T H E M E N S C H W E R P U N K T

Hypermasculine War Games:
Triangulating US-India-China

Payal Banerjee* and L.H.M. Ling**

Abstract: Triangulation discourse perpetuates a hypermasculine war game that is also colonizing in nature. Participation in and complicity with this model of international relations relegate the postcolonial state to a position of subaltern "mimicry" that aims, constantly, to demonstrate its national "manhood," so to speak. We need to change not just "the rules" but also "the game" altogether. We can begin by recognizing other relations, traditions, and ways of being. We focus on US-India-China relations as an example.

Keywords: War games, hypermasculinity, international relations, US-India-China relations
Kriegsspiele, Hypermaskulinität, internationale Beziehungen, Beziehungen USA-Indien-China

1. Introduction

"Triangulating" US-India-China perpetuates hypermasculine war games. These refer to a "level playing field" where one leg of a triangular relationship extracts concessions from the other two to achieve a so-called balance of power. What results instead, we argue, is a global security hierarchy of race (white), gender (hypermasculinity), class (elite), and culture (Western), given the asymmetries that stratify power and resources in world politics. Under triangulation, each party is reduced to an exaggerated, *faux* masculine competition supposedly to achieve parity but actually reinforcing this global security hierarchy. And why, we ask, would India and China, home to one third of the world's population and now comprising its two fastest growing economies, put up with it?[1]

We begin with triangulation discourse: what it is and how it is applied to US-India-China relations. Next, we examine the implications of triangulation discourse for race, gender, nationality, and class in world politics. Next, we propose

---

*   Payal Banerjee is Assistant Professor at the Department of Sociology, Smith
     College, Northampton, Massachusetts.
** L.H.M. Ling is Associate Professor in the Graduate Program in International
     Affairs at The New School in New York.

1   India and China have their own security discourses vis-à-vis the US, as well
    as each other, but we touch upon these only briefly. What's more relevant for
    our purpose here is to understand its implications for race, gender, class, and
    nationality. As the world's sole superpower, the US security discourse merits
    special attention.

"borderlands" as a postcolonial-feminist alternative that views India and China on their own terms and in their own time. We conclude with the implications of this "borderlands" approach for US-India-China relations, in particular, and world politics, in general.

2. Triangulation: US vs India vs China

John Garver's "The China-India-US Triangle: Strategic Relations in the Post-Cold War Era" (2002) exemplifies the triangulation discourse in the US.[2] It casts the US, India, and China as self-enclosed, self-interested units of national identity. Each state fixates on the same concerns: i.e., how certain military or economic strategies would help or hurt the relative position of the national Self vis-à-vis its foreign Others. For India-China, this involves the "border dispute, establishing nuclear deterrents, the war on terrorism, relations with Pakistan, and political and economic influence in the South Asia-Indian Ocean region" (Garver 2002: 5).

Balance of power concerns motivate this triangulation discourse. The fear of two aligning against one pertains to all, but Garver (2002: 6) assigns it especially to "the two weaker state actors, China and India." Garver believes that India and China need US power more than each other; whereas, the US can suffice alone. Accordingly, while all three actors play this geopolitical "game," India and China fret more over their relative status with the US than the reverse. Towards this end, Garver advises China to learn from nineteenth-century Europe:

> Unless China can produce a statesman closer to the caliber of Otto von Bismarck, the *sine qua non* of whose diplomacy was to keep Russia, France, and Britain from uniting against Germany, the future may be gloomy, or to return to the narrower theme of this essay, alignments within the new post-Cold War Triangle may become rigid (Garver 2002: 56).

This triangulation discourse is not just hypermasculine and elitist; it is also distinctly Western and colonial.

3. Hypermasculine Whiteness

Triangulation discourse builds on three, realist assumptions: (1) borders anthropomorphize the state into an analogue of the Hobbesian man [sic], (2) strategies for world politics are comparable to a gentleman's game of chess, and (3) History demands subaltern mimicry of the West. These assumptions cumulate into one proposition: i.e., good governance should be white, hypermasculine, elite, and Anglo-American-European.

---

2 Our singular focus on this article is more than compensated by its *representativeness* given the views, interests, and social infrastructure propagated by its journal, *National Bureau of Asian Research* (NBR). NBR's Board of Directors is composed of mega-corporations (e.g., Unocal, Coca Cola, Corning, Microsoft, Boeing, Ford) and their elite associates in the military (e.g., former joint chiefs of staff John M. Shalikashvili), industry (e.g., Virginia Mason Medical Center), and conservative think tanks (e.g., American Enterprise Institute, Woodrow Wilson Center).

3.1 Borders: The State as Hobbesian Man

Realists impute an implicit social relationship with borders. In centralizing what's "inside," they deplete what's "outside," regardless of the peoples and communities already there. Realists may concede that "frontiers" exist but these serve only to highlight the social order "inside" and not how the resources from "outside" contribute to the establishment of that very social order. No connections, histories, or co-productions between Self and Other, "inside" and "outside," "order" and "chaos" could be considered.

Feminists have long exposed the intimate connections between patriarchy and the Hobbesian man/state.[3] Like the Hobbesian state, the patriarchal household is cast as without history or context or class, despite severe dependence on subaltern labor and resources to maintain and accumulate for the state/household. Both patriarchy and the state propagandize that they protect that which they exploit ("women, children, and chattall").

Postcolonial feminists, in particular, have highlighted the significance of borderlands, not just borders, in daily life (Ling 2008). Though all genders and races experience the complexities of borderlands – defined as that space in-between "majority" and "minority" cultures, seemingly belonging nowhere yet pervading everywhere – women of color who endure the double yoke of patriarchy and colonialism are most aware of how borderlands position them into contending yet equally confining identities, roles, languages, and practices. From such mixing at the borderlands come a rich repertoire of seeing and doing that endows postcolonial peoples with the flexibility and adaptability to thrive at the interstices of worlds and cultures (Ling 2002; Agathangelou and Ling 2009). When realists stress the need for borders, then, they are actively denying that realm of advancement and achievement made by borderland or postcolonial peoples. In this way, hypermasculine whiteness as a colonizing power becomes the rule of the day. And with it comes a way of life that is, to borrow a phrase from Victorian England, a "gentleman's agreement."

3.2 Strategies: World Politics as Gentleman's Chess

Chess serves as the iconic metaphor for triangulation, specifically, and realism, generally. To realists, chess best approximates the "rules" of world politics given its cold, hard strategizing to "win" or "lose," "check" or "check-mate" between self-interested opponents.

But, we ask, *who* gets to play at *whose* expense, and for *what*? That is, what is the *relationship* between the "players," the "pieces," the "chess board"? Who produced the chairs, for example, on which players sit to ponder their moves, the gin and tonic they sip while pondering, the silver tray from which they take the drinks, and the servant who carried it? Certainly, players and providers are not the same. The latter typically come from the "margins" of society (e.g., peasants, women, workers, the

---

3 For a review of this literature, see the review article in the ISA Compendium.

poor, the illiterate, the menial) and enable the game with their resources, labor, and physical bodies. The players, in contrast, represent the "center" with their privileges and protections. They are the ones in charge.

Of course, many outside the West have also regarded politics as a game. Note how Japanese noblemen in the 11th-century novel, *The Tale of Genji*, used similar strategies to vie for power and status or simply to demonstrate them. But triangulation discourse restricts chess to its Western and colonial variants only. The colonized can only be envious, desirous mimics – even to history.

3.3 Histories: Subaltern Mimicry

Here, triangulation discourse reveals its "white man's burden." In claiming that India and China seek to ally with the US more than each other, triangulation assumes that (1) India and China value the US more than each other, despite the mutual and ancient histories that have interwoven their civilizations, (2) India and China offer relatively the same to each other, even though China seems the more powerful (and therefore desirable) partner for the US, and (3) the US is indifferent to relations with either India or China. The US easily plays one party against the other, triangulation discourse claims, because it is not motivated by national self-interest; rather, the US aims only to maintain world peace. Thus the US, though disinterested, *must* perform as the global hegemon by making sacrifices for Others.

At the same time, triangulation discourse self-contradicts with the Hobbesian state. That is, in attributing competition and chaos to world politics, the Hobbesian state cannot claim global altruism or lack of national self-interest. Indeed, the Hobbesian state invariably leads to a war-like ultimatum when dealing with Others: i.e., either you convert to us or we will annihilate you (Agathangelou and Ling 2009). The US invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan in 2003 and 2001, respectively, exemplify conversion/annihilation in political and military terms; the treatment of Asia's financial crisis in 1997-1998, in economic terms (Ling 2002, 2005).

Triangulation sustains this contradiction by colonizing and racializing world politics. The discourse upholds the West as implicitly superior to all Others. Accordingly, Garver can disregard two millennia of civilizational contact and interaction between India and China, miring them, instead, in a "deep" geopolitical rivalry from the 1962 border dispute. A larger sense of history comes only with 19th century Europe and, more pointedly, that icon of Teutonic hypermasculinity: "Iron Fist" Bismarck.

We grant that triangulation discourse raises some important issues. There's no denying that border disputes, nuclear power, and economic globalization warrant serious consideration. Nonetheless, this focus unduly constrains our thinking in terms of problem-solving and problem-framing. With the Hobbesian state as premise, triangulation discourse locks us into a world of colonial patriarchy, thereby further justifying and rationalizing its usage.

But we do not need to abide by triangulation. There are alternatives.

4. "Borderlands": A Postcolonial-Feminist Alternative

Postcolonial-feminists offer another approach to world politics.[4] They probe into the politics of labor, sexuality, race and gender within the resistance and relations informed by imperialism and transnational capitalism. As such, postcolonial-feminists provide key analytical tools to understand: (1) the critical importance of the colonial experience for current socio-economic and political circumstances, (2) Eurocentrism in knowledge-making and the creation and continued reconfiguration of an array of boundaries, binaries, and categories surrounding a relatively stable core of racist and sexist epistemology, (3) historic claims about colonized/third world people's "insufficiencies" in stagist theories of development (e.g., "modernization" or "progress"), (4) systematic omission or devaluation of pre-colonial history, and (5) the persistence of colonial methods of control, both discursively and administratively, in so-called independent, post-colonial states and societies.

A "borderlands" perspective helps us reconsider India and China on their own terms and in their own time.

4.1. India and China: On Their Own Terms, In Their Own Time

We juxtapose India and China *before* the onset of the West. This is not a romantic return to an idyllic, golden past between the Heavenly Kingdom and the Middle Kingdom. Neither these times nor their societies refrained from violence, oppression, exploitation, and destruction. Rather, we delve into this Sino-Indian history to draw from its wealth of experience, accumulated over two millennia, of very different approaches to and visions of thinking, acting, being, and relating.

First, we question the realist timing of India-China relations. Dating these from post-World War II (WWII), realism erases a common history with foreign occupation, colonialism, and imperialism between India and China. Second, we challenge the realist presumption that these two countries and civilizations – dubbed "the Dragon" and "the Elephant" by mainstream media (cf. Elliot 2006) – perpetually compete against each other to "catch up" with the West. Such analyses preclude a thorough understanding of the encounters, exchanges, and flows, along with the disputes and conflicts that have marked India and China as geographies and civilizations over time.

A small but growing body of literature now corrects the record. Using archives derived from monks, scholars, traders, and emissaries deputed to animate the ideas and activities circulated between India and China, this literature gives us a narrative far beyond realism's post-WWII, Eurocentric, hypermasculine

---

4 For a review of this literature, see Chowdhury and Ling (forthcoming) in the ISA Compendium Project.

visions of the world. A multi-volume work from A. Rahman (2002), for example, traces the extensive interactions among India, China, Central, and West Asia from the 8th century onwards. Tansen Sen (2003, 2006) notes the maritime relations between India and China from the 13th to mid-15th centuries. Tan and Geng (2005) examine *twenty centuries* of interaction between India and China. And Amartya Sen (2004) identifies Sino-Indian collaborations in trade, religion, mathematics, astronomy, philosophy, medicine, and public health, just to name a few.

A "borderlands" vision of India and China emerges. It reframes our understanding of the 1962 border dispute.

4.2 Borders: Postcolonial Nationalism and Cold War Politics

The 1962 Sino-Indian border dispute reflects a colonial artifact (Malviya 1992). Since the war in 1962, Indian nationalism constructed an ideal Indian nation/citizen over and against the Chinese Other in India. The Indian government later interned, deported, and disenfranchised the Chinese community in India, primarily in Calcutta, based on the 1960s' newly revised legal definitions of national origin ("internal others"). This became a form of engagement with the Chinese Other, embedding it into the template of Indian nationalism and self-identity in one way or the other, subjecting it to various revisions depending on geopolitical circumstances (Banerjee 2007).

Some Chinese, however, are revamping their understanding of this relationship. Liu Xuecheng (1994), for instance, argues that Cold War and post-Cold War legacies actively shaped relations between not just China and India, but also with surrounding states like Pakistan. And scholars like Ji Xianlin (2006) along with Tan and Geng (2005) remind Chinese scholars, if not state officials, of the venerable history between India and China.

4.3 Strategies: Beyond "Gaming"

Chess-like "moves" and "counter-moves" cannot capture the complexity of Sino-Indian interactions. Even in 1962, no declaration formally declared the war nor was a truce signed to end it. The conflict festers, interweaves through, and "plays in the background" to deep cultural and personal understandings of what it means to be an Indian vis-à-vis the Chinese (Banerjee 2007). These socio-cultural and psychic dimensions redefine the "rules," the "game," and most importantly, the "players."

Today, tensions still exist (BBC 2009) but simultaneous strategies of competition *and* cooperation are also at play (viz. *Beijing Review* special report 2005). Contrary to the expectations of triangulation discourse, Indian and Chinese elites are seeking closer relations. In 2005, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh announced a China-India Strategic and Cooperative Partnership for Peace and Prosperity to enhance "mutual cooperation," "partnership," "friendship," and "building trust" to enable further political exchanges, mutual connectivity, economic, technical, and

scientific cooperation, a potential regional trade agreement, cultural activities, and youth exchange programs (*People's Daily* 2005). Joint defense and security "consultations" have been taking place as well (BBC, 16 December 2008). Indeed, China has now surpassed the United Arab Emirates to become India's second-largest trading partner (*Asia Times*, 11 February 2005).[5] In 2008, Sino-Indian trade increased by 30% to total $517 billion (Toloken 2009). In turn, India has become one of China's top ten trading partners.

What India and China demonstrate is another heuristic at work.

5. Other Worlds, Other Visions, Other Ways of Being

"Borderlands" have always characterized Sino-Indian relations. Dunhuang in northwest China, for example, served as a gateway for 7th-century Indians and Chinese to meet and learn from one another through Buddhism, leading to the notion of "*nizhong you wuo, wuozhong you ni*" ("I in you and you in me") (Tan 2002: 130). Other locations like Tashkent transited caravans from the Silk Road to Kashmir and Punjab through the Khyber Pass (Tan 2002). And Khotan "was a most important centre of Buddhist learning and research, frequented for that purpose both by the Chinese and the Indians" (Devahuti 2002: 94)

From these borderlands, we begin to see, live, and relate in other ways. Patriarchy prevailed throughout but societies along the Silk Road granted alternative venues for women's agency precisely because the environment was so mixed, unstable, and confusing (Devahuti 2002). Women often acted as shamans, for example. And it was a resourceful Chinese bride who smuggled silkworms in her sleeve when given in marriage to a local chieftain. She could not live without her silk. More generally, women produced, traded, distributed, and consumed the goods that made the Silk Road.

A cosmopolitan outlook came with such trade. "Silk diplomacy" solidified relations between Han Chinese and others, like the Huns in 2 AD (Sen 2003). In the 7th-century, King Harshavardhan, ruler of what is now northern India, and the Tang Emperor Taizong (reigning AD 626-49) engaged in a series of exchanges involving monks and scholars as well as tradesmen. India and China enjoyed their most prolific, profound, and productive interaction during this period. Religious pilgrimages from India brought knowledge of math, astronomy, calendrical science, and medicine to the Tang court. Similarly, the subcontinent learned of key Chinese technologies like silk and sericulture, paper making and printing, use of the compass, and gunpowder.

Not least, another heuristic animated inter-state relations. The Tang Emperor Taizong, for example, initiated relations with India by recalling a dream that the Han Emperor Ming had in 64 AD: he dreamed of a golden deity flying over the palace, seeming to signal the arrival of Buddhist learning and wisdom

---

5   See http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/GB11Df07.html.

(Tan 2002: 132). We do not suggest that dreams and other extrasensory visions serve as better strategies for national decision-making than, say, realist power balancing. Rather, our point is that so-called realism in international relations invariably locks the Self into endless cycles of hypermasculine war games in the name of peace. What else could be more fantastical?

For India and China, these games impose a condition of perpetual subalternity, beholden to and mimicking of the US hegemonic Self (Ling, Hwang, and Chen 2010). Our point here is that precisely because dreams, visions, and other so-called irrational heuristics for decision-making force us out of the familiar and the usual, they stimulate innovative approaches to problems. And by drawing on alternative epistemologies, we may begin to reframe the problem itself. Recent articulations of an "Asian School of IR" (Acharya and Buzan 2007) or an "Asian epistemic community" (Mishra 2009) or "culture as method" (Chen, Hwang, and Ling 2009) indicate moves within the region to depart from Cold-War power politics both practically and intellectually.

6. Conclusion

Western knowledge-making, whether academic, state-diplomatic, or policy-oriented, continues to thrive on erasures of the Other. These serve to racialize and feminize the non-Western Other by casting it as simplistically chaotic instead of rife with pre-existing histories and subjectivities. And the non-Western Other allows itself to be demarcated and delimited in this way due to a dual process of external and internal colonization. Lost are the richly-endowed inventories of indigenous thought and action.

Note, for example, the intramural Olympics of hyper-masculinized, nationalized competitions that beset our world politics today. States compete on development, growth, progress, security that lead to mutual suspicions, patchy short-lived truces or none at all, warring factions, and endless fights over geographical, material, political, and cultural resources. India and China, in particular, must take up the challenge of decolonizing themselves, as well as the inter-state system, and in a manner resonant with their own access to history and humanity.

One step towards this end is to rework the project of nationalism. Seen as a solution to colonialism in our great-grandparents' time, nationalism has become a proxy for colonial power relations not just in terms of race, gender, class, caste, and religion, but also inter-state relations. Accordingly, nationalism reinforces, as it rationalizes, hypermasculine war games for all. A "borderlands" approach radically re-envisions India and China by re-centering them on their own terms, in their own time.

And the US had better take note. India and China possess rich histories and even richer resources. There is no reason to believe that they – or any other postcolonial state– will stick to the colonial scripts assigned to them simply to demonstrate their "arrival" in world politics. Postcolonial states see things differently, have acted accordingly, and will continue to do so.

It is time that we, in the academy, realign these "realities" with our "theories."

References

Acharya, Amitav and Buzan, Barry (2007), "Why is there no Non-Western International Relations Theory? An Introduction" and "Conclusion: On the Possibility of a Non-Western IR Theory in Asia." *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 7 (2007): 287-312, 427-439.

Agathangelou, Anna M. and Ling, L.H.M. (2009), *Transforming World Politics: From Empire to Multiple Worlds*. London: Routledge.

Banerjee, Payal (2007), "Chinese Bodies in 'Fire': Refractions of Ethnicity, Gender, Sexuality and Citizenship in Postcolonial India's Memories of the Sino-Indian War." *China Report* 43 (4): 437-463.

BBC (2008), "China, India Hold Second Defence, Security Consultations." 16 December (http://www.zibb.com/article/4569938/China+India+hold+second+defence+security+consultations) (Downloaded: 1 March 2009).

BBC (2009), "China Has 'Expansionist' Agenda in Region: India Opposition Party Chief." January 31 (http://fnbgiddings.portalvault.com/default.aspx?pageMode=control&pageModeType=NewsArticleControl&pageModeParam=&storyId=125998483) (Downloaded: 1 March 2009).

Chen, Boyu, Hwang, Ching-Chane, and Ling, L.H.M. (2009), "Lust/Caution in IR: Democratizing World Politics with Culture as a Method." *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 37(3): 739-762.

Devahuti, D. (2002), "Ancient Central-Asia and India." A. Rahman (ed.), *History of Science, Philosophy and Culture in Indian Civilization,* Volume III, Part 2: 45-126. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Elliot, Michael (2006), "India Awakens." *The Times.* 26 June: 36-39.

Garver, John W. (2002), "The China-India-U.S Triangle: Strategic Relations in the Post-cold War Era." *NBR Analysis.* 13(5) October (http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/APCITY/UNPAN015790.pdf) (Downloaded: 1 April 2006).

Ji, Xianlin (2006), *Ji Xianlin lun Zhong-Yin Wenhua Jiaoliu* (Ji Xianlin on Sino-Indian Cultural Exchanges). Beijing: Xin shijie chubanshe.

Ling, L.H.M. (2008), "Borderlands: A Postcolonial-Feminist Approach to Self/Other Relations under the Neoliberal Imperium." In Heike Brabandt, Bettina Rooss, and Susanne Zwingel, (eds), *Mehrheit am Rand? Geschlechterverhaeltnisse, globale Ungleichheit und transnationale Loesungsansaetze*, pp. 105-124. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag.

Ling, L.H.M. (2002), "Cultural Chauvinism and the Liberal International Order: 'West versus Rest' in Asia's Financial Crisis." In Geeta Chowdhry and Sheila Nair (eds), *Power,*

Postcolonialism, and International Relations: Reading Race, Gender, Class, pp. 115-141. London: Routledge.

Ling, L.H.M. (2005), "Neoliberal Neocolonialism: Comparing Enron with Asia's 'Crony Capitalism'." In Dirk Wiemann, Agata Stopinska, Anke Bartels and Johannes Angermüller (eds), *Discourses of Violence - Violence of Discourses: Critical Interventions, Transgressive Readings and Postnational Negotiations*, pp. 93-105. Frankfurt/Main: Peter Lang.

Ling, L.H.M., Hwang, Ching-Chane, and Chen, Bo-yu (2010), "Subaltern Straits: 'Exit', 'Voice', and 'Loyalty' in US-China-Taiwan Relations." *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 10(1).

Liu, Xuecheng (1994), *The Sino-Indian Border Dispute and Sino-Indian Relations*. Landam, Maryland: University Press of America.

Malviya, Gopal (1992), *Sino-Indian Relations: Security Environment in the Nineties*. Madras: Madras University Press.

Mishra, Binod Kumar (2009), "Articulating an Asian Epistemic Community: Presenting the *Other* Worldview." Paper presented at an international conference on "Democratizing International Relations," at National Sun Yat-sen University, Kaohsiung, Taiwan, 11-12 March.

Rahman, A. (ed) (2002), *History of Science, Philosophy and Culture in Indian Civilization* Volume III, Part 2. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Rai, Shirin (2003), *Gender and the Political Economy of Development: from Nationalism to Globalization*. Cambridge, UK: Polity.

Sen, Amartya (2004), "Passage to China." *The New York Review of Books* 51(19) December 2 [http://www.nybooks.com/articles/article-preview?article_id=17608]. (Downloaded: 18 February 2008).

Sen, Tansen (2003), *Buddhism, Diplomacy, and Trade: The Realignment of Sino-Indian Relations 600-1400*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Sen, Tansen (2006), "The Formation of Chinese Maritime Networks to Southern Asia, 1200-1450." *JESHO* 49(4): 421-453.

Tan, C. and Geng, Y. (2005), *India and China: Twenty Centuries of Civilizational Interaction and Vibrations*. New Delhi: Centre for Studies in Civilizations.

Toloken, Steve (2009), "India, China Talk of Expanding Trade Pact: Global Economic Slowdown Spurs Discussions for a Bilateral Strategy." *Plastics News* 9 February 2009 (http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1G1-193649990.html) (Downloaded: 1 March 2009).

Political and Socio-Economic Aspects of Gender Equality and the Onset of Civil War

Margit Bussmann*

Abstract: Recent empirical studies showed that societies with less gender discrimination are more peaceful. However, the relationship could be spurious if gender equality captures aspects of good governance, democracy, or the level of development. Empirical results of a sample of 110 countries for the years 1985-2000 indicate that various aspects of gender equality do indeed promote peace even when holding other influences constant. The results of the present study support the notion that improving the situation for women with regard to more political representation but especially more economic participation and better access to health and education improves a society's domestic peace.

Keywords: civil war, gender equality, good governance, welfare
Bürgerkrieg, Geschlechtergleichheit, gute Regierungsführung, Wohlfahrt

1. Introduction

The literature on civil war frequently concentrates on ethnic and religious polarization or economic inequality as sources of violence. Discrimination against and systematic exclusion of large parts of the population are considered to be main causes of ethnically motivated violence. Another form of discrimination in society, gender inequality, is not on the forefront of research on armed conflict. Only few empirical studies investigate and support the peacefulness of societies that experience less gender discrimination (Caprioli 2005, Melander 2005a,b). Explanations for this mostly refer to a general pacifism of women as a result either of nature or socialization. Consequently, so the arguments, women in positions of power are more hesitant in deciding to use military force. The peacefulness of states could be enhanced if the position of women would be strengthened

* Dr. Margit Bussmann is Professor for International Relations at Ernst Moritz Arndt University, Greifswald. For helpful comments on this article I would like to thank Volker Franke and two anonymous reviewers.