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Women's Wings in Rebel Groups

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Abstract

The proceeding dissertation is a collection of three articles exploring the phenomenon of women's wings in rebel groups. The articles ask different questions and utilize diverse methodological tools. The three abstracts are below.

Paper 1 exposes the patterns of women's wings in rebel groups through a large-N analysis of 372 rebel groups existing between 1946 and 2015. Scholarship in rebel governance has begun to identify trends of how women organize and participate in rebel groups. Patterns of women's participation in conflict vary widely in scope, purpose, and form between, within, and after conflict. This paper focuses on patterns of women's wings in armed rebellion. I establish variation in women's participation between women's integrated participation throughout rebellion and participation organized through women's wings. I ask: Why do rebel groups have women's wings? I argue that having some form of women's wing is a governance strategy that rebels interested in state building employ, as evidenced by territorial control and rebel provision of social services. Women's wings are important spaces for women to develop a gendered political consciousness which has downstream effects on gender coordination in rebel governance. I employ a large-n quantitative approach using the Women's Activities in Armed Rebellion (WAAR) dataset and added variables coded to measure the degree of institutionalization of gender orders, rebel control of territory, and social service provisions. I demonstrate that rebel groups that control territory or provide social services are more likely to have some form of women's wing than other rebel groups. I conclude with a discussion of how different types of women's wings and different gender orders assist in rebel strategy through two case vignettes.

Paper 2 pivots to looking at the formation and strategic utility of women's wings. The ways that rebel groups regulate women's participation has warranted much attention in studies of rebel governance, yet few have explored rebel control in the regulation of the private lives of women. Attention to the household, particularly a feminist interrogation of marriage as an institution and as a lived experience, can begin to explain militarizing dynamics in rebellion. How can attention to the household explain control in insurgencies? In what ways do rebels control the conjugal orders, and to what ends? I introduce a new theoretical framework to explain the ways that rebels control conjugal orders, and what their intended consequences are of these sets of orders. Through the Variance in Conjugal Order (VCO) framework, I argue that rebels control conjugal orders to achieve internal cohesion, broader social reproduction of the narratives of rebellion, and biological reproduction of the rebel base through their positioning of women. Women's social positions of wife, mother, woman-soldier, or masculinized-soldier demonstrate how gender operates relationally in rebel control in support of their state making aims. This article operationalizes marriage as a structure with social and political incentives. Since marriage is the primary way that the state (and rebels) can regulate the interactions between men and women, policies regarding marriage allow rebel groups to structure the conjugal orders. In doing so, rebels position women based on which identity they seek to invoke in order to produce what the rebellion needs. I trace the distinct ways rebels deploy conjugal orders through a variety of rebel movements focusing on commonalities in rebel strategy.

Paper 3 positions women's wings in the post-conflict period. A wealth of empirical data exists about the diverse ways that women participate in and sustain conflict in rebellion. Despite their participation, combatant women are often systematically excluded from the processes of

redress in post-conflict periods. In this article I ask: What can attention to combat women's wings unveil about women's contribution to post-conflict processes? I argue that armed-women's wings shape rebel's governance priorities through the post-conflict period and facilitate the development of a gender political consciousness. This politicization helps ex-combatant women foster collective demands and secure roles in governance structures post-conflict. I derive this argument from the experiences of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NCSN-IM) women combatants including those involved in the all-women tactical wing, the Ladies Unit. I employ a process-tracing methodological approach where I follow the formation of the Ladies Unit and track its persistence through post-conflict processes. Through the analytic focus on women's organizations – or women's wings – I set a research agenda highlighting the diverse ways the state and rebel groups employ gender regulations in structuring post-conflict processes. Rebel governance literature has begun to shed light on combatant women's exclusion from post-conflict spaces despite the broad set agreement that women's participation at any stage of the peace process produces better, more durable outcomes. I conclude by encouraging future scholars to consider combatant women as having engaged in violence as opposed to being solely arbiters of peace.

WOMEN'S WINGS IN REBEL GROUPS

by

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[1] The Minnowbrook Rebel Governance Conference and resulting Special Issue on Rebel Legitimacy and Rebel Control *forthcoming* in International Politics, organized by Ryan Griffiths.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

In the last few decades, women's participation in rebel governance has become ubiquitous in news coverage and academic inquiry. Inspired by feminist International Relations scholarship from the late 1900's, scholars have begun to consider questions about how women sustain and contribute to rebellion. These questions have motivated inquiry under the lens of other burgeoning literature on rebel governance, which interrogates the ways that nonstate armed actors' groups govern populations. This field of study is a result of International Relation's (IR) increasing attention to how women participate in nonstate actor governance constellations composed of insurgent groups, terrorist networks, or transnational criminal organizations. Much of this research explores the tropes ascribed to women fighters, why women join rebel movements, and through which roles they participate (Cohen 2013; Ahram 2015; Eggert 2015; Henshaw 2016; Hedstrom 2018; Asal and Jadoon 2019; Darden, Henshaw, and Szekely 2019; Baser 2022; Gutierrez and Murphy 2022; Loken and Matfess 2023). One trend that emerges is rebel groups often have specific gender-segregated units folded into their institutional structures. All-women military brigades are a persistent institutional structure in state militaries and in rebel groups. This phenomenon has yet to be explored – and is the focus of the three articles which compose this dissertation. I ask a series of interrelated questions: What are women's wings? How are women's wings distinct from women's general participation? What does this specific form of gender ordering signal about rebel aims? Before

outlining the three papers here, I will provide a brief history of the scholarship of gender and rebel governance, focusing on how gender informs and is informed by rebel strategy.

There are four concepts that appear throughout this volume and should be defined here**. Rebel groups** are defined as "groups whose members engage in protracted violence with the intention of gaining undisputed political control over all or a portion of a pre-existing state's territory" (Kasfir 2015). Rebel groups are the central political actors in this set of articles which compose the dissertation. These groups also engage in governance and often do so parallel to the central state. **Rebel governance** has been defined as "the set of actions insurgents engage in to regulate the social, political, and economic life of non-combatants during war" (Arjona et al. 2015). Employing a gender lens is necessary to understand rebel governance. Borrowing from critical feminist security studies, gender orders global politics through expectations that comes "from maleness and femaleness, masculinities and femininities" (Sjoberg 2017). Organizations are *gendered* through the distribution of "capabilities (defined as advantage and disadvantage, exploitation and control, action and emotion, and meaning and identity) among units on the basis of a unit's place in a gender hierarchy" (Acker 1990). Units can consist of a variety of political actors, including rebel groups. Gender is a constitutive element of international politics (Sjoberg 2017) where patriarchy structures privilege and control (Enloe 1993) and other forms of social power.

Gender order, then, is defined as referring to the social hierarchies and organizations based on assumptions of values linked to femininities and masculinities that order gendered political and social relations (Sjoberg 2017). I argue gender orders shape how rebels control women's movements within rebellion. Women participate in rebellion through two pathways:

integrated fashions where they are side by side with non-women and in segregated women's only spaces. The latter is a distinct form of gender order titled women's wings. **Women's wings** are defined here as consciously coordinated organizations within rebel groups which are organized specifically based on gender. There is a wide range of ways that rebels organize women based on gender and a wide range of impacts that these wings have – explored in depth through the three articles which compose this dissertation. The aim of this project is to begin to set the stage for how women's wings are distinct from women's integrated or general participation.

The research under the canopy of rebel governance has clearly outlined that women contribute to every stage of rebellion during periods of both warring and peace. To date, scholarship predominantly focusses on women's integrated participation in rebellion. Women's participation inside and outside of wings are distinct empirical questions. Women's participation through gender coordinated effort implies a saliency on gender that is absent from women's general participation. Women's wings signal something distinct about women's collective interests aside from sustaining rebellion. Gender coordinated efforts serve rebellion differently than women's integrated participation. As viable political actors, women's wings have political leverage to instill lasting change within rebel movements by shaping rebel priorities and broadly rebel governance. Women's wings, too, create a space where women share their collective experiences from engaging in previous activities within the rebellion.

There are a wide variety of coordinated roles that women play in rebel groups. Book length projects such as *Female Fighters: Why Rebel Groups Recruit Women For War* by Reed Wood (2019), and *Insurgent Women: Female Combatants in Civil Wars* by Jessica Trisko Darden,

Alexis Henshaw, and Ora Szekeley (2019) begin to explain how patterns of women's participation can be understood by both the rebel strategies in governance and by the individual motivations of women. Existing quantitative scholarship has told us women are more likely to be present in rebel governance in noncombat capacities (Wood and Thomas 2019; Loken and Matfess 2023). From studies of war and conflict, we know that what it means to be a warfighter is inherently gendered. Dichotomies used to discuss war (public/private, noncombat/combat, individual/social, international/personal) privilege a specific form of war mongering which often negatively impacts visibility of women in war related efforts, and thus, rebellion. Women's contributions are regularly sidelined and falsely categorized as auxiliary (Mackenzie 2012). Within international relations scholarship, this is a known product of a masculinized interpretation of conflict which privileges the false dichotomy between a feminized home front and a masculinized war front (Parashar, Tickner, and True 2018).

Despite the frames assigned to women's participation in rebel governance, there is large agreement women pose a tactical advantage for rebel groups (Wood 2019; Gilbert 2021). Women are present in recruitment for rebel movements, both as faces in propaganda and as physical recruiters for the movement (Loken 2019). Women have strategic utility, given their perceived passivity, in engaging in clandestine operations for the movement (Saksena 2018). Women are also seen as community interlocutors, lending them specific advantages at engaging with domestic constituencies which insurgents seek to govern over (Shayne 2004). The scholarship thus far has provided a great deal of explanations about paths forward in both conducting more ethical gender analysis and paying better attention to where women are present. Absent from these in-depth understandings of the ways women are mobilized and

choose to mobilize is attention to the ways that women organize themselves. This dissertation begins to explain the effects of coordinated women's participation on governance strategies.

For the purpose of this collection of articles, I focus on the provision of goods and services, namely the provisions of local order. Rebel groups have different aims which cause them to govern differently. Rebels often seek to resemble or emulate the state (Mampilly 2011), sometimes through multi-layered governance where there are overlapping constellations of governance by a variety of actors including crime syndicates, religious groups, foreign interveners, the police, and non-governmental organizations. Stressing the importance of the provision of public goods, rebel governance constellations are charged with the maintenance of local order under the complex horizontal networks that emerge. Local order refers to a variety of things – ranging from maintenance of enforced curfews and protection rackets to organization of civil society participants (Arjona 2016). Another component of this local order is the maintenance of gender order. Scholars note that rebel groups can order their own social policies, including that of women's participation in society (Arjona 2016; Wood and Thomas 2019). Regardless of the authority structure of the group, rebels are interested in governing their domestic constituency and often do so by governing the private lives of civilians. In emulating the institutional features of the state, rebels often control the conjugal orders. Ordered gender relations and conjugal order are discussed extensively in the institutionalist and critical security studies literature and are used to inform the theoretical underpinnings of the articles in this dissertation. Women's bodies are often the site for national and international contestation (Enloe 2004). I leverage insights from existing state level analyses of political actors in application to rebel groups, making the case that rebels perform

similar functions to the state. Gendered orders play a significant part in the roles available to be filled by women and vary amongst rebel groups.

One form of gender order is women's wings. There are, at a minimum, 139 rebel groups which have women's wings documented, yet this phenomenon has been rarely acknowledged and systematically studied. Women's wings differ in complexity and organizational apparatus. Some are more centralized with specific names and mandates to their organizations, whereas others operate as more informal groups of women fighters. Some organizations of women are unnamed, but many groups discuss the importance of women's spaces. There are broadly two types of women's wings: combat and noncombat. These are defined along similar lines to that of women's general or integrated participation. The first type is combat wings which include all women's combat, frontline, or military detachments. The second type is noncombat women's wings which includes women's support, political, social, mass, or groups otherwise organized on noncombat related contributions. Scholars have just begun to expose the potential implications of an analytic focus on women's wings. To preview some of the findings from this volume: Women's wings provide a space of group socialization and political consciousness raising for women rebels where they can create new gendered self-conceptions. Women's wings also contribute to rebel state building aims by fulfilling roles as community interlocutors and contributing to the distribution of social service provisions. The positioning of women's wings serves the rebel aim of sustaining internal cohesion. Women's wings are a space where a gendered political consciousness may emerge as well as a space where women gain necessary socialization in navigating implicit social norms in rebellion. Women, when in this collective gender segregated unit, can leverage different identities in service of the rebel cause, and often

do so. Rebels, too, leverage women's mission specific wings in service of their aims. Women's coordinated participation through women's wings can aid rebel aims and serve to continue to keep salient the ways that women sustain rebellion.

Through this three-article dissertation, I begin to set the research agenda for women's wings in rebel groups. Further examination of these patterns is explored through the articles in this collection. This dissertation contributes to several strands of research. First, it adds to the scholarship highlighting the broader relationship between wartime institutional arrangements and residual changes in social orders. Second, the methodological approaches here aid in a more complete understanding of the experience of women in rebellion akin to the goals of feminist security studies – to improve the lives of women. Third, I illuminate a new pathway for future research to explore: the patterns and effects of women's wings in rebel groups. To date, this phenomenon is under researched and recognized infrequently as a pattern across different types of rebel groups. Below, I will briefly outline each article and its contributions.

Paper 1 exposes the patterns of women's wings in rebel groups. I begin by introducing the concept of women's wings and making the case that they are a frequently adopted institutional arrangement in rebel groups. I ask: Why do rebel groups have gender-segregated units? I start with a large-N approach to understanding where women's wings exist and which types of groups have this institutional arrangement. I find that rebel groups that control territory and provide social services are more likely to have a women's wing than rebel groups that do not control territory or do not provide social services and that the type of women's wing that groups have—either noncombat or combat – signals distinct types of rebel strategy. In this article, I begin to itemize how women's integrated participation is distinct from women's

wings. By way of example, I conduct micro-case analyses to supplement the quantitative approach. I describe how the noncombat women's wing (the Bougainville Women for Peace and Freedom) of the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) worked as a mediator between warring factions and led the peace negotiations by travelling through warzones to negotiate with and on behalf of the BRA. I contrast this with the way the combat women's wing (Female Detachment) of the Liberation Front of Mozambique (FRELIMO) was tasked with raising the revolutionary consciousness in concert with their deployments. The combat women's wing of FRELIMO served strategic purposes, overtly described by ex-combatants and former leadership of FRELIMO. Through this article, I examine the patterns of women's wings in rebel groups and establish a distinction between women's integrated participation and gender-segregated participation.

Paper 2 draws on recent scholarship which combines rebel governance and the politics of the home. Attention to the household, particularly a feminist interrogation of marriage as an institution and as a lived experience, can begin to explain militarizing dynamics in rebellion. How can attention to the household explain control in insurgencies? In what ways do rebels control the conjugal orders, and to what ends? Drawing a connection between the state-making projects of rebel groups and rebel regulation of sexual politics, I argue that social position is dictated by identity, such that there are different ways of viewing rebel women as a wife or as a combatant. There exists a phenomenon within women's wings across many rebel groups where unmarried women are initially permitted access to combat wings until they marry and are then removed from combat wings and placed in noncombat spaces. I introduce a new theoretical framework to explain both the ways that rebels control conjugal orders and the

intended consequences of these sets of orders. Through the Variance in Conjugal Order (VCO) framework, I argue that rebels control conjugal orders to achieve internal cohesion, broader social reproduction of the narratives of rebellion, and biological reproduction of the rebel base through their positioning of women. Women's social positions of wife, mother, woman-solider, or masculinized-soldier demonstrate how gender operates relationally in rebel control in support of their state making aims. This discourse of women as mothers of the nation is ubiquitous in rebel governance scholarship. Women's denial from conflict spaces is often marked by their role in preserving the reproductive engine of the state, both because women's bodies physically create new citizens and because women are expected to act in the capacity of social reproducers of national narratives. Through this article, I trace how rebels reposition married and unmarried women and what this repositioning reveals about their state making projects. I find rebels position women based on which identity they seek to invoke in order to produce what the rebellion needs. I trace the distinct ways rebels deploy conjugal orders through a variety of rebel movements focusing on commonalities in rebel strategy. By regulating the private life of women, rebels show their political ambition in exercising social controls.

Paper 3 further interrogates the role of women's wings as coordinated interlocutors during the peace process. Despite significant advances in the understanding of women's roles in rebellion, there is a substantial lack of understanding about the relationship between women's armed wings in rebellion and post-conflict outcomes. The impact of armed conflict on women has been routinely studied, but less attention has been directed toward the impact of women on armed conflict. Conflict reconstruction periods are framed as a time where women

are most likely to gain access to and reshape institutions, but the expectation that women enter these spaces as pacifists rather than as combatants limits the leverage that women have to subvert gender roles. In this article I ask: What can attention to combat women's wings unveil about women's contributions to post-conflict processes? Where are the combat women in post-conflict governance? I argue that the decisions and priorities of armed-women's wings in rebel groups shape the priorities of governance in the post-conflict period. Accessing post-conflict institutions through women's wings allows women to subvert implicit social roles by leveraging different aspects of their identity. Women entering the post-conflict space as ex-combatants as opposed to pacifists has downstream effects on inclusion in post-conflict governance structures. Specifically, I find that the precedent set by the existence of women's wings in rebel groups contributes to gender integrated militarized institutions and political access for women in post-conflict settings. I apply a qualitative approach to this argument, tracing the evolution of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN-IM)'s Ladies Unit through the ongoing peace negotiations. I discuss the strategic utility of the Ladies Unit and the ways that women supported the insurgency. Where the first article focuses on both combat and noncombat women's wings, this article explicitly tracks the impacts of combat women's wings. The roles of women in the combat women's wing create a pathway for women's involvement in post-conflict processes.

These questions of women's combat wings in post-conflict processes have yet to be explored by scholars of rebel governance, though this institutional arrangement is prevalent across many geographical and ideological rebel spaces. Paper 1 asks why rebel groups have women wings and looks at other facets of rebel governance as indicators of patterns of the

observed dispersion of women's wings. Additionally, Paper 1 begins to create the distinction between women's integrated participation and participation through women's wings. Paper 2 continues by thinking about ways that women's participation is designed and constrained in rebellion. Paper 2 further asks about the relationship between women's wings and rebel projects in state making by focusing on the social processes of developing and sustaining the state. How women's wings form and how they are positioned to reproduce the ethos of the rebel struggle is surveyed and theorized about here. Paper 3 seeks to understand under which conditions combat women's wings last through the post-conflict periods. By picking up on the literature linking women to peaceful processes, I set forth a new research agenda centering ex-combatant women.

Each of these papers works to fill gaps in the existing literature on women's participation in rebellion. The lack of understanding of women's wings as an institutional arrangement is symptomatic of our lack of understanding about women's initiatives in civil wars and larger issues within the field of IR generally. Scholarly research tends to perpetuate – either explicitly or implicitly – the masculinized domain of conflict. The proliferation of gender-based institutions has two seemingly contradictory impacts on political rights for women. First, women organized within women's coalitions are excluded from a variety of features of decision-making. Second, women's coalitions make it more apparent and easier to locate where women are present. Coordinating women's efforts may relocate women further away from decision making structures, despite the assumption that an institution may have more political leverage than an individual. This phenomenon is explored in article 2 and in the discussion of post-conflict institutional design in article 3.

There is a variety of policies and academic implications of this line of inquiry outlined in the following articles. I will briefly expound on one here before concluding this introduction. Women's wings are an important and oft overlooked unit of analysis in the study of rebel governance and IR generally. In the policy realm, paying attention to the spaces where women are present and the ways women organize themselves or are organized has foreign policy relevance. International organizations can center the political power of women's wings in post-conflict reconstruction processes and when folding gender analysis into crafting international agreements. Women's organizations are leading on the frontlines of political change and this momentum can be harnessed in conflict resolution and reconciliation practices. Understanding women's experiences in combat zones and how women's identities are given saliency provides insight into how rebels mimic the state. Women's contributions to rebellion are shaped by which facets of their identity they leverage and through which pathways. Future research can continue to explore what factors lead rebels to have women's wings and how these wings are organized. Further interrogation into how women's wings emerge and at what stage of conflict they are most likely to emerge may provide further insights into rebel strategy and control of gender orders.

Chapter 2

Patterns of Women's Wings in Rebel Groups

Introduction

> "We are not military, we are militants, we are not paid to make war, we are partisans of the revolution. We live with our people, we follow a philosophy, which is also a political project. At the same time, we are carrying out a gender struggle against the patriarchal system." (Nesrin Abdullah, founder of Women's Protection Unit, YPJ) (Tax 2016)

In 2014, the Women's Protection Unit (YPJ) of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) joined forces with the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) in the Sinjar mountains to clear a safe corridor to aid an estimated 35,000 Yazidis victims of a series of brutal massacres by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). In the fight against ISIS, the Kurdish Women Fighters of the YPJ navigate double militancy, where they are fighting for both their cause and for women's rights. Their contributions to wartime labor do not go unrecognized. They were and continue to be integral in the fight against ISIS. In 2014, CNN, an American cable news network, named the Kurdish Female Fighters of the YPJ as the most inspiring women of the year ("The Women of the Year" 2014). In 2021, the YPJ again appeared in headlines as allies of the U.S. Special Forces in the fight against ISIS (Labott 2021).

Despite what the uptick in media coverage of women's brigades might imply, this phenomenon is not new, and is quite common in a variety of political atmospheres. From the first all-women combat flying squadron "Night Witches" of the Soviet Air Force (Garber 2013) and the Western Allies women flying corps, the American Women's Auxiliary Service Pilots (the

"WASPS") (Stamber 2010) in the Second World War to the Dahomey Mino Amazons of West Africa popularized by Marvel Comics Black Panther (Jones 2022) and Fidel Castro's Las Marianas (Guerra 2010), all-women military brigades are a persistent institutional structure. Yet we know little about why this institutional arrangement emerges and its impacts.

The empirical reality of women's wings leads to an interesting question: Why do rebel groups have them? Women's wings are defined here as consciously coordinated organizations within rebel groups which are organized specifically based on gender. I argue that having at least one type of women's wing is a form of rebel strategy in which rebel groups who are interested in state building employ. Specifically, I argue that rebel groups who provide social services and have territorial control are more likely to have a women's wing compared to other rebel groups. Rebel groups that have women's wings are more likely to perform similar functions to the state than groups who do not have a women's wings. The type of women's wings that rebel groups have, I argue, are also revealing of rebel strategy. Inferring a connection between women's general participation in rebellion and women's wings, rebels who have social service provisions are more likely to have a noncombat women's wing, and rebels who control territory are more likely to have a combat women's wing. Since women's wings help consolidate power, develop sustained support for the movement, and provide spaces for awakened gender consciousness for women rebels, I argue rebel groups seek to harness this institutional arrangement in their state making projects.

According to the expansive Women's Activities in Armed Rebellion (here forth, WAAR) project dataset (Loken and Matfess 2023), which to date is the most detailed and descriptive collection of the ways that women are present in rebel governance, there are at least 139 rebel

groups who have at least one variety of women's wing of the total 372 groups present in the data.[2] There are at least 42 rebel groups who have both a combat and a noncombat oriented women's wing. Still, women's wings continue to be an under-theorized aspect of rebel governance. Patterns of women's participation in conflict vary widely in scope, purpose, and form between, within and after conflict. This paper focuses on patterns of women's wings in armed rebellion. Rebel groups are defined as: "consciously coordinated groups whose members engage in protracted violence with the intention of gaining undisputed political control over all or a portion of a pre-existing state's territory" (Kasfir 2015).

Scholarship in rebel governance is beginning to identify trends of how women organize and participate in rebel groups. I add existing variables from other studies of rebel governance to the WAAR dataset in order to measure the degree of institutionalization of gender orders, control of territory and social service provisions. I hypothesize that social service provisions and territorial control increase the likelihood that a group will have a women's wing. Using the WAAR dataset, with added variables borrowed from other studies on rebel governance, I run a series of logit regressions to test these relationships. I find that territorial control and provision of social services increase the likelihood that a rebel group will have a women's wing. I also find that the type of women's wing matters too – where rebels with both a noncombat and combat women's wings more frequently control territory than those with neither.

A wealth of empirical data exists about the ways that women participate in war zones. Women have committed war crimes, engaged in the recruitment of child soldiers, acted in suicide attacks, and worked in various other capacities supporting insurgencies (Goldstein 2003;

[2] See Appendix A for a list of the breakdown of rebel groups with women's wings.

Herrera and Porch 2008; Henshaw 2016; Darden, Henshaw and Szekely 2019). From auxiliary roles such as community organizers or administrators, to leading the front lines as field commanders, women's roles have clear impacts on the day-to-day operations of rebel movements (Henshaw 2016; Wood and Thomas 2019). A variety of scholars have sought to quantify this participation during rebellion, based on type of involvement such as noncombat, combat and leadership roles (Henshaw 2016). Others have focused exclusively on the effects, or outcomes of women's participation (Mehrl 2023). While it's clear that women work side by side with men in a myriad of roles, women also organize all-women units within rebel groups. These units are called "women's wings" and are often important spaces for women to develop a gendered political consciousness and develop a community of women with similar experiences.

Not every rebel group has a women's wing, and those that do have different purposes. Broadly, these purposes are bifurcated along similar lines of women's integrated participation. There are both noncombat women's wings, responsible generally for women's political activism or frequently mothers' associations and combat women's wings which operate as military factions parallel, at times, to men's fighting units. Some groups have both, and some employ one or the other. This article examines which types of wings exist in rebel groups.

The rest of this paper is as follows: First, I survey the literature on rebel governance and gender, focusing broadly on melding two facets of literature: where women participate in rebellion, and how and why rebels seek to control gender orders. In doing so, I expose how governance strategies differ amongst rebel groups and how patterns of women's participation are impacted by these governance decisions. I focus on both the perceptions of gender within rebellion, and the rebel strategies surrounding controlling gender order. Next, I introduce the

concept of a women's wing and disaggregate the types of women's wings that rebels have. I then outline my quantitative approach, introducing the set of variables I employ in the quantitative methodology. I then present the analysis and findings, providing some explanations for the patterns of women's wings in armed rebel groups. I conclude with an overview of how future scholars can continue to conceptualize women's wings.

Women in Rebel Groups

The literature on rebel governance has explored women's participation in rebellion in a myriad of ways. I survey the literature on women's participation in rebellion, beginning with examining the strategies that rebels employ in their rule. I point to one central strategy rebels employ, which is that of controlling the gender order. I then expose two distinct pathways of women's participation, through general or integrated participation, and through women's wings or gender-segregated forms of participation. To date the literature on rebel governance has focused only on the former, with the latter being relatively undertheorized. I survey insights into women's general participation and argue that women's wings in rebel groups follow similar patterns cross-nationally, where rebels that control territory or provide social services to local populations are more likely to have some variety of women's wing. Through this literature review and theoretical argument, I set the stage for a fruitful future research agenda in women's wings, drawing parallels and exposing differences between participation through women's wings and through general participation. The theoretical framework underpinning this article is built upon existing insights on women's participation and applied to the context of women's wings.

Rebels Strategy and Control

Rebel governance has been defined as "the set of actions insurgents engage in to regulate the social, political, and economic life of non-combatants during war" (Arjona et al. 2015). Rebels govern in different was based on strategy and availability of resources. Rebel groups set up different sets of institutions and rules that they use to control populations and sustain their rule. Rebel groups govern both the public and the private life with an eye for future outcomes with the aim of supporting the continuation of the struggle and securing both international and domestic legitimacy (Arjona 2016). Through this, rebels control taxation, public health provisions (Rubin 2020), judiciary systems (Loyle 2020), foreign diplomatic relations and even the wartime social order, which is a set of rules that structure human interaction, social relations, and private conduct in a given community during wartime (Arjona 2015, p. 1374–75). Some rebel groups begin to act like states and develop profuse systems of government. These aims shape where we see women's participation. For example, groups that control territory are more likely to include women combatants (Asal and Jadoon 2020). Sustaining territorial control benefits from forms of gendered labor and rebels are strategic in incorporating women into their fighting forces.

Some rebel groups are interested in state formation which is defined as "the effort to monopolize the means of violence within a delimited territory" (Tilly 1985, p. 172). State building also involves a social process through the "formation and reformation based on the changing nature of societies within the state" involving a set of institutions for social control and decision making (Gruhn 2015). There are a variety of definitions of state making, but they can be distilled into containing two components, the ascertaining of authority over a population,

and the sustaining of that authority through social and political processes. Rebels develop their strategies differently based on the types of rule they seek to employ.

Rebel groups adopt different types of organizational structures. Largely, these organizational decisions are shaped by the rebel group's goals. Some are interested in territorial control, some domestic population control, and others in international legitimacy. Rebels with short term trajectories may focus on the tactics of rebellion and less on garnering support from their populations. Those with long term-trajectories may seek to establish fully functioning parallel systems of government, such as The Liberation Tigers of Talim Eelam (LTTE) (Alison 2003). We know that rebels which have strong central command structures and have lasted longer periods of time, are less prone to rebel fragmentation (Joo and Mukherjee 2021). Rebels with a stronger social base, too, persist longer than those without (Fjelde and Nilsson 2018).

One distinction that emerges in the literature is the distinction between long-trajectory rebel groups and short trajectory groups. Long trajectory rebel groups seek to establish connections with host communities to foster support and often seek to engage in mutually beneficial activities through embedding in the population (Sarbahi 2014). Short term groups primarily establish projects of extraction and protection rackets (Cunningham, Gleditsch and Salehyan 2009). There are a variety of outcomes which result from rebel time trajectories and influence rebel strategy. For example, rebel groups that have women combatants are known to have a longer conflict duration as well (Wood and Allemang 2022). This is a product of women's strategic "specialized labor" (Thomas and Bond 2015) in spying and terrorist operations (Mehrl 2023) and women's capacity as a legitimacy building force (Manekin and Wood 2020; Stallman

and Hadi 2024). Women's participation can help create sustained support for the movement through sustaining community ties.

Rebel groups adapt too, in response to particular conflict phases or intensities (Israelson 2020). For example, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) has a specific rebel humanitarian wing, Relief Society of Tigray (REST), tasked to handle the influx of international humanitarian aid during the famine in the 1980s (Matfess 2022). The TPLF's primary goal was domestic legitimacy, and one means of securing a relationship with domestic constituents is through providing aid and assistance. TPLF knew that the goodwill of the population would sustain their movement and ultimately lead them to victory (Matfess 2022). Similarly, Stewart (2018) finds that rebels interested in state making, through declared intent or status as a secessionist group, provide more inclusive social services. She finds that inclusive social services provide benefits both international and domestic constituencies and that inclusive service provision is one way that rebels perform the role of the state (Stewart 2023).

Rebels organize, too, on the basis of gender with specific goals in mind. A variety of scholars emphasize the ways that rebels operationalize the perceived passivity of women as a strategy in obtaining military objectives (Wood 2010; Thomas and Bond 2015; Braithwaite and Ruiz 2018). The perception of women as passive and nonparticipant provides vast military strategy for rebel groups (Warner and Matfess 2017; Manekin and Wood 2020). Rebels exploit gender and women's strategic participation in support of rebel cohesion (Cohen 2016). Rebels utilize gender sensationalist imagery in service of their cause, with pictures of mothers used to demonstrate the direness of the cause (Manekin and Wood 2020; Loken 2021), and images of women combatants used in public relations efforts to garner support (Dirik 2014).

Regardless of the authority structure of the group, rebels interested in governing their domestic constituency often do so by governing the private lives of civilians. Gender order is defined as referring to the social hierarchies and organizations based on assumptions of values linked to femininities and masculinities that order gendered political and social relations (Sjoberg 2017). Gender orders shape how rebels control women's movements within rebellion. For example, FARC enforced a policy of forced contraception and abortion within its ranks ("Basta Ya…" 2012), ISIS released regulations on how and why sexual slavery of Yazidi girls and women is permissible (MEMRI 2014), Al-Shabaab brokers marriages between rebels and women in the community to embed the group locally (Donnelly 2019), Kurdistan Worker's Party compelled combatants to sign an abstinence contract to abstain for love and sexual relationships (Kaser 2021), the Frente Farabundo Marti para Liberacion Nacional (FMLN) banned rape and sexual violence (Wood 2009), and Maoists designated women as the main category of oppressed people (Giri 2023). How armed groups control and regulate women's activities showcases how armed groups define their community that they are fighting for which has downstream effects on how women are positioned and position themselves. Groups seeking social embeddedness can utilize tools in gender reproduction in women's access to the social sphere to mediate the relationship between the public and the private.

Insights from rebel governance make it clear that rebels' chosen strategies in sustaining their rule differ amongst groups but there are patterns that emerge cross nationally. One such pattern is that rebels do recognize the way that women's participation can work in service of their governance ends. How rebel groups position women, and women position themselves provides insights into rebel strategy. There are two distinct pathways of women's participation

in rebellion, integrated participation which is what is typically captured in academic research, and gender segregated participation, the focus of this article. I will review the former first before setting the stage for the latter type of participation.

Women's Integrated Participation in Rebellion

Women's participation in rebellion has to date been studied as integrated or general where women are understood as individuals within the rebel movement. According to the WAAR dataset, 63% of rebel groups have women participants in some fashion or another – with 59% of rebel groups having women in noncombat capacities, and 53% having women in frontline or combat capacities (Loken and Matfess, 2023). This empirical reality has spurred many interesting lines of academic inquiry. One such line interrogating women's general participation in rebel groups has focused on the relationship between gender narratives and rebel aims. As such, it is necessary to survey what we know about the relationship between gender and combat. Women operate under a variety of conditions that might constrain their agency including relations of global patriarchy and innocence and motherhood tropes which draw on women's perceived nonviolent nature. On the one hand, women who participate in war are labeled as gender-nonconforming *monsters*, innocent *mothers*, sexually deviant *whores, zombies or widows* (Sjoberg and Gentry 2007). Under these frames, mothers are fighting for their children in dire circumstances and groups are manipulating women's presence to represent a broader legitimacy of the conflict (Loken 2020). *Zombies* represent women drugged, raped or tricked into violence and *widows* are forced into violence as a result of deaths of men in their life (Stack 2011). On the other hand, though, this narrative poses a tactical advantage -

groups can leverage these existing frames as a rebel strategy. Women are included to overcome human resource constraints (Wood 2019), to soften the image of the rebel group (Gilbert 2021), to garner international support and legitimacy (Manekin and Wood 2020), and/or to achieve their goals, namely of survival (Baser 2022). The image of women as innocent also benefits groups, as women can more readily engage in clandestine operations (Saksena 2018). Groups that do actively reframe these narratives and incorporate women combatants are more likely to exhibit gender-inclusive institutions.

Despite the frames often applied to women in war settings, a variety of conditions are shown to explain how and where women contribute to rebellion. Women's individual motivations for contributing to rebellion are varied, but there are patterns that emerge. Women organize themselves in rebellion in broadly two ways: on feminine identity or against feminine identity. On feminine identities, mothers, wives, grandmothers are fully embracing their roles providing a new face to nonviolent militant politics. For example, mothers utilized femininity and collective experiences of motherhood to gain entrance to politically hostile spaces closed previously to non-men (Shayne 2004). In contrast, when women organize in opposition to feminine identity, they are actively contesting or ignoring the roles ascribed through the patriarchy to contribute to rebellion. The development of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland Isak-Muivah Faction (NSCN-IM) Ladies Unit demonstrates this type of organization. Women felt the pull to rebellion and carved out militant opportunities outside of the expected role of mothering the nation (Goswami 2020). Women cadres underwent the training of the other NSCN-IM cadres which was outside of the norm of how women were expected to participate in rebellion.

The literature on rebel governance has shown how, when, and where women participate in rebellion (Henshaw 2016; Wood 2019; Loken and Matfess 2022) and these findings provide insights into patterns that emerge of when rebel groups have some form of women's wing. Existing literature has stressed the importance of ideology and of rebel groups' objectives in explaining patterns of women's participation. Rebel groups that are leftist are more likely to higher levels of women's participation across all categories of participation (Wood and Thomas 2017). In understanding the role of ideology, scholars have set forward a two-step process where ideology matters in shaping leaders' interests (demand) and is paired with willingness of women to participate as fighters (supply) (Thomas and Bond 2015; Wood and Thomas 2017; Wood and Allemang 2021). Leaders with egalitarian beliefs willing to adapt existing social orders create spaces for women to participate in *nontraditional* ways in rebellion. Some groups too, predominantly leftist groups, espouse a gender emancipatory platform advocating for women's political liberation (Henshaw 2016).

Across the ideological spectrum, women are more likely to be present in rebel governance in noncombat capacities. What is defined as noncombatant work, though, varies across rebellions. Through the lenses of patriarchy, women's contributions are regularly placed in the auxiliary category, though the work may not so neatly fit. Take for example, the noncombat work of the women with the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in Sierra Leone in the Women's Auxiliary Corps. Women prepared food and cared for the wounded as well as delivered messages between RUF camps, served as representatives at RUF meetings, distributed weapons, and worked in military reconnaissance missions (MacKenzie 2012). The distinction in this case, between soldiers and auxiliary participants is very blurred, so much so that some have

suggested delineating between them is not analytically useful (MacKenzie 2012). Some rebel groups, such as the Ethiopian People's Liberation Front (EPRDF), had a looser definition of fighter than the traditional participation in combat. The EPRDF had women fighters rise to commanders while others were trained as administrators, health workers, carpenters, metal workers and drivers (Oda 2010).

These examples show that women's participation in rebellion varies across contexts, but patterns emerge. Integrated women's participation has been linked to rebel strategy and drives rebellion in a myriad of ways. Some factors distilled from the existing literature on women's participation that might influence the likelihood a rebel group has a women's wing might be ideological orientation, leadership of the group, external pressures, socio-cultural contexts, women's strategic roles, recruitment needs, propaganda, internal dynamics, external learning, and diffusion and/or, to secure rebels long term goals. I expect that these strategic distinctions rebel groups make, such as the tension between longer trajectory and short trajectory rebels, will matter in patterns of women's wings. Women's participation, as tested in existing scholarship on rebel governance, does not distinguish between integrated participation and participation through women's wings.

Women's Participation through Women's Wings

Women's participation in rebellion in gender coordinated wings serves rebels differently than women's general participation, though some markers may overlap. Women's wings are a different form of gender order than other forms of women's participation. The literature on rebel governance has shed light on where, when, why, and how women participation in rebel

groups. What is left unclear yet is a similar investigation on women's wings. It seems that women's wings do not follow the same outline as reasons for women's general participation. For example, consider the emphasis on the confounding factor of ideology on gender access. We know that groups that espouse religious extremism are less likely to permit women to join the ranks as a combatant (Wood 2017). This presupposes a relationship between what acceptable support of the rebellion looks like for women and ideology. The pattern of presence of women's brigades does not follow this. For example, al Qaeda, which is a religious fundamentalist group, has an all-women tactical brigade (Von Knop 2007); ISIS affiliate Al-Khansaa Brigade is an all-women police enforcement brigade; Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL) had a women's combat wing and Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) had all-women military training centers, Victory Camp and Mkushi Camp (Lyons 2004). Women's wings, then, are a distinct form of gender order from that of women's general participation, and don't always follow patterns exposed in previous scholarship on rebel governance.

Participation in women's wings differs from general women's participation in a variety of meaningful ways. There is little unity in the story of how rebel groups develop women's wings. From existing work on women's strategic contributions to rebellion we know that "women [are] recognized for their potential to create bridges that led to political and financial support for the rebel movement" (Shayne 2004). Certainly, women's wings have important political utility, but they are also a function of the emergence of gender political consciousness. Women's wings can serve as an important vessel to keeping issues of gender salient as a political concern. As Loken and Matfess (2022, p. 10) note, "even in groups with gender emancipatory platforms and where

women compose a significant membership, gendered issues may be put on the back burner or sacrificed in the face of 'more pressing' political concerns." Women's wings are a space where a gender political consciousness may emerge as well as where women gain necessary socialization in navigating implicit social norms in rebellion. Women, when in this collective gender segregated unit, can leverage different identities to service of the rebel cause. Their coordinated participation through women's wings can aid rebel aims and serve to continue to keep salient the ways that women sustain rebellion.

Rebel strategy provides an interesting avenue to explore with women's wings. Institutional arrangements are strategies for rebels and so are gender orders. Rebels that exist for longer periods of time may deploy gender in coordinated fashions to consolidate power and develop sustained support for the movement. A combination of these strategies, as well as a collective gender consciousness, begins to explain patterns of women's wings. Existing scholarship suggests that women's participation in rebel groups results from social factors, organizational characteristics, individual motivations, and strategies of rebel leadership. Women's decisions to participate in rebellion in coordinated manners are heterogeneous despite often following similar paths to mobilization. Why women participate in rebellion can shed light on the emergence of women's wings, illuminating which conditions are most fertile for the development of women's wings. We know that periods of active warring are often a time of radical social change including expanding social and political roles for women (Henshaw, Eric-Udorie, Godefa, Howley, Jeon, Sweezy and Zhao 2019). Exploring how women organize, or are organized, can shed light on the assortment of women's interest within the rebel movement.

Theorizing Patterns of Women's Wings in Rebel Groups

Women's wings can play pivotal roles in mobilization. While rebel groups' compositions and motivations often differ significantly, there are some common factors that may make a rebel group more likely to have gender-segregated units. As Shayne (1999) argues, women serve as gender revolutionary bridges in both the physical and nonphysical spaces as intermediaries. Broadly distilled, there are two forms of women's wings. Women's wings are defined here as consciously coordinated organizations within rebel groups which are organized specifically based on gender. The first type is combat wings, which are all women's combat, frontline or military detachments. The second type are noncombat women's wings, which are women's support, political, social, mass or otherwise organized on noncombat related contributions.

The insights from previous scholarship on rebel governance and women's participation shed light on a variety of pathways by which women's wings aid in rebel strategy of state making. Notably, rebel strategy and women's participation have a bi-directional relationship (Donnelly 2019) where gender dynamics are an important facet of the strategic terrain that rebels navigate, and rebels strategically deploy gender in service of their governance aims. Gender order is "not a fixed system, but a continuous process" (Donnelly 2019). For this study, the bi-directional relationship means that iterations of governance expansion and strategy, such as controlling territory, are not decisions taken without gender dynamics in mind. Distinct gender orders, such as the facilitation of women's participation in integrated pathways or through women's wings, evolve throughout rebellion. Given that the quantitative data on rebel governance focuses on a single moment in time, rebel strategy is informed by the governance structures quantified in those specific time periods.

Rebels interested in state building can be classified intuitively as long trajectory rebels who may be more institutionally developed than short term rebels. One form of institutional development is that of women's wings. We know that rebel groups that control territory are more likely to have women combatants (Asal and Jadoon 2020) and that perceptions of women are leveraged to achieve military objectives, such as territorial control. Combat women's wings may follow similar patterns to women's general frontline participation. Women are often positioned as intermediaries with local communities and rebels with a stronger social base persist longer than those without (Fjelde and Nilsson 2018). Noncombat women's wings can achieve these rebel aims. Through developing gendered institutions, rebels harness women's labor.

Given that existing scholarship has found that integrated women's participation benefits rebel groups, I suspect that the existence of women's wings will reap similar benefits. I explore which contexts we are more likely to see women's wings and establish distinctions between integrated women's participation and gender-segregated women's participation. Rebels' different gender orders have different aims. I argue that the existence of one or more women's wings within a rebel group, as a form of gender order, indicates rebels' interest in state building. This is evidenced by two facets of competing for statehood as established in the rebel governance literature, territorial control and provisions of social services.

Rebel groups that are interested in sustaining their control and power are more likely to have a women's wing. In the quest for survival, rebels will make a series of decisions which make them more likely to have a women's wing. The sociopolitical cleavage in what is termed the postrevolutionary period is a time rife with changes to social orders. Through women's

wings, women gather and provide training in militancy and create social spaces where they receive training from one another in advocacy. Women's wings provide fertile ground for expanded political consciousness. The formation of a women's wing takes time and requires efforts in the reproduction of gender and in the socialization necessary for the development of a group consciousness. Newer rebel groups, too, might not find it politically advantageous to create/allow a space that may encourage gender political consciousness. The threat of group consciousness is less intense to leadership in groups that have existed for a longer period of time.

Women's wings create mobilization which aids in rebels' project of territorial control. This can support rebel interest in cohesion, which is necessary to sustain territorial control. Some women's wings grow out of practical concerns with services during rebellion. Controlling territory may require rebels to engage with diverse local populations which might necessitate the establishment of a women's wing. For example**,** the Melida Anaya Montes Women's Movement (MAM) was established to respond to the material conditions of poor women in El Salvador (Shayne 2004) and, separately, the Karen National Union's (KNU) Karen Women's Organization (KWO) formed in 1949 in protection of women during conflict and has evolved to providing educational and leadership opportunities to women. Others start based on a strategy. For example, the Bougainville Women for Peace and Freedom (BWFP) emerged in response to prolonged violence and a desire for the resolution of the conflict and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front in the Philippines, created women's auxiliary organizations to support combat (Dwyer 2012). At times the mobilization is a combination of both practical concerns and strategy, where women are organizing to meet basic needs and to explicitly challenge the

patriarchy. The Women for Dignity and Life (Las Dignas) with the FMLN is one such group (Bougher and Herrera 1993). One commonality of women's wings emergence, is that they develop from women's strategic coordination, as opposed to as a command from rebel leadership.[3] These insights show the diversity in establishment of women's wings but also underscore the strategic utility of these wings. This argument is summarized in hypothesis 1:

> H1: Rebel groups that control territory and/or have social service provision are more likely to have any type of women's wing than rebel groups that do not control territory nor provide social services.

Given that I argue having at least one type of women's wing will serve rebel interests, having more than one will do so even more. Groups that are strategic in their usage of women's combat and noncombat women's wings are the most interested in state building. I suspect the coefficient will increase when testing rebel groups with both types of women's wings, as opposed to rebel groups with just one variety of women's wings, or no women's wings. Rebel groups recognize the strategic utility of this form of gender order and harness women's labor in multiple dimensions in sustaining their state making aims. This argument is summarized here:

> H1a: Rebel groups that control territory and/or provide social services are more likely to have *both* a combat and noncombat women's wing than rebel groups that do not control territory nor provide social services.

The underlying logic of this argument is that rebel groups benefit from women's wings in their state building projects. Given that women's wings help consolidate power, develop sustained support for the movement, and provide spaces for awakened gender consciousness

[3] Not true of all groups, but for many it is. One such where a women's wing was developed at the request of the leadership was the Farabundo Martí Front for National Liberation (Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional, or FMLN). The leadership directed women to start organizing women's groups to potentially develop support among sympathetic women to encourage international solidarity and financial support.

for women rebels, rebel groups seek to harness this institutional arrangement in their state making projects. Previous projects picked up a combination of women's integrated participation and women's participation through women's wings. From existing scholarship, we know that rebels that control territory are more likely to include women combatants (Asal and Jadoon 2019). Rebels' groups that control territory are different, and adopt different institutions and structures, than those that do not. I expect this pattern to be upheld in the case of women's combat wings. Summarized below:

> H2: Rebel groups that control territory are more likely to have a combat women's wing.

We know that women participation in rebel groups in higher levels in the noncombatant space, as educators, recruiters, and in healthcare. Given this grouping of women's work within rebellions, women's wings often start from mission specific needs in rebellion. Women in their "domestic or reproductive roles have had to compensate for state retreat and state failure to provide social infrastructure and support" (Kantola 2007). For example, Fretilin's women's wing, The Popular Organization of Timorese Women (OPTM) established systems of child care centers in Fretilin camps to care for orphans of war (Da Silva 2012) and the Palestinian Liberation Organization's (PLO) women's wing, The General Union of Palestinian Women (GUPW) coordinated support work, organizing charities, and building schools and hospitals (Gonzalez-Perez 2008). In doing so, both of these women's wings fulfilled roles created absent by the central state in areas of care and noncombatant work. Again, this draws attention to the bi-directional relationship between gender and rebel strategy. Gender coordinated efforts can fulfill the needs of rebel groups, such as providing social services which works to improve

civilians' perceptions of rebel rule and develop necessary governance institutions for rebels in securing their rule. Through this logic, women coordinate a variety of noncombat labelled services, and it is reasonable to suspect this coordination happening through women's wings is a pattern across different forms of rebellion. I suspect that rebels that have social service provision, will be more likely to have a noncombat women's wing.[4] This hypothesis is summarized here:

> H3: Rebel groups that provide social services are more likely to have a noncombat women's wing than rebel groups that do not provide social services.

Separately but related, if the governing authority, the rebel group in this instance, is providing social services, then the burden imposed on women to socialize children and provide these types of services are ameliorated, and women are free to engage in rebellion in other manners. Women's wings are a tool in the rebel toolkit of sustaining governance. One causal mechanism is that women's perceived passivity and contributions to mediation in the post-conflict space can apply within (not just after) insurgency, women's wings have the potential to mend emerging splits within the rebel groups, as a solution to fragmentation and factionalism. Second, women's wings aid in the project of rebel cohesion and fight co-optation. Third, women's wings both broaden the base of support for the rebellion and provide spaces for the reproduction of a common narrative of struggle. Women's wings can target populations and develop fundamental alliances that rebels may not otherwise be able to achieve. Women's wings fulfill different rebel aims. How women's wings are deployed gives insight into broader rebel group objectives.

[4] At present, there are few quantitative variables which proxy social service provision in aggregate.

Data Overview

In this analysis, I create a distinction between *women's integrated participation* in rebel groups and *women's participation in women's wings*. While the relationship between these variables is not modeled in the hypotheses, addressing this distinction is necessary to distinguish this research from other studies of women's participation in rebel groups. Rebels employ different types of gender orders with different aims, and these gender orders have different outcomes on different ways that rebel's rule. In setting the agenda for understanding women's wings in rebel groups, it is necessary to differentiate the strategy of women's gender-segregated and coordinated participation, and women's integrated participation. Given that this article is focused on women's wings, the analysis focuses mainly on patterns of their existence. I briefly address women's integrated participation in the analysis to further distinguish quantitatively the qualitative differences in types of women's participation.

I use the WAAR dataset as a starting point which codifies a binary metric women's participation in any role in rebellion and a binary metric of the presence of any type of women's wing. I add a variable of exclusively integrated women's participation, which classifies a binary metric for groups which have women's participation but not in through a women's wing. The WAAR dataset codes 372 rebel groups existing between 1946 and 2015. In total, there are 235 rebel groups which have some form of women's participation and 137 rebel groups in the WAAR dataset which have no forms of women's participation. 95 rebel groups which have only women's integrated participation, and 139 rebel groups which have at least 1 type of women's wing. These data are represented in Table 2. I begin this analysis by exploring the existence of women's wings across contexts and with the variables tested in the analysis, and then run a

series of regressions testing the independent effects of integrated women's participation and participation through women's wings. This organization focuses first on women's wings and the independent variables before contending with the differences between integrated participation and women's wings. After establishing distinct effects of the type of women's participation, integrated or in wings, I test the differences between having either noncombat and combat women's wings, or having both types of women's wings.

In conducting the present study, I compiled several cross-national data sets on women's participation in rebel groups, data on rebel aims and objectives, as well as the types of women's wings rebel groups have. My starting data set is the Women's Activities in Armed Rebellion dataset (Loken and Matfess 2023) which is the most comprehensive collection of the varieties of women's participation in rebel governance to date. In the WAAR dataset, there are 371 rebel organizations coded between 1946 and 2015. In addition to distinct types of women's participation, the data captures the existence of women's wing, and if women were founders of the movement. I added a series of group level variables described below.

The primary dependent variable of interest is Women's Wing, which is a binary measure of existence or absence. There are two types of women's wings, which are in the second set of regressions, table 5 below. Noncombat and combat women's wings are binary as well. Given that my dependent variable is binary, I have selected a logit regression as my model. The primary two independent variables of interest are territorial control and provision of social services. Territorial control is a binary variable for the group either controlling or not controlling territory. There are less data on provision of social services, so I test educational provision, and social service provision, independently, given that they significantly decrease the N. For this

project, I focus on the rebel provision of education, utilizing data collected by Stewart (2018), and supplemented with Huang (2016) and Mampilly (2011). Education is a separate binary variable which codifies if a rebel group provides educational services.

Table 1 provides the summary statistics for independent and control variables. Each of the variables are coded on the group level. The number of observations fluctuates on the variable given the availability of data on rebel governance. Some variables are known about most groups (such as ideology), whereas some variables are known of some of the groups, but not all of them (social service provision). The variables presented here are all binary. The only variables presented in the analysis which are not binary are duration, which is coded in number of years; and rebel strength, which measures the rebels comparative strength to the state on a scale of 0-4, 0 being the rebel group is much weaker than the state, 2 being the rebel group is equal in strength to the state, and 4, the rebel group is much stronger than the state (Cunningham, Gleditsch and Salehyan 2009).

Table 1: Summary Statistics of Variables

Variable	Total Number of Obs.	Number of Rebel Groups	Percentage of Rebel Groups
Women's Wing (total)	372	139	37%
Combat Women's Wing	372	60	16%
Noncombat Women's Wing	372	121	32%
Both Types of Women's Wing	372	42	11%
Women's Participation (total)	372	233	63%
Women's Participation (integrated only)	372	94	25%
Territorial Control	372	134	36%
Social Service Provision	190	33	17%
Women Founders	372	11	2%
Educational Institutions	177	79	44%
Secessionist Aims	218	60	27%
Leftist Ideology	320	50	15%

In the next section, I use these variables to examine the link between gender strategy and rebel governance.

Quantitative Assessment of Women's Wings

In this section, I conduct a preliminary analysis of the relationship between rebel governance and women's wings. This analysis' purpose is to determine whether certain strategies of rebel groups are related to the existence and organization of a women's wing. For the purposes of this article, there are two pathways of women's participation – through

integrated participation, and in coordinated women's wings. Given that women's wings capture the aggregate variable of women's participation as well, I operationalize a newly constructed variable of *only women's integrated participation* in the regressions. Doing so ensures that I am picking up women's wings in the regressions, as opposed to previous findings in rebel governance about the strategic utility of women's participation in aggregate. I argue that the existence of women's wings serves rebel strategy – specifically that rebels which control territory and provide social services are more likely to have a women's wing compared to rebels who do not have a women's wing. Similarly, rebels having both a combat and a noncombat women's wing will be more likely to control territory and/or provide social services than rebels who do not have a women's wing.

Women's wings are present across geographical and temporal contexts. This institutional arrangement has only recently been recognized, and to date, only the WAAR dataset (Loken and Matfess 2023) has sought to quantify its prevalence. Scholars know very little about the trends in how women's wings emerge, where they emerge, and what their impacts are. A few scholars have written in depth explorations of one type of women's wings[5], but none have yet to compare trends temporally and geographically. There are 139 rebel groups in the WAAR dataset that have 1 or more types of women's wing. Table 1 presents the distribution of women's wings in rebel groups. There are 18 rebel groups which have a combat women's wing only, and I listed some notable examples with the women's wing font bolded. There are 79 rebel groups which have a noncombat women's wing only, and I have listed examples of rebel groups and the name

[5] Individual explorations of women's wings exist in some spaces, but the language of women's wing is infrequently used, and women's wings are not compared across region, yet.

of the women's wing title bolded. There are 42 rebel groups which have both a combat and a noncombat women's wing. I have listed some examples of rebel groups, and the names of the women's wings are, again, bolded.

Table 2: Total Number Rebel Groups with Women's Wings

Type of Women's Wing	Number of Rebel Groups	% of Rebel Groups	Notable Examples
Any Type of Women's Wing	139	37%	
Exclusively Combat Wings	18	4%	Free Aceh Movement (GAM) **Pasukan Inong Balee Troops**; Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) **Mary Company**; Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) **Women's Artillery Commandos (WAC)**; Maidan Movement Women's Squad, **Zhinocha Sotnia**
Exclusively Noncombat Wings	79	21%	Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) **Women's Committee for the Bangsa Moro Army (BMA);** Montoneros **Argupacion Evita**; Palipehutu-FNL **Movement of Patriotic Hutu Women (MFPH**); Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el Hamra and Rio de Oro (POLISARIO) **Union of Sahrawi Women (NUSW**); South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) **Women's Council**
Both Combat and Noncombat Wings	42	11%	Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU), **Women's Brigade** and **Women's Affairs Department**; Revolutionary United Front (RUF) **Women's Auxiliary Corps** and the **Ministry of Gender**; Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) **Women's Peshmerga Force** and **Women's Union of Kurdistan**; National Socialist Council of Nagaland- Isaac Muivah faction (NSCN-IM), **Ladies Unit** and **National Socialist Women's Organization of Nagalim**

Figure 1 shows the regional distribution of rebel groups which have women's wings. I have presented here both the noncombat and combat women's wings.[6] For each of the regional breakdowns, some rebel groups are represented twice in each region if the rebel group has both a combat and a noncombat women's wing. This table accounts for the number of women's wings instead of the number of rebel groups. In the Middle East and North Africa, there are 24 noncombat women's wings, and 13 combat women's wings. In Asia, there are 24 combat women's wings, and 42 noncombat women's wings. In Sub-Saharan Africa, there are 19 combat women's wings and 36 that have noncombat women's wings. In Eastern and Western Europe, there are 3 combat women's wings, and 8 noncombat women's wings. In North and South

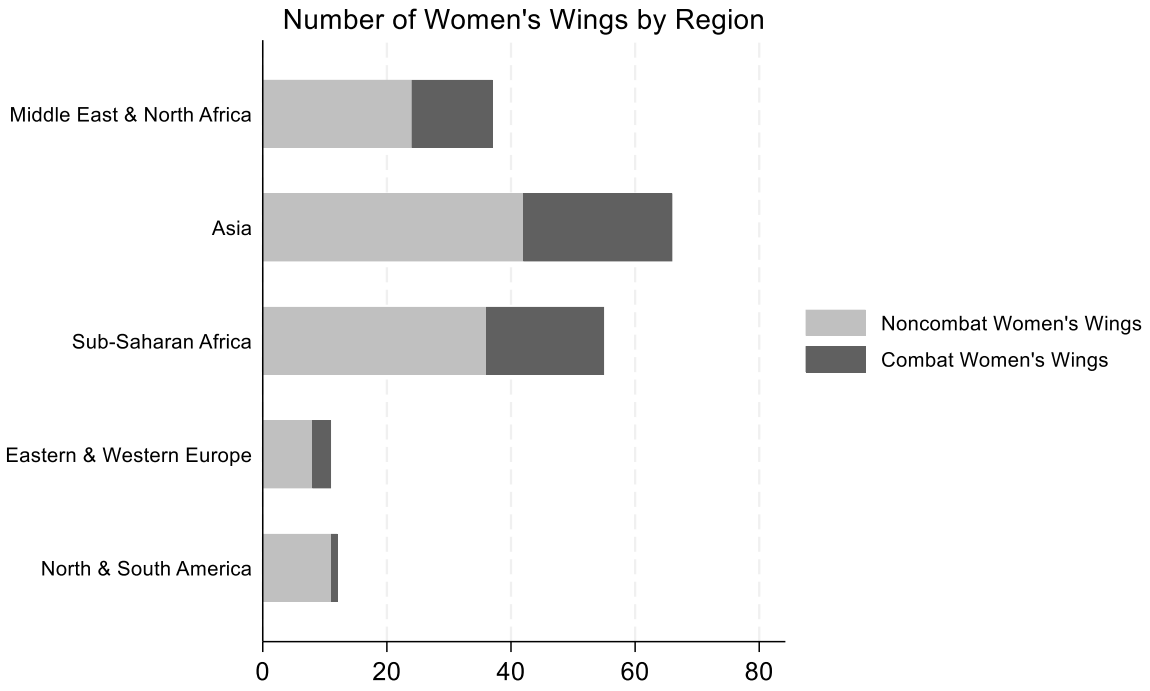


***Figure 1**: Regional Distribution of Women's Wings*

[6] This decision to focus on number of women's wings as opposed to rebel groups which have women's wings allows for a more thorough understanding of how prolific women's wings are. For a display of where rebel groups with women's wings are located, see Appendix B.

America, there are 11 noncombat women's wings and 1 combat women's wing. Each region has more noncombat women's wings than combat women's wings.

Figure 2 demonstrates the relationship between duration and women's wings. Descriptively, groups that have a women's wing on average exist or persist longer than those that do not. The plots show statistically significant differences in the ranges of time that groups with women's wings last. This shows something interesting about the relationship between rebel strategy and women's wings, and points to the notion of a bi-directional relationship between gender and strategy. Rebels who exist for longer periods of time are able to employ different sets of gender orders, to try out different institutional structures. Rebels, too, may have sought to develop lasting community relationships, which patterns of women's noncombat wings fulfill. Long-trajectory rebels are more likely to have women's wings, on average. When rebel control persists, women are faced with a variety of options, and one of those is to collectively organize within rebel rule. The rebel governance apparatus can select to formalize these organizations under the guise of a broader, more inclusive strategy to rebel governance. While duration is certainly one reason why rebels may be more likely to have had a women's wing, it is not a main variable in the analysis but described instead to explain the category of long trajectory rebels, who I assert are those most interested in state building.

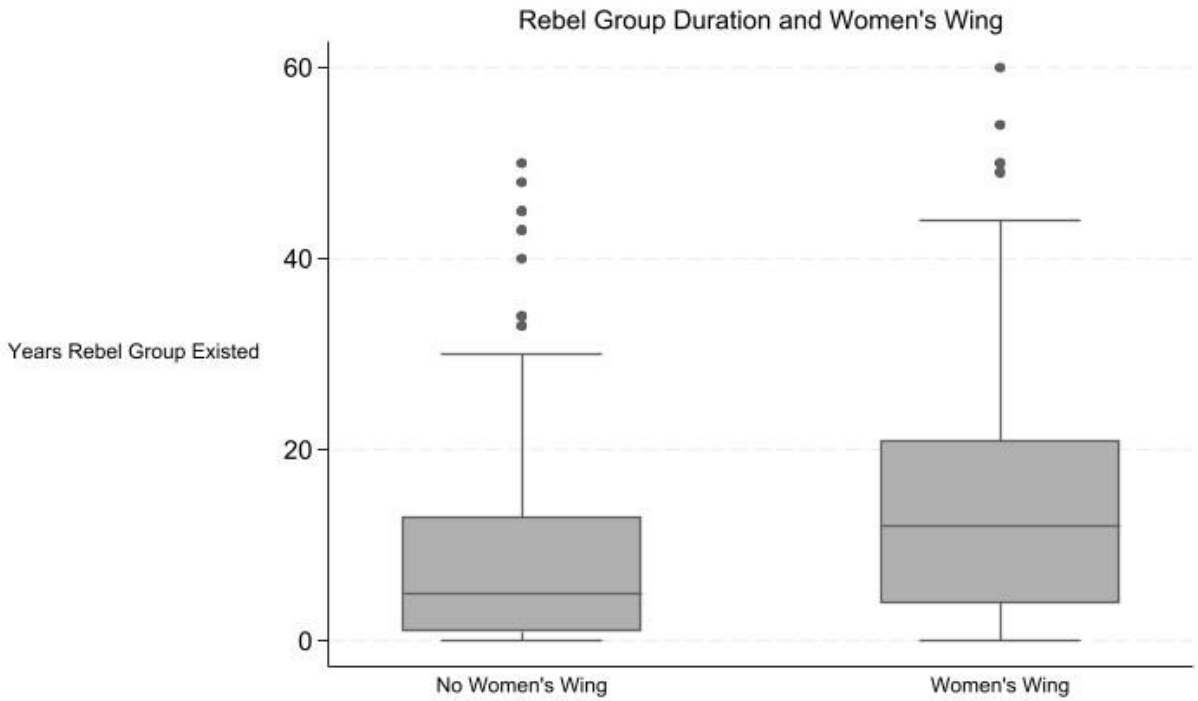


***Figure 2**: Rebel Group Duration and Existence of a Women's Wing*

Figure 3 displays frequency bar charts for territorial control by rebel groups whether or not they have a women's wing. In describing these data, I have also displayed which type of women's wing they have. The most frequent type of women's wing is the noncombat wing. In rebel groups that control territory, understanding how women organize provides insight into the strategies that rebels employ.

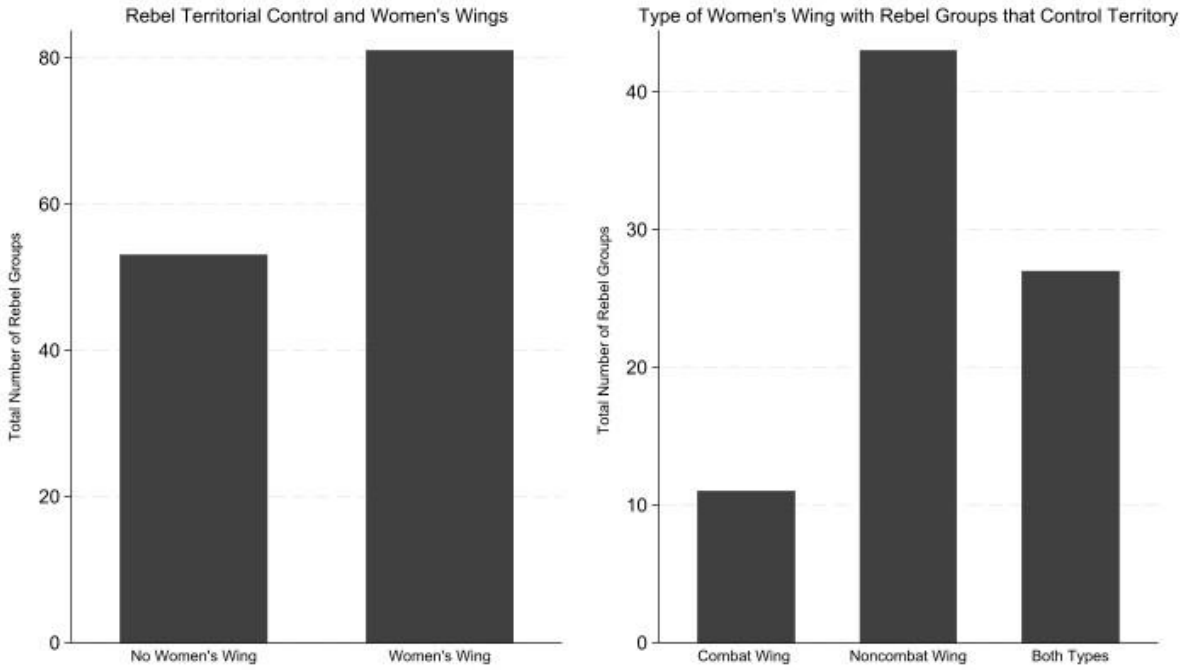


Figure 3: *Rebel Groups Territorial Control and Women's Wings*

Figure 4 displays frequency bar charts for rebel provision of social services with groups and whether they have a women's wing. I have delineated too, which type of women's wings rebel groups are likely to have if they provide social services. Rebels provide social services with a variety of goals in mind. For some, providing social services is replacing the state or looking to circumvent the control of the state (Asal, Flanigan and Szekely 2020). Rebels can aim to present themselves as credible alternatives to the state (Huang and Sullivan 2020). Women's wings have a function in this project, and women too, may organize on the basis of the perception of the rebel's authority, to secure a place for themselves and their interests in rebel governance. For example, the Karen Women's Organization (KWO) within the Karen National Union (KNU) espouses the goal of integrating women's political participation within the mission of the KNU to develop a sovereign state (Israelsen 2018). Within the KWO, women received training and

education to foster their leadership capabilities. Women's organizing sought to utilize the platform of the KNU to further women's political participation in the movement and contribute opportunities for women.

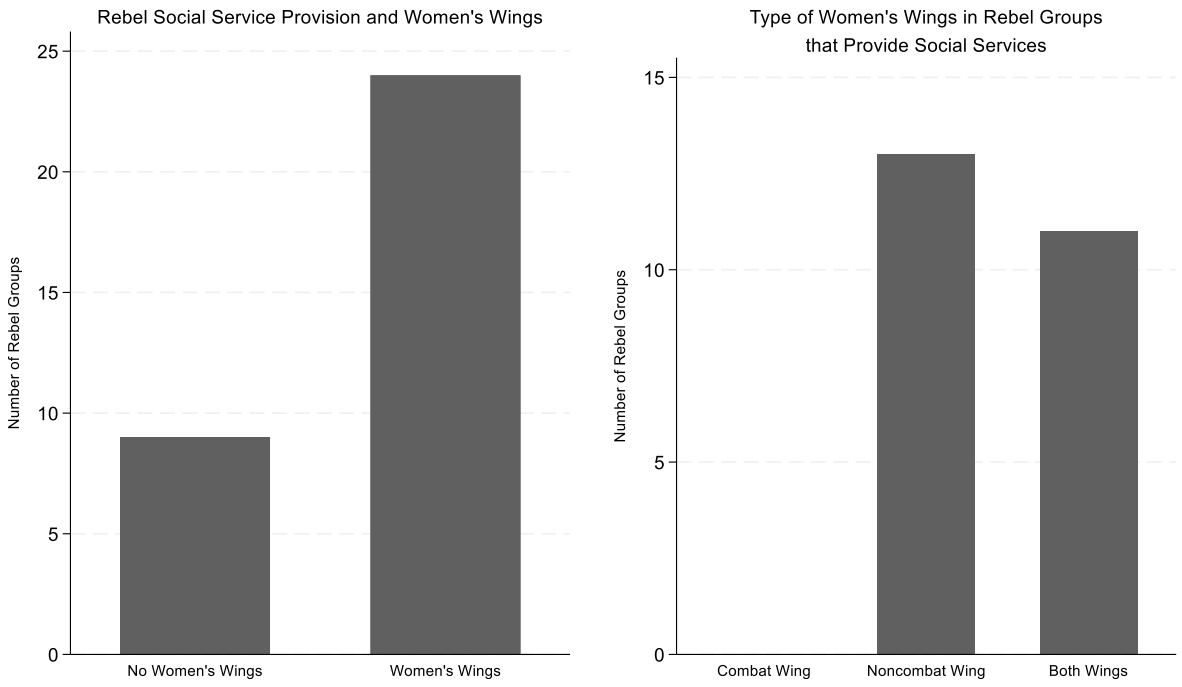


Figure 4: *Rebel Social Service Provision and Women's Wings*

There are no rebel groups present in the data who provide social services and only have a combat women's wing. Rebel groups which have both a combat and a noncombat women's wing provide social services but not when the combat group is isolated. This implies that rebel groups which have only a combat women's wing do not perceive the provision of social services to be a necessary strategy in sustaining their rule. This could also imply that combat women's wings may be present when groups are engaged in ongoing warring but be less necessary when

rebels are working to foster relationships with the domestic populations. This puzzle is explored in the potential explanations section of the article.

In testing the association between the variables described prior, I begin by running a chi squared analysis on the patterns of rebel groups between territorial control and women's wing, as well as the provision of social services by rebel groups and the existence of a women's wing compared to rebel groups who do not have a women's wing. The results are displayed in Table 3. This analysis may be picking up existing findings about women's participation in rebellion, but women's wings are a distinct mechanism by which women organize within rebellion. Testing them independently of women's integrated participation provides insights into how women organize within rebellion and provides pathways for understanding how different gender orders are employed in rebellion. To further distinguish my findings from other studies about women's integrated participation, I test the variables here independently with women's integrated participation. Based on the findings here, it is clear that there exists a bi-directional relationship between rebel strategy and gender.

While there may be overlap with women's general participation in the rebel group, women's wings offer a distinct pathway of participation and organization. Women's wings are different empirically than women's general participation. For the chi square analysis, this distinction cannot be modelled. For territorial control, the frequency of groups controlling territory, and whether a group has a women's wing, are not random. For provision of social services, this is the same. It is statistically highly unlikely that the observed pattern of groups that both provide social services and have a women's wing is random.

Table 3: Chi Squared Analysis of Territorial Control and Social Service Provision

	No Women's Wing	Women's Wing	Total	
No Territorial Control	179	58	237	
Territorial Control	53	81	134	
N	232	139	371	
			Chi2(1) = 47.28	p=0.000
No Social Service Provision	83	74	157	
Social Service Provision	9	24	33	
N	92	98	190	
			Chi2(1) = 7.15	p=.007

To further test these relationships, I run a series of logit regressions with the binary women's wing variable as my dependent variable. I introduce a series of control variables including forced participation of women (binary), leftist ideology (binary), women founders of the movement (binary), rebel strength,[7] and secessionist aims (binary). Because my dependent variable (women's wing) is binary, I utilize logit models to assess my hypothesis. The variable of exclusively integrated women's participation is only binary, so a logit model fits best. Table 4 below shows the results.

[7] Rebel strength measures the relative strength of the rebel group compared to the state, and is measured from 0-4, with parity at the state represented by the number 2. This measure comes from the NSA dataset and is frequently used by others in rebel governance.

Table 4: Regression Analysis of Prevalence of Women's Wings

	Model 1 Logit All Types of Women's Wings	Model 2 Logit All Types of Women's Wings	Model 3 Logit Both Types of Women's Wing	Model 4 Logit Both Types of Women's Wing	Model 5 Logit Integrated Women's Participation Only
Territorial Control	**.62 (.34)****		**1.3 (.34)*****		**-.53 (.26)***
Social Service Provision		**.76 (.46)****		**1.02 (.43)****	.03 (.44)
Leftist	**.72 (.41)***	.66 (.41)	.76 (.52)	.82 (.52)	.61 (.42)
Women Founders	1.09 (.90)	.87 (.87)	.45 (.82)	.29 (.74)	.08 (.87)
Secessionist	.30 (.36)	.41 (.39)	-.33 (.43)	-.86 (.61)	.33 (.39)
Duration	**.032 (.01)*****	**.03 (.01)***	**.02 (.01)***	.03 (.17)	.01 (.01)
Rebel Strength	.24 (.17)	.27 (.19)	-.08 (.25)	.03 (.24)	-.03 (.19)
N	**316**	**190**	**316**	**190**	**190**

p-value < 0.05 *, p-value < 0.01**, p-value < 0.001***

Model 1[8] tests the relationship between territorial control and women's wings presence and absence and finds strong positive statistically significant results in support of hypothesis 1. This suggests that if a rebel group controls territory, they are more likely to also have a women's

[8] Too address concerns of endogeneity, the variables territorial control and social service provision are correlated at a .33, which means that 33% of the data overlap. Given this correlation is relatively small, I do not have concerns about multicollinearity.

wing. Model 1 demonstrates the influence of territorial control on the presence or absence of women' wing in a rebel group. This corresponds to the core argument of this article. The decreased N (316) is a result of missing data from the rebel group strength and secessionist claims. The same applies in model 2.

Model 2, tests social service provision, independently of territorial control. These are tested independently given the potential relationship between the variables and the availability of data on rebel social service provision as compared to territorial control. Testing these independently avoids the potential issues of multicollinearity and captures a larger N for territorial control. Social service provision is positive and statistically significant, indicating further support for hypothesis 1. The decreased n is a result of missing data on rebel social service provision. Rebel social service provision is positively correlated and statistically significant with whether a group has some form of women's wing.

Models 3 and 4 tests rebel groups that have both a combat and a noncombat women's wing, against rebel groups that have neither or only 1. Both of these models demonstrate support for hypothesis 1a. The coefficients are higher than those in Models 1 and 2, indicating that rebel groups with both types of women's wings are even more likely to have territorial control and provision of social services.

Model 5 displays a really interesting finding which is not in line with existing scholarship in rebel governance, that exclusively integrated women's participation is negatively correlated with territorial control. Model 5 tests general/integrated women's participation against groups that have participation through women's wings. Interestingly, this finding is in opposition to extant literature on the roles that women's participation has in territorial control. Here, I find

that there is a significant negative relationship between solely integrated participation and territorial control. This suggests that women's wings, as opposed to women's participation, are what extant findings are picking up on in their analyses. Rebel groups which only have women's integrated participation are less likely than other rebel groups to control territory.

These findings have yielded support for hypothesis 1 and hypothesis 1a. In order to further parse out what about women's wings are correlated to the facets of rebel strategy in state making efforts addressed here, I run a series of regressions with the disaggregated variables of women's wings. As noted, prior, there are two broad categories of women's wings – combat and noncombat. Just like existing literature in women's participation, I suspect that the distinct types of women's wings are deployed and developed strategically in rebellion. There are more noncombat women's wings than combat women's wings. To further understand the strategic decision by the rebel governance apparatus and by rebel women in developing and sustaining women's wings, I have tested the effects of each type of women's wing. For the next set of analyses, I focus on combat women's wings and noncombat women's wings, as opposed to the category of any type of women's wing. Models 6-9 test the relationship between territorial control and provision of social services with each form of women's wing, to test hypothesis 2 and 3.

Table 5: Regression Analyses of Prevalence of Women's Combat and Noncombat Wings

	Model 6 Logit Combat Women's Wings	Model 7 Logit Noncombat Women's Wings	Model 8 Logit Combat Women's Wings	Model 9 Logit Noncombat Women's Wings
Territorial Control	**1.2 (.40)*** **	**1.3 (.24)*** **		
Social Service Provision			.84 (.40)	**1.33 (.35)*** **
Leftist	.41 (.45)	**1.02 (.40)***	.25 (.46)	**.97 (.43)***
Women Founders	.36 (.92)	.52 (.84)	.33 (.88)	.42 (.84)
Secessionist	-.30 (.45)	.31 (.37)	-.31 (.47)	.54 (.40)
Duration	.02 (.01)	**.04 (.01)*** **	.02 (.01)	**.04 (.01)***
Rebel Strength	.07 (.20)	.16 (.16)	.08 (.18)	.13 (.17)
N	**316**	**316**	**190**	**190**

p-value < 0.05 *, p-value < 0.01**, p-value < 0.001***

Model 6 finds a strong statistical correlation between combat women's wings and territorial control. This provides support for hypothesis 2. Women's noncombat wing is also statistically significant, which was not modelled in the hypothesis. Model's 8 and 9 test hypothesis 3, that rebel groups that provide social services are more likely to have a noncombat women's wing than rebel groups that do not provide social services. The relationship between women's wings and providing social services is enlightening. Women serve as community

bridges in times of rebellion and this specific set of gender orders seems to encapsulate women's perceived community relationships to aid in rebel strategy.

Similar to the effect of testing solely women's integrated participation, isolating the type of women's wing shifts the effects of ideology. Previous scholarship has found overwhelming evidence about the relationship between ideology and women's integrated participation. This finding does not translate to women's combat wings. When the type of women's wing is isolated, the effect of ideology, too shifts. There is no statistically significant relationship between a rebel group holding a leftist ideology and having only a women's combat wing. This is interesting given the patterns of women's general participation. Women's participation in rebellion is more frequently codified as noncombat, and this trend continues in patterns of women's wings. There is no relationship between combat wings and duration.

The cross-national results yield interesting findings, namely that when isolated, combat women's wings do not have a statistically significant relationship to the provision of social services. Noncombat women's wings do, and the coefficient is much higher than is when women's wings are aggregated. This demonstrates an interesting relationship between rebel's chosen structures of governance, and the ways that women's wings either help attain some of the priorities of governance or contribute to a shift in the ways that rebel's rule. The distinction between rebel's usage of combat and noncombat women's wings is explored further below.

From the results, it becomes clear that both the duration of the rebel groups and leftist ideology also are correlated with women's wings in some circumstances. Interestingly, the types of women's wings and the proxies for rebel strategy have different relationships. Future analytic works should continue to interrogate what specifically about territorial control and social

service provision, or other facets of rebel governance influences the frequency of groups which have some form of women's wing. Women's wings sometimes are created in response to mission specific needs and are sometimes a product of sustaining control. Patterns of when women's wings begin may provide insight into the driving force of the relationship between territorial control, social service provision, and patterns of women's wings in rebel groups.

The results support the hypothesis that Insurgencies are more likely to have a women's wing. The quantitative analysis sheds some light on the hypotheses presented here, while simultaneously creating areas ripe for more in-depth research. The section below offers a closer examination of an illustrative case which demonstrates some of the trends of women's wings in rebel groups. Supplementing the quantitative analysis allows for an in-depth examination of the micro-theoretical mechanisms driving the relationship between women's wings and rebel strategy.

Potential Explanations

These correlations suggest that different gendered arrangements for women's participation offer rebel groups different strategic utility. Notably absent from the empirical analysis is an exploration between rebel groups who only have women in integrated pathways and rebel groups who have women's wings. In order to further understand how different sets of gender orders are different rebel strategies, I explore the strategic utility of each type of women's wing through short case lets.

Noncombat and combat women's wings can be positioned differently based on mission specific needs. Similarly, rebel groups who harness women's labor through having both types of

women's wings have even higher statistical correlation with facets of rebel state making. Women's integrated participation and women's participation in women's wings are different sets of gender orders that rebels strategically deploy. Women organize themselves in rebellion in a variety of ways and rebels benefit strategically from operationalizing these organizations in service of rebel aims. The quantitative analyses above suggest that rebel governance strategies and the existence of a women's wing are correlated and positively associated in some instances.

The provision of social service institutions is one way that rebels consolidate power and develop sustained support. Women's noncombat wings are often structured around the provision of social services or support for the community, and thus rebels can benefit from this strategic organization. Given that these findings are novel, I use case vignettes to trace a set of mechanisms that could potentially explain the findings between rebel governance and the existence of women's wings. These mechanisms are not mutually exclusive. I posit a mechanism that could explain some of the quantitative findings above.

Combat wings and noncombat wings signal a difference in rebel strategy and serve different purposes. I explore here that the creation of combat wings could be an effort in gender parity, or a response to forced participation of women and serve strategic utility, whereas noncombatant wings might perhaps to be rooted in women's political consciousness. Women's wings, and their emergence and purposes are best seen under the guise of the reproduction of the state – women's wings, while being spaces to foster a gender consciousness, reproduce the rhetoric and struggle of the movement.

Combat & Noncombat Wings Serve Different Purposes

As models 1-9 demonstrate, territorial control and women's wings are statistically correlated for all iterations of the models. Social service provision is except when isolated to just combat women's wings. This means that there is no statistically significant relationship between combat women's wings and social service provision. I suspect combat women's wings to be a product of mission specific needs, and if not complimented by a noncombat women's wings, have no relationship to social service provision.

This distinction is interesting when we consider extant theories about how rebels recruit for war. The creation of combat wings appears distinct to noncombat. Noncombat wings purposes are more analogous to women's political and social liberation, and combat wings serve a specific aim of the rebel groups. For example, noncombat wings may perhaps be in service to women's interest distinct from rebellion, or in response to the displacement caused by ongoing rebel violence. Women's organizations can form in response to a perceived injustice or disagreement with the operation of the rebel movement. In the case of the secessionist movement the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA), women expressed discontent with the high rates of death among the male fighters (nearing almost 10% of the total population) and formed the Bougainville Women for Peace and Freedom (BWFP). The founder of the Bougainville Women for Peace and Freedom (BWPF) Josephine Tankunani spent her time during the conflict as a supporter on the frontlines initially, having witnessed the violence and perceived unending cycles of conflict. The BWFP appealed to Bougainville society as a liaison between the fighters on the frontlines of the BRA and the public, through the arrangement of peace activities at the village level (George 2016). Women instigated grassroots movements to send messages of peace, through visiting BRA camps to negotiate with soldiers and use radio to

send messages of peace to the public (Znu 2020). Given Bougainville's matrilineal familial tradition, women used their high status in the family to negotiate peace within the community by travelling into the jungle to negotiate with local BRA through the BWFP (Garasu 2003). Women's groups and individual women leaders emerged as active and integral influences in the political arena.

In contrast to noncombat women's wings, the emergence of combat wings is often in response to ongoing conflict, and the need for more (wo)manpower. In the case of the Liberation Front of Mozambique (FRELIMO), the women's wing "Destacamento Feminino" (Female Detachment known as "DFs") women fulfilled roles of in support of active conflict such as in the transportation of war material and establishment of bush hospitals (Katto 2014). Alongside the fight against colonialism, FRELIMO guerilla commanders systematically armed women and celebrated the ways that insurgency was overturning traditional gender-based hierarchies (West 2000). The DFs served in capacities protecting civilian populations from Portuguese attacks and were often deployed in reconnaissance missions. The women of the DF were set as an ideal type in the discourse of the emancipation of women – as FRELIMO leaders realized that including women in combat capacities was of service to the greater goals of the insurgency.

Samora Machel, the former military commander of FRELIMO, said in a speech in 1973: "The emancipation of women is not an act of charity, the result of a humanitarian or compassionate attitude. The liberation of women is a fundamental necessity for the Revolution, the guarantee of its continuity and the precondition for its victory" (Isaacman and Isaacman 1984, p. 174). In contrast to noncombat women's wings, this combat women's wing served a

distinct purpose in the liberation struggle. Women were expected to "raise the revolutionary consciousness" of populations that they came into contact with during their deployments. Despite the liberation and inclusion of fighters, the strategic deployment of women as community mediators and consciousness raisers unveils interesting facets of rebel strategy. Traditional and colonial concepts of women's oppression are juxtaposed to the insurgent exploitation of women's positionality. Women's "acts of heroism" in service of FRELIMO's requests reflect a different form of conscription (Arnfred 1988). One former member of the DF recounts her role spying on behalf of the insurgency:

> My task was to spend time at the water source listening to what people were saying about FRELIMO. I also listened in on conversations at the mission after mass, as people talked quietly in small groups. People would talk openly in front of me because they considered me a child. I reported what I heard. I was told never to lie because people would be executed based on what I said. [Reproduced interview from West, 2000, p. 186]

The women's wing in FRELIMO were explicitly tasked with mitigating the relationship between the insurgent population and controlling how people responded to insurgent rule. In doing so, women acted in reproducing the narratives and discourses of insurgency.

All women's wings are distinct and serve a different purpose. While it is not clear what factors contribute, it is clear that this institutional arrangement will be around for a long time. Sometimes rebel groups use wings as a means of controlling gender orders where other times rebels need women's wings in service of the cause. Distinctions in rebel aims and rebel history shape both whether a group will have a women's wing, and the purposes that those wings may serve.

Avenues for Future Research

Women's brigades – as opposed to other forms of gender inclusion such as efforts to mainstream gender in existing institutional structures – allow a politically advantageous collective consciousness to form. With failed efforts in gender integration, women are forced to create their own initiatives for structural change to gain visibility within masculinized environments. Women who embrace their identity as mothers are not antithetical to feminism, just as militant women are not necessarily feminist. Elsewhere in this dissertation, I demonstrate that a political network of collective consciousness created by gender-coordinated groups may continue through governance through the post-conflict period.

The results and the effects show the strong effect of territorial control on the likelihood that groups have a women's wings. My research is significant for several reasons. Previous studies have shown how women's participation in rebel governance shapes the goals and outcomes of rebellion, and my analysis suggests that a more nuanced approach may better explain how women carve out roles in rebellion. Women's wings are an increasing phenomenon. Paying better attention to the places where women gather sheds light on how both social cohesion and norms are reproduced within rebellion. Women's roles in reproduction – both in physical spaces and discourses, are central to sustaining rebellion.

My research also raises several questions for future research. First, I find that social service provision and territorial control are positively and statistically correlated to if a rebel group has a women's wing. Therefore, greater attention should be given to how rebels controlling territory changes their approaches to controlling the gender order. This relationship between rebel aims and chosen structures of gender order is an important area for future research. Second, my research finds a relationship between social service provision and

women's wings. Future work might examine more in depth how this relationship comes to exist, and if women's wings play central roles in establishing or sustaining the chosen types of service provisions.

Women's organizations roles in the peace process are also an avenue that future works may embark on. Where women's wings position themselves within the rebel governance structure, and the ways that they serve in mediator capacity with the central state can provide insights on how rebel institutional arrangements emerge. Further, specific policies and rules within women's wings can further be explored. One such avenue is how rebel groups mimic the state in the usage of marriage as a regulatory political institution is specifically within women's wings. Policies within women's wings are important to be explored. Insights from studies of women's revolutionaries and collective organizing can provide further insight into how women develop these organizations, and the utilities of such during periods of active warring or administrative normalcy.

While the data at present do not codify when women's wings began, future research and data collection efforts may seek to add the temporal scope to this research agenda. Scholarship is beginning to analyze women's wings as political actors in rebellion and track the effects of these institutions. Patterns of women's organizations in rebel groups provide insights into how rebels prioritize different types of rule.

Chapter 3

Wedded to the Cause: Social and Conjugal Orders in Rebel Groups

Introduction

The Ladies Unit, the women's military wing of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland Isak-Muivah faction (NSCN-IM), allows only unmarried women to participate. Should a woman cadre want to marry, she must inform the authority and get no objection, to relieve her of her military service (Zingkhai 2019). The Kachin Independence Organization (KIO) and its' military branch Kachin Independence Army (KIA) have a strong norm that women will retire from the ranks once they are married "in order to fulfill their duty to have children," to contribute to the cause (Hedstrom 2015, p. 69). The Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP) also prohibits military service to married women, as they must have their priorities set to family affairs (Kolas and Meitei 2019). Women in the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) with children were not allowed to fight, though "unmarried women 'kept participating in all the soldiers' activities'" (Linke 2018, p. 33-34). Curiously, women's contributions to rebellion are often contingent on their marital status. The ways that rebel groups regulate women's participation has warranted much attention in scholarship in rebel governance, yet few have explored rebel control in the regulation of the private lives of women. Attention to the household, particularly a feminist interrogation of marriage as an institution and as a lived experience can begin to explain militarizing dynamics in rebellion. As Cynthia Enloe states:

“After all, what is messier than marriage? And who on the world stage is more trivial – worthy of trivialization – than a mere wife?” (Enloe 2016, p. 1).

How can attention to the household explain control in insurgencies? In what ways do rebels control the conjugal orders, and to what ends? I introduce a new theoretical framework to explain the ways that rebels control conjugal orders and what the intended consequences are of these sets of orders. Through the Variance in Conjugal Order (VCO) framework, I argue that rebels control conjugal orders to achieve internal cohesion, broader social reproduction of the narratives of rebellion, and biological reproduction of the rebel base through their strategic locating of women. Women’s social positions of wife, mother, woman-soldier, or masculinized-soldier demonstrate how gender operates relationally in rebel control in support of their state making aims. This article operationalizes marriage as a structure with social and political incentives. Since marriage is the primary way that the state (and rebels) can regulate the interactions between men and women, policies and practices about marriage allow rebel groups to structure the conjugal orders so that it positions women to produce what they need.

The first section of this paper combines two broad sets of literature – rebel governance and state making, and gender and combat – to highlight the significance of studying the interpersonal and structural implications of rebel governance in tandem. The next section introduces the Variance in Conjugal Order (VCO) framework, identifying a set of conjugal orders and their perceived aims in rebellion. I provide a brief methodological note and justification for the use of comparative analysis in this study – scholars have yet to interrogate the repositioning of women based on marital status and have yet to put sets of conjugal orders together to explain broader patterns in rebel governance. In the subsequent analysis I interrogate these sets

of orders through examples in rebel groups. I demonstrate how different conjugal orders serve different aims in rebellion, contributing to feminist IR scholarship's hymn that the personal is political. I conclude this article with a discussion of the implications of highlighting attention to the household, women's labor, and structural decisions rebels make, have in furthering our understanding of women's positions in rebel governance.

Gender Dynamics in Rebel Governance and State Making

Four conceptual terms inform the work in this article and are defined here before surveying existing literature. There are two competing conceptions of state making that this argument draws from: first, the Tillyian definition of state formation as "the effort to monopolize the means of violence within a delimited territory" (Tilly 1985, p. 172); and second, state making as "a process of formation and reformation based on the changing nature of societies within the state" involving a set of institutions for social control and decision making (Gruhn 2015). There are a variety of definitions of state making, but they can be distilled into containing two components, the ascertaining of authority over a population, and the sustaining of that authority through social and political processes. The next concept to be defined is rebel governance which is "the development of institutions and practices of rule to regulate the social and political life of civilians by an armed group" (Mampilly 2011). The last term is conjugal order which refers "to the laws and social norms that serve to regulate sexuality, (re)construct the family, and send messages about acceptable and legitimate social relationships" (MacKenzie 2012, p. 4). The following literature review explores two assumptions central to the theoretical framework: First, rebels have interests in governance and/or state making which is achieved

through their war making efforts, and second, state making, at its core, involves gender ordering processes. I will explore the literature on state making in rebel governance, and then dictate how state making is a form of gendered ordering through differentiating women's roles within the state. By situating the literature on rebel governance, state making and gender order, I set forward the ways that different varieties of conjugal orders show different rebel strategies.

Making War and the State

"War makes the state, and the state makes war", the famous dictum which seeks to explain European state formation, also partially accounts for how rebel groups assign authority and control over the populations they seek to govern (Tilly 1985). State making in the Tillyian sense at a minimum involves eliminating rival within their territory. War making, the process of sustaining the military through extracting capital from local populations, creates the state. In needing to resource conflict, both through human capital and material means, rebels establish systems of governance which resemble the modern state. Many types of rebel groups go further than this process of extraction and territorial conquest.

Some critique 'the state' as too abstract a term when only understood in its aggregate form (Allen 1990). In response, the state, and state making is understood as an amalgamation of social processes, in addition to the warmaking machine, used in service of sustaining rule. State making is an ongoing, iterative process. Kantola argues that the state is discursive and structural as the product of the effects of "everyday practices, representational discourses and multiple modalities of power" (Kantalo 2007, p. 279). This focus catalogs the ways that state institutions are recognized and reproduced through governance decisions, and how the populations

respond to those decisions. Discursive power is deployed in sustaining state identity and unity. In focusing on the social processes of the state, the boundaries of the state are problematized, where the public/private divide becomes less rigid, and how the state is discursively created (and reproduced). As Kantola argues "extending the politics of the public sphere into the home facilitates state-led constructions of domestic subject positions" (Kantola 2007, p. 280).

One common assumption about why rebels govern is that governance provides them the means to contest the state militarily (Stewart 2020). Some scholars argue the only path forward for rebel groups to sustain political authority is in "replicating functions and forms of the nation-state" (Mampilly 2011, p 8). Rebel groups do so through developing expansive systems of government, maintaining territorial control, and providing services to their populations. Rebels build governing structures to extract resources and sustain their war fighting capacity (Weinstein 2006; Mampilly 2011). Rebel groups have an incentive to create security, or governance, because it allows rebels access to new recruits and the civilian population (Kalyvas 2006). Kalyvas states that "insurgency can best be understood as a process of competitive state building […] state building is the insurgent's central goal" (Kalyvas 2006, p. 218). As such, rebels often seek to mimic the design of the state (Arjona, Nelson, and Mampilly, 2015). Insurgents are often engaged in protracted conflict, and given these long-time horizons, rebels strategically design their systems of rule.

Rebel state making is one way that rebels garner collaboration and establish order. Arjona (2016) argues that this state making project moves beyond the protection, extraction racket, and that rebels often ''establish a social contract [which] facilitates monitoring of civilians and makes both obedience and spontaneous support more probable, which in turn

favors territorial control as well as its byproducts", or what she terms, a wartime social order. The systems of order rebels employ over civilian populations make tactical sense. Rebels with short term horizons are less orderly, and those with long term horizons develop profuse systems of social orders (Arjona 2016). In essence, rebels contesting the central state (more frequently long-time horizon rebels) engage in state making to sustain their rebellion. State making, the cyclic process of extraction, and mobilization, transforms the relations between the ruling group and those ruled over.

Rebels sustain social orders through regulating private lives, such as reproduction, marriage, and other sexual engagements. Rebels regulate where women participate in rebellion to harness women's labor, to sustain the state making project, and to reproduce the state through gendered duties. They control these orders in periods of active warring, and administrative normalcy. In expanding their forms of rule, some scholars of rebel governance have begun to illuminate how rebels govern the private affairs of participants in rebellion (Hedstrom 2022; Giri 2023) This analytic focus begins to illuminate the ways that rebel's structure and order social life.

Gendered Making of War and the State

There are a variety of ways in which the state, and state formation, is gendered. Both the state and rebel groups are explicitly gendered formal institutions as they are "defined, conceptualized, and structured in terms of a distinction between masculinity and femininity" (Britton 2000, p. 419). Britton (2000) takes an expansive view of organizations which can be distilled to explain both the state and rebel groups. The state is seen by feminist scholars in

competing frames – either as the only institution that can realize women's human rights and redress patriarchal structures or as a site of masculinist power that legitimizes those patriarchal structures through domestic and foreign policies (Parashar, Tickner and True 2018). V. Spike Peterson argues that "early state-making processes are singularly important for constituting and normalizing binary sex difference and heteropatriarchal "family" relations; in short, making states makes sex" (Peterson 2014, p. 390) through the production of "compulsory frames set by the various forces that police the social appearance of gender" (Butler 1990, p. 33). States are gendered in their reproduction of gender systems (True 2001). State making then is a process of distinguishing between genders and prioritizing that which is masculine over that which is feminine. Sex/affective relations, marriage, kinship, and family formations are intertwined with sociocultural and economic developments, and the practices these relations operate within shapes the politics of states. States expend "energy and resources in trying to shape their citizens' ideas about what constitutes an acceptable form of masculinity and an acceptable form of femininity" (Enloe 2000, p. 236). Rebel groups, like the state they mimic, too, structure the role and relations of women to this aim.

Ahram (2019) argues that state building is a distinctly gendered practice. He articulates that "asserting control over sexuality is a critical component of rebels' efforts to cultivate the institutional and ideational characteristics of statehood and governance" (Ahram 2019, p. 181). State formation and building the state involve gender ordering. States, and institutions with power, regulate access to sexual relationships and rely on patterns of sexual stratification that

ensure men's power over women (Yuval-Davis 1993; Ahram 2019). Patriarchal[9] relations are a constitutive principle of state formation (True 2018). As True argues, state making is gendered in this way of the positioning of women's labor. Women's positioning to the auxiliary, or outer realms of governance is meant to subjugate them in sustaining state's structural power relations. Gendered social relations are both "an embodiment of, and a threat to, sovereign statehood and political order" (True 2018, p. 35).

Gender order is often framed as a differentiation between women as mothers and women as soldiers. The household is a key location of the production and sustaining of gender roles. A woman who has more children is contributing to national security by birthing the next generation of soldiery. In raising those children, the woman is tasked with sustaining the military's legitimacy and the appeal of soldiering (Enloe 2000, p. 254). The home and family structure, then, are where individuals learn authority and citizenship. The household is ordered in service of the social reproduction of the military apparatus. The regulation of women's bodies and reproductive practices serves in relation to the rebel project of capturing state power and repelling threats to the national identity (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1989). As such, rebel regulation of women's bodies is in service of steering their own national narratives.

Women as soldiers signals the direness of the cause (Matfess and Nagel 2020). Enloe (1990) notes that when militaries can have a hard time getting all the "manpower" they employ the strategy of the militarization of women. In this narrative, women's contributions to war time labor are valorized under a heroic form of masculinity. This view of women in the military often

[9] Patriarchy as a structural relationship is defined as: "gender hierarchy that privileges masculinity over femininity, creating and reinforcing the divisions between public and private (family/home) spheres, reason and emotion, men and women." (True, 2018)

views women as degendered soldiers, another pair of boots on the ground. In equipping a military with bodies needed to sustain war making, there is a strategic deployment of women, which Enloe (1990) terms the militarization of mothers. Women's gender is operationalized in two different ways here: women as male soldier, and women as mother. Both serve distinct purposes in active warring. In this dance, the military maintains its masculinized image (which sustains appeal to men) by enlisting women in state soldiery in combat adjacent roles and encouraging women to produce young men soldiers through spoils such as voting rights.[10] Women's participation in the state, then, is intricately linked to her ability to contribute to sustaining the military.

Previous insights frame state making as organizing an institution which distributes power by identities, state making itself is a system of designing distributing of power. The distribution of power is inextricably linked to gender subordination (Mackinnon 1982; True 2018) State making is gendered through establishing women's bodies as the space to construct and sustain the socio-political order. Sexual domination, too, is intrinsic to statehood. The literature on sexual and gender-based violence in wartime suggests that sexual assault is a strategic tool in "control over production and reproductive resources" (True 2012, p. 121) and that violating women's sanctity disempowers and emasculates the enemy (Sjoberg and Peet 2011). Asal and Nagel (2021) position rebels' territorial control and rates of sexual violence together and argue that rebel's control over territory emulates the state by violently controlling human, sexual, and reproductive capital.

[10] During World War I, Canadian and Belgian male legislators, desperate to sustain popular support for male enlistment, awarded women who were mothers of soldiers with the right to vote before most other women (in Canada, only military nurses preceded mothers of soldiers in gaining the vote; most Belgian women did not gain suffrage until forty years later. (Enloe 2000, p. 248)

The patterns of women's role allocation are fundamental to how organizations structure power and social control in the context of war. Rebel groups craft a dynamic social landscape where personal affairs are woven into the political sphere, as survival and militarism drive participation (Parkinson 2013). Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1989) highlight both how women affect and are affected by the state, underscoring how the strict regulation of gender, women's bodies, and reproductive practices capture state power and repel threats to nationhood. Thus, state making is a gender project.

Insights into how state making is gendered are derived from examining governance of the private sphere. Women's bodies are often the location for the construction of social order (Enloe 2000; Peterson 2020; Giri 2023). Rebel's relationship to women's bodies is a product of the strategic utility they serve in rebel aims. Referring to state making as controlling order (Arjona 2016), rebels control a variety of sets of social orders including the conjugal order. Conjugal order, as referred to by Mackenzie (2012), refers to the laws and social norms that regulate sexuality and construct the family – as well as send messages about legitimate social relationships. Much like social order, there is not one form of conjugal order, but instead this order is defined by the rules associated with marriage and family. Groups shape conjugal order by establishing rules governing marriage, inter-sex relations, and permissible forms of promiscuity. Managing the institution of marriage, or establishing conjugal orders, reveals a lot about the priorities of governance groups.

Specifically, how rebels govern the private lives of their participants provides insights on rebel strategy and rebel control. One such way that rebel groups govern private affairs is through the regulation of intimacy. Critical feminist international relations contends that the

regulation of intimacy is a constitutive feature of successful nation building/state formation (Pateman 1988; Peterson 1992; Sjoberg 2012; True 2018). Rebels regulate how systems of marriage and sexual relations operate as a means of establishing how the state is both imagined and governed. Marriage in modern state-making operates as a regulatory mechanism (Peterson 2020) where the family is a focal site of power relations both reproducing the state and legitimizing power relations [hierarchy] necessary to sustain power consolidation.

Much of our understanding of the regulation of marriage and sexual politics in rebellion comes from studies of sexual violence. This literature largely tends to focus on the organizational and interpersonal dimensions of forced marriage and sexual violence within the "victim-perpetrator" and "weapon of war" frameworks (Revkin and Wood 2021). Studies which seek to understand the policy of forced marriage amongst rebel's stress that compulsory marriage improves cohesion and loyalty, as well as promotes interdependence within rebel factions (Cohen 2013). These studies provide useful insights on the links between sexual violence and social cohesion, as well as begin to center sexual politics in tactics in rebel governance. Giri (2023) draws the literature away from the oversampling on the existence of forced marriage and introduces a framework of noncoercive marriage where marriage and sexuality consolidate and legitimize their political agendas, to accumulate power. Matfess (2024) too, focuses on marriage policies in rebel groups with a similar lens towards non forced marriage. This article is informed by both Giri's (2023) and Matfess (2024) centering of marriage practices in rebel governance, and adopts an expansive view of conjugal order, focusing on the regulation of the home life as a political practice.

In summation, rebels are interested in state making which involves the control of a variety of sets of social processes and orders. State making is a gendered process which depends on the sexual stratification of maternal reproduction of the biological state and the imagined state, and the masculinized war front. State making is an iterative social process which is often gendered in execution. Many rebel groups aim to create and sustain state-like institutions. Rebel groups act like states in a variety of ways and because of this, literature on gender, order and the state, naturally fits to describe rebels, in addition to states. In this article, I infer that rebel groups are engaging in processes akin to that of state making.

Variance in Conjugal Order Theoretical Framework

Drawing insights from the literature on state making, I apply gendered logics to rebel groups sustaining of rule. This analytic move is in line with other works on rebel groups – rebel governance is a field of inquiry built upon insights from a variety of different disciplines. This work takes the gendered nature of state making and applies it to rebel rule. Rebels govern both the public and the private lives of those in their rule and do so with specific aims in mind. These aims shape the types of rule they employ.

Rebels govern conjugal orders in a variety of ways. “The concept of conjugal order refers to the laws and social norms that serve to regulate sexuality, (re)construct the family, and send messages about acceptable and legitimate social relationships” (MacKenzie 2012, p. 4). As such, there is no single form of conjugal order, but instead conjugal order(s) are analytical tools to examine the regulations and norms that dominate a political space. Understanding conjugal order involves focusing on the laws, rules, and norms that are associated with marriage,

sexuality, and the family unit. Conjugal order is distinguished from other theoretical analyses on family and sexuality by its use to specifically understand the links between sexual regulation and notions of order and stability (MacKenzie 2012). In the rebel context, the concept of conjugal order helps understand how rebels navigate commitment to their cause and how they establish systems of governance.

I introduce the Variance in Conjugal Order theoretical framework which explains which types of conjugal orders rebels employ and to what ends. Conjugal order not only refers to marriage, but also the social norms surrounding affinity relations between rebels. Different conjugal orders produce different outcomes. Conjugal orders strategically gender women to serve the aims of the rebel group. "Masculinized" women serve a purpose of combat roles whereas "maternalized" women act as the mothers of the nation. This gendering of women doesn't always match the environment where they are – so gendering too can be a strategy of rebellion. Rebel groups gender (and thus locate) women differently depending on what they need from them. Building on this point, I argue that rebels seek to achieve internal cohesion, broader social reproduction, and biological reproduction through their control of conjugal orders. These are mapped into the dimensions of conjugal order below. The labels of the dimension point to which aspect of rebel group the dimension is acting upon, where the group is the entire rebel apparatus, the mind is the stories of rebellion, and the body is the physical bodies needed to sustain rebellion. Since marriage is the primary way that the state (and rebels) can regulate the interactions between men and women, policies and practices about marriage allow rebel groups to structure the conjugal orders so that it positions women to produce what they need. This argument is described in Table 1.

Table 1: The Variance in Conjugal Order (VCO) Framework

Conjugal Order Dimension:	Cohesion	Mythology + Ethos	Biological Reproduction
Intended Outcome:	*Structure how men and women relate (or do not relate) with and to one another in production of rebel aims.*	*Structure how masculinity and femininity define the purpose of rebellion and the strength of the rebel cause.*	*Structure how sex and gender tell participants what their roles and responsibilities are in relation to supporting rebellion.*
Sets of Observable Examples:	- Gender Segregation - Military Readiness and Retention Rules - Dating Rules - Sex-Related Contracts -Prohibit/Regulate Marriage	- Socially Reproducing Rebellion - Revolutionary Objectives Defined in Opposition to Existing State - Collective National Imagining - Repelling Threats to Nation	- Biologically Reproducing Rebellion - Practical Considerations of Childrearing, And Community-Functioning - Restructure Based on Marital Status - Mother-Soldier Affinity - Educating And Socializing the Base of Support
Axis:	Ordering Sexuality	Ordering the Nationhood	Ordering Identities

State making is conceptually and structurally linked to "the constitution of gendered spheres of social activity materialized as hierarchical divisions of authority, power, labor and resources; and state centralization of authority, power, accumulation and reproduction ideologically" (Peterson 2014, p. 401). Insurgents, in their state making efforts, regulate these gendered divisions of labor. Gender operates differently in different contexts seen through different varieties of conjugal orders. Paying attention to the spaces women are positioned indicates the conjugal orders rebel groups deploy. There are three sets of orders that are explored in this article.

First, cohesion as a dimension of conjugal order creates spaces, such as women's wings, where collective consciousness can grow under control of the rebel governance apparatus. In ordering sexuality, rebel groups set permissible standards of how participants in the rebellion engage with one another. Rebels secure commitment to the rebel aims by regulating the ways the genders interact with one another. This includes creating sets of dating rules and permissible forms of sexuality. Gender-segregation, too, aims at increasing rebel cohesion through deploying gender as a war sustaining function. In illuminating a space for women to serve the rebel cause, rebels achieve their aims of gendering women in support of rebellion. Gender-segregation, too, accounts for the regulation and structuring of intimate relations. As Enloe (1983) notes, many men will note stay in the military if they cannot marry or have sexual access to a woman (p. 4). Part of the process of sustaining a rebellion or military force involves getting and keeping recruits (military readiness and retention). This requires a duality which is explored in the body dimension of the conjugal order framework, where there is a battlefront where war is waged, and a home front where war is sustained. State making requires both of these spaces and rebels need bodies to fill each space. Gender segregation as a conjugal order relies on two dueling images – women as masculinized soldier, or woman as woman soldier. Women as masculinized soldier preforms functions of military readiness. Women as feminized soldier performs functions of retention and signaling direness of the fight. The ends, then, of this form of conjugal order, is sustaining the military and unit cohesion.

The second dimension of conjugal order explored here, mind, is women positioned as the social reproducers of rebellion through narrating and preserving a common myth. In this too, myths of womanhood and sexuality are exploited in service to rebel aims. In ordering

nationhood, rebel groups craft a common narrative that provides the basis for political action. Doing so involves repelling threats to the nation and developing a collective national imagining. This mythology and ethos dimension of conjugal order involves invoking structures of how masculinity and femininity drive the rebellion. Rebels aim to secure support for their rebellion and doing so requires rebels to be aware of what is at stake in rebellion. Women too, serve as spirit leaders and morale boosters. The aim of this rebel strategy is similarly to achieve unit cohesion, but also to create and build the myths that bind the nation. Referring back to the discussion on what composes state making, discursive power is a central social process in creating and sustaining the state through the development of unity and a state identity. These processes can happen both in the public and private spheres. Women are often positioned as "reproducers of the nation and they symbolize the purity of the nation" (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1989, p. 7). Creating both the inside, and the outside, of the nation is a function of the state's discursive capabilities (Doty 1996). Rebel groups create a foundation worth supporting and fighting towards, while simultaneously identifying threats to the nation to position themselves against. For rebels, this threat might be other rebel groups, state actors, or the threat of attacks on their way of life, or the norms they sustain.

The third form of conjugal order is in the mobilizing of women as mothers and biological reproducers of rebellion. In ordering identities, rebel groups sustain rebellion through establishing permissible forms of womanhood. Women are positioned based on how they can serve rebel aims. Successful command structures often employ the rhetoric of the military unit as family – though this image is incomplete without women. Militaries need women and need women to behave as women. This set of conjugal orders requires women to behave as wife and

mother, as opposed to the first dimension of conjugal order established here, which deploys women either as masculinized-soldier or woman-soldier. This social positioning comes with different expectations of what the appropriate gender performance is and is observed through rebel regulation of marriage and homemaking. Women in their domestic (reproductive) "roles compensate for state failure in provide social infrastructure and support" (Kantola 2007, p 274). Women are positioned here in the periphery. Insurgents organize married women to preform support and home front roles, while unmarried women are channeled into military roles (Enloe 1983). Militaries utilize women's unpaid labor from the category of military wives. The aim of this conjugal order is in physically reproducing the rebellion as well as securing that the state making projects aims are represented and understood in the household.

Usage of women's labor must contend with the competing frame of preserving femininity, masculinity, and social orders (Enloe 1983). There is variation in how each of the conjugal orders outlined here is employed in rebellion, which is explored in the analysis. Rebels can and often do have more than one type of conjugal order, meaning each of the categories are nonexclusive. The framework proposed here is not meant to explain every rebel decision in controlling conjugal orders but does provide a baseline for understanding rebels' chosen forms of rule. There are a variety of testable implications established in Table 1, but I will address a few here before continuing to the methodological approach and analysis. Groups that are utilizing one or more functions of conjugal order are interested in state building. One observable implication is that of positioning of women based on their capacity to serve rebellion. Women's bodies as a place of political order signals rebels blurring the public private divide.

Methodology

In the next section of the paper, I employ a comparative analysis of rebel groups with state making aims categorized by type of conjugal order as outlined in the theoretical framework. This analytical move separates me from, albeit limited, prior studies of rebel marriage. These works most often focus on single case studies, and center practices of forced marriage. Scholars have yet to interrogate the repositioning of women based on marital status and have yet to put sets of conjugal orders together to explain broader patterns in rebel governance. By taking a comparative approach, I center rebel marriage systems to understand the variances in how they establish and sustain conjugal orders in their state making projects. The burgeoning literature establishing rebel governance's attention to the private (through attention to marital affairs and sexuality) makes calls for comparative studies which reveal variation and patterns of the governance of marriage (Giri 2023; Matfess 2024). Analytic focus on marriage best shows how the personal is political and has relevance in understanding control in rebel groups. Fineman (2001) encompasses the multiplicity and complicated concept of marriage by noting that:

> Marriage can be experienced as: a legal tie, a symbol of commitment, a privileged sexual affiliation, a relationship of hierarchy and subordination, a means of self-fulfillment, a societal construct, a cultural phenomenon a religious mandate, an economic relationship, a preferred reproductive unit, a way to ensure against poverty and dependency, a romantic ideal, a natural or divined connection, a stand-in for morality, a status, or a contractual relationship.
>
> From the state's perspective, marriage may mean the imposition of order necessary for record-keeping purposes (e.g., to facilitate property transfers at death) ... It has been argued that marriage is the preferred method of containing and harnessing [male] sexuality in the interests of the larger society. Marriage can reflect the moral or religious convention of a society– a symbolic function. Marriage can also be the site where essential reproductive tasks are performed for

> society ... Finally, marriage can be the mechanism through which society distributes and delivers social goods to its citizens (p. 239)

As such, understanding marriage practices as both an ordering system and an intimate space adds complexity to how rebels sustain their systems of control.

My second analytic move, using short case vignettes of a variety of rebel groups with differing contexts and aims achieves two ends: First, it furthers the scholarship in understanding gender-segregated spaces in rebel groups, and second, it creates a baseline conjugal order to evaluate in rebellion. By employing a feminist epistemology of a bottom-up approach, as opposed to a top-down analysis by asking how the state and international structures embed in people's lives, I begin to unpack the day-to-day lives of those living under insurgent rule.

The politics of power and social order embedded within the private lives of insurgents call for paying attention to firsthand accounts of women's experiences within and outside rebel organizations. The rebel groups analyzed here were selected as vehicles for the exploration of the ways in which marriage and sexuality shape and are shaped by rebel strategy. Donnelly (2018) sets the norm of understanding strategy as an iterative process informing and being informed by women's participation. My analysis relies on secondhand documents, publicly available primary accounts of rebellion, rebel policies, and existing scholars' interviews with rebels. This project does not intend to eliminate focus on the historical grievances held in rebellion, and points to various other projects which seek to understand the micro-casual relationships within rebellions. The away from singular case analysis allows me to better grip the similarities and differences in how rebels deploy different sets of conjugal orders.

Dimensions of Conjugal Order in Rebel Groups

In this project, I take the theoretical insights from war making as state making, to consider the way that gendered orders shape women's positions vis-à-vis governance structures. Gender orders strategically locate women in service to the rebel cause, both through the positioning of women into auxiliary spaces to preserve the masculinity of combat (MacKenzie and Foster 2017) and sustaining regulatory norms and institutions contingent on women's marital status (Matfess 2024) to aid in their state making efforts. Rebels control myths that bind groups, interactions between the sexes, domestic tasks, and proper performances of marriage and sexuality. Marriage is often the primary way a government can regulate interactions between men and women, and as such, rebels use marital status to control conjugal orders. Marriage is one space where the ideology of control is visible.

If the argument I am positing is not explanatory of rebel behavior and strategy, I would expect that rebel groups focus is on the physical rebellion and extraction as opposed to developing profuse systems of social control. I argue that there are different dimensions of conjugal order, and they serve to fulfill different purposes. The following analysis takes a comparative approach to outline both the differences and similarities in how rebels control conjugal orders to achieve ends of state making. As noted prior, conjugal orders are not mutually exclusive, so one set of orders may serve dual purposes, which is noted within the case vignettes. Gender analysis is necessary for understanding how rebel groups emulate state behavior in the international system and perpetuate political and social inequalities.

Cohesion Dimension of Conjugal Order

Rebels regulate the interaction and communication between the sexes and rebels regulate the ways married and unmarried women participate in rebel activities. There are many ways that rebels engage in gender segregating practices. Two primary pathways are through the rules and norms placed onto sexual and intimate relations and through establishment of women's wings. There are many outcomes of this ordering that rebels aim to achieve. They often are seeking to increase unit cohesion, military readiness, and retention, and absolve issues related to masculinity nostalgia.[11] State making rebels benefit from cohesion. They also benefit from control over the spaces where women are likely to develop a collective consciousness. This consciousness raising project being a product of rebel rule allows rebel leadership to control and order the way that women seek to organize themselves. The ways that women are located, and their identities are made salient illuminates a lot about rebel strategy.

A maximalist approach to the establishment of gender segregation as conjugal order achieves ensuring uninterrupted faith to the movements ends. The Mujahedin-e Khalq (People's Mujahedin of Iran) (MeK), a woman-led group, forbids all forms of emotional relationships among men and women, including romantic partnerships and friendships. The group is headed by a wife and husband pairing, Maryam and Massoud Rajavi. From the time that they are toddlers, boys and girls are not allowed to speak to one another. This policy extends through adolescence and adulthood, and if a man is turned on by the scent of a woman, he must confess. Members also attend weekly cleansings where they confess their sexual desires. Upon

[11] Mackenzie and Foster (2017) term masculinity nostalgia as a yearning for a set of gender norms and relations linked to fantasies of a secure, 'traditional' and ordered past, viewed in the images of father, breadwinner, and landowner.

membership, members are forced to divorce and take a lifelong celibacy to ensure that their love would be directed to Maryam and Massoud (Rubin 2011). This gendered order sets the rebels priorities and ideological commitment to the cause. The sex ban aims that rebels focus on fulfilling their duties within rebellion.

These policies in rebel groups shift and adapt over time to changing mission needs. In the case of the National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT), in response to problems of morale and rebel fatigue, rebel leaders decided to increase the recruitment of women, so that men would have ample opportunity to have their sexual needs satisfied within rebellion. The fallout of this shift in strategy resulted in large numbers of NLFT rebels getting married on the bases. The rebel group publicly announced that they would no longer recruit women because of the male and female rebels regularly attempting to elope (BBC News 2002). In the case of NLFT, they were struggling with a morale problem, where fighters recorded being fatigued by war and craved a sense of returning to domestic life. This return to domestic life was staged as marrying and fleeing the cause. The ban on marriage only applied to low-level members of the group, as leaders were free to marry because they are seen to be in roles (such as planning) which are not interfered with by the family (BBC News 2002). The life of a combatant, though, was framed as damaged by domesticity. Former leader Dhananjoy Reang stated: “If large numbers of guerillas who are involved in combat get married, it will surely dampen their morale” (BBC News 2002). Like the MEK example above, this regulation of the lives of combatants sought to redirect fighters’ attention to the rebel aims. Marriage is functioning as a symbol of a return to normalcy but also a threat to insurgency. The NLFT prioritized maintaining their fighting base, knowing that this was at the expense of their social base. This is a distinct strategy from that explored in

the third set of conjugal orders, which involves encouraging marriage to keep soldiers engaged/attached to the cause.

The Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) regulates intimacy through compelling women combatants to sign an abstinence contract to abstain from both love and sexual relationships. Women, by relinquishing control over their private lives, are disciplined and ready to fight and die for their struggle (Kaser 2021). There is a tension here between subordination of women and emancipation by ends of rebel success. Notably, this policy is charged to women's bodies, as opposed to that of the man soldier. Man's commitment to the cause is proven by his adherence to principles of masculinity. This form of gender alignment serves to recruit women to be masculinized-soldiers, as opposed to invoking their femininities as woman-soldier. The Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) formed the "Girls Battalion" Ketiba Banat to fulfill the political and social functions of insurgency. This was created to craft a female elite tasked with creating mythologies around women fighters in war (Pinaud 2015). The Ketiba Banat was a tool to regulate women and girls' social positions through the vector of marriage. This space served as increased social differentiation between women and men within the rebel movement. Only unmarried women were allowed to serve in the combat capacity.

This example gives light also to another form of gender segregation as conjugal order is that of women's wings. Women's wings are gendered political units within rebel groups[12] and are one such way that rebels regulate women's participation. Women's wings are an understudied phenomenon that has clear implications for understanding rebel social control

[12] Article 1 of this dissertation explores patterns of women's wings. Article 3 of this dissertation explores the post-conflict outcomes and women's wings.

and state making. This specific conjugal order has vast numbers of examples in rebel governance. The women's wing becomes a facet of rebel institutional design and becomes a political space where women's bodies are regulated and controlled. Women's wings in rebel groups are an exemplary space for analytical focus given their existence is a form of conjugal order, and the ways that women's participation within women's wings are regulated reveals a great deal about rebel aims and strategy.

The Kachin Independence Organization's (KIO) state making project involves a degree of sustaining the narrative struggle of the Kachin state, or the nation. In doing so, the KIO strategically tasked their women's wing with amplifying this nationalist discourse. Women recognized as one source of moral strength (Harriden 2011) through their narration of the history of the KIO. This production of national narratives falls onto women. The post-colonial federalized Burmese state was framed through gendered rhetoric, where the centralized Burmese core (the patriarchal father) was to bring unity amongst the peripheral (feminized) subordinates. In this narrative, the KIO's struggle for statehood is impenitently gendered. The strategic use of gendered narratives gives insight into how rebel leaders are framing what the fruits of their fight will bring. The promise of fundamental restructuring of orders in society serves to engender their war as a legitimate aim.

Social + Mythology Reproduction Dimension of Conjugal Order

Rebel groups control the myths that bind their group in order to foster a collective identity and valor which shapes the group's internal cohesion (Hutchinson 2009; Stewart 2023). This shaping of the broader rebel purpose and mission is in service to state making efforts. In

unifying a collective myth of rebellion, rebels can create a narrative struggle in opposition to the central state. The unifying practice is also a tool of recruitment in expanding the rebel base. The collective national imagining provides the basis for the social organization of rebel governance. In sustaining rebel movement, rebels are tasked with creating the story that gender is a salient enough identity to develop commonalities in lived experience from. Women are positioned both within these stories and myths and are tasked with the ideological reproduction within the community and household. These national narratives exploit gender as a basis for protection (Wilkinson 2018) and work to legitimize the struggle (Matfess and Nagel 2020).

This process is gendered in both the implicit and exploit deploying of gender frames. For example, the Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force (NDPVF) provides different gendered roles between pre-menopausal and post-menopausal women in physical and spiritual spaces. This delineation of women is a gendered ordering practice. Post-menopausal women sanctify the creeks with gels which protect insurgents against gunshots – and the insurgents strongly believe that this helps with bodies repel bullets during conflict. This space is, however, is unfit for women of reproductive age. Non-menopausal women are forbidden from entering the creeks, as their mere presence, and specifically, their menstrual blood is believed to "defile the grounds at the creeks, thus endangering insurgents" (Oriola 2012 p. 550). The NDPVF also separate male insurgents into male-only creeks to enforce their strict regulations of when is appropriate to have sexual relationships (Oriola 2012). This differentiation categorizes women based on their fertility, invoking imagery of the mother of the nation.

Rhetoric can also create and sustain the conjugal order. The Montoneros in Argentina held strong views about permissible forms of sexuality, including imposing compulsory

heterosexuality, which was in promotion of an ideal revolutionary couple who was both monogamous and heterosexual (Cosse 2014). The personal becomes political where the group sought to establish a moral foundation for social relations by setting forth the parameters for proper romantic relationships. During a period of factionalism in 1973, devotion to the cause become embroiled in gender and sexual undertones. In othering by opposition groups, the Montoneros were responding to a rhetoric of discrediting the “drug addicts, [and] homosexuals”, including chanting “"We're not fags, we're not junkies, we're FAR and Montonero soldiers" (Cosse 2014, p. 115). This rhetoric of sexuality, and control of permissible forms of sexual behavior is an essential state function, as a way that governments perform defining sovereignty, citizenship and securitize morality (Canady 2009). State designation of permissible and impermissible behavior accomplishes a systematic othering. Different sexual orders and norms are strategic in producing different outcomes. Rebels in this instance are designing permissible sets of sexuality as the basis for ordering of states, where heterosexuality is superior to other forms of sexuality, another means of the ways that state making is a system of power over differing classifications such as gender and sexuality.

The Kachin Women’s Association (KWA) has created reports and substantive documentation projects of rape by the Tatmadaw (Burmese state forces). In doing so, women’s bodies are framed by rebel forces as what is at stake in rebellion and are framed as the site of conflict, targeted by non-Kachin men. This narrative of protection worked to serve the boundaries of the community of the KIO nation.

Biological Reproduction Dimension of Conjugal Order

The last set of conjugal orders explored through this framework is that of deploying women as mother and wife to the rebellion. Marriage operates as an ordering structure with social and political incentives in these contexts. Rebel groups use the family system to help regulate society. The household is operationalized to service the social reproduction of the military institution. This strategy of regulation of private life is one of the ways that rebels control the social and conjugal orders of the societies they are building. This set of conjugal orders is a logistical strategy aimed at control of the domestic with effects on ensuring a broad, horizontal support base of the rebellion. This strategy assists in rebel state making aims as they contest the central state. War is waged both on the battlefield and in the household. Women are the symbolic (and often literal) mothers of the nation. Women as wives and mothers become the bearers of masculine honor, where "women's shame is the family shame, national shame and man's shame…the family, nationhood and manhood (are) all politicized and associated with national imagery" (Nagel 1998, p. 249).

In combat spaces women serve as manpower, and in the household particular skills and assets are rewarded differently. Women are positioned in ways that come with different expectations of what the appropriate gender performance is. The [correct] form of being a soldier privileges a specific type of masculinity which is incompatible with the work of the wife. As Matfess (2024) contends that at the organizational level, "as a forum for horizontal socialization, marriage among rebels can spur renewed devotion to the organization and its cause or detract from revolutionary zeal; it may represent an actualization of rebel ideology or

an uncomfortable compromise between ideology and practicality" (p.5). Marriage as an institution orders the roles of both men and women.

In the case of the NSCN-IM Ladies Unit unmarried women are permitted access and membership to the brigade, but if a woman decides to marry while a part of the Ladies Unit, she is relieved of her status and her service moves to the activities and tasks of the NSWON, the noncombatant women's wing only (Zingkhai 2019). This staunchly categorizes the family responsibilities that married women hold elsewhere in support of the state making project. And this is not the only case of this specific ordering. The Kachin Independence Organization (KIO), National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT), Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP), Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), and the Sudan People's Liberation Army all have similar role shifts from the women's wing (when unmarried) to a political or social role (after marriage). In Zimbabwe during the insurgent war against white Rhodesia, only unmarried women were present in combat spaces. Married women were laundresses, chefs and nurses ("Women Freedom Fighters of Zimbabwe" 1982). FRELIMO required women in their combat women's wing to be single without social commitments (West 2000). The sexual divisions of labor here are precarious, and frequently follow a similar pattern. The positioning of women and broader project of controlling conjugal orders is one facet of rebel strategy in state making. By relegated the proper ways to perform one's gender, in this case, the work of the wife and mother, women's labor is prioritized in service of state making.

Policies on inter-rebel marriage structure social and political life. The Eritrean People's Liberation Front's (EPLF) shifting of conjugal orders specifically of marriage demonstrates the how rebel adapt in state making strategies. At first, The Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF)

required its members to be celibate, forbidding sexual relations between fighters. Later, the policy evolved to allow and encourage marriage amongst the fighters, going as far as abandoning the ban on premarital sex. Though, once married, spouses were routinely assigned different work duties, being allowed to only spend one month of the year together (Bernal 2001). During periods of active warring, the EPLF regulated every aspect of social and domestic life, but after independence, EPLF no longer organized domestic work. The lack of regulation in this instance is a form of conjugal order. Even without regulation, domestic life had to go on: "within the household food had to be prepared, children cared for, clothing washed, floors swept. So, in practice, household labor became once again a "private" matter and fell to women" (Bernal, 2001, p. 140). In absence of rebel services, the political and economic structures depended on women participating in the domestic work. In this case, and as Bernal (2001) argues, women must first help emancipate [create] their states, and only then can gender issues be addressed.

In the case of RUF in Sierra Leone, the military-wing controlled marriages to incentivize male fighters to stay in the group and to structure women's domestic and logistical work. The Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) often encourage fighters to marry and suggested that couples live together for a year first. In doing so, they sought to increase social cohesion and commitment to the rebellion, where bringing intimate partnerships into the war shift opportunity costs: instead of leaving their partner to join the group, leaving the group means leaving their partner.

In securing the roles that the motherhood status is expected to fulfill, the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO) involves itself overtly with marital practices. Hedstrom (2020,

p. 4) notes that “women’s social reproductive duties are so important that the Kachin army regularly organizes mass-weddings and compulsorily mobilizes women into ‘women’s units’ to ensure the continued reproduction of the armed forces.” These ceremonies happen multiple times per year and are seen as a morale-boosting tool. In these ceremonies, there are often 30 partnered couples awaiting marriage. Women soldiers affiliated with KWA work the logistics of the ceremony, distributing wedding rings and ushering couples through the pews. Marriage, overseen by the KIO, is a systemized and regulated to fulfill objectives of the state making project.

In the KIO, women are pushed to physically reproduce the Kachin nation, facing shame if they do not (Hedstrom 2015). The necessity of birthing the new nation is verbalized in church sermons and by KIO officials. Given both the reality of the Burmese offensive, and the narratives of nationalism embedded in the KIO, how women are expected to contribute depends on the identity they have which best serves the rebellion. Women’s perceived ethic-of-care is contingent on their marital status. The National Service (NS) program is the form of conscription that all Kachin’s above the age of 18 must register for, except, unsurprisingly, for married women. One lieutenant of the KIO notes:

> Both men and women work for the KIO but in the army, men can work much more effectively. Basically women, when they get married and they have children, they cannot work very effectively, they cannot take any active duty in the army because they have to take care of the children. It is women who have to take care of their child, so they just have to quit earlier. That’s why women cannot be very effective in the army and also why women are not in leadership. (Hedstrom 2018, p. 129)

This framing of the causality of women’s perceived inaction in battle post-childrearing is an interesting reflection into how gender roles are framed in the narrative struggle. Before

women are married, they serve specific purposes within the armed all-women's wing of the KIA. They fight alongside other units of the KIA and contribute to the day-to-day aspects of active warring. Various ex-combatant women now in the noncombat women's wing of the KIO document how the insurgency priorities were distilled onto them differently once they became a wife. The roles of combatant and wife are mutually exclusive in the Kachin project of state building. The combatant, often invoked as a masculinized soldier, produces favorable outcomes such as expanded territorial control, but the wife creates and sustains the rebellion through militarizing daily life.

Governance over reproduction is embedded in the structures of the KIO. The Kachin Independence Organization and its' military branch, Kachin Independence Army, have a strong norm that women will retire from the ranks once they are married "in order to fulfill their duty to have children," which is also considered a means of contributing to the cause (Hedstrom 2015, p. 69). And, despite the strong anti-rape sentiment embedded in the mythology of the nation, marital rape is not criminalized if the wife is over the age of 14 (Hedstrom 2018). This violence experienced by women in the privacy of their homes is not vocalized given that doing such does not serve national objectives. The regulation of women contingent on marital status about the priorities of the KIO. We know from studies of state formation and gender, that women's reproductive capacity is strategized both through ideational and material terms. Typically, this role redefinition is not as explicit in the everyday governance of private lives in rebellion.

There are a variety of consequences of the conjugal (re)ordering of women upon marriage. The militarization of marriage accomplishes two major tasks in the state making

project. First, marriage enforces a gendered system of control where women are to sustain, as opposed to question, the missions of the leadership. Second, marriage physically links women to rebellion by securing them roles as the emotional and symbolic support – both underscoring the necessity of their participation and creating a subjugated other. Women as wives keep the household alive both as comfort to the male soldier and as a space to revitalize the narratives of the gender struggle.

The axis of marriage operates similarly in other rebel groups as well. Centering the ways that the rebellion positions women contingent on their marital status, reveals interesting aspects to rebel strategy, as well as recenters how rebellion effects private lives of women. Subjugating women as mothers and wives to the periphery contributes to the preservation of the masculine notions of combat. Weaponizing the identity of homemaker shows how dependent rebel military structures are on the subjugation of women. This is in service to state making aims.

Conclusion

Rebel design of conjugal orders profoundly affects the construction of gendered insurgency and the nature of women's participation in rebel groups. I explore the consequences of this ordered relationship between state making and homemaking in terms of the experiences of insurgent women. Rebel groups are explicit about this relationship between marriage, sexuality, and state making. The comparative analytic focus on conjugal orders illuminates the states relationship to women. This control over conjugal order illuminates how women's political access has historically been contingent on marital status.

In the study of war and state building, gender analysis is necessary to explain how rebels conduct themselves in relation to the civilians under their rule and other armed groups. Gender

is fundamental to the power relations which form the basis for statehood. Power operates in normative practices and shapes the ways that governmental authorities exercise control. This capacity creates an integral space for women in sustaining the state, where women are both the biological reproducers of the state, and the reproducers of discourses of hierarchy needed to sustain state making efforts.

Femininity and militarism are seen in opposition to one another, especially in the context of state building. For women to hold arms, they sacrifice their uniquely feminine duties of wife-ing and mothering. It is well known that women's traditional labor as a homemaker is key to the survival of the rebel movement. Women cooked, provided shelter, gathered supplies, and tended to a variety of auxiliary tasks. The dichotomous portrayal of supporting rebellion, combatant, and noncombatant, fails to explain the wide varieties of women's activities. In locating women's roles in rebellion, scholars are better able to understand insurgent tactics at sustaining their rule.

Paying attention to the ways that rebels govern the private lives of women and the ways that women respond to these governance strategies opens a wide range of research agendas. The main contribution of this paper lies in building a theoretical explanation for why and how rebels seek to govern conjugal orders. One such conjugal order is that of gender-segregated participation, or women's wings. The creation of these gender coordinated institutions are strategic, either by women or by the rebel leadership structure. This paper has focused predominantly on the top-down strategic arrangement of women's wings. Future scholars could employ a more bottom-up approach to understand women's coordinated actions by them, in service of rebel strategy. The existence of women's wings spans across geographic and temporal

contexts, and the patterns of their existence are explained, in part, as a downstream effect of state building projects.

Chapter 4

Regendering The Battlefield: The Post-Conflict Legacies of Women's Wings

Introduction

> "I am the soldier, the supporter and the nurse in times of tears. And with my wounds, with my dreams, with my visions, with my strengths, I am the silenced one when the cause is no more." (Shekhawat 2015, p. 15)

The FMLN's women's wings Las Dignas and Las Melida's were created at order of the rebel leadership two years prior to the peace agreement signed in 1992 (Ortega 2015). These women's wings were positioned to attract international financial resources and address women-specific needs in work and education. After the conflict ended, women who engaged in post-conflict state led processes were shamed for "having moustaches" or defending androcentric positions (Ortega 2015). The FMLN's women's wings spearheaded a project in creating a separate women's wing in the post-conflict period in 2001 titled "The Collective of Female ex-Combatants" (Colectivo de Mujeres Ex-combatientes) which was open cross-nationally to "all the women who participated in political tasks, organizational, logistics, military and solidarity activities to support political or military organizations that signed the peace agreements in the early 1990s" (Ortega 2015). The organization was created to build political momentum and form a reflective space for the former women combatants where their wartime efforts were recognized and commemorated as soldiers, subverting narratives of passive victimhood. Commemoration is often considered "war by other means" (McDowell 2012) where wartime

gender regimes are preserved by positioning men as the recipients of valor. To date, the groups' writing initiative has released life history of twelve former militants, many documentary films and theater projects, a range of academic research projects and organized workshops on their conflict experiences (Sanchez-Blake 2012; Londono and Nieto 2006).[13] The success of commemorating women's valor raises the question: Why were women hesitant to participate in state-led post-conflict processes? What about women's wings makes them a chosen space for women ex-combatants to find political and social redress?

A wealth of empirical data exists about the diverse ways women participate in and sustain rebellion in war zones (Goldstein 2003; Herrera and Porch 2008; Henshaw 2016; Darden, Henshaw, and Szekely 2019). Some scholars have focused exclusively on the legacies, or post-conflict outcomes, of women's participation (Anderlini 2007; Caprioli, Nielsen, and Hudson 2010; Demeritt et al. 2015; Shair-Rosenfield and Wood 2017; Jessen and Hudson 2022). Some even explicitly emphasize the need for women's organizations in peace building processes (Hudson 2009). There is overwhelming agreement that women's participation in *any* stage of the peace process results in better, more inclusive, and robust peace outcomes. This finding necessitates understanding what about women's participation efforts produces more durable outcomes. However, over emphasis on women's formal representation in peace negotiation creates relative invisibility to the ways women soldiers, and women's organizations, drive the broader processes and institutionalization of reconciliation efforts. Women's inclusion in rebel governance has been met with women's exclusion in post-conflict processes. Post-conflict

[13] Among them, documentary films by Juliana Ladrón de Guevara Guerrero, Reveladas. Tres historias de mujeres excombatientes, 2010; and by the Institute of Regional Studies at the University of Antioquia, An Archive of Silence: Female Ex-Combatants in Colombia, 2005.

reconstruction is framed as a time where women are most likely to gain political access and reshape institutions, but the expectation women enter these spaces is pacifist capacities rather than combatants, limits the leverage women have to subvert gendered roles. In this article I ask: What can attention to combat women's wings expose about women's contribution to in post-conflict processes? Where are the combat women in post-conflict governance?

I argue that decisions and priorities of the armed-women's wing in rebel groups shape governance structures in the post-conflict period. Women accessing post-conflict institutions through women's wings allows them to subvert implicit social roles by leveraging different aspects of their identity. Women entering the post-conflict space as ex-combatants as opposed to pacifists has downstream effects on inclusion in post-conflict governance structures. Post-conflict scenarios create opportunities for women to transform their roles in society. Opportunities during this time of vast social changes are leveraged differently by different individuals. How women navigate these periods of change are informed by their positionalities and identities. Specifically, I argue the precedent set by the existence of women's wings in rebel groups contributes to gender integrated militarized institutions and political access for women in post-conflict settings.

Women's participation through combat women's wings is distinct from women's general participation because of the leverage these organizations have as viable political institutions. Women's wings persistence contributes to a gender reordering post-conflict. This process of destabilizing patriarchal order is a product of two social and political facets of women's wings: the arrangement of women's wings allows rebel women fighters to develop group identities to foster collective demands as *women fighters* as opposed to as *women;* and second, politically,

the institutionalization of women fighters through women's wings demands attention in ways distinct from just individual women as previously legitimized institutions are easier to continue to leverage.

I derive this argument from the experiences of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NCSN-IM) women combatants, including those involved in the all-women tactical wing, Ladies Unit. I demonstrate that while the NSCN-IM benefits operationally from women in combat roles, the specific organizational and mobilization decisions by women's combat wings in positioning themselves through the post-conflict moment shape the priorities of governance in the post-conflict period. I argue the existence of women's military units in rebel groups has downstream effects on women's access to post-conflict institutions. I employ a process-tracing methodological approach, where I follow the formation of the Ladies Unit and its persistence through the stages of the peace process. In selecting the case of the NSCN-IM, it is important to note that NSCN-IM is highly institutionally developed and ranks among the top echelons of rebel groups in terms of rates of women's participation. They are one of many separatist rebel groups in the region. The portability of this theory to other rebel groups is discussed in depth in the conclusion. To preview this discussion, I suspect women's wings have political leverage in post-conflict periods across contexts.

This article departs from existing work in three important ways: First, I trace the institutional legacy of a specific governmental apparatus through the post-conflict period. Post-conflict periods are fraught with institutional change, and following the path of one such institution provides a framework for understanding which institutions persist. Second, I focus on combat and militant women. Doing so works against the project of preserving the passive image

of women in war. There is reason to think combatant women do not easily and naturally transition to roles as peacemakers. The pathways ex-combatants take in the post-conflict spaces may be diverse, women may transition to security sector roles such as join police forces or other state apparatuses as opposed to fall back into homemaker roles post-conflict. In doing so, I take women's decision making, and agency, seriously.

Third, and most importantly, I focus analytically on women's combat wings. All-women rebel factions, termed women's wings, broaden the scope of the roles of women in conflict and post-conflict security governance, and help destabilize extant gender norms in post-conflict settings. Put simply, focusing on women's combat wings is an important analytic shift to understanding legacies of broader political representation by women, in post-conflict governance. There are at a minimum, one-hundred and thirty-nine rebel groups which have specialized all-women wings, and still, women's wings continue to be an under-theorized aspect of rebel governance. Analytic focus on institutionally preserved combatant focused women's spaces can reveal a lot about the priorities of the rebel group. This article aims to show that having a combat women's wing has a variety of effects on women's involvement in post-conflict processes. Women's wings act as spaces which foster collective identities, or collective consciousness, where women construct social and political opportunities. Combat women's wings positioning through the post-conflict period has the ability to address the specific post-conflict needs of women ex-fighters.

This article begins with a discussion of women's participation in combat capacities in rebellions, and through combat women's wings. I provide some empirical examples of women's wings and demonstrate a variety of effects of this institutional arrangement. Next, I outline the

variety of international efforts to increase women's participation in the post-conflict space. I then trace, using the illustrative case of NSCN-IM, the micro-casual theoretical mechanisms by which women's wings can increase women's access to post-conflict governance institutions. I demonstrate that having an active women's military wing shapes the gender-composition of post-conflict institutional structures. The work concludes with a discussion of the policy implications of my findings and offers recommendations for future research.

Women's Participation in Rebellion and Post-conflict Processes

My argument is derived from three insights of the literature on rebel governance, and gender and combat: First, rebels develop institutions (which are often products of establishing and sustaining dimensions of conjugal order[14]), and those wartime institutions provide roots for post-insurgent rulers to build on. Second, gender is strategically deployed in rebellion and this strategic positioning of women affects post-conflict outcomes. And third, combatant and ex-combatant women experience persistent erasure from post-conflict spaces despite the empirical reality that women contributing to the post-conflict period leads to more durable peace outcomes. These three insights begin to position the puzzle of this article, that post-conflict periods are those where women have the most opportunities to restructure formal and informal institutions (Gilmartin 2017; Hughes and Tripp 2015), but the expectation women enter these processes as pacifists negates the impacts of women combatants. Combat women's wings offer women leverage as they enter post-conflict spaces. By focusing on women's exclusion in post-conflict processes in the literature review, I describe the social and political landscape women navigate.

[14] For more on institutional design as fulfilling rebel aims through social order, see Stallman Dissertation Article 2.

Rebel Governance Structures and Institutions

Rebel groups are defined as "groups whose members engage in protracted violence with the intention of gaining undisputed political control over all or a portion of a pre-existing state's territory" (Kasfir 2015). Rebel groups govern differently based on their aims. Some groups are interested in developing long-lasting systems of governance in state-like fashions (Mampilly 2011) and some employ a minimalist approach to governance by just aiming to economically sustaining their rebellion (Lidow 2016). Rebel governance has been defined as "the set of actions insurgents engage in to regulate the social, political, and economic life of non-combatants during war" (Arjona et al. 2015, p. 12). Rebels' institutional structures and governance systems are different, in part, because insurgents have different aims. Naturally, these different governance structures lead to different post-conflict processes. The institutions rebels design provides roots for post-insurgent rulers to build upon (Huang 2016).

Rebel groups adopt different types of organizational structures. These are largely contingent on the rebels' goals being territorial control, domestic population control, international legitimacy, or any other variety of goals (Stewart 2021). Several studies emphasize that rebels' chosen system of governance varies across a wide variety of contexts (Mampilly 2018). Typically, the institutional arrangements match the goals of the group. For example, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) has a specific rebel humanitarian wing, Relief Society of Tigray (REST), tasked to handle the influx of international humanitarian aid during the famine in the 1980s (Matfess 2022). The TPLF primary goal was domestic legitimacy and believed securing a relationship with domestic constituents is achieved through providing aid and assistance. TPLF knew that the goodwill of the population would sustain their movement and ultimately lead

them to victory. The Lashkar-e-Taiba insurgents in Pakistan have a political wing called Jamaat ud Dawa which oversees the group's social services (Jones 2017). The Sudan People's Liberation Movement was the political wing of the Sudan People's Liberation Army and has subsumed to being a major political party after the civil conflict in South Sudan. The Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) has a youth wing, The Civil Protections Unit (YPS) to organize and train the youth to sustain the movement. The NSCN-IM has a variety of distinct wings including a foreign affairs arm tasked with being the intermediary with the United Nations Human Rights Council, and a variety of gender segregated wings including the Naga Mothers Association (NMA) and the aforementioned women's combat wing the Ladies' Unit.

Our understanding and theoretical inquiry of rebel institutional structures have narrowly focused on mission specific wings, without much attention paid to gender-specific wings within separate factions of the rebel governance structures. This oversight is where this article grounds its theoretical examination. Women's wings in rebel groups are defined here as "consciously coordinated organizations within rebel groups which are organized specifically based on gender" (Stallman 2024, Dissertation Article 1). Women's wings serve a wide variety of purposes in rebel groups including to foster collective identities amongst rebel women. As Thomas (2023) notes "participating in a rebel organization with other women can illuminate women's concerns about their relative status as a group and inspire them to add these concerns to the list of grievances they are fighting for." This effect is only amplified in gender-segregated spaces. Enloe (2014) states that even apolitical women are socialized into noticing gender disparities within conflict due to consciousness raising efforts of rebels. Mobilization in women's

wings helps illuminate shared aims of combatant women who are frequently drawn to war to produce social and political changes within society (Kampwirth 2014).

Although this paper focuses on one rebel group's women's wings, many groups have some variety of women's military wings. Women's Protection Unit (YPJ) of the PKK and the women's military wing, Yekîneyên Jinên Azad ên Star (YJA-Star) are women's wings tasked with the goals of equality in democratic confederalism in staunch opposition to existing patriarchal nationalism (Wilhelm and Nilsson 2022). The Free Aceh Movement has the Aceh Women's League (GAM) which was founded to prioritize inclusion of women in the peace processes (Lee-Koo 2020). The Karen Women's Organization (KWO) is the women's wing of the Karen National Union (KNU) which fights to end discrimination against women. The Maidan protests in Ukraine have a conglomerate of women's squads, including the Zhinocha Sotnia and the Olha Kobylianska Women's Squad which both separately take up commemoration of women fighters and seek to advance women's access to power structures (Phillips 2014).

Rebel's chosen institutional arrangements matter as we begin to understand how women organize themselves and navigate conflict spaces. How rebel institutions persist or dissolve through the post-conflict period has warranted much scholarly attention (de Zeeuw 2007; Pearlman and Cunningham 2012; Arjona 2014; Staniland 2014; Coggins 2015; Huang 2016b; Albert 2022). This scholarly attention has yet to shift to understanding the legacies of women's wings broadly, and on women's access and inclusion in post-conflict political processes. Conflict related periods are often a space for radical change in social relations and institutions including those of gender coordination (Mackenzie 2015). During these periods, women take on new roles and responsibilities. Changes in power dynamics take place across all

areas of society, including gender dynamics in determining who can participate in a combat capacity. Having outlined the empirical reality of both mission specific and gender specific wings in rebel groups, it is necessary to survey what we know about the relationship between gender and combat.

Gender Expectations and Women's Participation in Rebellion

Women's participation in rebellion is constrained by the masculinization of combat roles. Because combat is a traditionally masculinized space, when women are allowed to participate in combat, the ways they can participate are often constrained by social expectations of womanhood. There are specific gendered expectations that frame the ways women can participate in rebellion. Women operate under a variety of conditions that might diminish their agency including relations of global patriarchy, and innocence and motherhood tropes which draw on women's perceived nonviolent nature. Women who participate in war are labeled as gender-nonconforming monsters, innocent mothers, sexually deviant whores, zombies, or widows (Sjoberg and Gentry 2007; Stack 2011; Loken 2020). Feminism has been associated often with nonviolence (Sylvester 2010). These narratives can pose tactical advantages to rebel groups as they leverage these existing frames as a rebel strategy. Arguments in resistance to women serving in soldier roles stress their physical inabilities to "keep up" with male cadres (Cohn 2000), and that women presence negatively impacts cohesion of the units (Heinecken 2017). These arguments also warn that women combatants will destabilize domestic life (Wood 2019) and be ineffective as soldiers given that women are, by nature, inherently peaceful. Regardless of the frames applied to women fighters, the empirical reality is that women do

participate actively in insurgency in combat capacities. The Women in Armed Rebellion Dataset (WARD) found that 40% of rebel groups had women combatants (Wood and Thomas 2019), with varying levels of women combatants coded up to 20% of the total fighting force.

A variety of scholars have sought to explain the effects of women's participation across different roles in rebellion, why rebel groups position women how they do, and how women navigate rebel governance spaces. Women are included to overcome human resource constraints (Wood 2019), to soften the image of the rebel group (Gilbert 2021), to garner international support and legitimacy (Manekin and Wood 2020), and/or to achieve their goals, namely of survival (Baser 2022). Groups who do actively reframe these narratives and incorporate women combatants are more likely to exhibit gender-inclusive institutions. Women, too, can exploit these frames in service of further inclusion in the rebel movements. Women can position certain facets of their identity in service of rebel aims, including engaging in clandestine capacities (Matfess and Loken 2023).

Rebel aims and priorities shape the way women participate in rebellion as well. Academic perspectives on women in conflict emphasize the confounding factor of ideology on gender access. We know groups that espouse religious extremism are less likely to permit women to join the ranks as a combatant. For example, both the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in the Philippines limit women's participation on the basis of religious ideology (Wood 2019). This presupposes a relationship between what acceptable support of the rebellion looks like for women and ideology. The pattern of presence of women's wing does not follow this. For example, al Qaeda, which is a religious fundamentalist group, has an all-women tactical brigade (Eggert 2015); ISIS affiliate Al-Khansaa Brigade is an all-women

police enforcement unit (Spencer 2016); Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL) had a women's combat wing (Utas 2005; Vastapuu 2020;) and ZAPU had all-women military training centers, Victory Camp and Mkushi Camp (Lyons 2004).

Evidently, women's participation in rebel governance is impacted by a wider range of contextual variables. For example, previous studies find security threats which present a need for military labor will override cultural values relating to gender dispersion of labor. Cultural values, such as norms of patriarchal exclusion, adapt to support expanded roles for women in military institutions (Segal 1995). Often, though, in places where women do engage in combat related roles, coverage of their existence implies a paradox, that women are both too valuable to fight, and they will be ineffective in doing so (Gilmer 2019). Women are more involved in conflict than is quantified, known, and accepted. Given their ubiquitous involvement, women are key stakeholders in the post-conflict space.

Women in civil society roles and other noncombat capacities are more frequently captured in academic inquiry, and subsequent discourses on the peace process. When women are involved in peace processes, agreements more frequently include provisions on women's rights (Anderson 2015). Women's representation is correlated also to the prioritizing of social welfare programs over military spending (Shair-Rosenfield and Wood 217). Ellerby (2013) and Paffenholz (2014) find that women's organizations bring women more directly into the peace processes and post-conflict institutions. Women's noncombat contributions to rebellion are seen to produce favorable outcomes throughout the post-conflict period (Krause 2018). The academic inquiry has yet to itemize the roles that women fighters have.

Women fighters exclusion also erases the important ways the women's groups or coalitions contribute to rebel group efforts. We know that women's participation in the peace process leads to longer and more durable peace (Krause 2018). This durable peace hypothesis has been tested in a variety of settings, including Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) in El Salvador or the Karen Women's Organization (KWO) in affiliation with the Karen's National Union (KNU) rebel group in Myanmar (Krause 2018). In Columbia, with peace negotiations with the FARC women are present as peace negotiators contingent on a variety of factors including their occupations during conflict (Henshaw 2020). The Gender Sub commission, which was an official party to the talks, represented the armed forces and Las Farianas of the FARC (Barrios and Richter 2019). During the post-conflict phase, women led the initiative of the People's Liberation Army of the Communist Party of Nepal—Maoist (CPN-M) dismantled caste-based social hierarchies by promoting inter-caste marriages and the remarriage of widows (previously a social taboo) (Henshaw 2020). In these cases, there are women's wings of either combat or noncombat capacity. Thomas (2023) traces how women's integration as combatants in the FARC context led to the adoption of gender-inclusive peace terms.

Women's organizations contribute to every stage of rebel governance through both warring and peace. Thomas (2023) illuminates that women fighters in rebel organizations are important drivers of the peace process. Previous scholarship surveyed in this section illuminates that the frames applied to women's combat participation in rebel governance constrain how women engage in rebel governance structures, and how their participation is viewed. There are

gendered expectations about women's participation in rebellion, and these expectations are present also in the post-conflict periods.

Gender Constraints in Post-Conflict Reconstruction

Post-conflict structures value women's perceived passivity and pacificism which lead women combatants to be written out of formal institutions in the post-conflict period. Women's wings are a pathway women can leverage when navigating the institutional erasures they face in this period. Hughes and Tripp (2015) find that the societal disruption caused by civil war creates systemic change and has downstream effects of increasing women's access to political power at the end of conflict. Despite the undeniable involvement of women as combatants in rebellion (Darden, Henshaw, and Szekely 2019; Wood 2019), women are systematically excluded from post-conflict processes. This is in part due to the framing within the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 Women Peace and Security (WPS) agenda of women as either victims or peacemakers, routinely neglecting women's roles as combatants (Mackenzie and Giri 2021). Women's participation as combatants challenges the many frames ascribed to women's passive participation. In ignoring women's wartime contributions as combatants, the consequences of their involvement go relatively underexamined in the ranges of post-conflict processes.

The ignoring of women's combatant activities has downstream effects on disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) programs. DDR programs are defined by the UN as: "a process that contributes to security and stability in a post-conflict recovery context by removing weapons from the hands of combatants, taking the combatants out of military structures and helping them to integrate socially and economically into society by finding civilian livelihoods"

(UNDDR 2006, p.6). Each phase of DDR is a process itself with disarmament being the formal process of collecting weaponry from ex-fighters, demobilization being providing ex-combatants with short term assistance as they reacclimate, and reintegration being where ex-combatants acquire civilian status and receive assistance in the longer term societal social processes of returning to their families and communities. DDR itself, is now thought to be an integral element of the peace process (Gilmartin 2017), as the technocratic disbanding of military structures. Disarmament and demobilization are seen as mechanical steps, whereas reintegration is a social process (Vastapuu 2021).

Feminist analyses at each stage of this process reveal the ways that women's needs are not being met. In DDR post-war reconstruction efforts during the disarmament phase, commanders of military units which have been identified in the peace negotiations are asked to deliver lists of soldiers under their command to DDR officials. Women soldiers are often discounted at this stage of the process. One effect of this method is that combatant women are simply not present in the places where negotiations are happening, and decisions are being made (Henshaw 2020). The "one-man-one-gun" rule, by definition, excluded women (Tarnaala 2016). To be registered as an ex-combatant, you must have a weapon in hand. In rebellion, not all combatants carry weaponry, which lends itself to blindness to the ways that women engage in combat (Mazurana and Carlson 2004). Demobilization sets up a false dichotomy between victim and perpetrator, denying women access to services of both categories.

Demobilization processes also carry social stigmas for women within the community. As joining rebellion came with political power for some women, demobilization becomes depoliticization, where women are often expected to return to their traditional roles (Krystalli

2021). Reintegration processes, too, reflect intricate social repositioning. Insurgent rule created different sets of social rules which had to be contended with as ex-fighters reintegrated back into their communities. For example, FARC guidelines on permissible homosexuality were incompatible with Colombia guidelines. Within FARC, same-sex couples were permissible but in Colombia same-sex couples face widespread discrimination and there is impunity for homophobia and transphobic violence (Herrera and Porch 2008). Perspectives on gendered labor and conjugal ordering suggest that greater attention be placed on perceptions of fighters during the post-conflict processes.

DDR programs have responded to this line of critique and have sought to incorporate more women into programming, even including a section in the UN Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS) entitled Women, Gender and DDR (module 5.10, p.7) which underscores the mediating and advocacy capacity of women's wings, stating:

> Women who are familiar with the needs of female fighters, veterans and other community-based women peacebuilders should attend and be allowed to raise concerns in the negotiation process. In circumstances where the participation of women is not possible, DDR planners should hold consultations with women's groups during the planning and pre-deployment phase and ensure that the latter's views are represented at negotiation forums.

This language is penetrable to critique – women's groups is a nonspecific term which doesn't necessarily guarantee access to women combatants, DDR planners are historically overwhelmingly men,[15] women's relationship to peace is overwrought, and "should attend" implies the decision to attend is offered to women, as opposed to them being systematically

[15] According to a report published in 2022, of all registered DDR programs, "only 38% of negotiators are women, only 6% of mediators are women, and only 6% of signatories are women". Donnelly, 2022. https://fba.se/globalassets/publikationer/ddr-and-gender-lessons-learned-from-ddr-research.pdf

divorced from peace processes. The qualification process for having a combatant status in the eyes of DDR reform processes also sets parameters and requirements that women combatants often do not meet (Henshaw 2020). Even when they do meet the requirements, they are often systematically sidelined. Take, for example, the case of a woman ex-combatant commander in El Salvador, where all ex-combatants (regardless of gender) were eligible for land titles:

> What happened with female ex-combatants was a tragedy; they did not give them land titles, and if they assigned plots, they were of the worst quality. They did not give women enough reinsertion mechanisms; what they received would not serve for much more than being good mothers, but by no means to survive. I remember that as the data came in, in my opinion, we had to go and pressure ARENA (conservative party in charge). But no, afterwards they disclosed that the lists for distribution were handed over by The Frente (FMLN), by us. The FMLN and each organization were in charge of issuing the lists. And if the (male) militant was a minor, he would get land titles, but if the militant was a woman they asked for a male reference; it did not matter if he was younger than she was. And in the event that she was accompanied by her husband, they would give him the land title. (Interview reproduced from Ortega 2015)

This exclusion is not region and conflict specific. In Angola's National Union for Total independence of Angola (UNITA), women were deemed ineligible for benefits offered to men, and after international pressure to offer the benefits to women, only sixty women passed through the process of a total of three hundred thousand people (Mazurana and Eckerbom 2013). In Sierra Leone, DDR efforts failed to serve women because of the perception that women were not real soldiers, and in turn not party to services and benefits offered in disarmament (MacKenzie 2009; Smet 2009). These examples combined lends itself to the relative invisibility of women in post-conflict processes. This is in part a result of systems of hegemonic ordering of states as contending systems of patriarchy.[16] This too, is a result of

[16] For more on the patriarchal nature of states, see Stallman Dissertation Article 2.

failures of international peace consolidating initiatives. DDR processes, though explicitly mentioning women's groups as key stakeholders, are not apt to reaching gendered concerns in the post-conflict space. DDR efforts, despite adapting to attempt to provide gender analysis, systematize the exclusion of women. Focusing on women led initiatives in the post-conflict space provides better insight into how women navigate their double militancy.

Three insights from the literature contribute to building the theory in the next section. Rebels develop institutions, such as combat women's wings, which *can* persist through the post-conflict periods. Gender is strategically deployed in rebellion both by women rebels and by rebel leadership. And lastly, combatant women are systematically erased from post-conflict periods. Despite this erasure, women's participation in the post-conflict processes produces favorable outcomes. The development of a women's bargaining unit which has fostered collective identities, or created a collective consciousness, may contribute to women's needs being paid attention to in the post-conflict period. Frames of victimhood, innocence, and pacifism constrain the ways women participate in post-conflict spaces, despite the agreed upon notion that post-conflict reconstruction is a time where women are most likely to gain access and reshape institutions. Combat women's wings offer another pathway by which women can enter and navigate these spaces.

Theorizing Combat Women's Wings and Women's Access to Post-conflict Processes

I argue that combat women's wings are the mechanism by which rebel women can secure access into post-conflict governance structures. Combat women's wings allows women to subvert social roles which are built upon notions of privileging women's pacifism, by

leveraging different aspects of their identity. Women entering the post-conflict space as combatants instead of as pacifists creates opportunities for women to leverage their political participation into securing roles in post-conflict governance. Women's wings serve a dual purpose: create and foster a space for socialization and consciousness raising where women create new gendered self-conceptions, and second, as a previously legitimized institution, the women's wing is easier to continue to politically leverage.

We know from previous scholarship that women's access to political power often increases following the termination of violence civil conflict (Hughes and Tripp 2015). Mapping how women's wings impact and are impacted by post-conflict processes provides insights into how ex-combatants navigate their position in post-conflict redress programs. Given that a component of DDR processes often involves mapping combat participants (Vastapuu 2021), all-women combat wings are already itemized as a stakeholder, if their military contributions are taken seriously. The ways women leverage their positions as combatants in the gender coordinated wings creates a separate obstacle to sustaining women's exclusions from post-conflict processes. Individual women combatant contributions are often ignored, meaning they are not included in the post-conflict political spaces. Recognition of gender ordering in post-conflict processes helps develop more sustainable programs. Specifically, I illuminate two avenues for evaluating the effect of women's wings on post-conflict outcomes: 1) combatant women's representation in the peace process and 2) institutional persistence of women's wings into formal military and police structures in the post-conflict period.

There are strong empirical reasons to believe women's wings will increase women's access to the post-conflict processes. Previously scholarship on rebel governance has

highlighted that wartime institutions are the basis for rule in the post-conflict period, women's groups are key actors in post-conflict structures, and gender is deployed strategically in rebellion by both rebel leaders and individual rebel women, and thus can be strategic in post-conflict processes. I demonstrate using the instructional case of insurgency in Nagaland, that women's wings are an effective lens for understanding gender inclusion and positioning in post-conflict society. Women combatants navigate sets of opportunities and constraints when approaching the post-conflict space. How combat women's wings position themselves vis-à-vis existing and emerging institutional structures is telling about how women navigate their political environments.

Previous scholarly insight contends that wartime institutions provide roots for post-insurgent rulers to build upon (Huang 2016). For example, the design of democratic institutions often has their roots in wartime governance. If a rebel group achieves their goals by relying heavily on civilians, mobilizing the masses, then democratic institutions are more likely to emerge (Arjona 2016). These institutions are developed in response to popular will, as this specific type of rebel governance relies on civilian participation (Huang 2016). Likewise, in the case of Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), Relief Society of Tigray (REST), the humanitarian arm developed during conflict, continued through the postwar period, and became registered as an independent NGO (Matfess 2022). Leaders of TPLF remained involved in REST as it underwent institutional adaptations in the post war period. We can similarly expect iterations and change of women's wings throughout the course of conflict.

War can also be transformative for women and gender relations (Karam, 2000) as women experience substantial changes in opportunities previously unavailable to them (Tripp

2015). Post-conflict efforts specifically can be a vital moment to "script alternative social possibilities away from damaging hegemonic militarized masculinities" (Theidon 2009). Rebel infrastructural designs, including all-women combat wings, can aid women in channeling their demands (Ortega 2015). We know women can capitalize on the skills they gained in war (Mazurana and Cole 2012). Coordinated women's wings act as a bargaining unit where women may use their combat experiences to secure roles in institutions related to security, such as state police and military forces. These skills too, may be in dictating their social positions, which is a skill that is fostered in the social and political training enmeshed in the women's wing.

Gendered institutions face different constraints than other types of institutions. Often, post-conflict processes favor a return to pre-war gendered status quo, which is frequently patriarchal in nature sequestering women to the household or as a class of subjugated other (Veale 2003; Gutierrez and Murphy 2022; Mazurana, Krystalli and Baare 2018). Though Thomas (2023) argues that when women have a coherent and vocal force within rebellion, they are more likely to be represented in post-conflict processes. Women's gender consciousness (Gurin 1985) is a strong political force. Women's wings, too, operate within the established structures of governance which is beneficial to their impacts. Building from Thomas' (2023) argument that women fighters in rebel organizations are important drivers of post-conflict processes, I argue women's wings foster a collective consciousness based on lived experiences which has effects on post-conflict processes. Attention to the process of disarmament processes of women combatants, shapes post-conflict outcomes.

Methodology and Case Selection

I employ a single case analysis of the Ladies Unit of the NSCN-IM. To do so, I rely on a variety of open-source information, including testimonials by ex-combatants, primary and secondary source data from the Nagalim voice bulletin, a regularly updated news platform where Naga governance structures issue public pronouncements, and publicly available social media outreach on behalf of the Ladies Unit. Some of this data relies on NSCN-IM original materials which may overrepresent their inclusion of women. To compensate for this, and in an effort to document the lived experiences of members of the combat women's wings, academic accounts and biographical sketches written by former combatants, and members of the rebel group also worked to inform my case analysis. In doing so, I hope to capture the nuances of women's participation in combat capacities in rebellion. Moreover, interviews by those granted access to members of the NSCN-IM Ladies Unit will be reproduced and analyzed. This case should be categorized as a most-likely case (Gerring 2007, p. 247) where given the Nagas' high levels of institutionalization and high rates of women's participation, we should see women combatants existing through the post-conflict period. The Women's Wing, named the Ladies Unit, is also well-regarded with the Naga administration.

The Nagaland conflict is unique in that it is often discussed in scholarly works regarding peace processes but infrequently referenced in the literature on rebel governance. This case challenges dominant assumptions of how women participate in post-conflict processes. The NSCN-IM – a large militant group with a demonstrated interest in governance and a leftist ideology – can provide insights for other groups which utilize women's wings. Further examination of the ways that women combatants navigate multilayered systems of governance

and relate to those peace processes will further illuminate the legacies of combat women's wings. By focusing narrowly on the combat women's wing of NSCN-IM termed "Ladies Unit", I trace the specific processes that generate greater gender access and the processes used in gender exclusion. Selecting a most likely case provides insight into how all-women combat wings transfer (or are erased) through post-conflict processes.

NSCN-IM's tactical evolution throughout the insurgency provides a ripe avenue for research, given the necessity of institutional adaptation in strategies parallel to an expanding network of global gender consciousness via international women's movements and recognition of women's contributions in war time. In addition, the Naga insurgency is an apt group for theory generating, because of their broad institutionalization and commitment to expansive governance. We know that when institutional power is prioritized, women play an active role in rebel governance (Henshaw 2016). The goal of the Naga insurgency is independent statehood, and they have opened diplomatic channels with an array of international organizations including the United Nations Human Rights Council and the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO). This signals a commitment to broad institutionalization and a desire for state recognition. NSCN-IM may differ importantly from other rebel movements and centering the women's wings in analytic focus provides insight into how women perceive and engage in post-conflict processes.

Given the diversity of women's experiences as combatants, this project is not intended to be prescriptive. I limit this article to the study of the mechanisms by which the institution of an all-women military cadre persists through the post-conflict political moment. This focus

highlights the institutional legacies of this specific form of gender inclusion and complements work emphasizing women's agential actions in structural change.

The novel case study presented here centers the experiences of women in combat, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the types of opportunities and constraints that women face. The in-depth examination of one combat women's wing provides the ability to focus on the mechanisms rather than ideologies and state-level factors which cause variation in the cases. A single case allows me to determine the scope conditions for how to determine which institutional structures may persist through periods of rapid social change, as are common in post-conflict societies. Often, our studies of post-conflict legacies focus on the composition of a peace agreement, or the immediate aftermath of disarmament. This study goes further to understand women's wings during the transition period, whilst acknowledging that in insurgent-controlled spaces, peace and war are better understood on a spectrum as opposed to two un-overlapping periods.

I center the institution of the women's wings as a means of illuminating institutional change, whilst paying mind to the ways that women and members of the wings are architects of their own futures. I trace the change over time from women in combat units as they navigate post-conflict architectures and note how these experiences differ from individual insurgent women. This methodological approach aids in a more complete understanding of the experiences of women in rebellion akin to the goals of feminist security studies – to improve the lives of women. Moreover, this approach has implications for interpreting existing work and comparing women's wings across contexts by extrapolating causal mechanisms and considering how they might travel to other contexts.

NSCN-IM Ladies Unit Combatant Experiences

Brief History of NSCN-IM

The Naga community is tribes inhabiting northeast India and northwest Myanmar. Each tribe has their own distinct language and customs but share similar institutions and social structures. Nagas have sought independent statehood through insurgency since as early as 1228, and in recent political history 1918 (Thomas 2012). After the first world war, the Naga Club emerged as a social group, and eventually transformed into a political group, providing the foundation for the Naga Nationalist Movement (Banerjee 2000).

Prior to the start of NSCN-IM, in 1947 a Naga faction, Naga National Council (NNC), declared Nagaland an independent state. Their immediate concern was post-war reconstruction, and quickly became unification and solidarity of all Nagas under one government (Haksar and Hongray 2019). As such, the NNC sent the United Nations General Secretary a cable declaring their independence: “Kindly put on record that Naga’s will be independent. […] Naga’s do not wish to accept the Indian Constitution” (Lotha 2016). In response to the declaration of Naga independence in 1947, the Indian government enacted the Armed Forces (Special) Powers Act (AFSPA), tasked with maintaining public order in “disturbed areas” (“Armed Forces Act…” 1958.) This act allowed officers of the armed forces unprecedented access to civilian facilities, including to fire upon civilians, and destroy insurgent hideouts on suspicion of anyone about to commit an offense against the maintenance of public order (Khala 2012). A decades long conflict ensued.

The insurgency continued in Nagaland, and eventually the warring parties were brought to the table and a peace accord was signed between the Indian government and the NNC. Through the Shillong Accord, the resulting peace agreement, NNC agreed to give up arms. Some senior leaders did not agree with the terms and broke away to form their own factions. One such faction was the NSCN-IM, established in the 1980's as a Naga-nationalist separatist group (Singh 2004). The armed insurgency continued in the task of creating an independent state, Nagalim, in the Naga-populated areas of both Myanmar and India. Their manifesto is based on Maoism and economic development. Nagas and the Indian state have a long tumultuous war-ridden past**.** In 1997, an Indo-Naga ceasefire is signed, and the resulting peace framework agreement was agreed upon signed in 2015 by leaders of NSCN-IM and Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi.

Despite ongoing conflict resulting from counter-insurgent policies, this 2015 inflection point is considered the start of the post-conflict period. In the context of this conflict over territorial sovereignty, an agreed upon peace document represents effort on both parties to secede at least in part to the other side. NSCN-IM is by no means inactive, nor can conflict in Nagaland be considered resolved. Post-conflict, in this case, refers to an end to active warring. In the agreement, all parties agree to shared sovereignty under a united Indian federation. The insurgency increased international attention to the Naga struggle and broadly women's fight on all fronts. The next section discusses how the women's wing came to fruition, including how members of the wing navigate separate overlapping identities as combatants and as women, focusing first on women's participation during conflict, then shifting to illuminate the processes by which the women's wing transformed through periods of post-conflict cold peace.

The Beginning of the NSCN-IM Ladies Unit

NSCN's espoused goal is to unite all Naga people under one administration and to 'liberate' Nagalim[17] from India and Myanmar. NSCN-IM governance is highly institutionalized compared to other rebel groups, divided into four major ministries – Defense, Home, Finance, and Foreign Affairs and five minor ministries – Education, Information and Publicity, Forests and Minerals, Law and Justice, and Religious Affairs. Women compose the leadership of National Socialist Women's Organization of Nagalim (NSWON) and the Ladies' Unit. The Ladies Unit was formed in 1999, though some accounts note there were separate women military factions prior to this as well. The formation of the Ladies Unit was to make apparent and commemorate the contributions women combatants made in the Naga resistance (Zingkhai 2019). Women also have positions on the NSCN-IM Steering Committee, and a woman is the third senior-most leader in the organization's national council (Saksena 2018). Women compose of the entire leadership councils of the women's wings which grants them access to spaces of political negotiation amongst NSCN-IM leadership. In this way, women's wings are a potential mechanism by which women gain access to post-conflict political processes through the leveraging of a previously legitimized institution. The Ladies Unit and NSWON are both recognized political factions of NSCN-IM meaning post-conflict processes are likely to welcome their participation.

Men's roles in NSCN-IM are most pronounced initially; however, women have been present as combatants since the beginning. Citizenship, as understood in Naga tradition, is

[17] Nagalim refers to the entire homeland of the Naga people, whereas Nagaland refers to the political and administrative Naga state in northeast India.

complex for women (Aier 2017). Traditionally, women were rarely present in village councils and at the places where decisions were being made. However, they were comparatively more empowered in regard to freedom, education, and social standing (Goswami 2020). Thus, it is necessary to situate women in Naga society. Some accounts of civil conflict in Nagalim highlight the enforced inferiority of womanhood (Kikon 2002), where others highlight women's violent devotion to their community (Saksena 2018). Women's passivity, in this context though, did not entail sheltering from violence. Women had very direct and institutional roles involved in intervention during inter-tribal disputes. For example, if two villages had a dispute over land, and negotiations were failing, two able-bodied men would be sent to fight one another. Women would be present at an elevated location near the battle space. Once a clear victor emerged, women would intervene to end the bloodshed (Das 2019). Clearly, women's relationship to violence is not as nuanced as frames of victimhood might presuppose. This perception of women's violent capacities may prime Nagas to better incorporate women into post-conflict processes than other rebel groups.

Women's participation as combatants in the NSCN-IM is categorized as a 3 (moderate) in the Women's Activities in Armed Rebellion dataset, indicating that between 10-17% of the total fighting force is women (Loken and Matfess 2023). This assessment captures women's frontline contributions. For reference, the average score that a rebel group receives in women's combat participation is a 1.3 (low) (Loken and Matfess 2023). The NSCN-IM has higher rates of women's combat participation than many other groups. This quantitative metric though fails to encapsulate the perceptions of women fighters and the ways that their participation is limited. Documentation of women's expansive participation in Naga society, and NSCN-IM, staunchly

follows the images of unsurpassable victimhood and inferiority. Women's participation follows the frames of exclusion, and women were historically excluded from a variety of formal political arenas. A material reality of this exclusion is that despite women's active roles in the agricultural economy, women have no inheritance rights over land (Manchanda and Kakran 2017). The public-private divide made women sovereign in the household, but not within traditional authority structures. Women's contributions during times of active conflict related to peace include informal and formal mediation, negotiation with Indian Security Forces, challenging underground armed groups, defusing community tensions, and mobilization campaigns (Manchanda and Kakran 2017). Given their experiences in all of these different spaces, it can be assumed that women leverage different aspects of their identity to act appropriately in those spaces.

During active conflict, this gender-balance is different. Women's combat participation dates back to the NNC. Women first engaged in clandestine operations, such carrying letters in their hair between camps (Manchanda 2005). As the armed struggle progress, the taboo of Naga women handling weapons dissipated. After women members of the NNC were raped by the army, women demanded combatant training and autonomy as fighters (Banerjee 2007). This similar fervor is the story of women taking arms with the NSCN-IM. Some highlight that women's extraordinary commitment to the movement is hailed in praise by male members of the community (Saksena 2018). Responding to counter-insurgent policies of the Indian government, legalized through AFSPA, forced every Naga person to be involved. All Naga's were deemed 'suspect'. Crops were burnt and Naga's were grouped into concentration camps. Sexual torture and violence against women's bodies became another battlefield (Zingkhai 2019). Naga

women reportedly lashed out in anger against the way the deployed Indian soldiers looked and behaved with them (Goswami 2020). Frequent documentation exists in the narratives of brutality of war specifically against women:

> 1988, July: The 21st Assam Rifles physically assaulted the women folk of 30 surrounding villages around Oinam. They underwent forced labor and detention in the open space and three women were raped. Two women were forced to give birth in front of the Indian Army jawans during the 'Operation Bluebird'. Twenty-seven innocents were mercilessly killed, 300 persons tortured beyond life-form, 125 houses burnt down and another 112 houses dismantled, 6 schools and 10 churches were destroyed and properties worth more than Rs. 50, 79,000 were looted by the Indian Armies
>
> 1994, 27th December: The 16th Maratha Light Infantry shot dead 5 innocent civilians. Women, particularly the young girls were raped, molested and their clothes were stripped off and soaked in petrol and other inflammable chemicals to torch Mokokchung Town where 6 more civilians were burnt alive, 48 buildings, 89 shops, 17 vehicles and 7 two wheelers were reduced to ashes in a 4-hour operation. There was a report of 16 cases of rape and molestation
>
> 2005 6th August: Four women from Lanmlong Khullen were physically assaulted and verbally abused at Thangathel by the Indian soldiers. Mrs. Teshangphum, the mother of a lactating child, was seriously beaten.
>
> (Reproduced from Zingkhai page 15: original source is NSWON Silver Jubilee Souvenir, 2006)

Women are framed as victims of war in the documentation of the ways that their bodies are abused. These narratives aided in legitimizing the reason why women's autonomy as combatants was respected in some instances. These physical realities shaped the political access granted to women during active conflict. Further, this underscores the necessity women felt to join in a combat capacity. Similar to adaptations in rebel institutional design, gender coordination efforts are often in response to a specific need of a rebel group. In the case of NSCN-IM, the need was twofold. Women needed political leverage, and the broader insurgency needed more fighters. Invoking gender imagery and gender struggles broadens the base of

support and facilitates the creation of a common myth of nationhood which the rebellion must protect.

Women's efforts to support rebellion were coordinated under the umbrella of GPRN-NSCN-IM. The civil wing of the National Socialist Women's Organization of Nagalim (NSWON) and the NSCN-IM women's wing "Ladies Unit" (Zingkhai 2019). NSCN-IM describes the Ladies Unit as "shouldering equal responsibility" as the vanguard of the Naga Nation (Sinha and Mahanata 2016). The Ladies Unit was formalized in recognition of the various contributions of women during war and emerged as women gained a collective consciousness about the ways women's bodies are weaponized in war. Though there is no doubt about the existence of this combat women's wing, little is documented about their military success and failures. According to an interview with the chairperson of the NSCN-IM Women's Wing, women made up a total of 20-30% of armed cadres (Manchanda and Kakran 2017). Another member of the Women's Wing recalled that women made up 33% of her group (Saksena 2018). Women tend to have less numbers in combat, but their representation is still sizable.

The women's wing of the NNC, an ancillary to NSCN-IM Ladies Unit, had designated roles in rebellion. Their training was akin to men – climbing trees, scaling mountains, weapons use – but they were also given special medical training. Their role in this first iteration was to give first aid to the frontline soldiers (the men) and stand as a second line of defense. Women's operational role involved patrolling the camps, while men composed of the ambush squadrons. Avuli Chishi Swu, a woman militant, described her experience within the insurgency and the women's wing (Saksena 2018). he states that she "exchanged [her] lotosu and chakutha qhumu (traditional handwoven cloth tied at the waist as a straight ankle-length skirt and shawl worn by

the Sumi women) for jungle fatigues" (Saksena 2018, p. 113). This symbolic overture of identity was fostered as early as childhood, as her mother Khuli Swu was the chairperson of the women's wing of the NNC. She attributes her mother's valor, and the systematic destruction of her livelihood by the Indian army, as her rationale for joining the armed movement.

Avuli Chishi recounts her roles in the military cadre, itemizing her capture and detainment as a result of her disagreement with the Shillong Accord. She was detained during the creation of NSCN-IM, but once she was released, she was appointed the vice-chairman of the formal women's-wing of the movement (NSWON). She recounts how her gender created an invisibility cloak – when walking through villages with her sons, she did not present as a rebel, and remained unquestioned by soldiers and police. She was one of the first women to join the armed insurgency in this capacity, and one of the few from the earlier phases, to live to tell the story. In regard to the complex relationship between gender and perceived passivity, she notes that "Naga women ordinarily love peace […] but we have not lived in ordinary times for decades" (Saksena 2018, p. 112). Here, it becomes apparent that women navigate invoking separate facets of their identity to match their social spaces. Participation in the women's wings is desirable given the political leverage and access to decision making structures that women are granted.

Women's wings operate as socialization mechanisms and consciousness raising projects which help create new gendered self-conceptions. How women's participation in rebellion is recounted matters for the way women perceive their roles in rebellion. The establishment of the women's wing underscores the ways that the women members of the insurgency worked to secure (more active word such as redress) women's access with NSCN-IM. Women join the

Ladies Unit for a wide breadth of reasons beyond grievance. They join due to being encouraged by male members of the household, through learning of resistance in formal educational settings, through community relationships, and through social media. In these pathways, gender political consciousness is activated as a potential recruitment mechanism. One member of the Ladies Unit recalls joining after both witnessing systematic brutality against Nagas during her training with the Kachin Independent Army (KIA) in Burma and following NSCN-IM through social media. Another member recalls leaving her PhD studies in New Delhi after being exposed to a lack of political consciousness of her own Naga struggle. Interestingly, on the Nagalim Republic Day in March of 2003, NSCN-IM had a parade of new recruits, one fifth of which for women. Manchanda (2019) recounts cameo interviews where it became apparent that most were college graduates.

The Ladies Unit effectively created a form of collective consciousness. Women entering political spaces as combatants rather than pacifists had different outcomes on the women's political access. Building consciousness among previously depoliticized women might also build a politically activated gendered class. Not only were women trained in battle readiness, but also in household activities, and on oral history of the struggle of Naga women and people. The Ladies Unit also created a sense of emotional support and community, a necessary ancillary to women's further political liberation. In relation to their male cadres, often both men and women are sent in the same training and combat, and women's actions in resistance have spurred men's cadres respect and appreciation (Zingkhai 2019). At Camp Hebron, the headquarters of NSCN-IM, the women's cadre is active.

In the Naga conflict and ongoing insurgency, peace and war are not exclusive time periods (Goswami 2020). We have seen thus far the ways that women utilized military opportunity as political liberation. This institutionalization of avenues for women to participate in the insurgency continues throughout the cycles of post-conflict redress.

Gender Coordination After War

Post-conflict reconstruction periods are often framed as times where women are most likely to gain access to and reshape political institutions. Locating women in struggles for independence, often begins at points of peace. Women's general perceived passivity and peaceful nature lends scholarship to overemphasis of women's contributions in times of ending conflict. Often, too, are women's contributions to peace located as informal. During the conflict-peace continuum, women's historical exclusion from formal political negotiation in Nagaland is widespread (Manchanda 2017). Though the period between formal ceasefire and the peace agreement was one rife with sociological shifts. 50-years of Naga statehood produced what Manchanda calls a "social churning" (Manchanda 2017) – where a generation of educated and socially-linked women emerged with consciousness of international women's movements. Combat women's wings when leveraged offer women new avenues with new tools to enter the post-conflict spaces.

Women have played a dominant role in conflict and resolution in a variety of capacities, yet a variety of setbacks still amass. The victim frame is increasingly prominent in coverage of women within Nagaland. Though as we see from primary source accounts, women's victimhood through being a member of a subjugated group translated for many into a source of political

and social agency. There is a constellation of women's organizations within the broader insurgency, specifically through the period of cold peace. In South Asian contexts, the most oversaturated image is that of a grieving mother/wife. Naga Mothers Association's (NMA) contribution to the insurgency is well-documented, as arbiters of peace and leaders of Christian morality. Their slogan "Shed No More Blood" embodies their commitment to peace (Nepram 2011; Menon 2015). National Socialist Women's Organization of Nagalim (NSWON), though, is the formal women's wing of the movement, following from the Ladies Unit.[18]

In the post-conflict period, we see a variety of ways in which women's roles in society have transformed. This leads to a reinterpretation of their traditional roles – women have gained mobility and notoriety for their commitment to the insurgent efforts. Women who joined the armed group are viewed as nationalists within their own communities and are both feared and respected. Women's contributions to both peace and conflict are publicly recognized by the NSCN-IM leadership. There may be, at this point, a critical juncture in reproducing norms of femininity. Women's valor is reproduced through tales of combat, in direct contrast to those tales of women's passivity and subjugation. As such, the struggle of self-determination becomes two struggles of self-determination for women combatants– for that of the Naga people, and then that of the Naga women. Women's combatant status has a subversive impact on gender norms.

[18] Other women's coalitions include the Naga Freedom Fighters' Widows Welfare Foundation; Naga Women's Union of Manipur (NWUM); Thangkul Shano Long (TSL)

Durability Of Gender Coordination Efforts Through Post-conflict Periods

Understanding women's agential actions, and mobilization capacity, is important to fully grasp the impact of coordinated action on women's access throughout post-conflict political processes. Combat women's wings are one analytic space to recognize how women navigate separate sets of identities and deploy them as strategies in rebellion. The analysis of the NSCN-IM shows how women have ventured into domains that were earlier exclusive to men. Since the signing of the 2015 peace framework agreement, there have been a variety of notable shifts to women's political participation in Nagaland. Increased gender access in security governance, women's presence, institutional persistence, and an agenda which specifies women's political inclusion, all point to an increase in women's visibility relating directly to the women's wing.

Combat women's wings are one mechanism by which rebel women can secure access into post-conflict governance structures. The Ladies Unit can be located as a space for political change. The institutional arrangement of all-women military wings has lasted across administration and through insurgent factionalism. Through this place of organization, their main objective has shifted to emancipation of Naga women from social bondage and combatting gender discrimination. Two main conditions uncovered inductively from the case study under which women transformed the contributions into lasting institutional change. First, women utilize their perceived passivity as tactical advantage, enabling their presence in combat to become a strategic necessity. Second, women strategically navigate patriarchal orders to expand their institutional grip under these constraints. The ways that women leverage the women's wings in navigating post-conflict opportunities allows women to subvert the implicit

social roles by leveraging their combatant status. Further information about the exact ways the women's wings engaged in the post-conflict negotiations is explored in the next section.

Ladies Unit in The Post-War Moment: Institutional Persistence

NSCN-IM has, in recent years, been more attuned to including women in the places where decisions are being made. In May 2002, at the Strengthening the Peace Strategy consultation, NSCN-IM sent six senior women representatives. In April 2004, NSCN-IM called on women from the underground forces to join at the Tangkhul tribal assembly to press for women's participation in decision-making structures (Manchanda 2005). At both the 2002 and 2004 consultation, specific representatives of the Ladies Unit were present (Manchanda 2005). In regard to peace negotiation, NSCN-IM expressly notes that Naga women must be seated at the table. The same level of access is not represented on behalf of NMA, where women are called upon, "whenever these is an issue of relevance to them" (Manchanda 2005, p. 13). Women's combatant forces were welcomed by other political actors involved in post-conflict processes as having a voice at a variety of stages during peace negotiation, on behalf of NSCN-IM.

The legacies of post-conflict gender access are multidimensional and will be the most successful when there are mechanisms in place to encourage and invite women into the spaces where decisions are being made. Women being able to leverage existing gender-based institutions creates a clear pathway for women's access to post-conflict processes. Specifically in the context of rebel governance, the Ladies' Unit is directly affected by outcomes discussed in the peace process. In comparison to other types of institutions which mainstream gender, the

Ladies' Unit has a particularly undeniable effect on women's access in the post-conflict governance structures. In the post-conflict period, an unexpected outcome of gender-balancing at the level of institutions happens. Women's access to governance is expanded, in part due to collective bargaining on behalf of the women's organization, but mainly a biproduct of staunchly shifted gendered orders.

In a 2018 parliamentary election manifesto, NSCN-IM identifies women's development and empowerment, as equal partners in the socio-economic development of the state, as one of their political pledges ("Manifesto: General Election…" 2018). In the same manifesto, under the category of policing and law and order, women's security is prioritized through the continued development of special women's cells in all districts. Using the group's own manifesto may overrepresent the commitment to women's empowerment but a variety of lasting institutional structures demonstrate some evidence in support of women's priorities being central through the post-conflict processes.

The Ladies Unit continues in full force as a combatant avenue for women. Figure 3 below are screenshots of recent Facebook posts regarding the Ladies Unit. This commemoration of military heroism signals a commitment or interest in further inclusion into the security apparatus for women. Socialization by women's wings creates a gendered space of recognition.

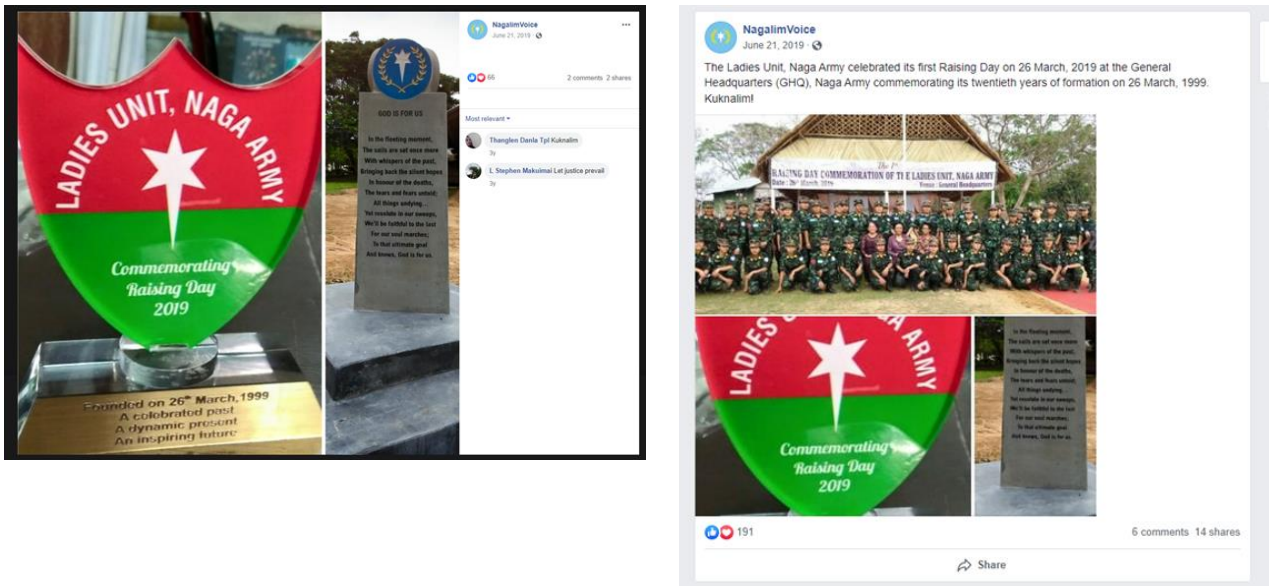


Figure 1: Nagalim Voice Social Media Post

Institutional persistence and adaptations are an important analytic space to focus on in post-war governance. The Naga Mahila battalion first started in October of 2016, as an all-women police station, tasked with investigating crimes such as molestation, rape, and child-trafficking ("First all women…" 2016). Its role has since expanded to twelve all-women police units tasked with investigating a wider breadth of cases ("Nagaland to..." 2021). In 2021, the Kohima all-women police station received the award of best police station in Nagaland ("Kohima all-women…" 2022). This transformation and approach to policing not only represents a shift in traditionally perceived gender roles, but also increases political access of women in militarized institutions. The all-women's police unit indirectly relates to the Ladies Unit through a similar mechanism. Women's political leverage is collectivized in leveraging both their perceived pacifism and the gender narratives of heroism from women's contributions to war. This leveraging of women's identities in tandem, both skills of conflict resolution and use of force, set the stage for a women's police force. The narrative of heroism and authority creates unique structural adaptations that result in greater access for women in the security related roles.

Specifically, this police station was formed during the post-conflict period, where women are most likely to gain access to political institutions.

There are still steps, but the new generation of Naga women are able to leverage these gendered institutions (women's wings) to facilitate demands for a direct voice in governance structures. It appears that the women's wings adhere to some patriarchal norms in gender ordering despite being an integral path for women to achieve combatant status. The relationship between matrilineal order and patriarchal order is unclear in this context. Though one of the influences of extant patriarchal orders is regarding how women's political access has historically been contingent on marital status. Unmarried women are permitted access to the Ladies Unit, to staunchly categorize the family responsibilities that married women hold elsewhere. If a woman decides to marry while a part of the Ladies Unit, she is relieved of her status and her service moves to the activities and tasks of the NSWON only (Zingkhai 2019). Of the women interviewed by other researchers, this is representative of their experiences. Which identities women invoke, then, is regulated based on the rebel aims.

There are other factors that impact this transition from active role as combatant, to administrative tasks still within the security roles, such as aging out of the rebellion. Firsthand accounts record that most cadres are between the ages of fourteen and nineteen (Goswami 2020). Though the strength of patriarchal orders should not be overshadowed, nor ignored. Interviewer Namrata Goswami who gained access to Nagalim and combat dynamics, notes that when conducting her research, men frequently told her to go home and get married (Goswami 2020). This lends to the idea that women's access in combat spaces often are a product of the relationship between traditional elites and authority and rebel groups. In the case of NSCN-IM,

the policy of participation being contingent on marital status dates to traditional authorities. From my research, I have found little pushback against this specific policy.

However, this does not negate the impact that access has on gender participation in governance in the post-conflict. Naga women create new political spaces to make visible the experiences of women living as an excluded section of community. This segregation of the sexes in important political institutions, such as that of NSWON and the Ladies Unit, is tactical in demands for recognition from previously male-dominated institutions. In Nagaland, the sense of tradition is strong (Banerjee 2007). This tradition of gender symbiosis in combat roles, having been a political feature since the consummation of Naga-Indo conflict in recent history, is a lasting structural change. Women's integral roles as combatants and granted social stature cannot be erased. The political reality of the Naga insurgency certainly shaped how women's voices are incorporated. The Ladies Unit of the NSCN-IM provides strong evidence that women's wings can alter post-conflict governance arrangement. Women work to preserve this through initiatives such as that of the Ladies Unit commemorative sculptures and plaques, the active social media presences of the women's wings and the all-women police battalion. Attention to the existing gendered orders of combat prior to the start of the wing is important to understanding how women negotiate structural change. Both advantageous historical timing and mobilization capacity led to the persistence of the institutional arrangement of the women's wing.

Social changes spurred by war, have lasting legacies. Historical destabilizations of existing social organization result in a wide variety of social outcomes related to gender parity (Carrington and Scott 2008). Rigid pre-war gendered divisions in Nagaland resulted in the

specific institutional arrangement of the Ladies Unit. Women circumvented the context of gender exclusion and the proper ways of preforming their gender by reshaping military activity. Through the iterations of the ceasefires and peace talks, new opportunities continued to emerge for women. The opportunities may be endogenously related to the changing social environment after active conflict, or global women's rights initiatives, but the women's wing provided the social structure and institutional design for women's issues to be staunchly imported into mainstream politics. Women ex-combatants of the women's wing are also held in higher stature in some instances. Currently, there are concerns about a return to the gendered orders which had privileged masculinity, largely contingent on physical prowess to fight. The realities of women combatants which are now entrenched in historical narrative and commemorated in public ways serve in contrast to the previously accepted orders. The most pertinent legacies of women's wings are distilled into visibility and access. Both the visibility of gendered orders and the access previously denied on the basis of gender have undergone substantial social transformation. Women's wings are, in part, responsible for this renegotiation of gender orders.

Conclusion

> "If anyone is called to 'reintegrate' into society, it is the State itself" (Ortega 2015, p. 10)

The institutions that rebels developed during wartime shape the contexts for how post-insurgent governments will rule. There are a variety of institutions that emerge out of rebellion, and some create pathways for better gendered outcomes. Women's combat wings provide a pathway into post-conflict governance – both for women in security governance roles and as

leaders of political movements. Insurgent groups' institutional arrangements are intentional and present a fruitful avenue for how to understand the pervasive ways that gender influences combat. One of the trajectories of women's wing in conflict is the normalization of women in roles which include carrying weapons. In the case of Nagaland, the women's wings and subsequent tales of bravery broadcast likely contributed to the proliferation of women across security institutions. Tales of valor increased the complexity of gender in a context which overemphasizes the traditional role of the mother. This article shows that women shape the organizational structure and contributed to their own protection against internal and external forces.

Using NSCN-IM Ladies Unit as an instructive case, I have outlined strong evidence for a relationship between women's wings and gendered post-conflict processes. There are strong empirical reasons to believe that women's wings will increase access of women to security governance, and women's visibility in contributions to wartime orders. This may not be as portable to other rebel movements. The NSCN-IM had aggregately higher levels of women's participation than other rebel groups and is more institutionally developed.

The focus on women's roles in combat here was strategic – though scholarship may benefit from putting both a macro analysis on women's organizations impacts on gender access in conversation with one another. The specific tracing and inductive approach used in this volume privileged the transition period from conflict to peace, and from combatant to agentic political actor. We know that women experience armed conflict differently than men. The impact of armed conflict on women has been routinely studied, but less attention has been paid to the impact of women on armed conflict.

Providing a detailed account of how women have carved out spaces in order to increase their political access, this study problematizes how agency is discussed in contexts of armed conflict. This article highlights that rebel groups can and do adapt to changing international norms on gender equity in conflict. Moreover, empirical weight is given to women's posited extraordinary access to populations frequently inaccessible to men. While there is no doubt that women's participation in all stages of the peace process is important, this article highlights that women's lived experiences in combat in visible institutions, affects the constellation of political actors sought during peace negotiations. Moreover, specific regional de-escalation programs such as Suspension of Operations (SoO) frameworks in India, have the capability of accommodating the constellation of actors which should be present in structuring post-conflict governance (Sinha 2017).

When drawing conclusions from the present study, it is important to highlight how the intersectional experiences of women in war greatly limits the explanatory power of the findings here. Rebel movements are best understood deeply contextualized. I draw attention to the goal of feminist security studies again, to improve the lives of women. When considering moving forward with any type of peace process, we must take into consideration the lived experiences of women in the movement, and the relative responsibilities that are associated with militant experiences. Without understanding the impact of gender inclusion, we cannot fully understand the motives for gender exclusion in the peace process. Drawing back to the importance of this special issue on rebel legacies, the legacy of all-women armed wings should not be underrepresented. This institutional arrangement has at least two interesting and important impacts on governance in rebel-controlled areas. First, rebel's institutional design which is

inclusive to women, translates into the post-war period. The norm of gender inclusion is pervasive. Second, rebel institutions are malleable and adaptable across contexts. Women in the case of Nagalim found an apt opportunity to transform their accepted roles and were met with some levels of encouragement from other Nagas. As other studies in conflict have shown, times of war are apt times to engage in social change. Illuminating the processes by which this happens is an interesting thing to do.

This paper illuminates how to best engage in gender mainstreaming – in highlighting the implications of policies and programs for both men and women. We should continue to be attune to the ways that women utilize collective organizations as opportunities for political advancement. Collective consciousness plays a large role in women's liberation. Understanding the effects of women's participation in rebel governance can reveal ways to be more successful at incorporating women into governing institutions post-conflict. Spaces apt for organization and exchanging of ideas are integral to any form of expansion of political rights. This paper found that in the case of NSCN-IM, the women's wing, Ladies Unit, increased women's access in the immediate post-conflict, both in security governance and women's political autonomy. It is necessary to next understand the effect of women's wings writ large, for nonstate military structures. Understanding the relationship between rebel groups and gender orders is important for advancing DDR initiatives to incorporate more gender-coordination and adopt gender inclusive policies to improve post-conflict governance practices.

Chapter 5

Conclusion to Dissertation Collection

This dissertation aims to provide evidence that women's wings are viable political actors in rebellion. In centering women's wings, I shift the analytic focus to women's collective action and the many diverse ways that women carve out opportunities for themselves in conflict zones. I introduced a series of questions in the introduction to this volume: What are women's wings? How are women's wings distinct from women's general participation? What does this specific form of gender ordering signal about rebel aims? Given that scholarship about women's wings is in nascent stages, there are a variety of ways to extend the research projects I have started here. I will outline three distinct areas for furthering this research agenda in rebel governance and then provide general conclusions from the work I have completed here.

Areas of Future Research

One future research area should take up unpacking the aggregated term of rebel groups. While the term "rebel groups" defines a field of inquiry, there are important differences among groups that get erased when research does not take into consideration the different aims and strategies employed by different groups. While there is utility in the way aggregating rebel groups as allows researchers to compare across time and contexts and develop a series of variables to test relative successes of rebel rule, I push the field to begin to itemize differences among rebel groups, insurgent groups, and transnational criminal organizations. These differences have implications for the way we study and understand women's participation and

broader gender dynamics in alternatively governed spaces. For example, in this dissertation I make the case that insurgent groups are more likely to have both types of women's wings when insurgent groups are recognized on the temporal axis as groups who have persisted for a longer period of time than other types of rebel groups. One such group is the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) who have existed for over 40 years and seek to create an independent Kurdish state. Their aims, and subsequent deployment of gender orders, may be remarkably different than transnational criminal organizations or gangs such as the West Side Boys in Sierra Leone. Transnational criminal organizations (TCOs) might view their global environment differently than insurgent groups and position themselves based on different structural opportunities (Brown and Hermann 2020). For example, TCOs might look to operate in spaces which are free trade zones in order to expand their profit margins and circumvent local and international trade regulations. Insurgents may navigate their geopolitical position differently given their long-term trajectories. Future scholars may consider rebel aims in a scaled manner where rebels who control territory, provide social services, or otherwise act like a state may be maximalist rebel control and those that are merely extractive may be considered minimalist. Quantitative work can begin to model different rebel aims by addressing delineating processes where rebels gain more control.

Clearly, different rebel groups have different aims and use different strategies to achieve those aims. In this dissertation, I make the case that the way rebels orient and operationalize their gender orders is one such strategy in sustaining rebellion. Drawing on the findings from the first article, rebel groups that have both types of women's wings are more likely than other groups to control territory and provide social services to those under their rule. Through an

exploration of women's wings, I point to many operational and structural distinctions among rebel groups. Specifically, I begin to center rebel groups with state building aspirations. In an expanded vocabulary of rebel groups, I believe these groups with state building aspirations are better labelled as insurgent groups. Having both types of women's wings accomplishes both facets of state building that I center in this work, the logistical and practical considerations of establishing and maintaining rule militarily, and the social considerations of establishing national consciousness and securing cohesion amongst those ruled over. There are 42 rebel groups in the WAAR dataset which have both a combat and noncombat women's wing. In future work, the similarities and differences in the priorities of these rebel groups should be examined in depth in order to draw conclusions about what having women's wings does in terms of rebel strategy. Focusing on the bi-directional relationship between gender and strategy will be pivotal in disaggregating the category of rebel groups.

The second research area focuses on beginning to understand variation in how women's wings emerge. In this conclusion, I presume that the emergence of women's wings often involves a two-step process where first there is women's integrated participation and then there are women's wings. However, this might not always be the case. From the research examined in this dissertation, it is clear that there are a variety of pathways that women's wings emerge. The two most central pathways found in this research are 1) that women's wings emerge in response to a collective gendered need in rebellion, such as greater political access for women and to center women's issues within rebel governance structures or 2) that women's wings emerge in response to a political aim (such as fundraising) and are developed in service of that aim. That is, women's wings can emerge from bottom-up collective action or from top-down

political processes. Future research might identify other variables related to the emergence of a women's wing. One such variable might be a proxy for rebel success or center-seeking rebel groups. I presume in my research that rebel groups who are interested in state building prioritize cohesion more than other rebel groups. This presumption can be evaluated in further study focused on the conditions under which women's wings emerge and gain political legitimacy within rebel groups.

As I have made the case for elsewhere in this dissertation, the organization of women and the inclusion of women are different empirical questions. Focusing on how women's wings emerge as a political unit is a fruitful path forward in further understanding the bi-directional relationship between rebel strategy and gender. In article 3 I focus on the NSCN-IM, a rebel group with a long temporal trajectory and note that the longer a group endues, the more likely it is that they diversify organizationally and institutionally. This might be another set of variation in why women's wing emerge: if rebels persist for a longer time, they may be likely to try out a bunch of strategies in sustaining their rule, including trying out different sets of gender orders. From studies of women's collective action outside of conflict spaces, we know that women's associations are capable of mobilizing support for various causes and can provide solutions to pressing political concerns.

The third research area centers article 2 and the Variance in Conjugal Order theoretical framework. Future projects can center this framework and consider how each of the dimensions relate independently to rebel state building. Each of these dimensions can be considered independently of one another and as a process. Mapping which rebel groups engage in conjugal order at each dimension might help explain the variations in rebel aims and their

general positioning of women in rebellion. Specifically, through this framework, future scholars may contribute to the research agenda of understanding how rebels govern the private lives of those within their rule. I selected examples for the comparative analysis based on rebel strategy and aims. My focus on the governing of private lives is often through policies directed toward women's bodies as opposed to the governing of other bodies. This analytic focus, too, begs the question: Where are the men? Future scholars can illuminate ways that men are centered in gendered policies utilizing this conjugal ordering framework.

In addition, mapping how each of the different types of women's wings function within the conjugal order framework may provide insights into rebel priorities. For example, if a group is not particularly interested in cohesion, but they still have a noncombat women's wing, we might ask what function does that women's wing serve? How are gender ordering policies framed at the top-levels of rebel leadership? Are these conjugal orders a result of a negotiated settlement on rebel grand strategy or a further biproduct of rebel groups evolving and learning from other movements? This theoretical framework is designed to be portable to evaluate the diversity of types of rebel movements. I would assume that rebels who have women's participation in any way are engaging in some form of conjugal ordering. Feedback on this chapter has called for applying this in a large-N format where women's wings and rebel groups are mapped into each dimension to explain both patterns of how rebels engage in conjugal ordering, and to establish which dimensions are most commonly used across rebellions.

Concluding Thoughts

My coverage of women's wings paints a relatively optimistic view, where women are able to circumvent patriarchal structures through leveraging their political power within the

women's wing to achieve rebel leadership positions or increasing the saliency of gender political concerns within the broader movement. This is not always the case within rebel groups. Rebel groups may position women into women-only units in order to bar them from access to political decision-making processes. Further, women's issues being sidelined into women's wings allows other rebel political units to abstain from undertaking gender issues within their mandates. Rebel groups may actually be using women's wings as a tool of sidelining women as opposed to including women. Parsing out the nuance here would best be achieved by learning from women participating in women's wings themselves. Desktop research may not be able to account in totality for the breadths of women's experiences or the ways that women navigate their positions within the women's wings. Future scholars should consider ethnographic approaches to these research questions and complement this scholarship by learning from women's experiences as described by themselves.

For my research, women's wings became the focus of this three-article volume by happenstance. Through a conversation with a practitioner with the United States Department of Justice, it became clear that U.S. foreign policy interests were served by training all-women tactical units in conflict zones, equipping them with skills of the United States military apparatus, and fostering longevity through material (and diplomatic) support. There is a general trend for the development of all-women security institutions. For example, the United States International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (ICITAP) works with foreign governments to develop law enforcement institutions. Together with Engaging Multinational Police Women on Equality and Rights (EMPoWER), tasked with increasing the number of women in counterterrorism efforts across the world, ICITAP has concluded several projects

focused on the development and training of all-women security forces. One such project is the Kenya National Police All-Women SWAT Unit (US DOJ Blog, 2021). The United States based Congressional Women Peace and Security agenda has cited all-women security institutions to be an effective method at combatting gender discrimination in law enforcement. Their empirical reality was similarly met in rebel governance.

My personal aim for this dissertation is to continue scholarship questioning the global systems of hierarchy, specifically the notions of gender hierarchy and order. I sought to engage with feminist security studies (FSS), looking for answers about how to best contribute to improving the lives of women and how to center women's interests and experiences in the study of insurgent governance. I agreed with the foundational beliefs of FSS that the concept of security must be seen through a gendered lens and should be broadly defined and critically engaged with, especially in the ways that security threats exist outside of war zones. Competing notions of power and subjugation have historically led to women's contributions to wartime being ignored.

I suspect that women's wings will begin to be centered more frequently in analysis. Just since the beginning of writing this dissertation, more work has begun to document this phenomenon.[19] The first article of this dissertation exposed the general patterns of women's wings in comparison to variables regularly studied in the broad rebel governance literature. Setting women's wings in conversation with other factors that result from rebel decision making and rebel aims begins to position women's wings as a unit of analysis. The second article

[19] Including appearing as a variable in the WAAR dataset, and an article being published a mere 3 weeks before my dissertation defense entitled "Women's Wings in Rebel Organizations".

emerged when, in writing article 1, I noticed how rebels control marital policies generally and specifically for combatants. In studying women's wings generally, it became clear that identifying where women are already organized on the basis of gender is a very important focal spot for understanding how rebels evolve over time. Women already organized into gender-coordinated units made rebel implementation of gender orders more visible, especially when policies are ascribed specifically to women's bodies involved in the wings. The third article looked at post-conflict spaces, seeking to problematize the conception of *innocent women.* So much scholarship on gender and combat seeks to position women as pacifists or as only victims of rebel rule. This line of reasoning does not make sense given the empirical realities of women combatants in war. By centering the ex-combatant women's wings in analytic focus, I provide a broader framework for understanding gender policies through the post-conflict period and institutional persistence.

Through this dissertation, I expose a variety of research agendas future scholars can pick up on. Women's wings in rebel groups are an important facet of the rebel governance landscape and shape how rebels seek to achieve their goals in various ways. Women, when in this collective gender segregated unit, can leverage different identities in service of the rebel cause. Women's decisions to participate in rebellion in coordinated manners are heterogeneous despite often following similar paths to mobilization. Women's wings in rebel groups are important political actors and their patterns of participation can shed light on various gender and conflict dynamics.

Appendix A

Table 6: Rebel Groups with Women's Wings

Rebel Group		Combat Women's Wing	Noncombat Women's Wing	Both Types of Women's Wing
ABSDF	All-Burma Students Democratic Front		x	
ABSU	All Bodo Students Union		x	
al-Mahdi Army	al-Mahdi Army	x		
al-Qaida	al-Qaida	x		
al-Shabaab	al-Shabaab		x	
Amal Movement	Amal Movement		x	
ANC	African National Congress		x	
Ansarallah	Ansarallah		x	
APF/PFA	Azerbaijani Popular Front		x	
Boko Haram	Group of the People of Sunnah for Dawah and Jihad		x	
BRA	Bougainville Revolutionary Army		x	
BRA	Balochistan Republican Army	x		
CNDD-FDD	National Council for the Defense of Democracy- Forces for the Defense of Democracy		x	
CPB	Communist Party of Burma		x	
CPI-Maoist	Communist Party of India- Maoist	x	x	x
CPI-ML	Communist Party of India- Marxist-Leninist		x	
CPN-M	Communist Party of Nepal- Maoist	x	x	x
CPP/NPA	Communist Party of the Philippines/New People's Army	x	x	x
DHKP-C/ Devrimci Sol	Revolutionary Left		x	
Donetsk People's Republic	Donetsk People's Republic	x		
ELF	Eritrean Liberation Front		x	
ELN	National Liberation Army		x	
EPLF	Eritrean People's Liberation Front		x	

EPRDF	Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front	x	x	x
EPRLF	Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front		x	
EPRP	Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party		x	
ERP	People's Revolutionary Army		x	
ERP	People's Revolutionary Army		x	
EZLN	Zapatista National Liberation Army		x	
FAT	Chadian Armed Forces		x	
Fatah	Fatah		x	
FLNC	Congolese National Liberation Front	x	x	x
FMLN	Farabundo Martí Front for National Liberation		x	
FPL	Farabundo Marti Popular Liberation Forces		x	
FPR	Rwandan Patriotic Front		x	
Frelimo	Mozambique Liberation Front	x	x	x
Fretilin	Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor	x	x	x
Frolinat	National Liberation Front of Chad	x		
Fronasa	Front for National Salvation	x		
FSLN	Sandinista National Liberation Front		x	
FUCD	Rally for Democracy and Liberty		x	
GAM	Free Aceh Movement	x		
Hamas	Islamic Resistance Movement	x	x	x
Hezbollah	Hezbollah		x	
Hizb-i Wahdat	Unity Party		x	
HSM	Holy Spirit Movement	x	x	x
INPFL	Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia	x		
IS	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant		x	
JSS/SB	People's Solidarity Association/Peace Force		x	
JVP	People's Liberation Front	x	x	x

Kashmir insurgents	Kashmir insurgents		x	
KCP	Kangleipak Communist Party		x	
KDP	Kurdish Democratic Party		x	
KDPI	Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan	x	x	x
KIO	Kachin Independence Organization	x	x	x
KNU	Karen National Union		x	
KPNLF	Khmer People's National Liberation Front		x	
KR	Khmer Rouge/Red Khmers	x	x	x
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army	x		
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam	x	x	x
LURD	Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy	x		
M23	March 23 Movement		x	
Maidan	Maidan	x	x	x
MCC	Maoist Communist Centre		x	
MCP	Communist Party of Malaya	x	x	x
MEK	People's Mujahedin Organization of Iran		x	
MILF	Moro Islamic Liberation Front		x	
MKP	Maoist Communist Party		x	
MNF	Mizo National Front		x	
MNLF	Moro National Liberation Front		x	
Montoneros	Montoneros		x	
MPLA	Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola		x	
MQM	Mohajir National Movement		x	
MTA	Mong Tai Army		x	
Mukti Bahini	Mukti Bahini	x	x	x
Muslim Brotherhood	Muslim Brotherhood		x	
NLF	National Liberation Front of South Vietnam	x	x	x
NLFT	National Liberation Front of Tripura	x		
NMSP	New Mon State Party	x	x	x
NNC	Naga Nationalist Council	x	x	x

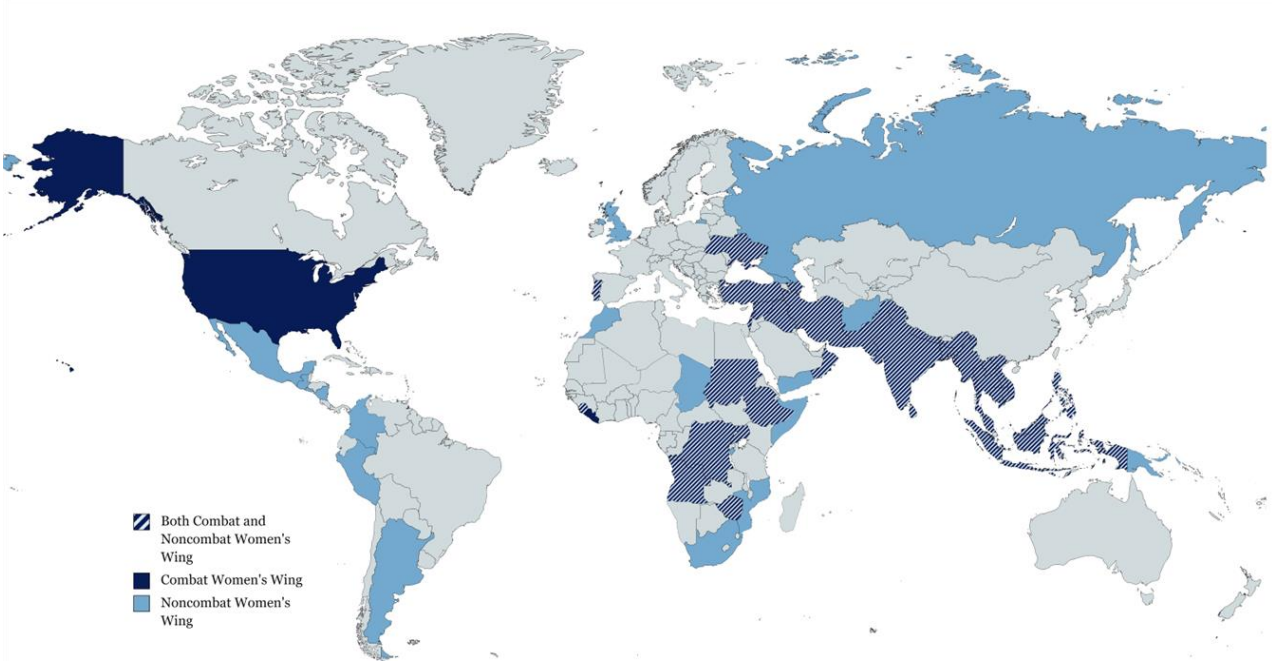
NPFL	National Patriotic Front of Liberia	x		
NRA	National Resistance Movement/Army	x		
NSCN-IM	National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Isaac Muivah faction	x	x	x
NSF/LNM	Lebanese National Movement	x	x	x
NUF	National Union Front	x	x	x
OLF	Ogaden Liberation Front		x	
ONLF	Ogaden National Liberation Front		x	
OPM	Organization for a Free Papua		x	
PAIGC	African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde		x	
Palipehutu-FNL	Party for the Liberation of the Hutu People-Forces for National Liberation		x	
Patani insurgents	Patani insurgents	x	x	x
Pathet Lao/LPLA	Pathet Lao/Lao People's Liberation Army	x	x	x
PBCP- J	Purbo Banglar Communist Party-Janajudhha faction	x		
PDPA	People's Democratic Republic of Afghanistan		x	
PF	Patriotic Front	x	x	x
PFLO	Popular Front for the Liberation of the Occupied Arab Gulf	x	x	x
PFLP	Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine		x	
PIJ	Palestinian Islamic Jihad		x	
PIRA	Provisional Irish Republican Army		x	
PJAK	Free Life Party of Kurdistan	x	x	x
PKK	Kurdistan Worker's Party	x	x	x
PLA	People's Liberation Army		x	
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organization		x	
POLISARIO	Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el Hamra and Rio de Oro		x	

PRC	Popular Resistance Committees	x		
PSLF/TNLF/A	Palaung State Liberation Front/Ta'ang National Liberation Force/Army		x	
PUK	Patriotic Union of Kurdistan	x	x	x
PWG	People's War Group	x	x	x
PYD	Democratic Union Party	x	x	x
Rejectionist Front	Rejectionist Front		x	
Renamo	Mozambican National Resistance		x	
Republic of Abkhazia	Republic of Abkhazia		x	
Republic of Biafra	Republic of Biafra		x	
Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh	Republic of Artsakh/Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh	x	x	x
Republic of South Ossetia	Republic of South Ossetia		x	
Republic of South Sudan	Republic of South Sudan		x	
RUF	Revolutionary United Front	x	x	x
Shining Path	Shining Path		x	
Sikh insurgents	Sikh insurgents	x	x	x
SLM/A	Sudan Liberation Movement/Army		x	
SPLM/A	Sudanese People's Liberation Movement/Army	x	x	x
SPLM/A- In Opposition	Sudanese People's Liberation Movement/Army - In Opposition		x	
SPLM/A- North	Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North		x	
SRF	Sudan Revolutionary Front		x	
SURA	Shan United Revolutionary Army	x		
SWAPO	South West Africa People's Organization		x	
Syrian insurgents (Free Syrian Army, FSA)	Syrian insurgents (Free Syrian Army, FSA)	x		
Syrian insurgents (Jahat al-Nusra, affiliates)	Syrian insurgents (Jabhat al-Nusra, affiliates)	x		
TPLF	Tigray People's Liberation Front	x	x	x

UNITA	National Union for the Total Independence of Angola	x	x	x
UNLF	United National Liberation Front		x	
URNG	Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity		x	
USC/SNA	United Somali Congress/Somali National Alliance		x	
USC/SSA	United Somali Congress/Somali Salvation Alliance		x	
UWSA	United Wa State Army	x	x	x
WNBF	West Nile Bank Front	x	x	x
WSLF	Western Somali Liberation Front		x	
ZANU	Zimbabwe African National Union	x	x	x
ZAPU	Zimbabwe African People's Union	x	x	x

Appendix B

Figure 5 is a world map highlighting the countries and territories where rebels are present which have a women's wing. To note here, the territory that the rebels are associated with is based on group level attributes such as the territory they assert control over, or their primary location of operation as opposed to rebel events such as active conflict, warring, or terrorist attacks. The dark color highlights where groups are that only have a combat women's wing, which are only present in Liberia. The lighter color highlights where rebel groups are that only have a noncombat women's wing. The striped pattern highlights where groups are that have both a combat women's wing and a noncombat women's wing. This is not included in the main data presentation because the organization around country level does not have analytic utility as it does not show the number of rebel groups or the number of women's wings in each region.



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Curriculum Vitae

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Education

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Publications

2024 — **Stallman, Heidi and Falak Hadi.** "Gender inclusion and rebel strategy: legitimacy seeking behavior in rebel groups" *International Politics* (accepted)

2024 — **Stallman, Heidi and Ryan Griffiths. "**Legitimacy and Control: Introduction to the Special Issue on Rebel Governance" *International Politics* (under review)

Working Papers

"Wedded to the Cause: Social and Conjugal Orders in Rebel Groups"
under review at International Feminist Journal of Politics

"Regendering the Battlefield: The post-conflict legacies of women's wings"

Research Activities

2023 Department of State: Bureau of Global Criminal Justice *paid intern*
2022 Department of State: Embassy of Zimbabwe *intern*
2018-2024 Moynihan Institute of Global Affairs *research assistant*
2020-2024 Intelligence Community Centers for Academic Excellence (ICCAE) Scholar
2022 International Policy Scholars Consortium (IPSCON) Johns Hopkins
2022 Institute for Qualitative and Multimethod Research
2022 Minnowbrook Rebel Governance Conference
2022 Syracuse Philosophy Annual Workshop and Network: White Supremacy, misogyny, and the 'new' terrorism
2021 The International Strategic Crisis Negotiation Exercise (ISCNE)
2019 The International Society of Political Psychology

Fellowship, Awards, and Grants

2022 John D. Nagle Award
2022 Research Excellence Dissertation Fellowship,
2020 Intelligence Community Center for Academic Excellence
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2020 Intelligence Community Center for Academic Excellence Grant
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2021 Cramer Fellowship, Moynihan Institute
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2021 Solo Instructor, Political Psychology Summer 2021
2019 Teaching Assistant, Political Leadership
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