

Gender and UN Peace Operations: The Confines of Modernity

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The essay seeks to problematize the recent UN discourse on gender, peace and war by demonstrating how modernity sets the limits for the discourse, and therewith confines the discourse to the pre-given binary categories of agency, identity and action. It engages in an analysis of modernity and the mode of thinking that modernity establishes for thinking about war and peace. It is demonstrated in the text that new thinking on post-Westphalian conflicts and human security did open up a discursive space for thinking about gender in peace operations, but this space has not been fully utilized. By remaining within the confines of modernity, the UN discourse on peace operations produces neoliberal modes of masculinity and femininity where the problem-solving epistemology gives priority to the 'rationalist' and managerialist masculinity and renders silent the variety of ambivalent and unsecured masculinities and femininities

United Nations peacekeeping has been used as an instrument for international intervention in armed conflicts for over 50 years, but the organization did not issue specific requests for women peacekeepers until the 1990s. Requesting women peacekeepers is just one element in the process of thinking anew about peace operations after the Cold War. Thinking anew about peace operations and integrating gender perspectives into peace operations is called forth by the 'reality' of post-Cold War complex emergencies. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's *An Agenda for Peace* was a first attempt to re-assess the nature of new conflicts and the type of peace operations needed. It was followed by the 'Brahimi Report', commissioned eight years later by Secretary-General Kofi Annan. He appointed an international panel to recommend measures to improve the UN's capacity to plan and carry out international peace operations. The panel, which was led by former Algerian foreign minister Lakhdar Brahimi, presented its report in late August 2000. The report was a central topic during the UN General Assembly the following autumn. The need to think anew about peace operations as it is expressed in the Brahimi Report covers a variety of areas ranging from the nature of the military components of operations to the gender of personnel needed for complex peace operations.

Integrating gender perspective into UN peace support operations relies on international humanitarian and human rights law, as well as other UN instruments that provide the foundation, rationale and international standards for gender mainstreaming.¹ The Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979) and the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (1993) add to legally defining violence and discrimination against women, and thereby provide internationally recognized standards that can be used in peace operations. Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security in October 2001, on the other hand, sets clear standards for integrating gender perspectives into peace operations. The resolution reaffirms the 'important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building', and stresses the 'importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution'².

Resolution 1325 is a step in a chain of attempts to mainstream gender in the UN discourse on peace operations. This step remains, however, within the confines of modern thinking. It points at a managerialist and problem-solving approach to improving peace operations, and does not reflect deeply upon what 'thinking anew' might mean from the gender perspective. The confines of modernity locate thinking about gender into the existing structures of binary oppositions where nature/body/private/women/peace are set against culture/mind/public/men/war. Furthermore, an epistemological stance which privileges 'authentic experience' as a source of knowledge over the acknowledgement of the socially and politically constructed nature of any knowledge is incorporated in the UN discourse on peace operations.

This essay seeks to problematize the recent UN discourse on gender, peace and war by demonstrating how the discourse's limits are set by modernity which confines it to the pre-given binary categories of agency, identity and action. The UN discourse – embodied in a variety of UN documents and delivered by its agencies – emerges from the United Nations as an institutional site. The discourse shapes and creates meaning systems that have gained the status and currency of 'truth'. The UN discourse, as any other discursive formation, contains a number of competing and contradictory discourses which organize social and political practices, among them the practices of peace support operations. Discourses are, thus, not a mere intersection of things and words, but they are practices that systemically form the objects of which they speak. They also form the responses to the

objects that are considered to be appropriate and the identities of the actors that are seen to have appropriate agency to deal with the objects.³ The study of the UN discourse on gender, peace and war is important, because it generates the responses the organization can have to these issues.

In the spirit of discourse analysis, the essay starts with the examination of the very assumptions that enable the existence of war as a particular type of problem. It does not intend to examine and classify the authors behind the UN discourse or their intentions, as a more positivistic-oriented reading would do. Neither does it provide absolute answer and solution to the 'problem', but tries to understand the conditions behind seeing war and gender mainstreaming as a particular type of problem. Since there is no one true view or interpretation of the world, the essay tries to offer one possible, and critical, reading of the UN peace operations discourse of the post-Cold War period. The reading derives specifically from Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali's *An Agenda for Peace* (1992), Secretary-General Kofi Annan's *We the Peoples, The Role of United Nations in the 21st Century* (2000), *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations* (2000), *United Nations Millennium Declaration* (2000), *Windhoek Declaration: The Namibia Plan of Action On 'Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective In Multidimensional Peace Support Operations'* (2000) and the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (2001).

In order to examine gender and peace operations, the essay has to engage in an analysis of modernity and the mode of thinking that modernity establishes for thinking about war and peace. It is argued that UN discourse at the turn of the millennium on peace operations remains within the confines of modernity and carries in itself a set of oppositions and categories that set the limits for thinking anew about gender and the operations. It is demonstrated in the essay that new thinking on post-Westphalian conflicts and human security did open up a discursive space for thinking about gender in peace operations, but this space has not been fully utilized by the UN discourse.

Modern Ambiguity and Problem-Solving Expertise

International peacebuilding by the UN system is a typical product of modernity. The UN peacebuilding, and peace operations as a sub-category of peacebuilding, is founded on a set of clear-cut distinctions and oppositions. Until very recently, one of the most influential distinctions in the discourse has been the differentiation between war and peace. *An Agenda for Peace* states that 'the concept of peace is easy to

grasp', while the concept of international security is more complex.⁴ The Westphalian thinking underlying the UN discourse during the Cold War, and which *An Agenda for Peace* tries to challenge moderately, assumes that belligerents are sovereign states that defend their territorial integrity in war. War is fought mainly over national interests which exist for political elites and national decision-making bodies to be discovered and interpreted. War can be distinguished from peace, because war is, as Clausewitz argues, a continuation of politics by other means.⁵ War is fought by hierarchical militaries of the states in conflict. Peace is characterized by politics, whereas war means the end of politics. Traditional peacekeeping functions, thus, mainly in the domain of peace where 'fighting has halted'⁶ and where the UN 'upholds *the* peace',⁷ although complex peace operations face the problem of 'having to assist communities and nations in making the transition from war to peace'.⁸

The UN discourse on peace operations arises from the modern fear of ambivalence and of a lack of mastery. The discourse is a product of modernity and its logocentric procedures that work through hierarchically organized oppositions. The opposition between war and peace is one of the pairs that fixes the standards of interpretation. It fixes the limits of interpretation in a manner that renders silent the ambiguity of the pair. We are assumed to know and take for granted the difference between these two as we know the difference between life and death.⁹ As Zygmunt Bauman argues, modernity is a historical attitude, a mode of thinking, that drives to mastery. It is drive to emancipation from necessity which ties us, for example, to nature, sin, ignorance, parochiality, exploitation and ultimately to death. Bauman relates modernity to our response to death, which is, according to him, bound to remain traumatic. We cannot know death and the non-being implied by it. Our spatial and temporal infinity is beyond our thought and mastery.

Furthermore, there is no exclusive mastery over one's own body, and this creates the experience of anxiety. We try to cope with this great ambivalence and master it in many ways: we try to survive and develop strategies for survival. Bauman's argumentation leads him to state that the 'impulse of survival is the stuff of which societies are patched together'.¹⁰ He then warns us think that this impulse is the society's creation. The impulse is, however, skilfully manipulated by societies and deployed to build and preserve boundaries of states, nations, races and classes. The boundaries produce an image of the survival of collectivity that transcends the survival of one's body.¹¹

Drawing boundaries, making distinctions, setting apart, classifying and demarcating 'inside' from 'outside' is, according to Bauman, culture's *tour de force* and a stuff from which social order is made. He argues that

'culture is a war of attrition declared on ambivalence'.¹² In the practices of drawing boundaries, our modern world becomes well mapped and marked, so that confusion will have little chance to arise. The mapping and marking also creates the space for expertise to emerge. Expert knowledge and the general accumulation of expertise are supposed to provide increasing certainty about how the world is, what are the distinctions and the pairs in the binary oppositions to be prioritized, and the logocentric interpretations of the world to be acted upon. The very condition of such certainty is paradoxically doubt, or in Bauman's words, the condition of security provided by expert knowledge is anxiety and ambivalence.¹³

The knowledge the expert produces is geared towards solving problems. The knowledge is founded on problem-solving theory which takes the world for granted and aims at smooth working of the relationships and institutions dealing with the troubles identified with the help of expert knowledge.¹⁴ Problem-solving theory coincides with cognitive-instrumental rationality that has marked the self-understanding of modernity. This type of rationality 'carries with it connotations of successful self-maintenance made possible by informed disposition over, and intelligent adaptation to, conditions of a contingent environment'.¹⁵ The *telos* inherent in the cognitive-instrumental mode of rationality is instrumental mastery. On this model of rationality, rational actions have the basic character of goal-directed, feedback-controlled interventions in the world of the existing state of affairs. Rationality is measured mainly by assessing whether goal-directed interventions to the world are successful.¹⁶

UN peace operations can be seen to represent expert institutions and problem-solving attitude *par excellence*. The UN discourse considers war to be a recognized political and social problem, not one set or kind of problem among a variety of possibilities. It is one thing to ask what is the appropriate policy with which to respond to violent conflict and war, and another to show how contemporary modes of problematizing conflict and war are peculiar when seen in a particular historical and political context, namely, in the contexts of liberal market democracy and of modern nation-state system.¹⁷ An example of not analysing the global structures that contribute to violent political conflicts can be found in *An Agenda for Peace*. The report seeks to 'address the deepest causes of conflict: economic despair, social injustice and political oppression'.¹⁸ Later it insists that the foundation stone of the UN's work must remain the state. In short, the report problematizes conflict and war by remaining silent on the role of state in the violent global practices of inclusion and exclusion.

Metaphors of War and Governmentality

The UN discourse on peace operations represents cognitive-instrumental rationality in the sense that preserving the state system constitutes its main goal. The state system has to adapt to the conditions of war and conflict which are seen to embody contingency and anomaly in the system. A means for adaptation is peace operations which aim at the instrumental mastery of violence. The cognitive-instrumental mastery is reinforced by the metaphorical understanding of war in the UN peace operations discourse, namely war as an epidemic or sickness and peace operations as a remedy for the illness. The UN Charter states that the organization is founded in order 'to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war'.¹⁹ 'Endemic conflict' is prevalent in some regions of the world and makes people's condition miserable unless 'remedial measures are taken'.²⁰ 'The world has often been rent by conflict and plagued by massive human suffering and deprivation.'²¹ When the United Nations sends its forces to uphold the peace, they must be prepared to confront the 'lingering forces of war and violence'.²² Post-conflict peacebuilding by the UN identifies and supports structures which will 'strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict'.²³

Hannah Arendt warns us against using organic thought and biological metaphors when discussing violence and war, because the metaphors comprise the notion of 'sick society' of which violence is a symptom. This implies the non-politicization of violence as well as glorifying it by naturalizing the causes of collective violence. The naturalization makes violent action appear as a prerequisite for the collective life of humankind. According to Arendt, this can only promote violence in the end. She also notes that the organic discourse opens up a space for expertise to enter when the medicine for violence is prescribed.²⁴ Arendt writes that 'the sicker the patient is supposed to be, the more likely that the surgeon will have the last word'.²⁵ In other words, the discourses which connect expertise and violence neglect the political understanding of violence and its sources, and reduce political violence into technical problems to be solved by outside experts.

It follows from the understanding of war as an epidemic that the UN discourse emphasizes the role of expertise in solving the problem of violence. It is argued, for instance in *An Agenda for Peace* that there is a 'requirement for technical assistance which the United Nations has an obligation to develop and provide when requested . . . for the strengthening of new democratic institutions'.²⁶ This is an example of what Roland Paris calls the 'globalisation of particular mode of domestic governance',

namely liberal market democracy, from the core to the periphery of the international system.²⁷ What is left, however, unnoticed by Paris, is that this globalization is based on instrumental-cognitive rationality and expertise knowledge. By generating agency for the experts, the UN discourse produces experts that act as the agents of the globalization of this particular mode of governance. The Brahimi report in particular advocates the use of experts in peace operations and in the '*mission civilisatrice*'²⁸ embedded in them. It is argued in the report that information gathering for databases on peace and security with the help of military analysts, experts on international criminal networks and information system specialists is needed in order to strengthen peace operations. In a similar vein, police officers and related experts as national pools should be earmarked for the UN peace operations.²⁹

The mode of power functioning in UN peace operations is that of bio-power. When it engages in peacebuilding what the organization ultimately manages is populations. It sets practices that control populations in the name of security. It secures territorial claims, reconfigures rights and responsibilities; specifies populations statistically; establishes, redefines and legitimates new forms of economic and political associations; and produces new ways of knowing the populations. In Michel Foucault's words, the organization is a part of modern 'governmentality'. Governmentality takes populations as its terrain of operation and functions through defining and controlling them.³⁰ Given the ideology of global governance of liberal peace, the tools suggested to be best suited to the UN peace operations give a great role to experts as demonstrated. These actors are seen to fulfil the managing function and act on the basis of their expert knowledge that problematizes and conceptualizes the 'emerging violent political complexities', to use Michael Dillon's and Julian Reid's words,³¹ in an administrable, calculable and controllable manner.

In sum, the UN discourse on peace operations relies largely on modern thinking and the need for the mastery of the ambiguity our fundamental human condition – death – places upon us. The discourse recommends non-political, managerial solutions to the problems which are political by nature. However, there are openings in this affirmative logic that allow insecurity to enter into the thinking about peace operations. The first opening is created by new thinking about war, which suggests that warfare in the post-Cold War world is often post-Westphalian and does not follow the Clausewitzian rationality of warfare. The second opening is provided by new thinking about human security, which shifts the emphasis from state security to the security of communities and societies. These two openings provide also a space for gender to enter into the peace operations discourse.

Post-Westphalian Warfare

The location of violence in the international system has shifted from inter-state relations to inter-community relations, many authors argue. Most, if not quite all, of the ongoing wars are now internal, and this change of the location of violence is of great significance. International violence and warfare have moved away from the Clausewitzian trinity of the state, the army, and the people to less definable violence. Wars between nations are replaced by intra-state warfare or by the 'war against terrorism' where national boundaries are no longer holding a central place. Both in inter-community warfare and in high-tech 'war against terror', territoriality has new meanings. Community boundaries have replaced state boundaries, and technology and its projection have de-territorialized a part of warfare. In other words, the international system has moved from the era of Clausewitzian war to disintegrative, decentralized and fragmentative violence. Clausewitzian wars were wars between states for clearly defined political aims where victory or defeat was absolute. Although the Clausewitzian model of war was a very limited one – few conflicts since 1945 fully corresponded to it, and it existed for a brief period mainly in Europe – many of the post-Cold War conflicts have certain shared features that are quite contemporary and post- rather than pre-Clausewitzian.³²

Clausewitzian war was war between modern states which were characterized by centralized and secularized power within a given territory and which hold to the absolutist notions of sovereignty. The key feature of the modern state was its monopolization of legitimate organized violence, which entailed the elimination of private armies, internal pacification, the emergence of a state system and the rise of regular professional armies. The modern state was, thus, organized essentially through violence and its containment. The containment of war in time and space produced a clear-cut distinction between war and peace, between outside and inside and between military and civil. War was instrumentally rational activity, and not confined by pre-modern prohibitions.³³

Mary Kaldor's notions of 'new wars' and 'post-Clausewitzian wars' – or post-Westphalian wars as some authors prefer to call them – offer a conceptual distinction which identifies new trends in warfare. As she summarizes it, in new wars the distinction between war and peace does not hold, because new wars tend to be longer, more pervasive and less decisive. Post-Clausewitzian conflicts rarely have decisive endings. Even where the ceasefire has been declared, periods of low violence tend to follow; neither war nor peace prevails. In many post-Clausewitzian wars, states have lost their monopoly of violence and non-state

actors play an important role. In the cases of ‘collapsed’ or ‘failed’ states, it is often difficult to distinguish between state and non-state actors. New wars have consequences at the level of populations: population displacement which is associated with large numbers of refugees and its counterpart, forcible repatriation, are typical results.³⁴ The breakdown of the binary opposition of war and peace, as the discussion on new wars demonstrates, has brought with it the collapse of other modern oppositions, for example, the oppositions between the state and non-state actors, inside and outside, and aggressor and victim.

A new approach to peace operations, which relies on the post-Westphalian thinking on warfare has emerged gradually in the UN discourse too. *An Agenda for Peace* notes that there are new dimensions of insecurity that spring up from new assertions of nationalism and ethnic, religious, social, cultural and linguistic strife. Wars between states have become less frequent and the most prominent conflict type is internal war. According to the document, ‘the time of absolute sovereignty, however, has passed; its theory was never matched by reality’, and this sets challenges for the state system in general and for the UN peace operations in particular.³⁵ The challenge does not, however, mean that the fundamental premises of the state system have to be questioned. Rather, the states have to strengthen their sovereignty by all possible means. It is recognized also that the United Nations operations are not always deployed into post-conflict situations, but try to create them. It follows, according to the Brahimi Report, that peacebuilding is an important element of ‘complex peace operations’ where the transformation from war to peace is assisted.³⁶

In other words, the line between war and peace is difficult to draw, and thereby, the UN peace operations have to be able to facilitate the transformation process. The concept of ‘complex peace operations’ tries to grasp the complexities of post-Westphalian warfare by suggesting that both peacebuilding and peacekeeping should be employed in new conflicts.

Gendered Human Security

In the 1990s, new critical discourses on security emerged that insisted on the enlarging of the notion of security. It was argued by several authors that the conventional thinking on state-centred military security does not answer the new security ‘threats’ that characterize the post-Cold War world. Both the object of security, namely what is to be secured, and the ways of knowing what is security were questioned in the discipline of security studies. One way of expanding the agenda of security

studies is to make a distinction between the state and the society. The coincidence of these two was largely taken for granted in the realist-inspired security studies where the emphasis was on the international system as a system of states. The emphasis on states resonates strongly with the UN discourse where the upholding 'the sovereign equality of all States'³⁷ and the 'strengthening of States'³⁸ – even in the face of new security threats – remain the main goals of the organization. However, if we argue that 'state security can be influenced by the security or insecurity of a society on which it is based', and that 'when nation and state do not coincide the security of a nation will often increase the insecurity of the state', the state-centred security agenda changes.³⁹

The state-centred security agenda has changed in the UN discourse in very moderate ways. The UN discourse does not fully acknowledge the possibility that the state and the society may not coincide, and that the state itself may be a source of insecurity. The organization has engaged in problematizing and securitizing issues in transnational terms but not in questioning the origin of these problems, which can, as argued earlier, in many cases be located in the state itself. The Millennium Declaration, which was adopted in 2000 by all 189 member states of the UN General Assembly, seeks to set out within a single framework the key challenges facing humanity at the threshold of the new millennium, to outline a response to these challenges, and to establish concrete measures for judging performance through a set of inter-related commitments on development, governance, peace, security and human rights. It wants to 'take concerted actions against international terrorism', 'counter the world drug problem', and 'fight transnational crime in all its dimensions, including trafficking as well as smuggling in human beings and money laundering'.⁴⁰

Secretary-General Kofi Annan's report *We the Peoples, The Role of United Nations in the 21st Century* (2000), which was prepared for the Millennium Summit and Assembly, expresses a need to think anew about the role of the UN in the globalizing world. According to the report, in the global world, there has been an increase in interactions across frontiers without involving the state, and this is seen to have dangers: 'crime, narcotics, terrorism, pollution, disease, weapons, refugees and migrants: all move faster and in greater numbers than in the past', and people feel threatened by these even if they are far away.⁴¹ Similarly, at the core of the report are security threats arising from climate change, water crises and pollution.⁴²

New thinking about security in Critical Security Studies opens up a space for gender to enter into the security discourse. By looking at the lives of women in numerous places and positions, feminist International

Relations scholars conclude that globalization and power in global politics manifest in multiple ways. Women are an elementary part of globalization and of many global practices, but these practices render women insecure and subject to violence. Global practices follow the patterns of patriarchal relations and thereby often leave women insecure. For example, the global virtual economy divides populations not only in terms of location and labour, but also in terms of gender. Global divisions of labour have their local counterparts, namely, the segmenting of labour forces along 'race' and gender lines. In other words, the increasingly global economy shapes the new international division of labour along state, national, radicalized, ethnicized and gender divides. The segmenting of labour forces along old and new divides is often a source of a feeling of (gendered) injustice and insecurity and, therefore, a source of further segmentation and fragmentation of states and societies.⁴³

Attention in Critical Security Studies is paid also to the female agency in violent conflicts. It is argued that women are both victims and actors in wars and armed conflicts. During wars, women participate in new activities and assume new roles. Women are not solely the victims of warfare, but they may also be combatants.⁴⁴ The binary opposition between the non-combatant and combatant holds less in post-Westphalian wars than in traditional Clausewitzian wars. As argued earlier, the post-Westphalian warfare creates 'zones of ambiguity' where neither peace nor war prevails in the traditional sense. The state apparatuses are often collapsed and the vacuum is filled with different kinds of actors. The border between combatants and non-combatants becomes murky, and the 'non-combatants' contribute to warfare in many ways (such as providing medical services, food and shelter). The 'zones of ambiguity' encourage also new strategies of warfare to be employed. Sexual violence against women – for example, mass rapes, rape camps and forced impregnation – are used strategically against communities. Women in combatant roles, on the other hand, are sometimes of a high symbolic value, because their presence in arms can be seen to signal the unity of the armed forces and the society in general.⁴⁵

The gendered nature of human security is recognized in the UN discourse too. The United Nations Millennium Declaration states at a general level that the organization will spare no effort 'to combat all forms of violence against women'.⁴⁶ The UNIFEM report, *Women, War and Peace* by Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and Elisabeth Rehn is more specific and emphasizes that security issues in warfare are always gendered. For example, trafficking of people, and particularly women, is a typical feature of post-Cold War conflicts and produces multiple insecurities for women in conflict situations. Criminal networks involved in

the trade of arms and drugs expand to include trafficking in people. According to the report, the breakdown of state apparatuses and open borders has contributed in many conflicts to creating an environment in which the trafficking of women flourishes. In sum, by expanding the security agenda towards a variety of security objects and the multiple experiences of security, a discursive space where gender can enter into the security and peace operations discourse is created.

The United Nations Discourse on Gender and Peace Operations

The United Nations discourse on gender and peace operations uses the space provided by the discourses on the post-Westphalian warfare and human security as argued earlier. Since the Beijing conference in 1995, requests have been made for mainstreaming gender into all of the UN activities, and in activities related to security and conflict resolution in particular. The Beijing Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women⁴⁷ emphasizes the importance of gender equality for effective and sustainable peace-building and peacekeeping efforts, and outlines a series of concrete actions that governments, the international community and civil society should take to implement the recommendations of the conference. The Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action by UNTAG on 'Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations' in 2000 demands effective gender mainstreaming as a standard component of all peace support missions.⁴⁸ It affirms that women had been denied their full role in multidimensional peace support operations and outlines, in the Plan of Action, practical ways in which the United Nations system could promote women's active involvement in peace missions.

These international actions, together with the convening of the General Assembly's 23rd special session entitled 'Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the Twenty-first Century' (Beijing +5), constitute important steps along the way to considering the United Nations peace operations from the point of view of gender. Based on previous international standards the adoption of the Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security represents an attempt to address both the impact of war on women and women's contributions to conflict resolution and sustainable peace.⁴⁹

Similarly, both the Brahimi Report and the Millennium Declaration aim to find ways of combating violence against women and suggest equitable gender distribution of the heads of substantive and administrative components of the peace support missions. In short, the UN discourse recognizes the need for equitable gender participation in complex peace

operations that are required in post-Westphalian conflicts. It recognizes also the need for protecting women against violence as an integral part of human security.

In the UN discourse on gender and peace operations, the starting-point is that women have not had equal access and participation in peace-building and peace support operations, although 'civilians, particularly women and children, account for the vast majority of those adversely effected by armed conflict'.⁵⁰ Women have been denied their full role in multidimensional peace support operations both nationally and internationally, and the 'gender dimension in peace processes has not been adequately addressed'.⁵¹ It is argued that women do have an important role in the prevention and resolution of conflicts. Therefore, 'gender equality must permeate the entire mission' of peace support operations⁵² and there is an urgent 'need to mainstream a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations'.⁵³ The special need to protect women's security in conflict zones is also noted by calling 'all parties to armed conflict to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse'.⁵⁴

Typical modern binary structures can be found in the UN discourse on gender and peace operations. Gender is equalled with women, and women are differentiated from men. By leaving unnoticed the possible performative construction of gender, the discourse founds itself on the essentialist and biological binary hierarchy of sexes. Furthermore, women are given the role of the protected, and their possible combatant roles are largely dismissed. In the discursive strategies of the UN documents, women are coupled with conflict resolution and peace. Their civilian roles in promoting conflict resolution and peace are emphasized and, thereby, the binary pairs of women/victim/protected/peace and men/aggressor/protector/war strengthened. Through these discursive strategies, women are assigned a certain type of agency and identity, namely, women are the objects of protective action and they occupy mainly the civilian space.

These pairs are also strengthened in UN discourses by the adoption of mainstreaming when encouraging gender equality. The ways of mainstreaming gender into the UN peace activities vary from specialized training to increased representation of women in managing and resolving conflicts. There is a request for training 'for all peacekeeping personnel on the protection, special needs and human rights of women and children in conflict situations'.⁵⁵ The number of women in all decision-making levels in conflict resolution and peace processes has to be increased, according to the UN documents. There should be 50 per cent women in managerial and decision-making positions. Women are seen to be

suitable for field-based operations too, and their contributions and roles should be expanded 'especially among military observers, civilian police, human rights and humanitarian personnel'.⁵⁶

These tools of mainstreaming gender call forth instrumentalist solutions to the gender question. They represent techniques that are aimed at problem solving and at the instrumental mastery of the conflicts. Increasing women's participation and gender awareness through training does not ultimately break the confines of modernity, because the idea of mainstreaming gender remains within the modern framework of binary oppositions. In his report in 1998, the Secretary-General defines mainstreaming as a placing of an issue within the pre-existing institutional, academic and discursive framework. The placing aims at integrating gender perspective into the pre-existing frameworks, and it is seen to be the opposite of marginalization.⁵⁷ The aim is thus not to think anew or critically the structures that have rendered gender silent in the first place. The aim is rather to add the gender element to the existing state-centred and patriarchal practices of conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

The quest for adding women to the existing structures is based on an objectivist epistemology that characterizes modernity. As demonstrated above, the Brahimi report places the focus on expertise knowledge. The counterpart of this type of knowledge is objectivist epistemology and a wish to include women's experience and knowledge in the objectivistic framework. By demanding the inclusion of women in the civilian personnel of peace operations, the report assumes that women's participation in the missions would create a new kind of knowledge that is needed in the governance of post-Westphalian conflicts. By assuming that women's knowledge would contribute to the solving of problems and increasing the expertise in conflict situations, a kind of authenticity of women's experience and knowledge is postulated.

The feminist standpoint theory included in the UN discourse assumes that taking women's experience as a source of knowledge can provide a valid base for generating more accurate knowledge. The view does go beyond the notion of the bodiless actor and knower, which has traditionally been a male actor and knower in the Western philosophical tradition. The Enlightenment ideals of knowledge and rational subjects turned the experiences of male subjects into universal experiences and into universal sources of knowledge. Man was seen to be abstract, individual and autonomous in the sense that his experience was thought to form the basis for scientific knowledge and truth. Female experiences were neglected, because they were seen to represent a kind of knowledge which could not serve as a foundation for scientific inquiry. According to the standpoint of feminism, on the other hand, women's experiences may be

different from men's experiences, but they should be considered a legitimate basis for knowledge production.⁵⁸ In sum, the UN discourse on gender and peace operations relies on the feminist standpoint notion of knowledge and thereby does not radically challenge the objectivistic epistemology that characterizes modern thinking in general.

Conclusions: Hegemonic Femininities and Masculinities

Some forms of feminism break the modern confines of the notion of experience by questioning both the idea of knowledge and the Enlightenment assumption of experience as the source of knowledge. Attention is turned to the body and its interconnectedness with knowledge, the regimes of truth and power. In short, the question 'how can we address the issue of the body in investigating social and global power and the interconnections between them?'⁵⁹ instructs the attempts to think anew about gender, power and knowledge. The body is not seen to be a neutral surface or a platform from which experience or action emerges. Neither is it something 'real' which could be an authoritative source of knowledge and truth. In other words, the body does not serve as an authentic source of experience and knowledge that could replace other less authentic and less neutral sources.

The focus on body and its production within the regimes of truth breaks the binary mode of thinking that characterizes modernity. By focusing on the body typical binary opposition are dissolved and a performative theory of gender founded. The performative theory argues that what we take to be an internal essence is manufactured through a sustained set of acts on the surface of our body. We produce gender through certain bodily acts: gender is not our internal psychic world. Neither has the gendered body an ontological status apart from the various acts that constitute its reality. The meaning of 'woman' becomes troubled and unfixed and 'female' no longer appears to be a stable notion.⁶⁰

There is no primary gender identity that is a platform for action and politics, as the UN discourse on peace operations seems to suggest. There are, rather, the constructions of femininities and masculinities that are bound to become the hegemonic forms of femininity and masculinity, although these are never the only possible constructions. There are always zones of ambiguity where neither of these prevails or where mixed variations of them come to the fore. Femininities and masculinities are enacted not only by individuals but also by groups, institutions and cultural forms, such as the UN.⁶¹ The problem the United Nations faces should be re-phrased. It is not how gender can be integrated in

the UN discourse and activities concerned with conflict resolution in general and peace support operations in particular, as the UN discourse problematizes the issue to be. The question is how the UN discourse itself produces certain type of femininities and masculinities as hegemonic. By remaining within the confines of modernity, the UN discourse produces neoliberal modes of masculinity and femininity where the problem-solving epistemology gives priority to the 'Rationalist' and managerialist masculinity and renders the variety of ambivalent and unsecured masculinities and femininities silent.

Since discourses are interlinked with practices and elicit a certain type of agency and identity into existence, an alternative has to arise from discourses too. The UN discourse on gender and peace operations is bound to remain limited if it relies on the modern binary oppositions indicated above and the type of agency and identity embedded in these oppositions. Allowing dissident, and not always affirming, voices to be heard can offer an element that celebrates uncertainty and multiplicity. The ongoing dialogue, in which the UN already engages for example with non-governmental organizations and civil societies, can bring in alternative thinking on peace, war and gender.

Similarly, listening to the 'Other' constructions of femininity and masculinity as they happen, for example, in the Islamic world, may fragment the self-assertive logic of the UN gender and peace operations discourse. Furthermore, letting the views on security that do not represent the state penetrate into the discourse would bring into being non-state agency in security matters and diversify the discourse on peace operations and the practices comprised in the discourse.

NOTES

1. An important first step was taken by Louise Olsson and Torunn L. Tryggestad (eds), *Women and International Peacekeeping*, special issue of *International Peacekeeping*, Vol.8, No.2, 2001.
2. UN Security Council Resolution on Women, Peace and Security (S/RES/1325), 31 October 2001.
3. Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, London: Tavistock, 1972, pp.48–9.
4. *An Agenda for Peace*, Preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping (UN Doc A/47/277–S/24111), Report of the Secretary-General, 1992.
5. Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968, p.23.
6. These guiding principles of peacekeeping were set by D. Hammarskjöld in 1956.
7. Report of the Panel on UN Peace Operations (The Brahimi Report) (UN Doc A/55/305–S/2000/809), 21 August 2000, p.1. Emphasis added.
8. The Brahimi Report (see n.7 above), p.2.
9. For logocentrism see Richard Ashley, 'Living on Border Lines: Man, Poststructuralism, and War', in James Der Derrian and Michael Shapiro (eds.), *International/Intertextual Relations*, Lexington: Lexington Books, 1989, pp.260–64.

10. Zygmunt Bauman, *Mortality, Immortality and Other Life Strategies*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992, p.35.
11. *Ibid.* pp.132–3.
12. *Ibid.* p.38.
13. See also Anthony Giddens, 'Living in a Post-Traditional Society', in Ulrich Beck, Anthony Giddens and Scott Lash, *Reflexive Modernization, Politics, Tradition and Aesthetics in the Modern Social Order*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994, pp.56–109.
14. Robert Cox, 'Social Forces, States and World Order: Beyond International Theory', *Millennium: Journal of International Theory*, Vol.10, No.2, 1981, pp.126–55.
15. Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action: Reason and the Rationalisation of Society I*, London: Heinemann, 1984, p.10.
16. *Ibid.* pp.10–11.
17. See more on problematization: Michael Shapiro, *Reading the Postmodern Polity, Political Theory as Textual Practice*, Minneapolis, Oxford: University of Minnesota Press, 1992, pp.47–8; Michel Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure, The History of Sexuality*, Vol.II, New York: Vintage Books, 1985, pp.14–25; and on peace operations and liberal market democracy: Roland Paris, 'International Peacebuilding and the "Mission Civilisatrice"', *Review of International Studies*, Vol.28, No.4, 2002, pp.637–58.
18. *An Agenda for Peace* (see n.4 above), p.3.
19. Charter of the United Nations, 26 July 1995.
20. Kofi Annan, *We the Peoples: The Role of the United Nations in the 21st Century*, Executive Summary, p.1.
21. *An Agenda for Peace* (see n.4 above), p.4.
22. The Brahimi Report (see n.7 above), p.1.
23. *An Agenda for Peace* (see n.4 above), p.4.
24. Hannah Arendt, *On Violence*, San Diego, CA: A Harvest Book, Harcourt Brace, 1970, p.75.
25. *Ibid.* p.75.
26. *An Agenda for Peace* (see n.4 above), p.12.
27. Paris (see n.17 above), p.638.
28. *Ibid.* p.637.
29. The Brahimi Report (see n.7 above). See also *An Agenda for Peace* (see n.4 above), pp.11–12.
30. On governmentality see Michael Dillon, 'Sovereignty and Governmentality: From the Problematics of the "New World Order" to the Ethical Problematic of World Order', *Alternatives*, Vol.20, No.3, 1995, pp.323–68.
31. Michael Dillon and Julian Reid, 'Global Governance, Liberal Peace, and Complex Emergency', *Alternatives*, Vol.25, No.1, 2000, pp.117–43.
32. Pertti Joenniemi, 'Wild Zones, Black Holes and the Struggle Void of Purpose; Has War Lost Its Name', paper presented at the 17th IPSA World Congress, Seoul, 17–21 August 1997. Mary Kaldor, 'Introduction', in Mary Kaldor and Basker Vashee (eds), *Restructuring the Global Military Sector, Volume I: New Wars*, London and Washington: Pinter, 1997, pp.3–33. Charles Moskos and James Burk, 'The Postmodern Military', in James Burk (ed.), *The Military in New Times, Adapting Armed Forces to a Turbulent World*, Boulder, San Francisco and Oxford: Westview Press, 1994, p.149. Martin van Creveld, *The Transformation of War*, New York: The Free Press, 1991.
33. Kaldor (see n.32 above), pp.3–7.
34. *Ibid.* pp.17–19.
35. *An Agenda for Peace* (see n.4 above), pp.2–3. See also *We the Peoples* (see n.20 above), p.2.
36. The Brahimi Report (see n.7 above), p.2.
37. United Nations Millennium Declaration (A/55/L.2), 8 September 2000, p.1.
38. *We the Peoples* (see n.20 above), p.1.
39. Ole Waever, 'Societal Security: The Concept', in Ole Waever, Barry Buzan, Morten Kelstrup and Pierre Lamaitre (eds), *Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe*, London: Pinter, 1993, p.26.

40. United Nations Millennium Declaration (see n.37 above), p.2.
41. *We the Peoples* (see n.20 above), p.1.
42. *Ibid.* pp.3–4.
43. Cynthia Enloe, *The Morning After: Sexual Politics at the End of the Cold War*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993; V. Spike Peterson and Anne Sisson Runyan, *Global Gender Issues*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1993, pp.79–112; Jan Jindy Pettman, 'Border Crossing/Shifting Identities: Minorities, Gender, and the State in International Perspective', in Michael Shapiro and Hayward Alker (eds.), *Challenging Boundaries: Global Flows, Territorial Identities*, Minneapolis, London: University of Minnesota Press, 1996, pp.261–84; J. Ann Tickner, *Gender in International Relations: Feminist Perspectives in Achieving Global Security*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1992.
44. Jean Bethke Elshstain, *Women and War*, New York: Basic Books, 1987.
45. On the roles of women in war see for example, *Gendering Human Security, From Marginalisation to the Integration of Women in Peace-Building*, NUPI-Report No.261, Oslo: Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, 2001. *Women, War and Peace, The Independent Expert's Assessment on the Impact of Armed Conflict on Women and Women's Role in Peace-building*, United Nations Development Fund for Women, 2002.
46. United Nations Millennium Declaration (see n.37 above), p.5.
47. A/conf.177/20/rev.1.
48. Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action on 'Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations', On the 10th Anniversary of the United Nations Transitional Assistance Group (UNTAG), 31 May 2000.
49. UN Security Council Resolution on Women, Peace and Security (see n.2 above).
50. *Ibid.*
51. The Windhoek Declaration (see n.48 above).
52. *Ibid.*
53. UN Security Council Resolution on Women, Peace and Security (see n.2 above).
54. *Ibid.*
55. *Ibid.*
56. *Ibid.* See also 'Women 2000: Gender equality, development and peace in the twenty-first century' (A/S-23/8), 7 June 2000.
57. Louise Olsson, *Gendering UN Peacekeeping, Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peacekeeping Operations*, Uppsala: Uppsala University, Department of Peace and Conflict Research, 1999, p.1.
58. For a discussion on gender and knowledge see for example Linda Nicholson (ed.), *Feminism/Postmodernism*, New York and London: Routledge, 1990.
59. Jan Jindy Pettman, 'Body Politics: International Sex Tourism', *Third World Quarterly*, Vol.18, No.1, 1997, p.2.
60. Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble, Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, New York and London: Routledge, 1999, 2nd edn., pp.vii–xxxiii.
61. R.W. Connell, 'Masculinities, the Reduction of Violence and the Pursuit of Peace', in Cynthia Cockburn and Dubravka Zarkov (eds.), *The Postwar Moment, Militaries, Masculinities and International Peacekeeping*, London: Lawrence & Wishart, 2002, p.36.

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