WEDDED TO WARFARE: FORCED MARRIAGE IN REBEL GROUPS

A Thesis

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ABSTRACT

Why do rebel groups create systems of forced marriage? In this dissertation, I build a theory of forced marriage based on original fieldwork examining two rebel groups in East Africa, Al-Shabaab (in Somalia and Kenya) and the Lord's Resistance Army or LRA (in northern Uganda). I also ask, what explains the different forms of forced marriage by rebel groups? And finally, what is the relationship between forced marriage and other gendered decisions by rebel groups? All rebel groups care about cohesion, yet rebel groups that use forced marriage have specific challenges related to cohesion. Rebel groups that are composed of abducted members need to build *internal* cohesion and have a *centralized* system of forced marriage as seen in the case of the LRA. Another model of forced marriage is for groups that govern a region and need to create *external* cohesion - a term I created to describe efforts by rebel groups to build connections to a large civilian population. If a rebel group is seeking to build external cohesion, they will have a *decentralized* system of forced marriage as illustrated by the case of Al-Shabaab. Rebel groups that use forced marriage not only have a strategic need related to cohesion, but also have a unique ideology which I describe as an ideology of social control. Rebel groups with ideologies of social control want to create a new ideal community and this community has specific standards of behavior for men, women, boys, and girls. For rebel groups with an ideology of social control, their power comes not from controlling territory, but instead from controlling men, women, boys, and girls. Finally, I examine the influence of forced marriage on decisions related to the gendered division of labor and the use of sexual violence outside of forced marriages. This study demonstrates that understanding forced marriage reveals essential information about rebel group behavior related to strategy, ideology, tactics, and organization.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation would not have been possible without the time and generosity of my interview participants and research partners in Kenya, Somalia, and Uganda. I am grateful to Clifford Collins Omondi Okwany, a brilliant academic and research partner who taught me so much about Kenya. I was lucky to work with Teddy Atim, an expert on gender and the LRA, who modeled how to engage with interview participants ethically and with compassion. It was a pleasure collaborating with and learning from my Somali research team. I hope this is one of many projects we will work on together. Anyone who knows about my trips to Kenya knows that David was not only my driver but was someone who I trusted to keep me safe and sane. I am truly grateful for him and the blue van I spent so much time in. Many people trusted me with their stories – often stories of pain and resilience - and I am privileged to have met and learned from these individuals. I aim to present their stories in this dissertation, and continue to write about and share these issues, in a way that honors and respects their insights and experiences.

I truly could not have asked for a better dissertation committee. I am so glad I enrolled in Dara Kay Cohen's first class as a professor at Harvard Kennedy School and met someone who would become an important role model to me. I so appreciated her feedback, advice, and diligence as a committee member. Richard Shultz's support and confidence in me helped me stay in the program even when I badly wanted to quit. Thank you for believing in me, encouraging me, and teaching me a little about the Red Sox along the way. I went to Dyan Mazurana's office hours as a master's student seven years ago and did not realize how that one conversation would alter the rest of my career. Dyan's passion for her research led to my interest in the topic of gender in rebel groups. I have grown as a researcher and writer because of her guidance and

thoughtful feedback on my writing. I knew that after every meeting with Dyan I would feel excited and inspired again to keep working.

Thank you to the Fletcher PhD Program, The Institute for Human Security, The International Security Studies Program at Fletcher, and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), for their financial support of my research.

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Academia can be a lonely place, but I have been lucky to be part of groups of my peers who gave me a sense of community and support. The "PhDames," are a truly exceptional group of women. Andrea Walther-Puri "does it all" – researching, writing, and remembering to send friends flowers and cards along the way. Roxanne Krystalli has been by my side through academic and personal challenges and achievements. Thank you for holding my hand through it all. Sophia Dawkins, I am so grateful for your kindness and openness. Torrey Taussig, thank you for the many pep talks you gave me before my field trips and for giving me a path to follow in

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For anyone considering starting a PhD program, I highly recommend getting a dog first. Our dog Bucky sat by my side when I wrote and gave me so much love even on the bad writing days. I got married at the beginning of my PhD program and as I wrote about the ways in which

marriage can be a harmful institution, I was reminded throughout this process about the positive power of partnership in my own life. I am the luckiest to have Shaun on my team. He could not have been more supportive - never complaining about my frequent trips away from home, talking me through the tears and doubts, and being a constant source of joy in my life. He is the most patient, kind, and loving husband.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

What can socks teach us about forced marriage?

The violent Islamist group, Al-Shabaab, ruled the town of Kismayo, Somalia from 2008-2012. During the time Al-Shabaab controlled Kismayo they held gatherings for women in town. These gatherings had a dual purpose - to gather information on local women and to convince women in the town of the worthiness of Al-Shabaab's cause.

Before one gathering, leaders of Al-Shabaab gave clear directions to the female population in Kismayo. Women who were married should wear black socks to the gathering, women who were divorced should wear red socks, and women who were single should wear white socks.

The leadership of Al-Shabaab started the gathering, looked out at the crowd, and saw most of the women in black socks. This angered the leadership who said they knew the female town members were lying because they thought 60 percent of the female population was single.

This story was told to my research team in Kismayo, Somalia, in their discussions with male and female members who had lived under Al-Shabaab rule. It raises the question, why would a rebel group spend time and energy learning about the marital status of women in the town they were trying to rule? Rebel groups have many conflicting priorities and demands, but attention to the marital status of women in Kismayo reveals an important strategic priority of Al-Shabaab.

In another part of East Africa, in northern Uganda, young women and girls, were abducted and then married to male members of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). Whereas Al-Shabaab was learning about the marital status of the entire population to forcibly marry as many members as possible, the LRA was creating its own separate population and sought young

women and girls to marry to its male members. High ranking leadership, including the well-known leader of the LRA, Joseph Kony, were involved in arranging marriage between members and even controlling members' relationships. This pattern again raises, the question, why would a rebel group devote time, energy, and resources to a system of forced marriage?

The central question of this dissertation asks why rebel groups create systems of forced marriage? I compare and contrast Al-Shabaab and LRA's systems of forced marriage to answer a secondary question, why do forced marriages look so different across rebel groups? And finally I ask, what is the relationship between forced marriage and other gendered decisions?

I develop a theory of forced marriage through the case study method and conducted and designed semi-structured interviews with former group members, individuals who have lived in populations where these groups recruited, operated, or ruled, and key informants including humanitarian workers, government officials, scholars, and policy experts.

In my theory of forced marriage, I explain that rebel groups use forced marriage when they have a specific ideology and a specific strategic need. Rebel groups that use forced marriage have what I have termed an "ideology of social control." These groups tend to be religious or nationalist, but an ideology of social control is not based on one specific religion or nationality. Instead, it is an ideology that is concerned with the management of people and their relationships with each other. Ideologies of social control involve imagining an ideal future society. This future society is based on specific ideas about male and female roles and relationships, and privileges male dominance.

The strategic need of rebel groups that use forced marriage is to improve cohesion. While cohesion is important for all rebel groups, groups that use forced marriage have a higher demand to improve cohesion because they are either composed of abducted members or are trying to rule

an large civilian population. I label the first type of cohesion, internal cohesion, and this is when group leadership is focused on the need to bind group members together, and to the group, which is a particularly acute need for groups composed of abducted members. The other type of cohesion, external cohesion, is a new concept I have developed that relates to a specific need that occurs for a group trying to rule and infiltrate a population.

The two case studies, Al-Shabaab and the LRA, illustrate two models of forced marriage because each group is focused on a different type of cohesion. Al-Shabaab is focused on building external cohesion as it is trying to rule Kismayo – the third largest city in Somalia.[1] As a result of its focus on building external cohesion and linking itself to the wider population, the model of forced marriage it represents is decentralized. Leadership of Al-Shabaab exerted minimal control over forced marriage in Kismayo. When Al-Shabaab ruled Kismayo it placed limited restrictions on group members use of forced marriage and did not require members to get permission to forcibly marry local women. This model of forced marriage was used to infiltrate the population of Kismayo.

The LRA represents a centralized model of forced marriage in which group leadership arranged and controlled marriages. The most senior ranking male members of the LRA picked their wives and assigned wives to certain lower ranking male commanders. The organization of the LRA was based around family units created as a result of forced marriages. Centralized forced marriage was essential to the LRA because the group was trying build and create its own society from its group members and used centralized forced marriage as a tool to control, retain, and organize its group members.

[1] "AMISOM Sector II Profile: Kismayo," September 25, 2018, http://amisom-au.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Sector-II-Kismayo.pdf.

The dissertation proceeds in three sections. In the first section, chapters 2 and 3, I describe the theory of forced marriage and the methods used to build the theory. In chapter 2, I define forced marriage and make an argument for the need to study forced marriage in conflict. I then describe my theory of forced marriage and the two different models illustrated through my case studies. There is not a specific body of literature that focuses on forced marriage therefore I situate my research in the literature on the strategy and ideology of rebel groups, female participation in rebel groups, sexual violence, and specific case studies of armed group control of marriage. My theory of forced marriage contributes to these different bodies of literature.

Chapter 3 is a detailed description of the methodology used to study forced marriage and rebel groups. I am specific in describing my research methodology and detail the legal, ethical, and safety challenges in studying rebel groups. I include a detailed methodology section because methods scholarship rarely provides honest accounts of the adaptations and decisions required to study contexts where rebel groups operate (or have operated), and contexts that are inaccessible or dangerous to outside researchers.

The next section focuses on my two case studies. I start with my first case study in chapter 4, where I provide historical context on Al-Shabaab and the conflict in Somalia and describe the group's strategy and ideology. I then describe marriage in Somalia outside of Al-Shabaab before moving to a description of Al-Shabaab's system of forced marriage in Kismayo, Somalia. I outline five ways Al-Shabaab's practice of forced marriage built external cohesion. I conclude the chapter by demonstrating how forced marriage reflected and reinforced Al-Shabaab's ideology of social control.

Chapter 5 focuses on the LRA in Uganda and its centralized forced marriage system. Mirroring chapter 4, I provide historical context on the conflict in Uganda and the LRA's long

history in the region. I describe the ways in which forced marriage was a tool to build internal cohesion and how it was essential to the LRA's ideology of social control. Throughout chapter 5, I draw parallels between how Al-Shabaab and LRA used forced marriage.

The final section of the dissertation examines the effects of forced marriage systems that help us better understand the operations of Al-Shabaab and the LRA. Chapter 6 examines how forced marriage influences the gendered division of labor inside Al-Shabaab and the LRA. Both groups rely on forced marriage as a way to exploit women and girls' skills while limiting female power inside the group. Chapter 7 focuses on the link between forced marriage and other forms of sexual violence. In particular, I highlight the fact that members of Al-Shabaab and the LRA generally do not use rape outside of forced marriage. There are exceptions to this pattern of limited rape and in chapter 7, I also analyze situations where group members have perpetrated rape and what that reveals about the overall pattern of sexual violence.

In chapter 8 I conclude by discussing implications of my theory and next steps for testing this theory. I also develop a research agenda that encourages studying other patterns of rebel group behavior that, like forced marriage, have been seen as outside traditional scholarship on rebel groups.

Al-Shabaab's requirement for women to wear different colored socks to denote their marital status is just one illustration of forced marriage being a priority for the group. In the LRA, forced marriage was described by the International Criminal Court as an "inherent design feature" of the group.[2] One cannot understand the LRA or Al-Shabaab without critically examining why forced marriage was essential to the groups and how the groups used forced marriage to achieve their broader goals.

[2] Prosecutor v. Dominic Ongwen, No. ICC-02/04/01/15 (International Criminal Court March 23, 2016).

CHAPTER 2: A THEORY OF FORCED MARRIAGE

INTRODUCTION

The leader of the rebel group in Africa with the longest lifespan, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), spends time mediating relationship disputes. Members of Al-Shabaab are instructed to help foreign fighters find Somali wives. Why would rebel groups spend precious time and resources on forced marriage? Why do certain rebel groups use forced marriage and others do not? How does the use of forced marriage by a rebel group relate to the participation of women in conflict and the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war?

I argue that marriage is not a byproduct of conflicts involving rebel groups but is central to how some rebel groups engage in conflict.[3] Forced marriage can provide key benefits to a rebel group, yet not all rebel groups use forced marriage. Research on sexual violence has focused on rape and therefore there are gaps in scholarship regarding how other forms of sexual violence, including forced marriage, are used by rebel groups in conflict. This dissertation proposes a theory of forced marriage in rebel groups.

To develop a theory of forced marriage I conducted a comparative case analysis of two rebel groups with systems of forced marriage that looked quite different. These groups are the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in Uganda and Al-Shabaab in Somalia and Kenya. I rely on qualitative data from semi-structured interviews with key informants, individuals living in the populations where the groups operated, and for the LRA, former group members. I detail my methodology in chapter 2.

[3] I used the term rebel group to mean "any non-governmental formally organized group of people having announced a name for their group and using armed force to influence the outcome of the state incompatibility," Uppsala Conflict Data Program, "Definitions," Department of Peace and Conflict Research Uppsala Universitet, available: http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/definitions/#One-sided_violence (accessed October 10, 2017).

There is little reliable data related to the prevalence of forced marriage, which reflects the broader challenges in getting data related to any form of sexual violence.[4] However, one study by the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) examines conflicts from 1987-2007 in which sexual violence was used. Out of profiles of 51 conflict-affected countries that have experienced some form of sexual violence in the last 20 years, 11 countries had reports of forced marriage by any party in the conflict.[5] Since the DCAF study only examines conflicts until 2007, there have been many rebel groups that were not active during that time period that have used forced marriage including for example, the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, Boko Haram in Nigeria, Al-Shabaab in Somalia and Kenya, and violent Islamist groups operating in Mali.[6] The DCAF data demonstrates that forced marriage is a selective strategy because in the sample size of conflicts with sexual violence, it was only used in 1/5 of these conflicts. However, in this dissertation I argue that it is a selective strategy because it is used for specific purposes and ideological reasons.

In this chapter, I first define marriage and the complexities surrounding the institution of marriage and make an argument for why it is important to study forced marriage in the context of rebel groups. Next, I highlight the gaps in the way forced marriage has been studied and suggest potential reasons marriage has been overlooked in scholarship. I then present my theory of

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[4] Sara E. Davies and Jacqui True, "The Politics of Counting and Reporting Conflict-Related Sexual and Gender-Based Violence: The Case of Myanmar," *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 19, no. 1 (January 2, 2017): 4–21, https://doi.org/10.1080/14616742.2017.1282321.

[5] Megan Bastick, Karin Grimm, and Rahel Kunz, *Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict: Global Overview and Implications for the Security Sector* (Geneva: Geneva Centre for the Democratic of Armed Forces, 2007).

[6] See e.g., Human Rights Watch, "Iraq: Forced Marriage Conversion for Yezidis: Victims, Witnesses Describe Islamic State's Brutality to Captives," October 11, 2014, https://www.hrw.org/news/2014/10/11/iraq-forced-marriage-conversion-yezidis; Stephanie Sinclair, "Child, Bride, Mother: Nigeria," *The New York Times,* January 27, 2017, https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/01/27/sunday-review/29Exposures-child-bride-interactive.html. Kerry Paterson, "Mali Conflict Is Latest to Employ Forced Marriage as Tool of War," Women's Media Center, June 4, 2013, http://www.womensmediacenter.com/women-under-siege/mali-conflict-is-latest-to-employ-forced-marriage-as-tool-of-war.

forced marriage. After outlining my theory, I conduct a review of the literature on rebel groups, internal and external cohesion, gender in rebel groups, and single case studies on marriage dynamics inside rebel groups.

WHAT IS MARRIAGE & WHY STUDY IT?

Marriage is a complex and diverse social, cultural, religious, and legal institution that has been examined in a range of fields including social anthropology, human rights law, economics, international law, and political science. Scholars studying marriage have argued that there is no universal definition of marriage that can be applied cross-culturally.[7] Marriage is key for institutions outside rebel groups for forming political communities, managing kinship relationships, and transferring economic resources and labor. Given the ways in which marriage organizes political and social organizations, it is not surprising that rebel groups would also find value in managing the institution of marriage.

There has been a false framing of marriage that places it within the private sphere and therefore not appropriate for political analysis. Cynthia Enloe explains that the, "workings of marriage are rarely accorded thoughtful attention by those who comment on 'serious' international affairs," and goes on to explain that she realized the "dichotomy between the alleged public sphere and the alleged private sphere hid more about politics than it revealed."[8]

Jacqueline Stevens also critiques the idea that there is a clear separation between the public and private sphere because the public sphere relies on the private sphere.[9] According to

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[7] See Elisabeth Jean Wood, "Variation in Sexual Violence during War," *Politics & Society* 34, no. 3 (September 2006): 307–42, https://doi.org/10.1177/0032329206290426. E.R. Leach, "Polyandry, Inheritance and the Definition of Marriage," *Man* 55 (1955): 182–83. Merriam-Webster Dictionary notes that the definition of the word *marriage* is highly controversy because it relates to cultural, religion, legal rulings, and human rights. Therefore the definition the dictionary does provide is quite inadequate and the only definition that does not use a term itself is, "an intimate or close union," https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/marriage.

[8] Cynthia Enloe, *The Big Push: Exposing and Challenging the Persistence of Patriarchy* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2017), 88 and 91.

[9] Jacqueline Stevens, *Reproducing the State* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), 52.

Stevens, membership in a political community (the public) is based on ideas about kinship and family (private).[10] Steven argues that a state *reproduces* itself by building political communities through marriage. She writes:

> …marriage provides the *legitimacy* that renders some children citizens and others aliens. Second, marriage is a *form* of kinship relations that defines the particularity of that state against others. Third, marriage is the benchmark of *full citizenship.*[11]

Marriage has been politically useful for states and is not something that should be seen as belonging in the private sphere and therefore outside politics.

The institution of marriage is used not only for building political relationships, but marriage also restructures social communities. A. R. Radcliffe-Brown argues that marriage changes the social structure of a society which he describes as "any arrangement of persons in institutionalized relationships."[12] According to Radcliffe-Brown, new relationships are created through marriage, and existing relationships are changed, including the relationship between the bride and her family.[13] The way in which marriage changes relationships or creates new relationships, even outside of conflict, is useful to recognize because it emphasizes why marriage is useful for rebel groups trying to create a new social order.

Marriage has important effects on economic relations, security relations, and lineage structures. Emily Burrill in her examination of marriage practices in Africa argues that they are based on, "uneven relationships of obligation and exchange."[14] Bridewealth (also referred to as brideprice) is an essential part of marriages in many cultures. Bridewealth involves the transfer

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[10] Stevens, *Reproducing the State*.
[11] Stevens, 220.
[12] A.R. Radcliffe-Brown, *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage* (London: Oxford University Press, 1950), 43.
[13] Radcliffe-Brown, 43.
[14] Emily Burrill, "Historicizing Social Justice and the Longue Durée of Forced Marriage," in *Marriage by Force: Contestation over Consent and Coercion in Africa* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2016), 315.

of goods or services from the husband and his kin to the family of the bride.[15] This payment is framed as being in exchange for the bride's productive and reproductive labor. Bunting, et al. explain bridewealth as a "strategic investment that built and maintained webs of kinship and organized and controlled labor."[16] Valerie Hudson and Hilary Matfess note that brideprice is more common when women's work is viewed as productively valuable.[17]

While dowry and bridewealth are part of similar systems, dowry is provided by the bride's kin to the groom and "is a means to enhance the attractiveness of a bride in marriage."[18] The resources from the dowry are then usually used by the groom's family to pay the brideprice for their sons' future wives. This makes females valuable resources to families. A family seeks to control reproductive and productive labor of their daughters until they exchange their daughters to a man and his family who then control the woman's labor and reproduction.

When lineage can only be passed down through reproduction, women are essential to continuing a man's lineage. Expanding one's clan or lineage is important in societies in which clans or ethnic groups have fought each other. Hudson and Matfess explain that patrilineality (when kinship is passed through the male line) is a "security-provision mechanism" by creating a group of natural allies based on bloodlines in case of conflict situation against other groups.[19]

Marriage is also important for its regulation and legitimation of sexual relationships and marriage is often framed as a way for rebel groups to access sex. However, one of the central questions related to marriages inside rebel groups, raised by Stacy Hynd, is why rebel groups

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[15] Annie Bunting, Benjamin N. Lawrance, and Richard L. Roberts, "Introduction: Something Old, Something New?," in *Marriage by Force? Contestation over Consent and Coercion in Africa*, ed. Annie Bunting, Benjamin N. Lawrance, and Richard L. Roberts (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2016), 18.
[16] Bunting, Lawrance, and Roberts, 17.
[17] Valerie M. Hudson and Hilary Matfess, "In Plain Sight: The Neglected Linkage between Brideprice and Violent Conflict," *International Security* 42, no. 1 (July 2017): 13, https://doi.org/10.1162/ISEC_a_00289.
[18] Bunting, Lawrance, and Roberts, "Introduction: Something Old, Something New?," 18.
[19] Hudson and Matfess, "In Plain Sight," 11.

introduce an element of "conjugality" into relationships when there are other ways they can fulfill their sexual and logistical needs.[20] Hynd sees forced marriage as a form of symbolic warfare intended to control women's bodies and labor and it can also be an aspect of armed group's political goals of reordering society.[21] Hynd builds off Turshen's argument that rape constructs women as property "in which the assets available for transfer are women's productive and reproductive labour."[22]

In Uganda and Somalia (the main contexts I focus on) there is a specific status that comes with being married. Chris Dolan describes marriage as the "essential passage to adulthood" in Uganda, but this theory applies to many other societies.[23] Dolan notes that marriage is an essential aspect of manhood. As a result, younger men who are unable to marry and older men who are unable to control their children's marriage choices both feel their masculinity and power is being challenged.[24] Notably, a similar dynamic was discussed by our interview participants in Kismayo in context of Al-Shabaab's marriage practices taking power away from fathers. I discuss in detail the link between masculinity and marriage in reviewing the ideologies promoted by the LRA and Al-Shabaab.

DEFINING FORCED MARRIAGE

[20] Stacy Hynd, "To Be Taken as a Wife Is a Form of Death," in *Marriage by Force? Contestation and Consent and Coercion in Africa*, ed. Annie Bunting, Benjamin Lawrance, and Richard Roberts (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2016), 300.
[21] Stacy Hynd, "To Be Taken as a Wife Is a Form of Death," in *Marriage by Force? Contestation and Consent and Coercion in Africa*, ed. Annie Bunting, Benjamin Lawrance, and Richard Roberts (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2016), 300.
[22] Meredeth Turshen, "The Political Economy of Rape: An Analysis of Systematic Rape and Sexual Abuse of Women During Armed Conflict in Africa," in *Victims, Perpetrators or Actors?*, ed. Caroline O N Moser and Fiona C Clark (New York: Zed Books, 2001), 56.
[23] Chris Dolan, *Social Torture: The Case of Northern Uganda 1986-2006* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2009), 199. See Hudson and Matfess, "In Plain Sight" for application to other societies.
[24] Dolan, *Social Torture: The Case of Northern Uganda 1986-2006*, 200.

The clearest articulation of forced marriage is within the international legal context. The Special Court of Sierra Leone Appeals Chamber defines forced marriage as:

> "a situation in which the perpetrator through *his words or conduct,* or those of someone for whose actions he is responsible, *compels a person by force, threat of force, or coercion* to serve as a *conjugal partner* resulting in severe suffering, or physical, mental, or psychological injury to the victim."[25]

I have italicized the key components of the definition which are useful for my analysis. The specification that forced marriage can be through "words or conduct" and involve a person being compelled "by forced, threat of force, or coercion," broadens the understanding of what force can look like. The most well-known cases of forced marriage involve physical abduction of girls, but abduction is not a requirement of forced marriage.

It is useful to see forced marriage along a spectrum that includes not only the physical use of force, but also the threat of force. For example, in Al-Shabaab controlled areas, members of Al-Shabaab, who were the governing authority in a town, would show up at women's house and "ask" for the women (and possibly her family's) permission to get marry. The population in an area controlled by Al-Shabaab knew of cases in which people had said no to an Al-Shabaab member's request and been jailed or beaten. Therefore, there is little opportunity for an individual to voluntarily refuse the marriage proposal. On the other end of the spectrum is the more physical forms of force, including adducting a woman or girl, to be forcibly married (as seen in the LRA). According to the definition of the Special Court of Sierra Leone Appeals Chamber, both types of force (the threat of force and the physical use of force) would be an indication of forced marriage.

[25] Morten Bergsmo, Alf Butchenschøn Skre, and Elisabeth J. Wood, eds., *Understanding and Proving International Sex Crimes* (Bejing: Torkel Opsahl Academic Publisher, 2012), 242 emphasis added.

A second part of the definition of forced marriage that is particularly useful for my analysis is the phrase "conjugal partner." Neha Jain, analyzing the legal opinions in the Sierra Leone case, emphasizes the significance of the label wife. Using the term "wife" is a way to assert extreme control over a woman and also leads to "unique psychological suffering" because of the future stigmatization and rejection a woman can face after having been labeled a rebel group member's wife.[26] While my theory is not a legal analysis, international courts have provided the clearest guidelines for analyzing forced marriage.

Using the term marriage in contexts of forced marriage in conflict can be contentious because societies often do not consider the marriages that took place inside rebel groups legitimate.[27] Some scholars have suggested the use of the term "conjugal slavery" and note its benefit in "signal[ing] the organization of labor in war and the severity of the crime, while also distinguishing it from peacetime marriage without consent."[28] I argue, however, that conjugal slavery fails to capture the broader intent or goal of the rebel groups in establishing these relationships and the complex gender relations that are part of systems of marriage.

There is an existing debate over the difference between forced marriage and arranged marriage which matters because both practices are seen as limiting the choice of participants in the marriage. Conceptually, in arranged marriages, the families of both spouses play key roles in choosing the marriage partners, but the choice of whether to enter into the marriage is that of the potential spouses.[29] However, in practice, the level of choice in arranged marriages is along a spectrum with spouses being forced to accept a marriage on one end to spouses being able to

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[26] N. Jain, "Forced Marriage as a Crime against Humanity: Problems of Definition and Prosecution," *Journal of International Criminal Justice* 6, no. 5 (November 1, 2008): 1018–19, https://doi.org/10.1093/jicj/mqn064.
[27] For a legal discussion of the use of the term marriage see, Bergsmo, Skre, and Wood, *Understanding and Proving International Sex Crimes*.
[28] Bunting, Lawrance, and Roberts, "Introduction: Something Old, Something New?," 11.
[29] Bunting, Lawrance, and Roberts, 15.

refuse a marriage on the other.[30] Annie Bunting and her co-authors conclude that the boundaries separating arranged and forced marriage can be ambiguous and complicated.[31]

I view forced marriage by Al-Shabaab and the LRA as distinct from arranged marriages because of the way that interview participants spoke about forced marriage perpetrated by these groups. Interview participants saw forced marriages by Al-Shabaab and the LRA as a break with traditional practices which is what made the practice particularly harmful for affected communities. Bunting et al. highlight the rupture that forced marriages can create even if aspects of forced marriages resemble other forms of marriage. Bunting et al. ask, "[if] forced marriages mimic customary arranged marriages, how do we account for the fundamental and irremediable social change to the character of such customary practices as a consequence of war?"[32] Thus, while marriage systems in rebel groups often reflect customary practices in some ways, it is crucial to pay attention to the ways in which forced marriages created and practiced by rebel groups break with customs and ultimately change the institutions of marriage.

GAPS IN STUDYING FORCED MARRIAGE

I review the literature on forced marriage in the final section of this chapter, but I want to first highlight the potential reasons that marriage has not been seen as an important component to understanding rebel groups. There are three weaknesses in the way scholars have understood forced marriage within rebel groups. The first and most common way of viewing forced marriage inside rebel groups is by not recognizing rebel groups use of forced marriage. Despite observing other strategies rebel groups use to organize themselves and control their members,

[30] Bunting, Lawrance, and Roberts, 15.
[31] Bunting, Lawrance, and Roberts, 14.
[32] Bunting, Lawrance, and Roberts, 13.

marriage is often ignored.[33] Marriage is seen as something separate from conflict and an institution that is only relevant for peace. This is an error and has limited our understanding of rebel groups' behavior in conflict. Alternatively, when forced marriage is recognized inside a rebel group, it is seen as a by-product of conflict as opposed to a strategic choice to accomplish a rebel group's broader goal. While not all groups use forced marriage in conflict, many groups do, and scholars have not asked why these groups would adopt this strategy.

The second way forced marriage has been studied in conflicts is by linking forced marriage with other forms of sexual violence, specifically rape. There have been important breakthroughs in the way rape in conflict has been studied, including the creation of new datasets. However, most datasets code multiple forms of sexual violence together. The Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict (SVAC) dataset, one of the most comprehensive datasets related to sexual violence, codes for sexual violence when there are reports of rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, forced sterilization/abortion, sexual mutilation, and sexual torture.[34] The SVAC dataset does not have a separate code for each form of sexual violence.[35] There are however different motivations and symbols related to different forms of gender-based violence.[36] Francisco Guitérrez-Sanín and Elisabeth Jean Wood argue that scholars need to understand "patterns of violence" perpetrated by rebel groups, which involves examining

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[33] See e.g., Peter Thompson, *Armed Groups: The 21st Century Threat* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2014), 116 who even notes power of friendship or kinship in helping armed groups organize, but does not mention marriage.
[34] 419 Dara Kay Cohen and Ragnhild Nordås, "Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict: Introducing the SVAC Dataset, 1989–2009," *Journal of Peace Research* 51, no. 3 (May 1, 2014): 418–28, https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343314523028.
[35] Elisabeth Jean Wood is in the process of updating this dataset to disaggregate forms of sexual violence, but it has not yet been released (as of October 2018).
[36] Margaret Urban Walker, "Gender and Violence in Focus: A Background for Gender Justice Reparations," in *The Gender of Reparations: Unsettling Sexual Hierarchies While Redressing Human Rights Violations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

variation in *forms* of violence.[37] Groups with similar goals often have different patterns of violence because decisions about forms of violence are based on ideology and organizational structure.[38] If we do not treat forced marriage as a distinct form of violence we miss important patterns and reasons behind differences in violence perpetrated by rebel groups.

Studies that do exist related to forced marriage tend to be single case studies that focus on a particular model of forced marriage: rebels a*bducting* young women and girls to forcibly marry. These young women and girls are often described as "sex slaves" in media or NGO reports. One key case that fits this model is the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in Sierra Leone.[39] In my dissertation, I demonstrate that forced marriage is not limited to the physical *abduction* of girls and young women but can include different uses of coercion, force and reward to bring girls and women into the group.

A final way forced marriage has been analyzed is through a legal lens.[40] One of the major criminal debates around forced marriage was defining it as a distinct category within crimes against humanity in international criminal law.[41] The discussions around defining forced marriage as a separate crime including identifying what made it a unique crime compared to other similar crimes like sexual slavery. In the Armed Forced Revolutionary Council (AFRC) case in The Special Court of Sierra Leone, lawyers and judges made the argument that forced marriage was different from sexual slavery because it was not predominately a sexual crime and

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[37] Francisco Gutiérrez-Sanín and Elisabeth Jean Wood, "What Should We Mean by 'Pattern of Political Violence'? Repertoire, Targeting, Frequency, and Technique," *Perspectives on Politics* 15, no. 01 (March 2017): 20–41, https://doi.org/10.1017/S1537592716004114.
[38] Gutiérrez-Sanín and Wood, 34.
[39] See e.g., Chris Coulter, *Bush Wives and Girl Soldiers: Women's Lives Through War and Peace in Sierra Leone* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, 2009).
[40] Bridgette A. Toy-Cronin, "What Is Forced Marriage-Towards a Definition of Forced Marriage as a Crime against Humanity," *Colum. J. Gender & L.* 19 (2010): 539.
[41] Jain, "Forced Marriage as a Crime against Humanity."

instead its distinctiveness was about the conjugal association.[42] Legal debates have also addressed the different forms of force and the difficulty inferring consent in environments of conflict and coercion.[43]

Despite forced marriage being ruled as a distinct crime in international law, Neha Jain argues it has received little academic attention.[44] According to Jain, the "the neat definition of the crime it outlines is a little too brief to be of sufficient guidance in location the disparate elements of forced marriage."[45] The "neat definition" and the exclusive focus on forced marriage within the case of Sierra Leone, have made it less likely that forced marriage receives attention in other international tribunals.[46] However, in 2016, the International Criminal Court prosecuted an LRA leader, Dominic Ongwen, for the crime of forced marriage as "an other inhumane act."[47] The legal discussions around forced marriage have been useful in identifying what makes this pattern of violence unique, however, the focus on *proving* the crime and its application only to Sierra Leone, limit its explanatory power in understanding rebel group behavior.

THEORY OF FORCED MARRIAGE

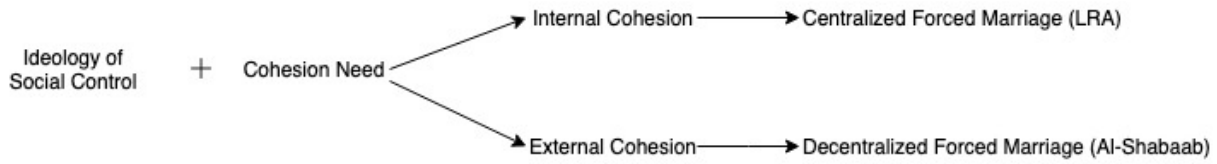
Why Rebel Groups use Forced Marriage

My theory of forced marriage explains why certain groups use forced marriage and why rebel groups promote different models of forced marriage. I highlight key effects of creating a forced marriage system including patterns related to the participation of women inside a rebel group and sexual violence outside a rebel group. I will begin by explaining why certain groups

[42] Bergsmo, Skre, and Wood, *Understanding and Proving International Sex Crimes*, 38.
[43] Bergsmo, Skre, and Wood, 246.
[44] Jain, "Forced Marriage as a Crime against Humanity," 1014.
[45] Jain, 1022.
[46] Jain, 1022.
[47] Prosecutor v. Dominic Ongwen.

use forced marriage systems and how that leads to different models of forced marriage as illustrated through my two case studies.

FIGURE 1: SUMMARY OF THEORY OF FORCED MARRIAGE



In order for a group to create a system of forced marriage they will have a specific ideology (an ideology of social control) and a specific strategic need based on cohesion. This is in contrast to traditional ways of understanding rebel groups with scholars privileging *either* strategic explanations *or* ideological explanations. My theory of forced marriage bridges these two perspectives. Rebel groups create forced marriage systems because of the strategic benefit related to cohesion, but groups that create marriage systems have a specific ideology that is reinforced and enacted through forced marriage.

Ideology, as defined by Barbara Walter, is "a set of beliefs about the proper order of society and how it can be achieved."[48] This is consistent with another commonly cited definition of ideology from C.J.M. Drake who describes ideology as being central in defining how group members view the world around them.[49] Instead of seeing ideology as just about broad political platforms like Marxism, both Walter and Drake provide more useful refined understandings of ideology. My theorizing about ideology focuses on its social components. Ideology shapes the goals of a rebel group and the strategic choices available to them. I use Laura Sjoberg's

[48] Barbara F. Walter, "The Extremist's Advantage in Civil Wars," *International Security* 42, no. 2 (November 2017): 15, https://doi.org/10.1162/ISEC_a_00292.
[49] C. J. M. Drake, "The Role of Ideology in Terrorists' Target Selection," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 10, no. 2 (June 1998): 56, https://doi.org/10.1080/09546559808427457.

definition of strategy, built from the work of Carl von Clausewitz, which describes strategy as, "the plan of how to fight a war."[50]

Ideology of Social Control

Rebel groups that use the strategy of a forced marriage system are seeking to create an ideal community. I label this an ideology of social control. Other scholars have highlighted the importance of social control, Andrew Kydd and Barbara Walter note that some terrorist groups focus on "social control" as the objective of their operations.[51] As part of defining their ideal community, rebel groups have ideas about sustaining the purity of the community and proper roles for men/boys and women/girls. These rebel groups may also be described as having millenarian ideologies meaning they believe in a coming ideal society, especially one created through revolutionary action.[52] The leaders of these types of rebel groups are seeking to reproduce themselves and therefore their power comes not from controlling territory, but instead from controlling men, women, boys, and girls. This is in contrast to other groups that seek to control a specific territory or control the government.

Social engineering is an essential part of the ideology of social control. Social engineering is the, "use of centralized planning in attempt to manage social change and regulate the future development and behaviour of a society."[53] Rebel groups with a platform of social control engage in social engineering to control the members of their new idealized society and their relationships to each other. Social engineering is not only about managing marital

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[50] Laura Sjoberg, *Gendering Global Conflict: Towards a Feminist Theory of War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 10.
[51] Andrew H. Kydd and Barbara F. Walter, "The Strategies of Terrorism," *International Security* 31, no. 1 (July 2006): 52–53, https://doi.org/10.1162/isec.2006.31.1.49.
[52] "Definition of MILLENARIANISM," accessed September 11, 2018, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/millenarianism.
[53] "Social Engineering | Definition of Social Engineering in English by Oxford Dictionaries," Oxford Dictionaries | English, accessed January 22, 2019, https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/social_engineering.

relationships between men and women, but also involves controlling other key relationships in a society. For example, Al-Shabaab's system of forced marriage involved a rearrangement of relationships between mothers and daughters and fathers and daughters. The LRA's strategy of forced marriage included managing relationships between wives. The process of social engineering is about taking control from other groups that were controlling societal interactions and replacing them with the leadership and beliefs of the rebel group.

The practice of forced marriage has embedded within it a goal to create a new future society. There is a permanence to labelling a woman a "wife" that does not occur in situations of sexual violence outside of forced marriage. In international criminal proceedings on forced marriage (specifically the "AFRC Trial Judgment on Sierra Leone") forced marriage was seen as an especially harmful crime because of the label wife and the ways in which it leads to stigmatization and rejection of the victim and its negative impact on a victim's ability to reintegrate into the community.[54] The label wife is not typically seen as indicating a temporary role and reflects the future thinking ideology of groups that create forced marriage.

Ideologies are not mutually exclusive, and each rebel group has its own unique ideology that changes over time.[55] Ideologies promoting social control are often inspired by religion because most religions have established rules for controlling the most personal aspects of an individual's life, including his or her relationship with god(s), family, sexual partner(s), and food. However, because rebel group ideologies are unique and change over time it is too simplistic to define a group's ideology as "Islamic" or "Christian." These labels are too broad and do not tell us what a rebel group is trying to achieve and what strategies and tactics they

[54] Jain, "Forced Marriage as a Crime against Humanity," 1019.
[55] Drake, "The Role of Ideology in Terrorists' Target Selection," 55.

could use to achieve their objectives. Using broad labels also makes it challenging to understand rebel group behavior that is inconsistent with their stated ideology.

Religion influences the ideologies and goals of rebel groups and is a vehicle to bind members to the group, yet scholars should not lose sight of the fact that the goals of rebel groups are political. Stevens writes, "The key to understanding 'fundamentalist' religious movements is not the respective texts, or even the zealotry of their members, but rather the specifically political character of their goals and institutional engagements."[56] We can recognize the ways in which religion influences the ideologies, strategies, communications, and goals of rebel groups, but religion on its own does not represent the ideology of a rebel group. Rebel groups use, manipulate and create ideologies to support their political goals.

Expanding upon the work of Garvey, Stevens argues that religious movements are motivated by government incursion into the public sphere.[57] Family and marriage are an area in which these battles are often waged. She explains that, "Controlling the family has always been a means by which particular political communities resist occupations and assert their identities."[58] Controlling the family is essential for rebel groups seeking to create a new social order.

Ideologies of social control are usually based on patriarchal ideas that privilege masculinity.[59] The desire to reestablish male dominance often comes after periods in which male authority has been threatened. This means the ideal society the groups are trying to promote is one in which certain men are at the top of the social structure and have access to markers of masculinity in that culture (guns, wives, children).

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[56] Stevens, *Reproducing the State*, 261.
[57] Stevens, 262.
[58] Stevens, 262.
[59] Cynthia Enloe, *The Curious Feminist: Searching for Women in a New Age of Empire* (Berkeley: University of California, 2004), 4.

For many men, their ability to marry, and the way in which marriages occur, are challenging their expectations. Globally, as detailed by Hudson and Matfess, brideprices are rising and therefore preventing many young men from marrying or delaying their marriage,[60] as is the case in Somalia and Uganda. Traditional marriage[61] is a crucial milestone in a young man's life and marks his entry to manhood. Traditional marriage and with it the status of manhood is something men have learned to expect and feel entitled to. Changing economic circumstances leading to rising brideprice or economic hardship preventing men from paying brideprice from periods of conflict are leading to a crisis in masculinity. Dolan describes this phenomenon as "thwarted masculinity."[62] Groups that are creating forced marriage want to remedy this thwarted masculinity and reassert male authority and power over women.

The desire to return power to men does not mean these groups do not recognize the power of women, in fact, rebel groups that use forced marriage want women and girls in the group because they see their strategic value. Part of the reason groups create a marriage system, as I discuss in chapter 6, is because they recognize the power of women/girls and thus they use marriage to reinforce a patriarchal structure. Therefore, a forced marriage system is also appealing to rebel groups because it provides a system for a group to organize the productive and reproductive labor of women and girls.

Strategic Motivations

The second component of my theory relates to the strategic benefits of forced marriage. The ideological focus on aspirational society is a precondition necessary for groups to consider

[60] Hudson and Matfess, "In Plain Sight."
[61] I refer to "traditional marriage" to denote the expectations within a specific society related to brideprice, dowry, or marriage ceremonies. As discussed throughout this chapter tradition is not monolithic and unchanging, but the short hand used here refers to expectations within a society at a point in time.
[62] Dolan, *Social Torture: The Case of Northern Uganda 1986-2006*.

the use of forced marriage for the strategic need of building cohesion. There are several benefits to creating a forced marriage system for rebel groups, but they all relate to cohesion. Jasen Castillo defines cohesion as, "the unity of a group and the commitment members have to a group's interests."[63] However, who makes up the "group" in this definition varies and leads to the different forms of cohesion I describe. I adapt Castillo's definition to distinguish between the two types of cohesion I discuss. Internal cohesion relates to the unity of *group members* and the commitment *group members* have to the group's interest. External cohesion is the unity of the *broader population* and the commitment the *broader population* has to the group's interest.

Cohesion is considered a top priority of all rebel groups, yet rebel groups that create systems of forced marriage have specific cohesion needs. Groups seeking to build *internal* cohesion are groups that abduct their members and therefore need a strategy to bind members to each other. Internal cohesion involves uniting the group's membership and ensuring their commitment to the group's interest. *External* cohesion is desired when a rebel group is trying to control the civilian population of an entire region. For external cohesion, the rebel group is not only focused on linking its own membership to each other, but instead on tying a broader population of nonmembers to the group and ensuring their commitment to the group's cause. In this type of cohesion, the target group that the rebel group leadership is focused on uniting is not just its own group members, but the whole population.

Al-Shabaab uses forced marriage to build external cohesion. External cohesion does not focus on binding group members to each other, but instead binds a society to the rebel group. As I detail in chapter 4, Al-Shabaab's marriage system was a key part of the way they interacted with the population in Kismayo. Al-Shabaab would arrange gatherings to learn about the marital

[63] Jasen J. Castillo, "The Will to Fight: Explaining an Army's Staying Power" (Ph.D., The University of Chicago, 2003), 41, http://search.proquest.com/docview/305295650/abstract/1C41674687B74B95PQ/1.

status of women in the town. Members of Al-Shabaab would then approach single women directly and ask to marry them, but the women had little opportunity to say no. This was a break with how marriages were traditionally arranged in Kismayo, which was through agreements between families. Al-Shabaab members did not require permission from leadership to seek out women for marriage

Al-Shabaab's system of forced marriage is a different model than what scholars typically think of when they consider forced marriage because it is decentralized. The decentralized model works for Al-Shabaab because the group is greatly concerned with controlling and infiltrating the entire population of Kismayo, more so than controlling its group members. This reflects the structure of Al-Shabaab compared to the LRA, Al-Shabaab is decentralized and composed of many voluntary members (instead of the LRA which is composed primary of abducted youth).

Al-Shabaab's system of forced marriage is used to promote external cohesion in five ways. First, Al-Shabaab forced marriages were framed as a commitment to the group not as a relationship between a man and a woman (or women). This deepened group members ties to Al-Shabaab and meant that in cases of divorce or death of a male member of Al-Shabaab, the woman would be linked to the group still. Second, Al-Shabaab forced marriages were a way to connect families to the group, similar to how marriage has functioned as an alliance building mechanism in Somalia. A third way forced marriage sought to build external cohesion was to take power away from traditional authorities to make Al-Shabaab the only powerful force in Kismayo. Fourth, Al-Shabaab's changes in marital practices, including abolishing brideprice payments, promoted a return of male power that Al-Shabaab (and other Somali men) felt had been lost after decades of conflict. Finally, Al-Shabaab's forced marriage system was part of its

system of control over all aspects of the population's lives in Kismayo ensuring that there were few areas of individuals' lives that Al-Shabaab was not controlling.

The other model of forced marriage reviewed in this dissertation, is a centralized model of forced marriage that is used to build internal cohesion. Rebel groups that abduct their members are particularly interested in developing internal cohesion to retain and control uncommitted group members. Dara Kay Cohen has shown the ways in which gang rape can be used to build internal cohesion for a group that forcibly abducts[64] and I illustrate how forced marriage can also fulfill this same function. Rebel groups that use forced marriage to build internal cohesion have centralized forced marriage.

As detailed in chapter 5, the leadership of the LRA controls forced marriage, with a specific process for how marriages were arranged and organized. When young girls were abducted there was an initiation and waiting period before they were assigned to a home and husband.[65] After the waiting period, young women/girls[66] were either chosen by a higher-ranking commander to live in his home or assigned by a higher-ranking commander to be a wife to a lower ranking, younger man. Girls who the LRA determined had not gone through puberty and were too young to be a wife were assigned to a man as a *ting ting* or domestic servant. At points, Joseph Kony, the leader of the LRA, would specifically assign women/girls to individual soldiers

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[64] Dara Kay Cohen, *Rape During Civil War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, 2016).
[65] Khristopher Carlson and Dyan Mazurana, "Forced Marriage within the Lord's Resistance Army, Uganda" (Medford, MA: Feinstein International Center, May 2008), 19.
[66] The categories of women and girls are significant because of the different gendered expectations for women and girls. Many girls were forcibly married in the LRA and some girls may have also subject to Al-Shabaab forced marriage. Because of the high number of girls that were forcibly married in the LRA I will use the short-hand "women/girls" to capture that both categories of females were subject to this pattern. For Al-Shabaab, when I know the pattern is for women *and* girls, I will indicate with same shorthand. However, as reflected by interview participants, for Al-Shabaab certain themes were specifically for women and girls were not discussed.

as wives or *ting tings.*[67] Kony would also intervene in marital relationships if there were problems in a marriage.[68]

There are four ways in which the LRA used forced marriage to build internal cohesion – some of which are similar to Al-Shabaab's paths to building external cohesion. The first way LRA marriages built internal cohesion was by framing marriage as a commitment to the LRA. This is similar to Al-Shabaab's framing of marriage and was especially useful for the LRA because many of its members did not join the group voluntarily. Second, LRA forced marriages were a way for the group leadership to control all aspects of members' lives and enforce its own system of discipline and control. This was a way to take away members of the LRA's sense of individual identity and link all aspects of their life, including the children they produced, to the group. Forced marriage was also useful for the LRA in building internal cohesion by providing an organizational structure arranged around family relationships. Finally, the LRA's system of forced marriage, similar to Al-Shabaab's, promoted a form of patriarchal control and specific masculinity that male LRA leadership felt had been lost in northern Uganda.

Effects of Forced Marriage System

Forced marriage has two primary effects on the group's broader gender organization. First, forced marriage allows groups to bring in women/girls and use them in key roles without threatening the dominance of men/boys in the group. Second, forced marriage allow groups to control members' sexual relations more broadly. In the LRA and Al-Shabaab there was little reported sexual violence outside forced marriage. These two effects of the forced marriage system reinforce the groups' ideologies and provide strategic benefits.

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[67] Dolan, *Social Torture: The Case of Northern Uganda 1986-2006*, 92.
[68] Interview with Former female member of the LRA, L5, December 11, 2017.

Groups that create forced marriage want to bring women and girls into the group as part of their ideological project of creating a new society. Rebel groups that use forced marriage also recognize the key strategic and tactical benefits of having women/girls as members. Women/girls key roles are not always combat related, but are essential to rebel group operations nonetheless. Al-Shabaab and the LRA rely on women and girls not only to be wives and mothers, but also for essential roles that support the armed group, as detailed in chapter 6. Al-Shabaab benefits from having women serve in fundraising, intelligence, and recruiting roles. LRA relies on women and girls for raiding/looting, carrying loads, cooking, cleaning, and farming.

In Al-Shabaab and the LRA, women and girls' roles are demarcated based on their marital status. For example, to be a full member of Al-Shabaab, a woman has to be married to a male Al-Shabaab member. However, Al-Shabaab relies on women in more part-time support roles and does not require these women to be married to Al-Shabaab male members. In chapter 6, I present a novel typology of women's roles in Al-Shabaab with details on Al-Shabaab female members, part-time employees, and supporters.

In the LRA, women and girls' roles in the group changed over time. When the LRA was initially formed, it had an all-female combat unit.[69] Once the LRA was given safe haven in South Sudan, they created their system of forced marriage and organized members into families and disbanded the female combat unit. At the individual level, women/girls' roles change in the LRA based on their marital and reproductive status. Before women/girls are married they are required to fight. Once women/girls are married they fight less frequently. Finally, when women/girls have children they are rarely required to fight. This transition in women/girls' roles and tasks

[69] Erin Baines, "Forced Marriage as a Political Project: Sexual Rules and Relations in the Lord's Resistance Army," *Journal of Peace Research* 51, no. 3 (May 1, 2014): 405–17, https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343313519666; Erin Baines, *Buried in the Heart: Women, Complex Victimhood and the War in Northern Uganda* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 334.

based on marital and reproductive status, illustrate the ways in which forced marriage was an essential part of the gendered division of labor in the LRA.

Another effect of forced marriage, illustrated through the two case studies, is that these two rebel groups were able to limit other forms of sexual violence. There has been little evidence of use of sexual violence against the civilian population in northern Uganda and Somalia.[70] Both groups wanted to control the sexual relations of their members and forced marriage were a part of this system of control. There are both ideological and strategic motivations for Al-Shabaab and LRA to limit sexual violence outside forced marriage.

The strategic reasons were that the LRA was concerned that sexually transmitted diseases would reduce their numbers. Additionally, as part of their system of internal cohesion LRA leadership wanted to control every aspect of their members' lives. Ideologically the LRA was trying to create a "pure" "new Acholi" and believed in cleansing rituals and other initiations for group members. This sense of purity could have been seen as being compromised if "new Acholi" were born outside of the sanctioned LRA marriages.

For Al-Shabaab, the ideological reason to create a forced marriage system fit into appearing to global Islamic communities that they respect women's sexuality and protect women and girls. This approach is linked with the reasoning that Al-Shabaab does not frequently use girls or women in combat. The strategic reason for creating a forced marriage system was an attempt to infiltrate the population and appear more legitimate than past authorities that have used rape. Al-Shabaab contrasted itself with previous ruling authorities, especially the warlords

[70] Little evidence of sexual violence does not mean it did not occur at all, but instead that it is not a widely reported pattern of violence. One notable exception by Al-Shabaab is recent accounts of sexual violence against Kenyan women and girls in camps along the border of Kenya and Somalia, see Charlotte Attwood, "The Sex Slaves of Al-Shabab," *BBC News*, May 25, 2017, sec. Magazine, https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-40022953.

in Kismayo, who perpetrated widespread rape in the population.[71] The warlords' rape and abuse of girls and women was a key complaint of residents of Kismayo. Forced marriage is therefore not only critical for understanding the benefits they bring a rebel group but as I show with Al-Shabaab, can also lead to different organizational strategies and tactical decisions.

ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS

Other explanations that try to account for forced marriage fall into three categories: sexual access, attracting male fighters, and religion. Each of these reasons are compelling and many of them relate to the ideological and strategic reasons that are *a part of* my theory. On their own, however, these arguments do not sufficiently explain why rebel groups create systems of forced marriage.

The first argument states that rebel groups create forced marriages for continuous sexual access. Megan Mackenzie describes the forced marriage system perpetrated by the RUF in Sierra Leone and notes the RUF system conflated sexual violence with taking a woman as a wife. She argues for some the motivation behind these marriages was "gaining consistent access to a woman's body."[72] This could be a part of the motivation for *individual* men participating in forced marriage, but my theory of forced marriage examines motivation at the leadership level. Additionally, male members of rebel groups can have access to sex with girls and women through force without labeling these interactions part of martial relationships.[73] Finally, the

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[71] See e.g. Life and Peace Institute, Peace Direct, and Somali Women Solidarity Organization, "Increasing Women's Participation and Inclusion in Jubbaland Peace Processes: A Study Report," April 2018.
[72] Megan Mackenzie, *Female Soldiers in Sierra Leone: Sex, Security, and Post-Conflict Development* (New York: New York University Press, 2012), 109.
[73] This can happen with female group members or with civilians. For details on sex with fellow group members outside marriage, for details on these relationships inside the FMLN and FARC see, Jocelyn Viterna, *Women in War: The Micro-Processes of Mobilization in El-Salvador* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Keith Stanski, "Terrorism, Gender, and Ideology: A Case Study of Women Who Join the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC)," in *The Making of a Terrorist: Recruitment, Training, and Root Causes Volume One: Recruitment* (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2006).

motivation of sexual access does not help explain why some groups use forced marriage and other groups do not (because ostensibly male members of rebel groups would have the same level of interest in sexual access).The discussion around forced marriage and sexual access relate to broader discussions about whether rape is about access to sex or about power and domination, further emphasizing the idea that gender-based violence can have complex motivations besides sexual gratification.[74]

Another explanation for forced marriage is presented by Hudson and Matfess who argue that rebel groups use marriage prospects to attract male fighters to join their group. They note this is particularly effective when brideprice payments are inflated. Hudson and Matfess' argument links to the broader strategic reason of forced marriage to build cohesion. However, similar to the arguments related to sexual access, Hudson and Matfess do not address the ideological reasons behind forced marriage and do not present explanations for why all groups don't use forced marriage to attract fighters. My theory, by linking the strategic and ideological motivations for forced marriage, provides a more comprehensive explanation for the pattern of forced marriage.

Finally, another way to explain forced marriage draws on religion. In particular, scholars have used ideas about Islam to limit analysis of certain behaviors within rebel groups that claim to be espousing Islamic ideology. If Islam on its own explained forced marriage, we should observe all violent Islamist armed groups using forced marriage. In fact, Al-Qaeda, a group with whom several other Islamist groups are closely aligned, does not use forced marriage. Al-Qaeda not only does not use forced marriage but has gone far outside Islamic rules about sexuality and sex being restricted to martial relationships. To recruit female members, Al-Qaeda has raped

[74] Maria Eriksson Baaz and Maria Stern, "Curious Erasures: The Sexual in Wartime Sexual Violence," *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 20, no. 3 (July 3, 2018): 295–314, https://doi.org/10.1080/14616742.2018.1459197.

women and girls to compel them to join the group out of shame.[75] The variation in the behavior around forced marriage and rebel groups between two closely related Islamist groups (Al-Shabaab swore allegiance to Al-Qaeda in 2006[76]) demonstrates that the use of forced marriage cannot be ascribed to Islam. Additionally, including one Islamist group and one Christian group as my case studies demonstrates that forced marriage cannot be explained by one type of religion.[77]

LITERATURE REVIEW

Scholars seeking to explain rebel group behavior have used *either* strategy or ideology to explain why rebel groups act in certain ways. My theory demonstrates that behavior, especially related to gender, is explained by combining both strategic and ideological factors. I start by reviewing the broad literature on rebel groups and the divide between strategy and ideology. I then review the literature on cohesion and highlight the gaps in this literature by excluding marriage as a tool for building cohesion. Finally, I review the literature related to gender and rebel groups, where some studies mimic the divide between strategy and ideology, and other research that focuses on single case studies related to forced marriage.

Literature on Rebel Groups: Strategy vs. Ideology

The strategic model (also called the "instrumental model") is the dominant paradigm for scholars in terrorism studies.[78] According to the strategic model, individuals who use terrorism as a tactic are seen as rational actors who undertake a cost benefit assessment of their behavior.

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[75] Mia Bloom, *Bombshell: Women and Terrorism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 236.
[76] Jonathan Masters and Mohammed Aly Sergie, "Al-Shabab," *CFR Backgrounders, Council on Foreign Relations* 13 (2015), http://mercury.ethz.ch/serviceengine/Files/ISN/183543/ipublicationdocument_singledocument/09426ebe-42b0-4c62-bf53-70a85e6a640c/en/Al-Shabab+-+Council+on+Foreign+Relations.pdf.
[77] To further test this theory, I plan to add a third case study of a rebel group that uses forced marriage that is not religious, such as the Revolutionary United Front in Sierra Leone.
[78] Max Abrahms, "What Terrorists Really Want: Terrorist Motives and Counterterrorism Strategy," *International Security* 32, no. 4 (Spring 2008): 78.

This strategic argument is exemplified in Gordon McCormick's scholarship which explains that a terrorist organization's decisions about its behavior (including decisions related to targets, tactics, and timing) are based on the actions of its opponent, political constituency, and other actors that influence the strategic environment.[79] He notably does not mention ideology as having an effect on a terrorist group's actions.

The strategic model has been challenged by scholars who see ideology playing a role in terrorist group behavior. Martha Crenshaw sees ideology as a guide to intentions of terrorist groups as well as influencing decisions related to tactics, organization, and communication.[80] Francisco Guitérrez-Sanín and Elisabeth Wood argue that rebel groups (their focus is not exclusively on terrorist groups) adopt ideologies instrumentally and then use them as a guide to choosing strategies and tactics.[81] Barbara Walter's argument is similar to Guitérrez-Sanín and Wood's argument and Walter explains that rebel groups use ideologies instrumentally, but focuses specifically on extreme ideologies. She defines extreme ideologies by comparing them to the majority opinion of the affected population.[82] According to Walter, rebel groups will emphasize certain aspects of their ideology (and potentially a more extreme version of their ideology) when it provides a competitive advantage based on the current strategic conditions.[83] Other scholars have critiqued Walter for having an instrumental view of ideology instead of seeing ideology as a sufficient explanation for rebel group behavior on its own.[84] By combining

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[79] Gordon H. McCormick, "Terrorist Decision Making," *Annual Review of Political Science* 6, no. 1 (June 2003): 482, https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.polisci.6.121901.085601.
[80] Martha Crenshaw, "Theories of Terrorism: Instrumental and Organizational Approaches," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 10, no. 4 (December 1987): 15, https://doi.org/10.1080/01402398708437313.
[81] Francisco Gutiérrez Sanín and Elisabeth Jean Wood, "Ideology in Civil War: Instrumental Adoption and Beyond," *Journal of Peace Research* 51, no. 2 (March 2014): 214, https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343313514073.
[82] Walter, "The Extremist's Advantage in Civil Wars," 16.
[83] Walter, 12.
[84] Max Abrahms, Jonathan Leader, and Kai Thaler, "Correspondence: Ideological Extremism in Armed Conflict," *International Security* 43, no. 1 (Summer 2018): 186–90.

the strategic and ideological models, I provide a way of viewing rebel group behavior that avoids the key weaknesses of each model.

Using the ideological and strategic explanation together enables my theory of forced marriage to explain change over time in rebel group behavior and positions.[85] For example, the LRA did not start using forced marriage until the strategic conditions changed and they had a base in South Sudan. While the LRA had the ideology to create a new group of Acholi people before the change, they did not decide to start *creating* it until strategic conditions made it possible. Al-Shabaab did not include women in key roles initially, but incorporated them into the group through forced marriage later, when they needed the strategic advantage of having female group members. If scholars see ideology as standardized and unchanging, it is easy to miss the delicate balance rebel groups are undertaking in stressing certain aspects of their ideology based on strategic conditions.

As noted earlier, ideology is "a set of beliefs about the proper order of society and how it can be achieved."[86] Most scholars see ideology as referring to a broad political platform of a rebel group. For example, in their study of the influence of ideologies on female participation in rebel groups, Reed Wood and Jakana Thomas, examine three broad ideologies: leftists (Marxist) groups, Islamism, and nationalism.[87] Livia Shubiger and Matthew Zelina argue that focusing on broad "programmatic orientations" like Marxism or ethnic nationalism, makes it easy to overlook important variations within categories.[88] Additionally, as emphasized in this

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[85] See also Kai M. Thaler, "Ideology and Violence in Civil Wars: Theory and Evidence from Mozambique and Angola," *Civil Wars* 14, no. 4 (December 2012): 546–67, https://doi.org/10.1080/13698249.2012.740203 for change in time in ideology and use of indiscriminate violence.
[86] Walter, "The Extremist's Advantage in Civil Wars," 15.
[87] Reed M Wood and Jakana L Thomas, "Women on the Frontline: Rebel Group Ideology and Women's Participation in Violent Rebellion," *Journal of Peace Research* 54, no. 1 (January 2017): 33, https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343316675025.
[88] Livia Isabella Schubiger and Matthew Zelina, "Ideology in Armed Groups," *PS: Political Science & Politics* 50, no. 4 (October 2017): 948, https://doi.org/10.1017/S1049096517001056.

dissertation, there are distinct commonalities across groups with different broad ideologies that are significant. Al-Shabaab would be labeled as an Islamist group and the LRA would be likely be labeled as a nationalist group, but these labels miss the similar feature that both groups are focused on creating new societies. By creating the concept of the ideology of social control, I emphasize important similarities between groups that appear to have different backgrounds (Islamist vs. Christian), yet actually have very similar ideas about the proper order of society.

If we accept that ideology is important to understanding rebel group behavior it is necessary to be able to conceptualize ideology and understand the way it varies across rebel groups. Shubiger and Zelina state that ideologies do not influence rebel groups in the same ways. They suggest measuring the "external intrusiveness" of ideologies, or how the ideologies are used to control the lives of civilians.[89] In contrast, they label "internal institutionalization," as the level to which rebel groups internally promote a specific ideology to members.[90] This maps onto my ideas about internal cohesion versus external cohesion. The LRA focused on internal cohesion and had high levels of "internal institutionalization" because they were most focused on promoting a specific ideology *within their group*. Al-Shabaab focuses on "external intrusiveness" and aimed to promote their ideology *within the population* they seek to control.

Studying ideology only through broad lenses also leads to scholars missing key features of an ideology, such as how groups think about gender roles and relations. Victor Asal and co-authors add ideas about gender to a conception of ideology. They do a regression analysis of the Middle East Minorities at Risk Organizational Behavior dataset to study the effect of a "gender inclusive ideology" on the use of violence by political groups (armed and unarmed).[91] The

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[89] Schubiger and Zelina, 948.
[90] Schubiger and Zelina, 948–49.
[91] Victor Asal et al., "Gender Ideologies and Forms of Contentious Mobilization in the Middle East," *Journal of Peace Research* 50, no. 3 (May 2013): 305–18, https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343313476528.

authors do not provide detail on what a gender inclusive ideology is except for noting a group with a gender inclusive ideology advocates for the inclusion of women in public life.[92] While this study is an encouraging first step in including gender in studies of ideology, ideologies have more detailed ideas about gender than can be captured in an inclusive or non-inclusive dichotomous variable.

Ideology is not usually studied as a key variable in explaining rebel group behavior and instead it is seen as a secondary factor compared to resources or other strategic decisions.[93] Kai Thaler argues against a prominent view of ideology, promoted in the work of Jeremy Weinstein, that views ideology instrumentally.[94] Weinstein discusses ideology's ability to help rebel groups, that lack resources, recruit and retain members.[95] According to Weinstein, rebel groups that have fewer resources and motivate their recruits based on ideology, use violence more selectively than groups with access to resources.[96] Thaler argues, in contrast to Weinstein's instrumental view of ideology, that rebel group ideology has an important *independent effect* on a group's use of indiscriminate violence. I extend Thaler's theorizing about the way ideology influences indiscriminate violence and apply it more specifically to gender-based violence. Thaler notes, "Ideology is present not only in thought or discourse, but also in behavior."[97] Instead of only understanding a rebel group's ideology based on an organized political platform, for example Marxism, my theory encourages scholars to look at ideology more broadly and to take seriously its influence on rebel group behavior related to forced marriage.

Rebel Group Dynamics: Internal and External Cohesion

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[92] Asal et al., 312.
[93] See e.g., Thaler, "Ideology and Violence in Civil Wars," 548; Jeremy Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).
[94] Thaler, "Ideology and Violence in Civil Wars."
[95] Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence*.
[96] Weinstein.
[97] Thaler, "Ideology and Violence in Civil Wars," 561.

Rebel groups are social institutions and therefore they must consider how to effectively organize their members. Cohesion is used to describe the effectiveness of how groups are organized, yet as described by Megan Mackenzie there is no accepted, clear definition of cohesion, or common approach to measuring its effect.[98] In this dissertation, I use a broad definition, "the unity of a group and the commitment members have to a group's interests,"[99] and refine it based on the target group the rebel leadership is seeking to unite. While there are debates over definitions of cohesion, most scholars agree that cohesion is especially essential for rebel groups. Paul Staniland explains that rebel groups spend "enormous amounts of time and energy" trying to build or sustain cohesion because organization is central to waging an internal conflict.[100]

Scholars studying cohesion also recognize the social nature of this phenomenon. Mackenzie refers to this as social cohesion which is the emotional bonds between group members.[101] Staniland proposes a "social-institutional" theory of cohesion focused on social networks.[102] Groups with the highest level of cohesion, or what Staniland labels "integrated groups," rely on social institutions to connect members in a standardized way across space and time.[103] Despite his focus on formalized social institutions, Staniland does not acknowledge marriage as a key institution that can solidify bonds within rebel groups.

One way to build cohesion is forms of communal violence. Dara Kay Cohen theorizes about the link between gang rape and internal cohesion. She argues that gang rape is used as a

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[98] Megan MacKenzie, *Beyond the Band of Brothers: The U.S. Military and the Myth That Women Can't Fight.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015.
[99] Castillo, "The Will to Fight," 41.
[100] Paul Staniland, *Networks of Rebellion: Explaining Insurgent Cohesion and Collapse* (Cornell: Cornell University Press, 2014), 3.
[101] MacKenzie, *Beyond the Band of Brothers,* 143.
[102] Staniland, *Networks of Rebellion: Explaining Insurgent Cohesion and Collapse*, 9.
[103] Staniland, 6.

tool to build cohesion inside groups with low cohesion, specifically armed groups that forcibly recruit their members.[104] I expand Cohen's theory of sexual violence in conflict by arguing that forced marriage is an alternative tool to build cohesion, and that cohesion can also be built outside the group (external cohesion), not just within it (internal cohesion).

There has been less research on what I have labeled "external cohesion," but the academic field of rebel governance has looked at how rebel groups govern populations. Rebel governance is a "set of actions insurgents engage in to regulate the social, political, and economic life of non-combatants during war."[105] Zachariah Mampilly and Ana Arjona study the different ways in which rebels can govern a population. Mampilly focuses on structures and practices developed by the modern state that can be used productively for the goals of rebel groups.[106] Whereas other studies of rebel groups focus solely on their use of violence, Mampilly explains that rebel groups can demonstrate their power through means other than violence.[107] Marriage is a central strategy used by modern states to organize and regulate citizens, but is only briefly mentioned in Mampilly's book when he references the Tamil Eelam Penal Code used by the LTTE in Sri Lanka that had a provision regarding marriage.[108]

Rebel governance literature has also looked at the ways in which rebel groups trying to govern sometimes regulate what are seen as the more private aspects of citizens' lives, yet this literature has not focused on marriage. Arjona notes that certain forms of rebel governance (or what she labels wartime social orders) regulate aspects of life seen as belonging in the private

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[104] Cohen, *Rape During Civil War*.
[105] Ana Arjona, Nelson Kasfir, and Zachariah Mampilly, "Introduction," in *Rebel Governance in Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 3.
[106] Zachariah Mampilly, *Rebel Rulers: Insurgent Governance and Civilian Life During War* (Cornell: Cornell University Press, 2011), 9.
[107] Mampilly, 8.
[108] Mampilly, 171.

sphere such as attire and sexual conduct.[109] She highlights variation in the intrusiveness of rebel governance into citizens' lives and notes that this has important effects on the social context. Arjona does not emphasize marriage as an essential tool to control citizens' lives. I fill a critical gap in the rebel governance literature through my examination of Al-Shabaab's use of forced marriage as tool of governance.

Literature on Female Participation in Rebel Groups

The debate over strategic versus ideological explanations for rebel group behavior has also translated onto studies of gender dynamics within rebel groups. My theory of forced marriage provides an example of the ways in which the ideological and strategic arguments can be combined and fills gaps in explaining the gendered division of labor in rebel groups that use forced marriage.

The strategic analysis of the gendered behavior of rebel group is exemplified in a study by Lindsey O'Rourke on female suicide terrorism (FST). O'Rourke argues that groups use FST because FST is highly effective and provides strategic benefits for groups. The strategic benefits of FST include increasing the recruitment pool for suicide bombers, strengthening mass backing for the group, signaling the commitment of the group to its cause, and helping generate increased media coverage.[110] She examines both secular and religious groups and argues that the pattern of both of these groups using FST shows that, "strategy trumps ideology."[111] O'Rourke's conclusion is a simplification of the relationship between strategy and ideology. Strategic benefits are central to decisions about gendered policies and practices, as illustrated throughout

[109] Ana Arjona, "Wartime Institutions: A Research Agenda," ed. Laia Balcells and Patricia Justino, *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 58, no. 8 (December 2014): 1381, https://doi.org/10.1177/0022002714547904.
[110] Lindsey A. O'Rourke, "What's Special about Female Suicide Terrorism?," *Security Studies* 18, no. 4 (December 2, 2009): 699, https://doi.org/10.1080/09636410903369084.
[111] O'Rourke, 692.

this dissertation, but strategy and ideology do not operate separately from each other. At times, groups may make a specific decision because of strategic benefit, but will need to support this strategy with ideological justifications. Alternatively, a group might make decision because of strategic benefit, but later will reverse that decision because of backlash from the ways in which it conflicts with their ideology. Viewing ideology only through the lens of secular or religious simplifies ideologies whereas secular groups are unproblematically seen as able to distort gender roles versus religious groups that are seen as facing more challenges in manipulating gender norms.

Gender has a key role in many ideologies and many ideologies have rigid expectations for gender that are not only based on religious justifications. My theory of forced marriage recognizes the strategic benefits women/girls can provide rebel groups, but takes ideology seriously, instead of dismissing it, as O'Rourke does. Instead of seeing ideology only through the lens of secular or religious I describe details in ideologies that lead them to use specific strategies like forced marriage.

A more useful version of the strategic argument can be found in Laura Sjoberg's argument that armed groups (she is writing about state armed groups) strategies and tactics are guided by gendered understandings of their society and their opponents.[112] This argument outlines an implicit relationship between ideology (which Sjoberg describes as gendered understandings) and strategy. A gendered understanding of society and a rebel group's components have an important influence on the ideology of social control.

Studies examining the relationship between gender, ideologies, and group composition, including research by Alexis Henshaw and by Reed Wood and Jakana Thomas, are unable to

[112] Sjoberg, *Gendering Global Conflict: Towards a Feminist Theory of War*, 11.

fully explain rebel group behavior through the framework of ideology because of their narrow interpretation of ideology. The two studies, by Henshaw, and Wood and Thomas, try to answer the question of what types of rebel groups are more likely to include women. Henshaw views this question from the supply side (why women join rebel groups) and Wood and Thomas view the question from the demand side (why certain rebel groups choose to incorporate women).[113] Henshaw predicts that women will be less likely to join Islamic groups because of their "strict interpretation of Islamic law." [114] Wood and Thomas hypothesize that groups that challenge existing social hierarchies are more likely to recruit large numbers of female fighters, while those striving to preserve traditional hierarchies will limit women's participation.[115] Both studies note that the presence of women in Islamist groups do not fit with their predictions and neither study constructs a new argument to explain the pattern of female members of Islamist groups. These studies miss two important patterns in rebel group behavior 1) the ways in which ideology can be manipulated for strategic benefit and 2) the fact that forced marriage can be used to incorporate women into rebel groups but retain traditional ideas about gendered relationships.

Regulating Sexual Relationships inside Rebel Groups without Marriage

Not all rebel groups use forced marriage to regulate relationships internally, but many groups have rules about sexual relations between members. Joshua Goldstein traces the different policies rebel groups and state militaries have devised for organizing mixed gender units. Goldstein provides examples of armed groups that discouraged sexual relations between male and female members, like the National Liberation Army in Yugoslavia during World War II and

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[113] Supply and demand framework described in Jakana L. Thomas and Kanisha D. Bond, "Women's Participation in Violent Political Organizations," *American Political Science Review* 109, no. 03 (August 2015): 488–506, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055415000313.
[114] Alexis Henshaw, *Why Women Rebel: Understanding Women's Participation in Armed Rebel Groups* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 117.
[115] Wood and Thomas, "Women on the Frontline."

the guerilla groups fighting in the Iraq in the 1990s. According to Goldstein, the guerilla groups in Iraq wanted all group members to operate as brothers and sisters and even suspended the marriages of already married couples.[116]

Two sociological studies trace the policies of rebel groups in different regions of the world and provide useful examples of methods rebel groups used to control sexual relations apart from forced marriage. Jocelyn Viterna's study of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) in El Salvador in which sexual relationships had to be approved by group leadership and Jeff Goodwin's study on the Huk movement in the Philippines. The FMLN and Huk movement were influenced by Marxist ideology so may have commonalities in the way they viewed gender relationships.

The FMLN did not have marriages but did have a system of regulating relationships between men and women that encouraged monogamous relationships regulated by commanders. Viterna notes the ways in which this relationship system was influenced by ideology and strategic benefits. First, the appearance of young women in monogamous relationships, gave the FMLN an advantage in recruiting young women because they would use these relationships as evidence that the young women's sexuality would be respected.[117] This also fit into the FMLN's ideological platform that they were more just than the military in El Salvador that perpetrated sexual violence[118] and therefore women would be safer with the FMLN. Additionally, and importantly for my theory, monogamous relationships also assisted with cohesion. There were more men than women in the FMLN, which meant not all men could have partners. By creating a system in which women could choose their partners it reduced conflict between male members

[116] Joshua Goldstein, *War and Gender: How Gender Shapes the War System and Vice Versa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 77–106.
[117] Viterna, *Women in War: The Micro-Processes of Mobilization in El-Salvador*, 167.
[118] Viterna, 167.

that could threaten cohesion.[119] Finally, monogamy helped prevent the spread of sexual diseases (a similar reason the LRA created their marriage system) and reduced unwanted pregnancies that would have created operational challenges.[120]

Jeff Goodwin also writes about a rebel group that manages relationships but does not create a forced marriage system. His research is valuable to my theory by providing sociological analysis of intimate relationships inside rebel groups and the ways in which they relate to cohesion. Goodwin's theorizing is focused on the Huk movement, an all-male communist insurgency in the Philippines. The Huk leadership, according to Goodwin, was concerned that the male married members would not be committed to the group because of their connection to women and other family members outside the movement. The concerns about male commitment was described by Huk leadership as the "sex problem" or "the unhappy problem of men without women" (men without sexual access to women).[121] To solve the "sex problem," while still retaining control over male members' sexual lives, the leadership created rules for the sexual relations of its members. Goodwin notes that there were "Huk marriages" which were ceremonies that focused not on the couple's loyalty to each other, but their joint commitment to the movement.[122] We see similar patterns of using marriage to link a couple to the rebel group, not to each other, in Al-Shabaab and the LRA. There were also rules that allowed Huk men to take second wives while they were away from their first wives if they had permission from their first wives.[123] Requiring the men to get permission from their first wives was an effort to avoid negative perceptions from the broader population and claims that the group was immoral.

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[119] Viterna, 167.
[120] Viterna, 167.
[121] Jeff Goodwin, "The Libidinal Constitution of a High-Risk Social Movement: Affectual Ties and Solidarity in the Huk Rebellion, 1946 to 1954," *American Sociological Review* 62 (February 1997): 59.
[122] Goodwin, 60.
[123] Goodwin, 61.

Although the Huks did not create a forced marriage system, Goodwin highlights the ways in which marriages in rebel groups, are innately linked to ideas about internal and external cohesion.

Single Case Studies of Marriages in Militaries and Rebel Groups

Marriage is not only important for cohesion inside rebel groups, but also has been important for state militaries. Cynthia Enloe discusses the ways in which the U.S. military manipulated relationships between male soldiers and their wives to sustain the military's goals. She summarizes the debate over whether marriage was useful to the military - with some believing it might minimize male soldiers' drunkenness and soliciting of prostitutes, and others believing marriage would divide a soldier's loyalty and force the armed forces to be responsible for maintaining housing, health care, and "family harmony." [124] The U.S. military, as described by Enloe, relied on the free labor of wives of soldiers on military bases. Wives of U.S. military members were needed to turn a military base into a community and were required to put their husbands' success in the military above their own needs.[125] Military wives were also seen as important to "ensur[ing] a cohesive military a generation later."[126] Enloe's analysis of the ways in which the U.S. military manipulated marital relationships for its own gain is useful for understanding why rebel groups might engage in a similar strategy through forced marriage.

My theory of forced marriage builds upon findings from one of the most studied groups that used forced marriage, the RUF in Sierra Leone. The works of Megan Mackenzie and Chris Coulter look at RUF marriage within the broader social gendered landscape in Sierra Leone.

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[124] Cynthia Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches & Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 71.
[125] Enloe, 72.
[126] Enloe, 72.

Mackenzie's use of the theory of "conjugal order" is especially relevant for the ideological component of my argument. She writes:

> 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. There is no singular form of conjugal order; rather, conjugal order can be used as an analytical tool to detect and examine the laws, regulations, and norms that dominate a particular region or context. Conjugal order is informed by the laws associated with marriage and family, including marital, paternity, adoption, and inheritance laws as well as broader social norms.[127]

Mackenzie writes that the way in which the RUF's used forced marriage and sexual violence disrupted the conjugal order in Sierra Leone. Coulter describes the ways in which marriage inside the RUF both broke with marital traditions in Sierra Leone, as well as upheld certain aspects of marital traditions.[128] Mackenzie and Coulter's scholarship reveals that the effects of forced marriage by a rebel group can only be understood by examining the local context. Additionally, both of their works demonstrate that forced marriage inside a rebel group is informed by the gendered context outside rebel groups, and rebel group leadership strategically manipulate, break, or sustain, certain aspects of cultural marriage practices.

Finally, Zoe Marks' work on forced marriage and sexual violence inside the RUF describes a complex relationship between marriage and cohesion. Marks argues that the leaders of the RUF saw rape as something that would threaten group cohesion and credibility, but they did not have enough control over their combatants to prevent rape.[129] Marks argues that leaders even attempted to prevent rape (unsuccessfully) by giving RUF fighters wives.[130] Marks advances the strategic perspective in arguing that the RUF manipulated gender relations around

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[127] Mackenzie, *Female Soldiers in Sierra Leone: Sex, Security, and Post-Conflict Development*, 4.
[128] Coulter, *Bush Wives and Girl Soldiers: Women's Lives Through War and Peace in Sierra Leone*, 110.
[129] Zoe Marks, "Sexual Violence Inside Rebellion: Policies and Perspectives of the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone," *Civil Wars* 15, no. 3 (September 2013): 360, https://doi.org/10.1080/13698249.2013.842749.
[130] Marks, 364.

military organizational priorities.[131] Marks' argument is useful in highlighting the fact that not all groups that have forced marriage are able to prevent sexual violence as occurred in my two case studies. This provides an area to expand my theory of forced marriage by examining when forced marriage builds cohesion to create enough command and control that commanders can control the sexual relations of members outside forced marriages.

Research by Clémence Pinaud looks at another context in which a rebel group distorted marriage practices for its own strategic benefit, the Sudan People's Liberation army (SPLA) in South Sudan. Pinaud describes the ways in which the SPLA manipulated the marriage market for its strategic benefit.[132] She does not specifically describe these marriages as forced, but her description of soldiers being sent to "collect women from different communities," and SPLA members intimidating fathers so they would not have to pay bridewealth, makes the marriages not completely voluntary (again demonstrating the spectrum of coercion).[133] Pinaud describes a process in which marriage became part of the SPLA's "circuit of predation" and was used strategically to create ties among ethnic groups.[134] One respondent told Pinaud, "This is a very strategic plan! Because you can't fight with the husband of your sister."[135] The SPLA's forced marriage system is being used strategically to build external cohesion similar to how Al-Shabaab uses their forced marriage system. Pinaud's descriptions support my theory and provide a potential case to test the theory in future research.

Another important single case study of forced marriage looks at one of my cases studies, the LRA. Erin Baines argues that the LRA use of forced marriage can be explained because of its

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[131] Marks, 372.
[132] Clémence Pinaud, "Military Kinship, Inc.: Patronage, Inter-Ethnic Marriages and Social Classes in South Sudan," *Review of African Political Economy* 43, no. 148 (April 2, 2016): 243–59, https://doi.org/10.1080/03056244.2016.1181054.
[133] Pinaud, 245–46.
[134] Pinaud, 247.
[135] Pinaud, 246.

ideology and goal of creating a new Acholi group.[136] While Baines acknowledges some of the ways in which forced marriage binds members of the LRA to each other, her primary argument is that one can only understand forced marriage inside the LRA by seeing it as part of the group's nationalist project.[137] While my theory, in line with Baines' theorizing, acknowledges the importance of the ideological motivation for rebel groups who use forced marriage, it also views cohesion as essential to the reason groups use this strategy. I also build upon Baines' argument by examining forced marriage in a comparative context.

In conclusion, with the exception of single case studies by feminist researchers, literature on rebel groups has failed to analyze forced marriage and marriage in general, despite the focus on related aspects of group behavior such as cohesion and rebel governance. Further, the focus on *either* a strategic or ideological perspective has caused scholarship on rebel groups to miss important areas of overlap across groups. The scholarship on gender dynamics inside rebel groups has also ignored the role of marriage in bringing women/girls into rebel groups and controlling them once they are inside the group. There has been important research in single cases of forced marriage, but there has been no comparative analysis to examine the reasons that rebel groups create forced marriage.

CONCLUSION

By creating a comparative theory of forced marriage, I contribute to research and fill gaps related to scholarship on female participation in rebel groups, the control (or lack of control) of sexual relations of rebel group members, and single case study examinations of forced marriage in specific rebel groups. A theory of forced marriage not only helps scholars and policymakers

[136] Baines, "Forced Marriage as a Political Project."
[137] Baines, 11.

understand the pattern of forced marriage but provides insight on rebel group operations more broadly.

I develop two new concepts that will assist scholars in understanding rebel groups. The concept of external cohesion is useful in understanding the relationships between rebel groups and the populations they are trying to govern. External cohesion is distinct from ideas about governance because it is used to examine the *social* ties that rebel groups seek to create to effectively control and manage a population. Second, I broaden the ways in which ideologies are classified by describing an ideology of social control. Traditional classifications of rebel group ideology, like Marxism or Islamist, do not capture the complexity in rebel groups ideological platforms. Additionally, moving beyond the broad labels of ideology, helps draw attention the ways in which rebel groups manipulate ideas from these platforms or religions, in support of their own goals and values. The ideology of social control helps scholars understand why rebel groups spend energy controlling the behavior of the populations they are targeting.

The two models illustrated by Al-Shabaab and the LRA demonstrate the ways in which forced marriage can be used for different strategic needs related to cohesion and as different expressions of ideologies of social control. Al-Shabaab faced a cohesion challenge because it was trying to govern large populations whereas the LRA was facing a cohesion challenge based on trying to organize a group composed mainly of abducted young people. Neither group would decide to use forced marriage solely based on challenges related to cohesion but chose this particular tool for building cohesion because of their ideologies of social control. Al-Shabaab and LRA are focused on controlling individuals and their relationships with each other and forced marriage is an essential way to establish that control and the control of future generations. In the following chapters, I compare and contrast Al-Shabaab and LRA's systems of forced

marriage to gain deeper insight on the pattern of forced marriage. Through this analysis, there are surprising similarities between two groups that most scholars see as very different rebel groups. Through innovative research methods, I am able to gain insight on the internal practices and external operations of Al-Shabaab and the LRA.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

OVERVIEW

I developed a theory of forced marriage inductively from two case studies of rebel groups where systems of forced marriage were vital to group operations. My unit of analysis is a rebel group and the two groups I examine are: Al-Shabaab and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). Al-Shabaab is based in Somalia and also operates in Kenya. The Lord's Resistance Army was formed in Uganda and has operated in Uganda and South Sudan for the majority of its lifespan.[138]

I conducted original fieldwork through semi-structured interviews in Kenya and Uganda. I trained and worked in collaboration with researchers who conducted interviews in Kismayo, Somalia. In total, I analyzed 148 interviews. I also relied on secondary data from non-governmental organization (NGO) reports, UN reports, and court transcripts. Between 2016-2017, I spent approximately one month in Uganda and two months in Kenya. My travel was funded through my work with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the International Security Studies Program at the Fletcher School, and the Institute for Human Security at the Fletcher School.

To build a theory of forced marriage inside rebel groups, I used case studies, and was guided throughout my research by feminist methodologies. Feminist methodologies helped me in my consideration of ethics, positionality, and safety of myself, my research partners, and interview participants. Researching rebel groups, especially active ones, requires careful

[138] While the majority LRA has disbanded in Uganda, a small part of the original group, including Joseph Kony, still is at large. They are likely operating in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and there were reports from June 2017 of attacks by the LRA in DRC."Lord's Resistance Army Steps up Congo Attacks as U.S.-Backed Force...," *Reuters*, June 16, 2017, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-congo-lra/lords-resistance-army-steps-up-congo-attacks-as-u-s-backed-force-pulls-out-u-n-idUSKBN1971ZP.

attention to ethics, safety, and legal standards. In this chapter I outline in detail the challenges and processes I took to ensure the data I gained was reliable and was gathered in a way that did not harm anyone involved. I begin by discussing case study methods and case selection. Next, I describe feminist methodologies and the ways in which they were essential throughout this project. I then describe my interview data, coding procedures, and sampling principles. Finally, I outline the specific methodology in each of the three field locations: Nairobi, Kenya; Kismayo, Somalia; and northern Uganda.

CASE STUDIES

I used qualitative case studies and relied on semi-structured interview data to address my central question of why rebel groups use forced marriage. Qualitative methods are particularly useful for understanding complicated patterns, including rebel group behavior. Bennet and Elman argue that qualitative methods have advantages for "studying complex and relatively unstructured and infrequent phenomena."[139] Case studies in particular are an ideal tool for theory development - the goal of this dissertation.[140] Theory development is traditionally an inductive process.[141] In an inductive approach, "[f]indings emerge out of the data, through the analyst's interactions with the data, in contrast to deductive analysis where the data are analyzed according to an existing framework."[142] Inductive research and analysis is an iterative process. I did not state specific hypotheses in advance of beginning my research. This allowed me to be open and flexible in responding to the data rather than reacting to predetermined ideas.

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[139] Andrew Bennett and Colin Elman, "Case Study Methods in the International Relations Subfield," *Comparative Political Studies* 40, no. 2 (February 2007): 171, https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414006296346.
[140] Alexander George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2005), 111.
[141] George and Bennett, 111.
[142] Michael Quinn Patton, *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods* 3rd edition (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publication, 2002), 453.

Case Selection

In studying active or recently active rebel groups, scholars must be more transparent in the criteria that go into case selection. The broader standards for case selection in the field of political science, such as guidance by Alexander George and Andrew Bennett, are that one should not select cases, "simply because they are interesting, important, or easily researched…" This might be a fair standard for those studying historical events or state behavior (as most of their examples are) in which there is a large universe of potential cases one can safely study.[143] However, when studying active rebel groups, case selection involves assessments about how to avoid putting oneself, one's research team and one's interview participants in harm's way. Furthermore, issues of access to interview subjects, data availability and safety become critical questions.

I limited the potential cases to the number of rebel groups that had been active in the past twenty years[144] and rebel groups that used forced marriage. Although there is an increasing amount of cross-national data on the use of sexual violence in conflict, most of these datasets or reports do not distinguish between types of sexual violence, such as forced marriage. As a general guideline on the use of forced marriage in conflict, I relied on the report, "Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict: Global Overview and Implications for the Security Sector," by the Geneva Centre Democratic Control of the Armed Forces (DCAF).[145] The DCAF study provides a profile of each country that was in a period of conflict from 1987-2007 and details all forms of sexual violence used in that conflict.[146] According to the DCAF data, forced marriage was used

[143] George and Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, 83.
[144] I limited my case selection to the past twenty years to improve my chances of being able to interview former group members and their family members.
[145] Bastick, Grimm, and Kunz, *Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict*.
[146] Bastick, Grimm, and Kunz, 23–24.

in 11 conflicts.[147] While this report only reviews conflicts up to 2007, it provided useful guidance in assessing the frequency of forced marriage and is the only data source I found that distinguished conflicts by their use of forced marriage.

I engage in a "study of similarity" on cases with forced marriage systems. Martha Finnemore describes her use of this technique, "It is precisely the similarity in behavior where none should exist that makes these cases theoretically anomalous and worthy of investigation."[148] Some guidelines related to case selection, such as the frequently cited, *Designing Social Inquiry* by Gary King, Robert Keohane, and Sidney Verba, tell scholars to avoid selecting similar cases.[149] However, their advice applies to theory testing as opposed to theory generation.[150]

To generate a theory of forced marriages, and understand the phenomena in question, I had to select case studies that had systems of forced marriage. As detailed in chapter 2, my definition of forced marriage is guided by the Special Court of Sierra Leone Appeals Chamber noted forced marriage in is a situation in, "a situation in which the perpetrator through his words or conduct, or those of someone for whose actions he is responsible, compels a person by force, threat of force, or coercion to serve as a conjugal partner..."[151] Forced marriage is a distinct crime from sexual slavery because of the significance of labeling someone a wife and the psychological effects of this label.[152]

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[147] Bastick, Grimm, and Kunz, *Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict*.
[148] Martha Finnemore, *National Interests in International Society* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), 25.
[149] Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994).
[150] Finnemore, 26.
[151] Bergsmo, Skre, and Wood, *Understanding and Proving International Sex Crimes*, 242.
[152] See Bergsmo, Skre, and Wood, 38; Jain, "Forced Marriage as a Crime against Humanity" on the distinction between forced marriage and sexual slavery.

To narrow down my cases beyond the criteria of rebel groups where there is evidence of a pattern of forced marriage, I focused on filling key knowledge gaps. I chose Al-Shabaab because of the lack of robust data related to women inside the group.[153] Al-Shabaab and the women with whom they interact presented a puzzle that had not previously been explored: how could a group that claimed to have no women/girls in it, use forced marriage? I wanted to fill this gap in the literature because it has impaired scholars' understanding of Al-Shabaab and of gender dynamics inside rebel groups more broadly. I knew Al-Shabaab would be a logistical challenge because of security and legal challenges in studying an active rebel group that is labeled by many governments a terrorist organization.

I wanted to choose a second group that 1) I would be able to safely study and 2) had a different model of forced marriage from Al-Shabaab. The LRA was an ideal choice because they used a form of forced marriage, abducting young women and girls to bring them into the group to be married, that is a different from what Al-Shabaab uses. It was beneficial to have case studies that illustrate two different models of forced marriage. In addition, I had contacts and experience in the region. There has been research on forced marriage in the LRA, most notably the work of Erin Baines,[154] but the LRA has generally been studied without a serious consideration of its ideology or strategy. Sverker Finnström argues that most studies of the LRA view the group as "rebels without a cause."[155] My research fills a gap by analyzing the LRA's

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[153] Laetitia Bader, Zama Coursen-Neff, and Tirana Hassan, *No Place for Children: Child Recruitment, Forced Marriage, and Attacks on Schools in Somalia* (New York, N.Y: Human Rights Watch, 2012).
[154] Baines, "Forced Marriage as a Political Project"; Omer Aijazi and Erin Baines, "Relationality, Culpability and Consent in Wartime: Men's Experiences of Forced Marriage," *International Journal of Transitional Justice*, September 5, 2017, https://doi.org/10.1093/ijtj/ijx023.
[155] Sverker Finnström, "An African Hell of Colonial Imagination? The Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda, Another Story," in *The Lord's Resistance Army: Myth and Reality*, ed. Tim Allen and Koen Vlassenroot (London: Zed Books, 2010), 75.

ideology and seeing the LRA as a strategic actor that used forced marriage for strategic, tactical, and logistical reasons.

FEMINIST METHODOLOGIES

There are many ways in which this project was grounded in a feminist methodological perspective. Feminist methodology is not a particular set of methods, but instead it is an approach to methods used to carry out research.[156] Ann Tickner describes the feminist methodological perspective as challenging what is often unseen and calling attention to the masculine bias in the construction of knowledge.[157] Feminist methodology has excelled at finding way to study silences, especially in hegemonic masculine institutions like militaries.[158] Feminist researchers look at texts as well as symbols and procedures in institutions for clues of gender relations.[159] Brooke Ackerly and Jacqui True describe feminist methodology this way:

> Feminist methodology encompasses reflections about the relationship among the purpose of research, how we tell fact from belief, theory and conceptualization, research design, ethics, methods, and analysis. In particular, it involves self-conscious reflections on the purpose of research, our conceptual frameworks, our ethical responsibilities, method choices, and our assumptions about what it means to know rather than to just believe something.[160]

In line with feminist principles, feminist methodology prioritizes an ethical approach to research that focuses on the individuals involved (researchers and participants). Feminist methodologies do not see ethics as a separate part of the research project, but instead see ethics as essential to the research questions and findings. Throughout my research process I engaged in this reflective

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[156] Brooke Ackerly and Jacqui True, *Doing Feminist Research in Political and Social Science* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 6.
[157] J. Ann Tickner, "Feminist Meets International: Some Methodological Issues," In *Feminist Methodologies for International Relations* ed. Brooke Ackerly, Maria Stern, and Jacqui True (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).
[158] Annica Kronsell, "Methods for Studying Silences: Gender Analysis in Institutions of Hegemonic Masculinity," In *Feminist Methodologies for International Relations* ed. Brooke Ackerly, Maria Stern, and Jacqui True (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).
[159] Kronsell.
[160] Ackerly and True, *Doing Feminist Research in Political and Social Science*, 6.

process, especially related to methodological choices, ethical and safety concerns, and the purpose of the research.

The practice of "taking women's experiences of international politics seriously," is another feminist methodology that guided this project.[161] This meant speaking with women in each location and treating their stories of everyday experiences as important political insights. Finally, feminist research often involves inverting the ways we approach questions. Instead of studying the strategy of rebel groups to understand forced marriage practices, I studied forced marriage practices to understand the strategy and ideology of rebel groups. This shift in perspective demonstrates the ways in which gender influences understandings of conflict and actors in conflict.

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

My three central field locations were Nairobi, Kenya, Kismayo, Somalia, and Gulu District, Uganda. I provide details on each of the field sites. In addition to interviews in the three central field locations, I also conducted interviews with experts and activists in the U.K, policymakers and experts in Washington, D.C., and U.S. government personnel at AFRICOM in Stuttgart, Germany. My data was comprised of 148 interviews and the number of interviews for each location is summarized in table 1.

My data is drawn from semi-structured interview because they are well-suited for understanding the nuanced dynamics of marriage inside rebel groups and its relationship to rebel group operations. Semi-structured interviews are a tested and reliable method of data collection that enable researchers to understand the behavior and decision-making processes of rebel

[161] Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches & Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics*, 4.

groups.[162] In any study, all interviews have some level of bias because they are based on an individual's subjective interpretation of a situation. However, recognizing and describing potential biases, as well as triangulating my data, helped prevent bias from affecting the validity of my conclusions.

I use several quotes from these interviews throughout this dissertation. I lightly edited quotes for clarity. The use of quotes throughout the dissertation is important to illustrate my reliance on interview participants own interpretation of the groups and events and helps to more directly share my data with readers.

TABLE 1: INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS BY LOCATION

Interview location	Number of interviews	Breakdown by type of interview	Breakdown by gender of participant
Kenya	47	25 Key informant interviews (KIIs) 22 Interviews with affected community members	KIIs: 11 women, 14 men Comm memb: 13 women, 9 men
Somalia	45	40 Interviews 5 Life stories[163]	34 women* 10 men *1 woman interviewed twice
Uganda	32	32 Interviews with affected community members	21 women 11 men
Key informants [by phone, skype or outside key field locations]	24	23 Al-Shabaab focused 1 LRA focused	11 women 13 men

[162] Jacob N. Shapiro, "Terrorist Decision-Making: Insights from Economics and Political Science." *Perspectives on Terrorism* 6, no. 4–5 (2012).

[163] In the life stories, the field research team started with a guiding question, such as, "tell me about your life since the start of the clan conflicts in 1991?" This data is more focused on an individual's personal experiences and relationships. The field research team asked clarifying questions about the interview participants' experiences but did not ask the interview participant to provide input on general research topics.

In each of the three field locations I designed a semi-structured interview protocol that focused on gender dynamics inside of the case, as well as questions related to the ideology and strategy of the group. I list sample interview questions in table 2. The interview protocols included questions related to the division of labor in each group, marriage and relationship dynamics inside the group, and sexual violence against nongroup members. These questions helped me in gaining a broad picture of how the two rebel groups managed internal and external gender relations.

The content of each question was the same across cases and locations, but the wording varied based on the contexts. The differences were the result of my ethical protocol, which involved a detailed contextual assessment related to potential harms in participating in an interview. The LRA has not been active in Uganda for 12 years and there is a country-wide amnesty program for former group members. Former members of the LRA have participated in rehabilitation programs and therefore are able to talk more openly about what occurred in the conflict without fearing legal ramifications.

The context in Somalia and Kenya was quite different. In both locations (Kenya and Somalia), Al-Shabaab is still active and there are legal and other repercussions for anyone who is thought to be associated with the group. Because of these concerns, I approached the topics I wanted to cover more broadly initially and let interview participants bring up Al-Shabaab (or not) in the way that felt comfortable and secure for them. Additionally, because of my knowledge of the legal concerns, I specifically reminded interview participants discussing Al-Shabaab to not tell me any incriminating information.

TABLE 2: SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Topic	Sample Question LRA	Sample Question Al-Shabaab
Division of Labor	Can you tell me the kind of jobs or roles women or girls would do in	Have you heard any instances of women or girls participating in

	LRA? Please feel free to list them out to me.	violence as members or supporters of armed actors in the conflict? (please do not identify specific women)
Relationships	Why do you think the LRA had marriages?	Have you heard about instances of forced marriage of girls by armed actors? (please list all groups and what they are doing without identifying specific individuals)
Sexual Violence Outside Marriage	What were the rules regarding LRA use of sexual violence (outside of forced marriage) against civilians?	Have you heard any instances of any armed actors targeting women or girls with violence? (please discuss any groups or actors and what they are doing, please note I am not asking about your relationship with any of these groups or any specific information about individuals involved or behavior you have witnessed)

I used an interview protocol for every interview, however, I also wanted to have flexibility to ask questions specifically related to the areas an interview participant had the most knowledge about and seemed most interested in discussing. This strategy is also a component of designing an ethical and respectful interview process that involved actively listening to each interview participant and engaging in a conversation, rather than reciting a set script or predetermining what is of value to know. Some of the best information I gained resulted from following-up on statements made by interview participants and adapting the interview protocol rather than adhering to a set plan. However, in most interviews I conducted I tried to at least briefly address each of the three areas of focus: division of labor, relationships inside the group, and sexual violence outside the group. This approach was a way to retain consistency and build richer datasets across field locations and interviews.

Sampling

I used snowball sampling to locate interview participants. Romain Malejacq and Dipali Mukhopadhyay discuss the benefits of snowball sampling in contentious environments.[164] They argue that having an introduction from an interlocutor is key to getting information and building trust with informants, especially in environments where the community may be suspicious of newcomers.[165] They explain, "[s]nowball sampling can therefore be understood as a form of social infiltration into an impervious setting in which the proper introduction can get a researcher a long way."[166]

In all three field locations there were different reasons that interview participants may have been suspicious if they were randomly contacted by me or my team. In Kenya, there were high levels of distrust, which were especially salient in the case of my positionality as an American. Americans are seen as being particularly interested in counterterrorism information and there could have been a fear that I would provide intelligence to governments or international organizations. In Somalia, there are high levels of distrust of outsiders because of the fear of people being associated with Al-Shabaab, the Somali government, or AMISOM. Finally, in Uganda, there was a skepticism of internationals because of experiences with officials from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) who asked for information on people's wartime experiences and promised resources and never delivered. In each of these scenarios it was therefore beneficial to only interview individuals who I or my team was introduced to by a trusted source.

Interview Processes and Analysis

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[164] Romain Malejacq and Dipali Mukhopadhyay, "The 'Tribal Politics' of Field Research: A Reflection on Power and Partiality in 21st-Century Warzones," *Perspectives on Politics* 14, no. 04 (December 2016): 1017, https://doi.org/10.1017/S1537592716002899.
[165] Malejacq and Mukhopadhyay, 1017.
[166] Malejacq and Mukhopadhyay, 1017.

All interviews were handwritten, and no interviews were recorded to protect the confidentiality of interview participants. I usually typed up interview transcripts within twenty-four hours so that the interviews were still in recent memory if I needed to clarify anything in the transcript. During my fieldwork and in between trips to the field I was consistently reflecting on my findings, sharing my findings, and reading new research related to my areas of focus. I wrote fieldnotes and field observations that I reflected upon throughout the process.

I used NVIVO software to assist with data analysis. For each field location (Kenya, Somalia, and Uganda) I started coding based on the three variables: division of labor, marriage/relationships, and sexual violence outside the group. I also coded for ideology, group organization, and strategy. After my initial coding with these broad variables I saw repeated themes emerging within the variables that I put into sub-codes. For example, for the Kismayo marriage code the sub-codes were: "cheap marriage," control, divorce, hierarchies, reasons for marriage, and widows. I then started to analyze the two cases together by creating tables so I could compare across codes. For example, I created a table with columns for LRA and Al-Shabaab with my data on ideology, strategy, internal organization, division of labor, marriage, and sexual violence outside the group. It was through this process of comparing data across the two cases that I developed my theory of forced marriage.

OTHER FORMS OF DATA

In addition to formal interviews, I participated in workshops with local researchers as well as a workshop in Uganda with former members of the LRA. I attended the Kampala Summer Institute in Uganda focused on "Men's and Women's Relations in Forced Settings." This workshop included presentations by former male and female members of the LRA. All workshop participants stayed at the same location which allowed me to engage informally with

women and men who had been members of the LRA. Another key source of data came through the workshops that I helped design and lead as part of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) research project in which I was a co-investigator. I co-led a four-day workshop to design the research, discussing our existing knowledge (formal and informal), and knowledge gaps our research sought to fill on Al-Shabaab. This workshop involved participants from Kenya and Somalia who worked with our research partner NGOs, as well as a Kenyan academic. I co-led a similar workshop after the data was gathered to analyze the data including identifying key patterns, findings and remaining questions.

I also used key secondary evidence to inform my theory. I reviewed approximately 1,500 pages of trial transcripts from the court cases of Amina Ali and Hawo Hassan in the U.S. District Court of Minnesota.[167] I also reviewed the indictment of Dominic Ongwen of the LRA from the International Criminal Court.[168] NGO reports were another key resource for gaining information on Al-Shabaab and the LRA.[169] Finally, in the case of the Lord's Resistance Army, in addition to important secondary scholarship on the group, I also used information produced by former group members. I reviewed two memoirs from women who had been abducted into the LRA as children and forcibly married. These books, *I am Evelyn Amony*, by Evelyn Amony, and *Not Yet Sunset*, by Grace Acan, were crucial to my understanding of the group.[170]

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

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[167] United States of America v. Amina Farah Ali and Hawo Mohamed Hassan, File No. CR-10-187 (MJD/FLN). United States District Court District of Minnesota, 2011.
[168] Prosecutor v. Dominic Ongwen.
[169] Chris Albin-Lackey and Letta Tayler, *Harsh War, Harsh Peace: Abuses by Al-Shabaab, the Transitional Federal Government, and AMISOM in Somalia* (New York, NY: Human Rights Watch, 2010); Bader, Coursen-Neff, and Hassan, *No Place for Children*; See e.g. The Justice and Reconciliation Project, "Remembering the Atiak Massacre" (Liu Institute for Global Issues and the Gulu District NGO Forum, April 4, 2007), http://justiceandreconciliation.com/wp-content/uploads/2007/04/JRP_FN4_Atiak.pdf.
[170] Evelyn Amony, *I Am Evelyn Amony* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2015); Grace Acan, *Not Yet Sunset: A Story of Survival and Perseverance in LRA Captivity* (Kampala, Uganda: Fountain Publishers, 2017).

Each of my field sites involved a collaboration with local researchers and activists. While this was key to gathering my data, this was also its own form of research. International researchers can easily be siloed or separated from interview participants so that a researcher only gains local perspectives during formal interview processes. However, collaborating with individuals living in the contexts allows a less formal way to gain insights into the research topic. Some of my most useful research insights emerged over lunch or coffee with my collaborators. This exchange was also an important way for me to more fully understand the context I was researching outside of just my research questions. Understanding daily life in the context illustrated the ways in which the behavior of the groups I was studying conformed with, manipulated, or broke with existing cultural practices.

Local researchers and activists also reveal information an international researcher not familiar with local nuances might miss. One way to assess the truth of the claims made by the interview subjects is through using the knowledge of local interpreters or research assistants who can assess social cues during interviews and who may have insider knowledge on context to assess the interviews.[171] Lee Ann Fuji describes this type of information as "meta-data" and includes, "spoken and unspoken expressions about people's interior thoughts and feelings, which they do not always articulate in their stories or response to interview questions…[meta-deta] include[s] rumors, silences, and invented stories."[172] For example, my research team asked to speak with me privately after one interview with a woman in Uganda who said she had been abducted by the LRA. They said that no one in the group of returnees from the LRA knew this woman and the way she shared her story didn't seem accurate. In the interview the woman

[171] Cohen, *Rape During Civil War*, 205.
[172] Lee Ann Fuji, "Shades of Truth and Lies: Interpreting Testimonies of War and Violence," *Journal of Peace Research* 47, no. 2 (March 2010): 232.

mentioned her sister had been abducted by the LRA and my team members thought this woman was sharing her sister's story and not her own and therefore didn't present information entirely correctly. This was one of many examples in which the local research team helped me assess the validity of interview data.

Working with local academics also taught me about how research is produced, absorbed, and used differently in different locations. It was important to have connections with local academics to think about the most responsible ways to share my research. Malejacq and Mukhopadhyay describe the process of building own's own tribe of researchers, members of civil society and activists in conflict environments.[173] They argue these tribes are important for safety, building trust with interview participants, and researchers' mental wellbeing.[174]

As part of a feminist research methodology, I recognized the power dynamics inherent to these interactions between me and my team. In my role as an international researcher I had certain privileges that my collaborators did not have. There is a risk of these relationships becoming problematic because of these power differentials.[175] However, remaining attuned to these power dynamics and attempting to create honest dialogues with my collaborators were two ways I tried to minimize unintended harm or offense to research collaborators.

ETHICAL PROTOCOL

I went through a comprehensive full review process with the Tufts University Institutional Review Board (IRB). I also went through an ethical review process with the Kenyan

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[173] Malejacq and Mukhopadhyay, "The 'Tribal Politics' of Field Research."
[174] Malejacq and Mukhopadhyay, 1017.
[175] Kate Cronin-Furman and Milli Lake, "Ethics Abroad: Fieldwork in Fragile and Violent Contexts," *PS: Political Science & Politics* 51, no. 03 (July 2018): 607–14, https://doi.org/10.1017/S1049096518000379. See also, Yolande Bouka, "Collaborative Research as Structural Violence," Blog Post on Political Violence at a Glance, July 12, 2018, http://politicalviolenceataglance.org/2018/07/12/collaborative-research-as-structural-violence/.

government. Finally, I completed an ethical review process in Uganda through Gulu University Review Ethics Committee (GUREC) and a review with the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST). These applications included information on my plans for protecting interview participant confidentiality and consent throughout the interview process. Some of my procedures related to protecting confidentiality including securing interview locations where interviews could not be overheard, developing a detailed coding system so that interview participant names were never associated with their interviews, and securing my computer and hard copy notes. My consent procedures included detailed consent forms that I explained to interview participants, pausing to make sure interview participants understood the interview process and consented, and stopping the interview if it seemed participants no longer consented to participating.

FIELD SITE DESCRIPTIONS

Research in Kenya

I carried out two types of interviews in Kenya. The first type of interview I started with in Kenya was what I have labeled key informant interviews (KIIs) and were meetings with UN employees, NGO officials, and local academics and researchers. These meetings were an important phase in understanding the security dynamics in Kenya and the existing knowledge related to gender and Al-Shabaab. I learned that there were many rumors about women and marriage inside Al-Shabaab, but little verified information.

Initially, my research plan was to speak to former members of Al-Shabaab that resided in Kenya, but over time I learned this could cause serious harm to interview participants. The Kenyan government announced an amnesty program for individuals who leave Al-Shabaab and

register with the government in April 2015.[176] However, in practice, the program has not been formalized.[177] There are news reports, and incidences discussed in my interviews, of Al-Shabaab returnees disappearing.[178] It is unclear if these disappearances are perpetrated by Al-Shabaab members in Kenya or Kenyan police or counterterrorism officials. Local researchers also faced challenges in trying to research women who had been members of Al-Shabaab inside Kenya. One of the few studies that was able to interview women who had worked with Al-Shabaab was only able to include interviews with three women.[179]

As part of my ethical protocol, I chose to adapt my research plans in Kenya based on this information. I believe it is important for decisions like this to be included in writing about methodology for research on rebel groups because while they may not initially seem like the ideal option in terms of gathering data, they are a part of the ethical cost-benefit analysis researchers should be making.

I therefore adopted a strategy of interviewing community members in Majengo, Kenya and asked broadly about the security challenges in this area. Majengo is an informal settlement or slum on the outskirts of Nairobi where the Kenyan branch of Al-Shabaab was founded.[180] There are also reports of Al-Shabaab influence on mosques in Majengo including the Riyadh Majengo Mosque.[181] Given my knowledge of the security situation, instead of directly asking

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[176] Cyrus Ombati, "Kenya Announces Amnesty and Reintegration to Youth Who Denounce Al-Shabaab," The Standard, accessed September 18, 2018, https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2000158358/kenya-announces-amnesty-and-reintegration-to-youth-who-denounce-al-shabaab.
[177] "IRIN | How Kenya's Al-Shabab Amnesty Is a Loaded Gun," accessed September 18, 2018, https://www.irinnews.org/investigations/2016/08/31/how-kenya%E2%80%99s-al-shabab-amnesty-loaded-gun.
[178] "IRIN | How Kenya's Al-Shabab Amnesty Is a Loaded Gun."
[179] Irene Ndung'u and Uyo Salifu, "The Role of Women in Violent Extremism in Kenya," Institute for Security Studies, 2017: 24.
[180] Christopher Anzalone, "Kenya's Muslim Youth Center and Al-Shabaab East African Recruitment," *CTC Sentinel* 5, no. 10 (October 2012): 10.
[181] "Special Report: In Africa, a Militant Group's Growing Appeal," *Reuters*, May 30, 2012, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-shabaab-east-africa/special-report-in-africa-a-militant-groups-growing-appeal-idUSBRE84T0NI20120530. "Kenya Imam Denies His Mosque Is Center of Radicalization," VOA, accessed

about Al-Shabaab, I let interview participants tell me what they thought was relevant in terms of threats to their security. Through this process, I met individuals whose family members were recruited by Al-Shabaab. Notably, many individuals also spoke about security threats from the Kenyan government.

An essential part of this research was my partnership with an academic in Nairobi, Martin,[182] who had previously assisted another scholar with his research on Al-Shabaab and was interested and willing to work with me on my research. Martin is from Majengo and had conducted research there in the past. He was interested in learning about some of the patterns I was researching to inform his own research. As part of building trust and ensuring research participants' security, each day, Martin would arrange interviews with different individuals in Majengo and he would be the one communicating with them directly, until we both arrived to carry out the interviews.

Interviews were conducted by me and Martin in a variety of locations around Nairobi. Almost all interviews were in English except for one interview that Martin translated from Swahili. For key informant interviews (which I conducted without Martin), I let interview participants suggest a location and they either invited me to meet them at their office or suggested a local café. If the interview was at a café, I would arrive early to find a private table where the conversation could not be easily overheard. In Majengo, Martin worked with interview participants to find a location where the interview participant felt most comfortable. Initially women in Majengo invited us into their homes to speak with them, but as is typical in informal settlements, the homes were connected by thin metal or cloth walls. During one of our first

September 19, 2018, https://www.voanews.com/a/kenya-imam-denies-his-mosque-is-center-of-radicalization/2764611.html.

[182] My research assistant said I could include information about him in this dissertation, but in an abundance of caution I decided not to use his name and instead use a pseudonym.

conversations a woman noted, “the walls have ears,” and suggested we go outside. We then moved to the courtyard of a church where we conducted most of our interviews in Majengo.

Martin and I also conducted interviews in the nearby Eastleigh neighborhood of Nairobi, which is referred to as “Little Somalia” because of the large Somali population. I was more concerned about security in Eastleigh as some security briefings warned U.S. citizens against traveling there. We tried to secure interviews in locations where we could easily access our driver and he could quickly evacuate us from the area if needed.

In each interview I had to think not only about my positionality as a white American woman, but also Martin’s positionality as a young Kenyan man. There were points where it may have been beneficial to have had a female research assistant, but in Majengo, interview participants felt comfortable speaking with Martin as he was from the same community as them. When working with a research assistant, a researcher must balance the effect of the different aspects of the research assistant’s identity on the interview process as there is no way to find a research assistant that will work with each type of interview participant. In this case, I chose to work with Martin based on his professionalism, experience, and connections to the community in Majengo. When it was possible for me to safely meet with women on my own, Martin did not accompany me to the interviews.

Throughout the interviews in Kenya, there was a general paranoia about Al-Shabaab, and there was a sense that they were ever present and always listening. It was challenging to frequently hear these anecdotes and not worry about my personal safety and Martin’s safety. We varied our schedule and interview location each day as a precaution. While I wished to have had more time to meet with people in communities like Majengo, I decided I did not want to spend

too long visiting the area in an effort not to attract attention from Al-Shabab or Kenyan police and counterterrorism officials.

Research in Somalia

Methodological scholarship has not addressed the challenges with researching contexts that are inaccessible to international researchers. Doing research in Somalia as a foreigner, in the words of the journalist Andrew Harding, "is a risky, expensive, and above all, logistically complicated process."[183] Harding is referring specifically to going into Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia, which is where most foreigners who travel to Somalia go. However, Mogadishu is not the ideal place for research on Al-Shabaab, because the group has mostly been expelled from the capital since 2012.[184] Stig Hansen, the author of one of the only academic books on Al-Shabaab, notes that Al-Shabaab prevents foreign researchers from accessing the areas they control.[185] He explains that the areas of Somalia that Western researchers can visit are areas controlled by the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), where Al-Shabaab sympathizers are afraid to visit due to the presence of AMISOM forces and the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) troops.[186] Hansen's research strategy involves partnerships with local researchers, as well as what he describes as "proximity of sources" or "closeness to the event described."[187] These principles, also guided my research strategy in Kenya and Somalia.

I was able to gain information from Somalia by fostering partnerships and actively seeking opportunities outside academia. My research strategy for Somalia was inspired by what

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[183] Andrew Harding, *The Mayor of Mogadishu: A Story of Chaos and Redemption in the Ruins of Somalia* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2016), 5.
[184] Stig Jarle Hansen, *Al-Shabaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group 2005-2012* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 118.
[185] Hansen, 12.
[186] Hansen, 13.
[187] Hansen, 14.

Melani Cammett describes as, "proxy interviewing."[188] Cammett explains that this strategy is useful for addressing sensitive topics.[189] Proxy interviewing, according to Cammett, involves finding local researchers with "embeddedness in local communities" and who are familiar with the goals and principles of social science research and the project more generally.[190] The researchers I worked with grew up in Somalia and either live in Somalia part time or live nearby to enable them to visit frequently. In Somalia, local researchers usually get their education outside the country and may not choose to return to Somalia to live full time, especially if they are from an area occupied by Al-Shabaab. Both researchers on my team had worked in Kismayo in the past and felt comfortable in the local context.

The second goal Cammett discusses, familiarity with the principles of research and the research project, was important to the success of the field research for this dissertation. Both researchers I worked with have done their own academic research and the woman I worked most closely with has her PhD from a university in North America.[191] I worked closely with these two researchers throughout the project to discuss goals and guidelines for the research.

My partnership began with both researchers as part of a United Nations Development Program (UNDP) grant to study women and violent extremism in Africa. I worked with other practitioners from Life and Peace Institute (LPI), Rift Valley Institute (RVI), and Feinstein International Center, Tufts University, to create and submit a proposal focused on women and extremism in Somalia. LPI had recently finished another research project working with women in Kismayo.[192] Based on their experience and connections, LPI recruited male and female

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[188] Melani Cammett, "Using Proxy Interviewing to Address Sensitive Topics," in *Interview Research in Political Science*, ed. Layna Mosley (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013), 125–43.
[189] Cammett, 130.
[190] Cammett, 130.
[191] She requested I do not mention the exact location of the University to keep her anonymity.
[192] Life & Peace Institute, Peace Direct, and Somali Women Solidarity Organization, "Learning from Kismayo: A Study Report" (Life & Peace Institute, April 2018), http://life-peace.org/resource/learning-from-kismayo/.

researchers through referrals. Due to cultural norms we decided that the male researcher would interview men and the female researcher would interview women. Kismayo, the third largest city in Somalia, was the ideal site for this project because it was ruled by Al-Shabaab from 2008 to 2012 and has been referred to as an Al-Shabaab "stronghold" or "hub."[193] Hansen describes Al-Shabaab's seizure of Kismayo as a strategic victory. The port of Kismayo serves large parts of southern Somalia and Al-Shabab could easily collect taxes and import weapons from there.[194]

The collaborative nature of the UNDP grant provided me with knowledge essential for my dissertation research. I was very fortunate to design the research and analyze the data with Judith Gardner, one of the most prominent researchers on gender in Somalia. Gardner and I held two workshops in Nairobi, Kenya, with the field research teams, staff members from RVI and LPI who had worked in Somalia or on extremism, and a local Kenyan academic. In the initial workshop, we brainstormed all existing information we collectively knew related to women and Al-Shabaab, constructed timelines about Al-Shabaab's rule in Kismayo, and discussed local customs related to women and conflict in Kismayo. This information was invaluable and is not available in other academic sources. We also designed interview research questions, discussed sampling, and reviewed ethical protocols. The areas of interest of UNDP overlapped closely with my area of interest.

For the UNDP study, we decided to let findings emerge inductively from the data. For example, we did not design the research to include any specific questions about marriage in Kismayo, but this was something nearly all interview participants chose to discuss. As a result of

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[193] "AMISOM Sector II Profile: Kismayo"; Hansen, *Al-Shabaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group 2005-2012*, 67–68.
[194] Hansen, *Al-Shabaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group 2005-2012*, 67.

this initial field trip as part of the UNDP grant, the team collected and I analyzed twenty interviews with women, five life stories of women in Kismayo, and ten interviews with men.

After the fieldwork for the UNDP project was completed, we held an analysis workshop. In this workshop, the field research team described the interview data in detail, and we coded the data together. We identified patterns and findings across the data, as well as gaps.

Based on the findings from the UNDP workshop, I designed additional questions for my dissertation research. I built a strong relationship with our female field researcher, Fatima,[195] and she volunteered to conduct additional field research in Kismayo for my dissertation. We discussed the interview questions together and we also spoke frequently while she was in Kismayo. The questions as part of this data collection were focused specifically on what Al-Shabaab marriages looked like, who were targets for Al-Shabaab marriages, and about children inside Al-Shabaab. This second visit to the field by Fatima led to an additional twenty interviews with women in Kismayo.

Not all partnerships as part of grants from international organizations are successful. There is the risk that these relationships can become exploitative of local researchers.[196] However, there is also great opportunity for a collaborative relationship to form if both international and local researchers are clear on their expectations and goals, as I tried to be throughout the process.

Research in Uganda

My fieldwork in Uganda was also made possible by working with a team of local researchers and community members. I traveled to Gulu with a scholar and activist from

[195] This is a pseudonym as the researcher asked not to be identifiable in my research.
[196] Cronin-Furman and Lake, "Ethics Abroad," 4–5.

northern Uganda - Teddy Atim.[197] Atim had been researching the LRA for over a decade and was completing her PhD on women's post-conflict experiences in Uganda.[198] Atim was an important source of information on both my research topics and on ethical and culturally appropriate practices throughout the research process in northern Uganda.

In addition to Atim's expertise, I also had the assistance of a man and woman who were former members of the LRA. They both led "returnee groups" which are community organizations for male and female former members of the LRA. There are different regional returnee groups across northern Uganda for men and women who had spent time in the LRA. As part of these groups, members volunteer in the community, save money together, have social events, and support each other in reintegrating into their communities. We traveled together (a different combination of us each day depending on whether we were meeting men or women) around Gulu town (an urban area) and to more rural areas. The areas we visited outside Gulu town included Atiak (the cite of one of the LRA's largest attacks) and around Awach sub-county.

I specifically was interested in traveling to more rural areas to speak to people who may not have spoken to researchers before and might be interested in the opportunity to share their insights. When we did travel to more rural areas interview participants expressed frustration that the attention to former members of the LRA (primarily from non-governmental organizations) was focused on returnees living in Gulu. It was useful to have a variation in returnees' post-conflict experiences, from urban to rural contexts, in case it influenced their descriptions and perceptions of life inside the group.

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[197] I received approval from Teddy Atim to acknowledge her by name in this dissertation.
[198] Teddy Atim, "Looking Beyond Conflict: The Long Term Impact of Suffering War Crimes on Recovery in Post-Conflict Northern Uganda" (Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Wageningen University, 2018).

Northern Uganda is a location that has had an influx of researchers and NGOs since the conflict inside the country ended in 2008. Recognizing this landscape, I sought to only meet with people who were interested in sharing their stories. There where interview participants who initially said they were interested in speaking with me, but once the interview started, they seemed to not want to participate in an interview. In these situations, I would give the interview participant an easy way to stop the interview such as by confirming whether this was still a good time. I also tried to speak with people who might be interested in sharing about their experiences who had not spoken to researchers before. Many interview participants had been promised various benefits by speaking to NGO workers and had not received them. It was therefore of extra importance to be sure I clearly communicated that I was there for research purposes only and would not be able to provide them with any immediate benefits.

Male returnees from the LRA seemed particularly interested in speaking with me as some of them mentioned they had not been asked about their experiences in the LRA before.[199] The men noted that international audiences seemed to only want to hear from the women about their experiences. Men are assumed to be the perpetrators of the conflict and therefore NGO workers looking to help "victims" (which they define as women and their children) were not interested in speaking with men.[200] I tried to create a space in the interviews with LRA returnees where they could share about their personal experiences if they wanted to, but if they did not want to, they could talk more broadly about their insights on their group and what roles people tended to fill within the group.

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[199] This article is a notable exception for its focus on male returnees Aijazi and Baines, "Relationality, Culpability and Consent in Wartime."
[200] See Baines, *Buried in the Heart: Women, Complex Victimhood and the War in Northern Uganda* for an analysis of the categories of victim and perpetrator.

One challenge that was present in the interviews in Uganda was the process of translation as most interviews were in the local Acholi language. Atim translated my questions and the interview participants replies throughout the interview. Not being able to speak to interview participants directly made it more challenging for me to connect on a personal level and to create the interactive conversations I had been able to build in other interviews. I was fortunate to have an experienced researcher in Atim to assist with forming connections and reading interview participants.

LIMITATIONS

It is hard to predict why any group behaves the way it does, but it is especially challenging to deduce the motivations of rebel groups when they survive by keeping their organizational practices a secret. However, for my dissertation, the motivation of the rebel groups does not matter as much as the process and result of their behavior. In other words, forced marriage does not need to be consciously used by leaders of rebel groups to create cohesion.

Dara Kay Cohen explains in her research how she conceptualized the connection between the use of gang rape and the creation of cohesion. She writes, "Creating cohesion through gang rape need not be a conscious decision by the combatants or their commanders. It is unlikely that combatants themselves identify gang rape with the explicit purpose of forming social bonds…"[201] For the purposes of my research, it is the observable benefit of forced marriage that is important. Ideally, in future research, I could interview former group leaders about why they created policies and practices of marriage, but even in those situations it is hard to interpret the true motivation.

[201] Cohen, *Rape During Civil War*, 22.

There are unique challenges to researching an active group like Al-Shabaab and a group that is active at a low level like the LRA (as of 2019). For Al-Shabaab, because the group is active and labeled a terrorist group by the U.S. government,[202] there are legal and safety concerns for those who admit to being a sympathizer or supporter. These threats can come from national governments (Kenya, Somalia, United States), international organizations (AMISOM, UN agencies), or from active group members. This makes recruiting interview participants who have supported or worked with the group extremely challenging.

The challenge for researching the LRA, a group that is no longer active inside Uganda, is relying on people's memories about the group. These memories are influenced by the current context in Uganda, one's personal situation (for example, if they are in a relationship with someone in the LRA still), and one's post-conflict experiences more generally. However, Chris Dolan, in his research in Uganda writes about women's memories from their experiences within the LRA. He describes, "The women's dominant memories were around physical harm, killing, and abduction of relatives, loss of properties…People do not forget – even after thirteen years the memory of loss was acute and detailed, down to how many sacks of which type of grain were looted."[203] Dolan's sentiment was reflected in my fieldwork experiences in Uganda in which people could remember the weather the day they were abducted or the pain from hunger they experienced on a long march with the LRA.

I tried to overcome potential weaknesses in my data through several methods. The first, which I described in detail, is seeking assistance from local field teams in verifying data. In all three field locations, local researchers I worked with had been engaged in similar research

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[202] U.S. Department of State: Bureau of Counterterrorism, "Foreign Terrorist Organizations," accessed January 26, 2019, https://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/other/des/123085.htm.
[203] Dolan, *Social Torture: The Case of Northern Uganda 1986-2006*, 57.

projects, so had an even larger sample size they could verify our findings against. A second way I verified data was through triangulation and paying attention to broader trends. Finally, I used secondary data to fill in gaps and confirm my findings. For example, while I was not able to personally interview women who self-identified as having been part of Al-Shabaab, I reviewed 1,500 pages of court documents including excerpts from phone calls between women in Al-Shabaab and Al-Shabaab leadership. Additionally, I spoke to the small number of individuals (local researchers, academics, and policymakers) who were able to speak to women who had returned after being associated with Al-Shabaab.

Another area in which I was limited in this study was the inability to go to Somalia – where one of the key case studies in this dissertation operates. However, I believe the quality of information I gained from local researchers is superior to information I could have gained from conducting interviews myself. Being a white American woman in Somalia would draw attention to myself and would affect the type of information interview participants would be willing to share. Given the U.S role in the Global War on Terror and the high number of drone strikes in Somalia,[204] interview participants would have felt they need to speak about Al-Shabaab within a counterterrorism framework and would likely not share any positive effects of the group. Additionally, Somalia is known for being a particularly insular culture that is concerned about outsiders and therefore it would be challenging to build trust with interview participants in the same way the local researchers were able. Methodological pressures to conduct fieldwork independently do not consider the ways in which it might make data gathering either impossible, unsafe (for everyone involved), or fail to deliver useful data.

[204] Jason Burke Africa correspondent, "Somali Citizens Count Cost of Surge in US Airstrikes under Trump," *The Guardian*, January 23, 2018, sec. World news, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jan/23/somali-citizens-count-cost-of-surge-in-us-airstrikes-under-trump.

CONCLUSION

I chose and adapted my research methodology based on its appropriateness for studying the topic of forced marriage, the context of my research locations, and the challenges in researching rebel groups. Since there is no existing comparative theory or cross-national data on forced marriage, I used qualitative semi-structured interviews to build an original theory of forced marriage. I chose two rebel groups with different patterns of forced marriage, Al-Shabaab and the LRA, to be able to identify the common themes that would lead both groups to use this strategy. I gathered and/or designed data for three field locations: Kenya, Somalia, and northern Uganda. I adapted my research design, interview protocol, and overall research strategy for each location. I also was prepared to change my research strategy once I started research in these locations based on developing safety or ethical concerns. An example of such a change occurred in Kenya where I had hoped to interview women who had worked with Al-Shabaab but learned the legal and safety environment would make that a risky undertaking for myself and potential interview participants. However, being flexible in my research process in Kenya, led to valuable knowledge about the security context in Kenya and allowed me to work in a neighborhood I had not known about before my research, Majengo, where Al-Shabaab's Kenya branch was founded.

The logistical, safety, and ethical challenges of researching rebel groups is rarely discussed in detail in academic research and in this chapter, I seek to bring attention to these challenges and outline the strategies I used to overcome them in my research project. The central strategy I used to conduct research on Al-Shabaab and the LRA was to develop a collaborative approach to research. My partnerships with local researchers were invaluable to conducting my research safely and ethically, validating my data, and understanding emerging themes and contextual details.

CHAPTER 4: AL-SHABAAB

INTRODUCTION

When we think or read about forced marriage, we tend to hear cases of rebel groups physically abducting young women and girls for marriage. Al-Shabaab's system of forced marriage does not fit that model and is what I have labeled a decentralized form of forced marriage. The type of force or threat of force used in Al-Shabaab's forced marriages varied from abduction, convincing women to marry members, use of force against parents, or threatening families of the targeted women. The individual forced marriages are not controlled by Al-Shabaab leadership and male combatants have a choice of who they marry. This type of forced marriage is ideal for building external cohesion or binding the population to Al-Shabaab.

Al-Shabaab's forced marriage system was an effective strategic tool in Kismayo, Somalia to build cohesion between the group and the population. The type of cohesion Al-Shabaab was trying to build was external cohesion which has the goal of infiltrating the population to more effectively control and rule. Rebel groups seek to build external cohesion when they are facing the challenge of governing a population. Forced marriage built external cohesion in five central ways in Kismayo. First, Al-Shabaab forced marriages were not framed as individual commitments between men and women (and their families), but instead as a commitment to Al-Shabaab and its cause. Second, Al-Shabaab forced marriages connected many women and their families to the group, similar to the way marriages in the past in Somalia had connected different families and clans to each other to build alliances. This goal of bringing many women into the group also had an added benefit because, as discussed in chapter 6, Al-Shabaab wanted to utilize women's productive and reproductive labor. A third way Al-Shabaab's forced marriage system built external cohesion was by taking away powers from other authorities in Kismayo and

solidifying Al-Shabaab's power over the population. Fourth, the change in tradition in Al-Shabaab's marital system represented a return of male power which was seen as a positive development even for those men who were not members of Al-Shabaab. Finally, Al-Shabaab's forced marriage system was a part of its complete control over all aspects of the population's lives.

Scholarly accounts of Al-Shabaab do not discuss the group's use of forced marriage and devote little attention to the what they see as less important aspects of Al-Shabaab governance like their restrictions on women's dress, prohibition on women operating businesses, or rules about men and women who are not related associating with each other.[205] In ignoring these components of Al-Shabaab governance, scholars miss key aspects of Al-Shabaab's control over populations and explanations for a decline in the group's popularity. The lack of attention to this aspect of Al-Shabaab is likely because the majority of Al-Shabaab researchers are male who have talked to male Al-Shabaab leadership and men who are seen as "experts" on Al-Shabaab within Somalia. By including information and perspectives from Somali women, I gained a deeper understanding of Al-Shabaab's operations.

I begin this chapter by giving a background on Al-Shabaab drawn from scholarship and my interview data in Kismayo, Somalia. I incorporate a gender analysis to the background of Al-Shabaab highlighting Al-Shabaab's early ideas about masculinity and the new understandings of the group we gain when we consider women's experiences and perspectives. I then describe traditions around marriage in Somalia. Next, I provide a detailed account of Al-Shabaab's forced marriage system in Somalia and the ways in which it broke with tradition. Finally, I discuss the

[205] I discuss the ways in which these topics are only briefly covered in these comprehensive studies on Al-Shabaab, Hansen, *Al-Shabaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group 2005-2012*; Harun Maruf and Dan Joseph, *Inside Al-Shabaab: The Secret History of Al-Qaeda's Most Powerful Ally* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2018).

ways in which forced marriage fits into Al-Shabaab's ideology of social control and describe the five ways forced marriage was used to build external cohesion in Kismayo.

BACKGROUND ON AL-SHABAAB

Al-Shabaab was formed in Somalia and is a group focused mainly on nationalist goals. It is therefore essential to analyze Al-Shabaab within the context of the Somali security and political environment. Harun Maruf and Dan Joseph start their history of Al-Shabaab by describing Mogadishu as having been a "jewel" that "boasted a mix of culture, history, and beauty to outshine almost any city in Africa."[206] Describing Somalia in this way is useful to disrupt stereotypical images that see Somalia as always having been a war-ton impoverished country. Recognizing what came before periods of conflict and Al-Shabaab rule in Somalia is useful in understanding Somalia more broadly, but especially useful for understanding the context of Al-Shabaab rule in Kismayo.

Somalia is unique within Africa because the majority of the population shares the same language, ethnicity, culture, and religion.[207] A Pew Research study estimates that 99.8 percent of Somalis are Muslims.[208] The main divisions between Somalis is by clan. However, Lidwien Kapteijns cautions against simplistic views of clans that treat clan as an "unproblematic, 'natural' category, and attribut[e] agency to it as if it were a single body or a machine operating automatically."[209] Instead, it is useful to critically analyze how the concept of clan has been manipulated over time to become a divisive force within Somali society. An important starting

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[206] Maruf and Joseph, *Inside Al-Shabaab: The Secret History of Al-Qaeda's Most Powerful Ally*, 7.
[207] Mary Harper, *Getting Somalia Wrong? Faith, War and Hope in a Shattered State* (London: Zed Books, 2012), 10.
[208] "Religions in Somalia | PEW-GRF," accessed December 11, 2018, http://www.globalreligiousfutures.org/countries/somalia#/?affiliations_religion_id=0&affiliations_year=2010&region_name=All%20Countries&restrictions_year=2016.
[209] Lidwien Kapteijns, *Clan Cleansing in Somalia: The Ruinous Legacy of 1991* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 73.

point for analyzing the manipulation of clans is during the colonial period in which clan became the only legal identity "natives" were allowed and the only avenue for access to the state.[210] Later, the authoritarian leader, President Maxamed Siyaad Barre, manipulated clans for his own gain or as Kapteijns summarizes Barre "did not rule for the benefit of any clans but through them for his own benefit."[211] Al-Shabaab continues a similar pattern of manipulating clan allegiances for its own benefit.

Similar to the ways in which clan allegiances have been manipulated, religion has become a newer identity used for political purposes. Somalis traditionally practiced Sufi Islam which is seen as a more mystical form of Islam and one in which controlling the government or people's lives is not seen as a priority.[212] However, starting in the 1990s billions of dollars were spent promoting Wahhabi ideology (including Saudi-funded religious schools and Islamic charitable institutions).[213]

As more conservative religious ideologies became popular in certain areas of Somalia, there was also a shift in regulations to control women. According to Judith Gardner and Judy El Bushra, religious law has been used in Somalia as a way to exert control over women's bodies.[214] This shift was especially visible after the civil war in Somalia in the 1990s when, according to Cawo Mohamed Abdi, women faced new restrictions in their lives. Abdi explains that controlling women and their sexuality was seen as a way to "salvage the souls of the whole community," after conflict and "the newly invented tradition requiring that all women veil

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[210] Kapteijns, 75 citing Mamdani 1996.
[211] Kapteijns, 79.
[212] Maruf and Joseph, *Inside Al-Shabaab: The Secret History of Al-Qaeda's Most Powerful Ally*, 16.
[213] Bronwyn Bruton and Paul Williams, "Counterinsurgency in Somalia: Lessons Learned from the African Union Mission in Somalia, 2007-2013" (Joint Special Operations University Report, September 2014); Judith Gardner and Judy El Bushra, eds., *Somalia: The Untold Story, The War Through the Eyes of Somali Women* (London: Pluto Press, 2004), 11.
[214] Gardner and El Bushra, *Somalia: The Untold Story, The War Through the Eyes of Somali Women*, 11.

themselves is transformed into a justifiable demand imposed on them."[215] The link between conservative Islam and ideas about masculinity was evident to Abdi in her analysis of this period because she argues that conservative Islam was attractive in war zones in Somalia when male morale was low and the economy depressed.[216]

Any analysis of Somalia must pay particular attention to the extreme period of violence in the 1990s because of its important influence on Somalis and the context Al-Shabaab is operating in today. After a brief period of democracy post-independence in the late 1960s, President Barre seized power of Somalia through a military coup in 1969. Barre ruled Somalia until 1991 under a military dictatorship. He used clans to cement his rule and promoted clan violence and division to prevent groups from uniting against him.[217] Lidwien Kapteijns argues that the Barre regime set the stage for a new period of communal violence within Somalia that occurred after Barre left power and fled Somalia in 1991.[218]

This shift in violence in Somalia is labelled, "clan cleansing" by Kapteijns and she identifies features of this violence that make it unique. The violence in this period represented a shift because it was outside state institutions and instead represented a form of communal violence in which civilians became the targets and the perpetrators of violence based on clan identity.[219] Kismayo was a key location for this type of violence post-1991. The Life and Peace Institute (LPI) studied the ways in which both men and women participated in this period of

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[215] Cawo Mohamed Abdi, "Convergence of Civil War and the Religious Right: Reimagining Somali Women," *Signs* 33, no. 1 (Autumn 2007): 194.
[216] Abdi, 193.
[217] Kapteijns, *Clan Cleansing in Somalia: The Ruinous Legacy of 1991*, 89.
[218] Kapteijns, 2–4.
[219] Kapteijns, 3–4.

violence in Kismayo. In Kismayo, women played roles as fundraisers and mobilizers, as well as combatants and killers, in clan violence.[220]

After President Barre left, there were many groups competing for power in Somalia. Al-Shabaab was influenced both by groups within Somalia, as well as groups outside of Somalia. One predecessor to Al-Shabaab was Al-Itihad Al Islam (AIAI) a Salafi group that formed towards the end of Barre's rule.[221] AIAI sought to eliminate the corruption, repression, and tribalism that had been a signature of Barre's rule.[222] A large part of AIAI membership was individuals across universities and mosques and the group also had a large presence in Kismayo.[223] AIAI is said to be responsible for the deadly attacks on American forces engaged in a humanitarian mission in Mogadishu in 1992.[224] There were also reports that Al-Qaeda was involved in planning this attack which was one of several examples of Al-Qaeda's links to violence actors in Somalia.[225] In 1997, AIAI top leadership held a meeting to discuss the future of AIAI which led to divisions ultimately marking the formal end of the group.[226]

While AIAI set the stage for Al-Shabaab, most scholars see Al-Shabaab's closest predecessor as the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) which was an official alliance of the Sharia Courts formed in 2000. The Sharia Courts had been operating in Mogadishu since 1993 and were formed by clan elders and businessmen with the goal of reestablishing order amid violence.[227] Judges in the courts were guided by Islamic law which they used to adjudicate property disputes,

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[220] Life & Peace Institute, Peace Direct, and Somali Women Solidarity Organization, "Learning from Kismayo: A Study Report."
[221] Maruf and Joseph, *Inside Al-Shabaab: The Secret History of Al-Qaeda's Most Powerful Ally*, 19.
[222] Ken Menkhaus, *Somalia: State Collapse and the Threat of Terrorism* (London: Routledge, 2005), 96.
[223] Maruf and Joseph, *Inside Al-Shabaab: The Secret History of Al-Qaeda's Most Powerful Ally*, 20–21.
[224] Maruf and Joseph, 21.
[225] Maruf and Joseph, 21.
[226] Maruf and Joseph, 22.
[227] Maruf and Joseph, 25.

divorce cases, and even payments of "blood money" to victims' families from murders.[228] Their form of justice was seen as benefiting the "common man."[229] Maruf and Joseph argue that the prominence of the ICU made it a target for infiltration by former AIAI members and Salafists.[230]

In August 2006, members of the ICU met to create a new "umbrella" organization that they called *Harakat Al-Shabaab al-Mujahedeen* which others shortened to Al-Shabaab.[231] Al-Shabaab translates as "the youth," and Al-Shabaab targeted youth in its recruitment, especially seizing upon the narratives of youth blaming older generations for past problems in Somalia.[232] This new Al-Shabaab group was seen as "cool" by younger individuals in Mogadishu and the leadership intentionally sought to craft a reputation of mystery and authority."[233] Ahmed Abdi Godane, one of the leaders of Al-Shabaab at the time, coached members on how to cover themselves and appear less in public noting that if they followed his directions they would, "look big and important, respected."[234] This is an early indication of the ways in which Al-Shabaab was trying to cultivate a specific form of masculinity amongst its members. The type of masculinity they were promoting was one of mystery, respect, and power.

The founding members of Al-Shabaab had long standing links with Al-Qaeda with some leaders even receiving training from Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan.[235] Al-Shabaab formally declared allegiance to Al Qaeda in February 2012.[236] There have been attempts by the Islamic State (ISIS)

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[228] Maruf and Joseph, 25.
[229] Hansen, *Al-Shabaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group 2005-2012*, 24.
[230] Maruf and Joseph, *Inside Al-Shabaab: The Secret History of Al-Qaeda's Most Powerful Ally*, 25.
[231] Maruf and Joseph, 40.
[232] Bruton and Williams, "Counterinsurgency in Somalia: Lessons Learned from the African Union Mission in Somalia, 2007-2013," 28; Maruf and Joseph, *Inside Al-Shabaab: The Secret History of Al-Qaeda's Most Powerful Ally*, 42.
[233] Bruton and Williams, "Counterinsurgency in Somalia: Lessons Learned from the African Union Mission in Somalia, 2007-2013," 39.
[234] Maruf and Joseph, *Inside Al-Shabaab: The Secret History of Al-Qaeda's Most Powerful Ally*, 40.
[235] Maruf and Joseph, 23.
[236]Masters and Sergie, "Al-Shabab."

to link with Al-Shabaab and although a small faction of Al-Shabaab fighters in Puntland declared their allegiance to ISIS, the group as a whole has not formally aligned with ISIS.[237]

Al-Shabaab's goals have been debated both by group members and by external observers.[238] Al-Shabaab's goals, like the goals of most rebel groups, change over time and are not the same for all leaders and group members.[239] According to their leadership, there are three distinct objectives for Al-Shabaab: establishing an Islamic republic within Somalia's current borders, establishing an "Islamic Republic of Greater Somalia," and taking jihad outside "Greater Somalia."[240] Greater Somalia refers to the Somali-speaking regions of Ethiopia, Djibouti, and northern Kenya, that are seen by some as part of Somalia, despite post-colonial borders.[241]

The first objective, of establishing an Islamic republic within Somalia, appears to be the dominate goal of Al-Shabaab and where most of its energy has been exerted. Because of its focus on Somalia, Al-Shabaab is primarily a nationalist group. Its actions of attacking foreign forces inside Somalia and attacking countries that have contributed to troops inside Somalia are in line with this nationalist narrative. Al-Shabaab's differing treatment of women in Somalia versus Kenya, as detailed in chapter 7, also provides evidence of its central goals being nationalist.[242]

An important part of Al-Shabaab's structure and strategy is the *Amniyat* or intelligence wing. Stig Hansen notes that the *Amniyat* had an "almost mythical reputation."[243] The *Amniyat*'s

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[237] Connor Gaffey, "Why Al-Shabab Is Not Joining ISIS," *Newsweek*, January 22, 2016, https://www.newsweek.com/al-shabab-not-joining-isis-418656.
[238] Harper, *Getting Somalia Wrong? Faith, War and Hope in a Shattered State*, 86.
[239] Harper, 86.
[240] Harper, 86.
[241] Harper, 12.
[242] Katharine Petrich and Phoebe Donnelly, "Worth Many Sins: Al-Shabaab's Shifting Relationships with Women," *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, Forthcoming 2019.
[243] Hansen, *Al-Shabaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group 2005-2012*, 83.

purpose was to handle internal justice and was used to maintain and create unity of group members.[244] The *Amniyat* had an extensive reach and had a network of spies in Somalia and Kenya.[245] Group members feared the *Amniyat* [246] and it was a tool used to successfully build internal cohesion. Al-Shabaab had fewer tools for sustaining external cohesion which is the key function of their forced marriage system.

By 2009, according to Hansen, Al-Shabaab controlled most of southern Somalia.[247] Al-Shabaab took over Kismayo in 2008 through a partnership with the "most radical clan-based Islamist organization in Somalia," the Harakat Ras Kamboni group (commonly referred to as Ras Kamboni).[248] The Ras Kamboni worked with Al-Shabaab because the group was dominated by the Ogadeen clan members who felt they had been alienated within Kismayo.[249] Kismayo was an important strategic victory for Al-Shabaab because it was a port city that connected to areas across Somalia allowing the group to control the transport of goods including weapons.[250] Kismayo also represented a new source of revenue for Al-Shabaab through taxation.[251]

One of the most notable aspects of Al-Shabaab's operations is its governance skills. A report by International Crisis Group notes that Al-Shabaab "acquired on-the-job governance experience unmatched by any rival in south-central Somalia."[252] Al-Shabaab's governance skills and ability to restore law and order across Somalia led to an initial receptiveness towards the group by many Somalis. Hansen notes that the Western media tends to overlook the law and

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[244] Hansen, 83.
[245] Hansen, 83–84.
[246] Hansen, 83.
[247] Hansen, 83.
[248] Hansen, 67.
[249] Hansen, 67–68.
[250] Hansen, 67.
[251] Hansen, 67.
[252] International Crisis Group, "Somalia: Al-Shabaab - It Will Be a Long War" (Nairobi/Brussels: International Crisis Group Policy Briefing, June 26, 2014), 8.

order aspect of Al-Shabaab governance structures, but he argues "it was the strongest card in getting local support."[253] Maruf and Joseph quote the newspaper journalist, Abdi Aden, explaining that, "people celebrated the victory of the Islamic courts not because they had particular love for the courts but they just wanted peace."[254] This sentiment is consistent with how people initially felt about Al-Shabaab rule, especially its justice system, across Somalia.[255]

Interview participants in Kismayo, who did not cite many benefits of Al-Shabaab rule, did speak about a type of security that came with Al-Shabaab governance including a reduction in robbery and rape. Al-Shabaab was especially popular among younger people in Mogadishu.[256] Others saw Al-Shabaab in a positive way when comparing it to the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) that was trying to rule Somalia at the time.[257] However, despite initial perception of Al-Shabaab's court system as bringing justice Hansen explains that, "[j]ustice could be random, and not exactly based on Al-Shabaab ideology…"[258] This idea was reflected in interviews in Kismayo with interview participants describing Al-Shabaab justice as random and the group as hypocrites.[259]

The popularity of Al-Shabaab governance mostly was a result of its court systems, but it also engaged in other governance activities like development work including fixing a major road in Kismayo.[260] Hansen asserts that the increase in security under Al-Shabaab also led to an increase in business activity and employment, but this claim likely reflects a male perspective.[261]

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[253] Hansen, *Al-Shabaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group 2005-2012*, 84.
[254] Maruf and Joseph, *Inside Al-Shabaab: The Secret History of Al-Qaeda's Most Powerful Ally*, 38.
[255] See Hansen, *Al-Shabaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group 2005-2012* describing the popularity of Al-Shabaab courts in Mogadishu and Baidoa.
[256] Bruton and Williams, "Counterinsurgency in Somalia: Lessons Learned from the African Union Mission in Somalia, 2007-2013."
[257] Bruton and Williams.
[258] Hansen, *Al-Shabaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group 2005-2012*, 86.
[259] See e.g. interview with female traditional birth attendant, W13, September 28, 2017.
[260] Hansen, *Al-Shabaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group 2005-2012*, 89.
[261] Hansen, 91.

Female interview participants in Kismayo spoke at length about the harm of Al-Shabaab restrictions on female businesswomen. One female interview participant explained, "Al-Shabaab did not create opportunities for women. In fact, they made it difficult for women to carry out their business activities and restricted them from traveling alone."[262] Al-Shabaab also collected taxes which was unpopular.[263]

Most academic studies of Al-Shabaab do not focus on the social aspects of its governance or mention its extensive forced marriage campaign.[264] This reflects the fact that most Al-Shabaab researchers are men who tend to talk to other men about Al-Shabaab. This might be because of ease with which men can access other men based on conservative Islamic ideas about the association of men and women. However, local men and former male members, tend to be seen as the "legitimate" authorities on rebel groups. I seek to demonstrate the additional information we learn from asking women about their perceptions of rebel groups in general, and Al-Shabaab specifically. In speaking to women who lived under Al-Shabaab rule we can better understand the ways in which Al-Shabaab governed which also is a piece of understanding the group's decline in popularity over time.

Marriage specifically has been dismissed in understanding Al-Shabaab governance. Stig Hansen in his book on Al-Shabaab mentions briefly that Al-Shabaab lower courts handled "other tasks, such as marriage ceremonies."[265] Later, when he discusses foreign fighters, Hansen notes that foreign members of Al-Shabaab, "seem to have 'gone native' by 2006, taking Somali wives and settling down."[266] Each of these references to marriage, hint at the fact that Al-Shabaab was

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[262] Interview with female activist, W15, September 30, 2017.
[263] Hansen, *Al-Shabaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group 2005-2012*, 92.
[264] Hansen, *Al-Shabaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group 2005-2012*; See e.g., Maruf and Joseph, *Inside Al-Shabaab: The Secret History of Al-Qaeda's Most Powerful Ally*.
[265] Hansen, *Al-Shabaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group 2005-2012*, 86.
[266] Hansen, 41.

involved in marriage, but the ways in which the marriages were "handled" in the lower courts and the avenues to which foreign fighters found Somali wives is not seen as an important topic for further exploration.

In Kismayo, interview participants spoke about Al-Shabaab's regulations that reflects the group's interpretation of Sharia law, but that came as a shock to many in Kismayo. As one female interview participant explained, "They treated us as though we were new Muslims. We are Muslims and were Muslims before they came, yet they made it difficult for us. They treated us as though we did not know much about our faith."[267] Many of the restrictions that Al-Shabaab claimed were Islamic were imported from countries like Saudi Arabia and came as a shock to many Somalis.[268] While traditional scholarship tends to focus on Al-Shabaab's tax or court system, I seek to emphasize that smaller restrictions on individuals' everyday lives are equally important to understand Al-Shabaab rule. I detail the regulations here, as described by interview participants in Kismayo, in a list to provide a visualization of how extensive the restrictions Al-Shabaab imposed on the population in Kismayo were.

- Women could not travel without a male escort who was a relative (*muhrim)*.
- Women's interactions with men were restricted and women were not allowed to loiter in public.
- Women were forbidden from operating businesses and engaging in small sales activities especially selling qat or tobacco.
- The population (especially women) were banned from using qat or tobacco.

[267] Interview with Female interview participant, W12, September 27, 2018.
[268] Harding, *The Mayor of Mogadishu: A Story of Chaos and Redemption in the Ruins of Somalia*, 158.

- There were several types of taxes (or *zakat)* the population was required to pay Al-Shabaab.
- Women were forced to wear a specific type of robe called a Jilbaab made of heavy black fabric and which covered their arms, heads, and went to their feet. They were required to wear socks, gloves, and *nikab* (face cover). Women were arrested for wearing traditional colorful Somali dresses (*dirac).* Women were also banned from wearing bras.
- Women were not allowed to use tampons, go to hair salons, or use bleaching creams.
- Men had to wear short trousers. They were required to have short hair and were not allowed to have mustaches.
- Watching television, movies, and listening to the radio was banned.
- Live music was not allowed.
- In addition to banning wedding ceremonies (as detailed below), Al-Shabaab also restricted burial ceremonies.
- The population was denied access to humanitarian assistance including food aid. Non-governmental organizations in the regions were banned. This led to shortages in medical supplies in Kismayo.
- Access to hospitals was restricted and interview participants told stories about not being able to go to a hospital because they did not have a male relative (or someone Al-Shabaab thought was a male relative) with them.
- Flights in and out of Kismayo stopped.
- Al-Shabaab banned goods including sugar, rice and flours, cooking oils from Kenya and neighboring countries.

- Livestock and certain harvested foods were confiscated by Al-Shabaab.
- Al-Shabaab banned sports.
- There were new rules about how to use public transportation with women being made to sit at the back of the bus and men in the front.
- Secular education was banned, and young people were required to attend *madrassas* (religious schools) and pay for this schooling.
- Female teachers could no longer teach girls and boys. Female teachers were only allowed to teach girls in religious schools.
- Tree cutting and charcoal production was banned.
- The entire population was required to attend daily prayers. Business owners had to close their shops and restaurants during these prayers.
- Al-Shabaab could look at people's phones at any time.

This long list of restrictions is important to fully understanding Al-Shabaab's governance. One interview participant summarized women's life under Al-Shabaab by succinctly explaining, "we had no life."[269]

Al-Shabaab's use of violence was another essential aspect of their rule. As detailed in chapter 7, in Kismayo, the town was forced to attend a stoning of a woman who was accused of *zina* or sex outside of marriage. Interview participants in Kismayo spoke about Al-Shabaab amputating hands as punishment for thieves. Doug Ansel sees Al-Shabaab's use of violence as a way to control populations and territory.[270]

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[269] Interview with female activist and musician from minority clan, W19, September 30, 2017.
[270] Douglas Ansel, "Civilian Support and the Foundations of Al-Shabaab Expansion," in *Somalia: Creating Space for Fresh Approaches to Peacebuilding* (Uppsala, Sweden: Life and Peace Institute/Kroc Institute, 2011), 31.

The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) pushed Al-Shabaab out of power in Kismayo in 2012. As of 2019, Al-Shabaab does not rule any major areas of Somalia and according to Maruf and Joseph the group has fallen far short of its goals.[271] Al-Shabaab is still conducting violent attacks in Somalia (including a suicide bombing in Mogadishu in October 2017 that killed approximately 500 people) and in Kenya.[272] Maruf and Joseph note that Al-Shabaab's strategy for how to retain an active group in the region is "tenacity" and scholars tend to dismiss the possibility of Al-Shabaab disappearing entirely.[273]

Al-Shabaab in Kenya

Al-Shabaab is primarily a Somali movement, but some analysts see it trying to transition to a more transnational organization.[274] Signs of this transition include Al-Shabaab's merging with its Kenyan affiliate, and its creation of a presence in Kenya and Tanzania.[275] The Muslim Youth Center (MYC) was formed at the Pumwani Riyadh Mosque which is one of the oldest Islamic institutions in Nairobi.[276] MYC was initially a youth group working with Muslim youth in the Majengo slum of Nairobi.[277] However, MYC began to develop links with Al-Shabaab and was accused of recruiting Kenyan youth to travel to Somalia to join the group.[278] MYC eventually merged with Al-Hijra which was a group that had not only a presence in Majengo, but also on the coast of Kenya and Tanzania.[279] My research in Majengo helped to provide a

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[271] Maruf and Joseph, *Inside Al-Shabaab: The Secret History of Al-Qaeda's Most Powerful Ally*, 267.
[272] In 2019 at the time of finalizing this dissertation, Al-Shabaab attacked a hotel complex in Nairobi, Kenya, Kimiko de Freytas-Tamura, "Shabab Claim Responsibility for Deadly Assault on Nairobi Hotel-Office Complex," January 15, 2019, https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/15/world/africa/nairobi-attack.html.
[273] Maruf and Joseph, *Inside Al-Shabaab: The Secret History of Al-Qaeda's Most Powerful Ally*, 276–80.
[274] Matt Bryden, "The Decline and Fall of Al-Shabaab? Think Again," *SAHAN Report, April*, 2015, http://sahan2.treelinehosting.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Bryden-Decline-and-Fall-of-Al-Shabaab.pdf.
[275] Bryden.
[276] Frederick Nzes, "Al-Hijra: Al-Shabaab's Affiliate in Kenya," *CTC Sentinel* 7, no. 5 (May 2014).
[277] Nzes, 24.
[278] Nzes, 24.
[279] Nzes, 24.

different perspective on Al-Shabaab and its activities outside of Somalia. However, since Al-Shabaab does not rule Majengo and did not implement an extensive forced marriage campaign there, this chapter is focused on Al-Shabaab in Somalia.

There has not been a lot of research focused on Al-Hijra which could be because it is seen as a cell of Al-Shabaab in Kenya rather than a separate organization. However, Al-Hijra operations are important to analyze to understand Al-Shabaab. A 2011 report, from the United Nations Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea, noted that Al-Shabaab has extensive networks within Kenya that are used to recruit and raise funds for the organization and conduct orientation and training inside Kenya.[280]

Kenya has also become a major target for Al-Shabaab's violence especially after Kenyan troops entered Somalia in October 2011.[281] Several of Al-Shabaab's major attacks occurred in Kenya with the September 2013 attack at the Westgate Mall in Nairobi in which at least 67 people were killed and another 175 injured, and the April 2015 attack in north-eastern Kenya at Garissa University in which at least 147 people died and 79 people were injured. Most recently, on January 15, 2019, Al-Shabaab attacked a hotel complex in Nairobi, killing at least 14 people, including Kenyan and international civilians.[282]

MARRIAGE IN SOMALIA

Scholarship on Al-Shabaab has *mentioned* that the group controlled marriage and their foreign fighters have married, but there has not been attention to Al-Shabaab involvement in this

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[280] "Letter Dated 18 July 2011 from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee Pursuant to Resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) Concerning Somalia and Eritrea Addressed to the President of the Security Council" (United Nations Security Council, July 18, 2011), http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2011/433 http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2011/433.
[281] Nzes, "Al-Hijra: Al-Shabaab's Affiliate in Kenya," 25..
[282] Freytas-Tamura, "Shabab Claim Responsibility for Deadly Assault on Nairobi Hotel-Office Complex"; Alex Ward, "Al-Shabaab's Kenya Attack Proves the Terrorist Group Is Still Deadly," Vox, January 16, 2019, https://www.vox.com/world/2019/1/16/18185182/nairobi-kenya-hotel-attack-spindler-american.

key aspect of Somali society.[283] Marriage is an institution in Somalia that influences social, economic, and security dimensions of Somalis lives. It is challenging to describe marriage practices in Somalia because of the diversity across clans and regions, as well as the limited amount of literature on the topic. I highlight the findings and commonalities from two scholars writing about marriage - Sadia Musse Ahmed (2004) and Virginia Luling (2015). Luling is writing specifically about the Geledi and Wa'dan clans of Afgooye in southern Somalia.[284] Ahmed does not specify which region in Somalia or group she is focusing on, but Luling posits that Ahmed's descriptions sound more focused on clans of nomadic background.[285] Since Kismayo has a diversity of clans I use findings from both authors descriptions of marriage combined with information from interview participants.

Ahmed describes marriage in Somalia as, "an institution vital to the maintenance of social, economic, and political organization that underpins a nomadic pastoral society. It has developed, and is maintained through, strongly defined rules and customs."[286] While marriage is a key social institution in many cultures, Ahmed's description illustrates the ways in which marriage is used to organize all aspects of Somali life.

Across Somalia there are some clans and regions where exogamous marriage (the practice of young people being encouraged to marry outside their clans to establish new relations[287]) is the norm, and others where endogamous marriage (marriage within the same clan or lineage[288]) is more common. Ahmed describes exogamous marriage whereas Luling focuses

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[283] See Hansen, *Al-Shabaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group 2005-2012*, 41 and 86 for brief mentions on Al-Shabaab and marriage.
[284] Virginia Luling and Anita S. Adam, "Continuities and Changes: Marriage in Southern Somalia and the Diaspora," *Northeast African Studies* 15, no. 1 (2015): 141.
[285] Luling and Adam, 145.
[286] Sadia Musse Ahmed, "Traditions of Marriage and the Household," in *Somalia The Untold Story: The War Through The Eyes of Somali Women* (London: Pluto Press, 2004), 51.
[287] Ahmed, 51.
[288] Luling and Adam, "Continuities and Changes," 143–45.

on endogamous marriage. While Ahmed highlights the importance of marriage to build new bonds across families or lineages, [289] Luling notes that at most in the clans she is describing marriage provides an alliance between families. [290] In both forms of marriage, alliances are built between families.

Exogamous and endogamous marriages both occurred in Kismayo depending on the couple, their families, and the clan.[291] One interview participant described the benefit of marrying outside one's clan for business relationships and to gain a new customer base.[292] Businesswomen might choose to marry outside their clan because they want to be able to rely on their clan's support in case there are business disagreements with their husband's family. There is more of a tendency to fight when a disagreement occurs between clans. Ahmed explains, "Men are fiercely protective of their relatives when the matter involves another clan, but are more likely to safeguard the status quo than seek retribution when the insult or injury comes from within their own clan."[293] The example of businesswomen from Kismayo marrying outside their clans highlights the ways in which some women and their families adapted exogamous marriage to a more modern version to protect their business interests.

Ahmed and Luling describe similar processes of marriage in Somalia. Ahmed notes that most traditional forms of marriage include participation from the parents of the bride and groom, as well as elder kinsmen. In Kismayo, the parents are usually involved in arranging or approving the marriages of their children.[294] In what Ahmed describes as the most common type of marriage a man and a woman have a secret courtship and then the man's family approaches the

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[289] Ahmed, "Traditions of Marriage and the Household," 52.
[290]Luling and Adam, "Continuities and Changes," 145.
[291] Interview with researcher and activist, 135, March 27, 2018.
[292] Interview with Kismayo male manual laborer Somalia, E, October 11, 2017.
[293] Ahmed, "Traditions of Marriage and the Household," 53.
[294] Interview with researcher and activist, 135.

woman's father for consent.[295] If the family refuses the woman may influence the situation by informing her kinsmen of her desire to marry the man.[296] The family may then decide to accept the match, but if they do not, the woman has to make a choice between her family and the man.[297] If the woman sides with the man she becomes estranged from her family which would be problematic for the woman if the marriage fails.[298]

In the above description there are points where the young woman entering in the marriage has agency and choice. Although the young man approaches the woman's father the mother of the young woman also has agency. In the case of a marriage arranged by a couple's family without their participation, if the young woman does not want to enter into the marriage, she has a better chance of resisting the marriage if she convinces her mother to side with her.[299] Luling also discusses the common practice of marriage by elopement when a couples' parents do not consent to their union or they do not have the sums necessary for a more traditional wedding.[300]

Somali marriages have many important rituals and payments. The groom is responsible for making several payments to the bride, her family, and her kin. One form of payment that came up in several interviews is *meher* which is paid to the bride by the groom. Ahmed calls the *meher* a "security bond."[301] This payment is required as a part of Islamic law to make the marriage valid.[302] The payment can be a monetary amount, jewelry, or something else the couple has agreed upon. *Meher* has a special place in Somali society and it was described to me as "something that every girl dreams about."[303] Often the *meher* amount is announced as a part of

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[295] Interview with researcher and activist.
[296] Interview with researcher and activist.
[297] Interview with researcher and activist.
[298] Interview with researcher and activist.
[299] Interview with researcher and activist.
[300] Luling and Adam, "Continuities and Changes," 155.
[301] Ahmed, "Traditions of Marriage and the Household," 56.
[302] Luling and Adam, "Continuities and Changes," 148.
[303] Interview with researcher and activist, 135.

the marriage ceremony and reinforces the promise by the groom to give the bride the specified gift.[304] More recently, among young people, a competition has developed over the amount of the *meher,* with prices rising as high as $50,000 U.S. Dollars.[305] For a smaller *meher* the man might pay the young woman immediately, but for larger amounts the couple will work out a payment plan.[306] Luling describes the increase in marriage costs and includes quotes from men who complain about the difficulty in having resources to make these payments. One of Luling's informants explains, "marriage became [a money-making] business in Mogadishu, and there are different stories on how families turn their girls into income generating machines."[307] In the case of divorce, if the entire *meher* had not been paid to the woman during the marriage she is still entitled to this payment.

Divorce is quite common in Somalia and Luling notes that Somali individuals in the south marry several times.[308] This has been historically true as documented in a study from the 1950s in Somalia in which one third of the marriages studied ended in divorce.[309] Divorce does not carry a stigma for women and most remarried quickly.[310] Luling discusses the term *garoob* which refers to a widowed or divorced woman.[311] She explains that *garoob* women, "enjoyed a particularly free and independent life, without the restrictions of either wives or unmarried girls" and these women might not marry for a year or two and had more say in selecting their next husbands.[312]

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[304] Interview with researcher and activist.
[305] Interview with researcher and activist.
[306] Interview with researcher and activist.
[307] Luling and Adam, "Continuities and Changes," 157.
[308] Luling and Adam, 142.
[309] Luling and Adam, 142 citing Lewis.
[310] Luling and Adam, 143.
[311] Luling and Adam, 143.
[312] Luling and Adam, 143.

Al-Shabaab has not been the only ruling authority that has tried to control marriages in Somalia. The regime of Siyad Barre created "The Family Law of 1975" to prohibit marriages in which a father formalized his daughter's marriage without her consent.[313] Barre's policies were focused on "regularizing the conduct of marriages" and required marriages to be held at "orientation centers" that were built in every district as part of the regime's socialist agenda.[314] These policies were no longer applicable across Somalia once Barre lost power, but show a history of attempts at controlling marriage in Somalia. The Barre regime control of marriage is consistent with theories by Jacqueline Stevens about states regulation of marriage to build political communities.[315] It is especially significant thinking about state control of marriage in the context of Somalia where there have been many periods without formal state rule. The absence of different formal state structures means that Somalis have had less experience with the state management of marriage and therefore there was a unique opportunity for Al-Shabaab to control this structure.

AL-SHABAAB FORCED MARRIAGE

Spectrum of Force

There were different types of coercion and force used by Al-Shabaab members in arranging marriages for themselves or other members. A report by Human Rights Watch (2012) focused on Al-Shabaab's abduction of girls from school and forcibly marrying them. Al-Shabaab picked up girls that they viewed as acceptable as wives which were the girls they considered physically mature.[316] The girls would be taken to Al-Shabaab camps in separate vehicles from

[313] Luling and Adam, 143.
[314] Luling and Adam, 135.
[315] Stevens, *Reproducing the State*.
[316] Bader, Coursen-Neff, and Hassan, *No Place for Children*, 55.Human Rights Watch, "No Place for Children: Child Recruitment, Forced Marriage, and Attacks on Schools in Somalia," 2012, 55.

the boy recruits.[317] This could be a possible attempt to retain an appearance of following the group's restrictions on fraternization between males and females. Once at the camp one report indicates that the girls were, "taken and paraded in front of old Al-Shabaab men who were masked."[318] Perhaps this was to add a ritual to the forced marriage process or even to demonstrate to the girls that they were to be married to older respected Al-Shabaab fighters.

Once arriving at the camp, the girls would then be locked up and kept in specific houses for combatants.[319] Keeping the girls locked up was likely a way to assert control over them and also keep them from interacting with male combatants. This process of keeping them in combatant houses may also have been part of an initiation ritual into the camp. The Human Rights Watch report does not specify where these incidences take place, but the people who spoke about these marriages were from Mogadishu, so it is possible that this was Al-Shabaab's marriage system during this time period around Mogadishu.

In Kismayo, the focus of this study, Al-Shabaab did not use the tactic of group abductions of young women and girls from public places. This was because Al-Shabaab was the ruling authority in Kismayo and wanted to retain an appearance of promoting order and justice. Physically abducting women and girls is also less useful for Al-Shabaab's goals related to external cohesion. It is useful to understand the different types of force Al-Shabaab used in its forced marriages across Somalia and within Kismayo and my theory of forced marriage encourages understanding force along a spectrum. I describe the different ends of the spectrum beginning with marriages that were seen as more voluntary (yet not entirely voluntary in a period

[317] Bader, Coursen-Neff, and Hassan, 55.
[318] Bader, Coursen-Neff, and Hassan, 55.
[319] Bader, Coursen-Neff, and Hassan, 58.Ibid., 58.

of conflict with high levels of coercion) and proceeding along the spectrum with different types of coercion and force.

There were some discussions by interview participants in Kismayo about women who chose to marry members of Al-Shabaab in a more voluntary way. Male interview participants spoke about this more than female interview participants. Three male interview participants thought that women had more of a choice regarding marriage to Al-Shabaab members (as opposed to traditional marriages outside Al-Shabaab) because they thought the women's opinions mattered more than their parents.[320] This likely was the case if a woman was seen as going along with the marriage to an Al-Shabaab member and her parents objected, but no one spoke about women having the option to refuse marriages to Al-Shabaab members. This sentiment about women having choice in Al-Shabaab marriages was not reflected by female interview participants and may have been because male interview participants generally saw Al-Shabaab marriage regulations more favorably because it made marriage easier for them.

It is clear in interview participants' discussions about why women might choose to marry members of Al-Shabaab there is still a limit in freedom that reflects the context of the conflict environment in Kismayo. The most common reason interview participants spoke about for women voluntarily marrying members of Al-Shabaab was because of financial benefit or protection. One male interview participant explained, "The only people who had a good life in those days were members of Al-Shabaab. So, many women, despite not being happy with them, opted to marry them."[321] A female interview participant noted that she knew a woman who

[320] Interview with Kismayo male farmer Somalia, B, October 6, 2017; Interview with Kismayo male Koranic teacher Somalia, F, October 8, 2017; Interview with Kismayo male clan elder Somalia, H, October 9, 2017.
[321] Interview with Kismayo male shop owner Somalia, G, October 7, 2017.

married a member of Al-Shabaab because she was able to still operate her business despite Al-Shabaab's restrictions on women operating small businesses.[322]

The economic benefit for women to marry members of Al-Shabaab is complicated because, as will be discussed below, women married to Al-Shabaab members did not get traditional payments at the start of the marriage. However, some interview participants thought that Al-Shabaab leadership made sure wives of Al-Shabaab members were financially taken care of - either through the group providing for them and/or by ensuring that men paid the living expenses of their wives and children.[323] One male interview participant explains:

> You remember also that Somalis were not good in giving women their share of the inheritance. Under Al-Shabaab, all these [rules] have changed. They give them their fair share of the inheritance, women felt safe for their money and business. It was really different from other periods in this regard.[324]

Other interview participants complained that Al-Shabaab did not give women enough living expenses.[325] This view of women financially benefiting from Al-Shabaab marriages was predominately one expressed by male interview participants. As detailed below, in Al-Shabaab's "cheap marriages" women lost access to key resources that were part of marriage payments.

Women also married members of Al-Shabaab to protect their families. Perhaps this was to avoid being propositioned for marriage and having their families say no and be punished by Al-Shabaab. Finally, a few interview participants mentioned women who supported Al-Shabaab because of ideological and religious reasons.[326] These were often framed as women outside of Kismayo who "migrated for the sake of Jihad."[327] While certain women supported Al-Shabaab

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[322] Interview with female youth activist, W2, September 25, 2017.
[323] Interview with male manual laborer, E.
[324] Interview with male manual laborer.
[325] Interview with Kismayo male driver Somalia, C, October 10, 2017.
[326] Interview with female peace activist, W5, September 25, 2017.
[327] Interview with male farmer, B.

for political reasons, similar to male supporters of Al-Shabaab, there were frequently other reasons related to the environment of coercion in Kismayo, that led women to marry members of Al-Shabab.

Another form of marriage into Al-Shabaab was women and men who were already married and decided to join the group together. In one of the few studies with former members of Al-Shabaab, the authors describe a couple who was recruited by Al-Shabaab (they do not specify in which region) and offered protection and $300 a month.[328] The couple initially did not agree to join Al-Shabaab, but were threatened by the group.[329] Eventually, the couple joined the group together.[330] The wife cooked, washed clothes, and collected firewood, and the husband inspected roads and worked as a fundraiser.[331] These types of Al-Shabaab relationships were not discussed as frequently in our research in Kismayo, but were mentioned in a few interviews. One interview participant describes how he thought about different types of women in Al-Shabaab:

> I think women can be categorized into three. Some are their wives whom they married previously and are still married with children. Some are the newly married ones. The third category are those ones who were the majority of the women and live in the town without any particular relationship with Al-Shabaab. The first group is safe from their life partners and are the ones who could be affected the least by Al-Shabaab mistreatment. The second ones are useful as long as Al-Shabaab members have an interest in them. The majority of women in the town are lucky if they are not under Al-Shabaab's spotlight. But once they come in contact with the Al-Shabaab, then they might start worrying for their safety.[332]

This quote illustrates the ways in which marriage is the central way women are linked to Al-Shabaab. The different ways women could become married to members of Al-Shabaab represents an illustration of a marriage system that is along a spectrum of voluntary to forced.

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[328] Anneli Botha and Mahdi Abdile, "Radicalisation and Al-Shabaab Recruitment in Somalia," *Institute for Security Studies Papers*, no. 266 (2014): 8.
[329] Botha and Abdile, 8.
[330] Botha and Abdile, 8.
[331] Botha and Abdile, 8.
[332] Interview with male shop owner, G.

Even though some members of the population (particularly men) saw some women as having more choice in marrying members of Al-Shabaab in Kismayo, where Al-Shabaab had complete control over the town, choice was generally limited for the population. Many female interview participants said the greatest harm of Al-Shabaab rule was the limits placed on their freedom and the lack of choice in their daily lives. For this reason, in an area that is ruled by a rebel group, it is useful to view force along a spectrum understanding that there are different levels of coercion and force when a group perpetrates a forced marriage campaign in a town it controls. One interview participant sums up the lack of choice, "I want to add that women married to Al-Shabaab, married not out of love, but to survive…to maintain the survival of her family and children. There were not many women who married them because of love. They married them because of fear and force."[333] Fear and force were commonplace for most women living under Al-Shabaab rule in Kismayo.

Overview of Forced Marriage Practices in Kismayo

A common interpretation of Al-Shabaab's forced marriage campaign in Kismayo can be summarized by quoting an interview participant who explained that members of Al-Shabaab, "acted as though they were told to go everywhere they controlled to loot the women and girls. They behaved very strangely in terms of their determination and need of forced marriages."[334] In contrast to the control of forced marriage by LRA leadership, all interview participants who were asked, said that Al-Shabaab members did not need permission to marry women by force.

Interview participants in Kismayo highlighted how marriages with members of Al-Shabaab broke strongly from what is acceptable practice within traditional marriage. Marriages were not arranged between families but were arranged at the initiative of members of Al-

[333] Interview with female peace activist and soldier, W1, September 24, 2017.
[334] Interview with female former khat/ciggarette seller, Respondent 20, March 12, 2018.

Shabaab. Al-Shabaab members would often approach a young woman directly and ask her to marry him. Interview participants recited the phrase Al-Shabaab men used in approaching women: "my soul likes you."[335] Again, this is significant because Al-Shabaab could have used physical force to marry women and girls but wanted to attempt to convince them of the value of marrying members of Al-Shabaab. However, if the wooing did not work, Al-Shabaab would step up their level of coercion and eventually forcibly take a woman.

Al-Shabaab took steps to make women and girls more amenable to proposals from Al-Shabaab members which is part of its strategy of building external cohesion. Many interview participants discussed brainwashing (their term) that occurred at madrassas (Islamic religious schools) to convince young women to marry members of Al-Shabaab. This brainwashing was frequently done by other women who were already members of Al-Shabaab. These female members of Al-Shabaab were also matchmakers who would later facilitate the marrying of men in Al-Shabaab to these women.

Madrassas were also a place for female members of Al-Shabaab to gain information on young women and girls and try to figure out who was single and might be a good wife for Al-Shabaab members. Jail was another key site where brainwashing of women and girls occurred. A few interview participants who had been arrested and spent time in Al-Shabaab jails spoke about their experiences of being propositioned for marriage while detained. Propositioning women in Al-Shabaab jails was significant as it is a site of extreme control over women's bodies. Jail is also a meaningful site because women who were in jails were seen as disobeying Al-Shabaab's rules, especially their rules about proper behavior of women and femininity related to

[335] Interview with Kismayo female small business owner Somalia, Respondent 1, March 7, 2018; Interview with female activist, Respondent 10, March 6, 2018; Interview with female small business owner, Respondent 13, March 10, 2018.

dress and interactions in public. Propositioning women for marriage in jails could be a way for Al-Shabaab to bring these women in line with the group's ideas about femininity.

Another way to gain information on women's marital status was done in Al-Shabaab public gatherings. As described in chapter 1, before one gathering divorced women were instructed to wear red socks, married women to wear black socks, and single women to wear white socks.[336] This was intended to guide Al-Shabaab about which women they could approach or set-up with other members. One interview participant spoke about one gathering in a large hall where this was ordered, and all women wore black socks because they did not want to marry members of Al-Shabaab. Al-Shabaab became angry and said they knew the women were lying because they thought 60 percent of the population was single and should be wearing white socks.[337]

Although it seems that generally Al-Shabaab members preferred to marry single women, interview participants reported that sometimes Al-Shabaab men would marry women as a means of revenge against particular men. They would target women whose husbands were politicians or out of the country. They would tell these women that their husbands were infidels and they should marry an Al-Shabaab man who is a true Muslim.[338] One interview participant noted that he heard Al-Shabaab members married all of the wives of a former politician they did not like in Kismayo.[339]

Al-Shabaab also used more random assigning techniques to arrange marriages for their members. In some cases, Al-Shabaab gathered young men and women and put them in separate

[336] Interview with female worker at family shop, Respondent 12, March 7, 2018; Interview with male driver, C.
[337] Interview with female worker at family shop, Respondent 12.
[338] Interview with female small business owner, Respondent 13.
[339] Interview with Kismayo Male interview participant Somalia, I, October 2017.

rooms telling them they were there for special Koranic teaching sessions.[340] Male Al-Shabaab members would take off a shoe for these young women to pick from at these gatherings. After the woman picked a shoe, she was told it belonged to the man she was going to marry.[341] Al-Shabaab leaders would then go ask the father of the girl for permission and if he refused, they would still arrange the marriage.[342]

Members of Al-Shabaab were encouraged to have several wives. Some people believe that as part of the Islamic faith men can have four wives.[343] One interview participant explained, "Al-Shabaab is supportive of polygamous marriage for sure. Each member of Al-Shabaab also believes in polygamy, and every Al-Shabaab man has more than one wife."[344] While this does not appear to be common practice in Kismayo interview participants described it as "religiously admissible."[345] This technique of encouraging Al-Shabaab members to marry many women was useful because it linked more women to the group and allowed Al-Shabaab to benefit from having them as members.

Cheap Marriages

When interview participants were asked if there were any regulations or rules in Al-Shabaab's marriage process many spoke about the fact that Al-Shabaab created and required "cheap marriages." "Cheap marriages" were not only enforced for Al-Shabaab members but were required for all marriages and weddings in Kismayo. The change in tradition towards

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[340] Interview with female peace activist, W20, September 30, 2017.
[341] Interview with Female interview participant, W12; Interview with female university nursing student, Respondent 11, March 7, 2018; Interview with female peace activist, W20.
[342] Interview with Female interview participant, W12.
[343] Don S. Browning, Christian Green, and John Witte Jr., eds., *Sex, Marriage, & Family in World Religions* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 186.
[344] Interview with female restaurant and teashop owner, Respondent 16, March 11, 2018..
[345] Interview with female nursing student from minority clan, Respondent 7, March 5, 2018.

"cheap marriages" were viewed more positively by male interview participants in contrast to female participants who were strongly opposed to these changes in marital traditions.

In Kismayo weddings were elaborate affairs involving celebrations with music and car escorts. Women received jewelry and new furniture for their homes as part of their marriage. One female interview participant noted, "Often Somali brides place high demands on the groom to buy gold and expensive things."[346] Al-Shabaab strongly enforced the rule on marriage practices and interview participants spoke about how if anyone violated these rules and engaged in payments or gifts they could be punished.[347] One male interview participant explained "cheap marriage":

> Marriage was made cheap. All the obstacles of marriage have been eliminated. Al-Shabaab stopped all the traditional burdens such as paying camel, bringing many vehicles during the wedding ceremony and also the camel that was slaughtered at the wedding ceremonies. All these were abolished, and the marriage was as a result made easy and simple.[348]

Al-Shabaab's new marriage rules, especially restricting marriage payments, was seen favorably by male interview participants who required fewer resources to marry. This practice was enforced for all members of the population in Kismayo because it was part of the goal of creating a new society in which male power was reinforced and not threatened as it had been by the rising marriage costs.

One type of payment, *meher,*[349] was seen as especially important for women and helped provide them with some financial freedom. One interview participant explained the rising costs of *meher* and noted that Al-Shabaab viewed *meher* as a, "a plot against men, these greedy young

[346] Interview with female activist and musician from minority clan, W19.
[347] Interview with female vegetable seller from minority clan, Respondent 15, March 11, 2018.
[348] Interview with male manual laborer, E.
[349] Also spelled mahr.

women were imposing this burden on men."[350] She went on to say Al-Shabaab was taking away something that benefited women. This is an example of the way in which looking to Islam to understand Al-Shabaab's marriage system is insufficient.[351] *Meher* is an Islamic practice, yet Al-Shabaab decided to abolish it because of the power it gave to women and the ways in which it was disempowering Somali men. It is notable that in interviews with men they spoke more positively about this aspect of Al-Shabaab's marriage system, revealing the burden marriage payments had placed on them.

Lack of Parental Involvement

One of the most common sentiments voiced by interview participants about Al-Shabaab's marriage system was that it broke with tradition and was problematic, in particular because of the lack of parental consent. The idea of parental consent was one that was debated in Al-Shabaab. One interview participant explained that Al-Shabaab used to marry women and girls without informing the parents, but there was a disagreement in Al-Shabaab about whether this was appropriate. Eventually Al-Shabaab decided that members should inform the parents of the woman or girl they would like to marry, but if the parents do not agree then he could still marry the woman or girl.[352]

In practice, parents had little power to refuse the marriage of their daughter to a member of Al-Shabaab. Interview participants recounted stories of parents who were beaten or jailed for refusing the marriage of their daughter to an Al-Shabaab member. It was especially forbidden for parents to disapprove of their daughters marrying members of Al-Shabaab because of clan affiliations. One male interview participant explained:

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[350] Interview with researcher and activist, 135.Interview 135, April 27, 2018.
[351] Dyan Mazurana, "Women, Girls, and Non-State Opposition Groups," ed. Carol Cohn (Cambridge: Polity, 2013), 164.
[352] Interview with male farmer, B; Interview with male manual laborer, E.

> You cannot cite clan difference as one reason [that you do not want your daughter to marry an Al-Shabaab man] as you will be reminded that our religion is the yardstick of equality among the Muslim people and Al-Shabaab does not accept racial or clan differences as basis of merits among the people.[353]

Marriage practices by Al-Shabaab were seen as so against tradition that one interview participant described them as "illegal marriages."[354]

Foreign Members of Al-Shabaab

Foreign members of Al-Shabaab living in Kismayo, were encouraged to marry local Somali women. Other male Al-Shabaab members were asked to help their fellow members who were not from Somalia marry. Foreign men were seen as needing additional assistance in marrying because they did not have "the connection with the community."[355] This is interesting to consider again because although Al-Shabaab marriages were forced, it was seen as important for male members to have connections to the community to marry, perhaps to gain information on who would be an appropriate woman to marry. Foreign men were seen by interview participants as especially benefiting from the forced marriage system. Interview participants were also especially offended at these marriages with non-Somali men because of the way it violated ideas about alliances between families and continuing Somali lineages. One female interview participant explained, "Somali Al-Shabaab men were responsible for findings wives for foreign men who came from various countries including America. Foreign men were seen as mujahedeen who came to Somalia to liberate [Somalis] and thus this was seen as the least Al-Shabaab could do for these noble men."[356] In this perspective, local women in Kismayo were seen as a reward for foreign men.

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[353] Interview with male Koranic teacher, F.
[354] Interview with female peace activist and soldier, W1.
[355] Interview with female small business owner and trader, Respondent 17, March 11, 2018.
[356] Interview with Kismayo female former Koranic school teacher Somalia, Respondent 2, March 4, 2018.

Interview participants explained that Al-Shabaab leadership placed particular value on foreign male members of the group marrying women in Kismayo. This pattern of encouraging foreign members of Al-Shabaab to marry local women in Kismayo, demonstrates the ways in which Al-Shabaab was not only looking to tie the population to the organization, but also link all group members to the population.

How Al-Shabaab Marriages Ended

Al-Shabaab marriages could end quickly because of the male member's decision to divorce his wife or because of his death. Interview participants spoke about how quickly and easily Al-Shabaab members divorced their wives. One interview participant told a story about a young woman she knows who was married to an older man in Al-Shabaab who then divorced her a few hours later.[357] This woman received a small amount of money as a payment after the divorce.[358] Another interview participant shared a different story about a woman with a newborn being divorced over the phone and never seeing her Al-Shabaab husband again.[359] These women who are divorced by their Al-Shabaab husbands are put in difficult situation and lack a social safety net because of the stigma they receive from their family after being married to a member of Al-Shabaab.

One interview participant spoke about her daughter who was married to a man in Al-Shabaab and had a child with him.[360] The man divorced her daughter after two years. The interview participant shared that her daughter is afraid of Al-Shabaab and gets calls from Al-Shabaab members asking her to marry another Al-Shabaab man. Al-Shabaab wanted to keep

[357] Interview with female business person, W4, September 25, 2017.
[358] In the clans Luling studies she noted that meher was usually paid in cases of divorce, Luling and Adam, "Continuities and Changes," 148.
[359] Interview with female peace activist, W5.
[360] Interview with female small business owner and trader, Respondent 17.

female members inside the group because these women had seen the internal workings of Al-Shabaab, and because the group generally valued its female members as described in chapter 6.

For some women, losing their Al-Shabaab husband created an opportunity for escape. However, for most women they were forced to marry another member of Al-Shabaab. Al-Shabaab was especially interested in making sure younger widows were remarried. Interview participants spoke about widows being "inherited" by another Al-Shabaab member. If Al-Shabaab wanted the widow to remarry it was very difficult for her to refuse and some interview participants spoke about women being physically abused for refusing to remarry. Widowed women in Al-Shabaab also knew it would be difficult to return to their families because of the stigma of being married to a member of Al-Shabaab.

Although some interview participants spoke about women who married into Al-Shabaab and were able to escape generally Al-Shabaab had an interest in keeping women in the group. The attempts to keep women within the group served multiple purposes for Al-Shabaab. Keeping women within Al-Shabaab was an important part of the strategy of external cohesion because the group wanted to sustain the ties to these women. Al-Shabaab was paranoid and secretive and did not want someone who saw the inner workings of the group back in society where they could share these details with the Somali government. Remarriage was also part of Al-Shabaab's ideology (and could be justified within the Islamic practice of remarriage to a male relative[361]) and strategy of controlling women.

Children

[361] See Abbas Mehregan, "Islamo-Arabic Culture and Women's Law: An Introduction to the Sociology of Women's Law in Islam," *International Journal for the Semiotics of Law - Revue Internationale de Sémiotique Juridique* 29, no. 2 (June 2016): 416, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11196-016-9467-8 which notes that wives are seen in some Islamic legal interpretations as a "personal possession to be inherited."

Many women had children within Al-Shabaab forced marriages. There were differing opinions on how Al-Shabaab treated children who were born as part of the forced marriage. Some interview participants believed the children were valued because they enabled men in Al-Shabaab to continue their lineage.[362] Others saw the potential for Al-Shabaab children to become future group members.[363]

In other cases, Al-Shabaab members did not seem to value their children from forced marriages. One interview participant explained, "Al-Shabaab soldiers married the women in the town and left many children. But these children do not know their fathers. If you ask one of them who was his father, he will say abu so and so-a nickname Al-Shabaab usually uses for their members which mean father of..." This quote illustrates the ways in which forced marriages were outside tradition because in certain cases an Al-Shabaab member did not share his familial identity with his forced wife. Since in Somalia an individual's clan identity and name comes from one's father, children born into Al-Shabaab were often left without formal identity markers or familial ties. We know very little about children born into Al-Shabaab and it represents an important area for future research.[364] However, it would be in line with the ideology of social control, as we will see in the case of LRA, if Al-Shabaab did focus on children as a way to create an new ideal society.

HOW AL-SHABAAB FORCED MARRIAGE BUILDS EXTERNAL COHESION

Marrying Al-Shabaab not an Individual

[362] Interview with researcher and activist, 135.
[363] Interview with female restaurant owner, Respondent 18, March 11, 2018.
[364] For more information see, Phoebe Donnelly, "Children Born into Al-Shabaab," in *Challenging Conceptions: Children Born of Wartime Rape*, ed. Dyan Mazurana and Kimberly Theidon (University of Pennsylvania Press, forthcoming 2019).

Marriages inside Al-Shabaab were not focused on the individuals involved in the marriage, but instead represented marriage as a commitment to the mission of Al-Shabaab. One interview participant highlighted the way religion was used in the framing of Al-Shabaab marriages: "Dar Allah iyo Darin was used to justify such marriage – meaning – marry me for the sake of Allah and with a mat made of reeds (meaning, no dowry, no lavish wedding and no furniture and so on)."[365] When Al-Shabaab members would approach women to marry them, instead of enticing them with information about the man or his family, they instead invoked language of religious duty. One interview participant explained, "Al-Shabaab took girls and encouraged them to escape from their parents to be married to Mujaahidiin. Mujaahidiin want wives, Al-Shabaab said to these young women, aren't you supporting the Mujaahadiin? You have a duty to support the cause – Jihaad."[366]

Female matchmakers similarly did not appeal to young women and girls by citing the appeal of a potential Al-Shabaab husband or trying to offer them material gain but framed the marriage in line with the broader cause of the group. This helped to link the women to the group and not to one male member of Al-Shabaab. Another interview participant explained that Al-Shabaab told young women and girls as part of brainwashing, "that this world is short and means nothing" and "that they have the responsibility to work with Al-Shabaab because it is ruling according to Sharia law."[367]

This tool of framing marriage was a way to not just link a woman to a particular man, but instead to link the whole concept of marriage to the mission of Al-Shabaab. That way if a man divorced an individual woman or if a man died, the woman still felt tied to Al-Shabaab. This was

[365] Interview with female business person, W4.
[366] Interview with female small business owner, W18, September 30, 2017.
[367] Interview with female local politician & activist, W17, September 30, 2017.

a way to strengthen a woman's commitment to Al-Shabaab and the commitment of her future children to the group. Additionally, the rhetoric of marrying to the movement also is in line with the ideology of social control in which Al-Shabaab's aims to have people linked to the group and tied together through the group.

Exogamous Marriage Reinvented?

Al-Shabaab's forced marriage campaign sought to connect members of the population of Kismayo to the group. This could be seen as a revival of the tradition of exogamous marriage discussed above, marrying within a new population to build alliances. One interview participant contextualized Al-Shabaab's with past groups looking to infiltrate a population, "Any group that emerged after the collapse of the state had their own supporters and opponents. Al-Shabaab also had their own supporters and those who opposed them. In order to increase their supporters, they married many women hailing from different clans."[368] Despite Al-Shabaab's desire to appear as a group that was above clan divides, Al-Shabaab still had to work within the clan system. Mohamed Ingiriis describes Al-Shabaab as, "pragmatic clannism and pure anti-clannism."[369] As this quote describes, Al-Shabaab's forced marriage system was a way to ensure that they had links, through women, to multiple different clans.

Most interview participants had a daughter, sister, cousin, or friend, who had been forcibly married into Al-Shabaab. One male interview participant explained, "I think they [Al-Shabaab] correctly understood that women are very important if they want to create sustainable control in the town."[370] Al-Shabaab controlled and connected women to the group through forced marriage as part of controlling the town. Similar to exogamous marriages, the idea was likely

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[368] Interview with female business person, W10, September 27, 2017.
[369] Mohamed Haji Ingiriis, "The Invention of Al-Shabaab in Somalia: Emulating the Anti-Colonial Dervishes Movement," *African Affairs* 117, no. 467 (April 1, 2018): 18, https://doi.org/10.1093/afraf/ady001.
[370] Interview with male farmer, B.

that if one's family member was in Al-Shabaab (including sons, brothers, and friends that had joined the group) the population might be less likely to actively resist the group. A study by UN Women examining the population's opinion of Al-Shabaab in another area in southern Somalia it ruled (Afmadow District) noted that even if individuals did not agree with al-Shabaab, many of them had family members who have joined so their loyalty remains with al-Shabaab over Somali's national security services.[371]

It is unclear whether building links to different families and clans reduced the population in Kismayo's resistance to Al-Shabaab. Interview participants in my study were speaking about Al-Shabaab rule five years after the group had left and after Al-Shabaab had been discredited across most of Somalia. There were not many individuals who publicly still supported the group, yet interview participants did speak about initial positivity toward Al-Shabaab rule. The shift in popular opinion in Kismayo towards Al-Shabaab especially towards their strategy of forced marriage, reveals that forced marriage can have negative effects on a rebel group. Interview participants were very angry about Al-Shabaab's forced marriage campaign and also turned against the group based on their use of violence (especially an incident of the stoning of a young woman detailed in chapter 7) and their perceived hypocrisy. Despite this shift in popular opinion, Al-Shabaab was able to maintain control over Kismayo for five years. It is unclear exactly how forced marriage helped promote this control, but it is feasible that the initial links Al-Shabaab created with the population reduced initial active resistance against the group. In a large population, if Al-Shabaab came in and ruled as a foreign (to Kismayo) entity without local roots,

[371] Sean Allen, Hawo Idris, and Tanja Chopra, "Women's Access to Justice and Security in Somalia's Afmadow District: A Snapshot" (UN Women Briefing Paper, January 2016), 6, http://katuni.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Briefing_paper_1_Justice_Security.pdf.

it may have been less able to control Kismayo in initial years. Instead, Al-Shabaab chose to work with not only local men and boys, but also chose to bring in many women and girls.

Al-Shabaab as the Only Authority Figure

Al-Shabaab's forced marriages took away power from other individuals and groups who had seen their role in arranging marriages as a key form of social capital. A father's approval of his daughter's marriage partner is seen as an essential task of a father and a marker of his masculinity.[372] Fathers were not the only ones losing traditional aspects of their role of fathers, but mothers and clan elders also relied on certain forms of power and social capital from their involvement in marriage practices.

The pattern of Al-Shabaab arranging marriages without parental involvement was seen as a significant break with expectations for marriage in Kismayo. Al-Shabaab knew this was an issue based on their wavering about how to include parents in the marriage process. Despite ultimately deciding that members of Al-Shabaab had to *inform* the parents of the woman they wanted to marry, Al-Shabaab usurped parental control and gave a new form of control to the group. One interview participant sums up the new power Al-Shabaab gained from their system of marriage. She explains,

> By removing all of the marriage requirement and practices, and replacing them with their own, Al-Shabaab was able to impose its own forced marriage style on the population. They minimized the roles of parents, the brides, the clans in marriages, and thus, they could do whatever they wanted to do, and this allowed them to promote forced marriages. In addition, Al-Shabaab used violence and intimidation to achieve their forced marriages. Any parent who opposed such marriage, was threatened with violence and death. Who benefited from such? It was Al-Shabaab men who were the biggest beneficiaries of forced and cheap marriages.[373]

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[372] Judy El-Bushra and Judith Gardner, "The Impact of War on Somali Men: Feminist Analysis of Masculinities and Gender Relations in a Fragile Context," *Gender & Development* 24, no. 3 (September 2016): 448, https://doi.org/10.1080/13552074.2016.1233668.
[373] Interview with female vegetable seller from minority clan, Respondent 15.

Several interview participants noted that Al-Shabaab had "the final say" in disputes about marriage giving its members another form of authority and control over the population.[374] Al-Shabaab's distortion of marriage takes away a key form of social capital for families, making it more difficult for families to build new networks or strengthen existing networks through the marriage of their children. One interview participant explained, "Parents were not respected under Al-Shabaab. Mothers were not listened by their sons and daughters. They only listened what Al-Shabaab tells them to do."[375] Taking away an important role of parents and the older generation was a way for Al-Shabaab to assert itself as the ultimate authority over the civilian population.

No one had the power to object to Al-Shabaab's opinions and preferences about marriage in Kismayo. One interview participant summarizes this dynamic:

> Al-Shabaab men forced young women into marriage and parents could no longer consent to their daughters' marriage. Parents lost power and could not protect their daughters from such marriages. If you are mother or father, and your daughter decided to marry Al-Shabaab man, Al-Shabaab were the ones who had the final decision.[376]

Overturning traditional marriage practices also represented a way of framing Al-Shabaab rule as a break with the past and a new period, thereby cementing its authority. Al-Shabaab sought to insert their authority into all aspects of the population's lives and marriage was an important part of this strategy. Yet their attempt to usurp control over marriages and families was not well accepted. Because these marriages were so different from Somali expectations of marriage several interview participants said, "in reality it is not a marriage."[377]

Promoting Patriarchal Control

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[374] Interview with female business person, W10.
[375] Interview with Kismayo Male interview participant Somalia, J, October 2017.
[376] Interview with female business person, W11, September 27, 2017.
[377] Interview with female business person.

Al-Shabaab's system of marriage promoted a return to male dominance in Somali society. In their study on manhood in Somalia Judy El-Bushra and Judith Gardner explain, "Transition to adulthood is marked by marriage and fatherhood, which participants considered man's primary purposes on Earth, and essential milestones towards manhood and elder status."[378] With rising marriage costs, marriage was becoming more difficult for men and they were therefore missing this key transition into adulthood and marker of male status.

Al-Shabaab's marriage system not only made it easier for male members of Al-Shabaab to marry, but also enforced a marriage system for everyone in Kismayo that forbid expensive marriage payments and weddings. Even male interview participants who generally spoke about the challenges of living under Al-Shabaab rule, had more positive views of the new rules related to marriage payments. This served two benefits of Al-Shabaab, first it was a model of an ideal society in which men did not have to face challenges in marrying. Second, men who were not members of Al-Shabaab viewed the group more positively because of the changing of traditions that had made it difficult for them to marry and achieve status as a man.

Al-Shabaab's promotion of polygamous marriage was also a way to reinforce male power. While before men had financial challenges as part of marrying in Kismayo they now were told they were entitled to several wives without having to pay any money or ask anyone for permission. The privilege to marry seemed unlimited for men. When the field researchers asked interview participants if male members of Al-Shabaab had to ask permission from group leadership to marry they all said no. This freedom for group members to marry contrasts sharply with LRA's forced marriage system that was controlled closely by top leadership and is because of Al-Shabaab's focus on external cohesion instead of internal cohesion.

[378] El-Bushra and Gardner, "The Impact of War on Somali Men."

Within Al-Shabaab marriages, the group also promoted a form of masculinity in which a husband should take care of and provide for his wife or wives. "If women complained about their husbands not financially supporting them, then Al-Shabaab would force them to provide for their families," explained one interview participant.[379] This was consistent with Somali ideas about manhood because Somali men are judged based on how well they support their families and manage their marriages.[380] Another interview participant described Al-Shabaab's perspective as, "If you are married, then your husband must work for you, and you sit in the house. If you do not have a husband, then marry one – a Mujahid."[381] Al-Shabaab's marriage system created a dynamic in which women relied on male group members and lost all contact with their families and other social support networks. This reduced women's independence in Kismayo during a period in which women were often primary breadwinners for their families. Al-Shabaab's marriage system focused on how it wanted marriages to look in its ideal society with women dependent on a male provider.

Totalitarian Control Over Population

Al-Shabaab's complete control over all aspect of the population's lives is a distinct type of rebel governance. Ana Arjona would label Al-Shabaab's rule as a *rebelocracy.*[382] A rebelocracy, according to Arjona, is when an armed group is the defacto ruler and instead of just focusing on basic tasks of ruling, such as collecting taxes and maintaining order, the group plays a more intrusive role in the population's lives.[383] She writes that a rebelocracy can create rules regulating citizens' private lives such as their attire and sexual conduct, as part of their method of

[379] Interview with female activist and musician from minority clan, W19.
[380] El-Bushra and Gardner, "The Impact of War on Somali Men," 448.
[381] Interview with female activist, W9, September 26, 2017.
[382] Ana Arjona, "Wartime Institutions: A Research Agenda," ed. Laia Balcells and Patricia Justino, *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 58, no. 8 (December 2014): 1375, https://doi.org/10.1177/0022002714547904.
[383] Arjona, 1375.

rule.[384] Although Arjona does not specifically mention the control of marriage as part of the ways in which rebel groups establish their governance system, Al-Shabaab's behavior in Kismayo demonstrates that controlling marriage is a key component of their governance strategy that attempts broad control over citizens' private lives, not just basic governance tasks.

Forced marriage was a part of Al-Shabaab's strategy of complete control and monitoring of the population's lives in Kismayo. One interview participant shared Al-Shabaab's extensive campaign to recruit her through forced marriage in Al-Shabaab's early phase of rule in 2009.[385] This woman had previously worked with the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) the group Al-Shabaab had previously been linked to. Al-Shabaab initially sent a male member to her workplace, but the woman was not there. The male member got her phone number and called her frequently trying to recruit her by telling her she is beautiful and needs to marry. He continued to threaten her and then sent two other male members of Al-Shabaab to find her in her computer classes. After this threat she threw out her sim card from her phone and stopped attending school. In a final effort, Al-Shabaab sent two women married to Al-Shabaab members to try to recruit her. Finally, the interview participant was so scared she stayed in the house for two months and then fled Kismayo. This story illustrates the level at which Al-Shabaab would target a particular woman for marriage in all areas of their life from their workplace, school, and home.

There was no way to escape Al-Shabaab's authority. Other interview participants shared stories of Al-Shabaab coming to their house to see if they were wearing Al-Shabaab required dress and punishing them if they weren't. This totalitarian rule gave the sense that Al-Shabaab was always watching and was part of all aspects of life. Marriage is a key social institution where

[384] Arjona, 1381.
[385]Interview with female youth activist, W2.

Al-Shabaab inserted their authority to control more private aspects of individual's lives. There was no choice or relationship that was free from Al-Shabaab infiltration.

Al-Shabaab's forced marriage system would not have been a useful strategy for building external cohesion if other forms of sexual violence were permitted by group members. I detail Al-Shabaab's policies and practices related to sexual violence in chapter 7. Al-Shabaab's use of forced marriage and prohibition against rape was also consistent with its ideology of social control.

Ideology of Social Control

I illustrated the ways in which Al-Shabaab's marriage promoted external cohesion, but Al-Shabaab's marriage system was also important for promoting and illustrating its ideology of social control. Promoting a system of marriage was not only consistent with Al-Shabaab's Islamic foundation, but also with its ideal vision of proper roles for men, women, boys, and girls (both inside marriage, but also in other types of roles and relationships).

Marriage holds an essential place in many religions including Islam. John Bowen explains, "In Islam, marriage (*nikah)* is a contract, requiring both parties' consent, whose primary effect is to render legitimate sexual relations between a man and a woman. Most Muslims take very seriously the idea that proper religious marriage is required to avoid sin."[386] This is not to suggest that everything Al-Shabaab did was in line with the rules of Islam, but constructing a system of marriage, instead of allowing members to have sex outside of marriage, allowed them to appear to be acting in line with an important component of Islam.

It was useful for Al-Shabaab to be seen acting in line with this essential aspect of Islam because the population in Kismayo at points questioned Al-Shabaab's religious devotion.

[386] John R. Bowen, "Gender, Islam, and Law," WIDER Working Paper 2017/152 (United Nations University UNU-Wider, July 2017), 5.

Interview participants spoke about how members of Al-Shabaab were not pious and were not subject to the same rules as the rest of the population in Kismayo. As described by one interview participant there was the perception that Al-Shabaab, "pretended to be religious" and "hid behind their madrassas."[387] Promoting a system of marriage that seemed to be in line with certain Islamic regulations was a way to illustrate reinforce Al-Shabaab's commitment to Islam.

Islamist extremist groups traditionally care deeply about gender and sexual relations.[388] Marriage was a way for Al-Shabaab to control the role and image of women in Kismayo. One interview participant explained, "Al-Shabaab did not like divorced and single women to not be married."[389] Another woman shared a story about Al-Shabaab members coming to her house to try to convince her to marry her daughters to Al-Shabaab members. Al-Shabaab members try to convince this woman by saying, "Early marriage is a great protection for young girls."[390] The protection Al-Shabaab was promoting was not about physical security but protecting women's sexual purity.

Al-Shabaab not only wanted wives for its members, but it also wanted to change the current composition of society and reduce the number of single women in Kismayo. Al-Shabaab did not want unmarried women because as part of their ideology women should be reliant on and controlled by a man, preferably an Al-Shabaab member. One interview participant explained, "Al-Shabaab did not like divorced and single women to not be married. They did everything to ensure that these women are married to men – Somalis or non-Somali jihadists. They believed that marriage is a religious duty and required."[391] Controlling women was central to Al-

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[387] Interview with female activist, W9.
[388] Keith Proctor and Dyan Mazurana, "Gender and Violent Extremist Organizations," in *Handbook of Gender and Security* (Routledge Press, Forthcoming).
[389] Interview with female part-time businesswoman from minority clan, W16, September 30, 2017.
[390] Interview with Female interview participant, W12.
[391] Interview with female part-time businesswoman from minority clan, W16.

Shabaab's actions in Kismayo including restricting women from operating businesses. One interview participant explained, "Women could no longer go out and travel without male relatives accompanying them. If you are married, then your husband must work for you, and you must sit in the house. If you do not have a husband, then marry one – a Mujahid."[392] Another interview participant explained Al-Shabaab's goals to control women:

> Al-Shabaab used their forced marriage to control women, to gain unlimited access to women, to remove the power of parents, clans and male relatives over women and girls, and create Al-Shabaab's unlimited access to women and girls' bodies. To overcome accountability, Al-Shabaab men can marry, can mistreat, can abuse and abandon and no one can stop them, simple as that.[393]

Although there are key strategic benefits in Al-Shabaab's system of forced marriage, the system also was part of a broader ideology of social control.

Al-Shabaab's social engineering meant that their rule changed relationships not only for husbands and wives, but also for mothers and fathers. Before Al-Shabaab rule, an important part of being a mother or father in Kismayo involved arranging the future relationships of one's children. Al-Shabaab took away this power from mothers and fathers and therefore changed an essential part of what it meant to be a mother and father.

The way men and women related to each other in Kismayo changed as well with Al-Shabaab's prohibition on men and women interacting if they were not related. This was a dramatic shift as men and women had previously worked closely together and interacted freely. Many women spoke about how they would ask a man to travel with them who was not their relative, but they would lie about being related to protect themselves.[394] These regulations

[392] Interview with female activist, W9.
[393] Interview with female vegetable seller from minority clan, Respondent 15.
[394] Interview with female activist, W15.

restricted women's freedom and also gave a new meaning to relationships between non-related men and women, making these relationships seem subversive.

Al-Shabaab's system of forced marriage was primarily created to build external cohesion, but it was also a decision made because of its link to Al-Shabaab's ideology of social control. Al-Shabaab sought to control gender roles and relationships and promote an idea of a new Islamic Somalia in which women were married, reliant on their husbands, and Al-Shabaab's authority usurped the power of families.

CONCLUSION

By presenting a new background on Al-Shabaab that does not only focus on men's experiences and perspectives, I present a more accurate description of the group and its strategy, especially its use of forced marriage in Kismayo. Al-Shabaab's forced marriage in Kismayo was not just a by-product of Al-Shabaab's rule, but a central governance strategy that reinforced and reflected its ideology.

Al-Shabaab exemplifies a model of a decentralized strategy of forced marriage because group leadership set minimal restrictions on who could marry and how the marriages were arranged. The only unified standards for forced marriages were ones that reflected Al-Shabaab's ideology such as making marriage easier for men by limiting the expenses associated with weddings and marriages.

The model of forced marriage is Kismayo used by Al-Shabaab was one that would enforce external cohesion and help link the population to Al-Shabaab, so it was easier for them to rule. The five ways in which forced marriage was used to build external cohesion was by framing marriage as a commitment to Al-Shabaab not to an individual man, creating new alliances between Al-Shabaab and the population, promoting Al-Shabaab as the only authority

that could control this important relationship in society thereby taking power away from previous authorities, creating a model of a society in which men had power in relationships, and making sure Al-Shabaab authority was present in all aspects of citizens' lives.

This strategic use of decentralized forced marriage makes sense considering the challenges Al-Shabaab faced in ruling a large population that had been divided by clan conflict since 1991. Their forced marriage campaign also was a chance for them to model the ideal society the group was focused on promoting and was a way to control gender roles and relationships. A system of forced marriage is not "one size fits all" and I will demonstrate the ways in which the LRA adopted a different model of forced marriage to fit their strategy and ideology.

CHAPTER 5: THE LORD'S RESISTANCE ARMY (LRA)

INTRODUCTION

When one envisions a model of forced marriage, the image would likely be of rebel groups kidnapping young women and girls to be married to high ranking male commanders. This type of forced marriage, which I label centralized forced marriage, is exemplified by the LRA in Uganda. By viewing the centralized form of forced marriage, alongside the decentralized form of forced marriage, one can see commonalities in the strategic benefits of forced marriage. The LRA case represents a centralized model of forced marriage because the entire marital process is highly controlled by leadership. The centralized forced marriage system was the ideal model for the LRA to build *internal* cohesion. The LRA had a need to build internal cohesion because the majority of its membership was abducted youth. The LRA's leadership needed to devise ways to retain abducted group members and to get them to work together for the benefit of the LRA.

I divide the ways in which the forced marriage system inside the LRA promoted internal cohesion into four categories. Several of these categories closely resemble the ways Al-Shabaab used forced marriage to promote external cohesion, and the ways in which forced marriage fit with its ideology of social control, specifically in enforcing patriarchal control. The first way in which LRA forced marriage promoted internal cohesion, which is consistent with forced marriage in Al-Shabaab, was that LRA marriages were not framed as marriages between two individuals, but marriage to the LRA. This was useful in linking people who did not voluntarily join the LRA to the group in a new way. The second way in which forced marriage built internal cohesion is again similar to Al-Shabaab and relates to the LRA use of forced marriage to control group members' lives. Al-Shabaab used forced marriage to control the population's lives to build external cohesion, whereas the LRA uses forced marriage to control its group members' lives to

promote internal cohesion. The next way in which forced marriage was useful for building internal cohesion in the LRA relates to a major challenge for any rebel group, but especially a rebel group composed of untrained and abducted young members, organizing members. Forced marriage organized members inside of the LRA by enforcing hierarchies between men and women, between girls and boys, between women and girls, and between men and boys. The LRA's system of forced marriage also organized group members into families and created monitoring systems within these families and homes. Finally, as in Al-Shabaab, the LRA's system of forced marriage promoted a form of patriarchal control and a specific masculinity that male members felt they had been denied.

My analysis of forced marriage in the LRA relies on semi-structured interviews conducted in northern Uganda with former male and female members of the LRA. Many studies on forced marriage focus on the female perspective, but it is also useful to have the male perspective. Male interview participants expressed interest at the chance to discuss their experiences inside the LRA and their perspectives on forced marriage. In contrast to Al-Shabaab, there has been scholarship on the LRA which provided an additional key resource in analyzing the group's forced marriage system. I also relied on two memoirs written by women who were forcibly married into the LRA, Evelyn Amony and Grace Acan. These memoirs are a particularly valuable source of information about forced marriage because they include the perspectives and insights of former wives in the LRA, in their own words.

I start the chapter with a brief background on the LRA and provide context on the war in northern Uganda. Next, I describe Acholi traditional cultural practices related to marriage in northern Uganda where the LRA was operating. I then review the four ways in which the LRA

used forced marriage to build internal cohesion. Finally, I demonstrate how forced marriage fit within LRA's ideology of social control.

BACKGROUND OF THE LRA

The LRA's emergence in the late 1980s stemmed from periods of historical grievances, transitions in power, and ethnic tensions. Many scholars stress the idea that ethnic and regional tensions in Uganda have their roots in the colonial period with British soldiers creating specific divisions between groups and promoting stereotypes.[395] Rather than reiterating Uganda's colonial history and tracing divisions in power that preceded the emergence of the LRA I will begin this historical overview with a key moment leading to the emergence of the LRA - the entrance of Yoweri Museveni into presidential power.[396]

Museveni gained power through a coup with the help of an armed group – the National Resistance Army (NRA) - in 1986. The entrance of Museveni with his own army left the previous army under Milton Obote, the United National Liberation Army (UNLA), in a precarious position. Many, though not all of the UNLA, were Acholi and many Acholi from the UNLA returned home to the north after Museveni took power. The NRA then moved forces to the north assuming they would be fighting an insurgency from the UNLA.[397] Some former members of the UNLA formed a northern opposition force to the NRA called the UPDA (Ugandan People's Democratic Army).[398]

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[395] See Erin Baines, "Histories," in *I Am Evelyn Amony*, by Evelyn Amony (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2015), xxxiii–lii for information on colonial history; See Adam Branch, *Displacing Human Rights: War and Intervention in Northern Uganda* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011) for information on ethnicity in Uganda.
[396] Much of this history comes from Tim Allen and Koen Vlassenroot, "Introduction," in *The Lord's Resistance Army: Myth and Reality* (New York: Zed Books, 2010), 1–21.
[397] Branch explains that "the NRA launched a counter-insurgency without an insurgency," Adam Branch, "Exploring the Roots of LRA Violence: Political Crisis and Ethnic Politics in Acholiland," in *The Lord's Resistance Army: Myth and Reality*, ed. Tim Allen and Koen Vlassenroot (New York: Zed Books, 2010), 33.
[398] Branch, *Displacing Human Rights: War and Intervention in Northern Uganda*, 61.

In response to the fear of the UNLA soldiers in the north, the NRA pursued a violent campaign against the population there. The NRA's tactics included the rape of male civilians, the looting of cattle, stealing and defacing property, and arbitrary arrest, detention, and torture of civilians accused of supporting UPDA.[399] This violence by the NRA (later renamed the Uganda People's Defense Force or UPDF) continued throughout the conflict with the LRA. Erin Baines spoke to interview participants in northern Uganda who said they witnessed the UPDF beating, raping, and torturing large numbers of Acholi civilians.[400] According to Baines, Kony spoke specifically about the rape of men, stolen cattle, and land grabbing by the UPDF as motivation for the LRA.[401] The use of rape against men and Kony's focus on it are a background to the emphasis on masculinity within the conflict in northern Uganda.[402]

Alice Auma (also known as Alice Lakwena) formed a separate rebel group to fight the NRA in 1986, the Holy Spirit Mobile Forces (HSMF or HSM), which was founded on spiritual principles and regulations. One of the spiritual principles promoted by Alice was that to remain pure, HSMF members should abstain from sexual intercourse and alcohol.[403] In 1987, the NRA defeated the HSMF and Alice Auma fled Uganda and took refuge in Kenya until her death in 2007. The HSMF was the precursor to the LRA.

Joseph Kony is said to be a distance relative of Alice Auma's but it is unclear what the exact familial relationship is.[404] Kony formed a group at the same time as Alice Auma's but the group operated in his home of Gulu.[405] In 1988 (after the HSFM was defeated), Kony's armed

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[399] Baines, "Histories," xxvi.
[400] Baines, *Buried in the Heart: Women, Complex Victimhood and the War in Northern Uganda*, 36.
[401] Baines, 35.
[402] See e.g., Dolan, "Collapsing Masculinities."
[403] Allen and Vlassenroot, "Introduction," 9.
[404] Allen and Vlassenroot, 9.
[405] Allen and Vlassenroot, 9–10.

movement became the major resistance group to the NRA and included former members of other resistance movements. In 1990 Kony named his group the Lord's Resistance Army or LRA.

LRA Leadership and Structure

The LRA has always revolved around Kony who has been described as a typical "charismatic leader" of a rebel group who is able to convince people to follow him.[406] Kony claimed he received a blessing from his elders to fight the Museveni government.[407] The LRA is centralized in its strategy as the orders come from Kony at the top and flow down to different commanders who then manage their own units. One of the most detailed descriptions of the LRA structure and camps comes from a woman who was abducted into the LRA and married to one of the high-ranking commanders, Grace Acan. Acan explains that most military decisions were made in the operation room where goods and sometimes young women and girls were gathered to be distributed by the leadership.[408] The highest leadership body of the LRA is the Control Altar.[409] The Control Altar makes all policies for the group and is composed of Joseph Kony, field commanders, chief-of-staffs, and then heads of departments (medical, defense). There were also four other brigades with brigade commanders that Kony oversaw.[410]

Acan's description is one of a highly centralized and organized group. There are perceptions of the LRA as odd and disorderly (from scholars and news outlets seeking to understand their use of violence)[411] which are falsified upon further examination of the group. A

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[406] Ruddy Doom and Koen Vlassenroot, "Kony's Message: A New Koine? The Lord's Resistance Army in Northern Uganda," *African Affairs* 98, no. 390 (1999): 22.
[407] Sverker Finnström, "Wars of the Past and War in the Present: The Lord's Resistance Movement/Army in Uganda," *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute* 76, no. 2 (2006): 208.
[408] Acan, *Not Yet Sunset: A Story of Survival and Perseverance in LRA Captivity*, 51.
[409] Acan, 51–52.
[410] Acan, 51–52.
[411] See e.g., Paul Jackson, "The March of the Lord's Resistance Army: Greed or Grievance in Northern Uganda?," *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 13, no. 3 (December 2002): 29–52, https://doi.org/10.1080/09592310208559196 which refers to practices of the HSM and LRA throughout the article as bizarre and strange.

UPDF general explained, "regardless of our moral assessment of Kony, we need to recognise that he is an excellent strategist and tactician."[412]

The LRA initially was a small group fighting a guerilla war against the UPDF. At any period in time the size of the LRA is hard to estimate. This is because many of the LRA bases were located in South Sudan and the LRA used small groups of combatants in Uganda to perpetrate violence against civilian populations instead of engaging in large scale battles with the UPDF.[413] In the 1990s the LRA received support from the Sudanese government because of the Uganda government's history supporting the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), a rebel group in Sudan.[414]

It was during this time period in the 1990s when the LRA started forming bases in, what is now South Sudan, that the group began its widespread abduction of young men and women and developed its strategy of forced marriage. The LRA camps in South Sudan gave the LRA an opportunity to establish makeshift homes where the families they would create through forced marriage could be based. In addition to abducting young men and women, during this time period the LRA was also using violent looting and amputation as a terror tactic. The international community paid greater attention to the LRA after it abducted 139 female students at the St. Mary's School in Aboke, Uganda including Grace Acan and other girls who became forced wives inside the LRA.[415]

Reducing LRA Presence in Uganda

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[412] Allen and Vlassenroot, "Introduction," 2.
[413] Doom and Vlassenroot, "Kony's Message: A New Koine? The Lord's Resistance Army in Northern Uganda," 10.
[414] Allen and Vlassenroot, "Introduction," 5; Baines, *Buried in the Heart: Women, Complex Victimhood and the War in Northern Uganda*, 34.
[415] Allen and Vlassenroot, "Introduction," 13.

A long process of attempts at peace between the LRA and the Ugandan government, also including regional and international actors, began in 1999.[416] The military responses from international actors also had a significant effect on the LRA. The government of Sudan allowed, "Operation Iron Fist," to attack LRA bases in southern Sudan (now the country South Sudan) in March 2002. Museveni directed the military operation which also included U.S. logistical support.[417] This military campaign successfully dislodged the LRA from its bases in South Sudan, but it killed or harmed many individuals who had been forcibly recruited and held captive by the LRA.[418] Operation Iron Fist led to the expulsion of the LRA from Uganda and many of my interview participants were released or escaped during this time period. Recent estimates note the remaining membership of the LRA is around 100 people and the group is thought to be based in Central African Republic, South Sudan, Sudan, and/or Democratic Republic of Congo.[419]

LRA's Use of Violence

There are differing perspectives as to why the LRA used violence against civilians. According to Erin Baines, Kony saw Acholi civilians as having aligned with the Ugandan government after the failed 1993 peace talks and used violence as a punishment against them.[420] Adam Branch writes that the LRA, "used violence to try to make their conception of a polarized society a reality. Violence was turned against those who, in the LRA's concept, needed to be convinced to support the rebels."[421] Branch also notes that the LRA's use of violence was a way

[416] Allen and Vlassenroot, 13.
[417] Allen and Vlassenroot, 14.
[418] Allen and Vlassenroot, 14.
[419] Helene Cooper, "A Mission to Capture or Kill Joseph Kony Ends, Without Capturing or Killing," *The New York Times*, May 15, 2017, https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/15/world/africa/joseph-kony-mission-ends.html.
[420] Baines, *Buried in the Heart: Women, Complex Victimhood and the War in Northern Uganda*, 34.
[421] Branch, *Displacing Human Rights: War and Intervention in Northern Uganda*, 70.

to show the Acholi population that Museveni's government could not protect them.[422] In this way, the LRA had a similar motive as Al-Shabaab to discredit current leadership.

Ruddy Doom and Koen Vlassenroot describes the LRA's use of violence as "blind terror" and note that it was used to produce political results.[423] They describe the unpredictability of the LRA violence and the ways in which this made the population feel vulnerable and therefore reinforced the position of the LRA.[424] Doom and Vlassenroot also posit that impunity given to local commanders perpetuating violence help to build in-group cohesion speaking to the need for the LRA to build internal cohesion.[425]

The forms of violence the LRA used were symbolic, including cutting the ears and lips off of civilians or amputating the legs of someone who was caught riding a bicycle.[426] The LRA also committed massacres and I conducted interviews near one of the largest LRA massacres in Atiak. On April 20th, 1995, the LRA rounded up around 300 men, women, boys, and girls and marched them to a river where they were separated into two groups based on sex and age.[427] They were lectured on their alleged collaboration with the government of Uganda and an LRA commander, reported to be LRA second in command at the time Vincent Otti, ordered his soldiers to open fire on the groups.[428] Women and children were told to applaud the LRA soldiers and the youth were taken by the group.[429]

Another important dynamic occurring during the conflict in northern Uganda was the creation by the Ugandan government of camps or "protected villages" in the late 1990s for

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[422] Branch, 74.
[423] Doom and Vlassenroot, "Kony's Message: A New Koine? The Lord's Resistance Army in Northern Uganda."
[424] Doom and Vlassenroot, 26–27.
[425] Doom and Vlassenroot, 27.
[426] Doom and Vlassenroot, 27–28.
[427] The Justice and Reconciliation Project, "Remembering the Atiak Massacre."
[428] The Justice and Reconciliation Project.
[429] The Justice and Reconciliation Project.

civilians in the north. Up to 90 percent of civilians in the north were forcibly displaced into these camps and some were there for two decades.[430] Baines writes that, "the degradation, humiliation, and subordination of the Acholi people to the Ugandan state resulted in high levels of trauma."[431] The Ugandan government created these camps under the auspices of protecting civilians, but the camps also were a way to prevent civilians from supporting the LRA.

LRA's Ideology

It is a challenge to summarize one distinct LRA ideology for several reasons. The first reason is that the LRA leadership (especially Kony) have stated the LRA's ideology in different ways to different groups of people. Second, the LRA does not always appear to act in line with its stated ideology. When asked about the LRA's ideology and strategy, interview participants shared their own confusion and said after leaving the group and reflecting upon it, it was hard for them to describe it. Another challenge in describing the ideology is that although the group says it operates according to a form of Christianity (based on the ten commandments) it created its own spiritual order combining ideas from Christianity with additional spiritual ideas. Kony says that spirits speak to him and tell him what actions to take.

The most clearly stated goal of the LRA, which was discussed by interview participants, was to create a "new Acholi" or a new generation of the Acholi ethnic group. This new generation included newly purified current LRA members (through ceremonies and rules of behavior) and children born into the LRA. Kony criticized the existing Acholi group (or what he labeled "Acholi B") for being immoral and spoke about their drunkenness, rate of STDs, and referred to them as leading a "bad life" that would lead to death.[432] The new Acholi (or "Acholi

[430] Baines, *Buried in the Heart: Women, Complex Victimhood and the War in Northern Uganda*, 34.
[431] Baines, 34.
[432] Baines, 35.

A" based in the bush) would be more moral and pure than "Acholi B" because of their adherence to cultural practices.[433]

The LRA at different points also articulated more political goals including overthrowing Museveni. This goal was described by one interview participant as being linked to the creation of the new Acholi because he said Acholi outside the LRA were "under barbaric rule."[434] He said the people who were "picked" to join the LRA were going to be ruled under the true Acholi culture.[435] This same interview participant also spoke about Kony's anger towards the abuses committed by Museveni's NRA in northern Uganda.[436] Baines also reiterates the idea that Kony saw the cause of "debilitation of Acholi culture" as the immoral and corrupt behavior of the leadership in Uganda.[437]

Existing broad classifications of political ideology do not fully describe the LRA and its focus on controlling people.[438] By analyzing the LRA's ideology in line with its focus on managing gendered relationships instead of trying to fit it into a broad classification, we can better understand the group and its motivations. The LRA's ideology is illustrative of an ideology of social control because of its focus on controlling group members (mostly Acholis) and trying to control these group members to create a new ideal Acholi society. The LRA's focus on controlling its members lives, from what they eat, how they relate to each other, how they clean themselves, was not peripheral to their central goals, but instead reflects the groups

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[433] Baines, 35.
[434] Interview with Former male member of the LRA, L23, December 15, 2017.
[435] Interview with Former male member of the LRA.
[436] Interview with Former male member of the LRA.
[437] Baines, *Buried in the Heart: Women, Complex Victimhood and the War in Northern Uganda*, 34.
[438] For attempts at classifying LRA ideology see Victor Asal and R. Karl Rethemeyer, "The Nature of the Beast: Organizational Structures and the Lethality of Terrorist Attacks," *The Journal of Politics* 70, no. 2 (April 2008): 446, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022381608080419 who describe the group's ideology as religious or ethnonationalist.

ideology. In the final section of this chapter I will detail how forced marriage in the LRA was an expression of the group's ideology of social control.

MARRIAGE IN NORTHERN UGANDA

Marriage is an important process in Acholi society.[439] Similar to marriages in Somalia, marriage in Acholi culture is not just a process linking two individuals, but also their clans/kinship networks.[440] This section will describe the traditional (according to interview participants) [441] marriage practices in Acholi culture while also demonstrating that many individuals in northern Uganda marry in "non-traditional" ways.

The Acholi marriage process often begins with a long courtship between a man and woman under the supervision of their clans.[442] Marriage is solidified through different payments with one payment to a woman's family at the start of the marriage and a payment to the man's family after the birth of the couple's first child.[443] Over time many men have been unable enter into a traditional marriages because of their inability to make these payments. According to Girling, the term *lim oyole* is used to describe this phenomenon and means "he was conquered by the bridewealth."[444] The phrasing has implications for how we think about the inability to pay bridewealth and its direct translation hints at ideas about masculinity (where men are supposed to be seen as the "conquerors") and about the history of Uganda as former British colony.

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[439] For another perspective on the LRA's manipulating of Acholi marital traditions see Phoebe Donnelly, "The Interactive Relationship between Gender and Strategy," *Global Society*, June 27, 2018, 1–20, https://doi.org/10.1080/13600826.2018.1490252.
[440] Aijazi and Baines, "Relationality, Culpability and Consent in Wartime," 9.
[441] I use the word tradition here, but recognize the problems with the term as described in Doom and Vlassenroot, "Kony's Message: A New Koine? The Lord's Resistance Army in Northern Uganda," 10 noting that tradition "has some mythicohistorcal aspects, with a few links to factual history, but more with reconstruction by political brokers.
[442] Aijazi and Baines, "Relationality, Culpability and Consent in Wartime," 9 citing 'Young Mothers, Marriage and Reintegration in Northern Uganda: Considerations for the Juba Peace Talks,' Justice and Reconciliation Project Field Notes, 2 September 2006,.
[443] Aijazi and Baines, 9.
[444] F.K. Girling, *The Acholi of Uganda*, vol. 30 (London: Colonial Research Studies, 1960), 70.

Ideas about upholding traditions around marriage are seen as important by some actors in Acholi society today. In an interview with a cultural leader in northern Uganda he spoke with pride about the history of Acholi marriage practices. He also gave me a guide about Acholi traditions made by the Cross-Cultural Foundation of Uganda. The guide notes that, "Traditional marriage is very important among the Acholi. It is the basis of enjoyment of all rights of a spouse in a relationship…Marriage gives women the assurance of a settled life and continuity of one's lineage. It is a sign of respect for the woman's family and for herself."[445] This guide highlighted the importance of marriage to family relationships. The role of family is key in Acholi society and Omer Aijazi and Erin Baines write that, "the family unit is the central governance structure in Acholi sociality."[446]

The way that marriages actually come about in Acholi society are often outside the traditional ideal. Girling writes that, "Although the Acholi usually say that the mutual affection of the couple is an important factor in the choice of a wife, there are several conventional forms of marriage in which this plays, but a small part."[447] One example of this is explained by Holly Porter who explains that in past conflicts in northern Uganda the capture of women as wives was a feature.[448] According to Porter this form of forced marriage - "marriage by capture" - is not acknowledged in Acholi civilian society, but it "remains one of the ways in which 'beginning a home' takes place."[449] Even though marriage by capture is a way historically marriages have occurred does not mean it is accepted by most people in society or seen as the ideal way to create

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[445] "My Rights as a Woman or Girl: What Does Acholi Culture Say" (The Cross-Cultural Foundation of Uganda, October 2017), 10.
[446] Aijazi and Baines, "Relationality, Culpability and Consent in Wartime," 9.
[447] Girling, *The Acholi of Uganda*, 30:70.
[448] Holly E. Porter, "After Rape: Comparing Civilian and Combatant Perpetrated Crime in Northern Uganda," *Women's Studies International Forum* 51 (July 2015): 81–90, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2014.11.005.
[449] Porter, 82.

marital relationships. Interview participants compared LRA marriages to some aspects of marriage in civilian life, but most interview participants spoke about the extreme ways in which LRA marriages broke from expectations and tradition.

Other forms of relationships outside of this vision of traditional marriage include men and women who are living together and consider themselves married, but who did not exchange traditional payments. Male interview participants in my research spoke about the challenges in marrying in the traditional way. One male interview participant who had been married while in the LRA, but whose wife died, spoke about the challenges in remarrying once he was outside the LRA. He explains that in order for him to get married within the Acholi tradition he would need livestock and 8 million Ugandan schillings (around $2,000 USD).[450] He explained that it is hard for him to work enough to earn the resources required to marry.[451] This interview participant lives with a woman, but they are not officially married. He explained that, "Our marriage is now temporary. Anytime her parents can withdraw her, but if I give money in installments [to her family] she can stay. This [agreement] depends on how good my relationships with my in-laws is."[452] I met with many other returnees who had similar informal marital relationships after their time in the LRA and some of these relationships were with the women they were married to in the LRA.[453] Men and women who had not been a part of the LRA are also engaged in these types of relationships, but some interview participants (included the man quoted above) believed it was more challenging for LRA returnees to acquire the resources to marry the traditional way.

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[450] Interview with former male member of the LRA, L12, December 13, 2017.
[451] Interview with former male member of the LRA.
[452] Interview with former male member of the LRA.
[453] For more on returnees lives and relationships after release see Atim, "Looking Beyond Conflict: The Long Term Impact of Suffering War Crimes on Recovery in Post-Conflict Northern Uganda."

The cultural leader I interviewed described the traditional Acholi wedding ceremony in detail. The process has specific roles for family members and community members of the bride and groom. In addition to the payments to the families of the bride and groom there are also several gifts exchanged throughout the marriage process including to the bride's peers who assist her and to the bride's future mother-in-law. As part of these ceremonies there were several tests for the bride. These included asking the bride to fetch water for everyone in the home to see how well she takes care of people.[454] Another test was to leave money for the bride to give her mother-in-law to see if she would steal it.[455] This suspicion about the new bride was also described in Girling's study who notes, "Until a woman bears a child by her husband there is always the fear that she may run away from home or to a lover. She is watched carefully to prevent this, but after her child is born it is believed that she will settle down, and she is no longer guarded so carefully."[456] This traditional distrust and testing of women in marriages influenced the LRA's system of marriage and interest in controlling women through marriage.

There are important norms in Acholi society related to sexuality. One key component of sexual relations in Acholi society is a specific custom called *luk.* Porter writes, "The social sanctioning of sex requires a payment called *luk*, the particular type and amount [are] dependent on the specific circumstances of each case. A type of *luk* is paid to acknowledge that sex took place even when the couple does not stay together."[457] *Luk* differentiates sex that is considered acceptable from sex that is considered transgressive.[458] Children are an important part of

[454] Interview with Male Acholi cultural leader, L32, December 18, 2017.
[455] Interview with Male Acholi cultural leader.
[456] Girling, *The Acholi of Uganda*, 30:72.
[457] Holly Porter, *After Rape: Violence, Justice and Social Harmony in Uganda* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), fn 11.
[458] Porter, 101.

marriage in Acholi culture and Girling even described having children as the whole purpose of Acholi marriages.[459]

Some men in Acholi marriages have more than one wife. The "first wife" is given a privileged status and does certain tasks, for example serving food to the husband and the family.[460] According to Girling's study. "Within the polygynous household of a man with several wives, the domestic family of each wife is to a certain degree a separate unit. Although they are united by their submission to the common authority of the household's head, each domestic family has some degree of autonomy."[461] Girling notes that while quarreling often takes place between wives there is also a high level of cooperation between cowives.[462] The traditional structure of a man with several wives and independent families is adapted within the LRA.

LRA MARRIAGE

Significance of Forced Marriage for the LRA

The International Criminal Court (ICC) ruling in *Prosecutor V. Dominic Ongwen*, a leader in the LRA, highlights the centrality of forced marriage for the group. The ruling concludes, "The chamber finds that the practice described above [forced marriage] was an *inherent design feature* of the LRA and that no leading role in the LRA could be obtained or sustained without knowledge of the practice and without an intent to perpetuate it."[463] The language by the ICC highlights the centralized nature of the forced marriage system in the LRA. Forced marriage was not something that group members perpetrated individually, but instead it was systematic and the intent of group leadership. In an article for *Global Society* I demonstrate

[459] Girling, *The Acholi of Uganda*, 30:72.
[460] Amony, *I Am Evelyn Amony*, 42.
[461] Girling, *The Acholi of Uganda*, 30:27.
[462] Girling, 30:27.
[463] Prosecutor v. Dominic Ongwen at paragraph 138 emphasis added.

the ways in which LRA's control of gender relations (with forced marriage as a key example) was a component of their broader strategy.[464]

When the LRA was operating only in Uganda (1986-1992) sexual relations and sexual violence against civilians was forbidden.[465] However, when the group was given bases and supplies in southern Sudan in 1992-1993 by the Government of Sudan, forced marriage became a common practice of the group.[466] This gave the LRA an opportunity to build families and homes within their camps in Sudan. One interview participant believes the decision to have marriages inside the group was heavily debated. He explained that initially women in the LRA were fighters. The existence of an all-female fighting unit is confirmed in Erin Baines' research which notes that in the early stages of the LRA there was a prominent armed faction of women called Mary's Coy.[467] The interview participant explained that when the LRA merged with the UNLA, the UNLA fighters who had spent already spent a long time in the bush would not continue to fight without access to women.[468] According to the interview participant, the LRA was initially opposed to this idea because they wanted women to be fighters, but needed to compromise with the former UNLA fighters.[469] The compromise was for women to become wives to *some* fighters and to give leadership the authority to decide who should be married. This interview participant saw the start of the forced marriage campaign as a heavily debated strategic level decision.

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[464] Donnelly, "The Interactive Relationship between Gender and Strategy."
[465] Baines, *Buried in the Heart: Women, Complex Victimhood and the War in Northern Uganda*, 34; Interview with Former male member of LRA and religious elder, L2, December 10, 2017 who said that Kony initially said the spirit told him "no one could have women."
[466] Baines, "Forced Marriage as a Political Project."
[467] Baines, *Buried in the Heart: Women, Complex Victimhood and the War in Northern Uganda*, 34.
[468] Interview with Former male member of the LRA, L16, December 13, 2017.
[469] Interview with Former male member of the LRA.

A female interview participant provided a different perspective on why women become wives and the all-female combat unit was disbanded. She explained, "They had a separate battalion for women early on, but later women were sneaking out with men and felt they had been denied access to men. They felt old enough to be married, so the LRA arranged marriages."[470] The female interview participant's perspective reflects fear, that was likely instilled by LRA leadership, about women's sexuality and what would occur if women in the LRA were unmarried. The forced marriage system was portrayed as a system to control both men and women inside the group.

Another important shift occurred at the same time the LRA began its use of forced marriage. Between 1994-1997 the LRA started its mass campaign of abducting children from northern Uganda.[471] The Survey of War Affected Youth (SWAY) report estimates that at least 66,000 youth between the ages of 14-30 were abducted by the LRA.[472] It is notable that the system of forced marriage became institutionalized at the same period that there were many abducted children coming into the camps. Dara Kay Cohen describes the ways in which the "rapid abduction campaign" in the Revolutionary United front in Sierra Leone "exacerbated the problem of low cohesion."[473] Cohen argues that the RUF dealt with this problem of low cohesion through the practice of gang rape which was a tool to building cohesion. The LRA did not use gang rape but saw forced marriage as an opportunity to build cohesion and organize its growing membership.

Forced Marriage Practices inside the LRA

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[470] Interview with Former female member of the LRA, L31, December 17, 2017.
[471] Baines, *Buried in the Heart: Women, Complex Victimhood and the War in Northern Uganda*, 38.
[472] Jeannie Annan et al., "The State of Female Youth in Northern Uganda: Findings from the Survey of War-Affected Youth (SWAY) Phase II," April 2008, vii, http://fic.tufts.edu/publication-item/the-state-of-female-youth-in-northern-uganda/.
[473] Cohen, *Rape During Civil War*, 120.

Forced marriage became a widespread practice in the LRA. One study that surveyed females abducted by the LRA found that of those females held for longer than two weeks, 42 percent were forcibly married.[474] Baines estimates an even higher percentage and states that every girl in the LRA who reached the age of menstruation was forcibly married.[475] While certain aspects of LRA forced marriages (including certain roles and tasks for wives and husbands as discussed in chapter 6) were consistent with life outside the group, the level of force used in arranging the marriage was seen as a significant rupture from life outside the group. When I asked one participant about how marriage in the LRA was different from marriage outside the group she explained, "There you were forced to become a wife whether the husband was your age or not – you had no choice of husband. Everything there was forceful…because you were afraid, you just accept. At home, you negotiate and agree."[476]

There were rules about the ways forced wives were distributed in the LRA. Khristopher Carlson and Dyan Mazurana describe the process of distributing women and girls in the LRA, which was confirmed throughout my interviews. After women and girls were abducted there was usually a waiting period before they were assigned to a home, the period was anywhere from one day (less common) to up to three months.[477] During this waiting period women and girls were meant to be isolated from all sexual contact.[478] There was also an initiation process in which women and girls were smeared with oils and dirt that they were told was for their protection.[479] After the initiation, the young women and girls would be distributed to commanders' homes,

[474] Annan et al., "SWAY II," 40.
[475] Baines, *Buried in the Heart: Women, Complex Victimhood and the War in Northern Uganda*, 38.
[476] Interview with Former female member of the LRA, L11, December 12, 2017.
[477] Carlson and Mazurana, "Forced Marriage within the Lord's Resistance Army, Uganda," 19.
[478] Carlson and Mazurana, 19.
[479] Carlson and Mazurana, 19.

with higher ranking commanders getting first pick of which females they wanted to bring to their home.

If a girl had not gone through puberty (in the perspective of the LRA leadership) she was kept in a commander's home as a *ting ting* or domestic servant.[480] *Ting tings* were responsible for babysitting the commander's other children, as well as performing domestic tasks like sweeping camps or fetching water.[481] The commander was supposed to wait until a *ting ting* reached puberty (i.e., started developing breasts) before she became his wife or was reassigned to become another LRA member's wife.

While this was the most common form of forced marriage, Carlson and Mazurana describe an alternative form of assigning marriages that operated more like a lottery system. This system seemed primarily for lower ranking men who would each place an item of clothing in a bag. Women and girls to be assigned as wives would then randomly pick an item of clothing and that would determine who their husband was.[482] It is unclear when this more random form of arranging marriage was used, but none of my interview participants discussed this path to marriage or were married in this way.

While the majority of young women who had reached puberty in the LRA were married, not all men or boys inside the group were forcibly married.[483] The number of wives a man had in the LRA was a symbol of his status within the group. Higher-ranking commanders could have as many as 15 forced wives, whereas lower-ranking fighters had an average of two forced wives.[484] Lower ranking younger men only were assigned a wife if a commander assigned one to them.

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[480] See Prosecutor v. Dominic Ongwen at paragraph 104 where the court defines ting ting as domestic servant.
[481] Carlson and Mazurana, "Forced Marriage within the Lord's Resistance Army, Uganda," 10.
[482] Carlson and Mazurana, 21.
[483] See Annan et al., "SWAY II," 40 note that 42% of abducted females held longer than two weeks were married; See also Baines, *Buried in the Heart: Women, Complex Victimhood and the War in Northern Uganda*, 38 who writes "every girl who had reached the age of menstruation was forcibly married.
[484] Carlson and Mazurana, "Forced Marriage within the Lord's Resistance Army, Uganda," 42.

Commanders did not assign all young men of a certain age a wife, but only those seen as deserving. Sophie Kramer uses this pattern to argue that the LRA used forced marriage as a reward because the group lacked other forms of payment for male combatants.[485] While the distribution of wives was in some ways framed as a reward system for men, the LRA could have provided men access to young women/girls without formalizing these relationships through forced marriages. Kramer's framing of the LRA's system of forced marriage also views the benefits and purposes of marriage only from the perspective of controlling men instead of seeing the ways in which the LRA relied on women and sought to control them through systems of marriage.

Marriage is traditionally seen as a way to keep men inside a rebel group, but it was important to retaining women and girls who were valued by the LRA. Mazurana and Carlson emphasize the value of female abductees to the LRA. They explain how commanders would track the number of females in the group at any time and had certain desired quotas for females in the group.[486] If the number of female abductees were below quotas then field teams were ordered by the leadership to abduct a certain number of females.[487] The ways in which the LRA relied on women and girls to fulfill key roles is expanded upon in Chapter 6.

Co-Wives

The structure of the household in the LRA reflected Acholi households in which the first wife was given certain privileges. In the LRA, the first wives were usually "original women" or those women who joined/were abducted into the movement in the 1980s/early 1990s.[488] The

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[485] Sophie Kramer, "Forced Marriage and the Absence of Gang Rape: Explaining Sexual Violence by the Lord's Resistance Army in Northern Uganda," *The Journal of Politics and Society* 23, no. 1 (2012): 28.
[486] Carlson and Mazurana, "Forced Marriage within the Lord's Resistance Army, Uganda," 18.
[487] Carlson and Mazurana, 18.
[488] Baines, *Buried in the Heart: Women, Complex Victimhood and the War in Northern Uganda*, 53 fn 8.

senior wives were assigned new recruits and *ting tings* to help them with their children, domestic work, and gardening.[489] The first wives had authority over the other wives and in some cases abused the power they had over their co-wives.[490]

The relationship between the co-wives in the LRA was similar to the patterns Girling described in which sometimes relationships between co-wives were tense. The tense relationships between co-wives is detailed in the memoirs of Evelyn Amony and Grace Acan[491] and discussed by my female interview participants who spoke about jealousy or mistrust between co-wives. However, in other cases co-wives were an important source of comradery for women and interview participants spoke about how they socialized with their co-wives, helped care for each other's children, and in one case shared huts.[492] The relationships between wives were especially important since members of the LRA were discouraged from socializing with other people outside their homesteads, especially men.[493] Fighting between co-wives was also discouraged within the LRA which is logical since forced marriage was intended to build unity not divide members.[494]

Widows in the LRA

In addition to regulations guiding marriages, there were also specific rules for the treatment of women whose LRA husbands died. A woman was given a period of time where she was allowed to be single (one interview participant said it was six months).[495] The woman's head was shaved and there was a special prayer and cleansing ceremony. Most interview participants

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[489] Baines, 38.
[490] See Amony, *I Am Evelyn Amony*.
[491] Amony; Acan, *Not Yet Sunset: A Story of Survival and Perseverance in LRA Captivity*.
[492] Interview with Former female member of the LRA, L28, December 16, 2017; Interview with Former female member of the LRA, L29, December 16, 2017.
[493] Interview with Former female member of the LRA, L28; Baines, *Buried in the Heart: Women, Complex Victimhood and the War in Northern Uganda*, 42.
[494] Interview with Former female member of the LRA, L10, December 12, 2017.
[495] Interview with Former female member of the LRA, L11.

said that after this time period other men could then approach the widow and *ask* her if she wanted to marry them or a woman could pick a man that she wanted to live with. This was the form of remarriage most frequently described, but it wasn't always followed as one interview participant said she was forcibly married after her husband died.[496] Most interview participants thought the treatment of widows was a reflection of the respect given to widows in Acholi society.

Children in the LRA

Children were an important part of LRA forced marriages and fit into the LRA's ideology of building a new Acholi.[497] The LRA could not expand its new lineage without women to give birth to new members. Half of all forced wives gave birth to children from their relationships.[498] Children born from LRA forced marriages were said to *belong* to the movement emphasizing the ways in which all personal relationships inside the LRA were linked to the broader group.[499] Children can be seen as a benefit of forced marriages (and to the group's goal more broadly), but also were viewed by some as a challenging consequence of forced marriages because of the logistical problems with having children inside a rebel group.

Children were desired in LRA marriages, similar to how children were seen as an essential part of marriage outside of the LRA.[500] I asked interview participants if there was pressure to have children and what would happen if someone did not have a child in an LRA marriage. There were some diverging views on this from interview participants. Most interview participants thought the LRA leadership encouraged children and one interview participant said

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[496] Interview with Former female member of the LRA, L5.
[497] For more detail on children born into the LRA see Eunice Otuko Apio, "Children Born of War in Northern Uganda: Kinship, Marriage, and the Politics of Post-Conflict Reintegration in Lango Society" (Thesis submitted to the University of Birmingham for the degree Doctor of Philosophy, University of Birmingham, 2016).
[498] Annan et al., "SWAY II," vii.
[499] Aijazi and Baines, "Relationality, Culpability and Consent in Wartime," 18.
[500] Interview with Scholar, L1, July 14, 2017.

Kony would perform ceremonies for women who could not conceive.[501] However, all interview participants when asked, said that if a woman could not have children she was not punished. One male interview participant noted that women who couldn't conceive were not treated badly, and "even her husband still stays with her there because men didn't only have one wife. If one wife didn't have kids others would."[502]

The focus on male needs for children seen in the above quote reflect a common reason children were seen as desirable in Al-Shabaab and the LRA – for the morale of male combatants. Interview participants thought LRA leadership knew that some men would be in the bush for a long time and wanted to give them a normal family life.[503] Interview participants spoke about the love and affection some fathers had for the children born into the LRA.[504] Aijazi and Baines in their article about men in the LRA write about the significance for some men of becoming fathers inside the group.[505] Aijazi and Baines write that men became more empathetic in battle once they were fathers and led to the escape of men with their families or men assisting their wives and children to escape.[506] The changes in male LRA members after fatherhood (empathy, desire to escape) is not in line with the interests of the LRA.

From a different perspective, children could be a problem within the LRA because they made it harder for group members to travel discretely. Mothers could not guarantee that their children would be quiet if they were hiding from the UPDF and therefore children could easily reveal the location of the LRA. When I asked one interview participant why women were encouraged to have kids in the LRA she said it was the "thing that confused her most."[507]

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[501] Interview with Former male member of the LRA, L13, December 13, 2017.
[502] Interview with Former male member of the LRA.
[503] Interview with Former female member of the LRA, L11.
[504] Former female member of the LRA, L31; Former female member of the LRA, L11.
[505] Aijazi and Baines, "Relationality, Culpability and Consent in Wartime," 16.
[506] Aijazi and Baines, 16–18.
[507] Interview with Former female member of the LRA, L5.

Children who are born into the LRA represent an important component of the group's ideology of social control. The LRA was trying to build a new Acholi population by cleansing old members, but also by having new children born into the group. The LRA wanted a new Acholi society to control and children played an important role in this nation building project.

HOW LRA FORCED MARRIAGE BUILDS INTERNAL COHESION

Marriage to the Movement

Similar to the ways in which forced marriages with members of Al-Shabaab were framed as a duty to the group, marriage was re-conceptualized in the LRA as a commitment to the movement. One former member of the LRA reiterated a theme that came up in several interviews explaining, "They say women belong to the movement not you [the husband]." This further reinforced the woman and the man's ties to the group as well as took away any entitlement or independence a man might feel in his relationship with his wife.

The way in which relationships between men and women in the LRA were framed as a commitment to the LRA is similar to the way other types of rebel groups control marriage. Jeff Goodwin studied cohesion in the Huk armed communist movement in the Philippines and writes about "Huk marriages." Goodwin writes, "The [Huk] movement recast the marriage ceremony into a ritual affirmation not only of the couple's loyalty to one another, but also of their joint commitment to the struggle."[508] Marriages within the LRA were similarly framed as a marriage to the movement. Men with wives in the LRA had a responsibility to provide for them and a man's relationship to his wife was conditional on him fulfilling this obligation as well as other obligations to the movement. Framing marriage in this way gave the LRA leadership control of even the most intimate relationships of its members.

[508] Goodwin, "The Libidinal Constitution of a High-Risk Social Movement: Affectual Ties and Solidarity in the Huk Rebellion, 1946 to 1954," 60.

New recruits in the LRA were instructed to "forget about their old families."[509] Relatives who were in the LRA together were purposefully separated into different commanders' homes and were not allowed to demonstrate emotional attachment to each other or provide special assistance to each other.[510] All of one's loyalty and allegiances should be to the LRA and the families built in the LRA.

Linking interpersonal relationships with the group was also important for reinforcing a system of interdependence. Baines summarizes this principle of group organization, "Interdependence was then thread through multiple levels of the LRA hierarchy, through monitoring and reporting mechanisms, and through decision-making on discipline and punishment. No one person could take it upon himself or herself to punish a subordinate without consultation with the leaders."[511] In line with this interdependent structure martial relationships should not be seen as outside LRA leadership control. The LRA's control of marital relationships was also important because if men and women had absolute freedom in their relationships and they were not seen as being linked to the group, then men and women could connect and unite against LRA leadership.

Totalitarian Control Over Group Members

Similar to Al-Shabaab, marriage provided an important tool of control for the LRA, but in the LRA marriage was used to control group members. This was especially useful for the LRA because so many of their combatants were abducted youth who did not want to participate in the group. LRA leadership was aware of the challenges in controlling their group members and even

[509] Baines, *Buried in the Heart: Women, Complex Victimhood and the War in Northern Uganda*, 39.
[510] Baines, 58.
[511] Baines, 43.

considered how the U.S. military faces challenges with controlling their members. A former brigadier in the LRA explained:

> There were those who went astray, soldiers were soldiers you gave orders to, but they went against you. One year, the US government went to war with Iraq – we know their military is very disciplined, yet when they went there, they did not behave well with prisoners of war. That is the nature of any army in the world. If the US, who is professional, could go astray, then what about the rebels? Why not us?[512]

This quote highlights the ways in which the LRA thought strategically about cohesion and recognized it could be a challenge for their group.

Jacob Shapiro highlights one way in which marriage inside rebel groups is a useful system for building internal cohesion. He asserts that encouraging members (his use of the word encourage here ignores ideas potential force) to enter into marriages within rebel groups (he focuses on jihadist groups) helps control members because married members would face a larger cost than unattached members if they went against the rules of the group.[513] This idea is reflected by an interview participant who said, "Some men would be forced to have women even if they didn't want one because they [the leadership] thought if they didn't give you a woman (especially when you were of age) you would escape to find a woman."[514] Forced marriages were a way to make group members have more to lose if they were caught disobeying the LRA (and were punished by death) or escaped the group. Group members might be less likely to act rashly or dangerously if they felt responsible for a spouse or children.

Within forced marriages, there were limitations on how couples could interact with each other. This reflects LRA's broader control of membership's daily lives. Baines writes that the behavior of LRA members was closely monitored and she describes a detailed reporting system

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[512] Baines, 47.
[513] Jacob Shaprio, *The Terrorist's Dilemma* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013), 52.
[514] Interview with Former male member of the LRA, L16.

which included meetings of LRA leadership about group members' behavior twice daily.[515] Couples could not have sex at certain periods including when a woman was menstruating or before important battles.[516] Baines notes one incident in which a married couple was caught having sex at the frontlines and this was seen by leadership as a major violation.[517] It is not that male LRA members were given forced wives and then able to have sex whenever they wanted, but their sexual access was still subject to leadership control and group goals.

Even high-ranking commanders could be punished if they did not follow the LRA's rules related to forced marriage. Commander Charles Tabuley was publicly beaten and demoted when he forced a *ting ting* to become his wife without first asking the high command for permission.[518] One male interview participant said that if an individual man put pressure on a woman to marry him she could report him to a commander and the man would "summoned and told what he can and can't do."[519]

I asked every interview participant about the rules inside the LRA because the LRA is known for having defined "Standing Orders." The "Standing Orders" are an oral code of conduct. Compared to other rebel groups with codes of conduct the LRA ranks near the top in terms of the number of rules. [520] One of the rules almost every interview participant discussed was the prohibition of sex outside of LRA marriages. As I describe in chapter 7, if members of the LRA perpetrated sexual violence, forced marriages would not be a useful tool to build cohesion. Allowing group members to perpetuate sexual violence would weaken the system of control the LRA had over their lives because rape is seen as more of a personal form of violence.

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[515] Baines, *Buried in the Heart: Women, Complex Victimhood and the War in Northern Uganda*, 42.
[516] Interview with Scholar, L1.
[517] Baines, *Buried in the Heart: Women, Complex Victimhood and the War in Northern Uganda*, 45.
[518] Baines, 45.
[519] Interview with Former male member of the LRA, L7, December 11, 2017.
[520] Olivier Bangerter, "Internal Control: Codes of Conduct with Insurgent Groups," Small Arms Survey Occasional Paper, November 2012.

One interview participant explained that marriage was to make sure group members were disciplined. He stated, "If people have sexual relationships with anyone they want it's bad and can cause problems. Marriage is a way to control sexual desire that drives people to sleep with different members."

Marriage was also a way to control and prevent the escape of women and girls specifically. Commanders were responsible for ensuring the women and girls in their home did not escape. One interview participant explained:

> I think they thought if women were left alone and could behave independently they would escape. When walking, if you have a man, you have to follow your husband and escorts close. This makes it harder to escape. Even women who are not yet wives are still put in the middle and walked together.[521]

Another interview participant thought she was able to escape more easily, with the help of her cousin, because she was not yet married.[522] Women and girls were important to the operations of the LRA (as detailed in chapter 6) and marriage (and children resulting from the marriage) would make it more challenging for them to escape and provide permanent links between them and the LRA.

One interview participant summarized the ways in which marriage was used to regulate member's lives in the LRA. In response to my question about why the LRA controlled marriages he replied, "Being in a fighting group, it is important to regulate what people do. If [male members] had freedom, people would start relationships with whoever, even married women. People would fight in the battlefield against each other. The purpose [of the LRA] was to always be strong in fights. If the group is divided, the group is weaker."[523] This quote also alludes to the

[521] Interview with Former female member of the LRA, L24, December 15, 2017.
[522] Interview with Former female member of the LRA, L20, December 14, 2017.
[523] Interview with Former male member of the LRA, L6, December 11, 2017.

ways in which forced marriage was used to prevent divisions between members which I describe in the following section.

Group Organization

The LRA's system of forced marriage helped promote and create a group organization that solidified hierarchies between men and women, and reduced fighting between group members. The most common reason interview participants thought the LRA assigned marriages was to reduce fighting between group members and to create or sustain hierarchies. Marriage sustained a hierarchy and reduced fighting not only between male group members, but also was useful for organizing females. Building hierarchies and organizing group members are important parts of a broader strategy of building internal cohesion.

Male interview participants thought men inside the LRA would have fought over women if they were not assigned wives. One interview participant explained:

> Rules were meant to keep the group in check. Because of these rules the group won't disintegrate, they were binding the group together. If men had free will about which women to have, it would lead to fighting because everyone had guns and the group would disintegrate. If we were assigned wives, no one would argue, it was final and regulated.[524]

In addition to reducing fighting between members, the way the forced marriage system was designed also promoted a hierarchical structure that gave power and privileges to senior group members. Senior men picked their wives first and junior members were given wives only if the senior men decided they were deserving. One interview participant described the ways in which forced marriage and respect were linked, "if any other fighter had a sexual relationship with another fighter's wife, it would decrease respect for that commander."[525] Part of the way a man inside the LRA was judged was based on his relationships with women.

[524] Interview with Former male member of the LRA, L4, December 10, 2017.
[525] Interview with former male member of the LRA, L12.

Wives were seen as a reward for only the most deserving male members of the LRA. Baines writes, "Only those [men] with a demonstrated loyalty, those who obeyed without question and carried out orders with enthusiasm, were recognized as valuable to the movement. A strong, decisive and fearless commander was considered deserving of wives. Those who did not advance in the ranks remained without one."[526] Other interview participants thought that senior men were given wives because otherwise they would leave the group. According to one interview participant, "Younger commanders were not given women, they gave wives to older men who joined/were abducted and already had wives at home. They were worried those men would leave the LRA."[527]

Forced marriage was a key place where commanders in the LRA asserted their power over junior officers. In Acholi society, unmarried men are considered boys and their opinions are not listened to and they aren't taken seriously. A male gains the status of being a man once he is married.[528] A male interview participant explained that, "Junior fighters had no place in making decisions [about marriage]."[529] Older senior officers were also privileged over younger junior officers because they had more opportunity to be given a wife and could choose their wife. One female interview participant explained:

> Senior commanders think young men can never be given women. Women only were given to men who were already officers. Senior commanders think all women who were abducted should only be for commanders. They told the boys, they can't sleep with women, because then senior commanders won't be able to get women.[530]

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[526] Baines, *Buried in the Heart: Women, Complex Victimhood and the War in Northern Uganda*, 41.
[527] Interview with Former male member of the LRA, L3, December 10, 2017.
[528] Chris Dolan, "Collapsing Masculinities and Weak States - A Case Study of Northern Uganda," in *Masculinities Matter! Men, Gender and Development*, ed. F Cleaver (London & New York: Zed Books, 2002), 57–83.
[529] Interview with Former male member of the LRA, L7.
[530] Interview with Former female member of the LRA, L11.

This quote demonstrates some resentment from the female interview participant who likely would have rather married a man her own age, but inside the group younger men and women had little freedom to express their anger or frustration over this pattern.

The LRA's system of forced marriage reinforced the broader centralized group organization. At the top of this system is Kony, who was the authoritarian father figure of the group. Kony asserted a patriarchal authority over the group. At points Kony even assigned women/girls to individual soldiers as wives or *ting tings.*[531] In addition to Kony, other senior male leadership made decisions in the group as part of the Control Altar and the Division (an operational unit).[532] The four brigades (Sinia, Gilva, Trinkle, and Stockree) also had male brigade commanders who oversaw more junior male members.[533] Junior male members had their own hierarchies with some boys who were *adaki* (security around the camp) who were higher in the hierarchy than the bodyguards to senior men.[534] Finally, the more senior women who had been in the group the longest and were married to higher ranking men had control over the newly abducted young women and girls. This brief outline of the LRA structure highlights the centrality of hierarchy to the group and forced marriage was one way the LRA asserted that hierarchy.

There was a fear that if the LRA allowed women to have a choice in who they married they would marry the younger combatants who were closer to their age. One interview participant explained, "Compared to young men of 17-20 years, older men won't find any women and it would cause fights/challenges in the group…that is why when a woman is of age

[531] Dolan, *Social Torture: The Case of Northern Uganda 1986-2006*, 92.
[532] Prosecutor v. Dominic Ongwen.
[533] Prosecutor v. Dominic Ongwen.
[534] Acan, *Not Yet Sunset: A Story of Survival and Perseverance in LRA Captivity*, 55–56.

she is given to a commander regardless of the age of the commander." [535] Having marriages arranged by seniority, as opposed to age, ensured that senior men in the group would have privileges in choosing their wives compared to younger recruits closer to the females age.

One of the common sentiments of former forced wives in the LRA was that marrying a much older man was a traumatic part of the forced marriage process. The age differences in the marriages was seen as one of the ways in which LRA marriages were different from life outside the LRA. Grace Acan writes in her memoir her shock at being assigned to an older commander's home. She notes, "I wondered whether a person of such an old age also existed in the LRA because I had not seen such an old person in the last almost two months that I had spent among them."[1] Acan goes on to describe her experience with the LRA leadership when she got to the camp. She writes, "I felt like they were looking at us with lustful eyes and yet they were far too old to be our husbands. In fact, as I saw it, they were the ages of our fathers."[536]

This subversion of traditional practices related to age differences in marriages benefited older senior LRA members and upheld a rigid patriarchy. It took away any potential form of power or privilege younger male LRA combatants could have through the fact that they were closer in age to most of the women/girls in the group. Stacey Hynd describes the intersection between age and marriage. She writes, "Marriage has proven to be a key site of social tension through which disenfranchised young men and women seek to attain adult status, on one hand, and adults look to control youth status and labor, on the other, with such struggles played out in war zones." [537]

The LRA's marriage system was also about organizing women and girls inside the group.

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[535] Interview with Former male member of the LRA, L16.
[536] Acan, *Not Yet Sunset: A Story of Survival and Perseverance in LRA Captivity*, 55.
[537] Hynd, "To Be Taken as a Wife Is a Form of Death," 293.

Single women without children participated in combat in the LRA, but once a woman was either married or had a child, she would no longer be required to fight.[538] Because women were not primarily in fighter roles they rarely received ranks for military tasks. Despite not receiving formal ranks there were systems of hierarchy between women built into the LRA's system of marriage.

Women received power if they had been in the group for a long time, were the first wife in a household, and/or were married to a high-ranking commander. Some women fulfilled all three of these roles. One interview participant said that the women who had been in the group the longest felt superior to other women and that they were called "those who suffered most."[539] These women have also been labeled "the originals."[540] The "original women" were seen as people who had sacrificed and contributed to the LRA and who had faced hardships during the long time they spent in the group. Baines notes that the "original women" were often the first wives of high ranking LRA commanders.[541]

While women who had been in the group longer were given a special status, most women gained power through their husband – either because he was a high-ranking member of the LRA and/or because they were his first wife. One interview participant explained that some of the privileges these wives were given was based on traditional Acholi ideas in which a first wife is given food first. Additionally, she noted that, "All the power over things in the homestead were with the first wife. Before doing anything, she was consulted."[542] Another interview participant

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[538] Vincent Otti, the second in command in the LRA, preferred that his wives who did not have children fight alongside him because he thought that they should "contribute their part" to the LRA's fight Carlson and Mazurana, "Forced Marriage within the Lord's Resistance Army, Uganda," 25.
[539] Interview with Former female member of the LRA, L31.
[540] Baines, *Buried in the Heart: Women, Complex Victimhood and the War in Northern Uganda*.
[541] Baines, 55.
[542] Interview with Former female member of the LRA, L31; Interview with Former female member of the LRA, L33, December 18, 2017.

noted that older senior wives in a home were able to give some of their labor requirements to newer younger women. This interview participant highlighted a negative power dynamic between younger and older women and said that if a senior wife didn't like a newer women or girl in the home they could beat her or say false things about her to a commander.[543] Similar to the ways in which LRA's forced marriage system helped organize men into clear hierarchies, the forced marriage system also organized women based on their marital status and position in the household.

The families created through forced marriages also provided guidelines for ways to structure the LRA. It is challenging to organize a group of untrained abducted young women/girls and men/boys but organizing them into families that reflected life outside the LRA was familiar. Baines describe families in the LRA as, "the site of building social cohesion in the group, the place where members became interdependent on one another."[544]

All LRA members were organized into brigades and then into compounds. The compounds included the senior commander's hut, the huts of his wives, and a hut for *ting* tings.[545] The senior commander's hut was surrounded by the huts of his military escorts and their families.[546] These compounds were referred to as homesteads by interview participants. Baines explains that homesteads in rural Acholi life were composed of polygamous lineages, with the father as having the formal public power, and the women controlling the social welfare of the household.[547] Homesteads in the LRA were useful for assigning tasks and formalizing relationships between members. Homesteads were also used as a structure for monitoring all

[543] Interview with Former female member of the LRA, L9, December 12, 2017.
[544] Baines, *Buried in the Heart: Women, Complex Victimhood and the War in Northern Uganda*, 33.
[545] Baines, 37.
[546] Baines, 37.
[547] Baines, 57.

group members. High ranking male commanders and senior wives were held responsible for the behavior of the other members of the homestead and senior male commanders had to report to Kony about the behavior of the members of his homestead.[548] Finally, organizing members in family units and homesteads, required all members of the family to rely on the male commander who was the leader of their homestead. All members of the homestead relied on the male commander for access to food and resources and therefore a man's success in battle – specifically related to raiding and looting – greatly affected the health and well-being of the rest of the homestead.[549]

Promoting Patriarchal Control

Similar to Al-Shabaab, LRA's ideology promoted a new form of power for men which had been lost through traditional marriage practices. Dolan notes that at the time of the emergence of the LRA, the vast majority of men were too poor to make marital payments.[550] Dolan writes, "In short, both young men who could not get married, and older men who could not control their children's marriage choices, felt their masculinity was undermined."[551] The LRA provided ways for men to reaffirm their masculinity through their system of marriage and reasserted a model for society in which male power was not limited because of wealth.

The importance of masculinity to the LRA was also seen in the language used in speaking about Museveni and the NRA/UPDF treatment of Acholi men. The sexual violence against men perpetrated by the NRA/UPDF was especially salient in discussions about masculinity in the conflict in northern Uganda. A former senior wife in the LRA told Baines that Kony would speak to LRA members about the UPDF and tell them they were perpetuating

[548] Baines, 42.
[549] Baines, 57–58.
[550] Dolan, *Social Torture: The Case of Northern Uganda 1986-2006*, 199.
[551] Dolan, 200.

sexual violence against LRA members mothers, fathers, and brothers.[552] According to Baines, Kony saw the government as making "men into slaves, the sexual subordinates, of the army."[553] These discussions illustrate the ways in which a reassertion of masculinity was tied to the mission of the LRA. Marriage was seen as an important place for men to reassert their masculinity.

Inside the LRA, a certain type of masculinity was promoted and it represented the form of ideal masculinity that would be seen in the new Acholi society. Husbands in the LRA had certain responsibilities One male interview participant explained that there were expectations for men to look after their wives and children, provide for them, and make sure they were safe.[554] He said it was similar to life outside the LRA where a the head of the household was expected to take care of his family.[555] He explained that if a man was not fulfilling his obligations to his wife, a member of the LRA who was seen as knowing how to fulfill this role well, would go talk to the man who was struggling and give him lessons.[556]

The responsibilities of a husband in the LRA were taken seriously by interview participants. One male former member of the LRA said commanders kept telling him he should have a wife, but he declined because he knew it would be difficult for him to fulfill the responsibilities of taking care of her.[557] The LRA enforced its rule that husbands should take care of their wives. One interview participant shared that she was abused by her husband and she reported this to the leadership who said, "if the man can't take care of her she should be removed from that homestead."[558] She said the leadership (including Kony) was going to send her

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[552] Baines, *Buried in the Heart: Women, Complex Victimhood and the War in Northern Uganda*, 37.
[553] Baines, 37.
[554] Interview with Former male member of the LRA, L6.
[555] Interview with Former male member of the LRA.
[556] Interview with Former male member of the LRA.
[557] Interview with Former male member of the LRA, L16.
[558] Interview with Former female member of the LRA, L5.

husband a letter informing him of this, but her husband was killed before they were able to send a letter.

The LRA's forced marriage system gave men a power they had been lacking because of the challenge with marrying in northern Uganda. Forced marriage also reinforced LRA male member's masculinity that they felt had been lost due to the violence in the conflict especially the sexual violence perpetrated by the NRA and UPDF. Finally, the LRA's forced marriage system demonstrates the type of masculinity that would be valued in the future Acholi society, one in which men took care of their wives and children.

Ideology of Social Control

Forced marriage was not only used to build internal cohesion, but also because the forced marriage system reinforced the LRA's ideology of social control. Baines argues that the primary purpose of LRA forced marriage was because of its ideological goals. She explains that forced marriage was, "vital to the political vision of the LRA and the realization of the new Acholi. Women's bodies, central to the reproduction of the nation, became sites upon which this vision was forged…"[559] Similarly, Dolan notes that the LRA's ideology was based in part on Kony's concern about the dissolution of "traditional" morality and therefore Kony sought to control sexuality and reinforce his ideas about "purity" in the New Acholi.[560]

The LRA's ideology of social control was different from Al-Shabaab's because it was primarily focused on controlling group members who would build the new Acholi. Kony controlled every aspect of group members' lives from their eating, sexual lives, praying, and

[559] Baines, "Forced Marriage as a Political Project," 415.
[560] Dolan, *Social Torture: The Case of Northern Uganda 1986-2006*, 204.

cleanliness. These controls have not been taken seriously in scholarship as being essential components of the LRA's ideology.[561]

I have argued that the LRA's manipulation of gender norms inside the group created a new "gender order"[562] or "a patterned system of ideological and material practices, performed by individuals in a society, through which power relations between women and men are made, and remade, as meaningful."[563] The LRA created this new gendered order, as part of their ideology of social control, by creating, manipulating, and sustaining specific ideas about femininity and masculinity inside the group. For example, Grace Acan discusses how inside the LRA there were strict rules about what women could wear and women could only wear long skirts without slits.[564] This type of restriction does not seem to be a logical priority as part of a rebel group's strategy, but it demonstrates the ideology and goals of the LRA.

The LRA's forced marriage system was a form of social engineering of group members where Kony and the LRA leadership did not only control relationships between men and women who were married, but also between men and women who were not married, between women, between women and girls, between men, and between men and boys. The families created in the LRA through forced marriage were the beginning of the ideal society Kony was trying to create and manage.

Some of the LRA's ideas about how the new Acholi should behave were taken from existing practices in Acholi society. For example, the fact that widows had more choice about who to re-marry does not seem to have any strategic benefit. In fact, having unmarried women

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[561] Finnström notes how most scholars see the LRA as "rebels without a cause" Sverker Finnström, "An African Hell of Colonial Imagination? The Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda, Another Story," in *The Lord's Resistance Army: Myth and Reality*, ed. Tim Allen and Koen Vlassenroot (London: Zed Books, 2010), 75.
[562] Donnelly, "The Interactive Relationship between Gender and Strategy."
[563] Jane Pilcher and Imelda Whelehan, *50 Key Concepts in Gender Studies* (London: Sage Publications, 2004), 61.
[564] Acan, *Not Yet Sunset: A Story of Survival and Perseverance in LRA Captivity*, 70.

who were not fighting and being given special treatment might have in fact been a burden to the group. When I asked interview participants about why widows were given special treatment and more choice in remarrying most noted that it was because it was in line with Acholi culture and a way to honor the woman.[565] This is one part of the marriage system that does not seem to have strategic meaning to the LRA, but is part of the ideal society they are trying to create in which widows are given special treatment.

The LRA's ideology of social control also relied on ideas about femininity and masculinity that were seen as being taken from historical Acholi practices. Grace Acan writes about how when she was a wife in the LRA she interpreted their ideas about gender as old-fashioned. She writes, "The men in the bush wanted to control women like in the old days where women had no voice."[566]

CONCLUSION

The LRA faced a major obstacle to building a cohesive fighting force with so many group members being abducted young people. It is not a coincidence that the LRA's system of forced marriage became popular around the same time that it increased its abduction of girls and boys, but instead demonstrates that as the need to build internal cohesion increased the LRA turned to forced marriage as a strategy.

Forced marriage was a way for Kony and the LRA leadership both to build internal cohesion and to pursue its ideology of social control. Forced marriage built internal cohesion inside the LRA by framing marriage as a link to the LRA not as a relationship between two individuals. Another way in which forced marriage built internal cohesion was by being another component of the LRA's total control over its members lives. Third, forced marriage was a

[565] Interview with Former male member of the LRA, L13.
[566] Acan, *Not Yet Sunset: A Story of Survival and Perseverance in LRA Captivity*, 88.

useful system to organize group members of different ages and genders by creating family units. Finally, the LRA's forced marriage system was a way to reinforce and demonstrate its system of patriarchal control.

Comparing the LRA's forced marriage system to Al-Shabaab's forced marriage system highlights key ways in which forced marriage builds cohesion, but also demonstrates a distinction between building internal cohesion and external cohesion. The LRA and Al-Shabaab both framed marriages not as a relationship between two individuals, but as a relationship between individuals and the rebel groups. Both groups also used forced marriage as a way to control a group of individuals, but the groups differ in who they were trying to control. Al-Shabaab wanted to use marriage to control the population of Kismayo whereas the LRA was using marriage to control its group members. Finally, the LRA and Al-Shabaab's forced marriage system were a part of reestablishing male dominance and promoting a particular kind of patriarchal order. Although forced marriage serves similar functions between the two groups, differentiating between the goals of internal cohesion and external cohesion, can help explain differences in the forced marriage systems particularly the level of involvement of group leadership in arranging marriages. The LRA relied on forced marriage to organize group members, monitor their behavior, and build hierarchies. Therefore LRA leadership viewed arranging and organizing marriages in the same way any rebel group would focus on arranging and organizing its membership.

As indicated in the ICC ruling, forced marriage was "an inherent design feature" of the group.[567] The LRA's forced marriage system is an important component in understanding how a group of individuals with little military training, composed mainly of abducted youth, was able

[567] Prosecutor v. Dominic Ongwen.

to operate as an organized force and wage a battle against the Ugandan government for fourteen years.

CHAPTER 6: DIVISION OF LABOR

INTRODUCTION

Rebel groups that use forced marriage don't have women/girls inside the group just for marriage, but instead recognize the benefits that having women/girls as members can bring to a rebel group. The role of women/girls inside rebel groups with a forced marriage system is a pre-condition to a theory of forced marriage as well as a key effect of the creation of a forced marriage system. Women and girls have played important roles in rebel groups with different ideologies and goals.[568] Forced marriage can be an effective way for rebel groups to exploit women/girls labor, and control women/girls, while promoting an ideology of social control.

The control and division of labor inside rebel groups is an important illustration of the ways in which forced marriage systems promote an ideology of social control. Through forced marriage, rebel groups can rely on women's labor to support the goals of the rebel group, but also control women and limit female power. In Al-Shabaab and the LRA, the status of women in the group is based on their martial and reproductive status. In addition to controlling women and limiting their power inside the rebel group, forced marriage is a way for rebel groups to promote their ideals of femininity. Through forced marriage, females most valued roles are their roles as wives and mothers which is a value system rebel groups are seeking to promote in their future societies. Additionally, forced marriage is a way to promote a form of masculinity, as described in chapters 4 and 5, in which men are protectors and providers for women/girls.

[568] Most rebel groups want women/girls as part of the group as seen by the high numbers of groups that include them, see e.g., Roos Haer and Tobias Böhmelt, "Girl Soldiering in Rebel Groups, 1989–2013: Introducing a New Dataset," *Journal of Peace Research* 55, no. 3 (May 2018): 395–403, https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343317752540; Susan McKay and Mazurana, Dyan, *Where Are the Girls? Girls in Fighting Forces in Northern Uganda, Sierra Leone, and Mozambique: Their Lives During and After War* (Quebec: International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development, 2004).

Rebel groups that use forced marriage see the strategic and tactical benefits to having women and girls as part of their group.[569] The roles women/girls play inside rebel groups are often more private roles and women/girls tend not to *dominate* active combat roles even if they fulfill them.[570] Frequently, those outside the rebel group (including scholars, policymakers, and the general public) focus only on the public and combat roles of rebel groups and therefore miss the importance of the roles women and girls fulfill inside rebel groups. It is useful to note that because of the scarcity of guns in most rebel groups, men also fulfill secondary roles besides just that of a combatant.[571] In understanding the multiple roles men, women, boys, and girls fulfill in rebel groups, especially those that have forced marriage systems in which they are building families and communities, we can better understand how rebel groups operate. In this chapter, I demonstrate that while rebel groups need members in combat roles, other roles that are less visible (such as fundraising, intelligence, or providing food) are commonly filled by women and are equally important as combat roles for modern rebel groups.[572]

The status of female members of Al-Shabaab (in Somalia) and the LRA is based on their marital status and whether they have children. This allows for women's primary role inside the group to be described as a wife or a mother thereby minimizing their other roles. The notable

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[569] For details on the benefits of including women/girls in rebel groups as well as data on female roles see McKay and Mazurana, Dyan, *Where Are the Girls? Girls in Fighting Forces in Northern Uganda, Sierra Leone, and Mozambique: Their Lives During and After War*; Henshaw, *Why Women Rebel: Understanding Women's Participation in Armed Rebel Groups*; Thomas and Bond, "Women's Participation in Violent Political Organizations"; O'Rourke, "What's Special about Female Suicide Terrorism?"

[570] I use Alexis Henshaw's definition of a combat roles as those who, "regularly engage in a frontline environment in support of one side of a conflict; engage in, are expected to engage in or directly support those engaged in close combat" Alexis Leanna Henshaw, "Where Women Rebel: PATTERNS OF WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN ARMED REBEL GROUPS 1990–2008," *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 18, no. 1 (January 2, 2016): 6, https://doi.org/10.1080/14616742.2015.1007729.

[571] Cohen, *Rape During Civil War*.

[572] Phoebe Donnelly, "Women in Al-Shabaab through a New War's Lens," *Women and International Security* (blog), accessed April 3, 2019, https://www.wiisglobal.org/women-in-al-shabaab-through-a-new-wars-lens/.

exception to this hierarchy, is for women supporting Al-Shabaab outside of Somalia. I review the reasons for these exceptions in my discussions of women in Al-Shabaab in Kenya and the U.S.

In Al-Shabaab, females excel in intelligence, fundraising, and logistics. Women in Al-Shabaab do not usually participate in combat roles and these roles are reserved for men. Somali women can only be members of Al-Shabaab in Somalia if they are married to a male member. Al-Shabaab's internal division of labor is based on ideas about marriage. For example, certain women, such as older businesswomen, were not seen as desirable wives so Al-Shabaab instead gave them a part-time role where the group exploited their skills but did not marry them into the group. The pattern of only having women as members if they were ideal wives also reinforces Al-Shabaab's ideology of control in which it policed certain forms of femininity.

The LRA is a useful case study for understanding the gendered division of labor because of the transitions in women's roles over time. Initially, women had their own combat unit in the LRA, but once the group formed bases in South Sudan and started its marriage system the all-female combat unit was dissolved. The LRA then shifted to having women/girls only participate in combat until they were married and had children, again demonstrating the close relationship between a female's marital status and her role in the group. As part of the LRA's ideology of social control, the group needed women to have children to produce the new Acholi and this was an essential aspect of women and girls' roles inside the LRA. The privileging of women's domestic roles inside the LRA was also a part of the LRA's ideology of social control promoting a specific type of femininity.

In this chapter, I start my analysis of each case study with a description of women's roles in past conflicts in the region, to provide context in analyzing women's roles during the conflicts under investigation. I first examine Al-Shabaab's relationship with women and divide my

analysis into different locations because of Al-Shabaab's differing relationship with women in each location. I draw upon primary research data to provide detailed and unique descriptions of women's roles inside Al-Shabaab because this information is not currently available in other sources. Additionally, because Al-Shabaab was governing Kismayo (my study site), there is complexity in the ways in which females both inside and outside could engage with the group. Consequently, as a key feature of my analysis, I create a novel categorization system for understanding the different forms of female involvement in Al-Shabaab.

In the LRA case study, I examine female roles within the group and highlight the transitions that occurred over the span of the group's lifecycle and over individual women's lifecycles. I rely on interview data from women and men who were members of the LRA, memoirs written by two women who were forced wives in the group, and scholarship on gender dynamics in the LRA. I reflect on the role of women/girls inside the group and how it intersected with the LRA's forced marriage system. Throughout the chapter, I highlight areas of overlap or difference between Al-Shabaab and the LRA's gendered division of labor.

AL-SHABAAB

Overview

Al-Shabaab reliance on women[573] could be missed if one only looked at combat roles. Al-Shabaab has not used women frequently in traditional combat roles and has used only ten women as suicide bombers (composing 4.6 percent of its total suicide bombers).[574] It is tempting to explain this pattern by relying only on Al-Shabaab's Islamist rhetoric that promotes women's

[573] I refer to Al-Shabaab's reliance on women as this is the language used by interview participants, but it is likely that Al-Shabaab also relied on girls for specific tasks.
[574] Jason Warner and Ellen Chapin, "Targeted Terror: The Suicide Bombers of Al-Shabaab" (United State Military Academy: Combatting Terrorism Center at West Point, February 2018), 22–24, https://ctc.usma.edu/app/uploads/2018/02/Targeted-Terror-3.pdf.

roles in the home and private sphere. However, other Islamic groups, have used women/girls in combat roles, specifically as suicide bombers.[575] It is also debated whether Islamic ideas about jihad explicitly exclude women.[576] Al-Shabaab made the strategic decision not to use women in combat roles and instead used them in roles the group leadership labeled as more feminine and distinct from (and subservient to) male roles. Importantly, Al-Shabaab makes this distinction in women's roles through their forced marriage system.

Female Roles in Past Conflicts in Kismayo

The roles women played in past armed conflicts in Kismayo are similar to the roles women fulfill for Al-Shabaab. A recent study, led by the Life and Peace Institute ("LPI study"), on women's roles in the clan conflicts in Kismayo in the early 1990s reveals important patterns and perceptions of women and conflict in Kismayo. According to the study, women played key roles in clan conflicts related to: financing, mobilizing men to fight, logistical support, intelligence, humanitarian and welfare activities, and participating in violence directly.[577] The study is careful to show that violence in Somalia, like in other contexts, requires male and female participation and gender roles. The authors explain, "Violence, it seems, is not a natural Somali male state. It needs to be produced and reproduced, an enterprise in which women play an important role."[578]

Despite the clear findings in the LPI study about women's involvement in conflict there was still resistance from interview participants in acknowledging women as actors perpetuating violence. The authors of the report note male's reluctance to acknowledge the involvement of

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[575] Boko Haram provides a particularly interesting contrast because they are an Islamic group operating in the same time period and over half of their suicide bombers are females, Warner and Chapin, 24.
[576] See Nelly Lahoud, "The Neglected Sex: The Jihadis' Exclusion of Women From Jihad," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 26, no. 5 (October 20, 2014): 780–802, https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2013.772511.
[577] Life & Peace Institute, Peace Direct, and Somali Women Solidarity Organization, "Learning from Kismayo: A Study Report," 44.
[578] Life & Peace Institute, Peace Direct, and Somali Women Solidarity Organization, 9.

women in conflict is reflective of war's deep association with masculinity.[579] The link between conflict and masculinity is seen in the way key informants view Al-Shabaab (with most noting that Al-Shabaab doesn't use women) and is reflected in Al-Shabaab's hesitancy to use women in active roles publicly. Marriage is one way to avoid confronting the fact that women are involved in conflict as a part of Al-Shabaab, instead it presents the false image of confining them to the safe domestic and private sphere. This allows Al-Shabaab to stay consistent with its ideology of protecting women and girls.

Female Roles in Al-Shabaab in Kismayo

Al-Shabaab in Kismayo is a unique case study because first it illustrates the importance placed on women being married within the group, and second it reveals that Al-Shabaab also differentiated roles that married women and non-married women were allowed to play. Because Al-Shabaab ruled Kismayo for three years and they controlled all institutions in the town there were many ways people in Kismayo interacted with the group. Someone might be forced to work with Al-Shabaab, yet they would not consider themselves a member because they are not incorporated into the general structure of the group. For example, our research team interviewed people who would not consider themselves members of Al-Shabaab but worked in an Al-Shabaab run school or were forced to do part-time driving for the group.

Because of the complexity in understanding membership when a group is the governing authority, the rebel governance literature describes the population as *citizens* rather than *members*.[580] This categorization of populations living under rebel groups' governance recognizes the limits in freedom a population has when being ruled by a rebel group. However, in this

[579] Life & Peace Institute, Peace Direct, and Somali Women Solidarity Organization, 46.
[580] Nimmi Gowrinatham and Zachariah Mampilly, "Resistance and Repression under the Rule of Rebels: Women, Clergy and Civilian Agency in LTTE Governed Sri Lanka," Forthcoming.

chapter, I do not label *all* members of the population in Kismayo citizens, because that erases the varying degrees of association individuals had with Al-Shabaab. Interview participants highlighted different levels of involvement their friends, neighbors, and family members had with Al-Shabaab and did not consider everyone in Kismayo a "citizen," but instead many people were "members" of Al-Shabaab.

My categorization system (see table 3) brings out distinctions in these levels of engagement that are important. However, I recognize that citizens living in Kismayo all had to interact with Al-Shabaab and engage with them in certain ways, such as paying taxes. For this reason, I don't include in my classification system, activities like paying taxes or attending Al-Shabaab schools, because these were activities all individuals were required to do.

I created a classification system to understand the ways women engaged with and were incorporated into Al-Shabaab in table 3. These categories do not indicate voluntary engagement but illustrate different intensity of participation in Al-Shabaab's activities. The most engaged is the category of "member" which is someone who lived with the group and was fully incorporated in the group's architecture. Being a member is the most intense form of involvement with Al-Shabaab. All interview participants agreed that female members had to be married to a man inside the group. The next level of intensity in a relationship with Al-Shabaab is people working for Al-Shabaab or what I label "Al-Shabaab employees." Women who were especially desirable as Al-Shabaab employees were businesswomen and teachers, which I expand upon in the subsequent sections. The final level of Al-Shabaab involvement was Al-Shabaab "supporters." These individuals would often become Al-Shabaab employees later, but included, for example, women who donated money or jewelry to Al-Shabaab voluntarily. This often occurred in Al-Shabaab's early phases of rule in Kismayo. It is not always clear from the

interviews which roles the interview participants were speaking about because interview participants used different terms such as, "supporting Al-Shabaab," "fulfilling different responsibilities," "played a number of roles." However, based on the context, I assessed which level of female involvement the interview participant was referring to.

TABLE 3: CATEGORIES OF ROLES FOR WOMEN IN KISMAYO

Role	Description
Member	Highest level of involvement in Al-Shabaab; lived with group and must be married to a male group member. Example of role: spy for Al-Shabaab.
Employee	Not necessarily living or incorporated into group architecture but work with group in essential roles. Does not have to be married to another Al-Shabaab member. Example of role: teacher at Al-Shabaab school
Supporter	Least involved with Al-Shabaab. Mainly important for financial contributions, such as donating jewelry.

A key distinction between Al-Shabaab members and others engaged with the group was related to marital status. Nearly all interview participants agreed that women could only be members of Al-Shabaab if they were married to another member of Al-Shabaab. One interview participant explained, "If she is not married to an Al-Shabaab man, she cannot be trusted and accepted as a true member of Al-Shabaab. It is just expected for both men and women in Al-Shabaab to be married to Al-Shabaab men and women."[581] Marriage is a key way in which women's level of engagement with Al-Shabaab was circumscribed. Employees and supporters, in comparison, were not required to marry group members.

Women were crucial to Al-Shabaab, but not in the same way men were. Their roles and contributions are seen as distinct by interview participants. For example, according to one interview participant, "Al-Shabaab men are considered the defenders of their ideology, whereas

[581] Interview with female small business owner, Respondent 4, March 4, 2018.

women are considered the care providers, being the backbone of the institutions, as a mother or wife. Al-Shabaab men and women work together."[582] Although according to this interview participant men are the "defenders of the ideology," women in Al-Shabaab perform and embody the ideology of social control by demonstrating the ideal roles for women under Al-Shabaab authority. Another interview participant described the distinctions between men and women inside Al-Shabaab, "When Al-Shabaab came to Kismayo, they used people differently according to their gender and age."[583] A key way to differentiate men and women's roles was to insist that women could only be in the group if they were married. This rule that women must be married was a way to make sure that their first role was as a wife who was subservient to a man and whose production and reproduction was controlled by a man and by the group as a whole. Women's other roles inside the group were seen as secondary to their role as a wife and were similarly controlled by male Al-Shabaab leadership.

Women were seen by interview participants as just as important to Al-Shabaab as men, but in different ways. One interview participant described men and women's roles:

> Al-Shabaab men are expected to fulfill different roles than Al-Shabaab women. Al-Shabaab men are expected to fight against "the enemy" whereas Al-Shabaab women are expected to recruit other women, fundraise, provide material and moral support to Al-Shabaab, spy on others and transport goods (food and medicine) to certain locations and Al-Shabaab individuals. Both Al-Shabaab men and women are expected to support Al-Shabaab's ideology, cause, interests, and must give their lives and resources to Al-Shabaab's cause. Al-Shabaab men are not more powerful than Al-Shabaab women. Al-Shabaab men have different roles to fulfill and Al-Shabaab women have other important roles to carry out.[584]

According to this interview participant men have one distinct job (fighting the enemy) whereas women fulfill several jobs in Al-Shabaab. While men also fulfill other roles, their purpose in Al-

[582] Interview with female tailor, Respondent 14, March 10, 2018.
[583] Interview with Female interview participant, W12.
[584] Interview with female small business owner, Respondent 4.

Shabaab was framed in this narrow way of fighting the enemy. Women's roles, in contrast, fulfill many strategic, tactical, and logistical needs of the group as described in the above quote. At the same time as women are fulfilling the strategic, tactical, and logistical needs of the group, they are also performing and embodying the ideology of Al-Shabaab. The pattern of women fulfilling so many crucial roles at once related to strategy, tactics, and logistics, and embodying ideology, is consistent with the gendered division of labor in the LRA and highlights the reason Al-Shabaab and the LRA valued female members.

Al-Shabaab valued women in roles that are crucial to the group's operations, but notably do not frequently use women in public combat roles. This is part of the process of differentiating women's roles in the group from men. There are a few cases (approximately ten)[585] in which Al-Shabaab has used women as suicide bombers. When asked about women's support of Al-Shabaab only two interview participants noted that women were suicide bombers inside the group.[586]

I created table 4 highlighting roles and tasks that are specifically mentioned as being fulfilled by women. Based on what I learned about these roles from interview data the last column is my assessment of whether the role was only fulfilled by women and whether women or men were seen as excelling at that role. I added the "women superior" note to roles that men and women could fulfill, but that interview participants discussed women as being especially skilled at.

TABLE 4: GENDERED DIVISION OF LABOR IN AL-SHABAAB IN KISMAYO

Female Role	Detail	Classification	Who did task? (1) Women only (2) Women superior

[585] Warner and Chapin, "Targeted Terror: The Suicide Bombers of Al-Shabaab," 22–24.
[586] Interview with female small business owner, W18; Interview with female peace activist, W20.

			(3) Women and men
Cooking for members		Member	Women only
Cleaning for members		Member	Women only
Teachers for young women at madrassas	Described as a leadership role for women inside Al-Shabaab	Member or employee	Women only
Raising children of members	Educating these children in Al-Shabaab ideology	Member	Women only
Donating money or jewelry	This includes donations from businesswomen which Al-Shabaab relied heavily on	Member, employee, or supporter	Women and men *Women superior
Fundraising		Member or employee	Women and men *Women superior
Recruiting women as members or supporters	This often was described in terms of brainwashing or indoctrinating women, but also could be temporarily mobilizing women to support Al-Shabaab	Member or employee	Women and men *Women superior
Hiding members and their families		Supporter	Women and men *Women superior (less likely to cause suspicion)
Intelligence	Gathering information from the population, gathering information on government or military forces, assessing who was a true supporter of Al-Shabaab	Member	Women and men *Women superior (seen as more trustworthy and less suspicious in Somalia)
Purchasing and transporting goods	Including food, medicine, weapons from areas outside of Al-Shabaab control to Al-Shabaab controlled areas	Member or employee	Women and men *Women superior

Public relations	"Selling a good image of Al-Shabaab to the public"	Member or employee	Women and men *Women superior
Using violence against other women	"It is women who flog/cane other women"[587] and hold women down for men to use violence against them (several interview participants said it was women who held a woman down to be stoned in Kismayo)	Member	Women and men *Women superior (while men may have used violence against other women in Al-Shabaab only spaces like jails, at public events women would be the ones using violence against other women)
"Matchmaker" arranging Al-Shabaab marriages		Member or employee	Women and men *Women superior and did more than men, but men assisted in helping foreign fighters find wives.
Recruiting male family members	Men mostly recruited other men, but women could recruit men and women	Member, employee, or supporter	Women and men
Healthcare to members	Medical support for injured members, but also more routine support like being midwives to Al-Shabaab wives	Member or employee	Women and men (depending on the task)
Military roles	Rare for women, discussed by few interview participants in Kismayo, but discussed by those outside Kismayo and female fighters are featured in Al-Shabaab propaganda	Member	Women and men
Facilitating suicide bombings		Member	Women and men
Being a suicide bomber	There are 10 cases of female suicide	Member	Women and men

[587] Interview with female peace activist, W5.

	bombers for Al-Shabaab[588]		
Facilitating assassinations of government officials or other perceived enemies		Member	Women and men
Give lectures about ideology		Member or supporter	Women and men

Table 4 demonstrates that there were certain roles that were feminized inside the group most of which mirror roles that are feminized outside of Al-Shabaab. However, there are some roles that women were seen as superior at that were not roles they traditionally fulfilled outside of Al-Shabaab such as the use of violence against women or the matchmaker role. I describe the roles women were seen as superior at in detail below. The roles for women inside Al-Shabaab highlight the ways in which Al-Shabaab harnessed women's labor towards the group's goals while also staying consistent with the ideology of social control. For example, female roles of arranging marriages or ensuring that women were the only ones in close contact with women (even in the use of violence) was consistent with Islamic ideas limiting interaction between unmarried men and women.

Female Members of Al-Shabaab

When asked if women worked with Al-Shabaab many interview participants responded with a resounding "yes" and conveyed the sentiment that this was something obvious. Interview participants discussed not only the fact that Al-Shabaab had female members, but how important women were to the group. A selection of quotes from the interviews about women in Al-Shabaab illustrates this sentiment:

[588] Warner and Chapin, "Targeted Terror: The Suicide Bombers of Al-Shabaab," 22–24.

- "Women were the most important supporters of Al-Shabaab."[589]
- "Al-Shabaab rely on women."[590]
- "The biggest support and weapon Al-Shabaab has is women."[591]
- "Women were the backbone of Al-Shabaab."[592]
- "Al-Shabaab could not function without the support of women."[593]
- "Women's support for Al-Shabaab was huge…they supported Al-Shabaab so much."[594]
- "Women are powerful agents who are needed everywhere and in every activity."[595]

Many interview participants stressed that women were better at certain roles and more reliable supporters of Al-Shabaab than men. In particular, women were cited as being more loyal to Al-Shabaab than men, better able to gather information and serve as spies, better able to keep secrets, and more adept at fundraising. I included a sample of statements by multiple interview participants.

- "Unlike men, women are loyal and give all of their support."[596]
- "Women can do better than men because they are more loyal, more committed to the cause, can mobilize and recruit more women than men and fundraise more money than men."[597]

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[589] Interview with female peace activist and soldier, W1.
[590] Interview with female business person, W11.
[591] Interview with female small business owner, W18.
[592] Interview with female small business owner, Respondent 1.
[593] Interview with female former business person, Respondent 5, March 5, 2018.
[594] Interview with Kismayo male pharmacist Somalia, D, October 11, 2017.
[595] Interview with female peace activist, W5.
[596] Interview with female peace activist and soldier, W1.
[597] Interview with female peace activist, W5.

- In response to the question, "Was there anything that women could do for Al-Shabaab and men could not?" one interview participant replied, "Yes economic contribution. Women did much better than men…They give money and everything they can to support Al-Shabaab. They will not even listen to their husbands."[598]
- "Unlike men, women are more loyal and good at fulfilling their assigned roles. Women are good at inciting other women to support Al-Shabaab. They are committed to the cause."[599]

These quotes demonstrate than women weren't seen as simply being a part of Al-Shabaab to serve as wives, but instead were seen as vital to the group's functions.

Marriage is essential to understanding how Al-Shabaab organized its female members. Women's status in Al-Shabaab in Kismayo was based on the status of their Al-Shabaab husbands and therefore marriage created a hierarchical way to organize women. I highlight a similar pattern in the LRA in which the most powerful women in the group were the ones married to the top male commanders. The women in Al-Shabaab who were seen to have power inside the group were those married to higher ranking male Al-Shabaab members. If a female Al-Shabaab member's husband was killed or decided to divorce her, she would lose any status, unless she was remarried to another high-ranking male inside the group. This is a significant way in which marriage is used to differentiate women's roles inside the group from men. While men are encouraged to take wives, their power and status is not based upon their wives' roles in the group. Using forced marriage to organize women inside Al-Shabaab and limit their roles also

[598] This quote is especially interesting because of women as seeming to resist their husbands (who were not members of Al-Shabaab) and support Al-Shabaab. Interview with male clan elder, H.
[599] Interview with Female cleaner from minority clan, W6, September 25, 2017.

reflects the ideology of social control and promotion of a patriarchal society in which women's power is dependent on their male relatives.

One of the main areas in which women were seen as important to Al-Shabaab is related to their monetary contributions. Within Somalia, women are known for their business acumen.[600] Because of decades of conflict there are many households where women are the primary breadwinners.[601] While Al-Shabaab had a unique relationship with businesswomen, it was not only businesswomen who provided financial support to Al-Shabaab. Women donated their own jewelry and money to Al-Shabaab and convinced other women to donate to Al-Shabaab. Women may have had access to these resources as part of their *meher* (bridewealth payment) or from their small business activities.

Finance is key to a rebel group like Al-Shabaab that wants to rule, and women are especially valuable to Al-Shabaab because of their skills at fundraising for the group. Part of the reason Kismayo was such an attractive area for Al-Shabaab to rule was because of its location as a port city to bring in income and because of its taxable population.[602] When outsiders view combatants as the most essential members of a rebel group they misunderstand the value of roles related to finances which distorts the value women provide to Al-Shabaab in particular. In examining Al-Shabaab's behavior, it becomes clear how essential financing is and how important women were to generating the finances to keep Al-Shabaab operating. Al-Shabaab understands the benefit of working with skilled Somali businesswomen and used them for their

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[600] See e.g., Amina Mohamoud Warsame, "Crisis or Opportunity? Somali Women Traders and the War," in *Somalia - The Untold Story: The War Through the Eyes of Somali Women*, ed. Judith Gardner and Judy El Bushra (London: Pluto Press, 2004).
[601] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees estimated that 90 percent of Somali's workforce was female in 1998 as cited in Mazurana, "Women, Girls, and Non-State Opposition Groups," 164.
[602] Hansen, *Al-Shabaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group 2005-2012*, 67.

operations. Finance is an area in which women were poised as uniquely capable in supporting Al-Shabaab.

Spying and intelligence were other key roles women played in Al-Shabaab and areas in which Al-Shabaab manipulated local gender roles. There were multiple types of intelligence women gathered for Al-Shabaab. One form of intelligence women gathered in Kismayo was to report back to Al-Shabaab on members of the population who were against their rule. One male interview participant described this form of intelligence gathering:

> If they suspect you are not happy with them, then a lady with a recorder will come to you and start having conversation with you. You might know her or used to see her previously. Then she will start complaining about the situation of the town and the Al-Shabaab treatment of the people. If you are not aware of the trap, you will also support her, complain, and start saying more. At night a group of Al-Shabaab will come to you and take you somewhere. They will beat you and threaten you and when you say what is going on, they will make you listen to the recording. Women do this to other women while men do it to other men.[603]

Another interview participant noted that women were very good spies and spoke about people being afraid of women they thought were spies. He repeated that his neighbors became spies and that they had a huge network of spies.[604] This was part of Al-Shabaab's social engineering of relationships in Kismayo. Al-Shabaab controlled relationships between women and men, neighbors, friends, and families to ensure they did not threaten Al-Shabaab's authority. The relationship between men and women was also a part of the ideology of social control that wanted to limit relationships between men and women who were not married and not related. Therefore, the creation of suspicion and distrust within male and female relationships benefitted the group both strategically and ideologically.

[603] Interview with male clan elder, H.
[604] Interview with Male interview participant, J.

Al-Shabaab also used women to gain information on local government officials, Somali military members, and international troops.[605] In areas where AMISOM (African Union Mission in Somalia) camps are located, one key informant said that Al-Shabaab had members pose as "tea ladies" to gain intelligence on AMISOM forces. He noted, "tea ladies were not really tea ladies" implying that they were instead female members of Al-Shabaab.[606] Al-Shabaab is also believed to have encouraged sex workers to get into AMISOM camps to gain intelligence on AMISOM forces.[607] One interview participant described this type of intelligence gathering:

> [Women] did surveillance for them, they go out and collect information and monitor and assess the current situation in the city and report to them. They would collect valuable information such as how many government troops are there, kind of weapons they had and so on. Women have comparative advantage, they are not searched, and they collect detailed information.[608]

Women made useful surveillance officers for Al-Shabaab. As mentioned in the above quote, women were not suspected of working with Al-Shabaab because of their gender. In this way Al-Shabaab was playing upon existing ideas about women in Somali society. Despite women's participation in previous conflicts in Kismayo, there was still the perception that women could not engage in conflict. The LPI report quotes interview participants who describe these sentiments: "They [women] cannot get involved in a conflict because mothers are very sensitive," and "Because women are softer, most of the time they don't have the strength to do these things."[609] Another reason women were useful at intelligence gathering roles was because of perceptions that women were trustworthy and could keep secrets.[610]

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[605] For information on Al-Shabaab's use of female spies in Kenya see, Katharine Petrich and Phoebe Donnelly, "Worth Many Sins: Al-Shabaab's Shifting Relationships with Women."
[606] Interview with Consultant and researcher, 173, March 22, 2017.
[607] Interview with Consultant and researcher.
[608] Interview with Female interview participant, W12.
[609] Life & Peace Institute, Peace Direct, and Somali Women Solidarity Organization, "Learning from Kismayo: A Study Report," 53.
[610] Interview with female traditional birth attendant, W13.Interview with female peace activist, W20.

Women were key for recruiting both women and men into Al-Shabaab. Several interview participants noted women were skilled at "brainwashing"[611] other women. One interview participant explained, "Women recruiting women was common. Women are soft and if they talk sweetly, they may change [the mind of a woman], particularly young girls whose age was around thirteen and fourteen."[612] This is another illustration of the ways in which local perceptions of women and femininity made women particularly adept at certain roles in Al-Shabaab. Women served as matchmakers in convincing young women to marry members of Al-Shabaab. Women also supported Al-Shabaab by encouraging their sons and brothers to join the group. This could be women who were members of the group, employees, or part-time members.

Al-Shabaab relied on women to fulfill traditional domestic roles. This included cooking, baking, and cleaning for Al-Shabaab members. Several interview participants referred to this as "free labor" that Al-Shabaab relied on. The use of this terminology reflected individuals in Kismayo (this term was used by female interview participants) frustration with Al-Shabaab's economic exploitation of women. Marriage was a way for Al-Shabaab to justify this free labor.

Finally, women's role as mothers was briefly discussed by interview participants who specifically noted that women fulfilled the task of taking care of children inside the group. Women not only took care of children, but also had a role to have children and reproduce the future society Al-Shabaab would rule. In the LRA, this role of reproducers of a society will be even more important since the LRA is trying to create a *new* Acholi. However, in Al-Shabaab children were seen as important as future members of the group and promoters of Al-Shabaab's ideology.[613] One interview participant explained, "I am sure adult Al-Shabaab groom young

[611] This was the term used by interview participants in Kismayo.
[612] Interview with Male interview participant, I.
[613] For more information on children in Al-Shabaab see, Donnelly, "Children Born into Al-Shabaab."

ones, indoctrinate, brainwash, and instill propaganda in their heads."[614] Another interview participant noted that the forced marriage system was beneficial because, "Al-Shabaab wanted to increase the number of families and children who are Al-Shabaab…they wanted to make everyone Al-Shabaab."[615]

Al-Shabaab leadership in Kismayo understood the value of women and went to great efforts to gain women's support and to convince women of the value of Al-Shabaab's ideology. Interview participants used the word indoctrination to describe this process. It's notable that Al-Shabaab sought to convince women to work with them because they easily could have compelled women's support through violence as they often did to gain obedience from the population in Kismayo. If the convincing did not work, Al-Shabaab would often follow-up with force, but the initial desire to gain women's voluntary support is noteworthy. Al-Shabaab recognized the power of women in Kismayo and wanted women to support Al-Shabaab and work towards the group's goals.

Al-Shabaab targeted certain types of women – young and/or lacking religious knowledge – as members and employees because they could more easily convince them of their cause.[616] One interview participant explained, "Al-Shabaab preferred to work with women (old and young) who did not know much of our religion. Such women, Al-Shabaab could easily indoctrinate and brainwash."[617] If a woman did not know much about the religion, Al-Shabaab may have had an easier time presenting its own interpretation of Islam, as the "correct" or "true" interpretation.

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[614] Interview with female small business owner, Respondent 6, March 5, 2018.
[615] Interview with female small business owner and trader, Respondent 17.
[616] Interview with female activist and musician from minority clan, W19.
[617] Interview with female former business person, Respondent 5.

Al-Shabaab's interest in indoctrinating female supporters and members is part of the reason why they valued teachers (as explained below) because teachers would indoctrinate young women. Female Al-Shabaab members and employees would mostly indoctrinate women, but they were also able to influence some men (especially family members or spouses). Additionally, Al-Shabaab would indoctrinate women at their jails. I describe in chapter 7 the sexual violence that was said to have occurred at jails as well, but jails represent an important location for female engagement with Al-Shabaab. There are a few reasons why jails might have been a place that Al-Shabaab indoctrinated women. The first reason is that the women who were in jails were seen as disobeying Al-Shabaab and were not acting in line with Al-Shabaab's ideals of femininity. Forced marriage could have been a way to punish these women and ensure their behavior was in line with how Al-Shabaab thought women should behave. Jails were also a location where Al-Shabaab could exert complete control over the population outside of the public eye. Finally, Al-Shabaab may have seen the women who were in jails as rebelling against Al-Shabaab and as a threat to the group. Therefore, Al-Shabaab leadership wanted these women on their side instead of allowing them to work against the group.

Al-Shabaab held lectures or events with the aim of indoctrinating young women. "Al-Shabaab did all they could to win women to their side," explained one interview participant.[618] Another interview participant detailed their efforts, "They made places to teach women their ideas and agenda, in which they thought to create the type of women they wanted. I think they correctly understood that women are very important if they want to create sustainable control in the town."[619] This idea of creating the ideal type of women they wanted is an illustration of the

[618] Interview with male pharmacist, D.
[619] Interview with male farmer, B.

ideology of social control. Al-Shabaab did not just want women's labor but wanted to use women to demonstrate the ideal gender roles in Al-Shabaab's desired future society.

As part of the indoctrination process of women, Al-Shabaab told women they valued them. Al-Shabaab told women in Kismayo, "You are our asset, we need you to fight against the infidels."[620] A perspective that only values individuals who fulfill combat roles cannot explain why Al-Shabaab would need women and would value female support. Instead, the value of women and girls inside Al-Shabaab stems from the skills and competencies women have and the ways in which women helped Al-Shabaab promote their ideology of social control.

Al-Shabaab's interest in indoctrinating women is revealing for several reasons. First, Al-Shabaab's focus on gaining women's support, demonstrates that it is too simplistic to assume that because Al-Shabaab describes itself as a conservative Islamic group, and restrict women's movement and activities, that they do not recognize the benefit of having women as members. This oversight is an example of the problems with only viewing ideologies broadly through lenses like Islamic or conservative because it can lead one to miss behaviors that contradict aspects of those ideologies. Second, Al-Shabaab's focus on indoctrinating women is indicative of the group's fear of women. Al-Shabaab rightly understood the power women held in Kismayo and thought that if they did not gain women's support, then women would turn against them and could convince other members of the population to turn against them.

Al-Shabaab Employees Overview

The different levels of women's involvement with Al-Shabaab: member, employee, or supporter, is a useful classification system because Al-Shabaab targeted different women for these different roles and had different expectations for these women. Members had to be married

[620] Interview with female activist and musician from minority clan, W19.

to other Al-Shabaab members, but employees or supporters did not have to be married inside Al-Shabaab. Al-Shabaab could control members through marriage but did not have the same level of control over employees and supporters. It is possible that Al-Shabaab wanted to have certain women as employees and supporters because it provided a way for them to monitor and control their behavior without having them marry into the group. The women that Al-Shabaab targeted as employees were the women the group most wanted to control because they were women seen as independent and resistant to Al-Shabaab control for example businesswomen as detailed below. However, while Al-Shabaab wanted to control these women they were not seen as eligible wives because they did not fit within Al-Shabaab's ideal model of femininity.

The language interview participants use to describe the type of women Al-Shabaab wanted to work with demonstrates the ways in which Al-Shabaab part-time employees contrasted with Al-Shabaab's ideal femininity. The women Al-Shabaab worked with were described as: "women who are charismatic and strong in character"[621] "productive, mature, and hardworking"[622] "educated women"[623] "active women in the community"[624] "loyal and brave."[625] The type of femininity Al-Shabaab promoted in Kismayo is reflected in their rules for women including not letting women engage in business activities, associate with men who were not their relatives, or dress how they wanted. This type of femininity portrays women as dependent and passive, contrasting with the active, brave, strong women described as the type of woman Al-Shabaab wanted to work with. Al-Shabaab part-time employees were not ideal wives for members of Al-Shabaab and were often older than the woman they sought to marry. Instead

[621] Interview with female small business owner, Respondent 4.
[622] Interview with female youth activist, Respondent 9, March 6, 2018.
[623] Interview with female activist, Respondent 10. Interview with female tailor, Respondent 14.
[624] Interview with female tailor, Respondent 14.
[625] Interview with female university nursing student, Respondent 3, March 4, 2018.

of marrying these women, Al-Shabaab worked with them in a part-time role where they could still control and exploit their skills and strengths. These descriptors of "active women" or "strong in character" would likely also fit some of the women Al-Shabaab arrested in their jails who they were trying to indoctrinate to work for Al-Shabaab instead of rebelling against the group's rules.

Al-Shabaab had a unique relationship with businesswomen because while the group publicly banned women from operating businesses in Kismayo, they sought to benefit from businesswomen's financial gains. This is an example of a way in which Al-Shabaab manipulated its ideology for strategic benefit. Businesswomen were described as "money-making machines" for Al-Shabaab.[626] When eight interview participants were asked, "what kind of women did Al-Shabaab want to work with them?", they all said businesswomen. One interview participant described businesswomen as the "backbone" of Al-Shabaab. [627] Al-Shabaab's targeting of businesswomen as employees demonstrates the complex relationship between strategy and ideology. Despite banning women from operating businesses as part of their ideology confining women to the home, Al-Shabaab recognized the strategic value of businesswomen to the group. To reconcile this contradiction, it seemed that Al-Shabaab's rule to ban women from operating businesses applied to women who were not giving money or providing support to Al-Shabaab. One female businesswoman explained, "Some businesswomen supported Al-Shabaab. Other businesswomen were pressured to support Al-Shabaab and pay taxes. These women had no choice but to support them. There were no differences between businessmen and businesswomen. They paid the same taxation and zakats [to Al-Shabaab]."[628] In this way, money became somewhat of an equalizer between men and women. If a person had money, Al-Shabaab

[626] Interview with female small business owner, Respondent 1.
[627] Interview with female youth activist, W2.
[628] Interview with female small business owner, Respondent 13.

wanted to use and exploit them. The interview participant goes on to note the link between money and power in Al-Shabaab, "Al-Shabaab women get power inside Al-Shabaab when they give all of their resources to the cause."[629]

Businesswomen are a group of women Al-Shabaab wanted to control yet they were not seen as ideal wives for their members. One interview participant described the contradiction in the type of women Al-Shabaab targeted to work with:

> Al-Shabaab worked with two types of women: those who owned businesses and those who were young. Businesswomen were targeted by Al-Shabaab because of their money. They wanted this group of women because they want to secure their financial support. The businesswomen are mature women and have money, and because of this, they [businesswomen] could be taxed and fundraise for them. Unlike the mature women who owned businesses, young women were also targeted by Al-Shabaab because they were immature, not experienced as the older women / businesswomen, and they could be easily mobilized, intimidated, brainwashed and their loyalty could be secured.[630]

This quote illustrates the fact that Al-Shabaab recognized that businesswomen would be more skeptical of their cause and might not be convinced by Al-Shabaab's ideology. In this way, businesswomen were also not ideal wives to bring into the group, in contrast to young women who they thought would more readily accept their ideology. Al-Shabaab's differentiation between members and employees was useful in differentiating the type of women that Al-Shabaab could bring into the group and control through marriage.

Female teachers were another important employee for Al-Shabaab and they worked in Al-Shabaab run madrassas (religious schools). Al-Shabaab targeted religious women or women who had previously been Koranic school teachers to be teachers for them.[631] Teachers served many roles for Al-Shabaab – they helped arrange marriages, collected taxes and donations from

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[629] Interview with female small business owner.
[630] Interview with female small business owner, Respondent 1.
[631] Interview with female peace activist and soldier, W1.

girls at their schools, and indoctrinated girls to believe Al-Shabaab's ideology. Teachers at Al-Shabaab schools played an important role in the group's marriage system as they would gather information on young women including their marital status so that Al-Shabaab members could decide if they wanted to approach them for marriage. In addition, to helping gathering information on girls for Al-Shabaab marriages they also taught girls about what to expect as a woman in an Al-Shabaab marriage. For example, one interview participant said at Al-Shabaab schools, female teachers convince young women not to demand material support or dowry from their Al-Shabaab husbands and taught them that, "In this world, one does not need material stuff and one has to strive for the next life."[632] This illustrates the importance of marriage to a women's role inside Al-Shabaab. Female teachers also taught young women and girls about Al-Shabaab's view of Islam and interview participants described this process as "brainwashing" and "indoctrinating." They wanted young women and girls to want to join the group and marry members of Al-Shabaab.

AL-SHABAAB AND WOMEN OUTSIDE SOMALIA

Kenya

In this section I discuss the views of women and Al-Shabaab from interview participants in Kenya who have a different perspective on women's roles and relationships with the group than individuals in Kismayo who lived under their rule. These interview participants had unique perspectives on women who were recruited from inside Kenya to work with Al-Shabaab in Somalia, as well as on the roles of women working with Al-Shabaab inside Kenya. Al-Shabaab limited and delineated women's leadership roles inside the group through marriage and motherhood. Interview participants in Kenya reflected this image and often were confused about

[632] Interview with female peace activist and soldier.

women's role in the group because while they saw them as likely assets of Al-Shabaab, they also noted they were confined to the "private sphere." This confusion has strategic and ideological benefits for Al-Shabaab. The ideological benefit is that by giving the impression that women are mainly wives and mothers in the private sphere, Al-Shabaab does not anger conservative supporters outside Somalia. It has strategic benefits because the group can still benefit from women's labor and unique skills.

There were differing views about whether or how Al-Shabaab used women from inside Kenya. It is interesting to note the range of ideas about whether women were members of Al-Shabaab. The confusion whether Al-Shabaab had female members likely reflects interview participants predetermined ideas about Al-Shabaab as an Islamic conservative group. Even in Kismayo where the majority of interview participants recognized Al-Shabaab's reliance on women there was still debate about whether women were truly members or leaders within the group. We see this tension within interviews in Kenya with many people denying that women play a role in Al-Shabaab, while at the same time recognizing that the group has been trying to recruit women. One interview participant summarized this dynamic, "I have difficulty in general trying to categorize women because they are not in a formal activity like fighting – they are seen as dependents or spouses." Public confusion about whether women are members of Al-Shabaab could be intentionally fostered by group leadership. By portraying women in Al-Shabaab as only spouses or mothers, it leads outsiders to question the importance of women to the group (and not suspect them) and supports Al-Shabaab's ideology promoting men's rightful dominance and role as protector of women.

The idea of women's roles being primarily in the private sphere in Al-Shabaab was a theme throughout interviews in Kenya. This perspective is different from interview participants

in Somalia who recognized the important role women played in Al-Shabaab with some interview participants even describing a few women they saw as playing a leadership role in the group. One interview participant in Kenya explained: "It is unclear how women are involved in Al-Shabaab. Publicly they are not involved, but I'm sure there are Islamist women who are members – mainly to look after men, as wives of jihadists, social service roles...women are immigrating to Shabaab areas with kids. Women are not in public, they are reduced to private domain."[633] Women are also not seen as having leadership roles within Al-Shabaab. Women working with Al-Shabaab in Majengo were told explicitly not to be leaders and to follow orders from other people.[634]

Women were seen as key gatherers of intelligence for Al-Shabaab in Kenya. This created distrust in communities like Majengo where female Al-Shabaab spies operated. During my interviews in Majengo my informants showed intense fear and suspicion of being overheard talking about Al-Shabaab. The living quarters for residents in Majengo are connected and divided by thin metal walls or curtains. During one interview the interview participant said we should conduct the interview outside because "the walls have ears," meaning she did not want her neighbors to overhear her conversation. There was a sense that members of Al-Shabaab were everywhere listening and gathering information. Al-Shabaab female spies in Majengo were seen as being older women and/or widows.[635] I write with Katharine Petrich about Al-Shabaab's cooptation of prostitutes in certain neighborhoods in Kenya to gather intelligence.[636]

Women in Kenya transported weapons and goods from Kenya into Somalia. One interview participant explained that Al-Shabaab was "using women and donkeys to carry

[633] Interview with Somali activist, 186, January 11, 2017.
[634] Interview with Male Community Leader Majengo, 144, May 23, 2017.
[635] Interview with Male Former official at Riyadh Mosque, 154, May 13, 2018.
[636] Petrich and Donnelly, "Worth Many Sins: Al-Shabaab's Shifting Relationships with Women."

armor."[637] Women within Kenya initially were not suspected as working with Al-Shabaab. This reflects a transition that several interview participants mentioned Al-Shabaab having minimal roles for women in the beginning and later having women play more active roles in the group. One interview participant said that in beginning delivering weapons was done by men, but eventually security personnel knew men were doing this, so Al-Shabaab started using women for these jobs.[638] Women also fulfilled what are thought of as more traditionally feminine roles by supporting members of Al-Shabaab through domestic tasks inside Kenya. This included harboring Al-Shabaab members in their homes, cooking for Al-Shabaab members, and providing healthcare to members of Al-Shabaab.

Interview participants in Kenya frequently brought up recruitment by Al-Shabaab inside Kenya. Al-Shabaab's recruitment of women in Kenya is consistent with its expansion into Kenya and relationship or merger with the Al-Hijra group.[639] Additionally, recruiting women from Kenya may have been a sign of Al-Shabaab expanding its reach into populations in Kenya by forging connections with communities there through marriage. Similar to Kismayo, Al-Shabaab focused on trying to recruit women in Kenya through the auspices of religion. Indeed, Al-Shabaab narratives outside Somalia seem even more focused on religion. This pattern was especially salient in Majengo where Al-Shabaab is said to have recruited at mosques in the area. At a mosque in Majengo, there were women only *darsas*, or short talks, given by Al-Shabaab affiliates or supporters. One interview participant explained that at these talks women were told to, "Allow their kids to go to proper Madrassas and not let their husbands use drugs and not

[637] Interview with Male Religous leader formerly involved with Riyadh Mosque, 152, n.d.
[638] Interview with Kenya NGO Representative, 163, March 30, 2017.
[639] See "Al-Shabaab as a Transnational Security Threat" (IGAD Security Sector Program and Sahan Foundation, March 2016), 31–34, https://igadssp.org/index.php/documentation/4-igad-report-al-shabaab-as-a-transnational-security-threat/file for a discussion of how females who worked with Al-Hijra started to work with Al-Shabaab.

watch TV or listen to radio, and to read the Quran. Those short talks radicalized women. Some elderly women went to Somalia because of that and told their sons to go."[640] These talks targeted both older and younger women.

These religious talks effectively recruited some young women to work with Al-Shabaab. One interview participant spoke about how his sister attended those talks and was given "pocket friendly" books on Islam, specifically about "love and hate."[641] The interview participants said that his sister started acting differently after these talks. On her Facebook account under job description she wrote, "activities of Al-Shabab."[642] This young woman was also in a relationship with a young man who worked for the mosque and who the interview participant believed was recruiting for Al-Shabaab. His sister became pregnant and followed this man to Somalia. Ultimately, the sister came back and cut ties with Al-Shabaab. When I asked the interview participant why his sister was attracted to Al-Shabaab he said he thought it was because her friends were involved, and she thought that was "real Islam."[643] The idea of promoting Al-Shabaab's ideas as "real Islam" is part of a strategy of recruitment, but also a process of indoctrination in which Al-Shabaab sells its ideology and begins promoting its system of social control.

Another interview participant who had ties with a mosque that Al-Shabaab used for recruitment also spoke about these meetings for women. The mosque's leadership said the women's meetings were about "family issues" such as raising children, but he notes they were really about preparing women if they decide to go to Somalia.[644] This demonstrates the ways in

[640] Interview with Male Community Leader Majengo, 144.
[641] Interview with Male Community Leader Majengo.
[642] Interview with Male Community Leader Majengo.
[643] Interview with Male Community Leader Majengo.
[644] Interview with Male Former official at Riyadh Mosque, 154.

which Al-Shabaab's recruitment strategy was at the outset linked to discussions about a woman's status and obligation in her family. It also is an example of the way in which women's domestic roles within the home could be used as a cover for recruitment because the meetings that were about "family issues" eventually turned to discussion about women joining Al-Shabaab in Somalia.

The meetings at the mosque in Majengo were led by the wife of the mosque leader. This woman also did "matchmaking," linking women in Majengo with Al-Shabaab men in Somalia. She would send a photo of potential wives to the male Al-Shabaab members who would then say, "Send her over," if they liked the looks of the woman.[645] Similar to dynamics in Kismayo, women in Kenya were recruited as members of Al-Shabaab by first marrying them.

In addition to this wife of the mosque commander who engaged in recruitment of women many other interview participants spoke about female recruiters. One interview participant spoke about women's important role as leaders of their families and said they could indoctrinate their families.[646] Women in Kenya were seen as being able to convince not only other women to support, work with, or join Al-Shabaab, but also male family members.[647]

Women and Al-Shabaab in the U.S.

There is regional variation in the roles women play in Al-Shabaab. One key informant who interviewed women who were recruited by Al-Shabaab noted that Al-Shabaab uses women more actively (or perhaps publicly) outside Somalia.[648] This reflects Al-Shabaab's focus on both

[645] Interview with Male Former official at Riyadh Mosque.
[646] Interview with Researcher, 171, March 23, 2017.
[647] Interview with Researcher.
[648] Interview with Consultant and researcher, 173.

gender and nationality (or perceived nationality for diaspora women) to determine women's roles.[649]

A key resource for understanding women's roles in Al-Shabaab in the diaspora is the trial of Amina Ali and Hawo Hassan (*United States of America v. Amina Farah Ali and Hawo Mohamed Hassan)*, who were convicted of fundraising for Al-Shabaab. Both women are naturalized U.S. citizens from Somalia who were living in Rochester, Minnesota. Ali was 36 years old at the time of her sentencing in 2013 and Hawo Hasan was 66.[650] The documents from Ali's trial are particularly illuminating for understanding Al-Shabaab's relationship with women. In the trial the attorneys played pieces of recorded conversations between the defendants and members of Al-Shabaab. The trial material illustrates several important themes. The first is the distinct and important role of women inside Al-Shabaab. Ali and Hassan were fundraisers and led a network of other female fundraisers. Instead of the traditional view that sees this role as less important than that of combatant, the trial material illustrates how essential this role was to Al-Shabaab. Another finding from the trial transcripts is that Ali's role as an employee living in the U.S. gave her more freedom to act outside Al-Shabaab's norms of femininity. Ali got married, after she began working with Al-Shabaab, to a man who does not support the group. She sees her role in the group as more important than her marriage. Finally, the material from this trial highlights the importance of an intersectional analysis in which we do not view all women as having the same relationship with Al-Shabaab, but instead see the identity markers of gender, location and nationality as interacting.

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[649] See also, Katharine Petrich and Phoebe Donnelly, "Worth Many Sins: Al-Shabaab's Shifting Relationships with Women."

[650] Department of Justice, U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Minnesota, "More Terrorism Sentences Imposed In Federal Court," May 16, 2013, https://www.justice.gov/usao-mn/pr/more-terrorism-sentences-imposed-federal-court.

Amina Ali and Hawo Hassan ran a phone conference line in 2008-2009 where Somali women across the diaspora would call in for discussions and religious lectures. This phone conference line became a fundraising network for Al-Shabaab led by Ali. Some conference calls had approximately 140 women across the U.S. calling in.[651] Ali would coordinate the sending of money and clothes to Al-Shabaab leadership in Somalia. Ali also had phone calls with key leaders of Al-Shabaab that were played at the trial. It is clear from the phone calls that Ali was not behaving as a passive member of Al-Shabaab in a support role, but instead was asserting herself in Al-Shabaab's operations. The government attorney's prosecuting Ali described her as "incredibly highly-placed person within this organizational structure that raised money for Al-Shabaab outside of Somalia."[652] The phone recordings played in the court case reinforce this assertion.

One phone call played in trial equates women's roles with men's roles in Al-Shabaab. Ali said:

> The person who provides supplies, the person who is going to jihad and the one who takes care of his children is like someone who went to jihad. So, dear sisters, let us help the Mujahid. Let us stand up for giving the Mujahid something. Let us…feed the Mujahid. Let us stand up and take care of their wounds. Let us stand up for the Mujahid.[653]

This quote illustrates Ali's vision of her role in Al-Shabaab as no less meaningful than male roles. She also says that people would describe her as a woman who "belongs to the youth" which a translator at the trial confirmed meant "belonging to Al-Shabaab." Other members of Al-Shabaab also see Ali as holding a powerful role in the Al-Shabaab network. Afgoye, one of

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[651] United States of America v. Amina Farah Ali and Hawo Mohamed Hassan, File No. CR-10-187 (MJD/FLN). United States District Court District of Minnesota, October 7, 2011, Document 286.
[652] United States of America v. Amina Farah Ali and Hawo Mohamed Hassan, File No. CR-10-187 (MJD/FLN). United States District Court District of Minnesota, October 7, 2011, Document 251, p. 100.
[653] United States of America v. Amina Farah Ali and Hawo Mohamed Hassan, Document 251, p. 87.

the leaders of Al-Shabaab at the time, has phone calls with Ali in which he gives her "battle reports" on who was killed and what weapons were seized.[654] Ali also brags about her own standing to Afgoye when on one of the calls she says that Abu Mansur (the spokesperson for Al-Shabaab at the time) does not normally answer the phone, but does when she calls.[655] We see the power Ali had within Al-Shabaab when she initially refuses to allow one of the leaders of the Islamic Courts Union (a precursor to Al-Shabaab), Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys, to speak on one of her calls because he would not speak about the topics she requested. Eventually Aweys does give a lecture on the line likely because he agreed to cover the topics Ali requested.[656] This interaction between Ali and Aweys illustrates the power Ali had over some male leaders of Al-Shabaab.

The way in which Ali is described in the trial (by her own attorney) and the ways in which she behaves in the courtroom are an interesting contrast to the image of a passive woman in line with the femininity Al-Shabaab valued. It is clear from reading the trial transcript describing Ali's behaviors and words in trial that she is outspoken, independent, and opinionated. The start of Ali's trial is delayed because she refuses to rise when the judge enters the courtroom, as required of all individuals in the courtroom. She seems to have an argument with the judge about this.[657] Later in the trial, after her guilty sentence is read Ali tells the jury they are going to hell.[658] Ali's attorney tries to defend her by portraying her as a housewife but struggles with the way in which a passive housewife contrasts with Ali's words and behaviors. Her attorney states,

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[654] United States of America v. Amina Farah Ali and Hawo Mohamed Hassan, File No. CR-10-187 (MJD/FLN). United States District Court District of Minnesota, October 12, 2011, Document 288.
[655] United States of America v. Amina Farah Ali and Hawo Mohamed Hassan, Document 288.
[656] United States of America v. Amina Farah Ali and Hawo Mohamed Hassan, File No. CR-10-187 (MJD/FLN). United States District Court District of Minnesota, October 11, 2011, Document 287.
[657] United States of America v. Amina Farah Ali and Hawo Mohamed Hassan, File No. CR-10-187 (MJD/FLN). United States District Court District of Minnesota, October 3, 2011, Document 171.
[658] United States of America v. Amina Farah Ali and Hawo Mohamed Hassan, File No. CR-10-187 (MJD/FLN). United States District Court District of Minnesota, October 20, 2011, Document 293.

"We have a housewife. She has five- and six-year-old children. Her world now is, you know, within five miles of downtown Rochester, her whole world…"[659] He later tries another tactic in describing her behavior. "She's not Florence Nightingale. She's too hard to get along with, anyway, to be Florence Nightingale. I said she backed the wrong horse."[660] Ali's attorney tries to limit her role by using feminine ideas about being a housewife, mother, and caretaker, despite acknowledging that Ali doesn't fit the model of a passive quiet woman.

Ali does not allow her role as a wife to limit her freedom to engage with Al-Shabaab. Afgoye discusses Ali's relationship with her husband on one phone call with her. Ali's husband was not involved in her work with Al-Shabaab. She tells Afgoye that her family told her to avoid getting arrested and causing problems with her husband. Afgoye responds that it would be bad if her work for Al-Shabaab put a wedge between her and her husband and created problems in her family.[661] Despite the benefit Al-Shabaab is gaining from Ali's fundraising they still prioritized her status us as a wife. She replies, "With regard to us…if he so wishes, he will stay with me with the way things are and if he wishes [to leave me] – I don't care. You see, I was involved in this matter before we met and no one can force me to get out of this cause…" [662]Ali's discussion about her marriage illustrates the ways in which marriage, outside Al-Shabaab's central area of operations in Somalia, was not used to limit or control women's involvement in the group. However, Ali's role is delineated not only through her identity as a woman, but also through her identity as an American. Al-Shabaab was less concerned with controlling Ali likely because she

[659] United States of America v. Amina Farah Ali and Hawo Mohamed Hassan, File No. CR-10-187 (MJD/FLN). United States District Court District of Minnesota, October 7, 2011, Document 251.
[660] United States of America v. Amina Farah Ali and Hawo Mohamed Hassan, File No. CR-10-187 (MJD/FLN). United States District Court District of Minnesota, October 7, 2011, Document 251.
[661] United States of America v. Amina Farah Ali and Hawo Mohamed Hassan, File No. CR-10-187 (MJD/FLN). United States District Court District of Minnesota, October 12, 2011, Document 288.
[662] United States of America v. Amina Farah Ali and Hawo Mohamed Hassan, Document 288.

was not a part of the constituency Al-Shabaab was trying to rule because while she was Somali she was a U.S. citizen living in the U.S.

Al-Shabaab and Non-Somali Women

There is a British woman, Samantha Lewthwaite, believed to be a member of Al-Shabaab who has received significant attention from media sources. The case of Samantha Lewthwaite emphasizes the importance of an intersectional analysis, as argued by Auer et al., because the intersection of her race, religion, nationality, and class, produce a specific narrative.[663] Lewthwaite is a white British woman who converted to Islam when she was seventeen years old and living in Britain.[664] She met her husband, Jermaine Lindsay, in an internet chatroom, and they married in 2002.[665] Three years later Lindsay was a suicide bomber in the 7/7 attacks in London. This led to Lewthwaite's nickname, "white widow," referring to her race and marital status. Reports note that Lewthwaite was involved in other radical Islamist groups and had a relationship with Abdullah el-Faisal a preacher known for recruiting individuals into violent organizations.[666] Importantly for this dissertation, Abdullah el-Faisal is said to have arranged Lewthwaite's second marriage.[667] It is hard to discern what role Lewthwaite actually plays in Al-Shabaab but she was widely rumored to be part of the Westgate attacks in Nairobi, Kenya in 2013.[668]

Lewthwaite is an important figure in this analysis for several reasons. First, she emphasizes the importance of analyzing gender, alongside race and nationality. It is unclear who

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[663] Meagan Auer, John Sutcliffe, and Martha Lee, "Framing the 'White Widow': Using Intersectionality to Uncover Complex Representations of Female Terrorism in News Media," *Media, War & Conflict* 00 (2018): 1-18, 3.
[664] Auer, Sutcliffe, and Lee, 11.
[665] Auer, Sutcliffe, and Lee, 11.
[666] Adam Goldman and Scott Shane, "A Long-Pursued ISIS Preacher Is Finally Charged in New York," *The New York Times*, December 22, 2017, sec. U.S., https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/01/us/abdullah-faisal-al-qaeda.html.
[667] Auer, Sutcliffe, and Lee, "Framing the 'White Widow': Using Intersectionality to Uncover Complex Representations of Female Terrorism in News Media," 13.
[668] Auer, Sutcliffe, and Lee, 2.

termed Lewthwaite's nickname the "white widow," but it is significant that her role in Al-Shabaab is immediately understood through her race and marital status. This nickname immediately limits her role as a leader and instead positions her primarily in the private domain as a widow. Lewthwaite's role was further mediated through the role of marriage if it is true that a well-known recruiter arranged her second marriage as part of her participation in Al-Shabaab. It was seen as important for Lewthwaite to be married if she was going to continue to be active in Al-Shabaab. However, Lewthwaite might be able to play more of a leadership role and even a combat role (if the stories of her participation in Westgate are true) because she is not a Somali citizen and not operating inside Somalia. Similar to Ali and Hassan, Lewthwaite is not part of Al-Shabaab's constituency that they are trying to govern and therefore gender norms are more flexible. Foreign women that do not conform to mainstream traditional understandings of femininity in a specific country, from journalists to military members, have been referred to as a "third gender."[669] This is because they are not seen as women based on the ways in which they digress from standards of femininity, but they are also not viewed as having the same authority as men. This frame may also apply to foreign women in rebel groups and because of their "third gender" status they may be given more power and ability to transgress traditional norms of femininity than local woman.

LORD'S RESISTANCE ARMY

Overview

Women and girl's roles in the LRA provide a useful illustration of the ways in which rebel groups use forced marriage to exploit women's labor and the way in which women's roles

[669] See e.g., Ilene Prusher, "Sexual Attacks on Journalists: Why Foreign Women Are Seen as Fair Game," *The Christian Science Monitor;* Boston, Mass., March 29, 2011. Matt Pottinger, Hali Jilani, and Claire Russo, "Half-Hearted: Trying to Win Afghanistan without Afghan Women," *Small Wars Journal,* 2010: 10.

in the LRA were essential to its ideology of social control. Inside the LRA, women's roles as wives/mothers and roles in combat were not compatible. Initially, the LRA used women primarily in combat roles, but once the LRA formed bases in South Sudan and began their forced marriage system, women stopped being as active in combat roles. Additionally, when young women/girls first joined the group they could be required to participate in combat, but once they were married and had children they were no longer required to be in combat.

A woman's role as a wife and mother was seen above her other roles inside the group. This privileging of the wife role over any other role is significant especially for a group like the LRA that lacked popular support and was required to abduct children for membership. One would think that the LRA would require its members to fulfill whatever role was most needed, but women's roles as wives and mothers were valued above other roles. This is because of the ideology of social control in which the LRA needed women to produce children as part of the new Acholi and to fulfill the role of idealized femininity as a mother and wife subservient to male group members.

In addition to women's roles as wives and mothers, women and girls, were required to multi-task and performed many functions for the group outside of combat. This is similar to the multi-tasking role of women inside Al-Shabaab. In the LRA, just like in Al-Shabaab, the group relied on women for strategic, tactical, logistical, and ideological reasons.

Women's Roles in Conflict in Uganda

I briefly provide an overview of women's past roles in conflicts in Uganda to provide context to the analysis of women's roles inside the LRA. Women have not had a substantial role in the national military in Uganda.[670] However, in past internal conflicts women have played a

[670] Tripp, 68.

role in fighting forces. According to Aili Mari Tripp, women had important roles within the National Resistance Army (NRA), the armed group under Museveni's control that ultimately helped him take over the government. Tripp notes that within the NRA women were made commanders and held command positions over men.[671] This is an interesting dynamic when considering that the LRA saw the NRA as a threat to their masculinity specifically related to their use of sexual violence against men.[672]

In contrast, to the dynamic of the NRA with women having served in combat roles, I could not find information about a history of women's involved in combat in the north. This fits with the perception in Acholi culture that providing physical protection is a key role for men.[673] Female members of the LRA struggled to see themselves in fighting roles. Evelyn Amony (a wife of Joseph Kony abducted at age 11) writes in her memoir about her complex relationship with her gun. Grace Acan in her memoir described carrying a gun as a burden.[674] After spending time in the LRA, Evelyn writes, "I started realizing, 'Oh, the gun is also a good thing because it helps you.' That was the point I started calling the gun Margaret, my mum's name, because I felt that my gun was like my mum."[675] Because of her age and gender, Evelyn had not expected to have to serve in a fighting role.

Even inside the LRA where some women had guns and went into combat, there was still the perception that women were not *real* fighters. One interview participant explained, "We had rules, first you are not supposed to kill a woman. A woman, Kony said, should not be killed, because women are not fighters."[676] This rule does not reflect the LRA's practice in terms of the

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[671] Tripp, 53.
[672] Baines, *Buried in the Heart: Women, Complex Victimhood and the War in Northern Uganda*, 35–37.
[673] Dolan, "Collapsing Masculinities," 63.
[674] Acan, *Not Yet Sunset: A Story of Survival and Perseverance in LRA Captivity*, 64.
[675] Amony, *I Am Evelyn Amony*, 37.
[676] Interview with Former male member of the LRA, L13.

use of violence against females or the role that the women played in the LRA, but instead it is an example of the idealized women's role in the LRA. Women are not portrayed as fighters by LRA leadership to contrast with the proper role for men as protectors in Acholi society.

In Acholi society, men are defined based on how they differ from women.[677] Chris Dolan writes that Acholi men, "are supposed to be richer, stronger, more capable, knowledgeable and skilled, trustworthy, and able to work in solidarity with one another."[678] He notes that men are also supposed to differ from youth.[679] Being a man in Acholi culture in this way is a distinct category from other Acholi with a very specific set of characteristics and responsibilities. An essential part of this male status is being married, as detailed in chapter 5. Dolan notes, "It is not sufficient to be an economic provider; a man has to be a *married* provider."[680] It would therefore make sense that while males and females may occasionally perform similar tasks inside the LRA, the group would want to distinguish male and female roles, especially through marriage.

Scholars have highlighted the ways in which the LRA both disrupts and conforms to traditional gender roles. The central way in which gender roles are disrupted is by having women/girls in combat roles at different points. Dolan explains:

> Although there were women soldiers, and although there was no differentiation between men and women when it came to making them kill, or be killed, gender roles inside the LRA conformed closely to very stereotypical 'masculine' and 'feminine' ones held in northern Uganda more generally…Women were regarded as the property of men. Indeed, Kony's attempts to intervene in relations between men and women, an attempt to realise his commitment to establishing a purity he felt had been lost in modern-day Uganda, would have considerable resonance with Acholi traditionalists.[681]

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[677] Dolan, *Social Torture: The Case of Northern Uganda 1986-2006*, 194.
[678] Dolan, 194.
[679] Dolan, 194.
[680] Dolan, 196 emphasis added.
[681] Dolan, 93–94.

In this quote, Dolan highlights the ways in which marriage was a way to control women/girls and therefore reassert a traditional male dominance despite the fact that women/girls were sometimes called on to fight. Dolan also alludes to the ideology of social control when he discusses Kony's idea about purity and the need to intervene in male and female relationships. Just like in Al-Shabaab, women and girl's roles in the LRA are inseparable from the forced marriage system. In both groups women's roles would be in some way outside what was considered traditional or expected of women and marriage was a way to reassert control over them in line with the groups' ideologies.

Women's Roles in the LRA

The roles for women and girls that interview participants discussed the most frequently in the LRA included (also listed in table 5): wives/mothers; raiding/looting; carrying loads; carrying guns for commanders; babysitting; cooking; cleaning; farming and gardening; praying; and fighting (specifically defense roles when attacked). The many roles women filled in the LRA can be obscured when their roles are labeled only as a "wife" or a "mother." Notably, despite many men also being husbands and fathers inside the LRA, scholars and commentators do not consider these important roles and mostly do not comment on them.[682]

The findings from my data are consistent with the findings from the large-scale survey data - the Survey of War-Affected Youth (SWAY). SWAY has one report focused on male youth in northern Uganda (SWAY I) and one focused on female youth in northern Uganda (SWAY II). The SWAY II report dispels the common myth that most females in the LRA were primary used as sexual slaves and highlight the crucial roles females fulfilled for the LRA.[683] In its overview of females roles in the LRA, the SWAY II report provides important context by noting that in

[682] A notable exception being Aijazi and Baines, "Relationality, Culpability and Consent in Wartime."
[683] Annan et al., "SWAY II," 34.

professional armies, the majority of members (over 85 percent) do not serve in combat roles, but instead in crucial back-up and logistical roles.[684] This fact about professional armies emphasizes the importance of non-combat roles to fighting forces. In the LRA while females were in combat roles, males composed the largest proportion of fighters.[685]

The SWAY II survey data asked women about their "primary" role in the LRA and therefore does not capture the many roles women fulfilled at once. I include their findings for the largest categories of primary roles self-reported by females held longer than two weeks in the LRA: 32.2 percent cook, 29.2 percent porter, 11 percent fighter, 7.5 percent wife, 7.4 percent childcare, 5.3 percent water collection.[686] Most of these roles conform with the domestic roles women performed outside the LRA. SWAY I does not include data on the same question for males related to their primarily roles, but they do report that most long-term male abductees received a gun.[687] The SWAY I report also notes that for male youth who stayed in the LRA longer than 6 months 54 percent were given ranks.[688] The data demonstrates that males were the primary combatants in the LRA, but females preformed vital functions for the group, as well as occasionally participated in the role of combatants. I summarize my findings on women's roles combined with the SWAY II data in table 5.

TABLE 5: FEMALE ROLES IN THE LRA

Task/Role	Percentage from SWAY II survey data of women that noted was primary role[689]	Quote or additional information

[684] Annan et al., 34–35.
[685] Annan et al., 34.
[686] Annan et al., 35.
[687] Jeannie Annan, Christopher Blattman, and Roger Horton, "The State of Youth Protection in Northern Uganda: Findings from the Survey of War Affected Youth," September 2006, 55, https://chrisblattman.com/documents/policy/sway/SWAY.Phase1.FinalReport.pdf.
[688] Annan, Blattman, and Horton, 60.
[689] Annan et al., "SWAY II," 25.

Wives/mothers	7.5%	42% of abducted females who were held longer than two weeks were forcibly married.[690] 1 in every 10 girls that was abducted conceived when in LRA captivity.[691]
Babysitting	7.4%	
Raiding/looting		Especially important for getting food. One male interview participant said wives would accompany husbands to hunt.[692]
Cooking	32.2%	
Carrying loads/porter	29.2%	Many interview participants said women could carry more loads than men.[693]
Water collector	5.3%	
Carrying guns or bullets for male commanders in battle		This was likely a wife's role when she accompanied her husband to battle.
Cleaning home		
Washing clothes		
Farming and gardening		
Praying		
Fighting	11%	Defensive role discussed most frequently. Interview participants estimated that 5% of women in fighting role.[694]

The LRA valued female members and relied on them for the jobs listed above for strategic and tactical reasons of supporting the group especially in tasks that women traditionally performed outside of the LRA that men inside the LRA were not trained in like cooking and gardening. Erin Baines also notes the ways in which certain tasks were linked to the group's ideology related to creating a new ideal Acholi group. She explains that gardening was about communal obligations, food preparation and cooking were a sign of discipline, and cleanliness

[690] Annan et al., 40.
[691] Annan et al., 36.
[692] Interview with Former male member of the LRA, L3.
[693] Interview with Former male member of the LRA.
[694] Interview with Former female member of the LRA, L31; Interview with Former female member of the LRA, L33.

"reinforced moral behaviour and protected the purity of the Acholi nation and family."[695] When we take the domestic sphere seriously, as I do in this dissertation by focusing on forced marriage, we learn more about the values and strategies of rebel groups.

The gendered division of labor inside the LRA and a privileging of women's domestic roles was a part of building the ideal femininity the LRA was trying to create for the new Acholi. Grace Acan writes, "To live peacefully among the LRA required the following from a girl: She was to be a good cook, obedient, well-behaved, a clean person, tolerant, calm, flexible, and hard-working."[696] A male interview participant who was a senior member of the LRA[697] spoke about women in the LRA compared to women outside the LRA and stated:

> Women here are lazy, they don't have jobs. In the LRA, women were hardworking. The reason people here are poor is people here don't work hard. People here do not know how to take care of children. If women didn't know how to care for kids in the LRA they would have come home with no kids.[698]

This quote reflects the LRA's ideology about women and femininity, that women inside the group worked harder than others and they knew how to care for their children better than other women. A female interview participant also spoke about ideas about femininity and appearance inside the LRA. She said that men inside the LRA would give women certain clothing or material for their hair so they looked good. She explained that the LRA, "wanted the ideal women to look good, nice, and be clean."[699] Ideas about femininity were central the LRA's ideology of social control and they controlled ideas about femininity through marriage and the gendered system of division of labor.

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[695] Baines, *Buried in the Heart: Women, Complex Victimhood and the War in Northern Uganda*, 63.
[696] Acan, *Not Yet Sunset: A Story of Survival and Perseverance in LRA Captivity*, 92.
[697] I did not ask about individual's ranks, but this interview participant spoke about being with the group for a long time and providing spiritual guidance to group members.
[698] Interview with Former male member of LRA and religious elder, L2.
[699] Interview with Former female member of the LRA, L8, December 12, 2017.

Married females were seen as especially important to the LRA. The SWAY II report notes that females who were kept as forced wives (both wives who had children and those who did not) are released at significantly lower rates than other abducted females.[700] Another report by Khristopher Carlson and Dyan Mazurana notes that there were rumors that female members of LRA were given to the Sudanese in exchange for goods.[701] However, informants reported that Otti wouldn't allow females to be traded. Carlson and Mazurana assert, "This admission suggests the importance given to the presence and participation of females within the force, bringing attention to the fact that they were more than mere disposables, but valued labor and support for LRA units and camps generally and for individual fighters specifically."[702] There were also quotas for the number of females in the LRA at any time and if the number of female abductees fell below a certain level field teams were ordered by leadership to abduct a certain number of females.[703] Women's roles as wives were important to the functioning of the LRA and women's ability to be a wife and mother as well as perform key domestic tasks were needed for the LRA's strategy and ideology.

The transition to the LRA's practice of forced marriage coincided with a change in women's roles inside the group. As described in chapter 5, in the early stages of the LRA, before the group had bases in South Sudan, there was a prominent female armed faction called Mary's Coy.[704] When the LRA started building bases in South Sudan and abducting high levels of young people, the way the group was organized changed and the forced marriage system was implemented. A male interview participant explained, "We trained women for some time, but

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[700] Annan et al., "SWAY II," 36.
[701] Carlson and Mazurana, 22.
[702] Carlson and Mazurana, 22.
[703] Carlson and Mazurana, "Forced Marriage within the Lord's Resistance Army, Uganda," 18.
[704] Baines, *Buried in the Heart: Women, Complex Victimhood and the War in Northern Uganda*, 34; Baines, "Forced Marriage as a Political Project," 408.

after a while the women started becoming wives so we didn't train them."[705] Although a focus entirely on combat roles limits our understanding of women's roles inside rebel groups, I detail women and girls' roles in combat in the LRA because it is the most clear illustration of the ways women roles shifted based on marital status.

The LRA started organizing its members into homes composed of a male commander, his forced wives, babysitters, and guards. This structure set the stage for the LRA's division of labor and required women to fulfill more tasks inside the home instead of focusing primarily on fighting. A male interview participant explained how life in South Sudan resembled life outside the LRA:

> They separate you based on how people live here [in Uganda]. The leadership gives people to certain homesteads and they go to garden, farm, and stay as if you are in a normal home. There was a family environment with daily activities. Only difference was when we were attacked by the Ugandan military – both men and women had to fight…people faced hardship.[706]

The transition to a domestic life that resembled life outside the group also meant that women's roles more closely resembled life outside the LRA. This interview participant goes on to explain, "In Sudan, women rarely held guns, they were more in domestic roles."[707] Women's roles as members with guns (closer to a combat roles) was not seen as compatible with their domestic roles. In South Sudan, women were not relied on for fighting because the bases in South Sudan were at points a safe haven from military attacks and this was an opportunity for the LRA to focus on how women's roles would fit into its ideology. In the LRA's ideal Acholi society, wives would be reliant on their husbands to protect them and provide for them and their role would be

[705] Interview with Former male member of the LRA, L15, December 13, 2017.
[706] Interview with Former male member of the LRA, L3.
[707] Interview with Former male member of the LRA.

in the home. However, before women were wives there was more fluidity in their roles in the group.

Similar to Al-Shabaab, a woman's role or task in the LRA was dependent on her marital status. In Al-Shabaab, females could only be full members of Al-Shabaab if they were married to a member, but in the LRA females performed a wider variety of tasks until they were married to another LRA member. A consistent theme in my interviews and in scholarship on the LRA was that females' roles as fighters was restricted after they got married and especially after they had children. There were different ideas about which females were required to fight. The process was that when leadership picked a team to go into Uganda to fight, they would pick members from each homestead.[708] The commander who was the head of the household would decide which girls or women went to battle. It seemed that *ting tings* or younger unmarried women would be more likely to be chosen and then a commander may choose one of his wives to accompany him as well. One female interview participant explained that a man would rotate between "spending time" with each of his wives. He would bring the woman to battle he was supposed to be spending time with during that period. [709] She also noted that women who were menstruating would not be assigned to go to battle.[710] A male interview participant summarized this process, "The ones who became wives stopped fighting, but they accompany their husbands to battle, they find a place for them to stay when men fight…Women once they becomes wives had to raise children, look after husbands, and stay back when men fight."[711] It is interesting in this interview participant's description accompanying a man to battle was not seen as fighting despite being near battles. The pattern of wives accompanying their husbands to battle is consistent with

[708] Interview with Former female member of the LRA, L10.
[709] Interview with Former male member of the LRA, L4.
[710] Interview with Former male member of the LRA.
[711] Interview with Former male member of the LRA, L16.

Carlson and Mazurana's finding that Vincent Otti (a top LRA leader) had dozens of forced wives and he preferred that those without children fought alongside him.[712]

The most dramatic change in women's roles were when they became mothers. This relates to the focus of the LRA on building a new Acholi. According to the SWAY II data, of females abducted by the LRA and held for longer than two weeks, 42 percent were forcibly married.[713] One in every ten girls that was abducted conceived when in LRA captivity.[714] There was a special status given to mothers in the LRA. Eunice Apio writes that once women were pregnant, they were given the status of "civilians" and their guns were taken.[715] Some women, especially mothers, were also protected by the LRA when they were attacked. Interview participants spoke about mothers and their children being sent ahead if there were an attack and being in a protected sick bay during fighting. This pattern is noteworthy because it is not beneficial for the LRA to have mothers and children who could slow them down if they needed to flee and make them vulnerable to attack. However, as demonstrated throughout this dissertation, forced marriage provides strategic benefits, but also is used because it reinforced an ideology. Kony wanted to create a new Acholi that he controlled and organized and his system of forced marriage and reproduction was key to this process. Protecting mothers and children was a way to protect the lineage.

In interviews, mostly with men, there was a discussion about females who chose to fight. In her memoir, Evelyn Amony, writes that she wanted to be a soldier instead of a wife to Kony.[716] A contrasting view by a male interview participant was that women wanted to go fight

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[712] Carlson and Mazurana, 25.
[713] Annan et al., "SWAY II," 40.
[714] Annan et al., 36.
[715] Apio, "Children Born of War in Northern Uganda: Kinship, Marriage, and the Politics of Post-Conflict Reintegration in Lango Society," 159.
[716] Amony, *I Am Evelyn Amony*, 54.

to be with their husbands.[717] I tried to discern if there were any patterns in the type of women who chose to fight and one male interview participant said that it was the women who were "stronghearted."[718] One woman told me about her role as a fighter. She was with the mobile team and spent two years fighting with them throughout Uganda and South Sudan. It is noteworthy that this woman was not in a formal marriage and did not have children. She explained her role, "I went like a regular soldier."[719] This woman had more freedom than other women and had a relationship with a man, but she was not officially given to him as a wife. She said that when people were not watching he would have sex with her, but "we didn't have any relationship."[720] Additionally, this man made the interview participant think the relationship was legal, but he threatened her and told her if she told anyone she would be killed (because it was against the LRA's rules for men to have sexual relations with someone who was not formally assigned as a wife).[721]

Adaptations to Reality of Conflict

While the ideal division of labor would result in men fighting and wives and mothers not required to participate in battles, this often was not the case. The gendered division of labor system also had to adapt to the reality of the context in the conflict. Similar to Al-Shabaab, for strategic reasons, the LRA recognized the necessity of having women in roles outside of the domestic context.

One interview participant described the division of labor if there was an attack by the Ugandan military. He explained, "When you hear the gun everyone goes to action."[722] This

[717] Interview with Former male member of the LRA, L13.
[718] Interview with Former male member of LRA and religious elder, L2.
[719] Interview with Former female member of the LRA, L26, December 15, 2017.
[720] Interview with Former female member of the LRA.
[721] Interview with Former female member of the LRA.
[722] Interview with Former male member of the LRA, L7.

"equality" in tasks seems to be intended for times when the group was under attack. Former LRA abductee and forced wife Evelyn Amony describes this, "When it was secure, a woman remained at home with the children, but when things were not fine, nobody cared if you were a woman or not; you had to fight."[723]

The training for women also reflects the reality of the context. After abduction, males and females were both trained, and often times it was together. In these trainings everyone was taught to use a gun – specifically they were taught how to put it together, but often they were not taught how to shoot it.[724] Some women/girls and some men/boys were given their own guns. However, one interview participant said that women would be trained in their homes on how to use a gun by a male member of the LRA. He described this as the "domestification of everything women learned."[725] The ways in which females were socialized into the group (before marriage) reflects the idea that they could be called upon to fight. Grace Acan describes a lecture she was given to by a captain, Captain Oyet, after she was abducted. Captain Oyet said to her and the other girls she was abducted with, "Starting from today, all of you should forget that you are students and all you should do is behave like soldiers. You ceased being students on the 10th of October and that's the end."[726]

It is strategically useful to give men/boys and women/girls the impression that they might be asked to do all tasks in the group and they weren't confined by gender. However, in reality this system meant women ended up being required to fulfill multiple roles at once. One male interview participant explained:

> Women did the domestic roles, like cooking, caring for children…the LRA mainly expected women to be in traditional role of mother, caring for household. If her husband

[723] Amony, *I Am Evelyn Amony*, 67.
[724] Interview with Former female member of the LRA, L9.
[725] Interview with Former male member of the LRA, L4.
[726] Acan, *Not Yet Sunset: A Story of Survival and Perseverance in LRA Captivity*, 74.

> was wounded, women were expected to provide care. Women played a major role. They are the reason the LRA exists today, men couldn't combine their role as fighters and domestic roles, because women did domestic roles men could focus on fighting.[727]

This quote highlights the extensive burden on women. When men fought, they often had wives who cared for them, but when women fought, they had to take care of themselves, in addition to their LRA families.

Status Based on Marriage

Despite the discussions of equality in tasks there was a distinct hierarchy and organizational model that privileged males over females inside the group and limited females' access to power or status. For women, their status was based on their relationship with a man – either as his wife or being a *ting ting* in his home. Evelyn Amony explains that were different expectations about how she would be treated because she was living in Kony's house (and presumably would be married to him once she went through puberty). When she was beaten by a commander the people who had witnesses told him, "you beat the *Ladit's* [referring here to Kony] *ting ting.* You are bigheaded."[728]

There were differing opinions over whether women could receive ranks inside the LRA. Grace Acan writes:

> Women who showed good leadership and hard work in the family were also given ranks under the order of Joseph Kony himself. He first investigated and consulted his top commanders before making any judgments. Then he would call everyone for a meeting where he would preach for hours about the failures, achievements and challenges, and pass orders. Ranks were given to the men who were active in the field. [729]

[727] Interview with Former male member of LRA and religious elder, L2.
[728] Amony, *I Am Evelyn Amony*, 32.
[729] Acan, *Not Yet Sunset: A Story of Survival and Perseverance in LRA Captivity*, 88.

In theory, women could receive rank for their work in their family and domestic sphere, but it seems that in practice very few women actually received ranks. It was harder and less common for women to receive ranks than men.

Erin Baines writes about "the originals" or the women in the LRA who had been in the group the longest and were given the most senior status.[730] The original women were also married to the most senior ranking members of the LRA. Baines describes a disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) ceremony she attended for top leaders of the LRA. She notes that there were two female second lieutenants which according to Baines is the highest rank a woman could achieve.[731] It is significant that females could only achieve a certain rank within the group. Baines writes that the way in which these senior women were given power was by controlling and socializing the younger new girls coming into the LRA. Importantly, the senior women were expected to enforce the "moral standards" in the LRA[732] reflecting the role senior wives played in reinforcing the ideology of social control. However, one senior woman tells Baines about being challenged by a senior-ranking male commander who told her, "Your command is very useless, that fake command of womanhood is nothing, you are useless."[733] This quote reflects the idea that male dominance and power comes above female power within the hierarchy of the LRA. There were even systems to prevent women from participating in the male leadership domain. Grace Acan describes the organization of the LRA camps and describes the Yard as a place where all rituals and sacrifices were performed. She notes that, "it was an

[730] Baines, *Buried in the Heart: Women, Complex Victimhood and the War in Northern Uganda*, 51–76.
[731] Baines, 51 rn 2.
[732] Baines, 69.
[733] Baines, 69.

abomination for a woman to enter there" and that the yard was well-fenced to prevent women from entering.[734]

CONCLUSION

Forced marriage systems are key to understanding the division of labor inside Al-Shabaab and the LRA and especially understanding the different ways in which the group relied on women/girls and limited their roles. Al-Shabaab and the LRA relied on women/girls for strategic, tactical, and logistical reasons by using them in the roles that women in Somalia and northern Uganda are seen as especially adept at like fundraising (in Somalia) and gardening/cooking (in Uganda). Both groups relied on women/girls for their operations, but also used the women/girls' roles as wives and mothers to retain traditional ideas about femininity and reduce their power inside the group.

The division of labor and hierarchy of females in Al-Shabaab and the LRA was based on women's marital status and reproductive status. In the categorization system I created for women's relationship to Al-Shabaab the most involved females were those who were members who were required to be married to other Al-Shabaab members. The next most involved females were "employees," or those women who did not live with Al-Shabaab and who were not required to be married to Al-Shabaab members. Finally, there were "supporters" of Al-Shabaab who were not married to Al-Shabaab members and mostly contributed financially to the group. For those women who were members of Al-Shabaab, the women with the highest status inside the group were women married to the top-ranking commanders.

Inside the LRA, women's roles were also dependent on their marital and reproductive status with younger women/girls who were not married being required to fight. Once they were

[734] Acan, *Not Yet Sunset: A Story of Survival and Perseverance in LRA Captivity*, 54–60.

married, women/girls had less responsibilities to fight and only when requested by their husband to accompany him to battle. Finally, mothers had an especially privileged status and were not usually required to fight. Similar to Al-Shabaab, the hierarchy of females in the LRA was also organized based on their marital and reproductive status. Females gained status based on who they were married to and when they were married to that person (with first wives having the most power). The women who had been in the LRA the longest were called "the originals" and were also married to high ranking commanders.

The gendered division of labor inside Al-Shabaab and the LRA is also reflective of the ideology of social control which underpins the forced marriage system. The division of labor and the limits on female roles inside Al-Shabaab and the LRA were key to the promotion of idealized types of femininity and masculinity that both groups were trying to build in their future societies. Additionally, females serving as wives and mothers was essential to creating new lineages and future group members, especially for the LRA in their project to create a new Acholi ethnicity.

CHAPTER 7: RAPE OUTSIDE FORCED MARRIAGE SYSTEMS

INTRODUCTION

What is the relationship between forced marriage and other forms of sexual violence? In this chapter, I examine Al-Shabaab and the LRA's use of rape outside of forced marriage.[735] Forced marriage is a way to control members of rebel groups' sexual behavior and this control extends to members' behavior outside of marital relationships. My theory of forced marriage highlights the strategic and ideological benefits to armed groups in promoting a system of forced marriage. Forced marriage systems works best in providing ideological and strategic benefits to rebel groups when the groups are also able to effectively prevent rape outside of forced marriage. Rape was counterproductive to Al-Shabaab and the LRA's stated ideologies and broader strategies. Additionally, rape would minimize the effectiveness of forced marriage in promoting cohesion.

While not all rebel groups use rape in conflict,[736] it is notable that Al-Shabaab and the LRA did not frequently use rape because they use other severe forms of violence against the populations where they operate, including violence against women and girls. My intention in this chapter is *not* to create a hierarchy of the harms caused by forced marriage versus rape outside of forced marriage. Instead, I seek to understand the patterns of violence[737] and to examine the differences in the way these forms of violence were used by these rebel groups. Additionally, I analyze what is unique about rape against nonmembers that led Al-Shabaab and the LRA to differentiate this form of violence against other forms of violence they used in the conflicts.

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[735] Throughout the chapter I will refer to sexual violence outside of forced marriage as "rape" while recognizing that rape still occurs within systems of forced marriage.
[736] Elisabeth Jean Wood, "Armed Groups and Sexual Violence: When Is Wartime Rape Rare?," *Politics and Society* 37, no. 31 (2009): 131–62.
[737] See Gutiérrez-Sanín and Wood, "What Should We Mean by 'Pattern of Political Violence'?"

While Al-Shabaab and the LRA effectively prevented *most* cases of rape outside their groups it is revealing to examine when this prohibition was neglected or ineffective and rape outside the group did occur. For Al-Shabaab, rape occurred in territories where the group was not ruling the population and therefore did not implement its comprehensive forced marriage system. In these areas Al-Shabaab had low levels of external cohesion as it had not infiltrated the population. Al-Shabaab members also perpetrated rape within their courts and jails where rape was used as a punishment of women who did not fit within Al-Shabaab's ideal social order. Instances of rape occurred within the LRA as a rebellion against the forced marriage system. Rape of women and girls by the LRA occurred when smaller groups were away from the larger LRA forces and governance systems, and there was less centralized cohesion with the larger group.

In this chapter, I provide a brief overview of scholarship that has examined the relationship between rape and cohesion among armed groups and highlight where my work makes a contribution to the literature on gender-based violence. I then turn my attention to my two case studies. I begin by examining the context of rape more broadly in each region and the armed groups' reasons for prohibiting rape of women and girls outside of their group. I then describe how forced marriage was viewed within the civilian population and compare these perceptions to other forms of violence against women that the groups did perpetrate. Finally, I examine instances in which rapes were perpetrated by group members and the ways in which this supports my theory that rape was prevented because it minimizes the utility of the forced marriage systems and harms the ideological platforms of Al-Shabaab and the LRA.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Scholars have presented frameworks for examining the link between rape and cohesion, but less research has focused on the link among rape, forced marriage, and cohesion. Dara Kay Cohen and Elisabeth Jean Wood both present theories that identify rape as being linked to cohesion. Cohen argues that groups with low levels of cohesion, especially those that forcibly abduct their members, use gang rape as a form of socialization to create unit cohesion. [738] She argues that participating in the communal violence of gang rape creates bonds of loyalty among fighters after initial circumstances of fear and mistrust.[739] Wood approaches this issue from another perspective and examines the ways in which armed group cohesion can prevent or promote group members' use of sexual violence. According to Wood, variation in armed groups use of sexual violence depends on whether they have effective military discipline (which relies on cohesion) to promote rape or sanction those that commit it.[740]

Cohen and Wood emphasize the link among cohesion, rape, and marriage that I explore in this chapter. However, in my theory of forced marriage, systems of forced marriage are used to create cohesion, instead of rape being used to build cohesion. I find that a group with a comprehensive forced marriage system will build cohesion and be able to prevent other forms of sexual violence as Wood's argument suggests. There are, however, examples of groups with forced marriage systems that also used rape, which challenges this explanation. Zoe Marks examines one of these groups, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in Sierra Leone. Marks argument reveals that the RUF saw rape as a threat to the group but had not built up enough cohesion or military discipline to be able to prevent it. She writes, "rape was seen as a threat to

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[738] Cohen, *Rape During Civil War*; Dara Kay Cohen, "Explaining Rape during Civil War: Cross-National Evidence (1980–2009)," *American Political Science Review* 107, no. 03 (August 2013): 461–77, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055413000221.
[739] Cohen, *Rape During Civil War*; Cohen, "Explaining Rape during Civil War."
[740] Elisabeth Jean Wood, "Variation in Sexual Violence during War," *Politics & Society* 34, no. 3 (September 2006): 331, https://doi.org/10.1177/0032329206290426.

RUF cohesion and efficacy as a fighting force, marriage - often forced - was promoted as its antidote. Supposedly offering stability and domesticity, unlike rape, sex within marriage had social and moral legitimacy in the RUF."[741] Despite an interest of the RUF leadership to use marriage as a replacement for rape, this policy was not effectively enforced, and the group sustained its pattern of perpetrating rape both inside and outside of the group.[742]

I extend theories on cohesion and sexual violence by distinguishing between different "repertoires of violence."[743] Specifically, I examine the conditions under which a group uses forced marriage and effectively prohibits sexual violence outside those marriages. Essential to understanding the management of rape and forced marriage, is the strategic and ideological incentives of the specific group for prohibiting sexual violence, as well as the level of cohesion the group has already built through forced marriage.

AL-SHABAAB

Rape in Somalia

It is necessary to understand the context surrounding reporting rape and sexual violence in Somalia because it helps explain Al-Shabaab's strategy related to rape. Rape was a tactic used widely in the clan conflicts in Somalia in the 1990s. These rapes were often symbolic and public. Lidwien Kapteijns describes the violence in the clan conflict and writes, "Large-scale rape was part of the clan cleansing campaign, with thousands of women and girls purposely gang raped in front or within earshot of relatives and friends who would have done anything to protect them."[744] Rape was symbolic and frequently used as a punishment for being a member of or

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[741] Z. Marks, "Sexual Violence in Sierra Leone's Civil War: 'Virgination', Rape, and Marriage," *African Affairs* 113, no. 450 (January 1, 2014): 74, https://doi.org/10.1093/afraf/adt070.
[742] Marks, "Sexual Violence Inside Rebellion." See also, McKay and Mazurana, Dyan, *Where Are the Girls? Girls in Fighting Forces in Northern Uganda, Sierra Leone, and Mozambique: Their Lives During and After War*.
[743] Amelia Hoover Green, "Repertoires of Violence Against Noncombatants: The Role of Armed Group Institutions and Ideologies" (Yale University, 2011).
[744] Kapteijns, *Clan Cleansing in Somalia: The Ruinous Legacy of 1991*, 144.

affiliated what Kapteijns describes as the "wrong" clans.[745] In this case, rape was used as a punishment against powerful men. In a report by the Life and Peace Institute which included life stories from women in Kismayo many spoke about the threat of rape and the prevalence of rape during the clan violence of the 1990s. One woman described this period, "[There were] So many rapes in which even children were not spared."[746] This context is essential for understanding rape in Somalia today.

In general, most cases of rape are not reported in Somalia because of the repercussions against families and victims for reporting. As Cynthia Enloe notes, "reporting particular sorts of violence is as much a gendered process as war waging itself."[747] Rape has been a tactic actors have used within past conflicts in Somalia to target specific clans by trying to dishonor their women and girls and thereby emasculate and humiliate the clan.[748] One interview participant explained, "Rape is a heinous crime in Somalia. It is embedded in Somali society and the idea of 'honor' associated with women. If a force dishonors women, the vendetta continues. It is a masculine society that protects women."[749] This idea of masculinity as protecting women from rape is a central component of Al-Shabaab's strategy related to gender.

Rape is particularly challenging for women to report in Somalia because of potential social, legal and physical ramifications. According to a Somali journalist, "The consequences for the victim after she goes public [about a rape] can also be life-changing. If you interview her and

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[745] See Kapteijns, 141 where two elders had female relatives gang raped in front of them as a punishment for having married members of the "wrong" clan.
[746] Life and Peace Institute, Peace Direct, and Somali Women Solidarity Organization, "Increasing Women's Participation and Inclusion in Jubbaland Peace Processes: Life Stories," April 2018, 26.
[747] Cynthia Enloe, *Maneuvers: The International Politics of Militarizing Women's Lives* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 133.
[748] Mohamed H. Ingiriis and Markus V. Hoehne, "The Impact of Civil War and State Collapse on the Roles of Somali Women: A Blessing in Disguise," *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 7, no. 2 (May 2013): 318, https://doi.org/10.1080/17531055.2013.776281.
[749] Interview with Researcher, 180, March 16, 2017.

people know who the victim is, she will be stigmatised and may never find a husband – or she may even be disowned by the society."[750] It is noteworthy that the punishment of not finding a husband is seen as one of the greatest harms that would befall a woman for reporting a rape. This contributes to an understanding of Al-Shabaab's strategy of forcibly marrying women instead of raping them. The group does not want to discredit its future constituency by allowing its members to rape women in areas it controls.

Other interview participants spoke about the safety issues in reporting incidences of rape. One interview participant told me about a case in which a woman reported she was raped by a policeman and she was jailed by the Somali government who accused her of lying.[751] Another interview participant explained, "If a woman or girl was raped, the best for her is to not tell anybody because if you tell you will get many more problems than rape."[752] Individuals who report rape rarely receive just treatment and sometimes face additional physical harm as a result. Nearly every individual I spoke to about this topic had heard about a woman or girl who had been raped and had not received justice. A few interview participants shared the same story, involving a young woman in Puntland who was gang raped and the gang raped was filmed. The young woman's mother wanted what she saw as Islamic justice, which would have been the death penalty for the perpetrators. However, the clan justice system got involved and the perpetrators spent only a little time in jail. The interview participant telling me this story explained, "clan power is stronger than justice."[753] Al-Shabaab is aware of the lack of security

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[750] Hamza Mohamed, "The Dangers of Reporting Rape in Somalia," *Al Jazeera,* Dec 9, 2013, accessed October 4, 2018, https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2013/12/dangers-reporting-rape-somalia-20131261475333929.html.
[751] Interview with Scholar focused on Somalia, 187, January 10, 2016.
[752] Interview with Somali activist, 185, January 31, 2017.
[753] Interview with NGO Representative, 139, May 25, 2017.

and justice provided by clan elders. Given this security context, Al-Shabaab tries to portray themselves as more just than the clans and wants to appear as if they would punish rapists.

Members of Al-Shabaab are aware of the cultural context about rape in Somalia. This cultural context, and Al-Shabaab's stated policies about punishing rape, has led outside observers (e.g., policymakers, NGO workers) to ignore the possibility that Al-Shabaab members would perpetrate rape. When I asked interview participants about whether Al-Shabaab had used raped against populations I found that in fact most had not looked into it. Rather than admit they had not explored rape by Al-Shabaab, they dismissed my question by discussing Al-Shabaab's Islamic orientation. The lack of investigation related to whether Al-Shabaab actually pursued a policy of punishing rapists or preventing its members from using rape, may indicate that Al-Shabaab accurately controlled the narrative around sexual violence.

There is also a broader environment within the Somali community related to cultural pride that leads some Somalis to deny patterns of rape. One interview participant described the disbelief about reports of rape in Somalia by many Somalis and noted they respond with sentiments such as, "That is not our culture, we are Muslims.'" [754] Forced marriage was therefore a less offensive strategy to outside observers because even though it is a form of sexual violence, it could be labeled to those outside Kismayo as voluntary marriage. Al-Shabaab's use of widespread rape as opposed to its widespread campaign of forced marriage would have likely received more attention from populations outside of Kismayo.

Many interview participants also spoke about the link between rape and Al-Shabaab's proclaimed ideology. One interview participant explained:

> I haven't heard a lot of reports of Al-Shabaab assaulting women. I would be stunned if it doesn't happen, but in general I haven't heard much. Shabaab in some ways is savvy

[754] Interview with Somali activist, 185.

> about how to navigate Somali culture…they understand culture and that sort of thing. I suspect part of that could manifest in not violating women.[755]

The interview participant above refers to Al-Shabaab as "savvy" in regard to Al-Shabaab's view on the treatment of women outside the group. A different interview participant said Al-Shabaab is "clever with how it operates – it doesn't respect Somali values, *but* it transgresses from these values subtly."[756] Another interview participant echoed this idea and spoke about it more specifically within the Somali context. He explained that Al-Shabaab was trying to avoid angering the Somali population because in Somalia, "the violation of women is a major rallying cry."[757] However, the interview participant was puzzled because Al-Shabaab has done other things that angered the Somali public "and they did not care that much."[758] As argued throughout this dissertation, there is something unique about how Al-Shabaab treats the sexuality of women. Indeed, part of Al-Shabaab's strength came from recognizing the power they could gain from being seen as respecting and protecting women. Forced marriage provided some disguise to offenses Al-Shabaab was perpetrating against women because Al-Shabaab forced marriages are often not outwardly violent and members of Al-Shabaab could falsely claim the marriages were voluntary.

My female field researcher also asked interview participants if there were any incidences in which Al-Shabaab perpetrated sexual violence against men and boys. No interview participants reported hearing of any such cases. Nonetheless, male survivors of sexual violence

[755] Interview with Scholar focused on Somalia, 194, November 30, 2016.
[756] Interview with Researcher, 180.
[757] Interview with Scholar focused on Somalia, 194.
[758] Interview with Scholar focused on Somalia.

face extreme challenges if they chose to disclose being rape and therefore, we know even less about whether this pattern exists.[759]

The cultural and legal context reveals the disincentives to report rape in Somalia and it is possible that there are a higher number of women who were raped by Al-Shabaab who did not report it. While there may be incidences of rape that have not been reported, all data has pointed to the overall trend that Al-Shabaab does not tolerate rape outside of forced marriages, except in specific incidences. One piece of evidence that strongly supports this conclusion was the fact that when the research team asked interview participants if they saw any benefits of life under Al-Shabaab almost everyone who noted a benefit said that women were not raped under Al-Shabaab. While people might not discuss incidences of rape if they did occur, interview participants had no incentive to bring up the lack of rape as a positive element of Al-Shabaab rule.

Al-Shabaab's Strategic and Ideological Reasons for Limiting Rape

Similar to the reasons Al-Shabaab created its forced marriage systems there are ideological and strategic benefits to limiting rape outside of this system. A UN Secretary General report from May 2012 examining security in Somalia discusses reports of sexual violence in the country. The report highlights continued incidences of sexual violence "carried out by men in military uniforms," suggesting rapes were perpetrated by AMISOM and Somali troops.[760] As part of Al-Shabaab's strategy, the group wants to contrast itself with AMISOM, which it seeks to portray as a corrupt foreign force within Somalia. This fits into Al-Shabaab's goal to expel external forces from Somalia and build a new Somali society in line with Islam. Since Al-

[759] S. Sivakumaran, "Sexual Violence Against Men in Armed Conflict," *European Journal of International Law* 18, no. 2 (April 1, 2007): 253–76, https://doi.org/10.1093/ejil/chm013.
[760] "Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia" (United Nations Security Council, August 22, 2012), para. 66, http://repository.un.org/bitstream/handle/11176/17417/S_2012_643-EN.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y.

Shabaab portrays itself as a legitimate ruler in Somalia it could not be seen as engaging in the same behavior external forces were criticized for. A U.S. government official explained, "In the battle for hearts and minds against AMISOM, Al-Shabaab have held themselves up as a counterpoint to some of the violence that has been perpetrated by AMISOM troops. They might force women into marriage at gun point, but they do not rape."[761]

In addition to trying to contrast their behavior with that of AMISOM troops, Al-Shabaab's approach to rape is innately linked with their interest in demonstrating their governance capabilities. Al-Shabaab wants to appear as an enforcer of justice and a provider of security to the population. Given the widespread rape perpetrated by warlords in the violence of the 1990s, by not allowing their members to rape the population Al-Shabaab created the perception that they could provide security. This view was reinforced through interview participants who spoke about a decrease in rape in Kismayo.

Significantly, the only perceived benefit interview participants reported about Al-Shabaab rule in Kismayo was a decrease in rape (outside of forced marriage). Women in Kismayo were especially affected by the violence of the clan conflicts.[762] Almost a quarter of interview participants said that there was no rape or a decrease in rape when Al-Shabaab ruled Kismayo. Discussions about the decrease in rape under Al-Shabaab often led to statements about Al-Shabaab's justice system. One interview participant noted:

> Rape was rampant before Al-Shabaab came to Kismayo. After Al-Shabaab came, rape cases completely stopped. The perpetrators that previously preyed on women and girls did not dare to rape women and girls in the presence of Al-Shabaab. Al-Shabaab would literally kill rapists and due to fear [of being killed by Al-Shabaab], rape cases went down.[763]

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[761] Interview with U.S. government AFRICOM intelligence professional, 199, September 19, 2016.
[762] Ingiriis and Hoehne, "The Impact of Civil War and State Collapse on the Roles of Somali Women," 318.
[763] Interview with female small business owner, Respondent 6.

Despite several people stating that under Al-Shabaab rule rapists would be killed, notably, no interview participants spoke about specific incidences in which they saw a rapist punished. This absence was in contrast to the frequent mention of individuals who were brutally punished for other crimes, including a number of reports of a thief having his hand amputated. It is likely that women in fact would not report incidences of rape to Al-Shabaab because of the likelihood that Al-Shabaab would instead decide to punish them (as seen in the stoning of the young woman discussed below).

Al-Shabaab was not only worried about appearing legitimate for its internal audiences, but also was concerned on how it appeared for external audiences. Al-Shabaab relied on external sources for financial support, including from Somalis living outside Somalia and from international Islamic organizations. Ken Menkhaus describes how Al-Shabaab's early media strategy was intended to reach external audiences, including the Somali diaspora and Muslims globally, to mobilize funds and recruitment from abroad.[764] Al-Shabaab's external narrative relied on both local and global grievances by focusing on a "vast global conspiracy" against Islam in Somalia and Somali nationalist outrage over foreign involvement in the country.[765] This narrative invokes ideas about Al-Shabaab as the defender of Islam and the Somali people. Notably, sex outside of marriage, or *zina*, is prohibited in Islam. Thus, Al-Shabaab could not be seen as perpetrating rape against Somalis in areas under their control. Forced marriage was thus a way to appear to be engaging in a form of sexual behavior allowed in Islam.

Forced Marriage as a Violation

[764] Ken Menkhaus, "Al-Shabaab and Social Media: A Double-Edged Sword," *Brown Journal of World Affairs* XX, no. II (Spring/Summer2014), 312.
[765] Menkhaus, 315.

Interview participants in Kismayo discussed the ways in which rape decreased but were also quick to add that Al-Shabaab's forced marriage system was a form of rape. This is important to emphasize for two reasons. The first is that it demonstrates the fact that Al-Shabaab's marriage system was a rupture with previous marriage traditions and was seen as a form of violence. As described in chapter 4, marriage in Somalia was often arranged between families and was not necessarily an entirely voluntary choice between a bride and groom. This traditional marriage arrangement also reduces the bride and groom's choices, and therefore some have argued that Al-Shabaab marriages were not so different than traditional marriages. However, quotes below from the population in Kismayo emphasize the ways in which A-Shabaab's forced marriage system was seen a form of violence against girls and women in Kismayo. Second, these quotes demonstrate that Al-Shabaab's attempt to use forced marriage to try to legitimate the sexual behavior of its members was not successful within Kismayo. The population in Kismayo while recognizing a decrease in rape under Al-Shabaab rule, still saw forced marriage as a separate violent and offensive crime. Below are a number of quotes detailing how interview participants described the link between Al-Shabaab's marriage system and rape:

- "Under Al-Shabaab, rape went down. No man dared to rape a woman or girl. But, if young girls were forced into marriages with Al-Shabaab men, including foreign men, what is the difference? There is no difference between direct rape and this kind of rape facilitated by Al-Shabaab."[766]
- "Forced marriage is a type of rape."[767]

[766] Interview with female youth activist, W2.
[767] Interview with female peace activist, W20.

- "There were no rapes under Al-Shabaab authority, but there were high rates of forced marriages, which to me is another form of gender-based violence."[768]
- "They used forced marriage to rape women and girls."[769]
- "Al-Shabaab did not rape women, but they used to force women to marry them. So women were married to someone and they do not know where they come from and who they are or from which country they came from."[770]
- "There was no rape, but they have a different kind of rape which is marrying simply without any norm and divorcing her so easily."[771]
- "Forced marriage was not a legal marriage, but rather a form of rape waged against women and girls."[772]

Although Al-Shabaab may have been seeking to promote the image that they do not use rape the population of Kismayo did not believe this message. It was clear to interview participants that through their marriage system Al-Shabaab was using a different form of rape. Beyond the use of coercion in the marriages, interviewees pointed to the fighters' ability to divorce a woman within a few hours of marriage after having sex with them. However, these forced marriages seem not to have received as much attention by scholars, analysts and the media and therefore have not reached larger international audiences.

Violence Against Women

[768] Interview with Female interview participant, W12.
[769] Life story 3, October 3, 2017.
[770] Interview with male driver, C.
[771] Interview with male driver.
[772] Interview with female worker at family shop, Respondent 12.

In addition to forced marriage, Al-Shabaab carried out other forms of violence against women. This violence was related to imposing Al-Shabaab's rules restricting women/girl's[773] freedom. The list of restrictions represents a form of structural violence which limited women/girl's freedom. This type of violence while not necessarily physical represents structural violence and psychological violence.[774] Women/girls also received violent punishments if they were seen to be disobeying Al-Shabaab's rules. In addition to punishing what Al-Shabaab saw as transgressive femininity, the rules for female behavior and Al-Shabaab's enforcement of the rules, was a re-assertion of masculinity and attempt to empower Al-Shabaab men and their supporters. I include an abridged list from chapter 4 focused on Al-Shabaab's restrictions against the population that especially targeted or affected women.

- Women could not travel without a male escort who was a relative (*muhrim)*.
- Women's interaction with men was restricted and they were not allowed to loiter in public.
- Women were forbidden from operating businesses and engaging in small sales activities especially selling qat or tobacco.
- The population (especially women) were banned from using qat or tobacco.
- There were several types of taxes (or *zakat)* the population was required to pay Al-Shabaab. Businesswomen were especially targeted to pay high taxes.
- Women were forced to wear a specific type of robe called a *jilbaab* made of heavy black fabric and which covered their arms, heads, and went to their feet. They were required to wear socks, gloves, and *nikab* (face cover). Women were arrested for

[773] Interview participants spoke specifically about girls being expected to follow these rules and violently punished if they did not follow them.
[774] Johan Galtung, "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research," *Journal of Peace Research* 6, no. 3 (September 1969): 167–91, https://doi.org/10.1177/002234336900600301.

wearing traditional colorful Somali dresses (*dirac).* Women were also banned for wearing bras.

- Women were not allowed to use tampons, go to hair salons, or use bleaching creams.
- Watching television, movies, and listening to the radio was banned.
- Live music was not allowed.
- In addition to banning wedding ceremonies, Al-Shabaab also restricted burial ceremonies.
- The population was denied access to humanitarian assistance including food aid. Non-governmental organizations in the regions were banned. This led to shortages in medical supplies in Kismayo.
- Access to hospitals was restricted and interview participants told stories about not being able to go to a hospital because they did not have a male relative (or someone Al-Shabaab thought was a male relative) with them.
- Livestock and certain harvested foods were confiscated by Al-Shabaab.
- There were new rules about how to use public transportation with women being made to sit at the back of the bus and men in front seats
- Secular education was banned and young people were required to attend *madrassas* (religious schools) and pay for this schooling.
- Female teachers could no longer teach girls and boys. Female teachers were only allowed to teach girls in religious schools.
- The entire population was required to attend daily prayers. Business owners had to close their shops and restaurants during these prayers.
- Al-Shabaab could look at people's phones at any time.

The fear and restriction in women/girls' lives under Al-Shabaab rule was severe. One male interview participant noted, "Many women preferred death than living under al-Shabaab."[775] Female and male interview participants noted that women faced an especially high threat of violence from Al-Shabaab during Al-Shabaab's control of Kismayo. Al-Shabaab created a set of rules for women/girls in Kismayo and violently punished women/girls who they thought were violating these rules. Male interview participants in Kismayo spoke specifically about how difficult life was for women under Al-Shabaab. When asked if there were any positive effects for women/girls under Al-Shabaab's rule, one male interview participant replied:

> There was nothing good for women in those days. They used to beat them with canes saying they did not dress well. There was a woman they stoned to death. Women lived in difficult situations under them [Al-Shabaab]. Even those poor ones who cannot even buy the hijab, they cannot say they cannot afford it because they are afraid they may be harmed.[776]

As noted by the interviewee above, Al-Shabaab promoted new standards in Kismayo about how women/girls should dress thereby promoting a new form of acceptable femininity.

Women's freedom and business opportunities were severely restricted under Al-Shabaab rule opening space for men to reclaim dominance in public spaces. Indeed, controlling relations between men and women was an essential part of Al-Shabaab's control in Kismayo. Men and women were not allowed to associate unless they were related. Women could not go out in public without a male relative.

Violence against women/girls by Al-Shabaab mostly occurred within the context of punishment for breaking Al-Shabaab's rules. Importantly, Al-Shabaab wanted to control gender relations more broadly within Kismayo and make itself the ultimate authority in rules and

[775] Interview with male driver, C.
[776] Interview with male shop owner, G.

practices related to gender relations. This was part of Al-Shabaab's strategy of binding the population to the group and taking away power from traditional Somali authorities.

Al-Shabaab's control of women/girls is part of a strategy to control female sexuality. There were specific subjects that Al-Shabaab focused on. One was adultery, which for women/girls was punishable by death. Interview participants also spoke about Al-Shabaab's rules related to women having children out of wedlock. One female interview participant described these changes, "Under Al-Shabaab authority, young women who had babies out of wedlock and who used to abandon their babies stopped doing it. No young women dared to get pregnant or have babies out of wedlock. Similarly, men stopped sexually exploiting young women."[777]

Women were also prevented from operating small businesses. Woman in Kismayo spoke about the ways in which they tried to get around Al-Shabaab rules by operating their businesses in secret or by having friends or business associates pretend to be related to them. The restrictions related to women engaging in business activity were a significant shift because Somali women play an important economic role in society and often work outside the home.[778]

Al-Shabaab was engaged in the process of social engineering as part of creating their new ideal society, which they saw as operating in line with patriarchal Islamic standards about gender roles and relations. Al-Shabaab's focus on controlling women and relations between men and women also reinforced their authority over the population of Kismayo and infiltrated all aspects of life for Somalis. There was no way to escape Al-Shabaab's rule or authority when they controlled one's livelihood, marriage, sexual relations, who one could associate with, how one moved in public spaces and even how one was to dress.

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[777] Interview with female youth activist, W14, September 30, 2017.
[778] Abdi, "Convergence of Civil War and the Religious Right: Reimagining Somali Women," 188.

This is an area in which simplistic views of Al-Shabaab as an "Islamic" group distort an understanding of the changes it was forcing in society. Al-Shabaab did not bring Islam to Somalia and before they ruled Kismayo the population was practicing its own form of Islam. However, Al-Shabaab promoted a form of Islam that imposed new regulations that most of the population of Kismayo had not previously incorporated as part of their adherence to Islam. Al-Shabaab used its own patriarchal, ideological interpretation of Islam to assert its own authority.

One of the first places that conservative Islamic groups seeking to control a population start to assert their authority is by controlling women's dress, movement and sexuality.[779] Cawo Abdi traces the control by Islamic rebel groups over women's dress and bodies. Abdi writes that that religious Islamic conservatives want to reconstruct an imagined Islamic society "untarnished by colonial influences and modern ideas."[780] This reconstruction requires a constant evaluation of what constitutes Islamic society and one of its key characteristics is "an obsession with women, women's bodies, and women's sexuality."[781] Abdi describes Somali women's traditional attire which included a dress that was made of a lighter fabric (also called a *dirac)* that allowed for mobility and some women also wore a light scarf that left the face, neck, and shoulders uncovered.[782]

Abdi tracks changes in Somali women dress during periods of conflict and explains that during the clan conflicts in the 1990s in Somalia women started wearing pants in an attempt to protect themselves from rape. She quotes a woman who described why women changed how they dressed in the conflict in the early 1990s:

> We started wearing these trousers under our clothes during the flight. Women were getting raped. If a woman is wearing a dirac, it can just be pulled or torn off in no time;

[779] Abdi, "Convergence of Civil War and the Religious Right: Reimagining Somali Women."
[780] Abdi, 186.
[781] Abdi, 186.
[782] Abdi, 187.

> but if she has tight trousers underneath [naag surweel ku giigsan], then help may come in time. Women started wearing these trousers for protection and as defense from violence.[783]

Dress in Somalia has historically adapted to the state of conflict and type of violence used in the conflict. It is therefore not unusual for violent Islamist organizations to attempt to control women's dress and this was a major component of Al-Shabaab rule in Kismayo.

Women in Kismayo spoke extensively about Al-Shabaab's requirements for women to wear a "long and heavy jilbaab."[784] The jilbaab is usually black and is a long robe with long sleeves and a hood leaving only a women's face and hands exposed. However, to prevent any of women's skin being exposed in Somalia, Al-Shabaab also required women in Kismayo to cover their faces and wear socks and gloves.[785] Before Al-Shabaab came to power, women in Kismayo usually wore a *dirac.*[786] Many interview participants in Kismayo spoke about the new burden Al-Shabaab's dress code imposed on women. In particular, the population in Kismayo noted the burden for older women, pregnant women, or women with health issues to wear the jilbaab.[787] The jilbaab also presented a challenge for women to perform basic tasks around the home such as cooking with firewood or washing dishes.[788] Many interview participants shared stories of doing housework and going outside to take out dirty water or the trash and being stopped and beaten or arrested by Al-Shabaab for not wearing proper dress.[789]

Al-Shabaab was seen as bringing its own conservative interpretation of Islam to Kismayo that represented a change from what the population expected. There was nothing inherently "traditional" in the rules Al-Shabaab imposed on women in Kismayo. Rather, the rules reflect

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[783] Abdi, 191.
[784] Interview with female part-time businesswoman from minority clan, W16.
[785] Interview with female peace activist, W3, September 24, 2017. Interview with female peace activist, W5.
[786] Interview with female peace activist, W3.
[787] Female cleaner from minority clan, W6; Interview with female traditional birth attendant, W13.
[788] Interview with Female cleaner from minority clan, W6.
[789] male driver, C; female peace activist, W3; Interview with female youth activist, W2.

Al-Shabaab's broader ideology and goal to control women. One interview participant explained that after Al-Shabaab was expelled from Kismayo women threw their heavy jilbaabs away. She explained that women, "hated it [the jilbaab] and only wore it because they were forced to wear it. Women never consented to wearing the heavy jilbaab. They wore it out of fear and because they obeyed Al-Shabaab's rulings and orders."[790]

Al-Shabaab's rules were also not consistently applied, which created an uncertainty and increased fear for those living under their rule. One male interview participant explained, "They are a system but they were selective in their rule. For example, the lady may go to the market thinking that she is dressed modestly. However, Al-Shabaab may think she is not dressed good enough. This was a challenge to women under Al-Shabaab."[791] The fact that women never knew if they would be dressed correctly to avoid Al-Shabaab punishment was a way in which Al-Shabaab asserted control over women's bodies. Women could never feel secure and free from Al-Shabaab judgment or questioning. As part of an ideology that focuses on building a new pure society dominated by Al-Shabaab men, Al-Shabaab emphasized the purity of women and attempted to limit any appearance of sexuality. Women's sexuality left unchecked was seen as something dangerous to the male-dominated society and had to be controlled.

Cases of Rape Perpetrated by Al-Shabaab

One of the most significant examples of the violence perpetrated against women and girls and Al-Shabaab's response to policies about rape, was the stoning of a young woman in Kismayo in 2008. Over a quarter of interview participants brought up this incident when discussing Al-Shabaab's treatment of women in Kismayo. This event was also discussed within the Somali diaspora in the United States. Amina Ali, a woman who was tried in the U.S. District

[790] Interview with female part-time businesswoman from minority clan, W16.
[791] Interview with male manual laborer, E.

Court in Minnesota for fundraising for Al-Shabaab, discussed this incident on a conference call with other Somali women in the United States.[792] International news outlets reported on this incident.[793] There are different accounts of how old the victim was, with reports saying she was anywhere between age 13-23.[794] There are also diverse accounts of how the young woman came in contact with Al-Shabaab, but most interview participants and news reports, believe she was gang raped by members of Al-Shabaab.[795] One interview participant explained:

> There was a case involving a young girl who was mentally ill who was raped by Al-Shabaab men. The same men who raped her told her to go to their office and report that she had sex with men that she was not married to. She went there and confessed to them. They then sentenced her to death.[796]

Reports also claimed the young woman had previously been in Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya.[797] Other interview participants described the young woman as mentally disabled.[798]

Al-Shabaab leadership in Kismayo sentenced the young woman to death for *zinna* or sex outside of marriage. The population in Kismayo was required to watch the woman be stoned to death in town. This was a significant event in Al-Shabaab's rule in Kismayo and interview participants spoke about their horrific experiences of watching the stoning. This event was a breaking point, as the population who may have initially supported Al-Shabaab seemed to turn against them after the stoning death of the young woman. Interview participants spoke about being traumatized from watching the stoning and crying for days. One woman described a shift in her perspective after being forced to watch the stoning:

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[792] Ali 11.
[793] "Sad End for Young Refugee | The Star," accessed October 12, 2018, https://www.thestar.com/news/world/2008/12/21/sad_end_for_young_refugee.html.
[794] "Sad End for Young Refugee | The Star" described the victim as 13 years old whereas in an interview she was described as around 15 years old . Interview with female small business owner, Respondent 13.
[795] "Sad End for Young Refugee | The Star" also notes that Voice of America reported that she was raped by three men.
[796] Interview with female business person, W4.
[797] "Sad End for Young Refugee | The Star"; Interview with female small business owner, W18.
[798] male driver, C; Interview with female small business owner, Respondent 13.

> I was there watching this horrific killing and I felt so helpless and powerless. I cried that day and many days. Everybody was traumatized by this case. But due to Al-Shabaab restrictions, we had to survive and cope with the challenges. I went along with their demands and restrictions, yet, I challenged them...[799]

The stoning was a misstep in Al-Shabaab's governance structure and demonstrated how miscalculating the ways in which one controls sexual relations and violence against girls and women can lead to a decrease in popularity both inside Kismayo and internationally. Rather than have the population suspect that members of Al-Shabaab raped this woman, Al-Shabaab authorities decided to execute her. The public nature of the punishment reinforced Al-Shabaab's image of control over girls and women and provided a warning to others who might accuse Al-Shabaab of rape.

It is also significant that this was a case of gang rape, which further supports Cohen's argument about the link between cohesion and gang rape.[800] The gang rape occurred in 2008 which was the first year of Al-Shabaab's rule of Kisamyo. Gang rape may have been allowed or tolerated as an internal cohesion building strategy before the group established its system of forced marriage in Kismayo.

Somalis were also reacting to the stoning outside of Somalia. Amina Ali discusses the stoning with women on her conference call line that Somali women across the United States called into for lectures by religious leaders and to fundraise for Al-Shabaab. Although the trial only includes Ali's side of the conversation it appears that she is reacting to other women's comments on the conference line who objected to Al-Shabaab's stoning of the young woman. Ali defends Al-Shabaab's actions in relation to the stoning by stating:

> It is our opinion that, the claim about the girl being twelve years old and being stoned to death is the work of infidels. The girl was stoned to death in Kismayo. The girl had been

[799] female former Koranic school teacher, Respondent 2.
[800] Cohen, "Explaining Rape during Civil War."

> married in the past. She was over twenty years of age. Anyway, there is a video recording of her. She came to the court on her own. She confessed.[801]

Al-Shabaab correctly assessed that its treatment of women and girls would receive attention from Somalis outside Somalia. The leadership of Al-Shabaab likely chose to punish this young woman to avoid any examination of the sexual behavior of its own members that threatened the discipline of the group. However, Al-Shabaab miscalculated the way in which the news about this event would spread and the international condemnation of the violence and sympathy towards the young woman. The fact that the story of the stoning was a topic of conversation between Al-Shabaab's network of fundraisers demonstrates how significant sexual relations and the treatment of women were to the group's strategy and ideology. Ali had to defend Al-Shabaab's behavior in this situation to try and prevent losing support and resources.

There was one place where interview participants in Kismayo reported that rape was perpetrated by Al-Shabaab and this was in Al-Shabaab jails and detention sites. These were places where Al-Shabaab had complete authority and were not being observed by the public. As part of exerting Al-Shabaab's authority over women who disobeyed their rules they used rape. This type of violence or the "symbolism of gender and punishment of women's (and men's) gender transgression" is a key category of gender-based violence highlighted by Margaret Urban Walker.[802] Walker explains that "transgression by women of their socially assigned meaning" can be punished through severe forms of violence including rape. [803] Al-Shabaab's ideology allowed for a forced marriage system involving women who adhered to Al-Shabaab's ideal femininity. Al-Shabaab did not tolerate women that did not fit within this system. According to

[801] United States of America v. Amina Farah Ali and Hawo Mohamed Hassan, File No. CR-10-187 (MJD/FLN). United States District Court District of Minnesota, 2011.
[802] Walker, "Gender and Violence in Focus: A Background for Gender Justice Reparations," 35.
[803] Walker, 36.

Cawo, women are only labeled "good Muslims" when they abide by the new rules and prescriptions of Islam.[804] Al-Shabaab was raping women in jails as a way to police femininities not allowed in their ideal society. One interview participant explained this dynamic:

> Al-Shabaab used to call women who refused them "difficult women." They were looking for any opportunity that can allow them to harass these women. If they find the girl in a dress other than the Al-Shabaab prescribed one, then they will be taken to the station and face mistreatment. They may even rape them in the station.[805]

According to a UN Women study in a different area of southern Somalia, Al-Shabaab raped women within Al-Shabaab's courts.[806] This reinforces my theory that rape was used by Al-Shabaab members as a punishment against women. Rape was associated with disciplining women in Al-Shabaab and, similar to the goals of forced marriage, was part of their project to control women.

There were also accounts of rape perpetrated by members of Al-Shabaab in areas that were not fully under their control. This fits with my theory because in these areas Al-Shabaab did not have an extensive marriage system and was not as focused as building cohesion within the population. Goobweyn is a region in which Al-Shabaab did not have full control where members perpetrated rape. A Somali government official noted that Goodweyn was an area where observers "cannot refute [rape] happens."[807] Goobweyn, according to the interview participant, is controlled by Jubbaland security (government forces) in the day and Al-Shabaab at night. The interview participant had heard of instances where Al-Shabaab would go to homes at night and would rape girls and their mothers. The government official detailed one incident

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[804] Abdi, "Convergence of Civil War and the Religious Right: Reimagining Somali Women," 195.
[805] Interview with Male interview participant, I.
[806] Allen, Idris, and Chopra, "Women's Access to Justice and Security in Somalia's Afmadow District: A Snapshot," 17.
[807] Interview with Somali Government Official, 145, May 23, 2017.

where Al-Shabaab wanted to take a girl as a wife and the family said no, in retaliation Al-Shabaab raped the mother. Al-Shabaab did not have established authority in this region and its ability to assert its forced marriage system was challenged and that challenge was met with direct violence against the mother and family.

Al-Shabaab has a different policy regarding rape of Kenyan women. These women are not seen as the constituency for Al-Shabaab's ideal society and thus do not fit into the ideological and strategic reasons for prohibiting rape and promoting forced marriage.[808] Recent information emerged regarding the trafficking of Kenyan women to live in an Al-Shabaab camp in the Boni Forest at the border of Kenya and Somalia.[809] The Kenyan women in the camps are forced to perform tasks for Al-Shabaab like providing sexual services, cooking or cleaning weapons.[810] Women in the camps at the border also reported that they received weapons training. In interviews about their time spent in the camp, the Kenyan women spoke about experiences of rape and gang rape by Al-Shabaab combatants. According to a key informant who spoke to a woman who spent time in this camp, there were about 40 Kenyan women in the camp at one point.[811] Another key informant who met the women who had spent time in this camp shared his impression of the camp. He explained:

> It strikes me as deeply hypocritical in an ideological sense. It seemed to be as a big group of men who couldn't keep their home lives in order, couldn't cook for themselves, and clean for themselves, and also have these kinds of desires. It was organized…I don't know who is organizing it, but it seems like a way to keep fighters happy, keep them content, and give them a misguided notion of purity and paradise they are looking for.[812]

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[808] For a discussion of the link between gender and nationality in Al-Shabaab's treatment of women see Petrich and Donnelly, "Worth Many Sins: Al-Shabaab's Shifting Relationships with Women."
[809] Attwood, "The Sex Slaves of Al-Shabab."
[810] *The Sex Slaves of Al-Shabaab* (BBC News Documentary, 2017), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jtHNElp04aQ.
[811] Interview with Key Informant, 166, March 28, 2017.
[812] Interview with Key Informant, 136, February 7, 2018.

When I asked whether the women there were all Kenyan the key informant responded, "We did come across some Somali women [described as] 'legitimate wives'"[813] The key informant went on to note that there were different groups of women including these "wives" who were there "to build the next generation of soldiers for Islam."[814] It is significant that Al-Shabaab has different policies towards Kenyan women as compared to Somali women. Whereas Somali women were part of the population that would be included in Al-Shabaab's ideal society within Somalia, Kenyan women who were not of Somali descent were not envisioned as part of this ideal society. For this reason, rules about femininity and sexuality for Kenyan women were different than Somali women.

LORD'S RESISTANCE ARMY

Rape in Northern Uganda

The context for discussing sexual violence in Uganda was different from Somalia, with some individuals seemingly more comfortable in discussing the topic. At the same time there was a denial of rape being part of Acholi culture. Holly Porter, who wrote a book on rape in northern Uganda, notes that while some people thought her topic was too sensitive to discuss she found that female survivors of rape seemed relieved to have the opportunity to talk about their experiences.[815] Porter notes that men also seemed willing to talk about rape, but as something that other men do.[816]

Similar to Somalia, there was a denial that rape occurred within the Acholi culture. Porter notes that many people said, "there is no rape in Acholi."[817] Porter interpreted this statement as a

[813] Interview with Key Informant.
[814] Interview with Key Informant.
[815] Porter, *After Rape: Violence, Justice and Social Harmony in Uganda*, 15.
[816] Porter, 15.
[817] Porter, 16.

normative idea of how things ought to be instead of a statement of fact.[818] It is noteworthy that in Somali culture and Acholi culture there is a denial of rape rooted in the sense that it does not traditionally occur within their societies. The social context in northern Uganda and Kenya, influences Al-Shabaab and the LRA's decision about whether, when, where and how to allow rape by their members.

LRA's Strategic and Ideological Reasons for Limiting Rape

LRA leadership prohibited rape of non-group members. The leadership also prohibited any sexual relations outside its forced marriage system. The LRA's prohibition was largely effective. In Porter's study, she documents 94 incidences of rape and notes that only 13 of these were by the LRA and 6 of the 13 were within the context of LRA forced marriages.[819] Annan, et al. in their study of female returnees also note that rape outside forced marriages was rare.[820]

The LRA used its forced marriage system to build cohesion and by improving cohesion inside the group they were able to successfully restrict cases of rape outside forced marriages. Yet there are still questions regarding the link between the LRA's forced marriage system and their broader success in restricting rape.

Similar to Al-Shabaab, there were strategic reasons the LRA wanted to restrict rape outside of forced marriage that involved contrasting itself with other groups operating in northern Uganda. There was an increase in STDs in Uganda in the 1990s, which has been attributed to "indiscriminate rape" of men and women by the National Resistance Army (NRA).[821] There was a fear of rape by the Ugandan military (UPDF) within members of the

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[818] Porter, 16.
[819] Porter, "After Rape," 82.
[820] J. Annan et al., "Civil War, Reintegration, and Gender in Northern Uganda," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 55, no. 6 (December 1, 2011): 884, https://doi.org/10.1177/0022002711408013.
[821] Baines, "Forced Marriage as a Political Project," 413. See also, Branch, *Displacing Human Rights: War and Intervention in Northern Uganda*, 64.

LRA. Grace Acan writes in her memoir that she heard that one of her schoolmates was raped by the UPDF and died.[822] Acan told someone within the LRA that, "I cannot surrender to the UPDF because they have that anger in them, and most of them have this idea of raping women. Moreover, nobody knows their HIV status. I don't want to be a victim of gang rape."[823] This contrast was useful for the LRA as it was for Al-Shabaab. The LRA's ideology of promoting a new pure Acholi was in contrast to the Acholi society that was victimized and raped by the NRA and UPDF.

The lack of rape outside of forced marriages in the LRA is often attributed to LRA leader Joseph Kony's fear of sexual transmitted diseases (STDs). LRA members have died of AIDS, including the LRA second in command George Omona Komakech Field who died in 1997.[824] Erin Baines explains there was a fear of STDs "infiltrating the internal purity of the new Acholi."[825] Trying to reduce STDs was certainly an important motivation for the LRA's policy prohibiting rape by group members, but it does not fully capture the role of controlling sexual relations of its members in the LRA's strategy.

The LRA's limit on rape and any sexual relations outside of forced marriage systems was part of its broader strategy to improve cohesion, command and control inside the group. The LRA's centralized marriage system was a way for the group's leadership to control all aspects of members' lives. The LRA leadership did not want members to have the freedom to choose their sexual partners outside of LRA marriages. Limiting sexual relations outside of forced marriage was a central rule enforced within the LRA. When I asked former members of the LRA about rules in general within the group, most of them discussed rules related to sexual relations.

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[822] Acan, *Not Yet Sunset: A Story of Survival and Perseverance in LRA Captivity*, 160.
[823] Acan, 154.
[824] Baines, "Forced Marriage as a Political Project," 413.
[825] Baines, 413.

Interview participants shared rules that men can't start an intimate or sexual relationship with a woman "at will" but that it had to be sanctioned by commanders.[826] This rule was a part of the LRA's "Standing Orders" which noted that adultery (sex outside its forced marriage systems) was punishable by death.[827]

Other rules related to controlling sexual relations of LRA members included the requirement to wait until females inside the LRA were old enough (had developed breasts or menstruated) before engaging in sexual relations. There were also restrictions about having sex with one's assigned husband or wife at certain periods.[828] These rules were important to the LRA and were enforced in two different ways. The first way the LRA enforced these rules was by publicly punishing people who broke them. Many interview participants spoke about seeing individuals severely punished, even executed, for having sexual relations outside of LRA marriages. Grace Acan writes that she witnessed the killing by commanders of two couples that were engaged in sexual relations not sanctioned by the LRA leadership.[829]

The second way in which this rule was enforced was through spiritual premonitions. Kony and other LRA leaders said that if someone engaged in sexual relations outside of LRA marriages they would be killed in battle or some other harmful fate would come to them.[830] This threat of punishment was a successful way of enforcing the rule because it required no action from the leadership. It also made members feel they were always being watched and could be severely punished even if they weren't directly caught by the LRA leadership. When people

[826] Interview with Former female member of the LRA, L8.
[827] Acan, *Not Yet Sunset: A Story of Survival and Perseverance in LRA Captivity*, 60.
[828] Interview with Former female member of the LRA, L10.
[829] Acan, *Not Yet Sunset: A Story of Survival and Perseverance in LRA Captivity*, 84.
[830] Interview with Former female member of the LRA, L10.

were harmed in battle or got sick in the LRA, it was often attributed to a past situation in which they broke a rule.

Forced Marriage as a Violation

Forced marriage was seen as a severe abuse of Acholi norms and culture. It was also seen as worse than rape. Porter writes, "sexual violence was experienced more as a violation of the individual woman, whereas the rape that happened as part of forced marriage was experienced as a crime against the individual, her family, and her clan, as well as the general mores of Acholi society."[831] The ways in which forced marriages within the LRA broke with traditional ideas about marriage were significant. Porter notes that despite similarities between marriages outside the LRA and LRA marriages, there were distinct differences, especially related to the payments, or *luk*, associated with marriages outside the LRA.[832] There are also ideas within Acholi culture about "sex in the bush." Porter writes that sex in the bush was seen as a desecration of norms about the purpose of sex involving the creation of a home.[833] This home could not be created in the bush as the LRA intended. Porter concludes that women who were in forced marriages were outside of their moral community and into an "entirely different and dangerous moral space."[834]

Interview participants saw LRA forced marriage as separate from marriages outside the group. One male interview participant said that there was so much force in LRA marriages that he thought it shouldn't even be called marriage.[835] A male Acholi culture leader who described traditional marriage practices to me said about LRA marriage, "That was not marriage, that was war."[836] Forced marriage was not used by the LRA because it was seen as less offensive than

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[831] Porter, "After Rape," 86.
[832] Porter, *After Rape: Violence, Justice and Social Harmony in Uganda*, 167.
[833] Porter, "After Rape," 87.
[834] Porter, 87.
[835] Interview with Former male member of the LRA, L3.
[836] Interview with Male Acholi cultural leader, L32.

rape. Instead, forced marriage provided broader strategic and ideological benefits than rape would have. The prohibition against rape by members of the LRA was not created to limit violence against the population because the LRA used other forms of violence against women outside the group.

Violence against Women by the LRA

The LRA's use of violence against the Acholi population was a key characteristic of their operations in northern Uganda. Adam Branch explains that the LRA's campaign of violence against civilians had two aspects, one to target government supporters and the other to widely target the civilian population to bring it under the rebel's control and authority.[837] Branch notes the LRA's goal was to create a polarized society, between the LRA and the government, and to demonstrate that the government could not protect the Acholi population.[838]

Additionally, the fact that the LRA used specific forms of violence against the civilian population – but not rape – I argue is in line with the LRA's cohesion strategy and ideology. The LRA focused on members breaking ties with civilian populations and instead wanted to build ties with group members as part of forming a new Acholi. Therefore, the LRA did not want to encourage prolonged interaction between members and nongroup members. Cohen explains that rape takes more time than other forms of violence and adds an additional layer of intimacy for perpetrators because they use their body as a weapon.[839] Instead of rape, the LRA used other direct and symbolic forms of violence against the Acholi people.

The LRA's campaign of civilian violence targeted all Acholi people: men, women, boys, and girls. Sverker Finnström describes the violence in the conflict between the LRA and NRA as

[837] Branch, *Displacing Human Rights: War and Intervention in Northern Uganda*, 70.
[838] Branch, 70–74.
[839] Cohen, *Rape During Civil War*, 35.

a new pattern because women became direct targets of violence.[840] Part of the LRA's power came from the fact that it used symbolic violence that did not have discernible boundaries. According to Ruddy Doom and Koen Vlassenroot, the LRA's use of amputation, specifically cutting off lips or ears of women, was to send a message to civilians about the cost of telling the authorities about LRA activities.[841] Peter Eichstaedt gives an example of one woman who worked for the local government who was ambushed by members of the LRA who cut off her lips and ears and told her to go back to the UPDF army to tell them, "The LRA is waiting."[842]

To understand the frequency and types of violence perpetrated against youth, I reviewed data from the "Survey of War Affected Youth" (SWAY II study), which is a survey of 619 young women and girls in northern Uganda. SWAY II found that 90 percent of females surveyed had their personal property destroyed or taken, 18 percent received a severe beating to the body, 11 percent received a physical injury in a battle or rebel attack, and 7 percent were tied or locked up as a prisoner.[843] These findings reinforce the idea that it is not as if the LRA had a more general pattern of restraint of violence against civilians, or women specifically, but instead specifically prohibited rape of civilians.

When I asked former members of the LRA about their interaction with civilians and if there were any rules for interacting with civilians, most interview participants did not seem interested in discussing this topic. This may have been because they did not want to talk about their own participation in violence against civilians. Another reason for the lack of comments on this topic may be that the LRA tried to limit interactions between civilians and group

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[840] Finnström, "Wars of the Past and War in the Present: The Lord's Resistance Movement/Army in Uganda," 206.
[841] Doom and Vlassenroot, "Kony's Message: A New Koine? The Lord's Resistance Army in Northern Uganda," 27.
[842] Peter Eichstaedt, *First Kill Your Family: Child Soldiers of Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army* (Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 2009).
[843] Annan et al., "SWAY II," 29.

members.[844] This could have been to prevent the escape of LRA members or to prevent civilians from telling the government about the LRA's location.

One interview participant spoke about the interaction between members of the LRA and women outside the group in the context of raiding a village. She said that the LRA response to the villagers depended on how they responded to the LRA raiding their village and if women did not acquiesce, the LRA would kill them.[845] According to this interview participant, in the context of raiding, violence was to be used against civilians only if necessary and then as a punishment. Thus, the LRA needed its female members to raid civilian environments, but LRA leadership did not want them to engage with civilians unless the leadership deemed it necessary.

Cases of Rape Perpetrated by the LRA

Although it was rare for rape to be perpetrated outside of LRA forced marriages, it is useful to examine when and why this rule was broken. There were two different types of situations that interview participants shared with me when I asked if rape outside of LRA marriages ever occurred. One interview participant said a commander raped her and other newly abducted females.[846] She thought this might be a way for this commander to claim newly abducted females as wives. The pattern of rape of young women/girls before they were married is also confirmed in Erin Baines research. Baines' interview participants described instances where commanders raped younger females who were assigned to commanders home as babysitters (*ting ting*) prior to marriage.[847] Baines notes that commander Charles Tabuley was beaten in public and demoted after other LRA leadership found out he forced a *ting ting* to

[844] Baines, "Forced Marriage as a Political Project," 410.
[845] Interview with Former male member of the LRA, L3.
[846] Interview with Former female member of the LRA, L22, December 15, 2017.
[847] Baines, *Buried in the Heart: Women, Complex Victimhood and the War in Northern Uganda*, 45.

become his wife (likely meaning he raped her) without permission of the high command.[848] It is notable that this instance of rape was still framed within the LRA system of marriage. This case of rape reveals a flaw in LRA cohesion and illustrates a competitive assertion of masculinity that the LRA was trying to avoid by assigning wives.

Another interview participant explained that members of the LRA who didn't have a wife and didn't think they would get a wife would rape women. He notes that he was abducted in 1993 and wasn't "given a woman" until 2004.[849] He emphasized that this was a long time to wait for a wife. He explained, "People are not strong hearted. They would sin and go outside the rule [prohibiting sex outside of marriage]."[850] This pattern also relates to ideas about masculinity and Dolan's concept of "thwarted masculinity." Dolan explains that for male recruits in the LRA access to women was closely controlled. Thus, participating in the LRA was not an assured way to satisfy thwarted masculinity.[851] The LRA's forced marriage system was intended to promote cohesion, but there were instances where cohesion was weakened by male members challenging the rules about forced marriage and their sexual access to women and girls.

The other situation in which rape outside of forced marriage occurred was when members were operating in smaller groups and outside centralized control. One interview participant explained, "Some people, really big people [i.e., commanders], didn't have wives. If sent on a mission and a woman or girl was there, they would rape her."[852] It is notable that this participant described this form of rape in context of the LRA's forced marriage system. A member of the

[848] Baines, 45.
[849] Interview with Former male member of the LRA, L23.
[850] Interview with Former male member of the LRA.
[851] Dolan, *Social Torture: The Case of Northern Uganda 1986-2006*, 204.
[852] Interview with Former female member of the LRA, L10.

LRA was only thought to use rape, not as a part of LRA strategy, but opportunistically when they had power in the LRA but they did not have a wife.

LRA members were in situations of less centralized control after Operation Fist when the Ugandan military destroyed the LRA bases in South Sudan. Rapes occurred during this period when the LRA was operating in smaller groups and members were less under the direct control of LRA leadership.[853] Because of increased fighting and flight, there was no ability on the part of the LRA to maintain the women and children through forced marriage systems. After Operation Iron First many of the women and children inside the LRA were released by leadership or escaped. This was a period in which the forced marriage system and families were breaking down. When the LRA gave up on its goals of forming a new society through marriage, it was less concerned about controlling its members' sexual relations.

The link between the LRA's ideology and sexual violence becomes clear in analyzing the situation of the female senior members of the LRA (referred to as "the originals"). Baines notes that one original woman questioned the movement when she found out her husband raped a seven-year-old girl. According to Baines this made the original woman question her role in the movement and Baines writes, "If she was unable to uphold the rules of the spirits and assume her role as a head wife to fulfill their wishes, why was she there?"[854] This experience of her husband's rape of a girl in the LRA made the original woman question the ideology of the LRA related to spiritual foundations of the group and her responsibility in the act. Violations of rules surrounding forced marriage were seen not only the responsibility of this married commander, but also his wife saw it as her role to ensure compliance with the forced marriage system.

CONCLUSION

[853] Interview with Former female member of the LRA, L22.
[854] Baines, *Buried in the Heart: Women, Complex Victimhood and the War in Northern Uganda*, 68.

For a forced marriage system to be effective in promoting cohesion and support a rebel group's ideological goals of creating a new pure society, rebel group leadership should be able to effectively prevent rape outside of forced marriage. The way in which a forced marriage system promotes cohesion is by giving rebel groups control of the sexual relations of its members and/or populations it seeks to control. If members of rebel groups are allowed to have sexual relations outside of these controlled relationships it reduces the authority of the rebel group and reduces cohesion.

Preventing rape also is important for rebel groups ideologies that are seeking to create a new society. The LRA wanted to create a pure Acholi in which individuals reproducing the population had been cleansed and capable of reproducing this new society in which the lineage was not to a clan but to the LRA. Al-Shabaab promoted itself as a force guided by the principles of "true" Islam. One of these principles prohibits sex outside of marriage. Additionally, Al-Shabaab wanted to appear legitimate to local populations by being a force that promoted justice and security. For this purpose, being seen as a group that did not use rape and instead protected women, was useful for their attempts to build external legitimacy and support internationally.

This chapter also analyzes the ways in which different forms of sexual violence (rape and forced marriage) are perceived by affected populations and external populations. There is value in analyzing how rape or forced marriage break, manipulate, or sustain ideas about sexual relations between men and women.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION

THEORY OF FORCED MARRIAGE

"They behaved very strangely in terms of their determination and need of forced marriage," explained a female interview participant in Kismayo, Somalia.[855] Forced marriage matters to rebel groups, yet scholars and policymakers have not asked why. This dissertation answers the question of why rebel groups use forced marriage and importantly why paying attention to patterns of forced marriage matters for understanding rebel groups.

Forced marriage is a unique pattern of violence and has different motivations than sexual violence or sexual slavery. There is significance in the label wife, as confirmed in the Special Court of Sierra Leone, that reflects the future planning of a rebel group.[856] Forced marriage is not just about sex, as it is often viewed, but instead is about building relationships and connections among groups of people. In Al-Shabaab, forced marriage was used to build connections between Al-Shabaab and the population of Kismayo. In the LRA, forced marriage was used to build connections between group members. I have used the terms *external* and *internal* cohesion, but forced marriage is most simply about attempts by rebel groups to build relationships and connections.

The goal to build cohesion is a strategic view of forced marriage, however, forced marriage cannot only be explained through a strategic lens. Not all rebel groups that have a challenge related to cohesion (such as being composed of abducted youth or attempting to govern a region) use forced marriage. In addition to fulfilling a strategic need, forced marriage is also an expression of a specific ideology. In attempting to describe the ideologies of rebel groups

[855] Interview with female former khat/ciggarette seller, Respondent 20, March 12, 2018.
[856] N. Jain, "Forced Marriage as a Crime against Humanity: Problems of Definition and Prosecution," *Journal of International Criminal Justice* 6, no. 5 (November 1, 2008): 1019, https://doi.org/10.1093/jicj/mqn064.

that use forced marriage, none of the existing labels that scholars have used to classify ideology are appropriate.

At the essence of the ideologies of rebel groups who use forced marriage is the desire to control people and a vision of how people (who are all defined by a gender) should behave. Because of a narrow focus of ideologies as broad political platforms,[857] existing descriptions of ideology do not fully capture rebel groups' beliefs systems. Because of this gap, I created the concept of the ideology of social control. Rebel groups that use forced marriage seek to control existing populations and/or create new populations that operate in line with the rebel group's proposed standards of behavior. These standards of behavior are focused on gender roles – how men, women, boys, and girls should behave, how they should interact with each other, and who should have power in a new society. As part of this vision for an idealized future society, there is the goal of returning power to men that has been lost.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Forced marriage is a trend that is being used by prominent rebel groups in existing conflicts right now including Boko Haram in Nigeria,[858] the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria,[859] and violent Islamist groups operating in Mali.[860] Because of the current prevalence of rebel groups using forced marriage today, it is especially important to reflect on how understanding forced marriage can assist policymakers.

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[857] See Livia Isabella Schubiger and Matthew Zelina, "Ideology in Armed Groups," *PS: Political Science & Politics* 50, no. 4 (October 2017): 948, https://doi.org/10.1017/S1049096517001056 for an overview of the weaknesses in viewing ideology through this lens.
[858] Hilary Matfess, *Women and the War on Boko Haram: Wives, Weapons, Witnesses* (London: Zed Books, 2017), 56–66; Mausi Segun et al., *"Those Terrible Weeks in Their Camp": Boko Haram Violence against Women and Girls in Northeast Nigeria*, Human Rights Watch (Organization) (New York: Human Rights Watch, 2014), 31–32.
[859] Ariel I. Ahram, "Sexual Violence and the Making of ISIS," *Survival* 57, no. 3 (May 4, 2015): 57–78, https://doi.org/10.1080/00396338.2015.1047251.
[860] Kerry Paterson, "Mali Conflict Is Latest to Employ Forced Marriage as Tool of War," Women's Media Center, June 4, 2013, http://www.womensmediacenter.com/women-under-siege/mali-conflict-is-latest-to-employ-forced-marriage-as-tool-of-war.

I view policy implications within the framework of preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE) which focuses not on the use of "hard power" or military operations to weaken rebel groups through force, but instead on "soft power" tools. Specifically, P/CVE focuses on goals such as preventing populations from voluntarily providing support to rebel groups, discrediting the legitimacy of rebel groups, and encouraging members to exit rebel groups.

The first policy implication of my research on forced marriage is that policymakers need to be aware of the presence of women and girls in rebel groups. Despite academic research stressing that women/girls are part of rebel groups[861] and policy documents recognizing women/girls in conflict,[862] many policymakers do not account for the presence of women/girls in rebel groups if they do not see them in active combat roles.[863] Even if women/girls are not visible to policymakers, individuals working on policy must recognize the likelihood that the rebel group relies on and incorporates women/girls into its organization.

The case of Al-Shabaab is especially illuminating on this point because for many years both researchers and policymakers did not acknowledge the potential that the group was relying on women/girls. When I began researching the group in 2011, I was told by scholars and

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[861] Dyan Mazurana, "Women, Girls, and Non-State Opposition Groups," ed. Carol Cohn (Cambridge: Polity, 2013); Susan McKay and Mazurana, Dyan, *Where Are the Girls? Girls in Fighting Forces in Northern Uganda, Sierra Leone, and Mozambique: Their Lives During and After War* (Quebec: International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development, 2004); Alexis Henshaw, *Why Women Rebel: Understanding Women's Participation in Armed Rebel Groups* (New York: Routledge, 2017); Jakana L. Thomas and Kanisha D. Bond, "Women's Participation in Violent Political Organizations," *American Political Science Review* 109, no. 03 (August 2015): 488–506, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055415000313; Reed M Wood and Jakana L Thomas, "Women on the Frontline: Rebel Group Ideology and Women's Participation in Violent Rebellion," *Journal of Peace Research* 54, no. 1 (January 2017): 31–46, https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343316675025.

[862] Most prominent among them United Nations, Security Council, *Women, Peace, and Security*, S/Res/1325, October 31, 2000, available at https://undocs.org/S/RES/1325(2000); see also "The United States National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security," The White House, June 2016, available at https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/National%20Action%20Plan%20on%20Women%2C%20Peace%2C%20and%20Security.pdf.

[863] Phoebe Donnelly, "Women in Al-Shabaab through a New War's Lens," *Women and International Security* (blog), accessed April 3, 2019, https://www.wiisglobal.org/women-in-al-shabaab-through-a-new-wars-lens/.

policymakers that there was no point in studying gender dynamics in Al-Shabaab because it was an all-male group and women/girls were not involved. This oversight and misunderstanding of Al-Shabaab led many to paint a false image of the group membership, tactics, and strategy. An ignorance about the possibility that Al-Shabaab would rely on women led policymakers to miss the patterns of Al-Shabaab forcibly marrying women as well as recruiting women who joined voluntarily.[864] If policymakers had understood that Al-Shabaab, like most rebel groups, relies on women/girls, they could have proactively prepared campaigns to discredit Al-Shabaab to prevent them from gaining legitimacy in certain regions and decrease the appeal of their female recruitment campaign in places like Kenya.[865]

The second related point is that policymakers must plan a path for women/girls (and their children) who have been forcibly married to safely exit or escape rebel groups. Although some women voluntarily marry into rebel groups given the environment of coercion rebel groups are operating in most women/girls face high levels of force once inside rebel groups. Forced wives (defined broadly) should not immediately viewed as suspects or "radicalized." This is not because of essentialist views of women as automatically victims, but instead a recognition of the reality that women/girls married into rebel groups have often been forcibly married or face severe forms of force and gender-based violence once inside the group.

In the case of the LRA, even when forced wives had opportunities to leave the LRA they did not because of fear of being attacked by the Ugandan military (UPDF). In the memoir of

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[864] Most women who joined Al-Shabaab voluntarily are not from Somalia. The most prominent cases of women's voluntary participation in Al-Shabaab are from Kenyan and the United Kingdom, see e.g., The Daily Standard, "Fatuma Musuo: Beauty Whose Heart Was Blown by Al-Shabaab Men," *The Daily Standard*, February 10, 2019, https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2001312582/fatuma-musuo-beauty-whose-heart-was-blown-by-shabaab-men; Meagan Auer, John Sutcliffe, and Martha Lee, "Framing the 'White Widow': Using Intersectionality to Uncover Complex Representations of Female Terrorism in News Media," n.d., 18.
[865] Fathima Badurdeen, "Women and Recruitment in the Al-Shabaab Network: Stories of Women Being Recruited by Women Recruiters in the Coastal Region of Kenya," *The African Review* 45, no. 1 (2018): 19–48.

Evelyn Amony, a forced wife of LRA leader Joseph Kony, she explains that she was shot at repeatedly by the UPDF when trying to leave the group even when she lifted her newborn baby over her head to surrender.[866] If the UPDF had made it easier for women/girls to leave the LRA, it would have been an important strategy to weaken the group as the LRA relied heavily on forced wives for in its strategy and operations.

There are plans for amnesty and deradicalization of men who participate in Al-Shabaab in Somalia and Kenya with the aim of encouraging men to defect from Al-Shabaab and helping them reintegrate into society.[867] During my research, I had informal conversations with international policymakers and international NGO leadership, about whether any of these programs considered the specific needs of women associated with Al-Shabaab. Most programs were unable to accommodate women and I heard one story where a woman who said she was associated with Al-Shabaab tried to enter a deradicalization program for former Al-Shabaab members but was denied access. One international organization had plans to start a program specifically for women, but the latest information I received on this program was that the plans had stalled. This program was likely not seen as an urgent priority for international policymakers and NGOs operating in Somalia. There have been similar challenges within Kenya to reintegrate women who are survivors of Al-Shabaab sexual violence and forced marriage.[868]

Interview participants in Kismayo conveyed the challenges faced by women who were forcibly married into Al-Shabaab. One interview participant summarizes the complications forced wives faced trying to reintegrate into Kismayo:

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[866] Evelyn Amony, *I Am Evelyn Amony* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2015), 103.
[867] John Horgan, "When Terrorists Defect," CNN, accessed January 25, 2019, https://www.cnn.com/2018/05/03/opinions/somalia-lost-boys-opinion-horgan/index.html.
[868] Charlotte Attwood, "The Sex Slaves of Al-Shabab," *BBC News*, May 25, 2017, sec. Magazine, https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-40022953.

> Young women who were forced to marry Al-Shabaab, they are marked forever. It was not their fault. They are purely victims. They were forced to marry Al-Shabaab men. These women can be victimized by others (government forces). They are labeled as Al-Shabaab wives…Even if they are divorced, abandoned by their Al-Shabaab husbands, or lost their husbands, they are always suspects. I see them as women whose rights were violated and abused, but others think that they are supporters of Al-Shabaab.[869]

Forced wives are not only met with suspicion from their communities, but they also can be viewed with suspicion from Somali government officials who may see them as members of Al-Shabaab. Finally, given the value Al-Shabaab places on their forced wives, interview participants spoke about how forced wives who have escaped Al-Shabaab are aggressively targeted by Al-Shabaab members who want them to return to the group. Former forced wives are often forced to flee either to other areas of Somalia (where Al-Shabaab does not operate) or to Kenya.

Children who are born as a result of Al-Shabaab forced marriage also need to be considered by policymakers. They should not be securitized and viewed as a threat, but instead, policymakers need to consider the stigma and challenges in reintegration these children face.[870] Al-Shabaab leadership may target children born into the group through forced recruitment. One interview participant explained, "Children are considered assets and when they grow up, they are expected to become Al-Shabaab and take the places of their fathers."[871]

Overall, policymakers must consider the challenge to communities that have been ruled by Al-Shabaab and recognize that there will be barriers for forced wives, and children born of forced marriage to reintegrate back into their communities. In order to build resilience from

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[869] Interview with female small business owner, W18, September 30, 2017.
[870] For more on children in Al-Shabaab see Phoebe Donnelly, "Children Born into Al-Shabaab," in *Challenging Conceptions: Children Born of Wartime Rape*, ed. Dyan Mazurana and Kimberly Theidon (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019).
[871] Interview with female restaurant owner, 2018.

future Al-Shabaab incursions into communities, policies must be created that focus on reintegration and recovery in the aftermath of forced marriage.

The case of the LRA demonstrates that rebel groups do not want to release forced wives and children and women/girls have only been able to leave the group during periods of extreme combat. Forced wives and children were only able to escape the LRA (or in some cases were released by the LRA) because the LRA faced intense military bombardment during Operation Iron Fist – a military campaign led by the Ugandan government to force the LRA out of its camps in Sudan.[872]

Northern Uganda also illustrates the extreme challenges to communities that occur when a rebel group uses forced marriage. Women who were forcibly married to LRA commanders are still facing stigma and struggling to reintegrate despite having been released fifteen years earlier.[873] In order to fully plan for the recovery of communities who have experienced violence by rebel groups using forced marriage, policymakers must account for the harms forced marriage causes not only to women, but also to their communities.[874]

Finally, understanding forced marriage as representing a specific ideology and a challenge related to cohesion, will allow policymakers to have a more accurate understanding of rebel groups. Scholars and policymakers have struggled with understanding the ideologies (and therefore goals) of Al-Shabaab in Somalia and the LRA in Uganda.[875] By understanding the

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[872] Erin Baines, *Buried in the Heart: Women, Complex Victimhood and the War in Northern Uganda* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 71–74 includes details on women leaving the LRA during Opeation Iron Fist.
[873] Teddy Atim, Dyan Mazurana, and Anastasia Marshak, "Women Survivors and Their Children Born of Wartime Sexual Violence in Northern Uganda," *Disasters* 42, no. S1 (n.d.): S61–78, https://doi.org/10.1111/disa.12275.
[874] See Annie Bunting, Benjamin Lawrance, and Richard Roberts, eds., *Marriage by Force? Contestation over Consent and Coercion in Africa* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, n.d.) for detailed case studies of the effects of forced marriage in different communities across Africa.
[875] For a description of the information and confusion over the goals and ideology of Al-Shabaab see Mary Harper, *Getting Somalia Wrong? Faith, War and Hope in a Shattered State* (London: Zed Books, 2012), 86–90; For a description of the information on confusion over the goals and ideology of the LRA see Sverker Finnström, "An

goals of using a strategy of forced marriage and how this exemplifies an ideology of social control, it becomes clear that Al-Shabaab and the LRA are focused on building new communities within their area of focus (Al-Shabaab in Somalia, and surrounding areas with Somali populations, and the LRA in Acholi areas of northern Uganda). Additionally, recognizing forced marriage as a reaction to a cohesion challenge will prevent policymakers from overestimating the strengths of rebel groups and potentially see opportunities to discredit them and question their legitimacy.

THEORY TESTING

This dissertation proposes a theory of forced marriage, but to strengthen this theory and improve its generalizability, the theory should be tested. I propose testing the theory in two ways. The first way to test my theory of forced marriage will involve quantitatively testing hypotheses associated with the theory. A team of scholars who study sexual violence are working on a dataset that codes for *different forms* of sexual violence cross-nationally. As soon as the dataset is finished, these scholars have agreed to share their data on forced marriage with me. This means I will have access to data on all cases of forced marriage globally. This data will include cases of forced marriage by rebel groups and state forces so I will need to further distinguish by rebel groups. I have outlined potential hypotheses I could test with this data:

H1: Rebel groups trying to govern are more likely to use forced marriage.

H2: Rebel groups that forcibly abduct their members are more likely to use forced marriage.

H3: Rebel groups trying to build a new society from an existing population are more likely to use forced marriage.

African Hell of Colonial Imagination? The Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda, Another Story," in *The Lord's Resistance Army: Myth and Reality*, ed. Tim Allen and Koen Vlassenroot (London: Zed Books, 2010), 74–89.

H4: Rebel groups that see rape as counterproductive to their image and ideology are more likely to use forced marriage.

The second stage of theory testing will involve doing another in-depth case study on at least one other group that used forced marriage. The Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in Sierra Leone is an ideal additional case study because of its significance within the literature on forced marriage and because it set the international legal precedent for forced marriage.[876] The RUF is also an ideal case because unlike Al-Shabaab and the LRA, it is not guided by any religious affiliation. Using Sierra Leone as an additional case study is also consistent with my focus on forced marriage within Africa. A case study on Sierra Leone will be informed by the existing work on gender and forced marriage within the RUF.[877]

REMAINING QUESTIONS FOR SCHOLARSHIP

The goal of this dissertation was not to answer all questions regarding forced marriage, but instead to inspire new questions related to forced marriage and gender in rebel groups. When we recognize how much information studying forced marriage can tell us about a rebel group, it can lead to the question, what other behaviors of rebel groups have not yet been analyzed, but reveal essential information about rebel groups?

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[876] See Morten Bergsmo, Alf Butchenschøn Skre, and Elisabeth J. Wood, eds., *Understanding and Proving International Sex Crimes* (Bejing: Torkel Opsahl Academic Publisher, 2012) for information on significance of Sierra Leone for legal analysis of forced marriage.

[877] Dara Kay Cohen, "Explaining Rape during Civil War: Cross-National Evidence (1980–2009)," *American Political Science Review* 107, no. 03 (August 2013): 461–77, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055413000221; Dara Kay Cohen, *Rape During Civil War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, 2016); Megan Mackenzie, *Female Soldiers in Sierra Leone: Sex, Security, and Post-Conflict Development* (New York: New York University Press, 2012); Chris Coulter, *Bush Wives and Girl Soldiers: Women's Lives Through War and Peace in Sierra Leone* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, 2009); Z. Marks, "Sexual Violence in Sierra Leone's Civil War: 'Virgination', Rape, and Marriage," *African Affairs* 113, no. 450 (January 1, 2014): 67–87, https://doi.org/10.1093/afraf/adt070; Zoe Marks, "Sexual Violence Inside Rebellion: Policies and Perspectives of the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone," *Civil Wars* 15, no. 3 (September 2013): 359–79, https://doi.org/10.1080/13698249.2013.842749.

Forced marriage is just one examples of a behavior that we should be taking more seriously in our analysis of rebel groups. Marriage, something that has been seen as belonging in the private sphere, is given renewed significance in this dissertation by examining forced marriage more carefully and seeing it as an important part of rebel group behavior. What happens if we view behaviors - that are seen as insignificant or not representative of a defined ideology or strategy, or only relevant for the "private sphere" - as sources of information about rebel groups?

For example, in the case of Al-Shabaab, we do not yet have information about the lives of forced wives inside the group, because these women cannot currently safely speak to researchers. In the future, if we can speak to these women who were forced wives, what would they say about their lives inside Al-Shabaab? What happens when we take these women's lives seriously?[878] How are wives inside Al-Shabaab treated by their Al-Shabaab husbands? Does Al-Shabaab leadership regulate the treatment of wives (informally or formally)? What does a regulation or lack of regulation of the treatment of these women say about Al-Shabaab's gender values?

For the LRA, a case study that has been the subject of more thorough gender analysis, what questions have been overlooked? Why did controlling sex mean so much to the LRA leadership and specifically Joseph Kony? What did sex signify for the group and what does that say about the group's ideas about gender? Instead of viewing the LRA as "rebels without a cause"[879] or a cult-like group that behaves strangely,[880] what if we took seriously its stated ideology and the regulations of behavior the LRA enforced?

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[878] Cynthia Enloe, *Does Khaki Become You?: The Militarization of Women's Lives* (Boston: South End Press, 1983).
[879] Finnström, "An African Hell of Colonial Imagination? The Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda, Another Story," 75.
[880] See e.g., Paul Jackson, "The March of the Lord's Resistance Army: Greed or Grievance in Northern Uganda?," *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 13, no. 3 (December 2002): 29–52, https://doi.org/10.1080/09592310208559196.

Viewing rebel group behavior through a simplistic predetermined lens of ideology *or* strategy, allow us to simplify rebel group behaviors, but rebel groups behave in complicated ways. What happens when we broaden our view of what is seen as worthy of scholarship related to rebel groups and question why and how those patterns of behaving came into being?

If we only care about rebel group behavior that is labeled as strategic or political, we miss key clues that explain rebel group motivation and organization. When we challenge simplistic views of ideology and strategy, we notice important inconsistencies in rebel behavior that we should use as data. If Al-Shabaab's belief system can be summed up by conservative Islamist values that say women should only be controlled and confined to the personal sphere, then why is Al-Shabaab trying so hard to win women over?

In the LRA, while there is information on the roles women and girls played in the group, interview participants had different interpretations about whether women and girls were fulfilling stereotypical feminine roles or if their roles were subversive of traditional gender roles. Young men in the LRA often helped babysit children for senior wives. What new information is revealed by analyzing men's roles with a gender lens? Instead of ignoring patterns of rebel groups that do not fit within an expected strategy or ideology, what if scholars paid attention to the nuance?

A NEW PERSPECTIVE

Rebel groups are social and political organizations and a comprehensive investigation of rebel groups analyzes the group's behavior without predetermined ideas about what behavior "matters" and what behavior fits existing knowledge of the group. Forced marriage is one example of a behavior that is traditionally not seen as worthy of investigation. The lack of attention to forced marriage, is not surprising considering, as highlighted by Cynthia Enloe,

marriage is "rarely accorded thoughtful attention by those who comment on 'serious' international affairs."[881] Often, the topics or discussions that are not considered "serious" are those that relate to women, feminized tasks, or seen as belonging in the "private sphere." In what ways does making certain topics off limits for research reinforce existing power structures? If male members of rebel groups are the experts on the group's behavior and if the lives of male combatants are the only topics that are worthy of serious discussion, in what way does that privilege male researchers, policymakers, and leaders?

Studying rebel groups is like solving a puzzle with researchers relying on available clues such as rebel group statements and rebel group behavior. However, these clues only reveal pieces of rebel group behavior. Richard Shultz teaches about rebel groups by describing them as an iceberg. Outsiders can observe some patterns of behavior (the part of the iceberg above the water), but there is a lot of the iceberg that is below the surface that we cannot see. In order to overcome the challenge of understanding rebel groups, researchers and policymakers must pay particular attention to everything a rebel group values and prioritizes. Forced marriage is a clear priority of rebel groups and by understanding in what ways the pattern of forced marriage reflects different aspects of a rebel group's strategy and ideology, we gain a fuller picture of the group.

[881] Cynthia Enloe, *The Big Push: Exposing and Challenging the Persistence of Patriarchy* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2017), 88.

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