Why are Violent, Intra-state Conflicts Protracted?
Looking at Azar's Model of Protracted Social Conflict
from a Gender-sensitive Perspective

Cordula Reimann

Abstract

There is a rather elusive literature on gender/women and peace, non-violence and peace-building. Yet, a systematic, gender-sensitive critique of mainstream conflict analysis like Azar's model of protracted social conflict (PSC) has been neglected. The paper aims at partly filling this analytical gap. It offers a gender-sensitive critique of Azar's four clusters of   communal content of a society, human needs, state's role and international linkages.

This will be done on two levels: On the one hand, it will make some of the "invisible" spots and ideas of all four clusters "visible". On the other hand, it will introduce to gender-sensitive entry-points to Azar's model. To illustrate the argumentation, the analysis will take the Sri Lankan conflict as point of reference and take into account (selective) empirical evidence collected during a field trip in 2000.

Biographical Note

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Before she came to the Department of Peace Studies in1998, she worked in various peace research institutes and NGOs like the Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management, Berlin; Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy, Washington, and has been active in local and national groups of amnesty international (ai) and worked in ai's international office in London.

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"Some conflicts are merely the result of the denial of dimensions of reality that are unattractive or troublesome to confront. Some are dismissed by merely dismissing the messenger."[1]

Phyllis Beck Kritek

1   Introduction

Conflict Resolution and International Relations scholar Edward Azar offered one of the first analytical attempts to comprehensively analyse and explain the protracted nature of intra-state conflicts[2]. While there have been several efforts to up-date Azar's model of protracted social conflict (PSC)[3], a feminist or gender-specific critique has so far been missing – in spite of a rich feminist literature on conflict, peace and development[4]. The underlying assumption is that while gender as a social relation is *formally*

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[1] Phyllis Beck Kritek, Negotiating at an Uneven Table. A Practical Approach to Working with Difference and Diversity (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1994), p. 53.

[2] See Edward E. Azar, *The Management of Protracted Social Conflict. Theory and Cases*, (Aldershot: Dartmouth, 1990). See also Edward E. Azar "Peace amidst Development", *International Interactions*, 6, 2 (1979), pp. 123-43; Edward E. Azar, "The Theory of Protracted Social Conflict and the Challenge of Transforming Conflict Situations", *Monograph Series in World Affairs*, 20, 2 (1983), pp. 81-99; Edward E. Azar, "Protracted International Conflicts: Ten Propositions", *International Interactions*, 12, 1 (1985), pp. 59-70; Edward E. Azar and Nadiah Farah, "The Structure of Inequality and Protracted Social Conflicts: A Theoretical Framework", *International Interactions*, 7, 4 (1981), pp. 317-36; Edward E. Azar and Chung In Moong, "Managing Protracted Social Conflicts in the Third World: Facilitation and Development Diplomacy", *Millennium*, 15, 3 (1986), pp. 393-406; Edward Azar and John W. Burton, eds., *International Conflict Resolution: Theory and Practice*, (Brighton: Wheatsheaf, 1986) and Edward E. Azar, "The analysis and management of protracted social conflict", in *The Psychodynamics of International Relationships. Vol. II: Unofficial Diplomacy at Work*, eds. J.D. Volkan, J.V. Montville and D.A. Julius (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1991), pp. 93-120.

[3] See for example in the context of globalisation, see Hugh Miall; Oliver Ramsbotham and Tom Woodhouse, *Contemporary Conflict Resolution. The Prevention, Management and Transformation of Deadly Conflicts* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999), chapter 3.

[4] See for example Adrienne Harris and Ynestra King, eds., *Rocking the Ship of State: Toward a Feminist Peace Politics* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1989); and Aruna Gnanadason, Musimbi Kanyoro, and Lucia Ann McSpadden, eds., *Women, Violence and Nonviolent Change* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1996).

excluded from Azar's model, it is nevertheless (omni)present and inherent in its construction. This is to say that gender is already - albeit implicitly - inherent in malestream theory and practice and constitutes the "secret glossary"[5]. This makes gender simultaneously *absent* and *present* in Azar's model of PSCs.

The aim of this paper is to bring into the open the hidden and taken-for-granted "gender-blind" and gender-specific ideas and perspectives of Azar's model of PSC. This is a two-fold task: On the one hand, the chapter will make the "invisible" "gendered" nature of a PSC visible. The guiding questions here are: How far is it possible to theorize about *gender from within* Azar's model of PSC? What are the gender-blind or gender-neutral spots? On the other hand, the paper will introduce possible gender-sensitive entry-points to conflict analysis. The guiding question here is: What might gender-sensitive perspectives offer Azar's model of PSC?

The paper is divided into three parts. The first part lays the analytical and conceptual ground: It defines Azar's model, the concept of gender, and employs a gender-sensitive framework that is *gender as an analytical category*. The second part looks at the main underlying assumptions of Azar's model from a gender-sensitive perspective: It offers a gender-specific critique while revealing the most striking gender-blind spots. At the same time, it puts forward (possible) gender-sensitive entry-points to Azar's model. The third part concludes by summarizing the most crucial findings.

The following analysis offers a synopsis of Azar's model concentrating on its most crucial dynamics only. To illustrate the main ideas, I will make special references to the Sri Lankan PSC[6] and primary research collected during a fieldtrip in 2000[7]. The empirical evidence put forward can do nothing more

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[5] Eva Kreisky and Birgit Sauer, eds., Das geheime Glossar der Politikwissenschaft. Geschlechtskritische Inspektion der Kategorien einer Disziplin (Frankfurt a.M./New York: Campus Verlag, 1997).

[6] The "official" beginning of the Sri Lankan conflict is generally traced back to the escalation of violence between LTTE and the Sri Lankan government in 1983. Since 1983, more than 65,000 people have died, ten of thousands "disappeared" and more than 1 1/2 millions have been internally displaced, more than 600.000 refugees fled the country, 500.000 civilians are caught in the fighting between the military forces and the LTTE in the Jaffna peninsula (North of Sri Lanka) and the damage to property is estimated with more than 7 million US $. As the analytical focus is on the "protracted-ness" of the Sri Lankan conflict vis-à-vis Azar's framework of PSC, the paper does not discuss the since 2001 ongoing "peace efforts" of the newly elected UNP-government and a re-vitalised third-party intervention by Norway.

[7] I conducted in-depth, semi-structured and informal interviews with NGO personnel of conflict resolution, peace-building, development and humanitarian agencies I/NGOs, politicians and policymakers. I also drew from unpublished material and reports of Sri Lankan peace-building and women's NGOs. What seems particularly worthwhile mentioning are unedited, transcribed focus group discussions and interviews with parts of the "internally displaced" female population in Puttalam (as part of a World Bank Study on the "Framework for Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconciliation" initiated by the Sri Lankan Government 10-11/4/2000.).

than to offer a snapshot of the diversity of Sri Lankan women's and men's lived experiences. In fact, individual Sri Lankan women and men may define their own private and public needs, roles and tasks in a different way. The selected feminist literature does not pretend to be exhaustive, but offers a reflective representation of gender-sensitive research and literature.

2 Definitions and Concepts

2.1 Azar's Model of PSC

According to Azar, a PSC represents "…the prolonged and often violent struggle by communal groups for such basic needs as security, recognition and acceptance, fair access to political institutions and economic participation."[8] Which are the preconditions and sources of such a prolonged and violent struggle? Azar defines four clusters of variables as preconditions for PSCs: These are the *communal content of a society, human needs, the state's role* and *international linkages*.[9]

Azar considers the communal content of a society the most important source of a PSC. Azar goes back in the conflict history to the colonial period where community groups are directly influenced by historical rivalries and a colonial policy of divide and rule.[10] In the post-colonial period, Azar stresses, in many multiethnic societies states emerge which are dominated by a single communal group. This communal group (or a coalition of groups) ignores the needs of other communal groups, thereby breeding frustration and polarisation.[11]

In terms of human needs, Azar argues that all individuals aim at fulfilling their (collective) needs through their collective identity group. Needs deprivation leads to increasing grievances, which individuals express collectively.[12] Azar distinguishes between different forms of needs such as **political access needs, security needs** and **acceptance needs** (in their religious and cultural expression).[13] As far

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[8] Azar, "The analysis and management of protracted social conflict", p. 93.
[9] Azar, Management of Protracted Social Conflict. Theory and Cases, pp. 7-12.
[10] Ibid., p. 7.
[11] See ibid.
[12] Ibid., pp. 7-10.
[13] See ibid.

as political access needs are concerned, Azar refers to the effective participation of individuals in political, market, and decision-making institutions. Azar defines security needs as the material needs for physical security, nutrition and housing, while acceptance needs point to the need for "distinctive identity" and its social recognition. Most importantly here, Azar's concept of human needs explicitly takes up the idea of power inequalities: The dominant social group "satisfies" its political access, security and acceptance needs at the expense of the needs of other social (excluded) groups. As a result, the dissatisfied social groups are frustrated and feel (more and more) marginalized and excluded from the social, economic and political participation.

The state as "power container" is not capable of mediating a level of need satisfaction for multiple communities. As a result, there is a growing "disarticulation between the state and society as a whole"[14] as the state increasingly pursues policies that are contradictory to the needs of the general public.[15] While questions of governance and the state's role are pivotal in the satisfaction or frustration of individual and identity group needs, most states going through PSCs are governed by "incompetent, parochial, fragile, authoritarian"[16] regimes. Given the rather rigid or fragile authority structure, the policy capacity and political access needs are limited to the needs of the dominant community - at the expense of all other identity groups. This monopolisation of power of the dominant community results in "crises of legitimacy" as the state is not able (any longer) to meet the political access, security and acceptance needs of the excluded groups. At the same time, the sovereign of the state in most PSCs is increasingly dependent on what Azar called international linkages; that is, the state is politically and economically compromised by both economic and military dependency on rich(er) and strong(er) states.[17]

2.2 Gender

Gender should be defined as the social construction of social relations between "women" and "men". It may be understood in terms of

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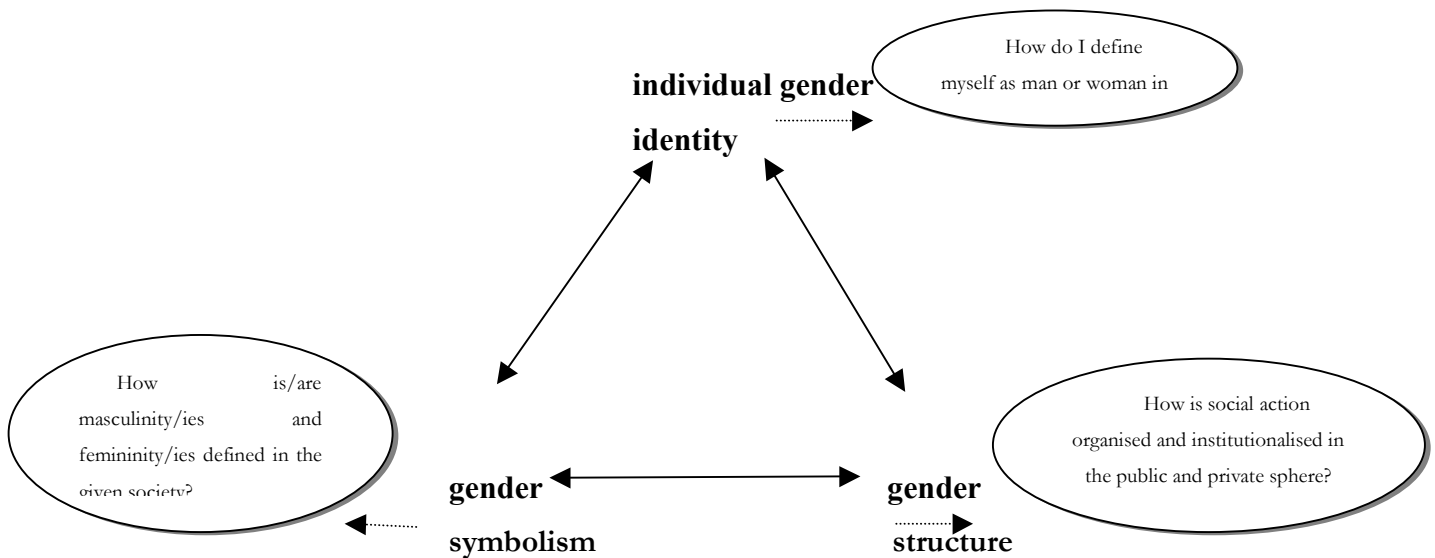[14] Ibid., p. 7.
[15] See ibid., p. 11.
[16] Ibid., p. 10.
[17] See ibid., p. 11

- the individual gender identity (social norms and the socially constructed individual identity)

- the symbolism of gender (classification of stereotypical gender-dualisms: Stereotypical gender-dualisms are classified by different dichotomies, which have little in common with sexual difference. Masculinity is, for example, associated with objectivity/reason/autonomy/subject/production/ culture in contrast to femininity equated with subjectivity/feeling/dependency/object/value/ reproduction/nature. To be feminine is to be not masculine), and

- the structure of gender (the organisation and institutionalisation of social action in the public and private sphere.)[18]

Gender is no biologically driven inevitable, but a socially constructed process. Individual gender identity is a fluid and transformative construction derived from certain notions of femininity and masculinity which, in turn, are very much based on the distribution of labour in the public and private sphere. The same holds very much true with the definition of gender symbolism and gender structure: Certain notions of masculinity and femininity are highly dependent on the distribution of labour in the public and private sphere, socially expected behaviour, and the interpretation of social norms. Masculinity/ies and femininity/ies are not single, fixed features but rather are dependent on class, ethnicity, sexual orientation and age. The distribution of labour in the public and private sphere, in turn, profoundly affects both the construction of certain notions of masculinity and femininity and the socially expected behaviour of a man or a woman.

To stress and understand the complementary nature of all three gender dimensions, I suggest illustrating the dynamics of gender in the following triangle:

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[18] Sandra Harding, *The Science Question in Feminism* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1986), pp. 16-7. For a more extended discussion on
"gender" see Linda Nicholson, "Interpreting Gender", *Signs*, 20, 1 (Autumn 1994), pp. 79-105.

**individual gender
identity**

How do I define
myself as man or woman in

How is/are
masculinity/ies and
femininity/ies defined in the
given society?

How is social action
organised and institutionalised in
the public and private sphere?

**gender
symbolism**

**gender
structure**

The gender triangle stresses that the three gender dimensions (individual gender identity, gender symbolism and gender structure) are closely connected and interwoven categories. All three dimensions only make sense together - one dimension like the gender structure in form of the gendered division of labour has little, if any, theoretical and political meaning without taking into account the gender symbolism and the individual gender identity, which produce and re-produce the gender structure. By the same token, a change of any of the three dimensions leads to a change of the entire "gender triangle": An illustrative example may be here a change in the gender structure like more women entering male-dominated job areas or policy-making institutions. This shift may, for example, slowly but surely alter stereotypical understandings of gender symbolism and socially expected behaviour of a man or a woman in a given society.

At the same time, individual gender identity, gender symbolism and gender structure are interdependent within any particular cultural setting - the manifestation of each category takes different forms in different cultures. As such, the definition and understanding of gender may vary from class to class, from culture to culture, from age group to age group, from peace to wartime etc.. This means it accounts for gender being made up by a complex and shifting conglomerate of social and cultural

relations like "class", "age", "culture" etc.. Having said that, gender is not universalisable: Meanings of gender are fluid and historically changeable. One cannot speak of a generic standpoint of women and men, and one single notion of femininity and masculinity in a given society. Rather, one comes across complex and plural forms of femininities and masculinities, which, in turn, are constantly open to (constant) social challenge and change.

Against this analytical background how can gender as an analytical category make the hidden and invisible "gendered" ideas and perspectives of Azar's model visible? A glance through the rich feminist literature on methodology will suffice to show that there is not a feminist method in the form of a single, all-inclusive tool to decode male bias and androcentricism in malestream[19] theory and practice. One way of decoding the gender-blindness may be a gender-sensitive methodological tool like gender as an analytical category.[20]

2.3   Gender as an Analytical Category

Having stressed the three-fold definition of gender, I argue that gender as an analytical category (and any gender-sensitive approach!) has to take into account all three gender dimensions[21].

Given the limited space in this paper, I comment briefly on the place of each gender dimension (individual gender identity, gender symbolism and gender structure) in gender as an analytical category:

- Taking gender as *identity*, one has to look at different fictions and meanings of personal identity of being *a* man in contrast to being *a* woman in a given society. How do women and men appear in Azar's model? What ideas about men and women inform the theory of PSCs? This means discussing *identity* and its *social construction* in Azar's model.

- If one takes the aspect of *gender symbolism,* one has to ask how far is it possible to discuss the gender identities and gender roles based on changing notions of masculinity and

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[19] "Malestream" need not necessarily be mainstream (think of e.g. gender-blindness of Critical Theory) and vice versa (think of e.g. female scholars doing mainstream and gender-blind research).

[20] For an extended discussion of *gender as an analytical category* see Cordula Reimann, "Opening Up Spaces: Engendering Protracted Social Conflict and Conflict Transformation. An Analysis with Special Reference to Sri Lanka". Unpublished PhD thesis (Bradford: Bradford University. Department of Peace Studies 2002), pp.   122-37.

[21] For a similar but differently developed understanding of gender as an analytical category in the context of IR see Sandra Whitworth, Feminism and International Relations. Towards a Political Economy of Gender in Interstate and Non-Governmental Institutions (London: Macmillan, 1994), pp. 41-2.

femininity and power structures? How far does Azar's model discuss the social construction of women and men and account for the socially and historically influenced and changing gender relations? The emphasis is on the theorizing of *social change and historical variability*.

- Thinking of the *gender structure,* one has to look at the distribution of labour in the "invisible", private sphere versus the "visible", public sphere. Which power structures are "visible" and which are "invisible" or rather hidden in protracted social conflicts? How far are taken-for-granted power structures that are supposed to be "gender-neutral" in fact highly gendered? The analytical focus is on the theorizing of *hierarchical power structures* and their *taken-for-granted and hidden distribution*.

Gender as an analytical category offers us some analytical space to discuss the following points: While looking at individual gender identity and gender symbolism, one is able to focus on theorising identity and its social construction. Moreover, to analyse the individual gender identity also points to the changing nature of identity/ies: Questions of the individual gender identity and gender symbolism allow us to ask for the historical variability of identity as social construction. Furthermore, the analysis of gender symbolism and gender structure highlight the necessary theorising of social change next to historical variability. Gender structure puts centre-stage the theorising of hierarchical power structures and their taken-for-granted distribution.

At the same time, and on a more general note, one should not forget that "real men" and "real women" do not necessarily or literally fulfil the gender prescriptions of an analytical category[22].

3   Applying Gender as an Analytical Category: Azar's Model of PSC Revisited

At first glance, Azar's four clusters seem to be gender-blind or at best gender-neutral: The individual is defined as a "he"[23] or a gender-neutral human being. Azar's definition of a PSC seems to be equally

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[22] See Joan Scott, "Gender. A Useful Category of Historical Analysis", *American Historical Review*, 91, 5 (1986), pp. 1053-75.

gender-neutral: According to Azar, a PSC emerges "when communities are deprived of satisfaction of their basic needs on the basis of their communal identity"[24]. This makes a PSC a "societal problem for all those parties involved in"[25] "…conflicting socio-cultural-ethnic relationships amidst chronic underdevelopment"[26]. According to Azar, the "parties" involved are gender-neutral social agents with no gender-specific needs, identities, roles or tasks. Their "socio-cultural-ethnic relationships" are portrayed as equally gender-neutral or gender-free.

Applying gender as an analytical category to Azar's clusters will show how far this preliminary reading of Azar's work does live up to scrutiny. To structure the discussion, Azar's four clusters, communal content of a society, human needs, state's role and international linkages are taken as analytical signposts. The analytical focus is on the gender-sensitivity of Azar's clusters, that is, how far each cluster is open to discuss gender and what gender-sensitive perspectives of all four clusters might look like.

3.1　The Communal Content of a Society

The first cluster, the communal content of a society, refers to the colonial period, where community groups are marked by historical rivalries and/or colonial legacy of divide and rule. As a consequence, in the post-colonial period a single communal group or a coalition of groups emerges and dominates in many multiethnic societies. Azar's focus on power asymmetry goes hand in hand with an explicit emphasis on an historical analysis of the colonial period to explain the emergence of PSCs.

Using gender as an analytical category puts the importance of an historical analysis in discussing social change and historical variability centre-stage. A gender-sensitive perspective of Azar's communal content may then stress the somehow taken-for-granted, underlying gender inequalities and hence multiple forms of power relations in most historical rivalries and colonial policies of divide and rule.

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[23] Azar and In Moon, "Managing Protracted Social Conflicts in the Third World: Facilitation and Development Diplomacy", p. 396.
[24] Azar, Management of Protracted Social Conflict.Theory and Cases, p. 12.
[25] Azar and In Moon, "Managing Protracted Social Conflicts in the Third World: Facilitation and Development Diplomacy", p. 401 (Emphasis there).
[26] Ibid., p. 394.

One could argue while Azar ignores the underlying gendered politics of colonialism, historical rivalries and national struggles altogether, the idea of "multiple forms of power relations" fits very nicely into Azar's initial idea of PSC as an "interlocking nexus of underdevelopment, structural deprivation, and communal or identity cleavages"[27].

In contrast to Azar's gender-neutral reading of social agents and members of community groups, the following gender-sensitive analysis will make women and men as colonising and colonised agents "visible". This also means pointing to the heterogeneous agency and roles of colonising and colonised women and men and hence multiple forms of power relations.

Different feminist scholars put forward enough evidence to illustrate women's active roles in fighting, resisting or perpetuating and collaborating with colonialism[28] as well as their passive roles as helpless, exploited and abused victims. Feminist IR scholar Pettman, for example, speaks of the "sexual politics of colonialism" which constructed colonising and colonised men and women through "racialised gender stereotypes"[29] along the lines of "ethnicity" and "class" [30]. The idea of a "sexual politics of colonialism" reflects women's and men's agency as a rather complex and heterogeneous nexus of power relations of oppression: Colonised women were, for example, presented as "sexual creatures, more of nature and less controlled and chaste than good colonising, white women"[31]. While the colonised, black men were portrayed as "savage, violent and voracious"[32], it was up to the colonising, white men to draw "excluding and controlling boundaries […] around white women and black men, leaving white men free to transgress the boundaries, and use, abuse or even care for colonised women"[33].

Pettman's idea of "sexual politics of colonialism" seems attractive in the light of the gendered policies of divide and rule in colonial Sri Lanka. Historically speaking, due to a matrilineal and patrilineal kinship tradition, gender relations - albeit implicitly – defined land inheritance patterns in

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[27] See again ibid., p. 395.

[28] See also Cynthia Enloe, Bananas, Beaches and Bases. Making Feminist Sense of International Politics (London: Pandora,1989).

[29] Ibid., p. 33.

[30] See Jan Jindy Pettman, *Worlding Women, A Feminist International Politics* (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 32-44.

[31] Ibid., p. 34 (Emphasis C.R.).

[32] Ibid., p. 33.

[33] Ibid., p. 34.

Ceylon.[34] While it is beyond the scope of this chapter to discuss these land rights in depth, a gender-sensitive perspective points to the gender-specific dimensions of the major changes under the colonial rulers like land appropriation by the British on the one hand (1796-1948), and the changes in laws concerning marriage, divorce and inheritance on the other hand[35].

The land appropriation by the British which led to land scarcity and landlessness among the native, local population was far from being gender-neutral[36]: As a direct result of land scarcity, women of all ethnic communities lost land dramatically between 1901 and 1921[37]. The number of Sinhalese and Tamil female paddy landowners, for instance, felt by half.[38] Not only did women loose land as a part of the colonial practice of land appropriation, they also did so due to major changes in marriage, divorce and inheritance laws. The British introduced marriage laws, which favoured virilocality, and in turn, implied land property and inheritance would go down the male lineage[39].

As a result, women's access to inherited land was dramatically restricted and women's economic position and status was weakened. The British's marriage laws guided by ideas of the superiority and morality of their own marriage practices of monogamy were in sharp contrast to the traditional Sinhalese marriage customs of polygamy, polyandry, easy and quick divorces procedures[40]. As Risseeuw stresses "…enduring monogamy, preferably limiting economic power to one of the spouses and reducing the

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[34] See Bina Agarwal, *A Field of One's Own. Gender and Land Rights in South Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 120-33.

[35] See Carla Risseeuw, "State Formation and Transformation in Gender Relations and Kinship in Colonial Sri Lanka", in *Shifting Circles of Support. Contextualising Gender and Kinship in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa*, eds. Rajni Palriwala and Carla Risseeuw (London: Sage, 1996), pp. 79-109 and Carla Risseeuw, *Gender Transformation: Power and Resistance among Women in Sri Lanka* (Dehli: Manoar, 1991).

[36] See Agarwal, Field of One's Own. Gender and Land Rights in South Asia , pp. 181-82.

[37] Ibid., p. 183.

[38] At the same time, the number of the Sinhalese women wage earners doubled and the numbers of women tea labourers and general labours increased, while the number of Tamil women wage earners dropped dramatically by a quarter. See Agarwal, *Field of One's Own. Gender and Land Rights in South Asia* , p. 183.

[39] In fact, according to the Roman-Dutch law the property of the woman passed entirely to the husband upon marriage.

[40] See Gananath Obeyesekere, Land Tenure in Village Ceylon: A Sociological and Historical Study (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), pp. 141ff. and Carla Risseeuw, The Fish Don't Talk About the Water: Gender Transformation, Power and Resistance among Women in Sri Lanka (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1988), pp. 33ff.

responsibility networks from a large extended family to a smaller unit"[41] seemed necessary socio-political cornerstones for the successful land appropriation and hence colonisation by the British.

While some women protested against these colonial changes[42], women's very lack of legal authority in elite male-dominated caste and clan councils prevented them from making their voices heard. In contrast to other South Asian countries like India, gender equality was not an explicit political aim of the early (Tamil and Sinhalese) nationalist movements[43]. At the same time, however, nationalist movements like the Sinhalese Buddhist nationalism and Tamil Hindu nationalism clearly led (mainly in the early 20th century) to a certain degree of political awakening process among women, particularly among women with upper and middle class background and from the Western educated, colonised elite.[44]

In conclusion, one could argue that while Azar's first cluster - the communal content of a society - works with gender-blind assumptions and ideas, it nevertheless opens up some promising analytical space to discuss gender as an analytical category and a gender-sensitive perspective like "sexual politics of colonialism". While the above gender-sensitive perspective offers only (a snapshot of) one possible gender-sensitive interpretation, it decodes the colonial legacy of divide and rule as an interlocking nexus of multiple "gender arrangements" of the colonising and the colonised.

3.2   Human Needs

In his second cluster, human needs, Azar stresses how the dominant communal group (or coalition of groups) ignores the needs of other communal groups thereby breeding social frustration and polarisation. Azar's ideas of "universal and ontological human needs" imply that they are "common to all and whose

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[41] Carla Risseeuw, "Transformation in Gender Relations in Sri Lank under Colonial Rule", *Netherlands Review of Development Studies*, No. 1 (1987), p. 15, cited in Agarwal, *Field of One's Own. Gender and Land Rights in South Asia*, p. 187.

[42] See Risseeuw, Fish Don't Talk About the Water: Gender Transformation, Power and Resistance among Women in Sri Lanka, pp. 82-3.

[43] Selvy Thiruchandran, The Politics of Gender and Women's Agency in Post-Colonial Sri Lanka (Colombo: WERC, 1997), p. viii.

[44] Chandra de Silva, "A Historical Overview of Women in Sri Lankan Politics", in *Women and Politics in Sri Lanka. A Comparative Perspective*, ed.
Sirima Kiribamune (Kandy: ICES, 1999), p. 25.

pursuit is an ontological drive in all"[45]. Azar distinguishes between material needs like the need for nutrition and non-material needs like political access needs.[46]

At first glance, one could argue that Azar's very focus on human needs suggests the possibility of opening up some promising space to discuss gender. Like using gender as an analytical category Azar's very emphasis on the needs of communal groups implies unpacking and opening up given social structures. Azar departs from stronger state-centric and state-based approaches to conflict management like most negotiation. By doing so, Azar clearly prioritises the underlying concerns of the conflict parties involved such as needs, grievances, fears and identity.

How far does this sympathetic reading of Azar's work withstand closer scrutiny? The following analysis will discuss how far Azar's concept of human needs opens analytical space to discuss gender and what gender-sensitive perspectives of Azar's needs might look like. This will be done on two levels, first vis-à-vis Azar's ideas of ontological and universal human needs (3.2.1) and of power inequalities (3.2.2) and second vis-à-vis Azar's specific needs, which are political access needs (3.2.3), acceptance needs (3.2.4) and security needs (3.2.5).

3.2.1 Ontological and Universal Human Needs[47]

The following points seem to be of particular importance for a gender-sensitive critique of Azar's model of PSC: Given their different roles and tasks in the pre-violent conflict situation, women and men speak with multiple voices and hence have different and similar needs. Along those lines, it does not make sense to speak of universal human needs or the human needs of the - to use Azar's language – "dominant communal group".

In Sri Lanka the Sinhalese are the dominant communal group. Yet, the material and non-material needs of, for example, a Sinhalese, upper-class, married woman living in Colombo are strikingly different from the needs of a Sinhalese, working class, widow living in the South. This is to say too, just because both women belong to the same sex and to the same "dominant communal group", they do not

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[45] Azar, "Protracted International Conflicts: Ten Propositions", p. 60.
[46] Azar, Management of Protracted Social Conflict. Theory and Cases, pp. 7-9.
[47] A detailed gender-sensitive critique of ontological and universal human needs is beyond the scope of this paper and is offered in: Cordula Reimann, *"All You Need is Love"… and What About Gender? Engendering Burton's Human Needs Theory* (Bradford: Centre for Conflict Resolution. Department of Peace Studies, University of Bradford 2002).

(necessarily) speak with one voice and have a homogenous and universal(isable) set of needs. Rather, women's "traditional" roles in the private sphere alongside their multiple "new" tasks in the private and public sphere during and after conflict escalation highly influence how they understand, express and satisfy "their needs". The Sri Lankan case shows that there is not, for example, a single form of female headed households in violent social conflicts. Rather, there are always multiple forms of female headed households like refugees, wives of "disappeared husbands", widows and ex-combatants. All of them have similar but also radically different needs and social interests: While female refugees and ex-combatants have special physical and social security needs in terms of shelter, rehabilitation and resettlement programmes, all single female headed households suffer from different forms of social stigma and exclusion.[48] Forms of "multiple victimization" may include increased poverty, forced prostitution, reduced marriage prospects, additional (sexual) harassment. These social-culturally accepted forms of "victimization" often reflect a gender-specific or "gendered vulnerability". Most female heads suffer from enormous mental trauma, forms of depression and psychosomatic illnesses[49]. In fact, there has been some troubling evidence pointing to the rapidly increasing incidents of suicides and attempted suicides by women, for example, in East Sri Lanka especially since the 1990s.[50] On a more positive note, one has to emphasize the ambiguous character of being single heads of households for some Sri Lankan women. While the role of women as sole breadwinners and decision-makers implies for many women different forms of "gendered vulnerability" and victimization as discussed above, some women experience their new found independence as main decision-makers as a form of

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[48] See also Dieneke van der Wijk, The Human Side of Conflict: Coping Strategies of Women Heads of Households in Four Villages in Sri Lanka and Cambodia.
Report for the Gender and Learning Team of Oxfam UK (London: Oxfam, 1997).
[49] Sasanka Perera, *Political Violence in Sri Lanka: Dynamics, Consequences and Issues of Democratization* (Colombo: CENWOR, 1998). The "gendered vulnerability" goes very much hand in hand with the so-called "marriage squeeze" that is the numerical imbalance between women and men of marriageable age: The number of who marry very late or never marry at all has been consistently increasing over the last couple of years. To understand this dramatic and rather tragic development for individual women and men, one has to know that in Sri Lanka sexuality, pregnancy and child-rearing outside marriage are socially and culturally not allowed.
[50] See for example http://www.tamilnet.com/reports/98/02/0204.html . At the same time, there is still very little known about the coping strategies/mechanism of female headed households. For one of the few analyses of coping mechanisms see Gameela Samarasinghe, "Strategies of Coping", in *Stories of Survivors. Socio-Political Contexts of Female Headed Households in Post-Terror Southern Sri Lanka, Vol. I*, Sasanka Perera (Colombo: WERC and Vikas Publishing House PVT LTD, 1999), pp. 102-19 and van der Wijk, *Human Side of Conflict: Coping Strategies of Women Heads of Households in Four Villages in Sri Lanka and Cambodia.*

political and social empowerment and emancipation. Interviews with some of them highlighted that they were unwilling to play the role of the stereotypical widow who is socially stigmatised and ostracized[51].

The above analysis showed that Azar's notion of ontological and universal human needs forecloses the very possibility to discuss gender as an analytical category. There is no space to discuss questions of social change and historical variability on the one hand and the socially constructed nature of identity on the other hand. How far the same may be said about Azar's idea of power inequalities as reason for and immediate expression of needs deprivation will be discussed next.

3.2.2 Power Inequalities

Azar explicitly points to the close relationship of unequal power distribution of resources (within and among societies) and needs (dis)satisfaction among social groups as cause and explanation for PSCs.[52] He speaks of the "interlocking nexus of underdevelopment, structural deprivation, and communal or identity cleavages"[53] where structural inequality is very much the result of "political inequality, economic stratification, and ideological domination by one social group over another"[54]. Hence, while Azar's idea of human needs is an a-historical and rather fixed one, it explicitly takes into account power disparities. This dual understanding of human needs as a-historical but closely and inextricably linked to power structures runs throughout Azar's concept of needs.

Azar's notion of structural inequality with its three features - political inequality, economic inequality, and ideological domination - seems rather favourable to discuss gender. Political inequality refers to the "asymmetric distribution of political power among social forces and the domination of the

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[51] See Darini Rajasingham-Senanayake, "After Victimhood: Cultural Transformation and Women's Empowerment in War and Displacement". Paper presented at the international conference "Women in Conflict Zone. Comparative Issues Faced by Women as a Result of Armed Conflict. Sri Lanka and the Post Yugoslav States", organized by the International Women in Conflict Zones Network at York University, in Hendela, Sri Lanka, 11-13/12/1998.

[52] See Azar, "Peace amidst Development"; Azar "The Theory of Protracted Social Conflict and the Challenge of Transforming Conflict Situations"; and Azar and Farah, "The Structure of Inequality and Protracted Social Conflicts: A Theoretical Framework".

[53] Azar and In Moon, "Managing Protracted Social Conflicts in the Third World: Facilitation and Development Diplomacy", p. 395.

[54] Ibid., p. 396 (Emphasis C.R.).

state apparatus by one […] social group"[55]. Political inequality, in turn, is closely linked with "…economic disparities in income, wealth and status"[56].

Azar's link of human needs with structural inequalities clearly opens some analytical space to discuss hidden and "invisible" women's needs and their gender-specific consequences and implications for wider power structures. Not only does Azar refer to open and direct forms of power inequalities, but he also takes up the idea of hidden and subtler forms of power inequalities. Azar speaks, for example, of the idea of a hegemonic ideology as "…attempts to stabilise the social structure by rationalising the resulting inequalities"[57]. The idea of hegemonic ideology as an underlying feature of structural inequality opens up some analytical space to look for the hidden features of power structures. It comes very close to the notion of gender symbolism including the idea of hegemonic, in a Gramscian sense, "colonizing dichotomies" of masculinity and femininity. In fact, one could argue that Azar's definition of hegemonic ideology implicitly opens up analytical space to discuss "deep-rooted" gender symbolism, like stereotypical notions of femininity and masculinity, and hence the more subtle hierarchical power structures and their taken-for-granted distribution. If one takes the Sri Lankan example, it helps to explain, for example, why a high literacy rate among girls and women did not foster more equal employment opportunities in the last fifty years.

Both a gender-sensitive perspective and the idea of hegemonic ideology suggest that power inequalities cannot be narrowed down to the constraints generated by a given social structure. By its three-fold definition, gender implies that forms of power inequalities are highly shaped (constrained and fostered) by the gender symbolism and the individual motivation of women and men. In Sri Lanka, for instance, women have stressed time and again that the very gendered division of labour prevents them from being involved in peace-building activities.

The very gendered division of labour as one form of Azar's hegemonic ideology constitutes a concrete "access barrier" for most women in getting involved in peace-building activities in Sri Lanka. Yet, it is only one part of a nexus of multiple and hidden power relations. The gendered division of labour (always) goes in tandem with (hidden and open) gender symbolism on the one hand and

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[55] Ibid.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Ibid.

individual motivation on the other hand. This means taken the above example that certain notions of femininity like the "sacrificing and caring woman" and the individual motivation "to work for peace" and/or "to be a caring mother" always co-write Azar's idea of hegemonic ideology in general and the gendered division of labour in particular. This also implies that women and men may perceive and experience victimisation in a different way. Yet, this does not necessarily mean that women as social group are victimised in the same way. As women and men are not a homogenous social group, the gender-specific victimisation of different women may come in different forms and fashions being highly dependent on women's class, caste, age and sexuality.

What seems to matter most here is that a gender-sensitive approach does not leave women and men in a state of gender-specific victimisation: It stresses that women and men as active social agents have the potential to challenge hegemonic gender symbolism like the "caring and sacrificing woman" through their individual behaviour and through, albeit slow, changes in the gendered division of labour.

Along those lines, a gender-sensitive perspective brings into the open the shifting, individual identities of women and men, the underlying symbolism of femininity and masculinity and its structural manifestation in social and political institutions. At the same time, a gender-sensitive approach by its very definition problematizes the needs and power structures in the private (the individual and the household) vis-à-vis the needs in the public sphere (the community and the state) (see section 2.4.).

One could therefore argue that while Azar's overall notion of structural inequality does not explicitly take into account gender inequality as a form of hierarchical power structure or as an "under-currant" feature of hierarchical power structures, it seems rather favourable to theorize about gender.

Having come up with a mixed picture of the gender-sensitivity of Azar's underlying ideas of universal needs and power inequalities, the analysis will now examine Azar's specific needs more closely.

Azar speaks of political access needs, acceptance needs and of security needs. I will take up these three different forms of needs one by one turning to the idea of political access needs first.

3.2.3 *Political Access Needs*

As far as political access needs are concerned, Azar refers to the effective participation of individuals in political, market, and decision-making institutions. On the one hand, one may argue that if women's

needs are socially constructed, then the same holds true with men and their (material and non-material) needs. If everyday terror and a "culture of violence" paralyse everyday life as in Sri Lanka, the need for political participation is clearly less predominant and vital for (most) men (and women) than the "need for physical security". This is to say too, men's need for political participation is far from homogenous or static: The "need for political participation" may be more predominant in the post-settlement phase than in the pre-escalation and escalation situation, where a "culture of terror" paralyses everyday life and makes "(effective) political participation" impossible and somehow irrelevant for the everyday survival of most men (and women).

On the other hand, and most importantly here, whose need for "effective participation" is at stake? Using gender as an analytical category decodes Azar's gender-neutral notion of the "individuals" in the public sphere as deceptive. In most PSCs the main political and economic key players in formal decision-making are men. At first glance, Sri Lanka with two high profile women politicians may appear to be an exception: President Kumaratunge and her mother Bandaraneike as prime minister (until her death in October 2000) have been the most powerful political players. Yet, to assume that women in general are predominantly or equally involved in formal, political decision-making could not be further away from current political life in Sri Lanka. The presentation of women in political decision-making is a far cry away from being equitable or equal. While women voters are in the majority, there are only very few high-profile and highly visible women politicians. Politics remains a firmly entrenched male monopoly[58]. Since independence in 1948, the wider political (formal and informal) decision-making process in party politics, trade unions, and student movements has been and still continues to be heavily dominated by men.[59] Women are still clearly underrepresented in both the legislature and executive. The presentation of women at the legislative level, for instance, has remained uniformly low over the last decades at 2-10%.[60]

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[58] See also Chandra de Silva, "A Historical Overview of Women in Sri Lankan Politics", p. 38, pp. 43-5, 60 and p. 63.

[59] See Sirima Kiribamune, "Climbing the Greasy Pole: Opportunities and Challenges in Women's Access to Electoral Politics in Sri Lanka", in *Women and Politics in Sri Lanka. A Comparative Perspective*, ed. Sirima Kiribamune (Kandy: ICES, 1999), pp. 87-8.

[60] De Silva, "A Historical Overview of Women in Sri Lankan Politics", 42-45. See also CENWOR, *Women, Political Empowerment and Decision-Making* (Colombo: CENWOR, 1994), and Kamala Liyanage, "Women in Political Parties: The Sri Lankan Expertise", in *Women and Politics in Sri Lanka. A Comparative Perspective*, ed. Sirima Kiribamune (Kandy: ICES, 1999), pp. 101-42.

In this context, the most striking feature of South Asian politics is the role of kinship and class and dynastic affiliation well reflected in the so-called "widows and daughters syndrome" (that is, if you are a widow or daughter of a deceased political leader it is very likely that you get elected over male aspirants to party nominations). Both Kumaratunge and her mother Bandaraneike as women politicians were clearly considered the "political heirs" of their deceased (popular) husbands.[61]

Applying gender as an analytical category points to the gendered nature of decision-making institutions, reflected in the domination of men as decision-makers in the public sphere. It highlights that the gender-neutral understanding of Azar's "need for effective participation" in political and economic decision-making disguises the gender-specific hurdles and "access barriers" for many women (not only in times of conflict) to participate in political and economic decision-making.[62] Many of these gender-specific hurdles like the workload in the private sphere, high inter- and intra-party violence, financial constraints etc. refer to different forms of the "re-invention of tradition[63]. The "re-invention of tradition" is understood as the social and political mobilization of stereotypical socio-cultural customs and beliefs to explain, justify and preserve the status quo. In Sri Lanka, predominant social-cultural norms clearly discourage women from leaving the "private sphere" and entering the "public sphere" of political decision-making. Women are considered, for example "… not good at decision-making, they are not sharp enough… they do not know their rights"[64]. Or in the words of one male politician "either you are a woman or you are a politician. You cannot have it both ways"[65].

The "re-invention of tradition" seems particularly striking in a country with a high literacy among girls and women (about 88 % as of 1994[66]) presenting nearly half of university students[67]. One could

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[61] At the same time, Kumaratunge is one of the few female Sri Lankan politicians who pursued a political career independently of her husband.

[62] See for example Sirima Kiribamune, "Women and Politics – A Field Survey", in *Women and Politics in Sri Lanka. A Comparative Perspective*, ed. Sirima Kiribamune (Kandy: ICES, 1999), pp. 264-65.

[63] KM de Silva cited in Sirima Kiribamune, "Climbing the Greasy Pole: Opportunities and Challenges in Women's Access to Electoral Politics in Sri Lanka", p. 97.

[64] Author interview with male participants at a conflict resolution workshop organized by the National Peace Council in Kandy, 20/4/2000.

[65] Ibid.

[66] For sex-disaggregated data on literacy see again Demographic Survey of 1994 in Swarna Jayaweera, "Fifty Years of Independence and Changing Gender Roles and Relations", in *Sri Lanka at Crossroads. Dilemmas and Prospects after 50 Years of Independence*, eds. S.T. Hettige and Markus Mayer (New Dehli: Macmillan India Limited), p. 143.

[67] See Department of Census and Statistics, *Statistical Profile of Sri Lanka* (Colombo, 1998).

argue that the "re-invention of tradition" has to be understood as part and parcel of "ingrained patriarchal structures of society"[68]. The basis of these "ingrained patriarchal structures" is a stereotypical understanding of femininity and masculinity which "[h]aving developed over several generations, … has the force of legitimacy gained through the strength of continuity"[69]. At the heart of this gender-stereotypical understanding is the idealization of "feminized sacrifice" and "masculinized valor"[70]. One illustrative example of "feminized sacrifice" is President Kumaratunge's self-portrayal: "I am a widow and mother, I have suffered and as a woman I understand your suffering"[71].

"Ingrained patriarchal structures" may take different forms in Sri Lanka. "Character assassination" as one form of "ingrained patriarchal structures" combines elements of ethnic chauvinism and religious fundamentalism. While both women and men may become victims of "character assassination", their vulnerability is again gendered. In Sri Lanka most men are "socialized" to address forms of "character assassination", while most women as carriers of family traditions and customs are not. The "tradition" is used to justify suppression and violence against women in form of "character assassination": Women are accused of being "impure" by entering into politics. This form of "character assassination" is supported by open and hidden forms of culturally promoted sexism in the media and popular entertainment like the cinema. Sri Lankan feminist Abeysekera points, for instance, to the open violence against women and the portrayal of women as weak, suppressed and dependent agents as common features in most contemporary Sinhala cinema[72]. Contemporary Sinhala cinema is an illustrative example of how cultural norms like "honour" and "shame" take the form of "embodied practices"[73]. "Embodied practices" are

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[68] Janaka Biyanwila, "Suicide – The Question of Agency", in *Matters of Violence. Reflections on Social and Political Violence in Sri Lanka*, eds. Jayadeva Uyangoda and Janaka Biyanwila (Colombo: SSA, 1997), p. 145.

[69] Thiruchandran, Politics of Gender and Women's Agency in Post-Colonial Sri Lanka, p. 31.

[70] These terms are taken from Sri Lankan feminist de Alwis. See Malathi de Alwis, "Moral Mothers and Stalwart Sons: Reading Binaries in a Time of War", in *The Women and War Reader*, eds. Lois Ann Lorentzen and Jennifer Turpin (New York: New York University Press), p. 254. See also Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches and Bases*, p. 197.

[71] Chandrika Kumaratunge cited in Kiribamune, "Climbing the Greasy Pole: Opportunities and Challenged in Women's Access to Electoral Politics in Sri Lanka", p. 93 (Emphasis C.R.).

[72] Sunila Abeysekera, "Women in Contemporary Sinhala Cinema: Violence against Women and the Presentation of Women's Sexual Autonomy", in *Confronting Complexities: Gender Perceptions and Values*, ed. CENWOR (Colombo: CENWOR, 1998), pp. 52-68. See also Kumudini Samuel, "Women's Sexuality, Sexual Pleasure and the Sinhala Cinema", *Options*, 20, 4th Quarter (1998), pp. 2-3.

[73] See Mangalika de Silva, "Embodied Practices: Body, Agency and Sexuality of Terror in Tamil Nationalism". Unpublished MA Dissertation, The Hague: Institute of Social Studies, 1998.

ideological constructs of sexuality and family that (de-)legitimise the social interaction of men and women in general and the control of women's sexuality in particular.

Not only does "character assassination" bring women's honour into disrepute, it also "tarnishes" the family's honour. Given predominant ideologies of "purity" and "chastity" in the wider Sri Lankan culture, many women are afraid of possible (further) social-cultural exclusion and public slander including possible backlash against their children once they join party politics.[74] Independent of social background, ethnicity and class, many women have "internalised" the above patriarchal values and norms. In this context, Thiruchandran speaks of a rather "subtle process of self-exclusion imposed by the women themselves"[75] in the face of men's control over the public sphere.

The idea of "internalised gendered vulnerability" is echoed by the self-image of many Sri Lankan women: "Women are generally afraid. Women have too much desire. Women are weak."[76] Having said that, in many social conflicts like in Sri Lanka the main concern for many (politically conscious and pro-active) women is not even to, in Azar's language, effectively participate, but to get access to the main political and economic institutions in the first place.[77]

The above analysis has made clear that most women are far from having equal - never mind effective - access to economic and political institutions. The question that arises is how far would Sri Lankan women as politicians make a real difference in a political climate, which particularly in the past was riddled by political thuggery and systematic inter- and intra-party violence?

To answer these questions one may turn to the sparse but clear empirical evidence from the political history of Sri Lankan party politics. Looking at the political decision-making of female politicians like Bandanaraike and Kumaratunge, one could agree with Thiruchandran that both these female politicians emulated masculine power in playing the same political games as their male counterparts.[78] A case in point is, for example, the ruthless crushing of the youth insurrection by Bandanaraike or the "war for

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[74] Thiruchandran, Politics of Gender and Women's Agency in Post-Colonial Sri Lanka, pp. 22-3.
[75] Ibid., p. 30.
[76] Interview with internally displaced population, Puttalam. Group 3.
[77] See also Barbara Nelson and Najma Chowdhury, eds., *Women and Politics Worldwide* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994) and
Merilee Karl, Women and Empowerment. Participation and Decision-Making (London: Zed Books, 1995).
[78] Thiruchandran, Politics of Gender and Women's Agency in Post-Colonial Sri Lanka, p. 17.

peace strategy" of Kumaratunge. Apart from anything else, the Sri Lankan case clearly illustrates that even with a woman as prime minister or as president the state's policies are not more gender-sensitive – in fact, given the current political situation the gendered distribution of labour remains completely intact and unchanged.

Feminists have showed time and again how far the entitlement and the right of men to political participation expressed in (Azar's political access) needs went in tandem with the exclusion of women from the public sphere. A gender-sensitive perspective decodes how far Azar's (non-material) political access and acceptance needs of (most) men remain "unharmed" and satisfied, while women's basic (material) needs, like the need for physical and personal security, are not only dissatisfied, but completely ignored (see section 2.2.5. below).

Against this analytical background let us now have a closer look at acceptance needs as another form of Azar's non-material needs.

3.2.4   Acceptance Needs

As far as acceptance needs are concerned, Azar had in mind the need for "distinctive identity" and its social recognition. Identity is defined in terms of "shared cultural values and heritage"[79]. On a positive note, one could argue that similar to using gender as an analytical category Azar puts the "identity group" centre-stage as the most important unit of analysis[80]. The identity group is defined in racial, religious, ethnic, cultural and other terms. Given Azar's gender-neutral understanding of needs and "identity groups", one could argue that women and their specific needs in PSCs could be discussed as the needs of another identity group. Yet, Azar's idea of identity is a rather static one. There is limited analytical space to discuss social construction and dynamic nature of identity including the fluid and changing agency of women and men and shifting notions of femininity and masculinity in (pre- and post-) war situations

Women (and men) in most PSCs like Sri Lanka have multiple roles and hence their identities are far from static or homogenous. Some Sri Lankan women become, for example, single heads of households,

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[79] Azar, Management of Protracted Social Conflict. Theory and Cases, p. 8.
[80] See Azar, "Protracted International Conflicts: Ten Propositions".

others may join militant protest groups like the JVP[81] or the LTTE[82] or get involved in informal, social protest movements like many did in the 1980s in the "Mothers' Front". The "Mothers' Front" as social protest movement against the ongoing war was heard and taken seriously as the "Front" spoke of their personal experience as mothers. One could argue that the "Mothers' Front" reflected very much the stereotypical understanding and identity of women as the "peaceful and caring sex" which is still predominant in the Sri Lankan society.[83] In fact, it is the imagery of "peaceful motherhood" which was symbolically used to ridicule women's political action as "mother's affair"[84] and to exclude women from party politics echoing the general belief that "motherhood and politics do not mix". Yet, at the same time, the metaphor of "motherhood" has always been a symbol for collective identity and for political protest in and of the public sphere. Or to put it in the words of Sri Lankan feminist and human rights activist Samuel "… [t]he invocation of motherhood was used as a protection against reprisals as much as it was a symbol of legitimate moral duty and obligation to safeguard life"[85]. One could argue that women in the "Mothers' Front" who were traditionally a-political became politicised because "their" "private sphere" was politicised. They got active when their husbands and sons were "silenced by the power of the gun"[86]. Mothers brought in the "private sphere" by carrying, for instance, broomsticks: Not only did their broomsticks represent the domestic and private sphere, but they also symbolised the dirt and rubbish of the "public sphere" that is the dirty, corrupt and violent party politics controlled and dominated by men.

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[81] Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) established as "People's Liberation Front" in the mid-60s started off as Marxist in orientation. It increasingly emerged as a Sinhalese nationalist organisation in the end-1970s/early-1980s opposed to any compromise with the Tamil secession. This was most dramatically reflected in the 1983 anti-Tamil riots. Additionally, the JVP was responsible for two insurrections against the governments in the 1971 and between 1987-1990.

[82] Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), which started off as an embryonic guerrilla movement with some armed Tamil youth in the mid-70s, developed into a paramilitary force with - according to Western intelligence agencies - between 14. 000 - 18.000 fully armed cadres in the end-90s. Its political aim has been a separate state Eelam and the political self-determination of the Tamils.

[83] Another Sri Lankan women's organization working with a similar "gender imagery" is, for example, "Mothers and Daughters of Lanka".

[84] Thiruchandran, Politics of Gender and Women's Agency in Post-Colonial Sri Lanka, p. 43.

[85] Kumudini Samuel, "Give Peace a Chance: Women's Activism and Marginalization in the Peace Process", *Options*, 21, 1st Quarter (2000), p. 7.

[86] Thiruchandran, Politics of Gender and Women's Agency in Post-Colonial Sri Lanka, p. 43.

The above analysis points to the idea of complex and shifting identities being part and parcel of the intractable and deep-rooted nature of PSCs. Yet, in Azar's notion of acceptance needs there is little if any analytical space to discuss the idea of negotiating and shifting identities in PSCs. This also becomes strikingly obvious when one takes into account the shifting identities of masculinity and femininity and their connection with violence in most violent conflicts like in Sri Lanka. In this context, one may refer to the work of feminist Yuval-Davis, which shows how far "women's identities" vis-à-vis their bodies and controlled sexuality are instrumental in reproducing ethnic identities and boundaries.[87] "Good women" are socialised to protect the "honour of the community" to ensure coming generations of the community are of pure ethnic origin. This is to say too, that while in many conflict situations one finds constant negotiating of ethnic and gender identities, "women appear to have far less space for shaping the outcome of gender negotiation in contexts where their identity is felt to be a prime ethnic marker"[88]. Along those lines, gender-specific violence like rape becomes a strategy for destroying these very "holy" boundaries and markers of "pure ethnic" identity. In fact, "gender, in conjunction with ethnicity, is a key construct in the creation of violence"[89]. Women as cultural symbols and symbolical markers of ethnic identities become "the other"[90]. This is to say too, in most PSCs "[w]here gender prescriptions as ethnic markers have been internalised by both women and men, the "politically correct" behaviour and appearance of women symbolise the core identity of the whole group"[91]. An illustrative example from Sri Lanka is the observation that among the displaced population, displaced Muslim women start subscribing more vigorously to the Islamic dress code, and thereby reflecting the radicalisation of Muslims as a whole.[92] Less surprisingly, "[a]n attack by the enemy on precisely this vulnerable core identity is one of the most powerful weapons"[93].

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[87] Nira Yuval-Davis, *Gender and Nation* (Thosands Oaks, CA: Sage, 1997).

[88] Joke Schrijvers, "Tamil-Muslim Violence, Gender and Ethnic Relations in Eastern Sri Lanka", in *Nēthrā Quarterly Journal*, ed. Regi Siriwardena, 2, 3 (April-June 1998), Colombo: ICES, p. 33.

[89] Ibid., 14. See also Joke Schrijvers, "Internal Refugees in Sri Lanka: The Interplay of Ethnicity and Gender", *The European Journal of Development Research*, 9, 2 (1997), pp. 62-83.

[90] A symbolic manifestation of "conquering women" as "the other" is the tattooing of the women's breasts and genitalia with symbols of the other community. Radhika Coomaraswamy, *A Question of Honour: Women, Ethnicity and Armed Conflict*. Third Minority Rights Lecture 25/5/1999 im Hotel Intercontinental in Geneva, Switzerland (Colombo: ICES, 1999), p. 10.

[91] Schrijvers, "Tamil-Muslim Violence, Gender and Ethnic Relations in Eastern Sri Lanka", p. 33 (Emphasis there).

[92] Author interview with staff of *Home for Human Rights* in Colombo on 27/4/2000.

[93] Schrijvers, "Tamil-Muslim Violence, Gender and Ethnic Relations in Eastern Sri Lanka", p. 33 (Emphasis there).

At the same time, leaders of ethnic groups are able to manipulate ethnic identities because they are so highly gendered: Gender-coded feelings such as emotions of "honour" and "shame" are at the heart of each ethnic identity group – and strikingly run through all Sri Lankan ethnic groups. One Sri Lankan scholar speaks of "[t]he socialization of shame"[94] as a "significant mediating concept"[95] in the wider socio-cultural socialization of the Sri Lankan society.[96] What seems to matter most here is that these feelings are embedded and highly interwoven with hegemonic, in the Gramscian sense, gender-symbolism.

De Silva discusses in "Shifting Frames of Masculinity" how notions of collective identity among JVP male activists were mediated through culturally coded emotions of "honour" and "shame" on the one hand and culturally promoted inter-male sibling relationships on the other hand[97]. One has to know that most JVP activists as members of a radical social protest movement defined themselves against the elite-based and -controlled Sri Lankan society. At the same time, most of them identified themselves very much with the image of "natural guardians" of the "honour" of the family and its status[98]. This very collective identity, in turn, centres very much around culturally coded emotions of the fear of loosing "shame" and "status"[99]. The JVP as protest movement against the Sri Lankan elite-controlled society "revived" these traditional notions of "honour" by promoting and fostering "traditional" Sri Lankan hierarchical authority and group affiliations like inter-male relationships[100]. Inter-male relationships, in turn, are highly embedded in both traditional ideologies of "honour" and "shame" on the one hand and the highly hierarchical and conformist Sri Lankan society on the other hand.

Having said that, the above analysis raises some troubling questions about the rather deadly and tricky combination of culturally sanctioned notions of "shame" and "honour", hierarchical authority and

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[94] Ibid.

[95] Biyanwila, "Suicide – The Question of Agency", p. 146.

[96] The Sri Lankan social anthropologist Obeyesekere goes a step further by stressing that the socialization of "shame" in Sri Lanka has a clearly disempowering effect as it contributes to and promotes the "individual's loss of self-esteem". See Gananath Obeyesekere, *The Cult of Goddess Pattini* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1984), p. 504.

[97] Jani de Silva, "Shifting Frames of Masculinity", in *Culture and Politics of Identity in Sri Lanka*, eds. Mithran Tiruchelvam and C.S. Dattathreya (Colombo: ICES, 1998), pp. 25-40.

[98] Ibid., p. 36.

[99] See Gananath Obeyesekere, *Medusa's Hair: and Essay on Personal Symbols and Religious Experience* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1981), pp. 76-83 and Obeyesekere, *Cult of Goddess Pattini*, pp. 501-8.

[100] See again De Silva, "Shifting Frames of Masculinity", pp. 25-40.

conformity, and ideologies of aggressive masculinity[101]. One may, for example, ask how far does the combination of culturally coded emotions of "shame", hierarchical authority and conformity and masculinity help us to explain and understand the large scale of inner- and intra-party violence and suicide committed by male JVP activists in the 1970s and 1980s.[102] How and why did systematic, large scale and inner- and intra-party violence turn into the only available, culturally sanctioned and "legitimate form of resistance"[103]? In conclusion, the above analysis stresses the need to take into account the socially constructed identities of masculinity and femininity and their connection with violence to more fully understand and explain the high inter-party and intra-party violence in most PSCs.

3.2.5 Security Needs

As far as security needs are concerned, Azar refers to the material needs for physical security, nutrition and housing. A gender-neutral reading of security needs suggests that men and women have similar, if not identical needs for physical security, nutrition and housing in war and peacetime.

How far these needs turn out to be gendered, may be discussed vis-à-vis the example of the need for physical security. The underlying assumption here is that any "gendered vulnerability" derives from the complex interplay and tension of a gendered division of labour, hegemonic (this includes "internalised" forms of) gender-stereotypes and personally experienced forms of vulnerability.

In Sri Lanka, as in most other conflict situations, the need for physical security clearly reflects a "gendered vulnerability". Due to the gendered division of labour in Sri Lanka many "women are expected to work from morning to midnight. The man may work for four hours, but the women might even come and take care of his shoes and meal"[104]. This snapshot of the everyday life of many Sri Lankans sets the scene for an analysis of the highly gendered nature of material needs like the need for

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[101] See Biyanwila, "Suicide – The Question of Agency", p. 147.

[102] Suicide as a socially constructed and culturally sanctioned form becomes an expression of violence: It becomes the very result of failed human needs satisfaction. See also Padmasiri de Silva, ed. *Suicide in Sri Lanka* (Kandy: Institute of Fundamental Studies, 1989) and see also Biyanwila, "Suicide – The Question of Agency", pp. 149-50.

[103] Ibid., p. 147 (Emphasis C.R.).

[104] National Peace Council, *7-Sectoral Report # 6. WB-Women Report. Unpublished Paper*, (Colombo: NPC, 2000), p. 18.

physical security. "The man" in our example clearly has a different need for physical security and recreation than his double-burdened wife.

Men and women may have different needs for physical security due to other forms of "gendered vulnerability" in the private sphere. Domestic violence is a case in point. In Sri Lanka, the large scale of domestic violence is an "open secret": While official figures speak of 60% of women who have been victims of domestic violence[105], unofficial sources estimate the figures are much higher. Domestic violence comes in different forms and fashions and may range from wife abuse, incest[106], martial rape[107] to family violence. As it is considered a "private matter" or "shameful matter", it is still a relatively under-reported, if not undocumented, crime. Again the problem seems to be one of socio-cultural norms of patriarchy, which prevent women from seeking legal redress, going public or speaking up[108]. In the light of stigmatisation, cultural repression and social exclusion, domestic violence becomes an "acceptable resolution" to marital disagreement and problems. In Sri Lanka as in many other countries and war zones the "blame-the-victim-syndrome" in the wider society and mass media runs so deep that even economically independent women tend to stay with abusive husbands and accept "violent, domestic life" as "part of the marriage"[109]. "Gendered vulnerability" is not only limited to the private sphere, but, in fact, is equally present in the public sphere. It may range from open sexual harassment, rape to increasing numbers of illegal abortions. Given paramount socio-cultural norms of "honour" and "shame", most women are understandingly reluctant to report rape, sexual harassment and abuse, as they fear further reprisals, harassment and harm.

In a country where all four dominant religions Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam are against abortion, women face (further) socio-cultural stigmatisation if they consider having an abortion.

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[105] See Radhika Coomaraswamy, "Violence Against Women", in *Matters of Violence. Reflections on Social and Political Violence in Sri Lanka*, eds., Jayadeva Uyangoda and Janaka Biyanwila (Colombo: SSA, 1997), p. 75.

[106] See Family Rehabilitation Center and University of Colombo, Workshop on Incest: A Qualitative Study on Incest Survivors in the Areas Anuradaphura, Badulla, Colombo, Matara, Puttalam: 1995-1996 (Colombo, 1997).

[107] See Women and Media Collective, "Rape", *Women's Rights Watch*, 1st Quarter (1998), Colombo.

[108] Kamalini Wijayatilake and Camena Gunaratne, Monitoring Progress in the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and Achievement of Equality for Women. Sri Lanka Report on Domestic Violence (Colombo: CENWOR, 1999) and CENWOR, Sthree Prabodha. Newsletter of the Centre for Women's Research, 11, 2 (Dec. 1999), p. 5.

[109] Kamalini Wijayatilake, *Domestic Violence – A Silent Crime*. Report of Third National Convention on Women's Studies. 4-7/2/1992 (Colombo: CENWOR, 1992).

Not only does the above analysis point to the different needs for physical security among women and men, it also shows how far this difference, both in quality and quantity, is the immediate result and expression of different forms of "gendered vulnerability". This is to say too, that different forms of "gendered vulnerability" which centre around the very fear of loosing "honour" and "shame" prevent many Sri Lankan, particularly Tamil and Muslim women, to express and go after their material and basic needs: They, for example, (deliberately) avoid travelling long distances, do not report rape or do not have an abortion in cases of forced pregnancy and rape.[110]

Does Azar's understanding of material needs account for (different forms of) "gendered vulnerability"? One could argue that while Azar's concept of material needs is gender-blind, it, nevertheless, does not foreclose the very possibility to take into account the gender-specific needs of women. This is very much down to Azar's explicit focus on material needs in addition to Azar's political access needs and other non-material needs. Yet, in contrast to Azar, a gender-sensitive approach stresses that given a highly gendered division of labour and different forms of "gendered vulnerability" in war and peace time most women's priority is or in fact has to be the satisfaction of material needs - before expressing non-material needs such as Azar's political access needs or acceptance needs.

The above analysis of "gendered vulnerability" in the private and public sphere leads us to the role and responsibility of the state and hence Azar's third cluster, the state's role as one direct expression and construction of the public sphere.

3.3 The State's Role

According to Azar, the state's role and state governance are crucial factors in satisfying or frustrating individual and identity group needs. In PSCs the monopolisation of power by the dominant social group limits the state's ability to meet the needs of all social groups.

Applying gender as an analytical category offers the following picture of the gender-sensitive character of Azar's model. By replicating and accepting the public-private split as somehow natural, Azar's understanding of the state's role maintains, legitimises and re-enforces the unequal power

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[110] National Peace Council, 7-Sectoral Report # 6. WB-Women Report, p. 17.

distribution in the private versus the public sphere. Azar completely neglects the role of the family in organizing political power and institutions while discussing the role of the state especially in the post-colonial period. This seems particularly striking as in many post-colonial states extended families have been and continue to be the (respected) key players in terms of (cultural) loyalty and political and economic organization. These family and kinship relationships often transform or spill over into ideological parties in the "new", post-colonial state. An illustrative example here is the kinship and family affiliation with the two main parties in Sri Lanka, the UNP on the one hand and the SLFP on the other hand.

Not only does Azar neglect the role of the family in structuring the public sphere, but he also obscures and masks the intra-household inequalities of resources and power in the private sphere. This also includes direct and indirect forms of violence against women like forced prostitution, rape, and domestic violence – which are clearly on the increase prior to the conflict's escalation.[111] A gender-sensitive perspective stresses the different forms of personal and structural violence, which take place in the public and the private sphere prior, during and after the conflict escalation.[112] The high level of inter- and intra-party violence alongside increasing violence against women in Sri Lanka is a case in point.

Feminists of different persuasions have stressed time and again the highly patriarchal foundation of the state[113]. They have demonstrated that the "state as power container" as the direct and open expression of "masculinity as system"[114] is a highly "gendered polity body". It is the "main organizer of gendered power"[115], which uses "legitimate" power both on the international and national/domestic level: Through law making, the education system, and the "traditional" culture, the state

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[111] See also Cordula Reimann, Towards Gender Mainstreaming in Crisis Prevention and Conflict Management. Guidelines for the German Technical Co-
operation (Eschborn: GTZ, 2001), p. 13.
[112] See also ibid., pp. 13-9.
[113] See for example H. Afshar, ed., *Women, State and Ideology – Studies from Africa and Asia* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1987); Sylvia Walby, *Theorizing Patriarchy* (Oxford/Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1990); Anne Showstack Sassoon, ed., *Women and the State*, (London: Hutchinson, 1987); Carole Pateman, *The Sexual Contract* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1988); Susanne Franzway, Dianne Court and R.W. Connell, *Staking a Claim. Feminism, Bureaucracy, and the State* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1989) and V. Spike Peterson, ed., *Gendered States: Feminist (Re)visions of International Relations Theory* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1992).
[114] Catharine MacKinnon, *Toward a Feminist Theory of the State* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), p. 170.
[115] Robert W. Connell, "The State, Gender, and Sexual Politics. Theory and Appraisal", *Theory and Practice*, 19, 5 (1990), p. 520.

institutionalises, legitimises and reproduces gender relations.[116] The state as "gendered polity body" is a general feature of most state-foundations and is very much a fact in Sri Lanka. In Sri Lanka the "gendered polity body" may be best-reflected vis-à-vis its most striking gendered features. These may be the following two among others:

First, one could argue that the very gendered nature of the Sri Lankan state is best reflected in the very exclusion of women from decision-making in the legislature and executive[117]. This goes hand in hand with a general governmental ignorance towards gender-specific issues in general and women's issues and problems in particular after independence[118]. Due to structural adjustment programmes in the 1980s, state policies sidelined gender-specific health needs and problems of young women, women workers, victims of domestic violence and ageing women[119].

Second, one may consider the very inclusion of women in, or more specifically the way women are included, in formal party politics as immediate expression and another form of the "gendered polity body". Given the "widows and daughters syndrome", only women of upper-class and privileged caste families where brothers, husbands, sons and fathers were already highly involved in formal, party politics have a chance to be accepted as (female) politicians. This may be then one reason why male politicians (and voters) "… do not seem threatened when women hold the highest positions in the state"[120].

Against this background, one could argue that the way women are included in and excluded from political decision-making is gendered. Yet, as with many other gendered features, the "gendered polity body" may not be immediately apparent or visible. There are four main reasons:

First, the casual observer may consider the Sri Lankan state with Kumaratunge and her mother as high-profile politicians as rather gender-friendly. In fact, there are no (open and direct) legal barriers for

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[116] See Franzway, Court and Connell, Staking a Claim. Feminism, Bureaucracy, and the State, p. 105.
[117] Thiruchandran, Politics of Gender and Women's Agency in Post-Colonial Sri Lanka, pp. 29-30.
[118] See also ibid., p. 8.
[119] Jayaweera, "Fifty Years of Independence and Changing Gender Roles and Relations", pp. 140-41.
[120] De Silva, "A Historical Overview of Women in Sri Lankan Politics", p. 45.

women to join politics. Further, since the 1980s, government bodies/agencies have started adopting policies and institutions to address women's specific needs, interests and concerns.[121]

Second, one could argue that in Sri Lanka there was not the same "harsh and overt forms of oppression"[122] of women like in India. In fact, one may argue that the liberal attitude of the state religion Buddhism towards women did not make it politically necessary to introduce a(n explicitly) gender-sensitive legislation[123].

Third, there has been a rather non-confrontational and rather conciliatory relationship between the state and different women's organizations.[124] In Sri Lanka, this has taken the form of self-chosen neutrality and distance by many women's organizations from government and state policies and formal (mainstream) party politics.[125] This "cosy relationship" between the state and some women's organizations, in turn, can be understood against the most predominant shortcomings and challenges of many women's groups in Sri Lanka:[126]: Most groups are based in Colombo, have been split along ethnic lines and are run by upper- and middle-class women, while 70% of their clientele are rural, low-income women. That is why some commentators stress that women's organizations tend to be "for the poor and not by the poor"[127].

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[121] In 1978 the Women's Bureau was set up and in 1993 the National Committee on Women started its work. The National Committee together with the Women's Charter (1993) are the implementing arms of the Ministry for Women's Affairs (1983). (The Women's Charter is based on CEDAW and applied to the Sri Lankan situation. At the time of writing, it is still a policy document *only* and not an integral part of the legislation.). The amendment of 1995 to the Penal Code makes sexual harassment an illegal offence. See also Sharni Jayawardena, "Defining – and Defying – Sexual Harassment", in *Options*, ed. Women and Media Collective, 4, 20 (1999), pp. 6-7 and Shyamala Gomez, "Sexual Harassment and the Law", in *Options*, ed. Women and Media Collective, 4, 20 (1999), pp. 9-10.

[122] Kumari Jayawardena, *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World* (London: Zed Books, 1986), p. 136.

[123] Thiruchandran *Politics of Gender and Women's Agency in Post-Colonial Sri Lanka*, p. 9. See also Rhadika Coomaraswamy, "The Impact of Tradition, Culture and Religion on Women in South Asia", *Ethnic Studies Report*, 1, 2 (July 1988), pp. 65-84.

[124] See also Carmen Wickremagamage, "Sri Lankan Organisations for Women: A Critical Appraisal", in *Women and Politics in Sri Lanka. A Comparative Perspective*, ed. Sirima Kiribamune (Kandy: ICES, 1999), pp. 161-62.

[125] Exceptions may here be the NGOs "Women for Peace", "Women's Coalition for Peace" and "Women and Media Collective".

[126] See also Carmen Wickremagamage, "Sri Lankan Organisations for Women: A Critical Appraisal", pp. 165-66 and R. Hensman, "A Feminist Movement in Sri Lanka: The Potential and the Necessity", *Contemporary South Asia*, 5, 1 (March 1996), pp. 67-74 (for an earlier version see http://www.mnet.fr/aiindex/i_aii/pag_w.html).

[127] Kamala Peiris, cited in Kiribamune, "Climbing the Greasy Pole: Opportunities and Challenges in Women's Access to Electoral Politics in Sri Lanka", p. 90.

Fourth, some may argue that to form and sustain a democratic state after independence, policy-makers had to base the Sri Lankan society so heavily fragmented and segmented by class, caste, gender, religion, ethnicity, cultural norms and practices on culturally sanctioned notions of hierarchy, domination and conformity.[128] Along those lines, gender inequality embedded in social institutions and gender symbolism was "just" one of many segments in a nexus of multiple forms of hierarchy and domination. Being deeply entrenched in gender symbolism and a gendered division of labour, gender inequality in Sri Lanka like in so many other countries became hegemonic and hence "natural".

3.4 International Linkages

Azar refers in his fourth cluster, international linkages, to the particularly political-economic and military relations which keep the state in all protracted social conflicts dependent on economically and/or politically "rich" and "strong" states.

First of all, one could argue Azar's overall gender-blind reading has to ignore the gender-specific dimensions of international linkages. Good examples from the Sri Lankan case study are the striking gender-specific dimensions of labour immigrants/migrant workers and the so-called Free Trade Zones. I will have a closer look at both examples starting off with labour immigration.

As far as labour immigration is concerned, one may refer to the situation of migrant workers leaving for the Middle East and other prosperous South Asian countries such as Hong Kong and Singapore and increasingly in the last couple of years Italy, Cyprus and Greece. Most leave due to a high unemployment rate in Sri Lanka (around 20% among women[129]) and relatively higher wages outside Sri Lanka. They work mainly in the garment industry and as housemaids. Work immigration is far from gender-blind or gender-neutral: 80% of the migrant workers are women[130]. In most receiving countries

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[128] See also Biyanwila, "Suicide – The Question of Agency", p. 149.

[129] For sex-disaggregated data of unemployment rates from 1963-1996 and sex-disaggregated data of unemployment rates by educational level see Jayaweera, "Fifty Years of Independence and Changing Gender Roles and Relations", pp. 147-48.

[130] See for example CENWOR, *Sthree Prabodha. Newsletter of the Centre for Women's Research*, 11, 1 (June 1999), pp. 1-4. For a database of migrant workers by the Sri Lankan Bureau of Foreign Employment see ibid., p. 8. While most women come from all different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, many are from the endangered and almost extinct indigenous peoples of Wanniyala-Aetto (from the Wanni, the dry zone tropical rain forest in the North of Sri Lanka). See Wiveca Stegeborn, "Endangered Wanniyala-Aetto Women sent as Sex Slaves to the Middle East", *Gender Policy Review*, www.genderpolicy.org (March 2001), pp. 4-9.

there are strict entry restrictions for men and an ongoing high demand for unskilled female workforce.[131] The "reprisals", which women have to face outside Sri Lanka may vary from sexual abuse, rape, contraction of AIDS, exploitative recruitment agencies and agents[132]. In some Muslim countries like the Middle East there are even reported cases of forced conversion to Islam as fundamental condition for getting employment abroad[133]. Other fundamental legal and political hurdles in the receiving countries are the lack of legal representation and discriminatory immigration and labour laws. The Sri Lankan women's human rights NGO "Women and Media Collective" highlights, for example, the issue of abduction and rape of returning women workers on their way home[134]. The effects of labour immigration inside Sri Lanka are equally negative: There are several NGOs reports pointing to disrupted and disturbed family ties, rapidly increasing cases of male alcoholism, incest and (attempted) suicides.[135]

Free Trade Zones (FTZ) as state-sponsored policies are as equally gendered practices of international linkages as labour immigration.[136] FTZ were introduced in Sri Lanka in the end 1970s to extract cheap labour for export production, here mainly garment production. Since their opening, 80% of the workforce have been women, who are semi-skilled and earn low wages. Many of these women come from rural and poor areas and consider working in the FTZ as the only way to earn a living and support their families back home. Moral pressures, family commitments and, most directly, incentives to reach high production targets force them to work long hours[137].

Having looked at work immigration and FTZ, one has to conclude that Azar's idea of international linkages is far from gender-neutral. Given Azar's overall gender-neutral (or gender-blind) model, it

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[131] See CENWOR, Sthree Prabodha. Newsletter of the Centre for Women's Research, 11, 1 (June 1999), p. 3.
[132] See India Abroad News Service 22/3/2001 on wysiwyg://4/http://www.indiaabroaddaily.com/2001/03/22/house-maids.html .
[133] Asoka Bandarage, Women and Social Change in Sri Lanka: Towards a Feminist Theoretical Framework (Colombo: CENWOR, 1998), p. 14.
[134] Ameena Hussein and Bhawani Loganathan, *An Annotated Bibliography on Violence Against Women in Sri Lanka* (Colombo: ICES, 1999), pp. 53-4.
[135] See for example CENWOR, Sthree Prabodha. Newsletter of the Centre for Women's Research, 11, 1 (June 1999), pp. 1-4.
[136] Main investors in FTZ have been European countries like Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, the UK, plus South East Asian counties like Singapore, Hong Kong and the USA.
[137] See Bandarage, Women and Social Change in Sri Lanka: Towards a Feminist Theoretical Framework, p. 6. See also Committee for Asian Women, Many Paths, One Goal. Organising Women Workers in Asia (Hong Kong: Committee for Asian Women, 1991), p. 65. For different NGOs' accounts of the poor working conditions see Voice of Women, Women Workers in the Free Trade Zones (Colombo: Voice of Women, 1983) and CENWOR, Export Processing Zones in Sri Lanka: Economic Impact and Social Issues (Geneva: ILO, 1994).

should not come as a surprise that Azar does not pay any explicit attention to these gender-specific dimensions of international linkages. Most importantly here, while not being explicitly gender-sensitive, Azar's overall idea of international linkages opens some promising space to discuss gender: Azar stresses that there is a blurred demarcation between "internal" and "external" sources of PSCs, which takes the form of a "dynamic interplay" between the international system and domestic social forces[138]. In fact, to distinguish between domestic and international politics becomes "artificial": The boundaries between "high" and "low politics" become more and more porous.

This line of argumentation clearly opens up some promising analytical entry-points to address the close and interrelated relationship of the private and public sphere. Feminists of different persuasions have stressed time and again that in order to overcome gender inequality and to achieve more equal gender relations one has to radically transform, Cohen speaks of "redescribing"[139], the private-public split. How far this practical and theoretical transformation should go and what it might imply is open to debate among feminists.[140] Feminist IR scholars like Enloe stress the close and intimate relationship of "the international" and "the private" by showing how far "the international" is highly influenced and penetrated by "the personal". Enloe shows how far different major arenas of gendered international politics like the foreign office, tourism, and third sector in the South are highly dependent on the supposedly "unpolitical" activities of women as diplomats' wives, foreign cleaning personal and prostitutes.[141] It becomes clear how far local and "private" activities like prostitution, "private receptions", hotel service, nurses and doctors in the army, partners of soldiers for international relations are systematically relevant to understanding and explaining international interaction processes. By

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[138] See Azar and In Moon, "Managing Protracted Social Conflicts in the Third World: Facilitation and Development Diplomacy", pp. 395-96. For the trend toward internationalization of communal strife see also Manus I. Midlarsky, ed., *The Internationalization of Communal Strife* (London: Routledge, 1992) and Kumar Rupesinghe, ed., *Internal Conflict and Governance* (New York: St. Martin's, 1992).

[139] See Jean L. Cohen, "Redescribing Privacy. Identity, Difference and the Abortion Controversy", *Columbia Journal of Gender and Law*, 3, 1 (1992).

[140] See for example Elisabeth Janeway, *Man's World, Women's Place: A Study in Social Mythology* (New York: Dell Publishing, 1971); Zillah Eisenstein, *The Radical Future of Liberal Feminism* (New York: Longmans, 1981); Jean Bethke Elshtain, "Moral Woman and Inmoral Man: A Consideration of the Public-Private Split and Its Political Ramifications", *Politics and Society*, 4, 4 (1974), pp. 453-61; J. Kelly-Gadol, ed., *Women, History and Theory*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1984); Carole Pateman, "Feminist Critiques of the Public/Private Dichotomy", in *Public and Private in Social Life*, eds. S.I. Benn and G.F. Gaus (London: Croom Helm, 1983), pp. 281-303 and Pateman, *Sexual Contract* and Elisabeth V. Spelman, *Inessential Woman. Problems of Exclusion in Feminist Thought* (London: The Women's Press, 1990).

[141] See Enloe, Bananas, Beaches and Bases.

referring to the interrelation of local activities and international interaction processes, Enloe highlights that the "personal is not only political", but it is also international.[142] A gender-sensitive perspective asks "where are the women?" and brings into the open women's place and activities in the private (and public) sphere. It shows far they are systematically relevant to more fully understand Azar's international linkages.

The focus on the "private" as agenda-setting has strong similarity with Azar's focus on the conflict sources' origin within states best reflected in Azar's statement that "there is really only one social environment and its domestic face is the more compelling"[143]. This understanding comes close to a gender-sensitive perspective, which by its very definition aims at synthesising the analysis of the private (the individual and the household) and the public sphere (the community, the state and the international arena).

Having said that, one may conclude on an optimistic note that Azar's idea of a rather blurred and "artificial" distinction between internal and external sources of the conflict makes his overall idea of international linkages rather conducive to theorize about gender as an analytical category.

4   Conclusion

The analysis of Azar's model of PSCs showed how far some conflict analysis implicitly opens up some limited, but promising ontological space to discuss gender. Given the three-fold understanding of gender as an analytical category, the analysis focused on the space to theorise identity as social construction, social change and historical variability and hierarchical power structures and their taken-for-granted distribution.

In terms of identity as social construction, it became clear that Azar has a rather static and fixed idea of identity and human needs. Azar's notion of identity remains unable to theorize the social construction of identity including shifting and multiple identities like masculinities and femininities and their connections with violence in most PSCs. At the same time, Azar's idea of a-historical and universal understanding of human needs makes it difficult to discuss historical variability and social change.

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[142] Ibid.
[143] Azar and Burton, International Conflict Resolution: Theory and Practice, p. 33 (Emphasis C.R.).

Further, in line with Azar's overall gender-neutral if not gender-blind discourse, all four clusters have to take the public-private split for granted and as "natural" and "given". Azar's four clusters neglect the underlying gender-specific if not "gendered clusters" of PSCs such as increasing domestic violence, gender-specific needs, grievances and gender-related interests, the changing (gendered) division of labour and changing and multiple notions of femininity and masculinity during the course of a PSC. These features make Azar's model of PSCs rather unconducive to theorize about gender.

Nonetheless, the analysis showed how Azar's work offers some promising gender-sensitive entry-points to conflict analysis and conflict resolution. Similar to using gender as an analytical category Azar puts centre-stage the very multiplicity of conflict sources, actors and issues to explain the very complexity of agents and of sources of PSCs. In fact, like applying gender as an analytical category Azar aims at unpacking and opening up given social structures. By prioritising the underlying concerns of the conflict parties involved such as needs, grievances and fears and identity, Azar unpacks state-centric and state-based approaches to conflict management. By the same token, Azar stresses throughout his work the necessity of a historical approach in any conflict analysis to understand and explain the conflict's multiple factors, agents and processes. This opens analytical space to discuss social change and historical variability. At the same time, Azar puts centre-stage open and hidden power inequalities and power asymmetries and explicitly addresses the link of needs dissatisfaction and (hidden and open) hierarchical power structures. This makes Azar's four clusters rather conducive to theorize about gender as hierarchical, hidden power structure.

Apart from anything else, gender-sensitive perspectives of the Sri Lankan PSC clearly show that any PSC is a highly gendered activity. It became clear how far any PSC is already co-written by a "protracted" gendered division of labour and "deep-rooted" if not "intractable" forms and expressions of gender symbolism. A gender-sensitive perspective of PSCs points to the necessity of taking into account the embodied nature of social agents and gendered causes and dynamics of most PSCs (and the consequences for their resolution) based on the public-private split and gendered intra-household power structures.