

STUDY GUIDE

THE GREATEST SILENCE: RAPE IN THE CONGO

Maureen Grolnick

INTRODUCTION:

Lisa F. Jackson's award-winning film is a masterpiece of engaged and committed art. Jackson uses her artistic vision with an eye towards social and political change of a compelling and urgent order. Through her vivid portrayal of the problems related to use of sexual violence as a weapon of war in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Jackson has galvanized the human rights community and brought this crisis to the attention of politicians and policymakers nationally and internationally.

- Margaret Crocco, Professor and Coordinator, Program in Social Studies and Chair, Department of Arts & Humanities, Teachers College, Columbia University

Winner of the Sundance 2008 Special Jury Prize for Documentary, *The Greatest Silence* was shot in the war zones of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and shatters the silence that surrounds the use of sexual violence as a weapon in that country's intractable war. It inspired U.N. Security Council Resolution 1820, opened the first-ever U.S. Senate hearing on rape and war, and has moved audiences to outrage and action. The film has catalyzed not only intense international awareness of an under-reported war, but it has also become part of a collective social movement developing around the DRC and the issues of sexual violence in conflict situation, resource exploitation, and women's right to justice and economic empowerment.

The Greatest Silence is a deeply disturbing documentary because it compels us to look directly at the atrocities human beings are capable of perpetrating upon one another. We are moved by the unimaginable suffering of the women we meet and awestruck by their strength and resilience—their ability to retain their own humanity, to take care of their children and each other.

Viewing *The Greatest Silence* as an individual is a powerfully affecting experience. Seeing the movie with others opens up the opportunity for group members to share their experience with the movie, test their understandings of what they have seen, and develop personal or group responses. Nevertheless, whether individually or in a group, *The Greatest Silence* will challenge viewers to explain what seems not only unimaginable, but inexplicable.

This guide provides additional context for viewing the film. The maps, timeline, and fact-set locate the events of the documentary in time and space. The readings offer five different ways of understanding these events. These five perspectives were not selected because they comprise a neat set of puzzle pieces that, once assembled, will tell the truth of the story/situation. Nor were they selected because they tell conflicting or competing stories, suggesting that the reader pick the best one. Instead, the readings were chosen because they

represent at least five of the multiple essential lenses through which the atrocities documented in *The Greatest Silence* must be understood and discussed—although they may never be explained.

TIPS ABOUT FACILITATING

Follow the Group

This guide is intended to enhance a group's understanding of *The Greatest Silence*. However, it is hoped that a group will immerse itself in *The Greatest Silence*, and have a direct experience with the women as they tell their stories before turning to the guide. While it is important to know the “facts” about King Leopold, conflict minerals, and issues of governance, these context details can also distance the group from the women in the film – distance the group from the fact that these women themselves are not statistics or data or objects. They are not the legacy of colonialism or a strategy of war. Rather, they are fellow human beings who have been violated in unimaginable ways and yet had the courage to tell their stories to an unseen audience.

Drawing on these visceral responses to the film, the guide can then be used in a number of ways in a post-screening discussion. The guide contains much important data and five—out of many more possible—ways to understand the ongoing catastrophe of war in the Congo. Through open-ended discussions, the guide can be a resource and a tool with thought-provoking materials that can trigger new questions, introduce new perspectives, and broaden awareness.

Thus, the needs and purposes of the group should ultimately determine how this guide is used. For a group that has come together out of common interests and a specific concern, the facilitator can turn immediately to the history, facts, and/or readings that are most relevant to its goals. With a group that is ongoing and will meet again following the film screening, the guide can serve as a text for subsequent conversations. The text, then, can become a framework to discuss the experience of the film and springboard into what the group might want to discuss or read next.

For one-time audiences especially, the guide can be a critical take-away. Audience members can independently reinforce and deepen their experience of the film with information and readings that open up that experience and inform a personal search for answers and action.

THE COLLECTION

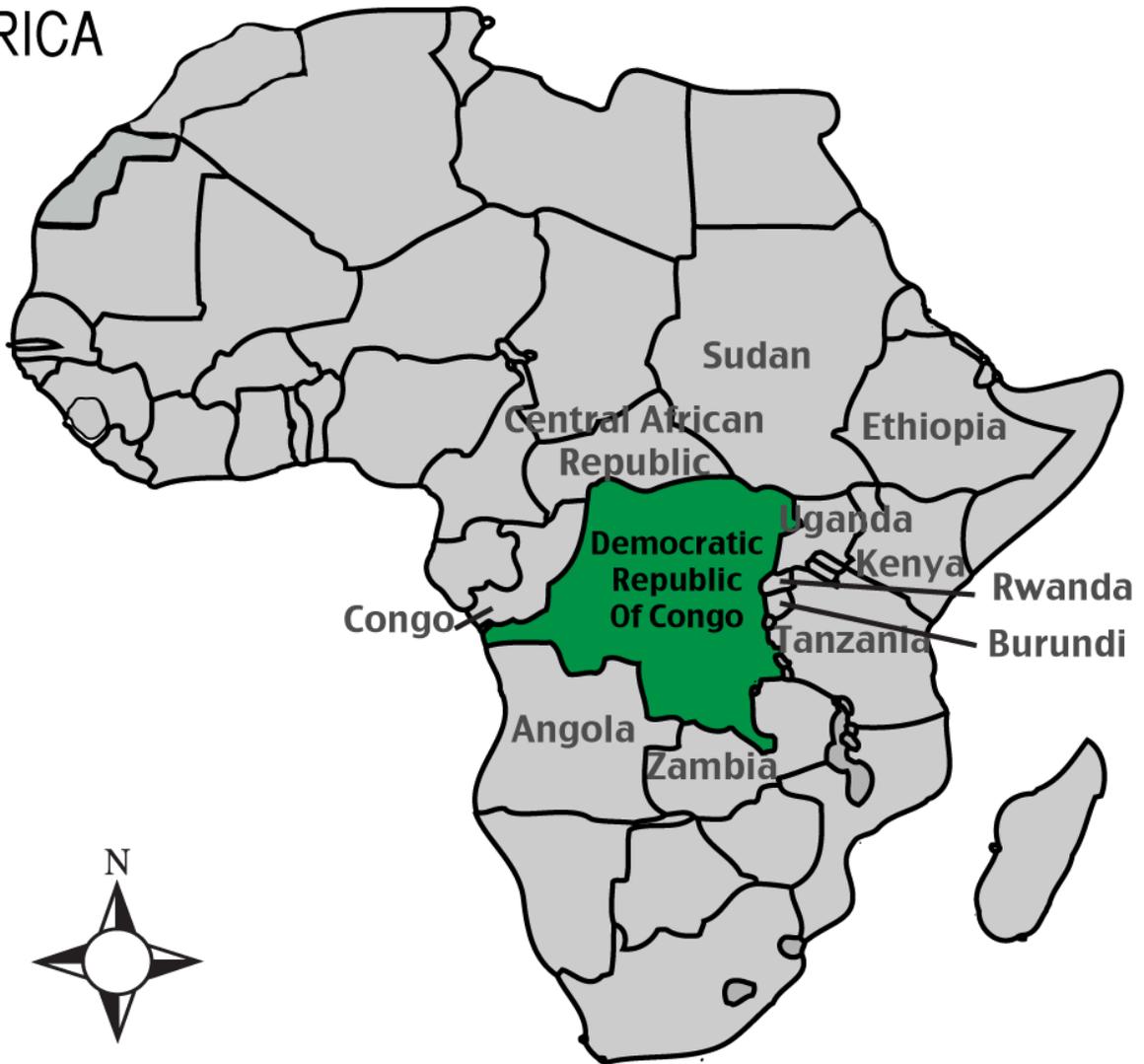
1. Maps
 - a. The Democratic Republic of Congo and surrounding countries
 - b. Eastern Congo, including the locations where the Greatest Silence Interviews were conducted
2. Timeline

3. Fact-set
4. Readings for discussion
 - a. "Femicide," excerpted from Eve Ensler's May 2009 testimony before a Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee
 - b. "Impunity," excerpted from the Human Rights Watch December 2009 report, "You Will Be Punished"
 - c. "Governance," excerpted from Jason Stearns' 2011 book, *Dancing in the Glory of Monsters*
 - d. "Mineral Deposits," adapted and excerpted from the Human Rights Watch June 2005 report, "The Curse of Gold"
 - e. "Rape as a Weapon of War," excerpted from an April 2010 report by the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, "Now the World Is without Me."
5. Resources
 - a. Resources used in the preparation of this reader
 - b. Resources recommended for further study
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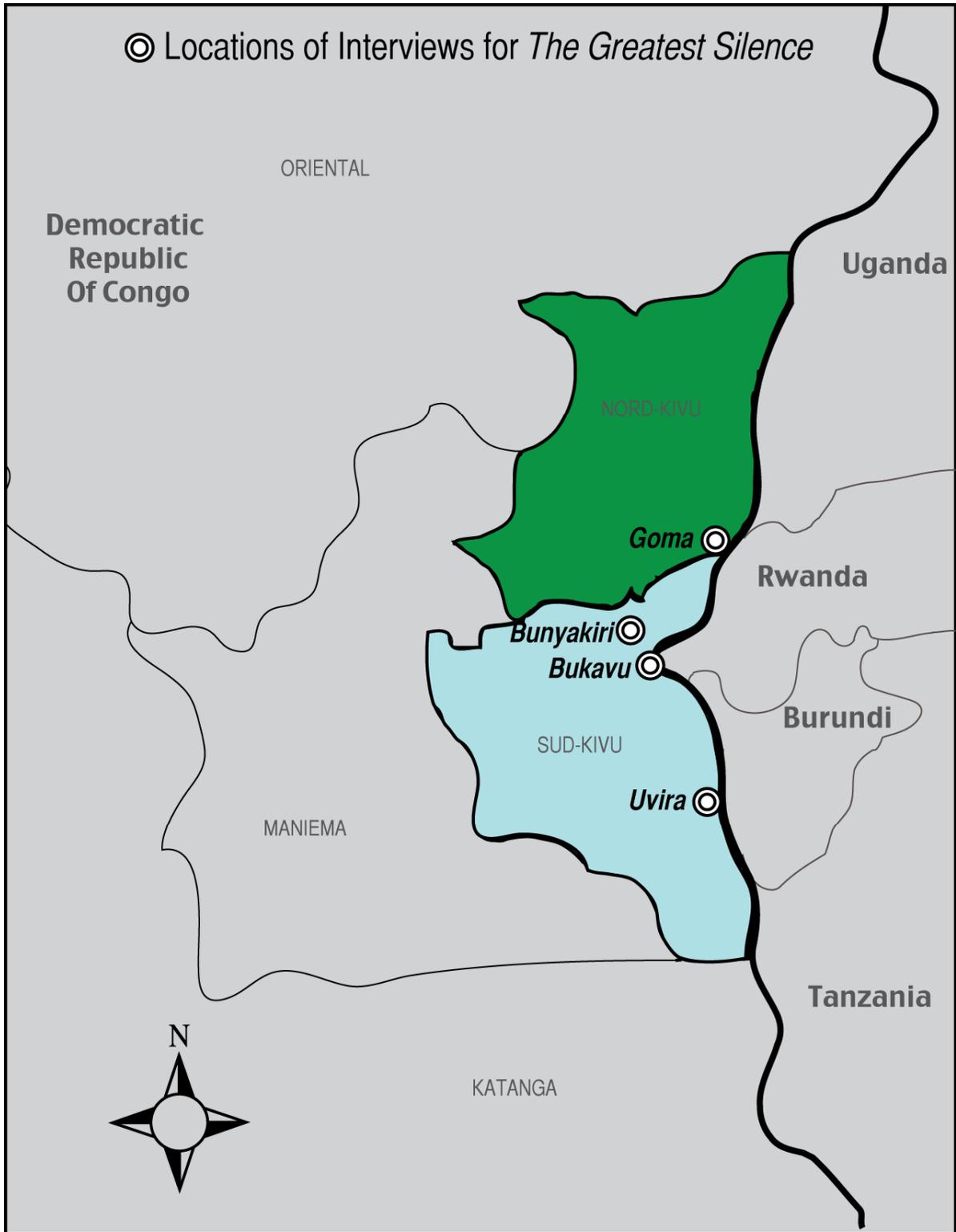
MAPS:

THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

AFRICA



© Locations of Interviews for *The Greatest Silence*



TIMELINE

1500-1870

Slave trade. Congolese imported by European merchants.

1885-1908

Belgium's King Leopold II claims the country as his private colony, naming it Congo Free State. Using his private army, Leopold uses brutality to extract rubber from the Congo. Villagers who do not meet their quota are forced to make up the difference in severed hands. By 1908, 8-10 million people, half the population, have died from violence, disease, and starvation.

1908

Belgian parliament takes over Congo Free State as an official colony and renames it Belgian Congo. The emphasis shifts to mining for cobalt, copper, diamonds, and gold. Although practices are less savage, the mines are worked entirely by slaves.

1955

Rise of Congolese Nationalism.

1960

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) wins independence from Belgium. All Belgian civil servants leave the country. Patrice Lumumba, the only national unity candidate, is elected Prime Minister. Western countries are concerned he will nationalize the mines and divest them of their holdings. Within months of independence, the Congolese army mutinies, the governor of mineral-rich Katanga province attempts secession, and a U.N. peacekeeping force is summoned to restore order. By 1965, Lumumba is deposed and assassinated (with rumored CIA complicity), leadership of the country has changed hands several times, and Colonel Joseph Mobutu has seized control.

1965

Mobutu renames the country the Republic of Zaire and himself Mobutu Sese Seko. Mobutu is in power for 32 years. His rule is characterized by nepotism, an extravagant lifestyle, and the accumulation of \$5 billion in personal wealth.

1993

The economy of Zaire collapses. Mobutu agrees to share power with opposition leaders.

1994

Hutu President of Rwanda, Juvenal Habyarimana, dies when his plane is shot down, presumably by either the Tutsi-led Patriotic Front or else by extremist Hutus to justify retaliation against the Tutsis.

Rwandan Genocide. Rwandan military and Hutu militia leaders air a radio broadcast instructing ethnic Hutus to slaughter their Tutsi neighbors with machetes. An estimated one million Tutsis and moderate Hutus are massacred within 100 days. An estimated 500,000 Tutsi women are raped.

1994-1997

Spillover into the Congo. One million Hutus mixed in with 70,000 Hutu soldiers and militiamen flee to the Kivu Province in the northeastern region of Zaire from the Tutsi-led Rwanda Patriotic

Front who are bent on revenge for the genocide. Refugees establish camps in the Congo that are run by Hutu militias comprised of people who had carried out the genocide. The Hutu militias conduct incursions into Rwanda whose now-Tutsi-led government in turn supplies Congo's Banyamulenge (a Tutsi group) with weapons. Mobutu attempts an offensive on the Rwandan border.

1996-1997

First Congo War. Congolese Tutsis organize around Laurent Kabila who, backed by Rwanda and Uganda, leads a rebel army against Mobutu and the Rwandan Hutus. Kabila unseats Mobutu and takes over, renaming the country Democratic Republic of Congo. Mobutu flees to Morocco

1998

War rape is recognized as a criminal act. The International Criminal Trial for Rwanda ruled that the systematic rape of an estimated 500,000 Tutsi women was itself an aspect of the genocide.

1998-2003

Second Congo War. Kabila turns on the Rwandan troops who supported him. In the deadliest conflict since World War II, 5.4 million people die from conflict-related hunger and disease in the war between the Congo and the Tutsi-led rebels backed by Rwanda and Uganda. Zimbabwe, Namibia, and Angola send troops to help Kabila. The fighting, involving 8 nations and 25 armed groups, centers on tribal control of the border between Rwanda and the Congo and control of such natural resources as gold, copper, and diamonds.

Children account for 45% of the war death toll. The U.N. estimates 30,000 children were used by the various fighting groups as soldiers or sexual slaves. Children who return to their villages often come back addicted to drugs or infected with HIV. More than 2.7 million Congolese are internally displaced (90% to the eastern regions), and 378,000 seek asylum in neighboring countries.

In 1999, 60% of the 54.9 million people living in the DRC are under the age of 25.

2001

Kabila is killed by one of his bodyguards and his 30-year-old son, Joseph, is named president.

2003

Joseph Kabila negotiates Rwanda's withdrawal from the east, ending the 1998-2003 war.

Coltan is identified as a "conflict mineral" by Amnesty International and the U.N. Security Council.

2004

166 Banyamulenge Tutsis (mostly women and children) killed in a 2-hour raid on the refugee camp to which they fled.

2006

1,200 Congolese continue to die every day from violence, preventable disease or starvation.

Joseph Kabila is elected president for a 5-year term in the Congo's second-ever multi-party elections.

2006-2007

400,000 women and girls are victims of sexual violence during this 12-month period.

2006-2007

Jackson travels to the Democratic Republic of Congo to begin filming, April 2006. Filming concludes, May 2007.

2008

The U.N. Security Council unanimously passes a resolution describing rape as a tactic of war and a threat to international security.

3,500 reported incidents of rape in North and South Kivu in the first six months of 2008.

2008-2011

Ethnic violence continues to victimize civilians in Kivu province by warring factions of Hutus and Tutsis. Civilians are regularly victimized by Rwandan militias, Ugandan forces, and deserters of the Congolese army.

2011

Presidential Election scheduled for November 28, 2011.

FACT SET:

Area: 2,344,858 square miles

- Size of Western Europe
- 24% size of United States

Population: 67 million (U.N., 2010) in the timeline, you used U.N. so I guess you need to decide on the consistent use of abbreviation

- 19th in the world
- 23% size U.S. population

Capital City: Kinshasa (9.3 million people)

Life Expectancy: 47 years (men), 50 years (women)

Median Age of Population: 16.5 (*CIA World Fact Book*, 2010)

Median Age of U. S. Population: 36.8 (*CIA World Fact Book*, 2010)

Religions: Include Catholicism, Protestantism, and Islam

Languages: Include French (official), Lingala, Swahili, Kikongo, and Tshiluba

Ethnic Groups: approximately 250, with Luba, Kongo, and Anamongo among the largest

Armed Groups:

- Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR), predominantly Hutu, led by individuals involved in the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda;
- Congrès national pour la défense du peuple (CNDP), predominantly Tutsi, a Congolese group, ostensibly integrated into the military
- Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo (FARDC), the state military organization—the army.
- In addition, there are smaller groups that bring the total to 25, including
 - the Mai Mai (local defense groups organized on the basis of ethnicity);
 - Pareco (Patriotes Resistance Congolais), which is the largest of the Mai Mai battling the CNDP;
 - and the North Kivu armed groups and South Kivu armed groups

Preventable Deaths : Preventable diseases and starvation aggravated by conflict have claimed 5.4 million lives (equivalent to the population of Denmark or the state of Wisconsin) since the beginning of the second Congo war in 1998.

Rapes: Because exact numbers are hard to determine, the following statistics are provided from various sources

- Hundreds of thousands, (Immaculee Birhaheka, head of a women's rights group in Goma, 2006)
- 200,000 between 1999 and April 2010 (U.N.)
- Tens of thousands since 1998. (Christian Science Monitor)
- 40 women a day in the South Kivu Province (June 2008 estimate from local health centers)
- 48 women are raped every hour (an estimate from The American Journal of Public Health, May 2011)

Adult Literacy: 65% (UNICEF)

Schooling : None 21%, primary 46%, secondary 30%, university 3% (U.S. State Department)

Human Development Index, 2010: Rated 168 of 169 countries (the Human Development Index is based on valuations for health, education and income, e.g., Norway, 1st; United States, 4th; Zimbabwe, 169th)

Land Use: Agriculture, 3%; pasture, 7%; forest/woodland, 77%; other, 13% (U.S. State Department)

Exports: Diamonds, 48%; crude oil, 20%; other, 16%; cobalt, 14%; copper, 3%; coffee, 1% (IMF):

Primary Markets: Belgium, 37.8%; U.S., 17.8%; China, 11.6% (*CIA World Factbook*)

Natural Resources: One third of the world's cobalt reserves and large deposits of copper, gold, and diamonds, among other minerals and precious metals.

Country profiles

Democratic Republic of the Congo

<http://www.trust.org/alertnet/country-profiles/democratic-republic-of-the-congo/>

BBC News DR Congo: Key Facts

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/shared/spl/hi/guides/456900/456977/html/nn3page1.stm>

Human Rights Watch, "Always on the Run," September 14, 2010

<http://www.hrw.org/en/node/92770/section/3>

United Nations Human Rights

<http://www.ohchr.org/en/newsevents/pages/rapeweaponwar.aspx>

BBC: Rwanda: How the genocide happened

December 18 2008

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/1288230.stm>

UN urges sanctions against rebel rapists in Congo

September 7 2010

Source: Reuters // Reuters.

<http://www.trust.org/alertnet/news/un-urges-sanctions-against-rebel-rapists-in-congo>

Central Intelligence Agency

The World Fact Book

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cg.html>

Hundreds of thousands raped in Congo

The Guardian,

Tuesday 14 November 2006

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2006/nov/14/congo.chrismcgreal>

Congo war leaves legacy of sexual violence against women

June 30, 2010

<http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Africa/2010/0630/Congo-war-leaves-legacy-of-sexual-violence-against-women>

U.S. Department of State

Democratic Republic of Congo

<http://www.state.gov/p/af/ci/cg/>

Human Development Reports

<http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/hdi/>

War in Congo kills 45,000 people each month

The Guardian, Wednesday 23 January 2008

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2008/jan/23/congo.international>

Human Rights Watch

“You will be Punished”

December 13, 2009

<http://www.hrw.org/en/node/87142/section/5>

BBC News

Democratic Republic of Congo country profile

May 17 2011

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/country_profiles/1076399.stm

READINGS:

Explaining the Inexplicable:

It is hard not to look away from the horror that is depicted in *The Greatest Silence*, but there are compelling reasons for staying with the agonizing struggle to understand it. From the position of activist, a better understanding of why the unfolding catastrophe of savage violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo continues suggests effective ways to become involved in helping – to finding that point of intervention that might make a difference. Another reason to keep looking is to be humbled by a confrontation with the ruthless legacy of five centuries of colonialism, slavery, and other forms of exploitation and the larger, historic sense that human beings did this. Human beings could do this and human beings did do this. The filmmaker’s interviews with the rapists themselves compel a personal confrontation: Could I victimize someone in this appalling way? Born in a different place and under very different circumstances, could I be reduced to abusing and debasing another human being so callously? The young men interviewed in the film have no apparent empathy for their victims, no understanding of, or connection to, the humanity of the women they have raped. Viewers will likely not benefit from the same detachment when they look at these young men.

What follows is a collection of excerpts from reports, testimony, and a book that reflect the efforts of their authors to address what has been happening in the Democratic Republic of the Congo since 1998. Each excerpt looks at the unfolding catastrophe from different, though not conflicting, perspectives. They are offered as multiple rather than alternative truths, but they hardly exhaust ways to pursue the deeply disturbing questions raised by *The Greatest Silence*.

FEMICIDE

5/13/2009

Confronting Rape and Other Forms of Violence against Women in Conflict Zones:

Testimony of Eve Ensler before the Senate Foreign Relations' Subcommittees on African Affairs and International Operations and Organizations, Human Rights, Democracy, and Global Women's Issues

Good afternoon, I am here on behalf of countless V-Day activists worldwide, and in solidarity with my many Congolese sisters and brothers who demand justice and an end to rape. I thank you for the opportunity to testify.

...

As some of you may know, my play The Vagina Monologues led me into the world of violence against women and girls. Everywhere I traveled with it scores of women lined up to tell me of their rapes, incest, beatings, mutilations. 1 out of 3 women on this planet will be raped or beaten in her lifetime.

...

I have visited and revisited the rape mines of the world, from defined war zones like Bosnia, Afghanistan, Haiti to the domestic battlegrounds in colleges and communities throughout North America, Europe and the world.

...

I am here today to tell you that nothing I have heard or seen compares with what is going on in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

...

I believed that just telling their stories, speaking these words, would be enough to propel those with power into action. I have traveled everywhere these last two years speaking out to the Security Council, the Secretary General, parliaments, world leaders. With many others I have pleaded for more peacekeepers asking over and over when the so-called 3000 troops who are supposedly on their way to DRC will ever show up? Asking when the powers that be might flex their diplomatic muscle in the best interest of the Congolese people by advocating for a political solution to the largest conflict since WWII.

...

I have felt a murderous lethargy in the halls of power. I have heard members of the European Parliament say they had no idea it was even happening. I have been in situation after situation where the serving of protocol trumps the saving of human lives. I have heard empty promises and straight-out lies. I have waited as those that have the power to change this situation work through bureaucracy and hierarchies so that months and months pass and nothing is ever done.

And then when it is all too late, ill conceived plans made in back rooms are rushed into play that bring more violence and rapes but get labeled success by the world community.

...

There is something sinister afoot.

...

I was there in Bosnia during the war in 1994. When it was discovered that there were rape camps and that thousands of women were being raped as a strategy of war, I watched the rapid response of the western world community. After all these were white women in Europe being raped. Within two years there was adequate intervention. I was there in Bosnia during the war in 1994. It has been 12 years in the DRC. . . . I can only believe now that we are dealing not just with the terrible legacy of genocidal colonialism in the DRC, the core impact of it now lodged in the DNA of the worst perpetrators, but more disturbingly the Congo has become not the “heart of darkness,” but the “heart of racism”—the place where the world’s disregard, its indifference towards black people and particularly black women has completely manifested.

...

Is it because the powers that be care more about power and resources and money? Is it that coltan, the mineral that keeps our cell phones and computers in play, is more important than the bodies and souls of little Congolese girls?

...

Is it the British and U.S. guilt over terrible inaction in Rwanda (which allowed genocide), which now allows them to turn a blind eye to Rwanda’s role in the femicide and murder of the Congolese?

...

Is it simply that the U.N. and most governments are run and controlled by men who have never known what it feels like to have bayonet shoved up their vagina or who have never lost a bladder and rectum and then had to wait for months for a pouch for their urine and feces so they could be freed from sitting in a wretched smell exiled from everyone and everywhere? Is it that they won’t allow themselves to imagine what this feels like? Or is it that patriarchy has so normalized violence against women that none of this shocks or disturbs them? Is it that they know that for patriarchy to continue, for them to keep their power, this violence must continue as well?

...

Women in the Congo are some of the most resilient women in the world. They need protection.

...

Where is the United States? I implore you—lead the world. Take action. Make this your mission.

Let the Congo be where we ended femicide, the trend that is madly eviscerating this planet—from the floggings in Pakistan, the new rape laws in Afghanistan, the ongoing rapes in Haiti, Darfur, Zimbabwe, the daily battering, incest, harassing, trafficking, enslaving, genital cutting and honor killing. Let the Congo be the place where women were finally cherished and life affirmed, where the humiliation and subjugation ended, where women took their rightful agency over their bodies and land. Where the U.S. led the world in standing against rape and femicide, where the U.S. stood for women.

<http://www.vday.org/node/1695>

For discussion:

In her testimony, Eve Ensler places rape in the Congo within multiple larger and very contemporary contexts by asking whether the failure of the international community to stop what is happening is a function of racism, of economic interests, of guilt over the Rwandan Genocide, or of the inability of men in positions of leadership to imagine the violence of rape. She believes that the United States has the role, the responsibility, and the power, through leadership, to end what she calls femicide.

IMPUNITY:

Entrenched Impunity

Human Rights Watch: “You Will Be Punished: Attacks on Civilians in Eastern Congo”

Several factors contributed to the numerous serious abuses committed by Congolese army forces against civilians, including commanders who ordered or tolerated atrocities, lack of discipline among the Congolese national troops and the hastily inducted rebel forces, and the failure to pay salaries and provide sufficient food for the troops on operations. Perhaps most crucial was the government’s failure to hold to account those responsible for war crimes and other violations. Impunity for serious abuses, already prevalent in Congo, has intensified since the launch of military operations.

In January 2009, the government promoted Bosco Ntaganda, wanted on an arrest warrant by the International Criminal Court for war crimes, to the rank of general in the Congolese army.

Since then, he has become the de facto deputy commander of operation Kimia II [a joint operation between U.N. forces and the Congolese army that was maintained in the face of evidence that the army itself was guilty of gross human rights abuses] The government has also promoted or permitted other known human rights abusers to play important operational roles in the military operations, including former CNDP and other commanders:

- *Bernard Biamungu, appointed a colonel in charge of the 2nd Operations Zone in Mushake, is accused of participating in dozens of summary executions in Kindu (Maniema province) in 2003 and Kisangani in 2002.*

- *Jean Pierre Biyoyo, found guilty by a Congolese military court in March 2006 of recruiting children into a militia group, was appointed to serve as a lieutenant colonel and the deputy commander of operations in the 32nd sector in Kalehe territory (South Kivu).*
- *Innocent Zimurinda, accused of participating in the massacres at Kiwanja in 2008 and Buramba in 2007, was appointed to be a lieutenant colonel and commander of the 23rd Operational Sector in North Kivu.*
- *Sultani Makenga, accused of child recruitment and participation in massacres at Katwiguru, Kiseguru, Buramba, and Rubare, was named colonel and deputy commander of Kimia II operations in South Kivu.*
- *Delphin Kahimbi, a colonel, was appointed Kimia II commander in South Kivu despite repeated allegations by MONUC officials, as well as Human Rights Watch, of his involvement in the arbitrary arrests, torture, and ill-treatment of detainees, especially Tutsi, in North Kivu and for ordering his troops to fire on U.N. peacekeepers.*

When many of these commanders continued to commit the same atrocities for which they were already notorious, as was the case of Colonel Zimurinda mentioned above, the government claimed it was unable to act to arrest them for fear of causing more harm to civilians should the peace process unravel.

Not only do such decisions violate the Congolese government's international and national legal obligations to investigate and prosecute individuals responsible for war crimes, they are also horribly misguided. Forgoing accountability effectively sanctions the commission of more grave crimes and puts civilians at even greater risk. All too often a peace that is conditioned on impunity for the most serious crimes is not sustainable. As Philip Alston, the U.N. special rapporteur on extrajudicial executions, said at the end of his mission to Congo in October 2009, "Peace will not come, nor will justice, until the government and the international community take seriously the notion that those accused of heinous crimes must be indicted immediately."

Human Rights Watch:

"You Will Be Punished: Attacks on Civilians in Eastern Congo," p. 128

December 2009

<http://www.hrw.org/node/87151>

For Discussion:

The specific instances of impunity documented in this excerpt make sense when they are understood in terms of the ineffective governance described by Jason Stearns in *Dancing in the Glory of Monsters*. Weak Congo leadership, so unable to prevail in intractable conflicts with armed groups that they attempt to co-opt the groups by including them in the army and advancing their leaders, institutionalizes impunity.

GOVERNANCE:

Dancing in the Glory of Monsters: The Collapse of the Congo and the Great War of Africa by Jason Stearns

Perhaps the most nagging, persistent problem I have witnessed while researching and writing this book has been the lack of visionary, civic minded leadership. The constant refrain from Congolese and foreigners and alike is: Why do most Congolese political officeholders seem so morally bankrupt?

(p. 328)

As these pages have made clear, the story of the Congo wars is one of state weakness and failure, which has made possible the ceaseless proliferation of insurgent groups, still numbering around twenty-nine in 2010. These armed groups fight brutal insurgencies and counterinsurgencies that, as the United States discovered in Vietnam and Iraq, are not so much about controlling territories as about controlling civilians, who are brutalized in order to obtain resources and as retaliation for attacks by their rivals.

(p. 329)

In the Congo, everything flows from political office: the best business deals, influence, and status. These rulers have treated strong public institutions as threats, eroding the capacity of the army so as to maintain tight control over key units and undermining an independent judiciary and parliament.

...

... its political system rewards ruthless behavior and marginalizes scrupulous leaders. It privileges loyalty over competence, wealth and power over moral character.

(p. 330)

No one factor has produced the kleptocratic, venal political elite. Certainly social and educational issues also play a role. But it is clear that political elites react to incentives and that no meaningful reform will result as long as these incentives are skewed against the creation of strong institutions. Buoyed by foreign support and revenues from copper, oil, and diamonds, the governments feels little need to serve its citizens and promote sustainable development. Why empower nettlesome parliaments, courts, and auditing bodies if they will just turn around and harass you?

(p. 332)

... advocacy efforts have ... had unintended effects. They reinforce the impression that the Congo is filled with wonton savages, crazed by power and greed. This view, by focusing on the utter horror of the violence, distracts from the politics that gave rise to the conflict and from the reasons behind the bloodshed. If all we see is black men raping and killing in the most

outlandish ways imaginable, we might find it hard to believe that there is any logic to this conflict. We are returned to Joseph Conrad's notion that the Congo takes you to the heart of darkness, an inscrutable and unimaginable mess. If we want to change the political dynamics of the country, we have above all to understand it the conflict on its own terms. That starts with understanding how political power is managed.

(p. 328)

This state of affairs should force foreign donors to think more carefully about contributing billions of dollars to development in the Congo without pondering the long-term repercussions. The donors—mainly the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the European Union, the United States, and the United Kingdom—usually insist that this money is politically neutral, that it does not directly benefit the political elite. This is true, as most of the money is for schools, roads, health care, and water projects. But all development is deeply political. By taking over the financing of most public services, donors take pressure off the Congolese government to respond to the needs of its citizens. Ultimately, the rule of law will be created not through a capacity-building project in the ministry of finance but through a power struggle between the government, local elites, and business circles. Donors need to figure out how to most responsibly insert themselves in this dynamic and not just pave roads, build hospitals, and reform fiscal systems.

(p. 332)

Dancing in the Glory of Monsters: The Collapse of the Congo and the Great War of Africa

Jason Stearns

New York: Public Affairs, 2011

For Discussion:

These excerpts, taken from a section near the end of Jason Stearns' 300-plus-page book, focus on the absence of a system—a set of institutions and/or a civic infrastructure—that would reward and support scrupulous leadership as at least one missing lynchpin to meaningful reform in the Congo.

Michaela Wrong, author of the *Footsteps of Mr. Kurtz: Living on the Brink of Disaster in the Congo*, questions the lens through which the West understands the Congo conflict when, in her review of the book, she writes: "(t)his courageous book is a plea for more nuanced understanding and the silencing of the analysis-free 'the horror, the horror' exclamation that Congo still routinely wrings from Western lips."

The Spectator, 7 May 2011

http://www.spectator.co.uk/books/6915438/part_3/fear-and-loathing-in-the-congo.shtml

MINERAL DEPOSITS:

Human Rights Watch
The Curse of Gold
June 1, 2005

*"We are cursed because of our gold. All we do is suffer. There is no benefit to us."
Congolese gold miner*

The northeast corner of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is home to one of Africa's richest goldfields. Competition to control the gold mines and trading routes has spurred the bloody conflict that has gripped this area since the start of the Congolese war in 1998 and continues to the present. Soldiers and armed group leaders, seeing control of the gold mines as a way to money, guns, and power, have fought each other ruthlessly, often targeting civilians in the process. Combatants under their command have carried out widespread ethnic slaughter, executions, torture, rape, and arbitrary arrest, all grave human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law. More than 60,000 people have died due to direct violence in this part of the Congo alone. Rather than bringing prosperity to the people of northeastern Congo, gold has been a curse to those who have the misfortune to live there.

This report documents human rights abuses linked to efforts to control two key gold mining areas, Mongbwalu (Ituri District) and Durba (Haut Uélé District), both bordering Uganda.

1998-2003:

Uganda occupied northeastern Congo from 1998 to 2003 and its soldiers took direct control of gold-rich areas, coercing gold miners to extract the gold for their benefit. They beat and arbitrarily arrested those who resisted their orders and seized one ton of Congolese gold valued at over \$9 million.

2003:

Uganda withdrew from the Congo, following Rwanda, which withdrew in 2002. Each left behind local proxies, armed groups which fought for the control of gold-mining areas and trade routes. These groups fought five battles to control Mongbwalu. Human Rights Watch researchers documented the slaughter of at least two thousand civilians in the Mongbwalu area between June 2002 and September 2004. Tens of thousands of civilians were forced to flee from their homes into the forests to escape their attackers. Many of them did not survive.

Northeastern Congo is beyond the control of newly installed transitional government, but multinational corporations try to make deals to start gold mining. AngloGold Ashanti, one of the largest gold producers in the world, established relations with the FNI, an armed group responsible for serious human rights abuses including war crimes and crimes against humanity, and who controlled the Mongbwalu area. In return for FNI assurances of security for its operations and staff, AngloGold Ashanti provided logistical and financial support—that in turn resulted in political benefits—to the armed group and its leaders.

In its gold exploration activities in Mongbwalu, AngloGold Ashanti failed to uphold its own business principles on human rights considerations and failed to follow international business norms governing the behavior of companies internationally. Human Rights Watch has been unable to identify effective steps taken by the company to ensure that their activities did not negatively impact on human rights.

In other small-scale mining operations throughout the duration of the conflict, armed groups and their business allies used the proceeds from the sale of gold to support their military activities. Working outside of legal channels, a network of traders funnelled gold mined by artisanal miners and forced labour out of the Congo to Uganda. In return for their services some traders counted on the support of combatants from the armed groups who threatened, detained, and even murdered their commercial rivals or those suspected of failing to honor business deals.

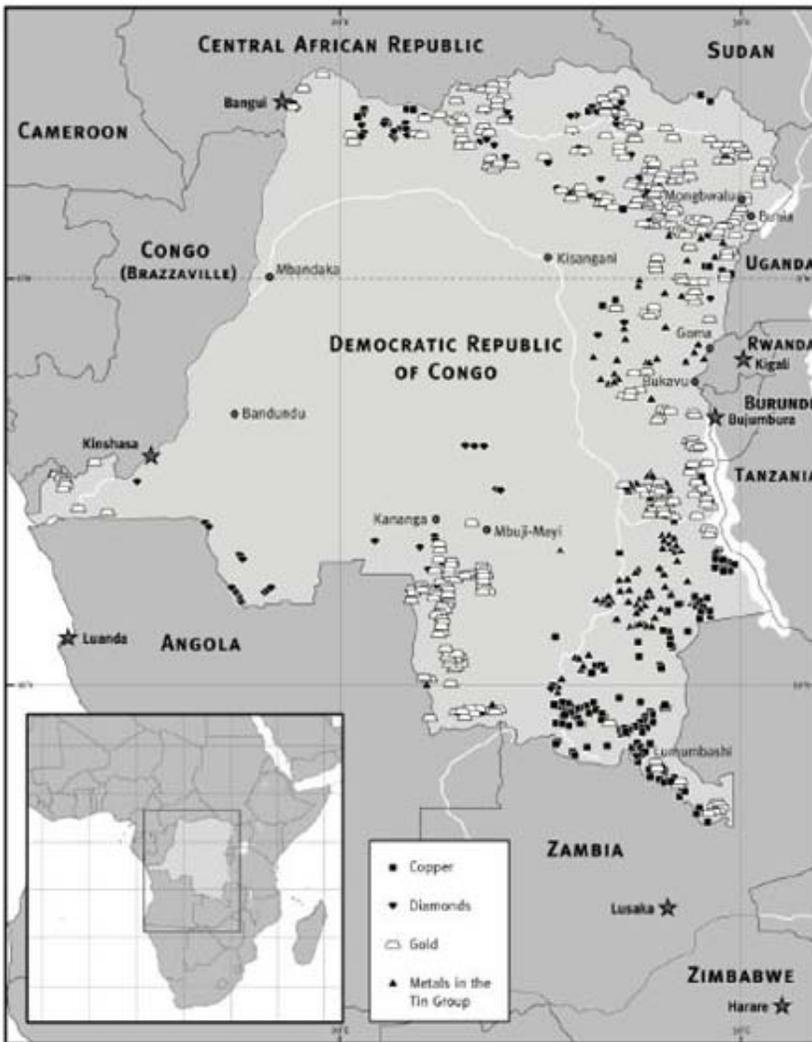
These traders sold the ore to gold exporters based in Uganda who then sold to the global gold market, a practice that continues today.

In 2003, an estimated \$60 million worth of Congolese gold was exported from Uganda, much of it destined for Switzerland. The chain of Congolese middlemen, Ugandan traders, and multinational corporations forms an important funding network for armed groups operating in northeastern Congo.

Through purchases of gold made from Uganda, Metalor Technologies may have contributed indirectly to providing a revenue stream for armed groups that carry out widespread human rights abuses.

The international community has failed to effectively tackle the link between resource exploitation and conflict in the Congo. The trade in gold is just one example of a wider trend of competition for resources and resulting human rights abuses taking place in mineral-rich areas throughout the Congo. The link between conflict and resource exploitation raises broader questions of corporate accountability in the developing world. Given the troubling allegations described in the U.N. panel of experts reports and in this report, it is imperative that further steps be taken to deal with the issue of natural resources and conflict in the Congo and beyond.

In preparation for this report, Human Rights Watch researchers interviewed over 150 individuals including victims, witnesses, gold miners, gold traders, gold exporters, customs officials, armed group leaders, government representatives, and officials of international financial institutions in Congo, Uganda, and Europe in 2004 and 2005. Human Rights Watch researchers also met with and engaged in written correspondence with representatives from AngloGold Ashanti and Metalor Technologies to discuss concerns.



Major Mineral Deposits in the Democratic Republic of Congo

<http://www.hrw.org/en/reports/2005/06/01/curse-gold-0>

For Discussion:

This excerpt, adapted from a report by Human Rights Watch, describes the role gold has played in the northeastern corner of the Democratic Republic of Congo, but in the Congo, the term “conflict minerals” also refers to the ores that produce tin, tantalum, and tungsten. Armed groups earn hundreds of millions of dollars per year by trading these four main minerals and this money enables the militias to purchase large numbers of weapons and continue their campaign of brutal violence against civilians, with some of the worst abuses occurring in mining areas. (Raise Hope for Congo, <http://www.raisehopeforcongo.org/content/initiatives/conflict-minerals>) As the Human Rights Watch excerpt documents, this bloody trading is enabled by trading partners which are, in some cases, well known multinational companies.

RAPE AS A WEAPON OF WAR

“Now the World is Without Me”

An Investigation of Sexual Violence in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo

A Report by the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative

With Support from Oxfam America

April 2010

pp. 5 and 6

“We found them in our house. They pillaged everything. They put my husband on the bed and beat him. Then two of the soldiers raped me. This story is so tragic—I can’t believe this happened to me. I prefer death instead of life. Now, the world is without me because of my situation.”

- 27-year old mother of three children who was raped in June 2002 and subsequently abandoned

Use of sexual violence as a weapon of war is usually strategic and systematic. Rape is used to terrorize civilian populations, causing people to flee and leave their homes, their belongings and their fields. In other conflict settings, mass rape is used during cultural and ethnic cleansing as a means of polluting bloodlines and forcibly impregnating women to produce “ethnically cleansed” children. These “ethnically-cleansed” children are often recognized as children of the enemy and they are extremely vulnerable to stigma, maternal rejection, statelessness, and abandonment. Finally, rape is strategically used to inflict shame, suffering, and humiliation.

For women who have been raped, the capacity to care for their children and to participate in community life is greatly diminished. They find that the potential for re-integration into their relational social networks is starkly reduced. Because the stigmatization and humiliation can last for decades, widespread infliction of sexual violence may effectively destroy the cultural and social bonds of entire communities. A key factor in this destruction is the impact that the rape of women has had on men in the victim’s family and community. Sexual violence, as the ultimate display of power and dominance, is used by the opposing force to signify the weakness and inadequacy of the men in the targeted social grouping or community. These men absorb this message, perceiving their inability to protect women against assault as their own final humiliation in the war.

Rape as a weapon of war has been employed by warring parties and occupying armies since early historical times. After World War II, the war crimes tribunal in Japan prosecuted perpetrators of the rape of Nanking, where an estimated 20,000 women were raped in the first month of the Japanese occupation of Nanking, setting the precedent for the 1949 Fourth Geneva Convention, which prohibits wartime rape and enforced prostitution. This prohibition in international humanitarian law has been amplified in judicial findings from the Ad Hoc Criminal Tribunals for Yugoslavia and Rwanda and has found final robust form in the language of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, which establishes rape and sexual

enslavement as crimes against humanity, and, in certain situations, rape as an act of genocide. (<http://untreaty.un.org/cod/icc/statute/romefra.htm>)

Yet despite the progression of international norms, sexual violence in conflicts continues. In many modern conflicts, sexual violence has become ever more prevalent and destructive. Mass rape campaigns have been documented in Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Liberia, the Balkans, Uganda, Sudan, and DRC.

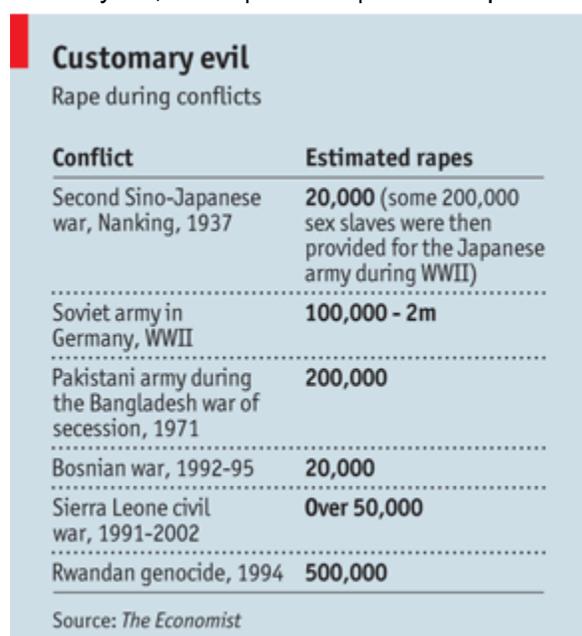
<http://www.hhi.harvard.edu/images/resources/reports/hhi-oxfam%20drc%20gbv%20report.pdf>

The Economist

Violence against Women

War's Overlooked Victims

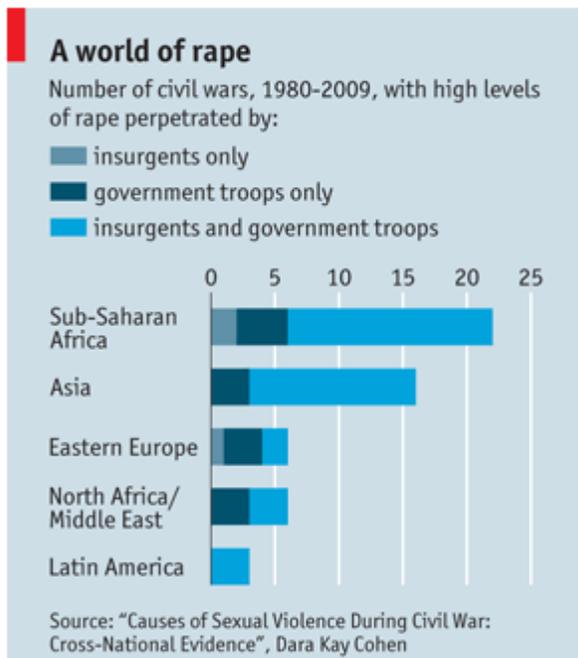
January 13, 2011 | GOMA | from the print edition



Customary evil
Rape during conflicts

Conflict	Estimated rapes
Second Sino-Japanese war, Nanking, 1937	20,000 (some 200,000 sex slaves were then provided for the Japanese army during WWII)
Soviet army in Germany, WWII	100,000 - 2m
Pakistani army during the Bangladesh war of secession, 1971	200,000
Bosnian war, 1992-95	20,000
Sierra Leone civil war, 1991-2002	Over 50,000
Rwandan genocide, 1994	500,000

Source: *The Economist*



http://www.economist.com/node/17900482?story_id=17900482

For Discussion:

The excerpt from the early pages of this 66-page report by the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative describes the strategic value of rape in war. Rape has long been associated with “unregulated” war, but the 1949 Fourth Geneva Convention explicitly prohibits wartime rape and enforced prostitution. International courts have held that wartime rape is a crime against humanity and an act of genocide; yet, as the graphics from *The Economist* show, the atrocities documented in the film *The Greatest Silence* are not unique to the Congo and hardly hidden from the international community.

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