

Protecting the Homeland by Sacrificing Women's Welfare: The Impact of External Threat on the Status of Women

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Last edit: May 26, 2015

Word count: 9,912

Abstract: Why is the status of women better in one country than another? We maintain that the answer lies in part in the extent of external threat to the homeland territory a country faces. Our project furthers the recent research showing that the undesirable effects of interstate territorial conflict extend to domestic politics of countries involved by arguing that the presence of territorial threat also negatively impacts the welfare of women. To respond to the threat, states tend to centralize their decision-making, invest more in the military, and decrease citizens' liberties. Associated restrictions and emphases on more "masculine" values create an environment where women's welfare may well take a back seat to the ostensible priority of defending the homeland. Utilizing measures of women's social and economic welfare, our analyses over the 1981-2001 period demonstrate that higher levels of territorial threat decrease women's welfare. This extends both the research into pernicious effects of territorial conflict and qualifies the finding from gender research that women's economic situation typically improves during the times of war as women take over jobs from the male population that is at the front.

Protecting the Homeland by Sacrificing Women's Welfare: The Impact of External Threat on the Status of Women

Why is the status of women better in one country than another? In this study, we argue that the answer lies in part in the extent of external threat to the homeland territory a country faces. Beyond frequent militarized disputes, wars, and rivalries (e.g. Vasquez 1993; Hensel 1994; 1996; Vasquez and Henehan 2001; Diehl and Goertz 2002; Vasquez and Tir 2010; Mitchell and Trumbore 2013), recent work has started to show that territorial control disagreements have a substantial negative impact on the domestic politics of countries involved. For example, territorial disagreements invite diversionary behavior (Tir 2010; Mitchell and Thyne, 2010) while territorial threats to the homeland have been found to inhibit democratization by militarizing the state and centralizing its authority (Gibler 2012).¹ Moreover, Hutchison and Gibler (2007) report that threats to the homeland territory result in discriminatory attitudes toward minority ethnic and religious populations. Our study furthers the nascent research into the domestic effects of territorial threat by arguing that threat to the homeland territory also negatively impacts the status of women. In threatened societies, the welfare of women takes a back seat to the ostensible priority of defending the homeland and – additionally – the sense of threat helps reinforce and increase gender stereotypes, further constraining women.

Considering external threat as a potential explanation for cross-national variation in women's welfare has not been given due attention thus far, constituting a notable research gap. That threat unduly affects the welfare of women is already known from work showing that in times of civil war traditional gender stereotypes often gain more traction (Goldstein 2001). Furthermore, as Plümper and Neumayer (2006) assert, women are particularly affected by economic hardship, displacement, and sexual violence during civil war. Additional effects include increased incidences of malnourishment due to rising food prices, a lack of needed medical supplies, rise in the frequency of infectious diseases (e.g., malaria, measles, sexually transmitted diseases, etc.), wartime rape, and more. As a result, women are subjected to higher levels of poverty, increased death rates, prostitution, and trading sex in order to obtain food (Hynes

¹ Conversely, the resolution of territorial issues opens doors toward democratization (Rasler and Thompson 2004; 2011; Gibler and Tir 2010; 2014; Gibler and Miller 2014).

2004).

While a solid basis demonstrating negative impacts of civil wars on women is therefore starting to emerge, our understanding of how threats *external* to the state affect the status of women is rather rudimentary. Some of the earlier research paints a rather rosy picture where the status of women advances during the times of interstate war, such as an improvement in women's economic position as they enter the workforce while men are at the front. During WWII, for example, women were mobilized to work for the war effort (Anderson 1943; Cable 1944; Milkman 1987; Yellin 2010). In India, women were temporarily allowed to work in the mines during the war because there was a coal shortage (Cable 1944). In the U.S., women took over jobs that were otherwise reserved for men (Milkman 1987). Beyond blue collar jobs, women were offered editorial jobs at magazines, became involved in politics, and went to school to become doctors (Yellin 2010). During this time, women were also able to actively participate in one of the U.S.'s favorite past times, baseball (Yellin 2010). Economically speaking, it would seem as though women benefited notably from interstate conflict. Yet, we point out that the effects of external threat on women are not as uniformly positive. As a result of interstate wars, women often become targets of sexual violence, as perpetrated by the Japanese, Soviet, and German soldiers during WWII (Wood 2006).²

We build on these earlier insights by going beyond how a wartime-specific period affects women, to consider broader cross-national variation in the *external threat to the state's homeland territory*. Wars – and even militarized disputes – are rather rare events, so assuming that women are negatively impacted only during such infrequent – and usually relatively short – times is arguably problematic. Countries threaten one another often without engaging in actual fighting all that frequently (e.g. the US-Soviet Union rivalry lasted for decades but produced relatively few militarized confrontations). We thus argue that the *expectation* of militarized conflict is a relevant factor to be considered, as societies necessarily adopt defensive postures and strategies due to expecting attacks. In taking such an approach, we continue

² Women's status is further compromised when states end progressive women's movements in favor of nationalist agendas, as happened during the civil and interstate wars surrounding the breakup of Yugoslavia (Stojcavljevic 1995).

the line of research that has already shown that, in response to external threats, states centralize their decision-making, increase military spending, and decrease the rights of citizens (Brooks 2004; Davis and Silver 2004; Hutchison and Gibler 2007; Gibler 2012). We argue that these threat-response dynamics extend to the status of women as well. Women's status suffers as the pressures created by territorial threats may de-prioritize policies meant to enhance women's welfare and create an environment conducive to restrictions and the increased desirability for more "masculine" traits. In fact, one can argue that because of women's greater support for family and household issues – rather than for issues related to national defense, military, and hawkish foreign policies – they represent a population of whom loyalty-demanding leaders would be easily skeptical (Smith 1984; Clements 2011). To put simply, because stereotypes give the expectation that women are more pacific than their male counterparts, the state may implement policies that restrict women, and the increased societal support of such stereotypes will likely lead to increased support for related policy changes.³

A result of these dynamics is decreased women's welfare in threatened societies, a pattern that arguably extends much more broadly than research focusing only on active wartime would suggest.⁴ And our emphasis on the more enduring sense of threat to the homeland allows us to go beyond a focus on wartime atrocities against women. That is, our study highlights broader negative effects that may for example include women's decreased educational and economic accomplishments.

To evaluate our argument empirically and in addition to theoretical innovation, our study makes an important methodological contribution. Many past studies rely on the well-known Cingranelli-Richards (CIRI) Human Rights dataset and its various measures of women's rights (Cingranelli and Richards 2013).⁵ Yet, as Caprioli et al. (2009) point out, the existing measures of women's rights,

³ See Meeker and Weitzel-O'Neill (1977); Ridgeway and Berger (1986); Carli (1999); (2001); Burgess and Borgida (1999), and Goldstein (2001).

⁴ While the majority of citizens may be negatively affected by high external threat to the state, women are likely to encounter greater, or at least different, types of challenges. See Watts and Zimmerman (2002). Our focus in this study is on a cross-national comparison of the status of women – rather than a male-to-female status comparison within a society.

⁵ For example, Gleditsch et al. (2011), Cohen (2013), and others use the women's rights data from CIRI to show that gender inequality is linked with different aspects of civil wars.

including CIRI, rely perhaps too much on the *laws* relating to women's rights. In doing so, they do not adequately capture the daily-lived experiences of women, such as educational attainment, income (in)equality, frequency of child/forced marriage, job discrimination, etc. And that laws meant to address discrimination sometimes fail to deliver on their goals is well known in the legal literature (see e.g. Siegel 1997; Ruane 2000; Okereke 2006). To overcome limitations inherent in the CIRI dataset, our study relies on an original data collection that incorporates both states' laws protecting women's rights – by using the CIRI variables – *and* women's actual lived experiences by including various other measures representing women's economic and social welfare.

We evaluate our hypotheses related to the expectation that external threat to the state's homeland territory lowers women's welfare across the world over the years 1981-2001. Not entirely surprising to us is our finding of no robust relationship between territorial threat and women's status when using the laws-oriented CIRI measures. When we, however, use variables that include both the state's laws and women's lived experiences, the results change notably. Women's social and economic welfare are both negatively impacted by external territorial threat. Our findings thus show that in countries threatened by their neighbors, women are affected adversely. While this may not always be apparent in the laws enacted by the state, accounting for women's lived experiences tells a different – and much more ominous – story.

The remainder of this study is organized as follows. Next, we provide brief overviews of the works on conflict and gender. Theoretical section linking external territorial threat and women's welfare and providing key hypotheses follows. We then deal with research design issues, followed by the presentation and discussion of our findings. Concluding thoughts close the paper.

Women in Threatened Societies

Why does the welfare of women matter? As Nussbaum (1995) asserts, "Women, a majority of the world's population, receive only a small proportion of its opportunities and benefits. According to the 1993 *UN Human Rights Report*, there is no country in the world in which women's quality of life is equal to that of men..." (2). By restricting women's social and economic welfare, the state not only does

disservice to its citizens but also potentially limits its overall opportunities for economic growth and development – by limiting the available quantity of human capital (Klasen 1999; 2002).

In this study, we suspect that countries that are particularly prone to adapting such self-injuring restrictions are the ones that face high levels of external threat to their homeland territories. Some threat-triggered responses are meant to deal with the threat more effectively. For instance, territorial threats to the homeland cause the state to centralize its decision-making and militarize, ostensibly to better confront the external threat. Yet, other threat-triggered responses do not have such strategic bases, but are rather functions of de-prioritizing policies that would help women or are reflections and intensifications of extant prejudices. Hutchinson and Gibler (2007) show this to be the case with increased levels of discrimination towards minority ethnic and religious groups in societies finding themselves under a territorial threat. We argue that women suffer a similar fate, with their economic and social welfare being held back in societies that experience higher levels of external threat.

Some of the general tendencies to discriminate against women under the condition of threat can already be seen in the literature on how civil and interstate wars affect women. As Goldstein (2001) posits, civil war leads the state and society to (further) polarize by gender: traditional stereotypes are not only reinforced, but they also increase. Furthermore, during civil war, women become victims of greater levels of poverty, higher death rates, selling sex for food, etc. (Hynes 2004). While not just women are of course negatively affected by civil war, the reasons that men are targeted, and how they are targeted, are typically different than why women become targets of the state or the insurgency (Watts and Zimmerman 2002). Women are particularly subject to greater economic hardship, displacement, and sexual violence during times of conflict more so than men (Plümper and Neumayer 2006).

Turning to interstate war, some of the literature reports positive news regarding women. Women are given new work opportunities that aid the war effort (Anderson 1943; Cable 1944; Milkman 1987; Yellin 2010). And women are given employment opportunities that help boost society's morale, as happened in the US during WWII when women in the US were able to play baseball (Yellin 2010). While these may be temporary and case-specific benefits, as occurred for women in India when they were put to

work in the coalmines (Cable 1944; Yellin 2010), women often face increased discrimination during interstate wars. First, women are prevented from holding high-risk jobs where they would be on the frontlines of war. As Carter (1996) explains, women lack political equality, and as a result, they “... are not required to adopt the so far exclusively masculine obligation of fighting for their country” (109). She continues by stating that rights should only be fought for when sizable gains are expected. In the case of women in combatant roles, she does not find this to be true; therefore, women should not aim for economic equality for jobs in the military. Yet, inequality within a state’s military goes beyond job type and pay grade. It also extends to sexual violence. Much research shows that soldiers frequently rape civilians during interstate war, as occurred during WWII by Japanese, Soviet, and German soldiers (Wood 2006), and this occurs in both interstate and civil wars (Watts and Zimmerman 2002). When women are sent to war as combatants, however, they face more than the possibilities of being wounded or killed by enemy forces and confronting issues of rape against civilians; they also face being raped by men within their own military unit (Jeffreys 2007). As Morris (1996) discusses, around 29% of American women serving in the Vietnam War faced sexual assault and/or rape.

While violence against women during war has been at the forefront of political discourse, what has yet to be researched is how external threats to the homeland affect women’s welfare in a broader sense and across societies.⁶ Is women’s welfare undermined in externally threatened states? Or do women make broad economic gains, as research by Anderson (1943), Cable (1944), Milkman (1987), and Yellin (2010) has found relating to the US and India during WW II? These are important questions to answer, and we seek to do so in this paper. As the 2014 UNESCO report on gender inequality states:

As inequalities are about hierarchy rather than difference, the question of power within gender relations is of key significance in the discussion. Gender inequalities are embedded in many societies’ institutions, from family through to the state. Embracing a reflective and critical view of this chain therefore forces us to examine how women, men, boys and girls are affected differently by power structures (15).

⁶ While it is beyond the scope of our study, researchers report that greater levels of gender equality may lead to less militarization within the state (Caprioli 2000; Melander 2005a; 2005b).

The Impact of External Territorial Threat on the Status of Women

In this study, we depart from examining the status of women specifically and solely during the times of active interstate conflict. War is a rare and relatively short event, and we argue that problematic state and societal practices are not limited only to wartime. Instead, they can also exist as countries prepare for war. States may be on a war footing but not actively engage one another militarily due to effective deterrence employed by the enemy. For example, India and Pakistan consistently threaten one another while engaging in actual militarized disputes only occasionally. It is the perception of threat, regardless of whether actual conflict involvement is observed, that will require countries to adopt defensive postures and strategies, which, we argue, have negative societal ramifications that include disadvantages to the welfare of women. Therefore, following Gibler (2012; see also Gibler and Tir 2014), we rely on the concept of threat – specifically, threat to the homeland territory – rather than on active war to explain negative societal ramifications.

A state existing in an environment threatening to its territory tends to have more centralized decision-making structures, an empowered military, and citizens who are discriminatory toward ethnic and religious minorities (Gibler 2012; Hutchinson and Gibler 2007). Our argument is that these negative dynamics extend to women as well. Women may suffer as policies meant to help them are not implemented or are discontinued as resources are shifted toward agendas needed to defend the homeland (e.g. greater investments in weaponry). Beyond this, women may also be specifically targeted for a number of reasons including, but not limited to, extant stereotypes, being peaceful and largely non-violent (Fukuyama 1998), having “special needs” during conflict (Security Council 2000), lacking education (Hill and King 1995), etc. Because women may face multiple challenges, we look at the impact of external territorial on women across social and economic categories.

Sources of negative attitudes against women can be broken up into two main categories: descriptive and prescriptive. As Burgess and Borgida (1999) posit, descriptive discrimination means that there are specific “beliefs about the attributes, roles, and behaviors that characterize men and women.”

Under this type of belief system, the discrimination against women could be inadvertent.⁷ Gender stereotypes that are prescriptive, in contrast, often stem from existing prejudices and animosities toward women. These include “beliefs about the attributes, roles, and behaviors to which men and women are expected to conform” (Burgess and Borgida 1999).

Looking at women’s welfare through a descriptive lens, the government and citizens are likely to view women as less competent than their male counterparts. Per Carli (1999), women are often thought to lack “legitimate” power. As a result, their status is lower than their male counterparts, and citizens and the government may deny them influence on the state’s behavior (Meeker and Weitzel-O’Neill 1977; Ridgeway and Berger 1986; Carli 1999; 2001). For states facing an external territorial threat, these issues become more prominent, making women’s “incompetence” further highlighted. Preparation for warfare makes the government and society less likely to listen to women, as women are expected to promote non-violence, diplomacy, and negotiations with the enemy. This is consistent with a recent finding by Tir and Singh (forthcoming) that, under heightened threat, women are less socially intolerant of perceived enemies than are men. A result would be that women are interpreted to be more favorably disposed toward perceived enemies, preferring more peaceful and conciliatory measures.

Although the intent of descriptive stereotypes is not necessarily to promote negative attitudes towards women, it often results in them – especially in the context of a threatening environment. Another consequence is that descriptive stereotypes may segue into prescriptive stereotypes, leading to greater gender hostilities within the state. Prescriptive expectations of women can arguably become even more evident in the context where the homeland faces high levels of external threat. While the government and public may expect all citizens to rally around the flag (Tir and Singh 2013; Rudolph 2013), skepticism of women could actually increase because of their ostensibly peaceful nature and expected opposition to war. Even though women will likely be pressured to support the war efforts, the expectations of gender roles increase the government and society’s likelihood to peg women as being disloyal and thereby limit

⁷ Note that when we refer to discrimination here, we are discussing the declining status of women’s welfare, not the comparison of the status of women to men.

their overall influence and/or welfare within the state.

Women's Social Welfare

State and societal stereotypes of women impact how they are treated along the social dimension under the condition of external territorial threat. As already noted, women are seen as the peacekeepers and caretakers of society. They are still often expected to maintain the home and raise children, and as a result, encounter greater restrictions by the state. As Goldstein (2001) states, "Whatever a culture expects of women, by conforming to these norms a woman reflects well on her warrior husband" (307). The social status of women can alter when the state and/or society plays into/strengthens stereotypes and strategically limits women and girls' welfare.

Reinforcing and strengthening stereotypes is a common practice during war. Existing stereotypes hold that women are less aggressive than their male counterparts and tend to take on roles that promote the well-being of others. This is particularly relevant in those countries existing in threatening environments, as women, thought to be non-violent, are unlikely to be able to defend themselves. In this regard, the state becomes a self-appointed father-like figure to women as it protects them from outside forces. In turn, the state expects its citizens to support the policies that it implements (Young 2003). Women, then, become dependent on the state to ensure their safety. As Young (2003) asserts, "State officials adopt the stance of masculine protector, telling us to entrust our lives to them, not to question their decisions about what will keep us safe" (9).

Similarly, the strategic limitation of women's social welfare in states under external threat also has a number of undesirable consequences for women (e.g., child marriage). Complications for women stem from practices such as being forced to marry at a young age, which could be exacerbated in countries that are under external threat. As UNICEF (2006) highlights, nearly ¼ of the world's female population aged 20-24 was married before the age of 18. In countries facing external threat, a father may, for example, believe his daughter will be better protected if she were married. Typically, the father, brother(s), or the husband takes on the role of protecting women and girls within their family

(Brownmiller 2013). If the father believes he is – or soon may be – incapable of adequately protecting his daughters, an early-arranged marriage could become an alternative to help ensure her safety. The government may also promote this line of thinking for similar reasons. Furthermore, the state and society more broadly may also be concerned about the future generation. By marrying young, girls have more opportunities to bear children. If the external threat were to lead to war in the future, increasing the amount of children helps the defensive and deterrent capacities of the state.

Pressures toward child marriage create further problems for girls and women. Girls' education attainment rates are already much lower than their male counterparts. Additionally, dropout rates for girls are much higher than are dropout rates for boys, further limiting girls in what they are able to do. Under the condition of external territorial threat, education is likely to become even more restricted by the state as the state increases its use of resources to help defend the homeland. At that point, educating young girls is not the state's priority. Girls who are unmarried and still in school will likely take on menial jobs in order to survive, which links to the economic welfare consequences we deal with next.

Women's Economic Welfare

Some of the literature on civil (Menon and van der Meulen Rodgers 2013) and interstate (Milkman 1987; Yellin 2010) wars show that women make economic gains during conflict due to an increase of employment opportunities. Nevertheless, we argue that, while some women may benefit, many women are also likely to face economic inequity if the homeland is threatened. Women's economic welfare suffers in various ways. Negatively affecting their earning potential, women are restricted from holding public office or leadership positions; they are restricted in jobs they can do within the military; women are viewed as unqualified for many jobs, and therefore, are often required to labor at a lower pay rate; and, the lack of economic opportunities can force women into prostitution as a means of survival for themselves and their families.

Women's roles in public office are generally accepted when the state is able to focus on its citizens' welfare, such as helping the poor or promoting family issues. In a state facing an external threat,

however, gender stereotypes prevent women from being seen as effective leaders (Sapiro 1984; Mueller 1986). As a result, a woman who is in a high-level political position in a state facing external threat will likely face pressure to take a more hardline approach⁸ or concede her position altogether to her male counterpart who is seen as more qualified to govern during crisis times. Similarly, women may be prevented from running for, or being appointed to, public office positions.

Women face further employment and economic inequity when the state refuses to allow women to have “dangerous” jobs, such as those within the military. During war, the vast majority of people fighting for the state are male, with very few exceptions (Goldstein 2001). The state may prevent women from fighting on the frontline because women are seen as weaker or more vulnerable than their male counterparts. While some states have conscripted both men and women, as did France, Norway, Germany, Greece, Yugoslavia, and the United Kingdom during WWII, women were often not recognized as combatants (Segal 1995). They were given jobs that were more civilian-like in quality and were generally not allowed to fire weapons.

Women’s economic welfare perhaps worsens even more in the civilian sector. As previously argued, women’s education suffers in a country that is under high external threat. In combination with literacy rates often being lower for women (Anand and Sen 1995), lack of training and education make it difficult for women to find jobs, especially ones that pay well. This prevents women from being able to take on high-paying male dominated jobs that become vacant as men are conscripted or enlist in the military. Because women lack the training and education to perform specialized jobs, they often are left to work at farms or factories in order to survive. Those who are unable obtain this type of work, or when this type of work does not provide enough to support the family, women often resort to prostitution during war as a means of survival (Ashford and Huet-Vaughn 1997; Hynes 2004).

According to the logic we advance here, women’s economic welfare does not seem to be the uniformly rosy picture that is often described from the WWII literature that looks at the U.S., India, or the UK (Anderson 1943; Cable 1944; Milkman 1987; Yellin 2010). Although some women may benefit

⁸ Arguably this is the approach that Thatcher took during her time as Prime Minister.

economically in states encountering external threat, many women will struggle to provide for themselves and their families and resort to extreme measures for basic survival.

The logic and arguments presented above are further supplanted by the observation that the specific discriminatory practices are not the only sources of decreases in women's social and economic welfare. Societies preparing for war face decisions over how to allocate scarce resources toward the defense effort vs. "butter" issues. Our expectation is that some of the latter category issues that are being sacrificed for the sake of defending the country will involve policies meant to help women (e.g. girls' literacy programs). As a result of discontinuation or lesser funding of women-empowering programs, women will consequently fare worse in such societies. Our discussion leads to the following hypotheses:

H₁: Higher levels of external threat to the state's homeland territory are associated with lower levels of *social* welfare for women.

H₂: Higher levels of external threat to the state's homeland territory are associated with lower levels of *economic* welfare for women.

Legal Versus Attitudinal and Behavioral Impact on Women

Our discussion above suggests that the status of women will be worse in countries facing increased levels of external territorial threat. The particular negative effects can take many forms, such as be legislated or be expressed in behavior, conduct, attainment, as well as attitudes toward women. While proclivities toward all these can be expected under the condition of threat, we suspect that legally-based discrimination may not be as systematically observable. Passing laws that are clearly discriminatory against women would likely put a country in a vulnerable international position, for example where economic and/or military aid from developed countries may be stopped and pressure applied to overturn controversial laws. After all, democracy has become such a dominant form of governance in the international system that even non-democratic countries are increasingly expected to behave like democracies when it comes to both their foreign and domestic politics (see Mitchell 2012). On the latter point, this means that much pressure is put on all countries to follow democratic ideals and agendas of

non-discrimination, broad support for human rights, eschewing various types of discrimination, etc.

What this means is that countries under territorial threat may be reluctant to pass laws that specifically discriminate against or restrict women. Instead, practices negatively affecting women may well be taking on more subtle, less easily and clearly detectable forms. This has been well established in the legal literature. For example, Siegel (1997) shows that, while laws discriminating against race and gender made improvements, the track record of lived experiences of members of these groups remained poor. Similarly, Okerke (2006) notes that gender-sensitive laws within African countries are often not adequately enforced, and discriminatory attitudes against women remain pervasive.

These concerns are of high relevance to our study because the most commonly used data on the status of women, by Cingranelli and Richards (2013), rely mostly on countries' legal frameworks. And the mere existence of laws does not necessarily equate to implementation and female-favorable societal programs and norms; see Siegel (1997), Ruane (2000), and Okereke (2006). Put simply, the CIRI data do not take into account the daily-lived experiences of women. These experiences need to be included in order to gain a better, more accurate and complete understanding of what the status of women is really like within the territorially threatened state. As discussed in the next section, we therefore use not only the CIRI data on status of women that rely in a large part on countries' legal frameworks, but also our original data that tap into women's actual achievements and lived experiences.

Research Design

Spatial-Temporal Domain, Unit and Method of Analysis, and Dependent Variables

Our data cover all countries from 1981-2009, with the unit of analysis being country-year. To test the hypotheses, we use feasible generalized least squares (FGLS) regression with heteroskedastic panels. We have two dependent variables of interest: women's social welfare and women's economic welfare. In order to show how informal institutions⁹ make a difference in the status of women, we compare our

⁹ Informal institutions are those of societal norms or culture; formal institutions are laws of the state. See also North's (1990) definition of institutions as rules of the game.

measures of women's welfare to those of women's rights from the CIRI dataset (Cingranelli and Richards 2013). Whereas CIRI has been critiqued for not being indicative of women's lived reality (Caprioli et al. 2009), our data include both the laws as established by the CIRI dataset and women's lived reality. Table 1 summarizes the CIRI and our approaches as well as points of key difference.

(Table 1 about here)

Our first dependent variable is *Women's Social Welfare*. This variable is an additive index including CIRI's measure of women's social rights, information from Barro and Lee's (2014) educational attainment dataset,¹⁰ and information from the World Bank's adolescent fertility rate dataset.¹¹ We include information on women's education attainment for primary, secondary, and tertiary levels of education; women's drop out rate across the three levels of education; and adolescent fertility rates.¹² Our second dependent variable is *Women's Economic Welfare*. This includes CIRI's variable on women's economic rights and information from the World Bank¹³ on women and men's unemployment rates and UN¹⁴ data on unemployment rates. For the coding scheme for both variables, see Table 1.

Explanatory Variable: Territorial Threat

To evaluate the effects of external threat on the status of women, we rely on the territorial threat measure developed by Gibler (2012; see also Gibler and Tir 2014). As noted above, we focus on territorial threat rather than actual militarized conflict involvement. Threat is a different concept than war because countries can be threatening each other without necessarily involving themselves in militarized

¹⁰ Barro, Rober and Jong-Wha Lee. 2014. "A New Data Set of Educational Attainment in the World, 1950-2010." Forthcoming, *Journal of Development Economics*.

¹¹ World Bank. 2014. Adolescent fertility rate (births per 1,000 women ages 15-19). Data retrieved May 15, 2014, from World DataBank: World Development Indicators database.

¹² Women's fertility rates are often used in gender research (see Caprioli et al. 2009). Adolescent fertility rates likely reveal more information about social (in)equality. The more adolescents who have children, the more likely gender inequalities are societal norms. This helps to get at issues like the lack of sexual education programs and child/forced marriage.

¹³ World Bank. 2014. Unemployment, female (% of female labor force) (modeled ILO estimate). Data retrieved May 15, 2014, from World DataBank: World Development Indicators database. ; World Bank. 2014. Unemployment, male (% of male labor force) (modeled ILO estimate). Data retrieved May 15, 2014, from World DataBank: World Development Indicators database.

¹⁴ United Nations Statistics Division (2008). Gender Information Database: Unemployment Rate. Data retrieved May 15, 2014, from <http://data.un.org/Data.aspx?q=unemployment&d=GenderStat&f=inID%3a121>.

conflict. And it is the perception of threat, regardless of whether actual conflict involvement is observed, that will require countries to adopt defensive postures and strategies; these in turn, we argue, have negative societal ramifications, including disadvantages to the status of women.

We accordingly utilize the territorial threat variable from Gibler and Tir (2014), which is a predictive measure of probable, latent threat to the state – specifically, a measure of threat to the territorial core of the state. The latent measure is developed by using common correlates of fatal militarized interstate disputes between contiguous states (e.g. border age, past militarized disputes over territory, past violent and peaceful border changes, alliances, militarization, colonial history). See Gibler and Tir (2014) for full conceptual and methodological descriptions.

Control Variables

As Branisa et al. (2013) argue, to properly assess issues related to gender status, it is important to look at (sources of) broader social and political inequalities. These include issues such as civil liberties (e.g. freedom of speech, press, assembly, and religion), level of the citizens' physical integrity within the state, and GDP per capita. Similarly, Dollar and Gatti (1991) claim that looking at religious preferences and civil liberties can help to determine the level of gender inequality in health and education sectors. We therefore control for a number of factors including: religious freedom, physical integrity, freedom of speech, electoral self-determination, an independent state judiciary, freedom of assembly (all from CIRI 2013),¹⁵ a female to male ratio (from the World Bank),¹⁶ the percent of the urban population (also from the World Bank),¹⁷ GDP per capita (from the United Nations),¹⁸ and polity score (from the Polity IV

¹⁵ Cingranelli, David L. and David L. Richards. 2013. *The Cingranelli-Richards (CIRI) Human Rights Data Project Coding Manual Version 7.27.13.* <http://www.humanrightsdata.org/documentation/ciri_coding_guide.pdf>

¹⁶ World Bank. 2014. Population, Female (% of total). Data retrieved from World DataBank: World Development Indicators database; World Bank. 2014. Population, total. Data retrieved from World DataBank: World Development Indicators database.

¹⁷ World Bank. 2014. Urban population (% of total). World DataBank: World Development Indicators database.

¹⁸ United Nations Statistics Division. 2015. Per capita GDP at current prices—US dollar. United Nations Statistic Division.

project).¹⁹

Empirical Results and Discussion

Table 2 presents results for the empirical analyses based on the CIRI variables. Across Models 1 and 2, only women's economic welfare is impacted negatively and significantly by higher levels of territorial threat (see Model 2). The relationship between territorial threat and social welfare is, meanwhile, insignificant (see Model 1). As a robustness check, Models 3 and 4 provide the results for the same analyses as Models 1 and 2, with the territorial threat variable being lagged. When we lag the territorial threat variable, Model 4 return an insignificant coefficients for the territorial threat variable. This indicates that the initial Model 2 finding is quite sensitive and not robust. Meanwhile, the lagged territorial threat variable coefficient now becomes significant in its impact on social rights (Model 3), but its sign is in the opposite than expected, positive direction. In short, relying on CIRI measures of women's social and economic welfare provides little support for our hypotheses and contention that women suffer in societies under higher levels of external threat to the homeland territory.

(Table 2 about here)

Instead of interpreting these findings as good news for women, we suspect that the issue may be the rather narrow, legalistic nature of the CIRI measures. As argued above, women's welfare is multi-dimensional and potential problematic behavior, practices, and outcomes are not necessarily reflected in a country's legal structures. To more accurately assess the status of women vis-à-vis territorial threat to the state, we thus turn next to analyses utilizing our original measure of women's social and economic welfare. The related results are presented in Table 3.

(Table 3 about here)

Models 5 (social welfare) and 6 (economic welfare) in Table 3 return significant coefficients for the territorial threat variable. Both coefficients' signs are in the expected, negative direction. This

¹⁹ Polity IV Project. 2013. *Polity IV data set and codebook*. <http://www.systemicpeace.org/inscr/inscr.html>

indicates that women's social and economic welfare is lower in those states facing higher territorial threat levels, which is consistent with hypotheses H₁ and H₂. Considering Models 7 and 8, which follow the setup of Models 5 and 6 but lag the territorial threat value, returns similar results. Women's social and economic welfare is negatively and significantly affected by (past) higher territorial threat values. Further support for both hypotheses H₁ and H₂ is therefore obtained.

In comparison to the other significant variables, the substantive impact of territorial threat on women's economic and social welfare is notable. Consistently the most impactful variable is the level of economic development. Women's economic and social welfare is the best in the most developed countries, as could be expected. The impact of territorial threat is, meanwhile, similar to those of physical integrity, freedom of speech, urban population, and electoral self-determination variables. Finally, the impact of polity score and female-to-male ratio varies across the models. Polity score has an effect similar to that of territorial threat in the economic welfare model; but in the social welfare model, this is the second most impactful variable. Female-to-male ratio is the second most impactful variable in the economic welfare model, but its impact is similar to that of territorial threat in the social welfare model.

The finding that women's social welfare is negatively affected by external threat is consistent with prior work by Hynes (2004) and Plümper and Neumayer's (2006). They show that women lack adequate health care and may resort to behaviors like prostitution in order to care for themselves and/or family. Findings for hypothesis H₂, meanwhile, support Plümper and Neumayer's (2006) argument that women are faced with economic hardships particularly during war. Meanwhile, our results contradict those from Milkman (1987), Yellin (2010), and Menon and van der Meulen Rodgers (2013). These authors argue that during times of war women receive economic benefits by having more available options for employment. Our evidence, unfortunately, does not support as optimistic of a view.

In sum, our findings provide evidence in favor of the contention that threatening environments unduly affect women's welfare along social and economic dimensions. Notably, these tendencies are not revealed when considering the most widely-used measure of women's rights, CIRI. As we argued above, its rather narrow, legalistic nature potentially leaves out other avenues through which women could be

affected negatively. And when additional metrics concerning women's employment, educational, child-bearing, and other experiences are taken into account – along with the CIRI-based measures – evidence of reduced social and economic welfare for women in countries facing external threat to the homeland territory becomes apparent. This gives credence to our argument that any measurements assessing women's status should include both existing laws within the state as well as women's lived experiences.

We also note that our findings are robust across different tests. For example, when using FGLS with heteroskedastic panels and excluding the independent judiciary variable due to missing data from the models, the findings remain similar. Most importantly, the effects of external threat on women's social and economic welfare remain negative and statistically significant. When using generalized linear models, the effect of territorial threat on our two welfare variables remains the same: the effects of territorial threat on women's social and economic welfare are negative and statistically significant. A similar outcome is obtained when the natural logarithm of the territorial threat measure is employed. Meanwhile, across these tests, the CIRI-based variables continue to provide little systematic evidence of territorial threat undermining various aspects of women's welfare. This provides further evidence that utilizing data that includes women's lived experiences paints a more complete picture of the status of women in societies living under external territorial threat.

Finally, we briefly turn to the results for the control variables often employed in the literature on gender discrimination. As Table 3 shows, larger female to male ratios, greater levels of economic development, higher polity scores, and greater respect for physical integrity of citizens all generally lead to better women's welfare. Meanwhile, the effect of other variables – religious freedom, freedom of speech, electoral self-determination, and urban population percentage – varies depending on the type of welfare considered. Only the coefficients for the variables relating to independent judiciary and freedom of assembly are generally insignificant.

Conclusion

The differences between the narrower CIRI-based metrics and our own measures help

demonstrate that focusing on existing state laws alone may well not be sufficient in analyzing the welfare of women. Measures of women's welfare should be inclusive of both women's rights provided by the state, as well as women's lived experiences. To exclude the latter may lead to inaccurate and biased results (Caprioli et al 2009). Our findings support this claim. When using CIRI's gender rights variables, the relationship between external threats and women's rights are inconsistent across different models and are generally not statistically significant. However, as we expected, when we include both the legal framework and women's lived experiences, the relationship is as expected: women's welfare is negatively impacted in states facing higher levels of external territorial threat.

Furthermore, our study expands on existing literature that shows external territorial threat to trigger state centralization of decision-making and discriminatory attitudes toward minority and religious groups (Gibler 2010; Hutchison and Gibler 2007). While previous research has demonstrated that minority groups suffer due to external threat, what had not been demonstrated is how women are affected. This left a gap in both territorial and gender literatures. We argue that threats to the homeland do not paint as rosy of picture for women as has been previously thought. Rather, women's status is impacted negatively in states facing high external threat to the homeland.

Our research only begins to fill the gap in the literature, and more work should be done when analyzing the impact external threat may have on women. One of the ways in which this could be done is to assess the situation when the level of threat decreases or ends entirely. Does the state continue to restrict the status of women after the threat to the homeland is no longer present? If there is a lag effect, how quickly can women expect to see their position in their respective societies to improve? Another line of inquiry could consider in more detail whether one type of women's welfare suffers more – and why – in the presence of external threat to the homeland.

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Table 1: Operationalization of Dependent Variables

CIRI Variables	Our Variables
<p>Women's Social Rights → The right to equal inheritance; The right to enter into marriage on a basis of equality with men; The right to travel abroad; The right to obtain a passport; The right to confer citizenship to children or a husband; The right to initiate a divorce; The right to participate in social, cultural, and community activities; The right to an education; The freedom to choose a residence/domicile; Freedom from female genital mutilation (FGM) of children and of adults without their consent; Freedom from forced sterilization (Cingranelli and Richards, 2013: 93)</p>	<p>Women's Social Welfare → This includes CIRI's information (coded 0 to 3), information from Barro and Lee (2014) to obtain the rate of women who complete different levels of education (coded 1 to 3 for each level of education: primary, secondary and tertiary, then averaged together to get a final score of education attainment), information from Barro and Lee (2014) to obtain information on women's dropout rate (coded 1 to 4 and averaged, 1 includes observations where 45%+ drop out; 2 includes observations where 30-44% of women drop out; 3 includes observations where 15-29% of women drop out; and 4 includes observations where 0-14% of women drop out of school), and information on adolescent fertility rates from the World Bank (2014 a), (coded 1 to 4: 1 includes observations with 100+ births per 1,000 female adolescents; 2 includes 70 to 99 births per 1,000 female adolescents; 3 includes 40 to 69 per 1,000 female adolescents; and 4 includes observations with 0-39 births per 1,000 female adolescents). We form an additive index: the highest value is 15 and the lowest is 3.</p>
<p>Women's Economic Rights → Equal pay for equal work; Free choice of profession or employment without the need to obtain a husband or male relative's consent; Equality in hiring and promotion practices; Job security (maternity leave, unemployment benefits, no arbitrary firing or layoffs, etc.); Non-discrimination by employers; The right to be free from sexual harassment in the workplace; The right to work at night; The right to work in occupations classified as dangerous; The right to work in the military and police force (Cingranelli and Richards, 2013: 77)</p>	<p>Women's Economic Welfare → This includes CIRI's information (again, coded 0 to 3) and the ratio of women's to men's unemployment rates using information from the World Bank (2014) (coded 1 to 3: 1 includes observations where female unemployment rates are three times greater or more than men's unemployment rates; 2 includes observations when women's unemployment rates are two times greater than unemployment rates of men; 3 includes observations where unemployment rates are the same as or less than male unemployment rates). We add the variables together to get an index with values of 1 to 6.</p>

Table 2: The Effects of Territorial Threat on Women's Rights (CIRI Data)

	Model 1: Social Rights	Model 2: Economic Rights	Model 3: Social Rights	Model 4: Economic Rights
Territorial Threat	0.107 (0.292)	-0.414 (0.197)*		
Territorial Threat (lagged)			0.475 (0.212)*	-0.235 (0.130)
Religious Freedom	-0.000 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)	-0.000 (0.000)	-0.000 (0.001)
Female:Male Ratio	2.766 (0.153)*	1.100 (0.142)*	3.214 (0.140)*	1.550 (0.114)*
GDP per capita (logged)	0.163 (0.015)*	0.082 (0.010)*	0.219 (0.011)*	0.163 (0.007)*
Polity Score	-0.048 (0.002)*	-0.057 (0.002)*	0.008 (0.002)*	0.011 (0.001)*
Physical Integrity	0.036 (0.005)*	0.042 (0.005)*	0.031 (0.004)*	0.028 (0.003)*
Freedom of Speech	0.384 (0.018)*	0.295 (0.016)*	-0.038 (0.015)*	-0.010 (0.010)
Electoral Self-Determination	0.505 (0.018)*	0.559 (0.016)*	0.046 (0.017)*	0.016 (0.011)
Independent Judiciary	0.000 (0.000)	0.001 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)
Freedom of Assembly	0.001 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)	0.018 (0.006)*	0.011 (0.005)*
Percent of Urban Pop.	-0.002 (0.001)*	0.002 (0.001)*	-0.003 (0.001)*	-0.001 (0.000)*
Observations	2,636	2,648	2,524	2,536
Number of Countries	149	149	149	149

Note: *p<.05

Note: All models use Cross-Sectional time-series FGLS regressions with heteroskedastic panels

Table 3: The Effects of Territorial Threat on Women's Welfare (Our Data)

	Model 5: Social Welfare	Model 6: Economic Welfare	Model 7: Social Welfare	Model 8: Economic Welfare
Territorial Threat	-2.093 (0.435)*	-1.472 (0.292)*		
Territorial Threat (Lagged)			-1.002 (0.442)*	-1.339 (0.279)*
Religious Freedom	0.000 (0.000)	0.066 (0.014)*	0.000 (0.001)	0.063 (0.016)*
Female:Male Ratio	5.675 (0.282)*	4.157 (0.230)*	5.605 (0.261)*	4.091 (0.229)*
GDP per capita (logged)	0.918 (0.025)*	0.212 (0.013)*	0.941 (0.025)*	0.204 (0.014)*
Polity Score	0.062 (0.004)*	0.007 (0.002)*	0.062 (0.004)*	0.005 (0.003)
Physical Integrity	0.054 (0.009)*	0.030 (0.006)*	0.054 (0.009)*	0.031 (0.006)*
Freedom of Speech	-0.263 (0.034)*	-0.090 (0.019)*	-0.260 (0.035)*	-0.065 (0.022)*
Electoral Self-Determination	-0.179 (0.037)*	-0.016 (0.019)	-0.207 (0.038)*	-0.010 (0.024)
Independent Judiciary	0.002 (0.002)	0.000 (0.000)	0.002 (0.002)	0.000 (0.000)
Freedom of Assembly	-0.001 (0.001)	0.011 (0.010)	0.007 (0.006)	0.012 (0.010)
Percent of Urban Pop.	0.003 (0.001)*	-0.005 (0.001)*	0.002 (0.001)	-0.005 (0.001)*
Observations	2,363	1,760	2,262	1,753
Number of Countries	128	147	128	147

Note: *p<.05

Note: All models use Cross-Sectional time-series FGLS regressions with heteroskedastic panels