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*Violent Peace: Women and the Effects of a Militarized
Concept of Security*

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Note to the reader:

Throughout this essay I maintain that there is good reason to believe that peace can be achieved through international cooperation and peacekeeping forces. Although many of the UN peacekeeping operations have to some degree been considered a failure, there are still no viable alternative other than letting the slaughter and violence continue uninhibited. Nevertheless, while all such efforts are admirable in intent they still present complex problems of waging war while at the same time respecting the human values that peacekeepers have been put in place to protect. Any criticism that is directed towards this activity must hence be seen in the light in which it was intended; to increase the knowledge of the unexpected side effects of peacekeeping and highlight these so that they may be addressed and solved.

Table of Content

Abbreviations

1. Introduction	4
1.1. Method and Material	5
1.2. Demarcations	6
1.3. Disposition	7
2. Women, Peace and (In)security- A Theoretical Framework	8
2.1. Peace- a Matter of Definition	9
2.2. The Feminist Contribution	10
3. Achieving Peace	13
A military Approach	14
4. The Militarization of Women's Lives	17
4.1. Military, Masculinity and Women	17
4.2. The Military Economy	20
4.3. Military Men and Local Women	21
4.4. The Foreign Context	25
4.5. Solving the Problem	26
5. Women and (In)security	29
The Collective vs. the Individual	29
6. Conclusion	31
Bibliography	34

Abbreviations

UN United Nations

R&R Rest and Recreation

SOFA Status of Forces Agreement

STD Sexually Transmitted Disease

UNAMA the United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan

UNOMIG the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia

UNOB the United Nations Operation in Burundi

UNTAC the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia

NATO North Atlantic Trade Organisation

1. Introduction

In today's public discourse we are often reminded that we live in a dangerous world. The perception of danger is needed in order to convince people that excessive military budgets are necessary and that the military activity of foreign soldiers in the close vicinity of our homes could be acceptable. Yet while warnings of danger may be true, few people take the time to ask the question; dangerous for whom? Surely meanings and experiences of security are highly varied and subjective and securing the environment for one individual is not a insurance that this security will be felt by all.

A militarized concept of security might sound like a paradox yet the military in forms of peacekeeping troops and national armies play a vital role in the promotion of peace and security in the international setting as it is today. Such operations embrace a range of activities from the deployment of peacekeeping troops to the establishment of permanent bases, and those deployed are almost all military-trained men.¹ The intention behind these missions can be anything from "detering conflict" (the official reason for U.S. presence in South East Asia) to disarming militias and distributing food (the UN mission to Liberia).² However, despite differences in spirit and origin, troop deployments usually have a few things in common; their destination is usually an impoverished and/or conflict ridden area, they arrive with ample resources and prestigious political goals, and last but not least, they are backed by forceful institutional powers in an aspiration to achieve international peace.³ Yet in contradiction to these aspirations, a growing number of recent reports have pored in implicating male soldiers in charges of rape and exploitation of local women and girls. These reports – alongside academic work examining the growth of commercial sex industries, trafficking rings and sexual slavery camps in militarized environments – have just started to expose what seems to be a gendered effect of military ventures.⁴

The effects of a pro-longed military presence on women are fragmented and highly complicated. Studies have shown that a foreign military presence will usually have a disproportionately altering effect of women's economic possibilities, which will in turn expose them to situations that affect their reproductive health (through unwanted pregnancies or STDs), their social status and their physical and mental health through sexual violence. If

¹ Higate and Henry (2004) 481

² UN peacekeeping web page: <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/index.asp> retrieved 2005-05-15

³ Agathangelou & Ling (2003) p. 13

⁴ For examples on these see: Sturdevant & Stoltzfus, (1992); Moon, (1997); Enloe, (2000)

such reports are true then there is an apparent contradiction between a militarization of peacekeeping and the security of many women.

Taking a feminist approach to security, this paper aims to follow in the spirit of preceding gender research and address this group of women's invisibility in security doctrines. By expanding our vision of security to go beyond the protection of the collective and instead study the effects that these strategies have on the individual, the following text will examine the notion of security which focuses on military strategies and suggest that such vision will be incomplete unless we take into consideration the effects these gendered relations between male peacekeepers and local women have on these women's individual security. To enable such a reasoning this essay has been divided into two parts where the first part will clarify the terms peace and security and examine how we envision them in our current security strategies, while the second part will take a closer look at the lives of the women that reside around military bases and how the relationship between soldiers and local women is played out in the field. By exploring the security contradictions that a military presence present for local women, this paper hopes to make clear some of the complex ways in which security can be understood for the individuals affected by our current security policies.

1.1. Method and Material

Feminist critiques of conventional approaches to security studies have been an important part of the conceptual debates on whether and how to expand the conceptualization of security since the 1980s. During the last two decades, scholars have with an increasing vigour questioned the traditional privilege given to military-political security of the state which has effectively excluded the acknowledgement of gendered security problems. In line with this work, this paper takes inspiration from feminist international relations theory and shifts the focus of security analysis from a state level to the security of the individual. The "individual" is in this case are the women who reside near military bases and as the focus of this paper is the gendered relationship between military men and these women, theoretical thoughts on this relationship will also be used in support of the arguments that will follow.

As a partial aim of this paper is to make a connection between this institutionalized behaviour and security concerns for the individual, the empirical elements of this article have

been used to contribute towards furthering understanding of the interplay of masculinities, femininities and security (and perhaps insecurities). This material is however meant to give an *illustration* of an existing problem and makes no aspirations on giving a complete picture. Further, in the absence of data illuminating the everyday experiences of local women/men and their gendered relations with male peacekeepers, it is not possible to comment with any confidence on the experience of local women's security, even for those involved in prostitution.

1.2. Demarcations and definitions

The scope of this study has three main limitations: first, since this study is aimed at questioning the existing perceptions of what generates peace and security it will focus exclusively on factors and consequences of peacekeeping that might challenge that intended security. Although a militarization of women's lives as theorized by Enloe and others is certainly interesting, I have in this text chosen to focus solely on the women that are suffering from violent effects of a militarization of their locality though an increase in sexual violence and a creation of a market for prostitution and trafficking. Since my security focus lies with the individual rather than the collective, I have taken this narrow focus to clearly demark that the security under question here is not that of all women, but only of the women who live in close locality to peacekeepers.

Second, peacekeeping missions are carried out in a variety of ways, in a myriad of places and by many different actors which make a comprehensive analysis of peacekeeping rather difficult. The type of "peacekeeping" that is currently being carried out by U.S. troops in South East Asia is undoubtedly very different from the peacekeepers deployed by the UN in Rwanda or Liberia, both in spirit and in practice. However, this study aims to discuss the overall impact of troop deployments and singling out UN peacekeepers or individual national forces would hence fail to identify any general patterns. While researchers and the media have put much of its focus on the actions of UN peacekeepers, this focus fails to include the doings of the rest of the almost 90% of internationally deployed soldiers whom are not UN peacekeepers. "Peacekeepers" in this essay will hence not solely refer to UN peacekeepers, but to all soldiers deployed in the world in order to create international peace and security. This more inclusive approach will not allow us to consider other possible variables that might

give rise to any one pattern of gendered relations with local women, such as class, religion or culture. However, I have chosen this approach to be able to detect any institutional behaviour in the military which will indicate that militarization, in any form, will have similar effects no matter under what flag it is carried out.

Finally, this essay makes little distinction between the terms peace and security. The reasoning behind this will be explained in the following passages, but it is important for the reader to keep in mind that it is presumed here that peace can not be achieved without the existence of security and that the two are hence treated as inseparable in the following reasoning.

1.3. Disposition

Following these introductory comments, chapter two of this essay reviews the existing literature on peace and security and suggests that no such definition can ever be complete without an incorporation of the security considerations of women. It further goes on to examining the feminist contribution to security theory in order to give the reader the analytical tools necessary to follow the subsequent arguments.

Having been given the theoretical framework on security, chapter three examines how peace and security is envisioned in the world today and concludes that a militarization of security remains a dominant strategy for the achievement of peace.

Concluding that militarization is still on the up rise, the fourth chapter of this essay takes a closer look at theories on gender and militarism and on the effects that militarism has on women. Some background will be given to the rationale behind the argued revision of the security concept by reviewing some of the effects that an introduction of military activity has had on women in a variety of places. It is here suggested that while militarized masculinities and femininities are fragmented, clear patterns can be found between militarism and abusive sexual behaviour towards local women which will inevitably impact gendered experiences of security. It is furthermore concluded that a unique “military economy” is established when bases and temporary missions are set up in which power relations between local women and the military is radically degenerated due to their divergent economic security.

To conclude a finishing analysis will be carried out in the fifth chapter where the security of the collective will be contrasted to the security of the individual. It will be suggested that

while collective security is important, it fails to encompass the experiences of the women that are the focus of this paper.

2. Women, Peace and (In)security- A Theoretical Framework

The 1990s was a decade of at least rhetorical progress towards humanizing our political visions of security. Although words sometimes had problems being translated into action, there was still a general consensus that crimes against humanity could no longer be ignored by the international community. When Bill Clinton visited Rwanda in 1994 and called for an ending to all genocides he said these words with such conviction that those who had hoped for a more humanitarian approach to security could rekindle with the idea that perhaps there would soon be a day when human security would indeed be of importance in foreign policy. However, as the war on terror began following the events of 9/11 a new agenda for security was set up threatening to erode all progress made in the regard of building a normative consensus on the importance of human security in the previous decade. Within such a vision, human sacrifice is deemed acceptable to achieve national security and yet again there is an uneasy relationship between national security and human security in the official security doctrines.

Certainly, the threats that we as nations and individuals face change constantly and so must our response to those threats in order to find more effective and appropriate ways of providing security. However in order to find security doctrines that will appropriately respond to the current threats on security and peace we must first define what we mean by these terms in order to have a goal to set our sights toward. As this paper has the aim of studying some of the gendered interactions of military activities, the following security analysis will take its support from existing feminist international relations theory and as such the traditional national security scheme must be expanded to include private experiences of security for the individual.

2.1. Peace – a matter of definition

Peace, just as war, is perceptibly a dynamic force that is under continuous change. In just one century, armed conflict has almost completely transformed itself from wars *between* states to wars *within* states and with changes the nature of war, the dynamics of peace has changed with it.⁵ Peace and war has gone from state business to an international concern and as such international peacekeeping activities have been deployed into many areas of conflict and as evidence show are likely to remain in these areas for decades after the official ending of a war. A probable explanation for such prolonged conflicts is the fact that war almost never has a sharply distinguishable border to peace. In his essay *War* Quincy Jones, a prominent peace researcher, wrote:

“The progress of war and peace between a pair of states may be represented on a curve: the curve descends toward war as tensions, military preparation, and limited hostilities culminate in total conflict; and it rises toward peace as tensions relax, arms budgets decline, disputes are settled, trade increases, and cooperative activities develop”.⁶

With these words is Jones makes it clear that his approach to war and peace is one where the two are simply ends of the same continuum without any precise borders. Certainly, any experiences of war and peace are highly individual and it is therefore difficult to determine exactly when peace occurs in a person’s life simply based on theoretical parameters. However as explained in the initial passages of this essay, this paper will argue that peace must undeniably contain one important factor; security. An insecure world can never be a peaceful world, and security will therefore be at the core of the following discussion.⁷

The concept of security has been a topic of debate over a number of years, especially within international relations theory. Traditional or realist definitions have mostly referred to national security where peace is defined as a state’s non-violent relation with an external party.⁸ It is only the last generation of peace scholars that have examined international conflict beyond the mere ending of fighting and thereby transcended the state centred vision by arguing that security should be expanded to include human and environmental

⁵ Tuft in Skjelsbæk and Smith (2001) p. 139

⁶ Quoted in Barash and Webel (2002) p.10

⁷ For further reasoning on the link between peace and security see; Barash and Webel (2002)

⁸ Karlsson (1992) p. 16

dimensions.⁹ In addition, feminist international relations scholars have challenged the “embodied masculinist assumptions” of traditional security studies by arguing that they overlook “a range of violences, including those defined as physical”.¹⁰ In 1985, the United Nations responded to this development by including the following definition of peace into their peace agenda:

Peace includes not only the absence of war, violence and hostilities [...] but also the enjoyment of economic and social justice, equality and the entire range of human rights and fundamental freedoms within society.¹¹

For feminist scholars this expansion of peace was a victory since definitions centred on the mere ending of violence had not sufficiently addressed the gendered consequences of armed conflict. An incorporation of “economic and social justice, equality and human rights” thereby allowed feminist researchers to focus on the non-military side of security, and expand security to include the social needs of women.

2.2. The Feminist Contribution

As mentioned in the beginning of this paper, feminist critiques of conventional approaches to security studies have been an important part of the conceptual debates on whether and how to expand the conceptualization of security since the 1980s. Within this debate scholars such as Cynthia Enloe and Catherine Moon have argued that the traditional privilege given to military-political security of the state has generated an effective exclusion of an acknowledgement of gendered security problems. As one of the early scholars focused on the topic of gender and security, Cynthia Enloe has been leading in her field since the beginning of the 1980’s when she created the term “the international is the individual”.¹² By the use of this term she argued that the full effects of international relations could never be properly analyzed without looking at the effects that its actions brought on the individual.¹³ Within this framework security cannot exclusively be understood to exist on a collective level through

⁹ Peace researchers have termed the mere ending of violence *negative peace*, while a definition that incorporates visions of equality development and justice has been labelled *positive peace*.

¹⁰ Steans (1998) and Hooper (2001)

¹¹ United Nations (1985) Quoted in Barash and Webel (2002) p.12

¹² Enloe (1980)

¹³ *ibid.*

national security, but must be considered on an individual level. In order to so we can use South African peace researcher Heidi Hudson's distinction between *human* security and *national* security.¹⁴ In such an approach we must make a necessary distinction between what is good for the collective through national security interests and what will provide security for the individual and give recognition to the fact that the two might not always be the same. This broader conceptualization of security will inevitably meet substantial critique since shifting the focus away from the collective level of state security onto the individual results in that everything can be said to be a security problem. Opting solely for "individual security" is a problematic theoretical move insofar that it downplays the collective character of security.¹⁵ However, rather than constructing a choice between "individual security" on the one hand and "state security" on the other, the goal of feminist security analysis has been to critique the field of security studies for its inherent male biases and to trace down how certain political practices (in this case military policies) produce collective ideas which creates legitimate problems of the individual.¹⁶ Individualizing security of women is hence solely an attempt to include a wider concept of security – one which might not be felt by all – but one which is no less real than the insecurities observed on a more collective level. A gendered analysis does therefore not advocate an abandonment of the traditional conception of "military-state security" of realism and strategic studies, but rather that it critically studies the production and consequences of this conception.

In line with this thought we can here expand on Enloe's claim that the international is individual by looking at how international military operations, with security as its main mission, effects women on an individual level. This is done with a normative belief that no international political security policy should be set up without considering the effects that such a policy has on its receivers. Taking a gender perspective on security will have two main advantages; first, it will, as explained in the above text, allow us to take a more human approach to security where every individual's security is valued alike. Second, it will also allow us to include notions of *structural violence* into our arguments which is a type of violence that highly affects women, but one which is rarely or never addressed in security doctrines. Structural violence is here defined as a type of violence that happens when we deny people important rights such as economic well-being, social, political, and sexual equality.¹⁷ Structural violence, in contrast to direct violence, is often built into the very structure of our

¹⁴ Hudson (2005)

¹⁵ Hansen (2001)

¹⁶ For more on this see Enloe (1993) or Moon (1997)

¹⁷ Barash and Webel (2002) p. 14

social institutions and as an effect this type of violence will tend to go unnoticed.¹⁸ The fact that structural violence is so deeply embedded into the institutions that we trust and are brought up with results in that even someone who is very aware of the dangers is likely to fail to identify situations that contribute to worsening the lives of others. In this essay, notions of structural violence is used with the rationale that if institutionalized violence is already embedded in military tradition, or in the local customs of a nation, then it can easily be overlooked when we sketch out a plan for how peace is to be attained in a conflict area.

The feminist discourse on security is fraught with tensions and different feminist schools will approach the gender issue in very diverse ways. Nevertheless, while there seem to be conflicting developments and strategies in the area of peace and security, the idea here is to open up for a broader discussion on peace and security – one which will not just encompass ideas of state security, but also the security of the individuals who are commonly not included in our security policies. Developments in security doctrines which contradicts humanistic values makes it all the more important to explore alternative visions of security in order to give voices to those who are often kept silent. As such this paper puts a feminist perspective on the security dialogue in order to explore gaps in our current vision of security which may affect women in a negative way. However, to accomplish this goal current strategies and visions of peace must be understood by the reader in order to have the analytical tools necessary to later draw conclusions on how an alternative vision of security could be constructed. In order to create alternate visions of peace and security however we must first understand present conditions under which security is provided and peace is maintained.

3. Achieving Peace

Today, more then ever, we seem to be able to identify conflicting forces in security politics. On the one hand we have those working for the prevention of new conflicts through development and education with the belief that security is a human and not a national right. Parallel to this development, many governments are increasingly focusing on fighting violence with violence and past popular terms such as non-nuclear proliferation, disarmament and non-violent peacekeeping is again looking like a thing of the past. As we move into the second half of this decade, the U.S. government is increasing its military budgets and its

¹⁸ *ibid.*

military spending now constitutes half of the world's total military expenditure. Along with this military development many countries are looking to follow in America's foot steps. While the EU speaks of a pacifist foreign policy in official rhetoric, it is at the same time planning for the construction of its own army to be used in peacekeeping operations around the globe.¹⁹ Increasingly the world is calling for a different approach to peace and security, while at the same time conflicting efforts are taken on state level to ensure that our militarized vision of peace will continue well after the end of the cold war.

A Military Approach

As of January 2005, over half a million soldiers were deployed in support of combat, peacekeeping, and deterrence operations in the world. Out of these 569 000 soldiers, almost 80% of them were U.S. soldiers stationed on permanent or temporary bases which are positioned in 31 strategically located countries across the globe. Out of the 406,000 U.S. soldiers that are currently stationed outside of the United States, around 40% are in "active combat" stationed in conflict zones such as Iraq and Afghanistan, while the majority of the soldiers (around 300,000) are never engaged in acts of war but are instead placed in "supporting combat operation"²⁰.

As for the 160,000 soldiers that are non-U.S. citizens, about 100,000 are stationed in supporting missions to the U.S., engaged in active conflicts of their own, or stationed to preserve peace in areas considered volatile by their own nation. The UN furthermore has around 60,000 troops stationed in 16 ongoing peacekeeping missions around the world, with an additional 10,000 foreign civilians and civilian police who fall outside of UN military operations.²¹

¹⁹ data retrieved from http://www.sipri.org/contents/milap/milex/mex_database1.html 2005-04-17

²⁰ Figures taken from globalsecurity.com/military/deploy/world.htm Retrieved 2005-05-16

²¹ Wadhams (2005) p.1

Total World Troop Deployments as of 2004

World	569,076
USA	406,569
Rest of the world (all but USA)	162,507

Source: www.globalsecurity.com

Military security commitments have been on a constant rise since the end of the World War II. The Cold War delivered a strategy for peace and security which was mainly focused around alliances between states and the strategic placement of military bases in order to “deter conflict” and “ensure continued access to regions”.²² The strategic placements of bases were made in a realist assumption that a constant threat of military force was necessary to convince states to take actions that they would otherwise not have taken.²³ As the Cold War came to an end in the end of the eighties, the U.S., along many other nations, had to reevaluate their strategies for security and as a result military expenditure was reduced world wide in the end of the 1980’s. With budgetary reductions came troop reductions and while some bases disappeared completely, others were simply reduced in numbers or maintained in status quo.²⁴ Despite troop reductions however, the U.S. has still not seen an administration that has been willing or able to part with the classical realist strategy for peace and security. In fact, one could easily argue that the U.S. security doctrine has remained remarkably unchanged in the last few decades. The basic thoughts of deterrence through the threat of violence, although outdated, remain the backbone of U.S. military strategy and as new concepts have entered into the U.S. military vocabulary such as “pre-emptive strike” and “Operation Freedom”, military budgets has yet again increased and this seem to be yet another decade of active engagement and a reconstruction of the war machine.²⁵

Regardless of the United States’ slightly rigid approach to the concept of peace and security, the end of the cold war nevertheless presented the world with a hypothetical possibility for fewer wars and an opening for the UN to create a less violent formula for security – one which did not focus solely on military operations. Yet, while development and equality agencies within the UN have fought to make their presence known during the last

²² U.S. Department of Defence security recommendation (1998) p. 5. The quote refers to U.S. security strategy in Asia.

²³ Bello in Pollock and Stoltzfus (ed) (1992) p. 14

²⁴ *ibid.*

²⁵ Data taken from the Sipri databank www.sipri.org/contents/milap/milex/mex_database1. retrieved 2005-04-17

fifteen years, decisions concerning peace and security have remained on the highly militarized table of the Security Council. State funding for individual state operations may have decreased during 1987-1998, but this was simply compensated by an increase in UN-funding for military operations which grew at a proportional speed.²⁶ As a result of the transference of military operations to the UN table, the United Nations now deploys soldiers in record numbers and more missions are on the horizon according to the organisation itself.²⁷ In light of such developments, a post-evaluation of the decade that followed the cold war must lead to the conclusion that the UN undoubtedly seems to have failed to seize the given opportunity for a demilitarization of security after the cold war and has instead continued down the path towards a militarized peace, although this time with a slightly more humanitarian touch.²⁸

As the U.S. is one of the UN's biggest budgetary contributors, as well as a powerful actor in the Security Council, it is perhaps not surprising that the U.S. strategy for peace and security has received such attention within the UN. Just as in the rest of the world however, conflicting ideas of how peace and security are to be achieved are easily found within the United Nations. One major problem which remains unsolved is the balancing act between guaranteeing rights through the provision of security, without limiting those rights through violent acts.²⁹ While violence as a precondition for the attainment of non-violence might sound like a paradox, it has still been argued that the attainment of a broader peace, such as it was laid out by the UN, will not be possible without a previous insurance that armed conflict is under control.³⁰ Undoubtedly, development of any kind is hard if not impossible to achieve in times of war and a ceasefire can therefore be considered a precondition for the achievement of peace. According to the UN itself the aim of military peacekeeping forces are therefore to ensure that an absence of violence can be achieved so that the process of development can start.³¹ However, no matter how honourable these intentions may be, what this has translated into on the ground is a *long-term military presence on foreign soil in times of "non-war" through prolonged peacekeeping missions*, something that will undoubtedly affect the lives of the people who reside in the areas where peacekeepers are deployed.

While the UN seems to have been unable to deliver the demilitarization of security that could have been expected after the cold war, steps have nevertheless been taken by UN to

²⁶ Enloe (1993) p. 259

²⁷ <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/index.asp> retrieved 2005-05-15

²⁸ Enloe (2000) p. 549

²⁹ <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/index.asp> retrieved 2005-05-15

³⁰ *ibid.*

³¹ <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/index.asp> retrieved 2005-05-15

address the many humanitarian concerns raised in relation to peacekeeping operations. While peacekeeping missions used to exclusively patrol buffer zones between hostile parties and monitor ceasefires, it now includes a much wider arrangement of duties with a substantial or predominantly non-military mandate and composition.³² Peacekeeping operations have come to include more civilians, a greater concern for human rights and an increased focus on gender issues. Despite these efforts however a maintain focus is kept on the military side of security and more military men are thereby deployed worldwide everyday.³³

Yet while the UN and individual states still argue that the military is indeed capable of providing human security, increasing reports of abuse against women contradicts such statements and suggest that human security might indeed not be human, but only a privilege for a special few. From a feminist perspective it is under such conditions an urgent matter to investigate gendered effects of military behaviour and see if there are indeed contradictions between military security and women's security, something which will be done in the following passages.

4. The Militarization of Women's Lives

4.1. Military, Masculinity and Women

As a concept and experience, masculinity has been significantly problematized by scholars over the past two decades. Masculinity can refer to a "set of attitudes and practices culturally deemed appropriate to men", shaped by the norms of what it is to be masculine in any given context.³⁴ Just as cultures and influences shift across the globe, images of masculinity will change with it and no masculinity can therefore be understood in isolation from other influences shaping identity.³⁵ In this process the army has long been one such "moulder" of the male identity. For example, anyone who has come in contact with a military institution are sure to have heard the pitch that the military will make "boys into men", indicating that adhering to military values will make men more masculine. Being closed off for women for centuries, the army has been a boys club aimed at shaping its men into emotionally detached,

³² Ratner (1995) p. 22

³³ The term "military men" is used here due to the fact that peacekeeping missions are predominantly carried out by male soldiers. 14% of U.S. soldiers, and 1% of UN military personnel are women.

³⁴ Buchbinder (1994)

³⁵ Higate and Henry (2004) p. 490

highly aggressive war machines.³⁶ Yet, while the army may traditionally have been strictly reserved for men, shaping the military male identity has proven hard without constructing this identity in relation to women.

The traditional military image of the relationship between women and men has been one where men are cast with the role of the warrior protector while women are left with the peripheral role of servers and supporters.³⁷ In this way, women have been comforters of men creating the coexisting assumption that soldiers in order to be real men are in need of women to seek care and satisfy their sexual appetites. Many masculinists believe that men, in contrast to women, have a biologically rooted need for sex and that the male sexuality in a military environment is uncontrollable and therefore in need of regular release.³⁸ This sexualized image of military masculinity has not only resulted in turning connection between the military and prostitution into a tradition that is as old as warfare, but has also generated several active government policies steered at providing troops with women while in combat.³⁹ Through these government policies, this type of prostitution has become an institution where structural violence against women is embedded deep within the military culture.⁴⁰ In fact, researchers have even shown that soldiers who practice the abuse often fail to see the harm their doing due to commonality of the phenomenon.⁴¹ In this way military prostitution has become a perfect example of the dangers of structural violence as it was theorized in chapter two of this essay.

Still, while a clear connection can be found between the military and prostitution, it is precarious to make generalisations on the masculinity within this institution since military cultures are nevertheless varied and theorized to evolve out of specific social and historical contexts of domestic and international politics.⁴² As such, military masculine subcultures create and shape a complex and nuanced range of soldier/peacekeeper identities and practices.⁴³ Therefore, even while male peacekeepers may have in common some aspects of masculinity, differences in religious, class, and military and ethnic backgrounds will still shape the ways in which they promote, experience and construct masculinity in a multitude of ways.⁴⁴ Such differences will make theorising on the concept of masculinity and the army

³⁶ Enloe (1993)

³⁷ Higate, Paul, (ed). (2003)

³⁸ Soh (2000) p. 1

³⁹ For more on such theories see; Enloe (1993, 2000) and Moon (1997)

⁴⁰ For more on this see; Enloe (1993) or Moon (1997)

⁴¹ Higate and Henry (2004) p. 491

⁴² Enloe (2000) Higate (2003)

⁴³ *ibid.*

⁴⁴ Higate and Henry (2004) p. 490

difficult since it leaves an opening for a constant redefinition of the male role within the army which can move with time and adjust to new settings and requirements. For example, a UN peacekeeping operation requires different qualities of a soldier than does the day-to-day work at a U.S. military base in South Korea. While UN peacekeeping operations are highly politicized processes which demand impartiality, sensitivity and empathy, the closed off location of U.S. military bases require little of these components.⁴⁵ In fact, some researchers have even argued that UN peacekeeping involve the very opposite of the conventional activities of warriors, such as aggression, instrumentality and goal oriented “brutality” and hence must be judged by entirely different parameters.⁴⁶ Yet, such an argument could just as easily be contradicted. Eight out of ten UN peacekeepers are military men who are directly transferred from training within national armies to peacekeeping missions with nothing but a pamphlet to sensitize them to their new environment. Their earlier socialization into the hypermasculine military, in contrast with what is required of them as peacekeepers in the field, will hence be fraught with tension.⁴⁷ Betts-Fetherston is one of many researcher who have made the point that there is no switch inside a blue helmet that automatically turns a soldier trained for fighting a war into an individual prepared to work non-violently and with cultural sensitivity in a highly militarised environment.⁴⁸

Hence, while military masculinity must be understood as diverse and complex, it is not to say that military prostitution is a phenomenon that can only be found within hypermasculinized militaries. Sadly, general guidelines on military sensitivity for these issues are not enough. Military prostitution continues to be a problem even in areas and squadrons where such practices are highly condemned and are at the risk of generating humiliating disciplinary consequences. While explanations for this can be found in variable explaining factors such as colonialism, lack of legal protection and culture, another explaining factor which has been given by soldiers themselves is the indisputably destructive combination of poor women and well paid soldiers. As one UN military commander in Congo put it: “abuse always stems from an unbalanced power relationship. There is so much abject poverty here, and people come in with economic leverage. That's a recipe for this to happen if we don't have a specific policy.”⁴⁹

⁴⁵ Pollock in Pollock and Stoltzfus (ed) (1992)

⁴⁶ Miller and Moskos (1995) p. 627

⁴⁷ Higate,(2004)

⁴⁸ (1998) p. 159

⁴⁹ Wax (2005)

4.2. The Military Economy

Generally a foreign military presence has a massively disproportionate impact on the local economy, and in particular on the economic opportunities that open up for poor women.⁵⁰ While salaries for UN peacekeepers can range from over a hundred US dollars a day to few hundred dollars a month, all military personnel are likely to be financially secure while in mission.⁵¹ Similarly, the U.S. military has had a reputation of making sure that their soldiers will have enough money to spend while they are on Rest and Recreation (R&R) to keep them happy during the duration of their service abroad. While soldiers are normally not in any way high wage earners, he or she can make 500 to a 1,000 times more than the average per capita income of the host country.⁵²

Since all UN peacekeeping missions and almost all U.S. military bases are located in highly impoverished areas, their introduction into the local economy will inevitably present the local population with new ways of making an income. Unfortunately war often has a disproportional dire effect on women's economy when the loss of family leaves women to fend for themselves.⁵³ As war destroys communities and leave the people who reside there in poverty, women may find it hard to find any other solution to their economic trouble than to sell their bodies to troops in order to survive. Due to extreme poverty and little infrastructure in the places where troops are deployed, soldiers often become the town's best employer, and whether the soldier is a UN peacekeeper or U.S. marine, his money is often these women's best chance of survival.

While sensitizing soldiers to this disturbance in the local economy prior to their arrival might be a good idea, little can prepare a peacekeeping soldier for the poverty and emotional destruction that follows in the footsteps of war. Oftentimes, prostitution is the result of earlier experiences with sexual violence which has resulted in a loss of "honour". An example of this was a story recently told in the Washington Post where a 10 year old Congolese girl sought counselling at a women's organization after having been raped by a militia man. Upon arrival she was told that she had done nothing wrong, but that the theft of her virginity made her worthless as a bride.⁵⁴ Having been deprived of the care of a family, this girl saw little other opportunity of survival than to sell her body for money to UN

⁵⁰ Jones (2004) p. 1

⁵¹ Higate and Henry (2004) p. 489

⁵² Higate and Henry (2004) p. 291

⁵³ Lorentzen and Turpin (ed) (1998)

⁵⁴ Wax (2005) p. 22

soldiers. In Congo, where long-standing marriage and sexual customs are revered, the victims of prostitution become poverty-stricken young women who are driven to the soldiers' doorstep due to a breakdown of cultural norms that leave these girls to fend for themselves. These girls, locally called *kidogo usharatis*, Swahili for small prostitutes, wait outside the camps of U.N. peacekeepers, hoping to sell their bodies for a mug of milk or for a dollar.⁵⁵

Stories of previous sexual abuse and poverty are not unique for Congo. A WEDPRO study carried out in the Filipino camp town of Olopongo showed that a significant amount of the women under study had been the victim of incest, physical abuse and unplanned pregnancy in their youth.⁵⁶ Similar stories of rape, unwanted pregnancies and a loss of honour in societies where a woman's virginity is her value can be seen all over the world and will continue to play an important role in the link between soldiers and prostitutes. The shame of sexual abuse for the victim is also an important factor as to why the stories of female prostitutes almost never reach the public and therefore continue to go underreported. There is no appropriate language to which we can describe the horror of being someone else's sexual property and women have therefore historically chosen not to talk about their experiences in fear of becoming outcasts of society.⁵⁷

4.3. Military Men, Local Women

Not until recently have researchers and lobbyists been able to map out the width and frequency in which instances of military prostitution occurs. Although the Japanese military staged a cartel of prostitution involving over 200,000 women, this was kept quite for fifty years since many of the women found that they were too humiliated and traumatized by their experience to be able to put words to their memories. Only recently have women started to uncover these stories and even now, thousands of stories later, are we just beginning to understand the impact that militarization has had on women's lives. In reaching such an understanding however it becomes increasingly clear that no conflict history can ever be complete without the stories of the women who have suffered due to a military presence, both in times of peace and in times of war.

⁵⁵ *ibid.*

⁵⁶ Miralao, Carlos and Santos (1990)

⁵⁷ Bello in Pollock and Stoltzfus (ed) (1992) p. 14

The tainted past between the military and women raises serious questions about what kind of security that the military can provide. Although South East Asia has been a peaceful zone since the ending of the Vietnam War in 1971, the U.S. military still deploy over 200,000 soldiers in the area to “secure and protect” it.⁵⁸ During the fifty years of their presence however, over 100,000 crimes have been reported against U.S. soldiers, many of which were reports of violence against women.⁵⁹ While the U.S. military has been busy “securing the pacific”, cartels of prostitution has sprung up in its backwaters and it is now one of the regions where women run the highest risk of being exposed to kidnapping, trafficking and organised prostitution in the world. South East Asia has become a textbook example of what happens when soldiers with purchasing power land in countries where few areas of the economy are open for women. The result has been a lucrative business for those who have no problem in trading in human bodies and where the prices are paid in women’s lives. For the women themselves, the work oftentimes does not result in any monetary gains, but instead ends up becoming a life-long debt that will tie them to their “pimp” for the rest of their working life.⁶⁰ In the development of this sex business, the U.S. military has not just acted as patrons to provided services but have furthermore actively participated in its maintenance. According to an article by Kirk, Okazawa-Rey and Cornwell, U.S. soldiers have long played an active role in the trafficking of women from South East Asia, where women have been loured to the U.S. with promises of marriage and have upon arrival been sent to work in massage parlours and brothels.⁶¹

While U.S. soldiers’ sexual abuse against local women in South East Asia has received much attention (mostly due to some high profile rape and murder cases) these practices are not unique for this region. The same stories can be heard in many other places around the world, such as in South America and Iraq, and sadly, U.S. soldiers are not alone in these practices. In spite of noble goals of preserving international security irrespective of gender and race, allegations of sexual misconduct by peacekeepers have dogged all of the UN peacekeeping missions.⁶² One of the first cases that came into the public light were the events that followed the peacekeeping mission to Cambodia (UNTAC) in 1992-1993. During this mission, the number of prostitutes rose from 6,000 in 1992 to a high of 25,000, while sex

⁵⁸ *ibid.*

⁵⁹ UWM p. 2

⁶⁰ Moon (1997) p. 22

⁶¹ (1999) p. 7

⁶² Reucker (n.d)

houses and Thai-style massage parlours proliferated in all places where peacekeepers resided.⁶³ There was also a rise in child prostitution since growing infection rates of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases among Cambodian prostitutes increased the demand for "clean young girls". Some even claim that the United Nations mission was itself responsible for the rapid spread, and possibly even the introduction, of HIV in Cambodia.⁶⁴

Following the Cambodian missions, few UN operations have had an unsullied record. Both the Mozambican and the Bosnian UN missions, to name but two, have acquired a reputation for peacekeeper-organised prostitution rackets. In Bosnia and Kosovo NATO and UN peacekeeping personnel are known to be important clients for the pimps and traders that make profit from "trafficking" women into sexual servitude. As late as in January of 2005, a staffer with the UN refugee agency was arrested in Kosovo on allegations related to sex abuse and human-and drug-trafficking.⁶⁵ The United Nations is furthermore investigating 150 instances in which 50 peacekeeping troops or civilians in the Congo mission are suspected of having sexually abused or exploited women and girls, some as young as 12. The United Nations is also investigating reports of rape or sexual assault in Congo, including one case in which a French logistics employee was found with hundreds of videotapes that showed him torturing and sexually abusing naked girls.⁶⁶

As we are beginning to understand the patterned sexual relationship between soldiers and local women, we can clearly see that these relationships are highly fragmented and therefore take on very different shapes. Not all soldiers abuse women, and not all relations between soldiers and local women are based on the purchases and selling of services, although where that line is to be drawn can sometimes be hard to determine. In a study on U.S. soldiers and their interaction with Filipino women near U.S. bases, researchers Pollock and Stoltzfus found that relationships between soldiers and local women were many times not of the fleeting kind, but more something that resembled a "temporary marriage" where the relationship would continue well past the sexual interaction and sometimes throughout the whole duration of the soldiers stay.⁶⁷ Although this type of relationship is not a matter of explicit prostitution – since the woman is not selling her services *per se* – the situation almost never in ends up being beneficial for the woman. The final outcome of these relationships is a phenomenon that is as much linked to the military as is prostitution, namely

⁶³ *ibid.*

⁶⁴ *ibid.*

⁶⁵ Wedhams (2005)

⁶⁶ *ibid.*

⁶⁷ Pollock in Pollock and Stoltzfus (ed) (1992)

a new generation of children fathered by visiting soldiers. Several of the sexual exchanges between soldiers and local women culminate in pregnancy and these “peace” babies, as they have been called when fathered by peacekeepers, have many times lead to controversial paternity disputes.⁶⁸ In these instances, women’s insecurity is significantly exacerbated, because the woman will not only have to contend with the stigma of pregnancy out of wedlock, but is also faced the challenge of financially supporting a child. The security is furthermore not only worsened considerably for the mother but also for the children in question. Children of mixed race are often highly stigmatised in their local communities and are as a result frequently ostracized even by their mothers. As a result of shame and poverty, women are many times forced to abandon their babies which are then left to fend for themselves where they run a high risk of returning to the cartel of prostitution that they were once the product of.⁶⁹ While many Asian countries are fighting for the right of the Amerasian children fathered by U.S. soldiers stationed in Asia, the UN have estimated the number of Liberian children left behind by UN peacekeepers to be close to 1500.⁷⁰ The failure both on behalf of the UN and other local governments to effectively deal with this situation has lead to a further undermining of the long-term security of members of the local population, and then especially for women and children.⁷¹

Another consequence of sexual liaisons between visiting soldiers and local women is the rapid spread of HIV/AIDS and other Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs). This road is often not a one-way street, but it has in many cases been the soldiers themselves who have introduced the deceases by moving rapidly from one place to another.⁷² However, in spite of the soldiers’ participation in the spreading of diseases, women have had to carry a heavy burden in the prevention of its spread. In South Korea, any woman that wishes to work on or near a U.S. base must register at hygiene clinics where they get tested for STDs. All women that work in the bar area have to go through this humiliating treatment regardless of profession, and a failure to get tested, or being caught on the street without a registration card, could lead to a possible arrest or a fine.⁷³ Another way of dealing with the problem has been distributing condoms to the soldiers themselves, which in effect is a revelation that although

⁶⁸ Term borrowed by Higate (2004)

⁶⁹ GABRIELA (n.d)

⁷⁰ The Economist (2004)

⁷¹ Higate and Henry (2004) p. 495

⁷² Reucker (n.d)

⁷³ Strudevand and Stoltzfus in Pollock and Stoltzfus (ed) (1992)

sexual relations may be formally discouraged, some sense of the reality of soldiers' sexual activities is simultaneously acknowledged.⁷⁴

4.4. The Foreign Context

As can be seen from the examples above it seems to matter very little if the soldier is a part of a national army or of a UN peacekeeping mission – the sexualized relations and the unequal opportunities remain the same no matter what the colour of his helmet. In a study carried out by researchers from Bristol University, peacekeepers attitudes towards local women were mapped out through a variety of questions and the results showed that the concept of “foreign” played a vital role in the sexualized actions of soldiers when stationed abroad. Within a “foreign” and “othered” context, conventional understandings of acceptable sexuality was reconfigured and soldiers participated in activities that they would never have attempted in their home country, including sex with younger children.⁷⁵ Another vital factor was the colonial stereotypes of hypersexualized ‘African’ women for UN peacekeepers; stereotypes that can easily be replicated for Asian or East European women. As one U.S. soldier wrote on a popular army chat site “it’s all true what they say about the Asian women. It’s well worth getting stationed here [in reference to a base in Japan]”.⁷⁶ Most strikingly is perhaps that in spite of the fact that while UN soldiers are supposedly sensitized to local conditions, many soldiers had not reflected on the social, economic and historical contexts of women’s lives. In the above mentioned study it can be read:

“In many of the accounts by peacekeepers, local women were seen as actively choosing prostitution and other types of sexual exchange [...] However, a small number of peacekeepers recognized that many of the local women had suffered gender-based violence during the conflict. Overall, peacekeepers tended not to recognize the power inequalities that shaped their relations with local women. [...] A consensus emerged from across the diverse sample of male peacekeepers that local women played an active role in their sexualized liaisons. In this way, a commonly volunteered sentiment turned on women being ‘enthusiastic’ in attracting peacekeepers.”⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Higate and Henry (2004) p. 492

⁷⁵ Higate and Henry (2004) p. 492

⁷⁶ *ibid.*

⁷⁷ Higate and Henry (2004) p. 489

Stories of enthusiastic women that “throw themselves” at men seem to be a common justification for using a female prostitute.⁷⁸ Overall there seems to be little reflection of why women make these choices, or whether they really ever made them at all. Soldiers have even been recorded saying that giving money to local women in exchange for sex was actually a benevolent act.⁷⁹

In general there seems to be little understanding of the greater pattern of abuse, both from the side of the soldiers and from the side the commanders. This ignorance to once own role in the abuse generates a serious problem for taking active action on this issue. While strict policies against the purchase of sex are in place in some cases, both the countries which provide the troops and the commanders who are responsible for disciplining them might not view the problem as very severe.⁸⁰ Often we fail to see prostitution in the bigger picture and as a result military commanders chose to look the other way, dismissing the sexual exploitation of women as their boys “having a little fun”.⁸¹ However, viewing these instances as “only” cases of prostitution is a failure to recognise these events for the manifestations of unequal power relations that they really are, something that in some cases come very close to what we can observe in cases of rape. Instances have for example been brought to the UN’s attention where several peacekeepers have had sex with one child in the same night, giving her a dollar from each soldier. In response to one such event, Antoine Tambwe, a Congolese paediatrician at the International Red Cross said that “It’s not rape, but it is close”.⁸²

4.5 Solving the Problem

As reports of abuse have been overwhelming in numbers to both the UN and to individual nations it has become impossible to leave the issue unaddressed. Official statements by the UN clearly show that it has grasped the effects that their presence might have on the local population. On UNIFEM’s web page it can be read that “Women are socially and economically affected by ‘peacekeeping environment,’ which is created by a large influx of well-paid international peacekeeping staff – military and non-military. Young women can

⁷⁸ibid.

⁷⁹ Higate and Henry (2004) p. 491

⁸⁰ Me (2004)

⁸¹ Enloe (2000)

⁸² Wax, Emily (2005)

become involved in and affected by industries and services such as bars and hotels that spring up with the arrival of peacekeeping operations.”⁸³ However, despite an understanding on a theoretical level, the UN has in practice experienced a slow start in dealing with issues of erring peacekeepers and absentee fathers, and sexual abusers are often allowed to simply disappear back home. For example, when the issue of UNTAC personnel’s fraternisation with prostitutes was brought to the attention of the UN leadership by the civilian population in Cambodia, the response was disappointing.⁸⁴ In effect, they were told, "boys will be boys" and a tacit blessing was given to untrammelled sexual exploitation.⁸⁵ Mendelson, who has studied the links between peacekeepers and human-trafficking in the Balkans, agrees that the United Nations has been more reluctant to take serious action. While the UN has had evidence of sexual abuse going back at least to 1997, 1998 in Bosnia, very little has been done in effect to battle the problem of wide spread prostitution.⁸⁶ In both U.S. and UN missions, commanders have made some concessions to local opinion by taking measures aimed at hindering soldiers from fraternizing with the local population such as establishing a curfew or declaring certain bars “out of bounds” to peacekeeping personnel. Simply forbidding these practices has however proven ineffective and soldiers have merely responded by making less obvious appearances in bars and clubs and spending only a limited period on the premises to link up with local women.⁸⁷ Peacekeepers have also employed other strategies to make their activities less obvious, including providing women with mobile phones so that they could be contacted more discreetly, and referring to the women they accompanied in hotels and other public spaces as “translators”.⁸⁸

Achieving changes directly in the field has undoubtedly been hard due to lack of engagement from responsible commanders or from the soldiers’ failure to adhere to the rules. In response to this, the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan has attempted to provide a central directive by issuing a far-reaching report under the name “A comprehensive strategy to eliminate future sexual exploitation and abuse in United Nations peacekeeping operations.” The report, written by Prince Zeid Ra’ad Zeid Al-Husseini, Jordan’s Permanent Representative to the United Nations, makes numerous bold recommendations, most notably that troop-contributing countries hold on-site court martial for guilty parties, but also that a voluntary trust fund for victims should be established - funded in part through fines levied

⁸³ www.unifem.org...retrieved 15-05-2005

⁸⁴ Reucker (n.d)

⁸⁵ Mackay

⁸⁶ Wadhams (2005)

⁸⁷ Higate and Henry (2004)

⁸⁸ *ibid.*

against civilian and uniformed personnel found to have engaged in sexual exploitation and abuse. Furthermore, all soldiers are to be given pocket-sized information cards that reprint the United Nations standards on sexual exploitation and abuse in the national languages of the troop contributors. However, although on-sight court martials and monetary fines would indeed be a partial solution to the problem of disciplining military troops, it would not include the civilian part of UN peacekeeping missions since these are not included in the military command structure.

One major problem in finding an effective solution to this problem is that the UN itself has no authority to punish offenders. Even in cases where policies are in place, these can easily be ignored by field staff since the United Nations has no ability to ensure that they are punished. As in *all* international military deployments, it is up to the nation that is deploying the troop to punish the offender – that is if the crime in question does not fall under the host nation’s jurisdiction – which in many cases it does not.⁸⁹ All issues of jurisdiction are predetermined in a Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA), which are signed prior to a troop deployment in a foreign nation. Traditionally, individual nations will have different SOFAs for different nations, while the UN operates under the same SOFA in all its missions. Since a SOFA has the effect of transferring jurisdiction away from the scene of the crime into an environment that has neither seen its causes nor its effects, crimes are often trivialized once they hit domestic courts and the result is a failure to appropriately punish offenders.⁹⁰ As I have shown in a prior study, the SOFAs have been a major problem in dealing with sex offences committed by U.S. soldiers in South East Asia and have also allowed the U.S. government to avoid giving a potentially politically controversial central directive on the issue.⁹¹

Solving the problem of military prostitution is obviously as complex as the problem itself. However, issues of security cannot be solved if we can not reach a more sophisticated understanding of the gendered side of security and how this is intertwined with the sexual relations explained above. The challenge in the following part will therefore be to expand our vision of a collective security through the military to include a more individual understanding of security which will better incorporate the interests of the women under study here. Only then can more effective policies and practices can be initiated.

⁸⁹ Me (2004)

⁹⁰ *ibid.*

⁹¹ *ibid.*

5. The individual vs. the collective

As soldiers are a key ingredient in our vision of peace and security, the question posed in the previous section was; “what are the security implications of troop deployments on women’s lives?” However, in order to be able to discuss security and insecurity on any real level, we must first recognize that while women might very well have common security interests as a group, their experiences of security are also very fragmented and are therefore hard to generalize upon. For example, it has been argued earlier that true security and peace can from a gender perspective only occur if greater consideration is given to issues of development and equality. These interests – or rights as we can call them through various treaties and conventions – can encompass anything from economic security to a right physical security in one’s own home. However, as our experience from war has also shown us, women’s lives and possibilities deteriorate rapidly with violent conflict and an absence of violence can therefore very well be seen as prerequisite for the implementation of these rights. If a woman cannot reach a voting booth in fear of violence, then she will not be able to enjoy her political rights no matter how many treaties her nation has signed. Hence, for women to be able to enjoy their collective rights, military peacekeeping forces can very well become a prerequisite.⁹²

In order to fully grasp the reality of security and peacekeeping we must first recognize that a sense of security is not an easily defined thing. Both peacekeeping soldiers and the women that are put under military protection play many different roles in society which may expose them to different types of dangers and varying needs for security.⁹³ In post-conflict settings, women are not just victims of the military, or the militarized masculinities as theorized above, but are also positioned in a variety of complex relationships with both local civilians and military personnel.⁹⁴ While the presence of peacekeeping forces might indeed worsen the security of women through sexual exploitation, diseases and unwanted pregnancies, women might still be drawn to areas where peacekeeping forces are located in order to avoid confrontation with militias and other types of physical violence. In this way, women’s lives might be saved by the presence of peacekeeping troops while their living conditions are nevertheless undeniably worsened by the troop presence. Under such conditions feelings of security and insecurity can be dual and contradictory. For example, in a

⁹² Whitworth (2004)

⁹³ Higate (2004)

⁹⁴ *ibid.*

study of women carried out in Bosnia, it was revealed that women felt both secure *and* insecure as a result of the presence of peacekeepers.⁹⁵

Following the above argument we must conclude that a collective understanding of security is not enough to fully encompass the insecurity of local women in relation to military men. For a gendered understanding of security to be complete – at least as it is understood in this paper – we must shift the conceptualization of security beyond the collective and also consider the implications that our strategies have on the individual. Following Cynthia Enloe's rationality of "the international is the individual", this paper has taken an individual approach to security and studied the effects of that international military operations have on women that reside in the vicinity of military bases. As a result of such an approach we can conclude that while security doctrines as they are sketched out today might very well achieve goals of national and international security, and if the result of peacekeeping missions are to be evaluated simply on a collective level, then they might very well be called successful. However, if peacekeeping missions are to provide human security in combination with national security, then a re-evaluation of the security doctrines is necessary in order to come to terms with the threats that the current doctrine poses on the individual. As was mentioned earlier in this passage, military activities are a complicated matter to analyze and evaluate due to their vast differences in social constructions and in the variety of roles that they are given in the societies in which they interact and as such, no military activity will ever be purely positive or purely negative. However, if we are to achieve the goals set forth in various treaties and conventions to provide human security for individuals residing in conflict areas, then it is explicitly unacceptable to allow for an approach to security which tolerates human sacrifices to be made for a collective good. No human rights propagator who believes in the rights of the individual can accept such an approach to security. Hence, we must call for a restructuring of army activities and a more open debate on the gendered effects of military activities in order to come to terms with the insecurities of those who are currently being sacrificed for a "collective good". A feminist approach to peacekeeping hence does not necessarily translate into propagation for an abandonment of the traditional conception of military security, but rather a critical study of the production and consequences of this conception. In terms of security thinking the aim of this paper is hence rather to address women's invisibility than to generally criticise a military approach to security. After all, as denoted by Walden Bello, international politics is seldom built on the recognition of a common responsibility for the

⁹⁵ Cockburn & Hubic (2002) p. 106

maintenance of human rights, and hence if the public fails to stay informed then only self-interest will prevail and under such conditions aims for human security is unlikely to flourish.⁹⁶

6. Conclusion

The new “machismo war” which has sprung out of the post 9/11 global war on terrorism has made the discourse on human security and vs. national security all the more important. In these times, more than ever, human security coexist uneasily with national security and while the world again heads in the direction of human sacrifices for national security we must put critical efforts into analyzing the effects of such an approach. From a feminist perspective, a deeper look at our current visions of security is all the more important since such approaches help highlight and overcome certain gender silences that stand in our way towards the goal of human security. As a result, this paper has taken a closer look at our current security doctrines and studied the implications that these have on women that live in the near vicinity of military bases. It has been concluded that in today’s vision of peace, soldiers are deployed in the thousands to maintain international security world wide. Their training is varied and they come from an array of cultural backgrounds and import their own perceptions of how men and women should relate and function in society. Since military units are furthermore nearly all-male and little specialized training is given before the soldier enters into a security mission abroad, little understanding exist among the soldiers of the history of local women and possible dangers that may face them. The lack of knowledge on local customs and its recent history often result in that the women are viewed as “foreign” or “othered” in relation to the soldier. In such a context, conventional understandings of acceptable sexuality are reconfigured and the boundaries of what becomes tolerable therefore become stretched, resulting in a widespread abuse of women around military bases. Aggravating this relationship between soldiers and women is the military’s hypersexualized image masculinity, where a soldier – in order to be a real man – needs the sexual comfort of a woman. This perceived necessity has generated a bond between the military and prostitution which can be traced back to the dawn of warfare.

⁹⁶ Bello in Pollock and Stoltzfus (ed) (1992) p. 14

In order to understand the security implications of this abusive relationship we must first part with conventional understandings of a collective national security and turn our focus onto the individual. By doing so we can clearly see that while militarized peacekeeping has clear possibilities of providing security for the collective, it will have the indirect result of creating an increased insecurity for the individual through an abusive behaviour against women which is all too common in the military world. Parting with the traditional state security thought it is clear that in order to provide any type of human security worth its name we must not only incorporate matters of military security, but also a type of security that guarantees a safety for women's reproductive, mental and physical health. As meanings and experiences of security are clearly highly varied and subjective, it is important to recognize that it is only through a more sophisticated understanding of gendered experiences of security and sexual relations that more effective policies and practices can be initiated. Connections between a military presence and the establishment of sex industries, as well as the relationship of gender relations between peacekeepers and local women remains under-researched and lack of information on this relationship allows it to continue uninhibited.

However, while more research is clearly needed on the gendered side-effects of military activity, let us take a minute and take a look at what we *do* know: We know that there has been an historic link between prostitution and the military that transcends cultures, policies and time. We also know that thousands of children now live as outcasts of their societies as a result of having been abandoned by their fathers, and that an even larger amount of women are currently dying from, or battling the effects of STDs that is the result of their sexual relations with visiting soldiers. We do know that for those who are sold, subjected to dangerous diseases and suffer frequent physical and mental abuse, the world did not become a safer place as a result of peacekeeping activities.

In light of the above effects of military activities it is obvious that vision of security which incorporates only the interests of the collective through military protection will fail to address the problem of insecurity experienced by these women. In order to incorporate their experiences we must therefore expand our security strategies to take greater consideration to the individual and his or her needs. Security and peace as we understand it today, is not just a matter of military activity in strategic locations, but has expanded to mean a provision of basic human rights that should be as important as any goal of disarmament. It is clear that international organizations and institutions create a complex and shifting series of impacts that both increase and decrease individual and collective security. However, in the creation of our future strategies we must keep in mind that peace means safety from harm whatever the

source. The security it brings should be for everyone, not just for some- for a peace that is not inclusive does not deserve its name.

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