



Summary: *(Un)Globalizing Civil Society: When the boomerang rebounds*

Through an interactionist perspective, this thesis investigates the structural and ideational mechanisms governing the intra-network dynamics of a transnational advocacy campaign. By looking at the advocacy campaign for the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda in post-conflict Burundi and Liberia, it demonstrates that success and failure of transnational campaigns for the implementation of international norms is also due to everyday informal encounters on the ground with local activists and individual agency, not simply the institutional design, the degree of hostility of the national government to international standards, the local organizational culture, or the implementation of internal reforms, as identified by existing literature. In so doing, I address a big gap in the social movements' literature, which has treated all international and local actors as a coherent ensemble, failing to differentiate among them. Second, I redress the structural bias in the global governance literature, demonstrating that the focus of IOs, INGOs, and bilateral donors on global legitimacy and accountability has perverse effects, because it does not take into account the agency of organizations' local-level performance and local partners on the ground.

The general literature review in chapter two and chapter four on scholarship on social movements, transnational advocacy networks and the life-cycle of international norms addressed the weaknesses of constructivist approaches to the intranetwork dynamics of advocacy campaigns, focusing in particular on the literature concerning international norms on gender. The literature review chapter reviews classic accounts of

global civil society as a response to the global governance democratic deficit, to the more recent literature on NGO-ization. Afterwards, it reviews literature on the life-cycle of international norms, from the most positivists to the more constructivist approaches. The discussion shows that, in spite of increasingly taking into account ideational and cultural elements, the factors explaining the processes of (trans) formation of the ideas and ideologies and the solidarity ties initially created between international and local actors in post-conflict reconstruction have been less studied.

Three main issues highlighted in the review, and related to the lack of studies on the matter, are: (i) a modular transnationalism, by which there is a single and coherent master frame in the campaign to which all of the activists follow; (ii) a neglecting of the implementation phase of the life cycle of international norms and; (iii) the lack of differentiation amongst local activists, who are taken as a cohesive ensemble. As explained in the review, the complexity of collective identity formation as a site of struggle and contestation between a diversity of interpretations of the Self and the Other is overlooked. However, as argued in the theoretical framework, the construction of a subject position is part of a project that tries to impose a dominant and natural representation of an issue while making the rest of representations impossible (Hansen 2006; Shepherd 2008c). I argue that a more appropriate view of intranetwork dynamics of advocacy networks should be as a site of contestation where activists struggle to provide their own meaning and definition of the issue at hand in order to make it coherent with their everyday experience. Even though constructivist approaches consider that identities and ideas can change as a result of exchanges with other actors, they still consider these identities and ideas as relatively stable and do not account for a sudden and explosive change. In addition, the focus on causality links between the factors accounting for transnational advocacy and the outcomes in terms of the passing of new legislation are not enough for understanding the processes behind the development of a network, with a common but flexible identity and a master frame driving the advocacy campaign. Indeed, there is no space for different conceptualizations of factors and events behind the campaign in causal explanations. In order to overcome deterministic conclusions and simplistic explanations, I highlight the need to focus on processes and I have looked into key questions such as:

How do activists' self-representation and collective identity formation contribute to the design of a master frame? How discourses are diffused and reproduced by activists and how are they translated into the policies they wish to see implemented? How are therefore vague international norms transformed by diverse discourses into different specific policies?

To carry out the empirical analysis I develop a twofold methodology of interpretive process tracing and poststructuralist discourse analysis. First, I analyse how five basic discourses on gender security formed out of different combinations of structural mechanisms and ideational factors. For so doing I use a poststructuralist discourse analysis that focused on the large linguistic-practical frameworks that constitute the categories and objects of the everyday world. In our case study, these frameworks act both as grids of possibilities on what constitutes gender security, and as conceptual horizons by making other practices and discourses on gender security unintelligible, bizarre or illegitimate. The task is to clarify how these unnoticed grids emerge and how they constrain and enable the individual agents. The task is, therefore, a critical one: to unmask and to emancipate. Second, I use interpretive process tracing to understand the interaction between the hegemonic grid on gender security and its practice in public policy options open. The task is to demonstrate how the discourses on gender security carry norms and reproduce identities that enable certain practices and policies to become natural and the best possible option. In addition, throughout the implementation of these policies, activists are also socialised to mainstream discourses on gender security. The result can be an adaptation to them or the launching of counter-discourses that respond better to the local context.

My theoretical framework, then, takes into account the geographical and temporal dimensions of the process of collective identity and collection action formation. It recognises therefore the way in which activists continue to frame and reframe gender security discourses through social practices of identity creation and through an interpretation of implementation projects. It also concentrates on the study of the interactions between discourses and practices of local and international activists and the process of tensions, convergences and divergence through which some activists will

end up inside the transnational advocacy campaign and others, together with their identities and discourses, will be left out.

The theoretical and methodological framework of the thesis is put into work for the empirical analysis carried out in chapters 5, 6 and 7. The comparative approach is essential to both, clarifying the different paths taken in the implementation campaign of UNSCR1325 in Burundi and Liberia, and to draw some general conclusions on the processes of transnationalisation of local civil societies in post-conflict contexts which will be further detailed in the third part of the conclusion. The logics driving the empirical analysis were to first, analyse the structural and ideational factors behind the interaction process of collective identity and collective action of a transnational advocacy network; second, to analyse how these factors put forward a dominant discursive identity and a dominant master frame. Thirdly and finally, chapter seven illustrates how this dominant master frame translates into practices and policies during the implementation of global norms that the transnational advocacy network advocated for.

The analysis of the gender security discourse of the transnational advocacy network on Women, Peace and Security highlighted the predominance of a hegemonic civil and political securitisation of gender mainstreaming, occasionally challenged by a more socio-economic conception of gender security that emerged in Burundi and to a much lesser extent in Liberia. The hegemonic discourse relies on the articulation of women as ambassadors of peace and of a victim in need of protection that mutually reinforce each other to produce the master frame of gender security as inclusion of women in post-conflict reconstruction and in high politics through quotas as necessary to reach gender equality.

Chapter five explains how three structural mechanisms identified by Tilly and Tarrow (2007) and their factors regulated the ability of an activist to create change within a network. Those are: brokerage, gatekeeping and diffusion. I redefine these mechanisms in order to adapt them to post-conflict contexts by adding factors obtained from inductive work, providing a well-rounded understanding on how structural opportunities shape intra-network power relations amongst activists in the same

campaign. Structural opportunities are essential in the internationalization process of local campaigns, as we learnt that reliance on international financial and human resources provokes competition, fragmentation and professionalisation of local movements. In addition, I prove how brokerage and gatekeeping works in a similar way in the Burundian and the Liberian contexts, dividing local activists into a small privilege elite with international linkages and the rest. Therefore, while the rhetoric is one of inclusiveness in order to achieve gender security, the reality of relations between parts of the network is very different. Similarly to what Cooley and Ron (2002) discovered on relief NGOs, the Women, Peace and Security network intranetwork relations were more founded on competition than on cooperation. It was more than just local competition for funds or attention. It was also about building allies and maintaining stability so that the international members of the network could have a long-term agenda. Finally, another interesting lesson retained is that the diffusion mechanism and its factors were key in understanding the differences between Liberia and Burundi. Those able to adapt their claims to different geographical opportunities and adapt their master frame and strategies are those groups of activists with good leaders and who act in a reactive manner. Finally, the chapter takes the reader through an examination of the structural power relations inside the Women, Peace and Security advocacy network in Burundi and Liberia, showing how the internationalization and institutionalisation of an international norm constitutes a new opportunity structure to local activists.

Chapter 6 describes the discursive encounters between Liberian and Burundian local activists and the transnational advocacy network on WPS. The chapter deals with the questions of how collective identities are produced, how these help create common discourses and how the productive power of issue entrepreneurs affect both, collective identities and common discourses. I argue that the creation and argumentation of a collective identity is a political instrument per se, since the creation of discourses is based on the development of collective identities. The chapter identifies 6 ideal types of basic feminist identities on gender security that appear throughout the campaign for the implementation of UNSCR1325: maternal, material, anti-violence, cultural, cosmopolitan and cosmological. Afterwards, I look at the most recurring combinations of discursive identities on gender security in Burundi and Liberia in order to classify 5

main discourses that modulate the interactions, illustrated by the tensions, convergences and divergences amongst activists. These discourses are: gender security as inclusion, gender security as equality, gender security as anti-sexual violence, gender security as freedom and gender security as a reconceptualization of spaces and structures. The second part of the chapter looks at the local empowerment dynamics created by these discourses and the productive power of these discursive encounters. First, the outcome of these encounters is a reinterpretation of local feminist discourses of insecurity and violence, which are merged with a liberal peace paradigm of quotas and gender equality. Hence, empowerment of local actors exists only in a context where local discourses are reconstructed through a selection of events and key problems that resonate with global audiences and donors. Second, the discourse of the TAN on WPS is very much compatible and similar to the liberal narrative of peacebuilding proposed by the Security Council, with an emphasis on individuality, productivity and countable results. This is important because the advocacy network's discourse finds itself closer to the UN and donors' discourse than to the discourse of civil society on the ground. The independence of a global civil society is therefore questioned. Finally, regarding shifting identities and loyalties, we have also seen that local women groups do not act just as mere passive beneficiaries of the political programs they are proposed. They translated them, adapt them and try to do with the challenges and the aspirations they find in their way. They try to affirm in that way their individuality as subjects, while at the same time trying to still be part of a social system to which they belong. This process of appropriation of international norms is full of tensions, at individual, groups and societal level.

Two main arguments wrapped up the empirical part of this dissertation in chapter 7: First, the transnationalisation of local battles in post-conflict settings provokes simultaneous processes of co-optation and empowerment that rarely lead to a boomerang effect, but rather to a rebound effect. Secondly, this rebound effect results from the increasingly hybrid forms of feminist knowledge created through the transnationalisation of local feminist battles and which is now used by international organisations to manage their development and reconstruction programs at a distance through international non-governmental organisations who depend on their funds. This

creates new marginalizations (rebound effect) and intensifies existing ones. In Liberia, the hegemonic and cohesive discourse of gender security as inclusion and equality reinforced by its performance in the Peace Huts, obscured informal spaces and places where other battles were considered more important. The study shows how Liberia and the TAN on WPS's discourses made possible a range of policies that led to a self-reinforcing process of self-construction of women as ambassadors of peace and as means to secure peace. Indeed, it is partly through recovering and validating those other voices that we can understand how, paradoxically, the professionalization of local movements brings to their depolitization, and therefore deserves the purposes of engaging with activists to counterbalance the power of statemen and abusive political and legal systems.

The general emphasis on this empirical part of the thesis has been on strategic framing analysis in order to understand how a transnational network coalesce or stop coalescing with local activists. Framing is strategic because successful frames resonate with specific audiences at particular temporalities and geographies, and as Oliver and Johnston (2000) and Bob (2005) suggest, framing in contemporary activist networks is strongly related to "marketing" in a global arena full of problems waiting to become issues. The focus of this strategic framings has been studied by scholars on a positive note claiming that frame alignment between local and global activists will lead to "a global transformative frame" (Reitan 2007: 19) able to challenge discontent with neoliberal norms. However, the key puzzle arising from the Women, Peace and Security network is that a neoliberal understanding of gender security is reinforced. Therefore, employing a security framework may be advantageous in the short term, but soon it situates activists in the WPS network in subjectivities where challenging the traditional security paradigm becomes impossible if one is to stay in the network. "Simultaneously the power structures that we wish to dismantle are the very structures that set the terms of women's entry... this revolutionary capacity can also be caught recycling rather than (re)signifying the terms of the debate" (Kinsella, as cited in Cohn et al. 2004: 137-8). I suggest that we also need to go behind the power structures and discourses of those who apparently challenge neoliberalism in order to look at how their final practices and the policies they propose are to the benefit of international organisms based on neoliberal

practices. This, in turn, can inform critical social movement scholarships and their theories.