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Introduction

A spatial-temporal, intersectional and institutional approach to interpersonal violence

Marita Husso, TuijaVirkki, Helena Hirvonen, Jari Eilola & Marianne Notko

Interpersonal violence is a global social and health problem in higher- and lower-income countries alike (Collins, 2008; Hearn, 2013; Krug et al., 2002; McCue, 2008; McKie, 2005; Ray, 2011). It is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon that involves violation, suffering, trauma and loss. The concept of violence includes both the threat and actual use of physical force or power, which may result in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation (Stockdale & Nadler, 2012). However, violence is an ineluctable part of social life and social structures. Interpersonal violence and armed conflicts seem to have existed in all known human societies (Malesevic, 2010). At the same time, violence often appears as exceptional and external (Larry, 2011; Scheper-Hughes & Bourgoise, 2004), and it' s impact on people's wellbeing has been underestimated and frequently rendered invisible in the human sciences, especially in the canon of social thought (Kilby, 2013; Stanko et al., 2002; Walby, 2009). The deployment and regulation of violence are social processes, and violence itself is socially patterned and embedded in inequalities in institutions and regimes (Walby, 2009; 2012). Hence, interpersonal violence seems to be socially, culturally and historically a phenomenon that in one way or another reflects social conditions, attitudes, conceptions and change, and that is manifested in human interaction. These social, historical and cultural dimensions of violence give interpersonal violence its

meaning and power.

Interpersonal violence has many names. Some of these, such as child abuse, refer to the age of the victim and perpetrator, some refer to behavioral criteria, i.e., to specific acts such as rape, stalking or genital mutilation, whereas others reflect attempts to capture broad constructs, such as intimate partner violence and violence against women. Interpersonal violence has also been categorized into two specific forms: family/partner and community, where each is further classified by the type of target (Krug et al., 2002). The target of family/partner violence may be a child, partner, or an elderly person. The target of community violence may be an acquaintance or stranger. The former type of interpersonal violence is distinguished primarily by life stage and living arrangements (i.e., domestic violence, child abuse, and elder abuse) (Tyner, 2012). The different names and frames of violence are closely linked to questions of how interpersonal violence is defined and explained (Hearn, 2013). Interpersonal violence is thus a slippery concept that permeates the unstable boundaries between public and private, legitimate and illegitimate, individual and collective.

While there are important differences between the different forms of violence, there are also extensive connections between them. These interconnections extend across time, cultures, relationships and discourses (Hamby, 2011; Hamby & Grynch, 2013). For example, violence in the home is inextricably linked to violence in the community, school and workplace as well as to the violence that has occurred in the home for centuries and how violence is discussed, represented and explained (Galtung & Jacobssen, 2000).

The necessity of recognizing and acknowledging experiences of violence not only concerns individuals, but also communities and societies suffering from violence and their need to deal with its effects. The sharing of experiences of violence is thus also a question of both communal and societal relationships and global political orders. Objectifying and oppressive attitudes related to interpersonal violence are also present in other social situations, ways of knowing and attempts to control and manage the world. They hinder the possibility to engage in relationships and inhabit spaces that are based on reciprocity, in which mutual recognition and acknowledgement can exist. At the same time, such attitudes uphold the existence of violence as a logical solution to problems – as a behaviour or practice that is attributable to circumstances or on the characteristics of the target or victim.

The anthropologist Mary Douglas (1966) has criticised the attempt to explain social problems and the primitive aspects of society and culture by reference to individuals' qualities, and so bypass the societal and cultural factors that affect people's behaviour. In relation to interpersonal violence, and especially gendered violence, this aim would appear to still be very much alive and well. For centuries, for example, violence against women in the home has been explained away as the result of, amongst other things, female bickering, provocation and masochism, and male jealously, aggression and use and abuse of alcohol. The lack of attention paid to the silent acceptance and tolerance of violence, and its social and cultural effects on both parties, have facilitated the repetition and re-iteration of these explanatory models (Lidman, 2013).

Even in countries where legal and social sanctions exist that challenge interpersonal violence, attitudes, practices and cultural conceptions prevail that enable the continuation of such violence. Research indicates, for example, that social and health care providers, educators and

lawyers, as well as social theorists and human scientists often fail to initiate appropriate interest, analysis and interventions due to their attitudes towards violence and unwillingness to acknowledge its existence (Besteman, 2002; Hearn, 2013, Husso et al., 2012; Laing & Humphreys, 2013; Lombart, 2013; Virkki et al., 2015).

Furthermore, research also shows that the pivotal role in interpersonal violence of gender equality and structured power relations has commonly not been recognized (Hearn, 2014; Hearn & McKie., 2010; McKie, 2006). On the contrary, personal and societal attitudes, organizational practices, policy responses, and popular and scientific discussions have tended to overlook the issue of interpersonal violence and its consequences. Social theory and history have been effective in analysing societal and institutional conflicts and violence, but less so in addressing the specifics of interpersonal violence. The study of violence has been fragmented into specific clusters, and it has been generally absent from social theory as a topic of reflection (Larry, 2011). Violence in everyday and intimate practices, in particular, has not been a central concern in social theory or history.

Despite the fact that interpersonal violence is unequivocally also a social problem, questions related to the topic have long been avoided in the human sciences. This neglect has affected both the understanding of violence and the means of approaching and outlining of social and societal relationships. Hence, the failure to focus attention on interpersonal violence, and especially violence that occurs in close relationships, has led to the ignoring of, amongst other things, such factors as considerations based on gender construction and the social formation of interpersonal relationships (see Hearn, 1998; 2013). This limitation may reflect cultural attitudes and the resulting taken-for-grantedness of violence, and the hierarchical and gendered nature of different research fields and social theories, combined with the earlier

marginalization of gender, ethnicity and age (Ray 2000; 2011). Hence, analyses of interpersonal violence are illustrative of more general issues in social theory and history, and consequently theories in the human sciences can be informed by the analysis of interpersonal violence when approached from the standpoint of structured power and social relations.

Spatiality and temporality

 In this book, interpersonal violence is analyzed in connection with structured power and social relations and gendered practices. We draw some conceptual interconnections between different studies on the basis of a theoretical framework that we call 'spatiality-temporality' (see also Virkki & Jäppinen in this book). Here, spatiality refers on the one hand to the different spaces, social locations and cultural contexts in which interpersonal violence occurs and in which it is understood. On the other hand, spatiality refers to the connections and similarities between those cultural contexts and forms of interpersonal violence. The concept of culture has been charged in recent research (e.g. Cousineau & Rondeau, 2004; Ertürk & Purkayastha, 2012) with promoting ahistoricism, essentialism, and the construction of homogenizing and static representations of social reality; here, the challenge presented by such essentialist notions of culture is addressed by mobilizing the theory of the dynamics between differences and similarities in cultural contexts.

Instead of a fixed or static notion of spatiality, we subscribe to a more dynamic notion by bringing an element of temporality into the spatial analysis. In the theoretical framework outlined in this book, space and time are integral to one another and, accordingly, space can be regarded as a sphere of plurality, ambiguity and the possibility of change. "Culture" is not something static; instead, cultures are considered as continuously evolving. The dynamic

nature of spatiality refers, first of all, to the historical context in which certain institutions, cultural beliefs, attitudes and practices have evolved. Second, recognition of the dynamic nature of spatiality refers to awareness of the ongoing cultural and social change in today's world of increased globalization and mobility. Globalization has furthered the multiplication of cultural groups within nations and, consequently, neither culture nor nation can any longer be regarded as unique definers of the identity of the people residing in a specific region, society, or ethnic enclave.

Despite emphasizing the possibility for positive change in the prevailing cultural conceptions of interpersonal violence and a decrease in the prevalence of violence, we must face the fact, evidenced by the empirical research in this book as well as elsewhere, that conceptions and practices that are likely to reproduce and maintain the problem of interpersonal violence across different times and places continue to be widespread. Consequently, we deploy temporality to refer not only to the possibility of change, but also to continuities. It is the enduring patterns of hierarchical differences along the lines of gender, age, ethnicity and other factors, as well as institutional orders and the persistent ignorance of the forms of violence and hierarchical differences linked to them that unite the different forms of interpersonal violence presented in this book.

The issue of hierarchical gender differences constitutes a major instance of the deep-rooted cultural conceptions and practices prevalent in society, as demonstrated by several chapters in this book. For example, there is a continuing normalization of violence against women, so that it is very much infused and ingrained in cultural conceptions and practices across various cultures and times, including the Western and so called modern ones. Nevertheless, gender-based violence is often attributed to "traditional" and "regressive" non-Euro-American

cultures, while "modernity" and "progress" is associated with Euro-American or Western cultures (Keskinen, 2011). This discourse of "culturalization" tends to present only certain parts of the world (e.g. the Third World countries) and certain groups of people (e.g. migrant women in Western countries) as subjected to gender-based violence, thereby ignoring the pervasive forms of gender-based interpersonal violence found in the Western industrialized cultures themselves (Anthias, 2014). It is important, therefore, to consider the power relationships, institutional orders and affective practices of communities and societies, and pay attention to the significant role of emotions like fear, honor and shame as a driving force feeding the continuity of forms of violence based on various deep-rooted patriarchal values, across different times and spaces.

Intersectionality and institutionality

In addition to the approach based on the opposition between change and differences, on the one hand, and continuity and similarities, on the other, this book addresses the complex dynamics between these positions. By analyzing the dynamics between similarities/differences and continuity/change, the chapters demonstrate the tendencies to "gender" the blame for interpersonal violence and the continuity of the tendencies to "gender" the responsibility for ending cycles of interpersonal violence. In exploring these issues, we draw on a growing body of research, which attends to the intersectional and institutional nature of interpersonal violence and to the interconnections between the different forms of violence. The intersectional approach takes into account various axes of differences, and analyzes gender, race, class and sexuality not as separate issues but in all the different combinations in which they come. Over the previous decades, intersectionality has been deployed in disciplines such as history, sociology, literature, philosophy and anthropology as well as in feminist studies, ethnic studies, queer studies and legal studies.

However, in light of the fact that the chapters comprising this book describe numerous different cases drawn from different societal contexts it is not enough simply to acknowledge the differences that exist in gender, race, class and sexuality but also to analyze the intersection of these factors in their varying institutional contexts. Such an institutional analysis pays attention to social orders and the rules of the social game as manifested in explicit regulations (laws etc.), social norms and value commitments as well as established cultural frames of interpretation (Scott, 2014; Husso & Heiskala, 2016).

Hence, while the majority of the chapters deal with gender-based violence, the topic of interpersonal violence is addressed in relation not only to gender, but also to other social divisions such as class, ethnicity, age and sexuality, and different institutional regimes. Here, interpersonal violence refers to a wide range of abusive behaviors, perpetrated by intimate partners, family members, care givers or members of the community, such as acquaintances and strangers. In this way, the different chapters reveal the multiplicity of the contexts of interpersonal violence along with cultural and institutional diversity.

The aim of the book

The book presents interpersonal violence as a universal, established and widespread phenomenon, which takes different forms in different times, places, institutional regimes and social and individual relationships. The book reflects on the dominant historical and culturally specific understandings and theoretical considerations of interpersonal violence. In focusing on the diverse and often ignored social locations and cultural backgrounds of interpersonal violence, the book demonstrates 1) how the specificity of temporality and spatiality affect the manifestation of violence, 2) how the dynamics of intersectional and institutional differences

are located in social space and time, and 3) how the different forms of violence in different times are affectively, conceptually and discursively connected.

The book offers perspectives on various forms of interpersonal violence, ranging temporally from early modernity to the present and spatially from Europe and Russia to Africa and Asia. The book draws together research results from various disciplines, including history, sociology, social policy, social work, cultural studies, and gender studies. The book introduces the diverse and often ignored social locations and cultural backgrounds of interpersonal violence. Various historically specific social inequalities are also recognized and acknowledged.

The book aims to weave together theories and perspectives that help to understand the relationship between violence and fundamental features of human sociality. Some key propositions are: violence is induced by shame, humiliation and cultures of masculine honor; the conditions for this are closely linked to socioeconomic inequalities in combination with a cultural ethos of informality and equalization; and violence is spatially distributed in ways that coincide with the spatial structuring of global capital. A recurrent theme in this book is that violence is largely a response to situations of exclusion and inequality, in which traditional modes of masculine identity may be deployed to provide a framework of justification for confrontational behavior.

From the perspective of violence studies, our emphasis on addressing both the differences and connections between various forms of violence challenges conventional explanations and both opens up new questions and offers insights for understanding and resolving the social

problems related to violence. Finally, we propose here that the spatial, temporal, intersectional and institutional approaches described above can contribute to further theorizing the dynamics between the similarities/differences and continuity/change in the complex and multilayered contexts of interpersonal violence, thus problematizing and extending our understanding of the differences and connections between different types of interpersonal violence. The various hierarchical differences linked to interpersonal violence not only intersect but are mutually constituted, formed and transformed within transnational power-laden processes, such as the history of European imperialism and colonialism, and neoliberal globalization (Patil, 2013).

The scope of the book

The book is divided into four sections in order to present differing but also overlapping themes on violence. The first section titled *Histories*, collects together chapters with both historical and contemporary accounts of violations against the female body on the one hand and violence towards children on the other. The overlapping theme running thorough these chapters is that the early modern normative and patriarchal interpretation of the family, gender roles and domestic hierarchies shaped institutional regimes, such as judicial and cultural norms that emphasized the primary responsibility of women and mothers for the wellbeing of children and the family as well as gendered interpretations of the causes of certain acts of violence. At the same time, the tendency to explain violence and criminal behavior either as a consequence of the evilness of an offender or as socially restricted problem prevented contemporaries from seeing the intersectional and institutional connections and structural causes of violence, and rendered interventions ineffective.

The first chapter by Satu Lidman scrutinizes sexual violence by adult men towards under-aged girls in early modern society and law, especially in the Swedish, German and English institutional regimes, such as their legal cultures. Alongside intersectional differences, like the meaning of gender, age plays an important role when dealing with the cultural or juridical unacceptability of behaviors directed towards other persons. As Lidman points out, the historical understanding of the phenomenon and the terms used are shifting, since they reflect contemporary European values concerning the age of consent.

In the next chapter, Mona Rautelin discusses the socio-medical phenomenon "cryptical pregnancy" (a medically defined condition in which her pregnancy is revealed to a woman as a biological fact only on the birth of her baby) and its potential nexus to unassisted lethal births of neonates in eighteenth and nineteenth century Finnish criminal proceedings. Rautelin suggests that even in the contemporary world, a more inclusive phenomenology of pregnancy embodiment is required to ensure more just criminal proceedings in cases of crimes against a neonate's life. Although the institutional regimes, incidence of neonaticide and the punishments for it have changed radically, the crime continues to be committed in the modern world, and closely resembles the characteristics of unawareness of pregnancy in modern medical research.

In the next chapter, following this theme, Anu Koskivirta illustrates the boundaries drawn with respect to motives and methods in child homicide trials between acceptable and non-acceptable chastisement in child homicide trials in early 19th century Finland. The right to administer educational corporal punishment in the home supported a high level of tolerance towards intra-family violence in the patriarchal system, making it possible to disregard the

rules made by other institutional orders regarding appropriate chastisement without official intervention.

The second section, titled *Cultures*, comprises contributors on different forms and conceptions of interpersonal violence, traditions, practices and institutional orders across various cultural contexts. Whereas the first three chapters in the previous section mainly address the North-European context, the next four chapters illuminate the issue of differences and connections in interpersonal violence from the varying perspectives of Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Russia, and various parts of Europe. The overlapping theme running through these chapters is the multilayered and complex nature of any cultural context, which can be regarded as a site of both continuity and change.

The first chapter, by Ville Sarkamo, Cyril Eshareturi, Günes Koc and Kari Miettinen, explores honour-based violence as a historical and cultural phenomenon from the point of view of legislation and administrative practices in Namibia, Turkey and the United Kingdom. Although honour-based violence appears to be a universal phenomenon, it takes significantly different forms in different cultures and under different institutional regimes. Whilst the notion of honour seems to be "natural" and evident, the authors argue that for honour-based violence to be tackled effectively, it should first be noticed in various institutional regimes, and a change effected in legislative practices which accept "honour" as a justification for honour-related crimes. The following chapter by Regina Opoku examines the role elderly African women play in promoting violence against women, such as the traditional practices of female genital mutilation and widow cleansing in order to enhance the political and economic stability and social well-being of their communities in the Lake Zone Regions in Tanzania. Opoku investigates the ways in which cultural beliefs and practices influence dominant power

relations and act as the driving forces feeding the continuity of woman-to-woman violence. Opoku's piece offers some compelling empirical evidence for the significant role of emotions (e.g. fear, honour and shame) as one such driving force which she sees as based on various deep-rooted patriarchal values and affective gendered practices. As previous research shows, these kinds of emotional dispositions are part and parcel of the continuity observed across different times and spaces in various forms of interpersonal violence.

In her chapter, Mutsuko Takahashi discusses the issue of legal interventions into intimate partner violence in the context of contemporary Japan. By analyzing social discourses on intimate partner violence, Takahashi asks whether sociocultural features, deeply-rooted value structures and institutional orders exist in Japan that operate against the promotion of anti-violence policies. Her research shows that the absence of a comprehensive understanding of "coercive control" is a critical shortcoming in Japan. Legally unregistered couple relationships have not been considered fully deserving of legal protection and remedies. Moreover, the societal hierarchy behind the harmonious and orderly appearance of interpersonal relationships is also pertinent in the Japanese value system. The final chapter by Tuija Virkki and Maija Jäppinen is a cross-cultural study that examines the shifts in the attributions of responsibility for the problem of intimate partner violence by Finnish and Russian professionals. By taking a closer look at the dynamics between similarities/differences and stability/change in these two cultural contexts, the chapter shows the co-existence of a decline in the tendency to "gender" the blame for intimate partner violence and, at the same time, a continuity of the pervasive tendency to "gender" responsibility for solving the problem of violence . The chapter identifies both the meanings that allow for the continuation of established practices and deep-rooted cultural conceptions, as well as the competing meanings that have the potential of catalyzing change over time.

The third section, titled *Relationships*, covers a variety of human relations in which violence may occur. Intimate partner relationships, relationships within the family or between peers, while different, are also overlapping relations in an individual's life. A person may occupy many roles in which they can be subject to violence. Close relationships, in particular, are expected to be characterized by loyalties, responsibilities and commitments, or expectations of these. However, there are also important intersectional and institutional differences and connections in practices, conceptions, and ways of thinking. Hence, these chapters take a comprehensive approach to these complexities, with an emphasis on the importance of the careful operationalization of the concept of violence, the diversity of relationships and the roles of different institutions like schools, the judiciary and social services in the task of identifying and intervening in violence.

The first chapter, by Rebecca and Russell Dobash, examines intimate partner murder. Their study is drawn from an exceptionally wide empirical database of 866 case files of all types of murder committed by and against men, women and children in the UK. The chapter focuses on three types of murder: intimate partner murder, sexual murder and the murder of older women. The study illustrates the differences and connections between all three main types of violence. The results point to considerable similarity in the perpetrators' backgrounds and in their conceptions, affects, and rationalizations, such as a sense of entitlement to control over their partner and sexual access and privilege.

In turn, the next chapter, by Maria Erikson, focuses on intersectional differences, especially in relation to children. She argues that children's voices and perspectives constitute a very fruitful point of departure in accumulating knowledge in the field of interpersonal violence.

Erikson considers children who have been exposed to violence, and emphasizes that despite the growing body of existing research on the subject, the problem is far from being solved or even understood. She suggests that a potential way to gain further insight on the theme would be to give these children a voice and listen to their accounts. Such an approach would work on two levels: it would serve in helping an individual child and would also contribute further information in general on children facing this kind of violence.

The next chapter, by Ana Kralj and Tjaša Žakelj, consider peer violence among school-aged children. The study points out that interethnic peer violence is not recognized as a matter of concern in Slovenian schools. Based on analysis of data collected from primary and secondary school pupils, teachers, school counselors and headmasters, the study shows that although cases of physical violence are rare, various forms of psychological violence are quite widespread. Racist slurs are the most common form of ethnic victimization. Children with a migrant background are more exposed to violence than the majority groups. Furthermore, lower socioeconomic status coincides with ethnicity or migrant status. The chapter indicates the importance of an institutional approach and intersectional analysis in the study of inter-ethnic peer-violence.

Ana Paula Gil, Ana João Santos and Irina Kislaya present results from a multi-method study on the abuse of older adults in Portugal. They also confirm how intersectional differences, and in this context age in particular, either intergenerationally or between age peers, is a significant factor in the forms taken by this kind of violence and abuse. The multi-method study demonstrates the methodological significance of using a careful and well-grounded definition of interpersonal violence in order to map the prevalence and special characteristics

of a phenomenon that is stigmatized and under-reported across different cultures and institutional regimes.

 In the last chapter, Veronika Ekström brings up issues related to professional help and social services. According to her, social workers and social work have been criticized for failing to address violence against women in adequate ways, of blaming the victim and ignoring domestic violence as a problem. The chapter examines abused women's experiences of support in connection with the police investigation of domestic violence. The results illustrate the institutional differences that exist in social service systems and emphasize the importance of both comprehensive support before and during the trial, surpassing the conventional support offered by social services, and information from the judicial system.

The fourth section is titled *Discourses*. It demonstrates how various cultural products play an important role in constructing attitudes and conceptions, and understanding of different forms of violence in different times and spaces, relationships, social locations, and cultural and institutional contexts. The two chapters, by Stephanie J. Brommer and Saara Jäntti, cover popular music and literature as special sources producing conceptions on violence-related issues. Brommer analyses how contemporary music artists (e.g. Rihanna, Eminem, Pink) grapple with the raw complexities of domestic violence by emphasizing the passion and power fueling abusive relationships. She points out how popular culture also reflects the societal beliefs surrounding domestic violence, including why women and men stay and the impact of passion. Brommer's chapter on the representations of intimate partner violence in popular culture music and videos also shows how the Western gendered narratives of heterosexual relationships and the passion fueling abusive relationships work to normalize

men's violence against women in widely consumed popular cultural representations all over the world. These research results, among others, emphasize the relationship between change and continuity in conceptions of interpersonal violence and challenge the essentialist notions of culture deployed to address the specific contexts of men's violence against women.

In turn, a fascinating insight into the ongoing simultaneity of different times and spaces is offered by Jäntti's multifaceted reading of the representations of gendered and colonial violence in a novel by Bessie Head. The specific context of 1960s and 1970s Southern Africa is analyzed as a space where multiple layers of violence come into play when the protagonist faces the violence of the society she has left behind as well as that of her new environment. The protagonist's mental turmoil stages colonial violence by describing mechanisms of dehumanization based on race and sexuality that are both intra-psychic and abstract enough to point to other culturally and historically remote points in the history of human violence. The representation reiterates the racial categorizations of people in the contemporary Apartheid-ridden South Africa as well as the disregard for the humanity of women, which draws its power from the malign presence of witchcraft in native communities. Jäntti reads this literary depiction of mental turmoil as the crystallization of an intersectional subject position in this particular cultural, institutional and historical context.

While in some senses all the chapters deal with spatiality and temporality, and intersectional and institutional approaches to violence studies, the last chapter, by Marita Husso, Helena Hirvonen and Marianne Notko, discusses the possibilities of applying these approaches to the study of interpersonal violence in social theories. The chapter introduces the common ways of ignoring interpersonal violence as an individual experience, as an institutional and societal

phenomenon and as a scientific research topic and considers the usefulness of the concepts of Bourdieu's theory of practice in the context of violence studies.

The authors of the book develop new concepts and methodological approaches for the study of cultural conceptions, attitudes, and gendered affective practices related to interpersonal violence. In so doing, the book develops the dialogue between the spatial, temporal, intersectional and institutional lines of inquiry. It offers empirically and theoretically informed approaches to questions of the definition, understanding and explanation of violence, and introduces interpersonal violence as a form of social inequality and as an integral part of structured power and social relations. The findings of the studies included in this book will contribute to filling some of the gaps in the current understanding of the phenomenon of interpersonal violence. Through its comprehensive and integrative approach, the book offers ideas and tools for both the scholars, academics and practitioners concerning the phenomenon of violence, cultural conceptions relating to interpersonal violence and the reasons why different forms of interpersonal violence remain so deeply embedded in our societies. Further, the analyses and the explanations they offer have value in giving greater voice to those experiencing violence, advance the debate on interpersonal violence, and informing policies and practices at the regional, national and transnational levels. The book also offers a solid research basis for better violence prevention planning, policy formation, and programme development.

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