelis, Theodora-Ismene. 2009. “Gender empowerment and United Nations peacebuilding.” *Journal of Peace Research* 46(4):505–523.
- Gizelis, Theodora-Ismene. 2021. “It Takes a Village: UN Peace Operations and Social Networks in Postconflict Environments.” *Politics & Gender* 17(1):167–196.
- Gizelis, Theodora-Ismene and Xun Cao. 2021. “A security dividend: Peacekeeping and maternal health outcomes and access.” *Journal of Peace Research* 58(2):263–278.
- Goetz, Anne Marie. 1998. “Women in politics & gender equity in policy: South Africa & Uganda.” *Review of African Political Economy* 25(76):241–262.

- Goetz, Anne Marie and Rob Jenkins. 2018. "Feminist activism and the politics of reform: When and why do states respond to demands for gender equality policies?" *Development and Change* 49(3):714–734.
- Goldstein, Joshua S. 2001. *War and Gender: How Gender Shapes the War System and Vice Versa*. Cambridge University Press.
- González, Belén and Richard Traunmüller. 2024. "The political consequences of wartime sexual violence: Evidence from a list experiment." *Journal of Peace Research* 61(6):1035–1050.
- Gowrinathan, Nimmi and Zachariah Mampilly. 2019. "Resistance and repression under the rule of rebels: women, clergy, and civilian agency in LTTE governed Sri Lanka." *Comparative Politics* 52(1):1–20.
- Graff-McRae, Rebecca L. 2017. "Ghosts of gender: Memory, legacy and spectrality in Northern Ireland's post-conflict commemorative politics." *Ethnopolitics* 16(5):500–518.
- Gready, Paul. 2010. "'You're either with us or against us': Civil society and policy making in post-genocide Rwanda." *African Affairs* 109(437):637–657.
- Haass, Felix and Martin Ottmann. 2022. "The effect of wartime legacies on electoral mobilization after civil war." *The Journal of Politics* 84(3):1322–1336.
- Hadzic, Dino, David Carlson and Margit Tavits. 2020. "How exposure to violence affects ethnic voting." *British journal of political science* 50(1):345–362.
- Hadzic, Dino and Margit Tavits. 2019. "The gendered effects of violence on political engagement." *The Journal of Politics* 81(2):676–680.
- Hagen, Jamie J. 2022. LGBTQ Perspectives in Peacebuilding. In *The Palgrave Encyclopedia of Peace and Conflict Studies*. Springer pp. 701–705.
- Hall, Andrew. 2011. "Nepal: An incomplete peace." *Asian Affairs* 42(3):403–418.
- Hamal, Dhana Laxmi. 2024. "Formal Inclusion, Informal Exclusion: Implementation of Women's Quota System and Political Participation in Post-Civil War Nepal." *Journal of Genocide Research* 26(4):506–516.
- Harari, Mariaflavia. 2019. "Women's inheritance rights and bargaining power: Evidence from Kenya." *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 68(1):189–238.
- Hartzell, Caroline and Matthew Hoddie. 2003. "Institutionalizing peace: power sharing and post-civil war conflict management." *American Journal of Political Science* 47(2):318–332.

- Haug, Marit, Aadne Aasland and Dilli Ram Dahal. 2009. Patterns of socio-political participation in Nepal and implications for social inclusion. In *Forum for Development Studies*. Vol. 36 Taylor & Francis pp. 105–136.
- Howard, Lise Morjé. 2007. *UN Peacekeeping in Civil Wars*. 1 ed. Cambridge University Press.
- Htun, Mala. 2003. *Sex and the state: abortion, divorce, and the family under Latin American dictatorships and democracies*. Cambridge University Press.
- Htun, Mala. 2004. “Is gender like ethnicity? The political representation of identity groups.” *Perspectives on Politics* 2(3):439–458.
- Htun, Mala, Francesca R Jensenius and Jami Nelson-Nuñez. 2019. “Gender-discriminatory laws and women’s economic agency.” *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State & Society* 26(2):193–222.
- Htun, Mala and S Laurel Weldon. 2010. “When do governments promote women’s rights? A framework for the comparative analysis of sex equality policy.” *Perspectives on Politics* 8(1):207–216.
- Htun, Mala and S Laurel Weldon. 2012. “The civic origins of progressive policy change: Combating violence against women in global perspective, 1975–2005.” *American Political Science Review* 106(3):548–569.
- Htun, Mala and S Laurel Weldon. 2015. “Religious power, the state, women’s rights, and family law.” *Politics & Gender* 11(3):451–477.
- Htun, Mala and S. Laurel Weldon. 2018. *The Logics of Gender Justice: State Action on Women’s Rights around the World*. Cambridge University Press.
- Huang, Reyko. 2016. *The wartime origins of democratization: civil war, rebel governance, and political regimes*. Cambridge University Press.
- Huber, Laura. 2019. *Buying Women’s Rights: The Role of Conflict and International Actors in Gender Reform*. PhD thesis Emory University.
- Hudson, Valerie M, Donna Lee Bowen and Perpetua Lynne Nielsen. 2011. “What is the relationship between inequity in family law and violence against women? Approaching the issue of legal enclaves.” *Politics & Gender* 7(4):453–492.
- Hughes, Melanie M. 2009. “Armed conflict, international linkages, and women’s parliamentary representation in developing nations.” *Social Problems* 56(1):174–204.
- Hughes, Melanie M. 2011. “Intersectionality, quotas, and minority women’s political representation worldwide.” *American Political Science Review* 105(3):604–620.

- Hughes, Melanie M. and Aili Mari Tripp. 2015. "Civil War and Trajectories of Change in Women's Political Representation in Africa, 1985–2010." *Social Forces* 93(4):1513–1540.
- Hughes, Melanie M, Mona Lena Krook and Pamela Paxton. 2015. "Transnational women's activism and the global diffusion of gender quotas." *International Studies Quarterly* 59(2):357–372.
- Hughes, Melanie M, Pamela Paxton, Amanda B Clayton and PÅNar Zetterberg. 2019. "Global gender quota adoption, implementation, and reform." *Comparative Politics* 51(2):219–238.
- Hultman, Lisa, Jacob Kathman and Megan Shannon. 2013. "United Nations Peacekeeping and Civilian Protection in Civil War." *American Journal of Political Science* 57(4):875–891.
- Hultman, Lisa, Jacob Kathman and Megan Shannon. 2014. "Beyond Keeping Peace: United Nations Effectiveness in the Midst of Fighting." *American Political Science Review* 108(4):737–753.
- Hunnicut, Gwen. 2009. "Varieties of patriarchy and violence against women: Resurrecting "patriarchy" as a theoretical tool." *Violence against women* 15(5):553–573.
- Hunt, Kate and Mike Gruszczynski. 2019. "The ratification of CEDAW and the liberalization of abortion laws." *Politics & Gender* 15(4):722–745.
- Ibàñez, Ana María, Ana Arjona, Julián, Arteaga, Juan C Cárdenas and Patricia Justino. 2024. "The long-term economic legacies of rebel rule in civil war: Micro evidence from Colombia." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 68(9):1825–1855.
- Inglehart, Ronald and Pippa Norris. 2000. "The Developmental Theory of the Gender Gap: Women's and Men's Voting Behavior in Global Perspective." *International Political Science Review* 21(4):441–463.
- Inglehart, Ronald and Pippa Norris. 2003. *Rising Tide: Gender Equality and Cultural Change Around the World*. Cambridge University Press.
- Inglehart, Ronald, Pippa Norris and Christian Welzel. 2002. "Gender Equality and Democracy." *Comparative Sociology* 1(3):321–345.
- Ishiyama, John. 2014. "Civil wars and party systems." *Social Science Quarterly* 95(2):425–447.

- Ishiyama, John and Anna Batta. 2011. "Swords into plowshares: The organizational transformation of rebel groups into political parties." *Communist and post-communist studies* 44(4):369–379.
- Ishiyama, John and Michael Widmeier. 2013. "Territorial control, levels of violence, and the electoral performance of former rebel political parties after civil wars." *Civil Wars* 15(4):531–550.
- Israelsen, Shelli. 2018. "Women in charge: The effect of rebel governance and women's organisations on Karen women's political participation." *Civil Wars* 20(3):379–407.
- Izumi, Kaori. 2007. "Gender-based violence and property grabbing in Africa: a denial of women's liberty and security." *Gender & Development* 15(1):11–23.
- Jenkins, Robert and Anne-Marie Goetz. 2010. "Addressing sexual violence in internationally mediated peace negotiations." *International Peacekeeping* 17(2):261–277.
- Jingushi, Akira W. 2015. "Post-Conflict Security Sector Reform, and the Roles of the Military and the Police: The Case of Sierra Leone." *NIDS journal of defense and security* 16:37–59.
- Joireman, Sandra F and Laura S Meitzner Yoder. 2016. "A Long Time Gone: Post-conflict Rural Property Restitution under Customary Law." *Development and Change* 47(3):563–585.
- Kalyvas, Stathis N and Laia Balcells. 2010. "International system and technologies of rebellion: How the end of the Cold War shaped internal conflict." *American Political Science Review* 104(3):415–429.
- Kaminski, Marek M, Monika Nalepa and Barry O'Neill. 2006. "Normative and strategic aspects of transitional justice." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 50(3):295–302.
- Kandeh, Jimmy D. 2003. "Sierra Leone's post-conflict elections of 2002." *Journal of Modern African Studies* 41(2):189–216.
- Kanel, Tara. 2014. "Women's political representation in Nepal: an experience from the 2008 constituent assembly." *Asian Journal of Women's Studies* 20(4):39–62.
- Kapidžić, Damir. 2015. "Democratic Transition and Electoral Design in Plural Societies: The Case of Bosnia and Herzegovina's 1990 Elections." *Ethnopolitics* 14(3):311–327.
- Karam, Azza. 2000. "Women in war and peace-building: the roads traversed, the challenges ahead." *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 3(1):2–25.
- Karim, Sabrina. 2020. "The legacy of peacekeeping on the Liberian security sector." *International Peacekeeping* 27(1):58–64.

- Karim, Sabrina and Daniel W Hill. 2024. *Positioning Women in Conflict Studies: How Women's Status Affects Political Violence*. Oxford University Press.
- Karim, Sabrina and Kyle Beardsley. 2017. *Equal opportunity peacekeeping: women, peace, and security in post-conflict states*. Oxford University Press.
- Karki, Arjun K. 2002. "Movements from below: land rights movement in Nepal." *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 3(2):201–217.
- KC, Luna. 2019. "Everyday realities of reintegration: experiences of Maoist 'verified' women ex-combatants in the aftermath of war in Nepal." *Conflict, Security & Development* 19(5):453–474.
- KC, Luna. 2025. "Do Local Norms Affect Women Ex-Combatants Reintegration in the Postwar Era?" *Global Studies Quarterly* 5(1):ksaf015.
- KC, Luna, Gemma Van Der Haar and Dorothea Hilhorst. 2017. "Changing gender role: Women's livelihoods, conflict and post-conflict security in Nepal." *Journal of Asian Security and International Affairs* 4(2):175–195.
- Kelsall, Michelle Staggs and Shanee Stepakoff. 2007. "'When we wanted to talk about rape': Silencing sexual violence at the Special Court for Sierra Leone." *The International Journal of Transitional Justice* 1(3):355–374.
- Kennedy, Ronan, Claire Pierson and Jennifer Thomson. 2016. "Challenging identity hierarchies: Gender and consociational power-sharing." *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 18(3):618–633.
- Kernot, Sarah. 2006. "Nepal: A development challenge." *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* 29(2):293–307.
- Kindervater, Lisa and Sheila Meintjes. 2017. "Gender and Governance in Post-Conflict and Democratizing Settings." In *The Oxford Handbook of Gender and Politics*.
- King, Gary, Robert O Keohane and Sidney Verba. 2021. *Designing social inquiry: Scientific inference in qualitative research*. Princeton university press.
- Kirby, Paul. 2015. "Ending sexual violence in conflict: the Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative and its critics." *International Affairs* 91(3):457–472.
- Kirby, Paul and Laura J Shepherd. 2016. "The futures past of the Women, Peace and Security agenda." *International Affairs* 92(2):373–392.
- Kittilson, Miki Caul. 2008. "Representing women: The adoption of family leave in comparative perspective." *The journal of politics* 70(2):323–334.

- Kittilson, Miki Caul. 2010. "Comparing Gender, Institutions and Political Behavior: Toward an Integrated Theoretical Framework." *Perspectives on Politics* 8(1):217–222.
- Kittilson, Miki Caul and Leslie A Schwindt-Bayer. 2012. *The gendered effects of electoral institutions: Political engagement and participation*. Oxford University Press.
- Koos, Carlo. 2018. "Decay or resilience?: the long-term social consequences of conflict-related sexual violence in Sierra Leone." *World Politics* 70(2):194–238.
- Koos, Carlo and Summer Lindsey. 2022. "Wartime Sexual Violence, Social Stigmatization and Humanitarian Aid: Survey Evidence from eastern Democratic Republic of Congo." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 66(6):1037–1065.
- Krasniqi, Vjollca, Ivor Sokolic and Denisa Kostovicova. 2020. "Skirts as flags: Transitional justice, gender and everyday nationalism in Kosovo." *Nations and nationalism* 26(2):461.
- Kreft, Anne-Kathrin. 2017. "The gender mainstreaming gap: Security Council resolution 1325 and UN peacekeeping mandates." *International peacekeeping* 24(1):132–158.
- Kreutz, Joakim. 2010. "How and when armed conflicts end: Introducing the UCDP Conflict Termination dataset." *Journal of Peace Research* 47(2):243–250.
- Kroeger, Alex and Alice J Kang. 2022. "The Appointment of Women to Authoritarian Cabinets in Africa." *Government and Opposition* pp. 1–24.
- Krook, Mona Lena. 2006. "Reforming representation: The diffusion of candidate gender quotas worldwide." *Politics & Gender* 2(3):303–327.
- Krook, Mona Lena. 2017. "Violence against women in politics." *Journal of Democracy* 28(1):74–88.
- Krook, Mona Lena. 2020. *Violence Against Women in Politics*. Oxford University Press.
- Krook, Mona Lena. 2025. "The Growth of a Field: Politics & Gender and Research on Gender Quotas." *Politics & Gender* pp. 1–27.
- Krook, Mona Lena and Jacqui True. 2012. "Rethinking the life cycles of international norms: The United Nations and the global promotion of gender equality." *European journal of international relations* 18(1):103–127.
- Laakso, Markku and Rein Taagepera. 1979. "'Effective' number of parties: a measure with application to West Europe." *Comparative political studies* 12(1):3–27.
- Laczo, Mona. 2003. "Deprived of an individual identity: citizenship and women in Nepal." *Gender & Development* 11(3):76–82.

- Lawther, Cheryl. 2013. "Denial, silence and the politics of the past: Unpicking the opposition to truth recovery in Northern Ireland." *International journal of transitional justice* 7(1):157–177.
- Lazarev, Egor. 2019. "Laws in conflict: legacies of war, gender, and legal pluralism in chechnya." *World Politics* 71(4):667–709.
- Leder, Stephanie, Floriane Clement and Emma Karki. 2017. "Reframing women's empowerment in water security programmes in Western Nepal." *Gender & Development* 25(2):235–251.
- Lee, Sumin. 2022. *Gender Justice for Whom? Domestic Accountability for Wartime Sexual Violence* PhD thesis Rutgers The State University of New Jersey, School of Graduate Studies.
- Levitsky, Steven and Lucan A Way. 2010. *Competitive authoritarianism: Hybrid regimes after the Cold War*. Cambridge University Press.
- Levy, Jack S. 2008. "Case studies: Types, designs, and logics of inference." *Conflict management and peace science* 25(1):1–18.
- Lijphart, Arend. 1971. "Comparative politics and the comparative method." *American political science review* 65(3):682–693.
- Lindgren, Mathilda. 2011. "Sexual Violence beyond Conflict Termination: Impunity for Past Violations as a Recipe for New Ones?"
- Lindsey, Summer. 2022. "Conflict, Protection, and Punishment: Repercussions of Violence in Eastern DR Congo." *American Journal of Political Science* 66(1):187–204.
- Lindsey, Summer and CARLO Koos. 2024. "Legacies of Wartime Sexual Violence: Survivors, Psychological Harms, and Mobilization." *American Political Science Review* pp. 1–17.
- Liou, Yu-Ming and Paul Musgrave. 2016. "Oil, autocratic survival, and the gendered resource curse: When inefficient policy is politically expedient." *International Studies Quarterly* 60(3):440–456.
- Liu, Shelley X. 2022. "Control, coercion, and cooptation: How rebels govern after winning civil war." *World Politics* 74(1):37–76.
- Lloyd, Catherine. 2006. From taboo to transnational political issue: Violence against women in Algeria. In *Women's Studies International Forum*. Vol. 29 Elsevier pp. 453–462.
- Loken, Meredith and Jamie J Hagen. 2022. "Queering gender-based violence scholarship: An integrated research agenda." *International Studies Review* 24(4):viac050.

- Loken, Meredith, Milli Lake and Kate Cronin-Furman. 2018. "Deploying Justice: Strategic Accountability for Wartime Sexual Violence." *International Studies Quarterly* 62(4):751–764.
- Lorch, Jasmin and Bettina Bunk. 2016. "Gender politics, authoritarian regime resilience, and the role of civil society in Algeria and Mozambique." *GIGA-German Institute of Global and Area Studies*, Working Paper (292).
- Loyle, Cyanne E and Benjamin J Appel. 2017. "Conflict Recurrence and Postconflict Justice: Addressing Motivations and Opportunities for Sustainable Peace." *International Studies Quarterly* 61(3):690–703.
- Loyle, Cyanne E, Kathleen Gallagher Cunningham, Reyko Huang and Danielle F Jung. 2023. "New directions in rebel governance research." *Perspectives on Politics* 21(1):264–276.
- Luciak, Ilja A. 1999. "Gender equality in the Salvadoran transition." *Latin American Perspectives* 26(2):43–67.
- Lyytik  Nainen, Minna and Punam Yadav. 2022. "Capitalising on UNSCR 1325: The construction of best practices for the Women, Peace and Security agenda." *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* 16(2):123–141.
- Mac Ginty, Roger. 2014. "Everyday peace: Bottom-up and local agency in conflict-affected societies." *Security dialogue* 45(6):548–564.
- MacKenzie, Megan. 2009. "Securitization and Desecuritization: Female Soldiers and the Reconstruction of Women in Post-Conflict Sierra Leone." *Security Studies* 18(2):241–261.
- Mageza-Barthel, Rirhandu. 2015. *Mobilizing transnational gender politics in post-genocide Rwanda. Gender in a global/local world* Farnham, Surrey, England ; Burlington, VT: Ashgate.
- Mageza-Barthel, Rirhandu. 2016. *Mobilizing transnational gender politics in post-genocide Rwanda*. Routledge.
- Mahoney, James. 2010. "After KKV: The new methodology of qualitative research." *World Politics* 62(1):120–147.
- Malla, Meena Vaidya. 2011. "Political socialization of women in Nepal." (No Title) .
- Mallinder, Louise. 2008. "Amnesty, human rights and political transitions." *Amnesty, Human Rights and Political Transitions* pp. 1–598.
- Mallinder, Louise. 2018. "Amnesties and inclusive political settlements." *Queen's University Belfast Law Research Paper* (2022-04).

- Mallinder, Louise and Kieran McEvoy. 2011. "Rethinking amnesties: Atrocity, accountability and impunity in post-conflict societies." *Contemporary Social Science* 6(1):107–128.
- Manekin, Devorah and Tamar Mitts. 2022. "Effective for whom? Ethnic identity and nonviolent resistance." *American Political Science Review* 116(1):161–180.
- Manjoo, Rashida and Calleigh McRaittt. 2011. "Gender-Based Violence and Justice in Conflict and Post-Conflict Areas." *Cornell International Law Journal* 44(11):11–32.
- Manne, Kate. 2017. *Down girl: The logic of misogyny*. Oxford University Press.
- Manning, Carrie. 2007. "Party-building on the heels of war: El Salvador, Bosnia, Kosovo and Mozambique." *Democratization* 14(2):253–272.
- Manning, Carrie and Ian Smith. 2016. "Political party formation by former armed opposition groups after civil war." *Democratization* 23(6):972–989.
- Mansfield, Edward D and Jon C Pevehouse. 2008. "Democratization and the varieties of international organizations." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 52(2):269–294.
- Marit, Haug and Aadne Aasland. 2016. Exploring dimensions of women's social exclusion and inclusion in Nepal. In *Forum for Development Studies*. Vol. 43 Taylor & Francis pp. 281–309.
- Marks, Z. 2014. "Sexual violence in Sierra Leone's civil war: 'Virgination', rape, and marriage." *African Affairs* 113(450):67–87.
- Marks, Zoe. 2013. "Sexual violence inside rebellion: Policies and perspectives of the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone." *Civil Wars* 15(3):359–379.
- Martin, Philip A, Giulia Piccolino and Jeremy S Speight. 2021. "Ex-rebel authority after civil war: theory and evidence from Cote d'Ivoire." *Comparative Politics* 53(2):209–232.
- Martin, Philip A, Giulia Piccolino and Jeremy S Speight. 2022. "The political legacies of rebel rule: Evidence from a natural experiment in Cote d'Ivoire." *Comparative Political Studies* 55(9):1439–1470.
- Matanock, Aila M. 2017. *Electing peace: From civil conflict to political participation*. Cambridge University Press.
- Matanock, Aila M. 2020. "How international actors help enforce domestic deals." *Annual Review of Political Science* 23:357–383.
- Matfess, Hilary. 2015. "Rwanda and Ethiopia: Developmental authoritarianism and the new politics of African strong men." *African Studies Review* 58(2):181–204.

- Matfess, Hilary. 2022. "Alms, Arms, And The Aftermath: The Legacies Of Rebel Provision Of Humanitarian Aid In Ethiopia." *African Affairs* 121(483):197–220.
- Matfess, Hilary. 2023. "New frontiers in rebel socialisation: considering care and marriage." *Civil Wars* 25(2-3):472–491.
- Matfess, Hilary and Meredith Loken. 2024. "Women's Wings in Rebel Organisations: Prevalence, Purposes and Variations." *Civil Wars* 27(1): 15–41.
- Matland, Richard E. 1998. "Women's representation in national legislatures: Developed and developing countries." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 23(1): 109–125.
- Mazur, Amy G and Dorothy E McBride. 2007. "State feminism since the 1980s: From loose notion to operationalized concept." *Politics & Gender* 3(4):501–513.
- McFerson, Hazel M. 2012. "Women and post-conflict society in Sierra Leone." *Journal of International Women's Studies* 13(1):46–67.
- M'Cormack-Hale, Fredline and Aisha Fofana Ibrahim. 2023. "Women's Decreased Political Representation in Postwar Sierra Leone: A Backlash or Lethargy?" *African Conflict & Peacebuilding Review* 13(1):77–105.
- Medie, Peace A. 2013. "Fighting gender-based violence: The women's movement and the enforcement of rape law in Liberia." *African Affairs* 112(448):377–397.
- Medie, Peace A. 2015. "Women and Postconflict Security: A Study of Police Response to Domestic Violence in Liberia." *Politics & Gender* 11(3):478–498.
- Medie, Peace A. 2020. *Global norms and local action: The campaigns to end violence against women in Africa*. Oxford University Press, USA.
- Medie, Peace A and Shannon Drysdale Walsh. 2021. "International organizations, nongovernmental organizations, and police implementation of domestic violence policies in Liberia and Nicaragua." *Politics & Gender* 17(1):136–166.
- Meger, Sara. 2016. "The fetishization of sexual violence in international security." *International Studies Quarterly* 60(1):149–159.
- Mehrl, Marius. 2023. "Female combatants and rebel group behaviour: Evidence from Nepal." *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 40(3):260–280.
- Merdzanovic, Adis. 2017. "'Imposed consociationalism': external intervention and power sharing in Bosnia and Herzegovina." *Peacebuilding* 5(1):22–35.

- Miklian, Jason, Kristoffer LidÅLen and °Ashild Kol°as. 2011. "The perils of 'going local': Liberal peace-building agendas in Nepal." *Conflict, Security & Development* 11(3):285–308.
- Mishra, Khushbu and Abdoul G Sam. 2016. "Does women's land ownership promote their empowerment? Empirical evidence from Nepal." *World Development* 78:360–371.
- Moghadam, Valentine M. 2010. Algerian women in movement: Three waves of feminist activism. In *Confronting Global Gender Justice*. Routledge pp. 198–217.
- Moghadam, Valentine M. 2020. "Gender regimes in the Middle East and North Africa: The power of feminist movements." *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State & Society* 27(3):467–485.
- Mohan, Sharanya Sai. 2011. "The battle after the war: Gender discrimination in property rights and post-conflict property restitution." *Yale J. Int'l L.* 36:461.
- Molyneux, Maxine. 1984. "Mobilisation without emancipation? Women's interests, state and revolution in Nicaragua." *Critical social policy* 4(10):59–71.
- Moncrief, Stephen. 2017. "Military socialization, disciplinary culture, and sexual violence in UN peacekeeping operations." *Journal of Peace Research* 54(5):715–730.
- Morgan-Collins, Mona and Grace Natusch. 2022. "At the Intersection of Gender and Class: How Were Newly Enfranchised Women Mobilized in Sweden?" *Comparative Political Studies* 55(7):1063–1094.
- Morse, Yonatan L. 2012. "The era of electoral authoritarianism." *World Politics* 64(1):161–198.
- Mukherjee, Joia S., Donna J. Barry, Hind Satti, Maxi Raymonville, Sarah Marsh and Mary Kay Smith-Fawzi. 2011. "Structural Violence: A Barrier to Achieving the Millennium Development Goals for Women." *Journal of Women's Health* 20(4):593–597.
- Murdie, Amanda. 2014. *Help or harm: The human security effects of international NGOs*. Stanford University Press.
- Mvukiyehe, Eric and Cyrus Samii. 2021. "Peacekeeping and development in fragile states: micro-level evidence from Liberia." *Journal of Peace Research* 58(3):368–383.
- Mylonas, Harris and Nasos Roussias. 2008. "When do votes count? Regime type, electoral conduct, and political competition in Africa." *Comparative Political Studies* 41(11):1466–1491.
- Nalepa, Monika. 2010. *Skeletons in the closet: Transitional justice in post-communist Europe*. Cambridge University Press.

- Nalepa, Monika and Emilia Justyna Powell. 2016. "The role of domestic opposition and international justice regimes in peaceful transitions of power." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 60(7):1191–1218.
- Nduka-Agwu, Adibeli. 2009. "'Doing gender' after the war: Dealing with gender mainstreaming and sexual exploitation and abuse in UN peace support operations in Liberia and Sierra Leone." *Civil Wars* 11(2):179–199.
- Ngcayisa, Lumanyano. 2021. "Developmental authoritarianism in Africa: the cases of Ethiopia, Rwanda, and Uganda." *Journal of Central and Eastern European African Studies* 1(3):93–118.
- Nordås, Ragnhild and Dara Kay Cohen. 2021. "Conflict-related sexual violence." *Annual Review of Political Science* 24:193–211.
- Norris, Pippa. 2006. "The impact of electoral reform on women's representation." *Acta Politica* 41:197–213.
- O'Brien, Kevin J. 1996. "Rightful resistance." *World Politics* 49(1):31–55.
- Ono, Yoshikuni and Yuya Endo. 2024. "The Underrepresentation of Women in Politics: A Literature Review on Gender Bias in Political Recruitment Processes." *Interdisciplinary information sciences* 30(1):36–53.
- O'Brien, Diana Z and Jennifer M Piscopo. 2018. "Electing women to national legislatures." *Measuring Women's Political Empowerment across the Globe: Strategies, Challenges and Future Research* pp. 139–163.
- O'Brien, Diana Z and Jennifer M Piscopo. 2019. "The impact of women in parliament." *The Palgrave handbook of women's political rights* pp. 53–72.
- O'brien, Diana Z and Johanna Rickne. 2016. "Gender quotas and women's political leadership." *American Political Science Review* 110(1):112–126.
- O'Rourke, Catherine and Aisling Swaine. 2017. "Gender, violence and reparations in Northern Ireland: A story yet to be told." *The International Journal of Human Rights* 21(9):1302–1319.
- Østby, Gudrun, Michele Leiby and Ragnhild Nordås. 2019. "The Legacy of Wartime Violence on Intimate-Partner Abuse: Microlevel Evidence from Peru, 1980–2009." 63(1):1–14.
- Pandey, Binda. 2002. "Women's Property Rights Movement in Nepal." *General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions (GEFONT)*.

- Pandey, Shanta. 2010. "Rising property ownership among women in Kathmandu, Nepal: An exploration of causes and consequences." *International Journal of Social Welfare* 19(3):281–292.
- Pant, Bijan and Kay Standing. 2011. "Citizenship rights and women's roles in development in post-conflict Nepal." *Gender & Development* 19(3):409–421.
- Paxton, Pamela, Melanie M Hughes and Matthew A Painter. 2010. "Growth in women's political representation: A longitudinal exploration of democracy, electoral system and gender quotas." *European Journal of Political Research* 49(1):25–52.
- Payne, Leigh A, Francesca Lessa and Gabriel Pereira. 2015. "Overcoming barriers to justice in the age of human rights accountability." *Human Rights Quarterly* 37(3):728–754.
- Peksen, Dursun. 2019. "Pro-market economic policies and women's economic wellbeing." *Journal of International Relations and Development* 22:159–183.
- Pettersson, TherÅLese and Magnus ÅNOberg. 2020. "Organized violence, 1989–2019." *Journal of peace research* 57(4):597–613.
- Phelan, Alexandra and Jacqui True. 2022. "Navigating gender in elite bargains: Women's movements and the quest for inclusive peace in Colombia." *Review of International Studies* 48(1):171–194.
- Pierson, Claire. 2018. "One step forwards, two steps back: Women's rights 20 years after the good friday agreement." *Parliamentary Affairs* 71(2):461–481.
- Poon, Pamela G, Kiely Houston, Abina Shrestha, Rajin Rayamajhi, Lily Thapa and Pamela J Surkan. 2016. "Nepali Widows' Access to Legal Entitlements: A Human Rights Issue." *Human Rights Quarterly* 38(2):391–410.
- Posner, Daniel N. 2017. "When and why do some social cleavages become politically salient rather than others?" *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 40(12):2001–2019.
- Pradhan, Rajendra, Ruth Meinzen-Dick and Sophie Theis. 2019. "Property rights, intersectionality, and women's empowerment in Nepal." *Journal of Rural Studies* 70:26–35.
- Prillaman, Soledad Artiz. 2021. "Strength in Numbers: How Women's Groups Close India's Political Gender Gap." *American Journal of Political Science* p. ajps.12651.
- Pudaisani, Surabhi. 2017. "Writing Citizenship: Gender, Race, and Tactical Alliances in Nepal's Constitution Drafting." *Studies in Nepali History and Society* 22(1):85–117.
- Pupavac, Vanessa. 2005. "Human security and the rise of global therapeutic governance: analysis." *Conflict, Security & Development* 5(2):161–181.

- Purohit, Bhumi. 2022. "Bureaucratic Resistance Against Female Politicians: Evidence from Telangana, India." *PhD Thesis* University of California-Berkeley.
- Rai, Shirin, Jacqui True and Maria Tanyag. 2019. "From Depletion to Regeneration: Addressing Structural and Physical Violence in Post-Conflict Economies." *Social Politics* 26(4):561–585.
- Raja, Sinduja. 2023. "Women's Rights After War on Paper: An Analysis of Legal Discourse." *Journal of Genocide Research* 26(4):484–94.
- Raleigh, Clionadh and Roudabeh Kishi. 2020. "Hired guns: using pro-government militias for political competition." *Terrorism and Political Violence* 32(3):582–603.
- Rausch, Colette. 2017. "Reconciliation and transitional justice in Nepal: A slow path."
- Reid, Lindsay. 2021. "Peace agreements and women's political rights following civil war." *Journal of Peace Research* 58(6):1224–1238.
- Reilly, Benjamin. 2002. "Elections in post-conflict scenarios: Constraints and dangers." *International Peacekeeping* 9(2):118–139.
- Reynolds, Andrew. 1999. "Women in the legislatures and executives of the world: Knocking at the highest glass ceiling." *World Politics* 51(4):547–572.
- Richardson, Diane, Nina Laurie, Meena Poudel and Janet Townsend. 2016. "Women and citizenship post-trafficking: the case of Nepal." *The sociological review* 64(2):329–348.
- Rickard, Kit and Kristin M Bakke. 2021. "Legacies of wartime order: Punishment attacks and social control in northern Ireland." *Security Studies* 30(4):603–636.
- Rošul-Gajić, Jagoda. 2016. "Women's advocacy in postwar Bosnia and Herzegovina. Implementation of UNSCR 1325 on women, peace and security." *Journal of International Women's Studies* 17(4):143–159.
- Rovny, Jan. 2023. "Antidote to backsliding: Ethnic politics and democratic resilience." *American Political Science Review* 117(4):1410–1428.
- Samii, Cyrus. 2013. "Who wants to forgive and forget? Transitional justice preferences in postwar Burundi." *Journal of Peace Research* 50(2):219–233.
- Sawyer, Katherine, Kanisha D Bond and Kathleen Gallagher Cunningham. 2021. "Rebel leader ascension and wartime sexual violence." *The Journal of Politics* 83(1):396–400.
- Schindler, Kati. 2010. "Who does what in a household after genocide? Evidence from Rwanda."

- Seawright, Jason. 2016. *Multi-method social science: Combining qualitative and quantitative tools*. Cambridge University Press.
- Seelinger, Kim Thuy. 2014. "Domestic accountability for sexual violence: The potential of specialized units in Kenya, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Uganda." *International Review of the Red Cross* 96(894):539–564.
- Seely, Jennifer C, Emma Diambogne Diouf, Charlotte-Anne Malischewski, Maria Vaikath and Kiah Young-Burns. 2013. "Second-class citizens? Gender in African citizenship law." *Citizenship Studies* 17(3-4):429–446.
- Sellstr  m, Angela Muvumba. 2015. Armed Group Impunity for Sexual Violence. Technical Report 05 Expert Group for Aid Studies.
- Sesay, Mohamed Gibril and Mohamed Suma. 2009. "Transitional justice and DDR: The case of Sierra Leone." *International Center for Transitional Justice* .
- Shair-Rosenfield, Sarah and Reed M. Wood. 2017. "Governing Well after War: How Improving Female Representation Prolongs Post-conflict Peace." *The Journal of Politics* 79(3):995–1009.
- Siaroff, Alan. 2000. "Women's representation in legislatures and cabinets in industrial democracies." *International political science review* 21(2):197–215.
- Sikkink, Kathryn, Helen Clapp, Daniel Mar  n-L  pez and Averell Schmidt. 2024. "Gender and Transitional Justice: Explaining Global Trends." *International Journal of Transitional Justice* 18(3):387–404.
- Silber, Irina Carlota and Jocelyn Viterna. 2009. "Women in El Salvador: continuing the struggle." *Women and Politics around the World: A Comparative History and Survey*: 329–51.
- Singh, Rajeev Kumar and Jivesh Jha. 2024. "Hindu Jurisprudence as The Basis and Source of Nepalese Family Laws: An Investigation." *QURU': Journal of Family Law and Culture* 2(2):145–168.
- Sjoberg, Laura, Kelly Kadera and Cameron G Thies. 2018. "Reevaluating gender and IR scholarship: Moving beyond Reiter's dichotomies toward effective synergies." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 62(4):848–870.
- Skorge,   yvind S  raas. 2021. "Mobilizing the Underrepresented: Electoral Systems and Gender Inequality in Political Participation." *American Journal of Political Science* 67(3):538–52.
- Solijonov, Abdurashid. 2016. *Voter turnout trends around the world*. IDEA.

- Stavrevska, Elena B. 2020. "Navigating to Subsistence: The Gendered Struggles in the Postwar Everyday and Their Implications for Peace." *Politics & Gender* 16(3):1–5.
- Stephan, Maria J and Erica Chenoweth. 2008. "Why civil resistance works: The strategic logic of nonviolent conflict." *International security* 33(1):7–44.
- Su, Xuhong and Wenbo Chen. 2025. "Pathways to women's electoral representation: the global effectiveness of legislative gender quotas over time." *The Journal of Legislative Studies* 31(1):108–129.
- Subedi, Dambaru B. 2013. "From civilian to combatant: Armed recruitment and participation in the Maoist conflict in Nepal." *Contemporary South Asia* 21(4):429–443.
- Subedi, Nutan Chandra. 2009. "Elimination of gender discriminatory legal provision by the Supreme Court of Nepal with reference to women's right to property." *Tribhuvan University Journal* 26(1):37–54.
- Suhrke, Astri. 2011. "Virtues of a narrow mission: The UN peace operation in Nepal." *Global Governance: A Review of Multilateralism and International Organizations* 17(1):37–55.
- Svallfors, Signe. 2021. "Hidden Casualties: The Links between Armed Conflict and Intimate Partner Violence in Colombia." *Politics & Gender* 16(3):1–33.
- Swaine, Aisling. 2023. "Resurfacing gender: A typology of conflict-related violence against women for the northern ireland troubles." *Violence against women* 29(6-7):1391–1418.
- Tamang, Seira. 2009. "The politics of conflict and difference or the difference of conflict in politics: The women's movement in Nepal." *Feminist Review* 91(1):61–80.
- Tanner, Victor. 2020. "Strengthening Women's Control Over Land: Inheritance Reform in Tunisia." DAI, February 20.
- Tavits, Margit. 2008. "Policy positions, issue importance, and party competition in new democracies." *Comparative Political Studies* 41(1):48–72.
- Teele, Dawn Langan. 2014. "Ordinary democratization: The electoral strategy that won British women the vote." *Politics & Society* 42(4):537–561.
- Teele, Dawn Langan. 2018. *Forging the Franchise. In Forging the Franchise*. Princeton University Press.
- Teele, Dawn Langan. 2020. "Women & the Vote." *Daedalus* 149(1):25–39.
- Teele, Dawn Langan. 2022. "Gender and the Influence of Proportional Representation: A Comment on the Peripheral Voting Thesis." *American Political Science Review* 117(2):759-66.

- Teele, Dawn Langan. 2024. "The political geography of the gender gap." *The Journal of Politics* 86(2):428–442.
- Thakuri, Dipendra Singh, Pramesh Raj Ghimire, Samikshya Poudel, Resham Bahadur Khatri et al. 2020. "Association between intimate partner violence and abortion in Nepal: a pooled analysis of Nepal demographic and health surveys (2011 and 2016)." *BioMed Research International* 2020.
- Thomas, Jakana L. 2024. "Sisters Are Doing It for Themselves: How Female Combatants Help Generate Gender-Inclusive Peace Agreements in Civil Wars." *American Political Science Review* 118(2):831–847.
- Thomas, Jakana L and Kanisha D Bond. 2015. "Women's participation in violent political organizations." *American Political Science Review* 109(3):488–506.
- Tickner, J Ann et al. 1992. *Gender in international relations: Feminist perspectives on achieving global security*. Columbia University Press.
- Toha, Risa J. 2017. "Political Competition and Ethnic Riots in Democratic Transition: A Lesson from Indonesia." *British Journal of Political Science* 47(3):631–651.
- Tøraasen, Marianne. 2022. "Women's Judicial Representation in Haiti: Unintended Gains of State-Building Efforts." *Politics & Gender* 19(1):34–65
- Toulmin, Camilla. 2009. "Securing land and property rights in sub-Saharan Africa: The role of local institutions." *Land use policy* 26(1):10–19.
- Tripp, Aili Mari. 2001. "The politics of autonomy and cooptation in Africa: the case of the Ugandan Women's Movement." *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 39(1):101–128.
- Tripp, Aili Mari. 2010. "Legislating gender-based violence in post-conflict Africa." *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development* 5(3):7–20.
- Tripp, Aili Mari. 2015. *Women and Power in Postconflict Africa*. Cambridge University Press.
- Tripp, Aili Mari. 2016a. "Comparative perspectives on concepts of gender, ethnicity, and race." *Politics, Groups, and Identities* 4(2):307–324.
- Tripp, Aili Mari. 2016b. "Women's movements and constitution making after civil unrest and conflict in Africa: the cases of Kenya and Somalia." *Politics & Gender* 12(1):78–106.
- Tripp, Aili Mari. 2019. *Seeking legitimacy: Why Arab autocracies adopt women's rights*. Cambridge University Press.

- Tripp, Aili Mari. 2023. "War, Revolution, and the Expansion of Women's Political Representation." *Politics & Gender* 19(3):922-7
- True, Jacqui. 2012. *The political economy of violence against women*. Oxford University Press.
- True, Jacqui and Michael Mintrom. 2001. "Transnational networks and policy diffusion: The case of gender mainstreaming." *International studies quarterly* 45(1):27–57.
- Upreti, Bishnu Raj. 2012. "Nepal from war to peace." *Peace Review* 24(1):102–107.
- Upreti, Bishnu Raj and Sharmila Shivakoti. 2018. "The struggle of female ex-combatants in Nepal." *Peace Review* 30(1):78–86.
- Valdini, Melody E. 2019. *The Inclusion Calculation: Why Men Appropriate Women's Representation*. Oxford University Press.
- Vinjamuri, Leslie and Jack Snyder. 2015. "Law and politics in transitional justice." *Annual Review of Political Science* 18(1):303–327.
- Walby, Sylvia. 1994. "Is citizenship gendered?" *Sociology* 28(2):379–395.
- Waldner, David. 2015. "Process tracing and qualitative causal inference." *Security Studies* 24(2):239–250.
- Walter, Barbara F. 1997. "The critical barrier to civil war settlement." *International organization* 51(3):335–364.
- Walter, Barbara F. 2004. "Does Conflict Beget Conflict? Explaining Recurring Civil War." *Journal of Peace Research* 41(3):371–388.
- Walter, Barbara F. 2009. "Bargaining failures and civil war." *Annual review of political science* 12(1):243–261.
- Walter, Barbara F., Lise Morje Howard and V. Page Fortna. 2020. "The Extraordinary Relationship between Peacekeeping and Peace." *British Journal of Political Science* pp.1–18.
- Wang, Vibeke. 2013. Women changing policy outcomes: Learning from pro-women legislation in the Ugandan Parliament. In *Women's Studies International Forum*. Vol. 41 Elsevier pp. 113–121.
- Wängnerud, Lena. 2009. "Women in parliaments: Descriptive and substantive representation." *Annual Review of Political Science* 12(1):51–69.
- Waylen, Georgina. 2007. *Engendering transitions: Women's mobilization, institutions and*

- gender outcomes*. Oxford University Press.
- Waylen, Georgina. 2009. "What can historical institutionalism offer feminist institutionalists?" *Politics & Gender* 5(2):245–253.
- Waylen, Georgina, Karen Celis, Johanna Kantola and S Laurel Weldon. 2013. *The Oxford handbook of gender and politics*. Oxford University Press.
- Webster, Kaitlyn, Chong Chen and Kyle Beardsley. 2019. "Conflict, peace, and the evolution of women's empowerment." *International Organization* 73(2):255–289.
- Webster, Kaitlyn, Priscilla Torres, Chong Chen and Kyle Beardsley. 2020. "Ethnic and gender hierarchies in the crucible of war." *International Studies Quarterly* 64(3):710–722.
- Weeks, Ana Catalano. 2018. "Why are gender quota laws adopted by men? The role of inter-and intraparty competition." *Comparative Political Studies* 51(14):1935–1973.
- Weldon, S. Laurel and Mala Htun. 2013. "Feminist mobilisation and progressive policy change: why governments take action to combat violence against women." *Gender & Development* 21(2):231–247.
- Westfall, Aubrey and Carissa Chantiles. 2016. "The political cure: Gender quotas and women's health." *Politics & Gender* 12(3):469–490.
- Wickeri, Elisabeth. 2010. "Land is life, land is power: Landlessness, exclusion, and deprivation in Nepal." *Fordham Int'l LJ* 34:930.
- Wilkinson, Steven. 2006. *Votes and violence: Electoral competition and ethnic riots in India*. Cambridge University Press.
- Wimpelmann, Torunn. 2019. *Gender and violence in post-conflict settings*. Edward Elgar Publishing pp. 308–319.
- Wolbrecht, Christina and J Kevin Corder. 2020. *A Century of Votes for Women: American Elections Since Suffrage*. Cambridge University Press.
- Wood, Elisabeth Jean. 2008. "The social processes of civil war: The wartime transformation of social networks." *Annual review of political science* 11:539–561.
- Yadav, Punam. 2018. "Women in the parliament: changing gender dynamics in the political sphere in Nepal." In *Women in Governing Institutions in South Asia: Parliament, Civil Service and Local Government* :79–96.
- Yadav, Punam. 2021. "Can women benefit from war? Women's agency in conflict and post-conflict societies." *Journal of Peace Research* 58(3):449–461.

- Yadav, Punam. 2023. "Do political quotas work? Gender quotas and women's political participation in Nepal." *Politics & Gender* 7(2):143-161.
- Yuval-Davis, Nira. 1997. "Gender and nation: SAGE publications."
- Zaks, Sherry. 2025. *Resilience beyond Rebellion: How Today's Rebels Become Tomorrow's Parties*. In *Resilience beyond Rebellion*. Cornell University Press.
- Zielinski, Jakub. 2002. "Translating social cleavages into party systems: The significance of new democracies." *World Politics* 54(2):184–211.
- Zulver, Julia Margaret. 2021. "The endurance of women's mobilization during "patriarchal backlash": a case from Colombia's reconfiguring armed conflict." *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 23(3):440–462.
- Zulver, Julia Margaret. 2022. *High-Risk Feminism in Colombia: Women's Mobilization in Violent Contexts*. Rutgers University Press.
- Zwingel, Susanne. 2012. "How do norms travel? Theorizing international women's rights in transnational perspective." *International Studies Quarterly* 56(1):115–129.