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"Half a Loaf is Better Than Nothing" Conceptualization and Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 in the South African National Defence Force

By Marieke Fröhlich

Submitted to Central European University Department of Gender Studies

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Erasmus Mundus Master's Degree in Women's and Gender Studies

Main supervisor: Dr. Elissa Helms. Central European University Support Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Rosemarie Buikema. Utrecht University

Budapest, Hungary

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Abstract

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR1325) has dominated the international Women, Peace and Security (WPS) debate since its unanimous adoption in 2000. Despite its inherent flaws and widespread criticism, the resolution remains a crucial tool in feminist lobbying for gender sensitive peacekeeping. While South Africa deploys one of the highest proportion of female peacekeepers, highlighting its supposed success of implementing the mandate of UNSCR1325, questions remain about the implications beyond the 'number's game'. This thesis aims to fill this gap by investigating the ways that UNSCR1325 and its problems, has been conceptualized and put into practice by members of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF). I engage with the organizational and individual level of conceptualization and implementation through in-depth interviews with members of the force, and pay specific attention to the unique case of South Africa's history and present. Considering South Africa's accomplishment in sending female peacekeepers to missions, I approach this project affirmatively, while keeping in mind postcolonial critiques of peacekeeping. I discuss how the shortcomings of UNSCR1325, specifically related to gender essentialisms, have affected discourses within SANDF, leading to contradictions and contestations around degendering and regendering of peacekeepers, related to the contradictions of South Africa's national transformation based on human rights and WPS discourses based on gender essentialisms. Despite reiteration and reifying of problematic gender essentialisms, I found tendencies of SANDF members within the organisation's gender structures, showing in-depth critical engagements with gender, pointing towards a surpassing of the limited premise of UNSCR1325.

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List of Abbreviations

ANC – African National Congress

AU – African Union

CEDAW - Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women

CSO – Civil Society Organisation

DI – Defence Intelligence

IR – International Relations

MK - Umkhonto ke Sizwe

NAP – National Action Plan

NGO(s) – Non-governmental organisation

PMTC – Peace Mission Training Centre

SADC – Southern African Development Community

SADF – South African Defence Force

SANDF – South African National Defence Force

SGBV – Sexualised and Gender Based Violence

UN – United Nations

UN DPKO – United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations

UN SC – United Nations Security Council

UNSCR – United Nations Security Council Resolution

WNC – Women's National Coalition

WPS – Women, Peace and Security

Introduction

> "[W]e need to be curious. But be curious in ways that do not start with judgement".
>
> Cynthia Enloe, 2015
> at the WILPF conference in The Hague

Towards the end of the first year of my MA, I took part in a Masterclass called 'Women, Peace and Security' offered by Utrecht Data School in cooperation with Oxfam Novib. Together with Sarah Pelham and Leonie Tichem, I conducted a quantitative study of women's representation in military peacekeeping deployments to United Nations (UN) peace missions. This initial research project inspired this thesis. In our study based on UN Peacekeeping documents, South Africa surfaced as one of the few 'success stories'[1] of implementing United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR1325) for greater gender balancing in peacekeeping, as South Africa's military deployments to UN peace missions had comparatively a very high proportion of female troops and military experts.[2] While the international average of women in national military peacekeeping deployments was only 3.5%, South Africa's proportion of women was 14%, just after Zimbabwe with 37%[3] and Namibia with 15% (Fröhlich et al. 2014).

Since I am emotionally and politically bound to South Africa, I was intrigued by these results. I had lived, worked and studied in South Africa for over four years and was socialized into academic feminism through the African Gender Institute during my undergraduate studies and was aware that gender and women's equality have been a constantly and hotly discussed topic in South Africa, as it is part of the broader national project of transformation after apartheid. South Africa has one of the most just constitutions on the planet, yet women's rights and security is an everyday struggle for South African women. I wanted to find out what is behind the numerical 'success story' of South Africa's peace mission deployments and investigate what the more subtle gendered politics in South Africa's peacekeeping looked like.

[1] Success here refers to relative achievement of quantitative goals, in comparison to the rest of the world, in which the relative number of women in military peacekeeping missions is much lower. A gender 'balance' of 14 percent still requires work and dedication for achieving adequate representation of female military personnel.
[2] Our results were published by different Dutch media outlets, e.g. *Vice Versa* (http://www.viceversaonline.nl/2014/07/39341/).
[3] Zimbabwe sent very few military personnel generally, though; although we had a filter that excluded countries with small deployments, Zimbabwe just made the cut.

Moreover, I am very critical of UNSR1325 and many related UN women's equality discourses, due to their rather essentialist notions of peaceful womanhood; I was wondering what the resolution meant for South Africa's peacekeeping. How do members of South African National Defence Force (SANDF) understand and make sense of UNSCR1325 within the context of South Africa? How important was the resolution for the implementation of gender policies in SANDF and what are women peacekeepers and women soldiers' experiences in SANDF and its deployments? How do these understandings and experiences relate to broader discourses in the women, peace and security discussions?

Curiosity is a crucial virtue of feminism and of academia. Without being curious, we cannot learn more, nor can we question taken-for-granted assumptions.[4] The military and armed forces are a site of extremes, both in terms of genderedness and gendering. Studying the military as a feminist, whether in 'benevolent' contexts such as peacekeeping or more traditional war making, requires the will to study without judgement, yet being a feminist requires us to research politically. Finding the middle ground of doing politically engaged yet non-judgemental research based on feminist curiosity is at the heart of this study.

Approaching the study of a military institution as a postcolonial feminist with anarchist and pacifist tendencies is not an easy task. However, while I agree with voices that argue that we should be working towards a world without militaries and militarisation, this world is still in the distant future. In face of the current geopolitical situation, where civilians are brutally murdered or children abducted to become soldiers, militaries are unfortunately still necessary to protect and defend civilians. And I do not see them ceasing in importance in the near future, making productive and engaging studies of militaries a crucial necessity if we want to create a better and more just world. Hence, in addition to a non-judgemental curiosity, my study is based on the premise of urgent necessity to change the ways that military peacekeeping is practically conducted while being aware of the deeper political meanings behind UN peacekeeping missions, as I will elaborate in the second chapter.

Women, peace and security (WPS) has become a broad field of policy, research and scholarship. While war and conflict have always been gendered, as most other parts of social

[4] There are various feminisms, with many diverging and contesting politics and goals, as I will also show throughout this thesis. When I use feminism in the singular, I refer to the very broad movement for gender and sexual equality, with all its variations, contestations and contradictions. I do not think that feminists need to name themselves as such to work for the common goal of gender justice.

interaction,[5] and international women's peace activism have been active in organised form for over a hundred years, it was only in 2000 that gender as a crucial area of engagement, research and lobbying was explicitly made a part of international policy. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR1325) of 2000 was a game changer in the international women's rights movement, as the first international policy that officially recognized the gendered nature of war, specific impacts of armed conflict on women and calling for action to increase women's participation in peace-processes (Miller et al. 2014). However, many activists and scholars have highlighted fundamental problems within the resolution and the broader discourses that have emerged around WPS (see for instance Simić 2014; Charlesworth 2008; Puechguirbal 2010; Onyejekwe 2005; Higate & Henry 2004).

I found that the title of Chris Dolan's (2014) short and powerful piece "Has Patriarchy been Stealing the Feminists' Clothes?" hit the nail on the head. In this paper, Dolan highlights the ways that UN Security Council (UN SC) resolutions on WPS have so far been reifying the patriarchal ideology of women and conflict instead of criticising and aiming to destabilise it. Gender essentialisms are prevalent and more often than not normalised in the discussion on WPS. Yet, UNSCR1325 remains one of the main advocacy tools for anyone engaged with gender and security. Scholarly discussions seem to fall into two main camps: either reiterating the gendered essentialisms and assumptions that women are better at certain tasks and specifically needed in peacekeeping, or scholars are very critical of the resolution and its effects, highlighting its shortcomings and pertaining gender injustices within the UN system, peacekeeping and militaries.

Yet, despite my own critical stance, I have at times been quite frustrated with the seeming virtue of critique in and of itself in some feminist scholarship, not only but also on UNSCR1325. Especially in context where feminist critique attacks the basic tools and principles for advocacy and rights based work, such criticism can become very incapacitating. With my research, I aimed to circumvent the paralyzing nature of some feminist critiques; also because my research team's findings of the earlier project showed that South Africa is in fact doing exceptionally well with sending female peacekeepers (Fröhlich et al. 2014). I aimed to approach this project affirmatively and wanted to produce research that does not only criticize but also focus on positive possibilities and tendencies while being sensible to essentialisms and

[5] Despite the inherent genderedness of the social world, it is important to acknowledge that gender works differently and gendered concepts as often taught and researched in 'Western' contexts might be very unsuitable to other socio-cultural contexts, such as in Africa, as for instance Oyěwùmí (2002) has repeatedly pointed out.

counter-transformative trends. I believe that especially South Africa is a country with much dynamic and constant possibility of change. Hence, I find it important to not only criticize and problematize, but also (yet not only) to engage with and highlight potential tendencies of transformative power, allowing the possibilities of these tendencies to become the first step towards a broader engagement for change.

Peacekeeping is riddled with contradictions and paradoxes (Whitworth 2004). Deploying militaries to create peace under the banner of the UN without following the basic founding rules of the very same organisation, and more recently pledging to work for gender equality while perpetuating and reinforcing gendered stereotypes that render women as victims and men as perpetrators just calls to be examined with a closer look. Hence, there has been much research and interrogation investigating the effects, effectiveness and underlying politics of peacekeeping and peacebuilding. Although many scholars make distinctions between peacekeeping, peacemaking, peacebuilding and peace enforcement, it appears that UN peacekeeping missions today engage in all of these areas. Importantly, I am mostly concerned with peacekeeping as a military endeavour, which is to be distinguished from peacebuilding. According to Pugh (2013, p.396) peacebuilding refers to "measures [...] to reduce the risk of lapsing [...] into conflict by strengthening national capacities [...], and to lay the foundation for sustainable peace and development." While I find the distinctions very hard to retain in context of multidimensional peacekeeping missions, as I will elaborate in chapter two, for this study, peacebuilding refers more to the institutional strengthening of the host country, whereas I am focussing on the military component of peacekeeping missions that aims to create the circumstances for peacebuilding to happen.[6]

Although there is quite a lot of research on gender and the military and specifically women within militaries in Western[7] contexts, there is a lack of research on women soldiers within (state) militaries in African contexts (Baaz & Stern 2013). Moreover, we know very little about the ways that UNSCR1325 has directly affected militaries and specifically those people in militaries who are in one way or another engaged in peacekeeping. We know even less about the ways that soldiers who have been trained on gender issues experience peacekeeping.

[6] Although military peacekeepers supposedly also engage in developmental and rebuilding activities.

[7] I do acknowledge that using terms such as 'the West' or 'the South' are problematic and need to be critically engaged with, as they often seem to rather stand in for terminologies of the 'First' or 'Third world'. Nevertheless, these terms are being used within the broader debates on peace and security as well as international politics and by my participants; they are useful to demarcate broader global power relations and rough cultural areas. For discussions on the potential problems with such terminology, even from postcolonial perspectives see Lazarus (2004).

Aiming to answer these questions in the South African context is especially interesting, since the defence force, as all other state institutions, has been undergoing transformation as part of the transition from racist minority rule of apartheid to popular democracy.

Despite its centrality to all spheres of the 'new South Africa', de Vos (2011, np) highlights that there is very little discussion about what exactly transformation means and argues that it " has become a hollow and empty word, devoid of any real meaning." In its basic form, transformation refers to change. In the context of South Africa's national efforts to move to a more just and equitable society, according to Former South African Chief Justice Pius Langa (cited in de Vos 2013, np), it means "a complete reconstruction of the state and society, including a redistribution of power and resources along egalitarian lines. [...] the eradication of systemic forms of domination and material disadvantage based on race, gender, class and other grounds of inequality." Hence, on the one hand transformation relates to a change of institutions and the law. On the other hand, social and political change are crucial, too. Gender transformation in SANDF relates to creating, according to the SANDF mainstreaming policy of 2008 (p.3) "[...] substantive equality [which] includes prohibition of unfair discrimination based on gender, sex, marital status, and pregnancy [and] includes the adoption of positive measures to advance women as a historically disadvantaged group". In order to reach substantive equality, the basic institution of SANDF needs to change, as it is based, as most militaries, on gendered and gendering structures and practices. Therefore, I describe gender transformation in South Africa and SANDF as the overcoming of (previous) inequality based on gender, sex and sexuality through the redistribution of symbolic, social and institutional power.

In this thesis, I aim to investigate the ways that UNSCR1325, with all its problems, has been conceptualized and put into practice by members of SANDF. I engage with the organizational and individual level of conceptualization and implementation and pay specific attention to the unique case of South Africa's history and present. I will show how some of the inherent and problematic contradictions of militaries and peacekeeping as well as military peacekeeping play out within SANDF and some of its members. Moreover, the contradictions and paradoxes when engaging with military institutions from a (feminist) gender sensitive perspective will be shown through the course of this study.

In the first chapter I position myself and my study as well as elaborate on my methodology and methods. Through my analysis with the lens of postcolonial and African feminism, I am sensitive to neo-colonial/neo-imperial tendencies in international politics and peacekeeping specifically. I interviewed 13 members of SANDF, most of which in one way or another work within the 'gender structures' of the force,[8] with some having peacekeeping experience. I explain how I aimed to engage with their accounts from a critical yet affirmative perspective, sensitive to essentialisms and subversions of broader discourses on women, peacekeeping and war.

In chapter two, I give an overview of UNSCR1325 and its shortcomings, scholarly and practitioners' critique, but also highlight the resolution's effects on WPS scholarship and debate. I also give a short overview of the history of UN peacekeeping, with its important changes since the end of the Cold War and contemporary problems of what is called 'multidimensional peacekeeping'. Gender and gendered relations feature prominently both in the history and current problems and contradictions of UN peacekeeping.

In the third chapter, I give a brief overview of South Africa's transition from apartheid rule and the implication of its past and present for its armed forces and gender transformation both in SANDF and broader society. I highlight the specific history and exceptional transition from racist and sexist minority oppression to democracy with a 'rainbow nation' ideology purporting 'strength in diversity'. While gender equality has stayed on the official and political agenda of the new South Africa, SANDF has been one of the areas where change has been resisted.

The fourth chapter consists of my analysis of my participants' understanding and opinions of as well as experience with UNSCR1325 and SANDF's related broader mandate for transformation. I show how my participants' accounts are at times contradictory. They whole-heatedly supported the national equality discourse and applied it through degendering discourses in their narratives and opinions on women in peacekeeping. However, at the same time, women were regendered based especially on women's roles as mothers, what shows the influences of the broader WPS discourses based on UNSCR1325. I also show how the figure of SANDF female peacekeeper are used as a way to (re)produce imperial discourses, pointing to the implications of South Africa's exceptionalism in an African and global arena. Lastly, I

[8] I use the terminology of ‚gender structure' of SANDF in order to allow for adequate anonymity of my participants while still indicating a broad positioning within the institution. Hence, gender structures of SANDF include different departments that work with gender perspectives in training, policy making, research, advocacy and public relations.

point to encouraging tendencies in my participants' accounts, highlighting the in-depth engagements and understanding of gendered injustice and oppression and the transformative potential of such political analyses within a military institution.

In my fifth chapter, I discuss my findings and their implications for SANDF and the broader peacekeeping context. While SANDF has started the conversation on changing peacekeepers' masculinity and femininity, based on the 'half loaf' provided by the mandate and political power of UNSCR1325, it ultimately needs to surpass the premises of the resolution if it is to critically engage in transformation that goes past the numbers game.

1. The Study

1.1 Theorising a Feminist Approach to Military Peacekeeping

This first chapter aims to describe and position my study within the broader theoretical discussions on gender and peacekeeping and the research and policy field of Women, Peace and Security. Theoretically, my research venture is informed by critical feminist security studies, African and poststructural feminisms and a postcolonial approach to international security.

Post-Cold War peacekeeping has been reframed in a human security approach, as part of the move from state centric development to human development. Similarly, the understanding of security has shifted from a focus on securing states, based on the protection of borders and national territory through military power, to "the legitimate concerns of ordinary people who [seek] security in their daily lives" (Hampson 2013; Hudson 2010; UNDP in Paris 2001, p.89). Through globalisation, individual and global security have become linked and security therefore does not only refer to freedom of military threat but similarly includes environmental, social, economic and political security.[9] This has directly affected the way that peacekeeping has been understood and practiced. Today, peacekeeping is multidimensional, not only including the warring of fighting parties but the development of conflict affected communities through a peacebuilding and reconstruction approach. As my discussion in the next chapters will show, this broadened understanding of security and the connected reshaping of peacekeeping has led to various operational contradictions and difficulties, such as the expansion of the duties and roles of peacekeepers.

Feminists have criticized the human security paradigm for its gendered silences (Hudson 2010; Hudson 2005; McKay 2004). Through its roots in International Relations (IR) theory, with its normalised masculinist framework in which human equals man, gendered dimensions of human security have often been overlooked (Tickner 1992). A feminist human security approach therefore "highlights the dangers of masking differences under the rubric of the term 'human'" and the inherently gendered nature of security (Hudson 2005, p. 157). This means

[9] There has been contestation about the breadth of the concept of human security and whether a broad conceptualization of it can be useful or whether "making everything a priority renders nothing a priority" (Hampson 2013, p. 281). For further reading see for instance Khong (2001), Paris (2001) or Mack (2005).

that the structural dimensions of security are highlighted and women's voices and their specific gendered insecurities, such as sexism and sexualized and gender based violence (SGBV), are paid attention to (McKay 2004). Hence, for feminists, a human security paradigm needs to include gender equality as a crucial aim. These critiques have resonated with the way peacekeeping is practiced and has induced gender mainstreaming[10] and gender sensitive peacekeeping approaches. UNSCR1325 is the corner piece of these developments, highlighting the importance of gender perspectives in war and post-conflict contexts, as I will further elaborate in the next chapter.

I approach my study from a poststructuralist[11] perspective, engaging in a discursive and deconsturctivist analysis of my interviewees' accounts situated within and in relation to a broader regime of international security. Importantly, poststructural feminist perspectives are based on a constructivist approach to the world, highlighting symbolic and discursive power and are based on an emphasis of multiplicity and multiple voices. As such, knowledge production is understood as succinctly political, co-producing realities instead of objectively describing them, as often posited by IR researchers and members of international organizations (Gannon & Davies 2007; Tickner 1992). While it is important to be wary of relativisms easily produced by poststructural thinking, due to its rejection of one reality and truth, suffice it to say that I agree with Gannon and Davies (2007, p. 81) who argue that poststructural theory and methodology is especially useful for feminist research, as it "makes visible the historical, cultural, social and discursive patterns through which current oppressive or dominant realities are held in place". This enables us to deconstruct these and hence "opens us into new futures" (Gannon & Davies 2007, p.99). A poststructural feminist perspective of international security and military peacekeeping therefore allows us to imagine a different (gendered) regime of international security while being attentive to the problems and shortcomings of current strategies and politics. In this view, it is crucial to link individual experiences in a specific location, in my study South African peacekeepers' and military members' experiences, to the broader regional and global processes and structures, i.e. the international gender

[10] According to the United Nations, gender mainstreaming is a "globally accepted strategy for promoting gender equality." and "not an end in itself but a strategy, an approach, a means to achieve the goal of gender equality." (UN Women n.d.). However, gender mainstreaming has often worked either to equate gender with women or as an 'alibi' through adding gender as a buzzword without critically engaging with a gender analysis.

[11] Poststrcuturalism refers to a 'discursive turn' in research and theory, which takes language and 'texts' to construct realities. It is a critique of positivist and naturalist approach to the world and focuses on deconstructing and interrogating the discursive production of power.

mainstreaming regime in peacekeeping, within which they are produced and negotiated (Hudson 2003).

When assessing the conceptualization and implementation, the 'life' an international policy takes on in different contexts, the multiplicity of lived experiences is especially important. Studying the 'life' of UNSCR1325 in the South African context necessitates a theoretical frame that takes the specific political, socio-cultural and historical realities seriously. Hence, an African feminist perspective is crucial for a contextualized and politically meaningful human security paradigm for the (South) African context. African feminist perspectives are based on the recognition of difference through intersections of layers of oppression and power structures within the feminist movement, which creates similarities with Black feminisms, such as those described by Crenshaw (1989) or Yuval-Davis (2006) but are focused on the specificities of ethnic, cultural and spiritual African contexts. The terminology of feminism has been rejected by many women in African contexts as an imperial politics or as simply not suitable for African familial and social structures (Kolawole 2002). Womanism is often mentioned as an alternative terminology, due to the importance of politics surrounding the naming African women's struggle as different to Western feminisms. Since the distinction between womanism and African feminism is arguably based primarily on politics of naming, [12] I will use the terms together in this thesis.[13] Womanism is inclusionary and hence a more conciliatory approach to gender equality than most Western feminisms (Hudson 2005; Kolawole 2004), as it emphasizes the importance of working together with men against the structural inequalities and injustices, which were important for many of my participants as I will show in my last chapter (Kolawole 2002).[14]

In my experience neither of these terms are embraced by most South Africa women, certainly most of the ones I interviewed for this study. As an analytical tool, I find womanism particularly useful in the South African context, as it does not position gender as necessarily the main level of analysis but rather focuses on various oppressions, such as poverty, racism and imperialism, crucial to all aspects of South African society today (Hudson 2005). Oyěwùmí (2002) and other

[12] Womanism is considered as less patronizing or imperial than feminism and more directly relating to "black women's concrete history in racial and gender oppression" (Hill Collins 1996, p.10). Kolawole (2004) for instance argues that naming one's own struggle instead of using someone else's name is crucial, highlighting political meaning of 'self-naming'.

[13] A more in depth discussion of my personal understanding of these terms would be desirable, but the space here does unfortunately not allow it.

[14] Within most Western feminisms, but in my experience also African feminisms, there are intense discussions on whether and how to engage with men or even include them in the feminist movement, or whether men can call themselves feminists, highlighting the difference between womanism and many (yet not all) feminisms.

scholars moreover showed how motherhood takes on a very different meaning and political positioning within many African contexts, positioning mothers as powerful and influential instead of primarily as wife of the patriarch. African feminisms and womanism therefore engage with the broader feminist struggle and are part of the international feminist movement, such as the struggle around UNSCR1325, while specifically engaging with the lived realities of African women (Hudson 2005).

Considering the feminist critique of human security and the African feminist critique of oppression within the feminist movement, a discussion of an African human security paradigm is necessary. This African human security approach, according to Hudson (2005), is possible only if it recognises the normalised nature of global hierarchies, to which I would add the postcolonial perspective of highlighting the colonial baggage and neo-imperial[15] present of these material, political and discursive hierarchies. A postcolonial feminist perspective on peacekeeping engages critically with the ways that current security paradigms and structures, such as the UN and its peacekeeping deployments, are reproducing and refiguring historical hierarchies based on neo-imperial and neo-colonial strategies and discourses (Razack 2004; Whitworth 2004). In an unequal world that is still structured by colonial lines of power and exploitation, any actions or discourses by the 'West' to 'democratise' or 'help' the 'underdeveloped' Other need to be understood as a perpetuation of historical legacies aimed at securing the status quo. As I will discuss further in the next chapter, peacekeeping is therefore not an altruistic act of goodwill but a political project that serves its agents on various levels, from securing the status quo and markets to nation building through military deployments. As such, the discursive power of colonial histories persists until today and manages to reinvent itself with new contexts and applications. In this context, South Africa takes on a very interesting position, as it is part of the 'developing' and 'postcolonial' world, while working to secure its regional hegemony with new means, especially peacekeeping and diplomacy, which I will discuss in chapter three (Solomon 2010).

Initially described as Orientalism by Edward Said (1979) as the representation of the Arab world in the West, symbolic representations of the Other in order to produce a 'progressive'

[15] In the context of this study I define neo-imperialism as a new form of global hegemony, encompassing cultural, social, economic and political spheres, often disguised in terms such as 'globalisation', 'development' or even 'security'. International institutions, such as the United Nations, its peacekeeping deployments but specifically its powerful member states, are agents of this new imperialism, working towards a specifically defined ideal of democratic nation-state and capitalist mode of production. See for instance Schellhaas and Seegers (2009), Hudson (2012) or Whitworth (2004).

and superior 'us' are crucial to understand international politics and security paradigms; the Other is framed as having to be democratised and secured by 'our' militaries and expertise. Within these discourses women, especially black, poor and those located in the 'global South', remain to be represented (in the sense of *darstellen*) instead of re-presented (as *vertreten*), producing essentialized notions of female victimhood and peace affinity (I borrow the terminology from Spivak 1988). Even if re-presentation of women is ensured, oftentimes the subaltern is not being heard by those not oppressed, but her voice is rather co-opted into the discursive underbelly of international politics and security regimes, positing powerful narratives instead of alternatives.

A feminist postcolonial analysis of peacekeeping aims to make the naturalised and normalised discourse of liberal peace and its representations of gender visible. As such, it aims to make discursive and symbolic power visible within the broader normative discourses on gender and security. The Women, Peace and Security discourse has been structured by similar assumptions as development and broader international women's rights discourses. These position women and men as inherently different, with gender being equated with women, instead of engaging with gender as a relational analytical concept to interrogate the structural workings of power. Importantly, Hudson (2012, p. 444) points out that "[g]endered power relations are shaped and reproduced through the discourses and practices of peacebuilding actors such as the UN and key Western powers." As such, the gendered power relations and conceptualizations of the UN and UNSCR1325 specifically have direct effects on the ways that gender discourses in peacekeeping contexts are formed and practiced.

Liberal feminist approaches and language have dominated the international discourse on gender and security, normalizing and reifying the gendered structures and representations of international politics, instead of questioning the inherent power dynamics of a patriarchal, neoliberal and neo-imperial world order (Wright 2010). This is because liberal feminism aims to get women into existing structures based on the idea that women and men are basically the same and in order to realise gender equality, women merely need to be given equal access to existing institutions (Connell 1990). The effect has been a regime of gender mainstreaming, which, although at times with transformational tendencies, does not aim for actual change but rather an inclusion of women into existing frameworks and organisations, ignoring the

inherently patriarchal structures of these institutions and reifying gender essentilaisms (Benschop & Verloo 2006).[16]

Liberal feminists also argue for the inclusion of women into national armed forces on the basis that their access to all institutions will bring gender equality, while some also argue that militaries will be transformed with a 'critical mass' (usually 30%) of women (Sasson-Levy & Amram-Katz 2007). However, many feminists with more transformative politics have argued against the inclusion of women into armed forces as a way to transform these 'bastions of male power' (e.g. Enloe 1998; 2000; Whitworth 2004). Especially pacifist feminists have long rallied for the complete dissolution of armed forces and argued that through their inherently peaceful nature, women should not join militarization (e.g. the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom). This argument is based on a radical feminist perspective, which posits that there are inherent differences between men and women (Goldstein 2001). Some radical feminists have also argued that women's difference to men makes it imperative to *add* women to militaries as they bring specifically female qualities to the institution (Heinecken 2001). The current discourse of WPS works along liberal feminist lines, while also advocating for women's inclusion in peacekeeping or militaries based on an essentialized notion of gender difference interestingly borrowed from radical feminism, as I will show in the next chapter in my discussion of UNSCR1325.

Gender essentialisms reify gendered power relations through constructing gendered difference as natural and unchangeable (Smith 2001). Gender essentialisms are hence hurtful for any kind of political agenda aimed at gender justice, increasing women's representation and rights, as these only work to further unquestioningly naturalize gender difference instead of positioning gender within a socio-culturally constructivist framework. This means that gender and its assumed characteristics or identities are seen as fixed, without possibility of change, transformation or transgression. However, I agree with scholars who argue that these identities are in fact always in-the-making and differently lived in different contexts (Butler 1990). Social practices negotiate gender identities and its meanings, for which there is no room within the essentialized construction of gender, such as within UNSCR1325 (El-Bushra 2007).

Gender essentialisms have been crucial for structuring institutions and creating hierarchies. Especially militaries have been "defined, conceptualized and structured in terms of a distinction

[16] This dynamic has been termed 'malestreaming' by some authors. Instead of mainstreaming critical gender perspective that could change institutions, women are mainstreamed into male structures without interrogating the baseline of these very institutions, leading to 'malestreaming' (Solhjell 2014).

between masculinity and femininity" (Britton 2000, p.419), juxtaposing essentialist notions of manhood and masculinity, with femininity and at the same time as being gendered, producing normative notions of masculinity and femininity (Britton ibid.; Carreiras 2010). (State) Militaries are masculinist organisations, and hence value hegemonic male qualities over female qualities (Sion 2008). The extent to which militaries are gendered highlights their production and investment of gendered essentialisms that have allowed the system of extremely strict differences and hierarchies. Various feminist scholars have discussed and highlighted the gendered hierarchies of armed forces based on militarized masculinities and extreme patriarchal structures.[17] Militarized masculinities are the epitome of nationalist manhood in many contexts, tough, fearless and violent (Whitworth 2004). This was based on the construction of femininity as essentially weak, emotional and incapable of violence, excluding women from military service and hence full citizenship (Tickner 1992). On the flipside, the masculinist nature of militaries contributes to the creation of institutional sexism, racism and homophobia, as they exclude women and men that do not fit the homogenized notion of militarized masculinity. Although women and minority men[18] are now allowed in some armed forces, such as in South Africa, the institutional culture of compulsory masculinisation often persists, creating hostile and dangerous environments for those not fitting into the hypermasculine norm.

Feminist researchers have also shown the gendered nature of human rights abuses and atrocities committed by soldiers. Nevertheless, Carreiras (2010) highlights the importance of recognising change and variation, even in such strictly gendered and gendering institutions as the military. The end of the Cold War and changing nature of conflict as well as, in the South African context, the end of racist, sexist and militarized minority rule have clearly affected changes in militaries and SANDF specifically.

One way of conceptualising change within highly gendered contexts refers to degendering (Wing 2008). Degendering is a *process* in which traditional gender stereotypes, norms and divisions are erased or undone and works to reduce the power of gender as a social organising principle (Lorber 2005; Wing 2008). The homogeneity of gender groups is questioned and similarities between genders are recognised (Sasson-Levy & Amram-Katz 2007). I see considerable variability in the concept, from an initial questioning and aiming to erase

[17] See for instance Sjoberg and Via (2010), Whitworth (2004), Enloe (1998; 2000) or Carreiras (2010).
[18] As I will explain in chapter 3, in South Africa under the apartheid government, the majority of men were excluded based on the racist oppression of the apartheid regime.

imagined gendered difference in certain areas to a complete undoing of gender as a social category through erasing it as a social organising principle, as Lorber (2005; 2000) has argued. It might appear a far stretch for some feminists to see the possibility of degendering within such a gendered institution as the military. However, it is exactly because the military is based on such intense and immense masculinisation that I believe even small tendencies of degendering should be noted and discussed, as I will do in the fourth chapter.[19]

'Multidimensional' peacekeeping missions as the main site of deployment for many state militaries together with the 'gender mainstreaming' regime of many states and the United Nations furthermore highlight the importance of being sensitive to change in the gendered and gendering nature of armed forces, while a postcolonial feminist perspective reminds us of the importance of recognising perpetuations and reinventions of historical structures of exploitation, as I will highlight in my last chapter through the analysis of my participants' accounts around gender in SANDF.

Hence, in my study of the implementation of UNSCR1325, I follow feminist security theory with a postcolonial and African feminist twist, working against gender essentialisms, highlighting the reproduction of patriarchy and imperial structures while being attentive to possibilities and realities of change in the gendered and gendering structures and practices of militaries and their engagement in aiming to provide security.

1.2 Researching Peacekeeping by the South African National Defence Force

In the following paragraphs I will elaborate the way I conducted my study and the problems I faced in the process. I will explain my methods and how my positionality as a German MA student affiliated with a foreign university but with much experience and connection to South Africa affected my research. While I faced many problems with accessing the SANDF, some of my participants were incredibly helpful and supportive throughout the field work process.

[19] Many researchers have engaged very critically with SANDF and focused e.g. on the difficulties of female soldiers in peace missions (Heinecken & van der Waag-Cowling 2009), whether the addition of women 'enhances operational effectiveness' (Heinecken 2013b) or what female soldiers 'add' to SANDF (Alchin 2014). I completely understand and agree with the very critical stance, which highlights the very problematic and endemic nature of militarized masculinities and sexist gendering within militaries, too. For further reading on this in general, see Whitworth (2004), Razack (2004), Cockburn and Zarkov (2002), Kronsell (2012), Enloe (1989) amongst many others.

This affected the ways that I understood my research and created some ethical problems researchers often face especially when doing ethnographic research.

Accessing SANDF

Studying militaries or any state institution is never easy, due to the vested interests in keeping (normalized) institutional power structures in place. I was aware that gaining access to members of SANDF would be difficult, but existing studies and researchers' recommendation for more collaboration between SANDF and academia encouraged me to pursue this project. I aimed to do interviews with returned female peacekeepers in order to gage how UNSCR1325 had been implemented 'on the ground', in SANDF's peace mission deployments. The difficult and long process of gaining access to SANDF in context of the tight time constraints forced me to change my study. Instead of being able to access a relatively homogenous sample of returned female peacekeepers, I had to use 'convenience sampling', which refers to talking to those members of SANDF to whom I could gain access.[20] In hindsight I believe that this change even lead to a more fruitful research project, as I was able to speak to members who are involved in the implementation of UNSCR1325 through the Peace Mission Training Centre (PMTC), while still being able to interview some individuals who had experience 'in the field', living the ways that UNSCR1325 had been practiced during mission deployments.

The process leading up to the application for access with the Defence Intelligence (DI) was nerve wracking. Although I started contacting SANDF and individuals who had either researched or worked with the force regarding gender and transformation in early November 2014, while still in Budapest, it was only at the end of January 2015, when I had already been in South Africa for about three weeks, after countless emails, phone calls and re-referrals that I reached someone who could tell me what I needed to do in order to apply for access.[21] The application required various documents, such as my research proposal and sample questions. After a few technical hiccups, my proposal was processed and about two weeks later (ten days before I had to leave) I received a call that permission had been granted but more

[20] In addition, I had to rely on gatekeepers, making decisions whom I should/could interview, which might have biased the research, as I assume that my gatekeepers had an interest in representing SANDF in a good light, possibly choosing specific members as my interviewees.
[21] In addition, this contact had only been established through a personal connection, who in turn referred me to others in the force, who then, after about five referrals, landed me at the person of the defence intelligence who could finally tell me what I needed to do in order to apply for access.

documentation and interviewees' names were needed.[22] Some early interviewees, who I had been able to interview, as they had published their research about gender in SANDF, acted as meta-gatekeepers and helped me to provide the necessary information. After another set of technical difficulties[23] I was finally given the verbal permission to interview – days before I had to return to Budapest. Thanks to the enthusiasm and support by some of my interviewees, I was able to conduct many interviews within the last few days of my stay. Their support and the fast work of the DI made this study possible. My mentioned affirmative approach of this project was, I believe, crucial for the granting of access and the support by some participants. Unfortunately I have still not received a written confirmation, despite numerous calls and emails. The repeated verbal approval to me and different interviewees and meta-gatekeepers however was substantial enough in everyone's view for me to proceed with the study.

Interviewing SANDF Members

In my study, I was interested to gain insights that go past the official policies and numbers that can be found in reports or statistics, but actually gage what the internal discourses were around gender and peacekeeping, since these affect how policies and regulations are actually implemented. Hence, I was interested in SANDF members' perspectives and experiences with UNSCR1325 in their work, both during deployments to peace missions and in their work in South Africa and how these related to the broader discussions on the resolution. I saw interviews as the most suitable research method, as they "can provide in-depth, detailed accounts of how gendered practices are actually carried out within institutions as well as of how gendered identities are constructed and contested" (Kronsell 2006, p.121). Semi-structured interviews moreover allowed participants to voice their perceptions and experiences in their own terms, allowing for 'thicker' insights that potentially go beyond my own ideas (Punch 2005).

My study mainly draws on thirteen interviews with members of the SANDF that took place in February and March 2015, in participants' offices or other quiet and secluded spaces within

[22] While I was waiting for clearance, I talked to different experts on USNCR1325 in South Africa, members of NGOs and could talk to some members about their publications around gender in SANDF. All these conversations and research informed this thesis.
[23] These difficulties were related to the necessity to fax my documents instead of emailing, which did not always work as expected. My time pressure obviously added to these hiccups, as things could have been much easier had there been more time.

the direct vicinity of their work place, usually in some kind of military base or area, located in or around Pretoria.[24] I conducted one interview in my participant's home as this was more convenient for both of us, due to our busy schedules. I voice recorded and then transcribed the interviews when possible, while taking notes on subtler cues during and after the interview. I also interviewed three experts who have studied SANDF and peacekeeping for years or have experience in military peacekeeping. Their insights were crucial for my background knowledge. In addition, I recorded field notes during my visits at the different military sites and offices, taking note of the more subtle interactions and environmental context to give me a 'thicker' understanding of the SANDF and to position my interviews. Moreover, different institutional documents and policies, such as the Gender Mainstreaming Policy, were crucial to provide the frame of my inquiry and informed the discussions with my participants.

The context of the military as an institution and subsequent issues of difficulty of access, the disclosure of information to SANDF, sensitivity of information also for national intelligence and its international reputation in connection with the risk my interviewees took[25] to talk to me allowed me to only ask certain questions. For instance, I was weary of asking questions about sexual harassment without interviewees' raising the topic, as this is a very contentious and not discussed topic within the 'cultural context' of SANDF, despite its pandemic nature in South African society (van den Berg et al. 2013).

I had an interview guide, which I adapted to the specific participants I was talking to. For instance, I asked former peacekeepers directly about their experience during missions while I asked trainers in PMTC about their trainees' reactions to gender training. The semi-structured nature of my interviews allowed me to be generally flexible so that our conversations could move in directions that my participants deemed important. Moreover, Pillow and Mayo (2007, p.165) argue that "analysing data cannot be separate from data collection." Hence, my questions to participants evolved slightly by virtue of getting to know more and more about SANDF and its gender structures. Nevertheless, I had various core questions that I asked all participants, mostly about their perception and experience regarding a 'gender perspective' and

[24] The context of my interviews contributed to me understanding the military context better and to immerse myself more in the logic and social context of military life. For instance, being surrounded exclusively by people in uniform and having to undergo constant security checks was intimidating, while my getting through security was an empowering feeling.

[25] These risks mostly referred to the closed nature of the military and the potential repercussions, both personal and professional, for my interviewees to support my research both by talking to me about the sensitive issue of gender within SANDF but also their active support to refer me to other individuals for interviews.

women's participation in peacekeeping deployments as well as the military more generally. The interview guide is attached (Appendix A).[26]

I analysed the interviews by coding and recoding, searching for themes in a deductive way to gain an understanding of the framing of UNSCR1325 by my interviewees and the effects of UNSCR1325 on their work. I paid specific attention to critiques of UNSCR1325, as described in the next chapter and the mentioned affirmative stance towards the research venture.

My Participants

My sample was rather diverse due to the difficult circumstances of access and time pressure. Since the DI required me to submit the names of my interviewees and since my pool of participants was rather small, I had to be very careful to anonymize all parts of their positionality and identity that might allow their identification. Next to using pseudonyms for all participants I concealed their ranks, location, and sometimes background or experience. While this affected the way I could write about my research and my participants, I do not believe that it had a large impact on the core findings of my study. Because I was dependent on the mentioned meta-gatekeepers, many of my interviewees work one way or another with gender in SANDF, for instance as trainers, as policy makers or as leaders of 'gender structures.' Other departments are affiliated with these gender focused structures by collaboration, such as for training or policy implementation.[27]

Eight of my participants work within the broader gender structures of the SANDF or have worked as part of them in the past, while two interviewees indirectly engage with the structures through their work in a different area of SANDF and three participants work in a completely different area of the military and have had no interaction with these gender specific structures, except for maybe short modules during their readiness trainings. Of my thirteen participants, eight identify as women while five identify as men and seven participants had been deployed to a peace mission at least once, but in very different capacities. Few had been deployed as soldiers, while some were deployed in supportive functions. I did not ask my participants for

[26] My interest in the ways that my participants engaged with the popular discourses about UNSCR1325 and women in peacekeeping generally led me to ask questions that might have been leading. I was aware of this possibility during my fieldwork and tried to ask these questions in a more probing way, making it easy to disagree, in order to minimise leading my participants' responses.
[27] See note 8.

their age or racial and ethnic identification. Hence the following are assumptions based on their names and language preference:[28] six interviews were black, four white and three coloured.[29] The sample was also very mixed with regards to ranks and seniority status. However, most participants had been in the SANDF for years and hence none of them were from the lowest ranks.

Although not representative of SANDF members, my group of participants probably even led to more interesting and original results than interviewing peacekeepers from the broader spectrum of SANDF, as for instance done by Heinecken (2013) or Schoeman et al. (2010). There is no research yet on the conceptualization and implementation of UNSCR1325 in the SANDF and none on the ways that gender and gender perspectives are understood within the gender structures. Therefore my sample is in fact very interesting, since most of the interviewees are the ones who are responsible for the implementation and conceptualization of UNSCR1325: they decide what should be added to the training of peacekeepers, how important structural measures are to increase women's presence etc.

My Participants and I: A Note on Positionality

Importantly, as Hesse-Biber and Piatelli (2007, p.505) point out, "[r]esearchers are interpreting and creating texts at every juncture of the process". Hence, my positionality affected all phases of my project, from conceptualization to interviewing, transcribing and analysis, producing partial, situated knowledge (Bhavnani 1994). Moreover, according to DeVault and Gross (2007, p. 179) "researchers are always working with accounts constructed linguistically, that experience recounted is always emergent in the moment, that telling requires a listener and that the listening shapes the account as well as the telling, that both telling and listening are shaped by discursive histories [...]." Therefore, the research encounter in terms of interviews is a *mutual* creation of knowledge, in which the positionality of participants and researcher and their relations directly shape the knowledge produced; my presence, listening, transcribing and

[28] In South Africa, racial groups are mostly congruent with linguistic groups, although the recent years have brought more variation, with some black South Africans growing up with English as their first language instead of their parents' mother tongue (also as a result of lack of institutionalisation of all 11 official languages).
[29] Racial categories in South Africa are still based on those used during apartheid oppression. Coloured is an ethnic and social group in South Africa.

later reading of the interviews interacts with my participants' reading of me and understanding of my questions as well as their expectations.

Similar to Edwards' recommendation (in DeVault & Gross 2007, p.181), in most interviews I directly addressed my positionality as a white German MA student who had studied and lived in South Africa for four years. This served on the one hand to create a common ground, as I signalled that I knew South Africa well, but also excluded me from the racial and historical tensions endemic in South African social contexts. As such, I was a white young woman, but I was a foreigner and hence not 'as white' as South African whites.[30] This outsider yet insider position put me in a middle ground, which seemed to make it easy for some white and black participants to speak about racial tensions and specificities. My position as an outsider to the military moreover allowed me to ask basic questions that might have seemed obvious for those within the institution.[31] However, it also most probably limited my research in various ways, such as possibilities of access or interpretative power due to my incomplete understanding of the institution and realities of deployment.

DeVault and Gross (2007) mention "strategic disclosure" as a way that feminists have experimented with reflexivity. Strategically disclosing my politics but also my positionality were crucial for my access and for most of my interviews, especially with participants within the gender structures. For instance, I engaged with some of their published writing on gender work within SANDF. In this way, I was able to talk to two women who, as I could gage through their writing and political statements, had similar politics and aims as I did in my research. I therefore revealed my politics and part of my own history to them, not only as a strategic move but also as a way to create relational interview process in which power was not as clearly demarcated. Nevertheless, in most interviews I tried to follow Klatch by "defin[ing] my own role in terms of listening and absorbing the other worldview" (in DeVault & Gross 2007, p. 183) during my conversations in order to gage my participants perceptions. This was especially important with interviewees who were not in gender structures, since we did not have the assumed or perceived 'common ground' of working with gender issues.

[30] This has to do with South Africa's history of racist minority oppression and the still normalized nature of racism in every sphere of society. As a foreigner, I am usually understood as not automatically complicit in the institutionalized and normalized racism that black South Africans have to face on a daily basis.

[31] Carol Cohn (2006) writes about a similar experience in her research of US security discourses in her early days as a researcher. Because she was a woman in a male dominated context to which she was an outsider, she was seen as naïve and could ask questions that she could later, as a middle aged college professor, not ask as such anymore.

The difficulties of access and specific context of the military created very interesting relations of power and alliance during the research process. I was dependent on the organisation for access but also on some of my earlier participants as meta-gatekeepers, since they actively engaged in helping me, giving them power vis-à-vis my positioning as applicant in need for help. Some of these participants were, in turn, my gatekeepers' juniors and hence might have been ordered or told to take part in the interview.[32] Considering the military is an intensely hierarchical organisation, this might have induced the possibility of social desirability biases, since participants were aware of the political 'coalition' between me and their superiors, despite my assurance to each participant that their accounts would be kept anonymous. Nevertheless, since most interviewees in one way or another were working in the gender machinery of SANDF and were aware of my field of study, we had a level of connection on the basis of the shared interest in gender and equality. At least to a certain extent, this created a trust and understanding between us, allowing us to have a relatively open conversation; yet could have also led to social desirability bias.[33]

Language also affected our conversations, as hardly any of my interviewees were native English speakers and some might not have had the terminology to phrase gender discussions in a differentiated way. This affected the power relations, as I, a white foreigner with good command of English, was in a linguistic position of power but issues of translatability might also have affected the meanings of my participants' accounts.[34] This potentially affected the courage of participants to voice certain opinions or experiences, despite my positioning as an insider-outsider.

Researching the Military as a Feminist Pacifist? Some Ethical Conundrums

I think we, as feminists, need to constantly make a split between political and conceptual necessities of the real life situations we find ourselves in without losing track of our principal political standpoints. Yet, we should not be stuck in our principal convictions but open for surprises and the unexpected. Studying the military was one of those exercises, which, for me,

[32] I nevertheless made sure that they took part voluntarily and explained that they can withdraw at any time, without any repercussions.
[33] As my analysis will show, this 'common ground' might have meant very different things to different participants.
[34] Here, I am referring to the different symbolic and cosmological underpinnings of different languages and their cultural contexts, producing different meaning when translated to English.

are inherently structured by contradictions and difficult personal and political choices. Can I conscientiously study the military as a postcolonial feminist with tendencies toward pacifism and anarchism? And if so, is it possible to do this from an affirmative perspective? How can I, as a complete outsider to military and with no experience whatsoever of armed conflict, write about these institutions and contexts ethically? Whom should my political alliance be with – women in the military as the disempowered or as militarized agents? I agree with Woolf (in Cock 1994, p.168) that instead of seeing women becoming militarized, I would rather see men being freed from militarisation as a way to affirm masculinity. But these contradictions and questions are what make this research venture so exciting; it is a whole new world that I am studying, of which I had and still have many strong assumptions but I had to be open to the arguments and understandings of my participants.[35]

An important and recurring problem in my engagements with feminist critique of UNSCR1325 and the broader WPS regime was the split between political principle and real life necessity. I find myself constantly drawn between the necessity of political and theoretical critique of international treaties and resolutions, based on feminist postcolonial notions of transformation (which I will elaborate on in the next chapter) and the problems of engaging with the realities faced by many women living in contexts of armed conflict every day. As a German-born, middle class woman who has never lived in a war torn context, my expertise clearly lies within the theoretical and discursive critique. However, I am wary of the paralysing nature of much of the critiques that I support, since they attack the few political tools available for many women in conflict contexts. Yes, there are many problems with the Women, Peace and Security paradigm as it is now, but is it not better than nothing? Can I critique the workings of an institution that I feel extremely alienated by and am principally against in a context that I have never even closely experienced nor directly studied?

Moreover, Higate and Cameron (2006, p.221) argue that, "[o]ver the years, military agendas tend to have skewed military sociology toward an empirical focus with most social science investigations of war and peace [...] designed [...] to make the armed forces more efficient and effective." Wanting to approach the SANDF from an affirmative perspective, I had to keep myself in check in order not to fall into this trap. I had to remind myself that my aim was not to make the military more efficient but ultimately to contribute to transformation of militaries

[35] This is a heritage of my studies in anthropology, where I internalized the mantra to "de-familiarize the familiar and familiarize the unfamiliar".

and military deployments through critically engaging with the gender discourses within SANDF and pointing to positive tendencies that are suggesting possibilities of change. It is incredible how the militarist ideology can become so consuming within such a short time.

An important ethical conundrum was, moreover, the personal relationships I formed and the crucial support by some of my interviewees and contributors to my study and the danger of betraying their trust and support. Stacey (1988, p.23) highlights the problems of betrayal in doing ethnographic research, in which "fieldwork represents an intrusion and intervention into a system of relationships, a system of relationships that the researcher is far freer than the researched to leave". Although I did not do extensive ethnographic research and only spent rather little time with my participants, some took considerable risk, spent time and energy on supporting my research and showed trust in me and my project. The age difference and specific social relations of black South African culture together with a political and personal sympathy between us led me to feel close and somewhat indebted to these women.[36] Hugging for goodbyes[37] and well wishes moreover strengthened these bonds, making me wary of the way I analyse and understand their accounts and what statements or arguments I can make with my research project more generally. Stacey (ibid., p. 23) argues that "the research product is ultimately that of the researcher" and the social relations and trust with and by my participants made we very wary of betraying their support through writing about their work, experiences and perceptions. Although Stacey further argues that there is no way not to betray either feminist research ethics or the researched, I believe that my initial affirmative stance allowed me to find an adequate balance between critical analysis and alliance with my participants.

[36] I was even told by one of them that "You now always have a home in Pretoria. When you come back, you should visit."

[37] This might not appear odd or meaningful in regular social contexts, but considering that I was studying the military within a militaristic setting of bases and headquarters, with strict control and code of conduct, these acts are quite a leap – at least they felt that way.

2. Peacekeeping and the Women, Peace and Security Agenda: Women as a Gift to Peacekeeping?

Gender has always played a role in peacekeeping, as in all other spheres of society and politics. While peacekeeping has been undergoing crucial changes since the end of the Cold War, it was only in the year 2000 that the genderedness of conflict and peacekeeping were officially acknowledged by international institutions through the unanimous adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR1325). The resolution was the first policy framework on the UN level that acknowledged the different impact of war and armed conflict on men and women, highlighted the specifically gendered nature of conflict and pointed to the gendered vulnerabilities of women and girls in conflict. UNSCR1325 has since been hailed by the vast majority of actors, organisations, scholars and political forces as a "watershed" in international relations and for women's rights and protection during and after armed conflict (Miller et al. 2014; Anderlini 2007).

2.1 UNSCR1325: Bringing Gender into the Discussion of International Security

UNSCR1325 forms part of a path in international governance aiming to recognize and advocate women's rights that succeeded in creating increased gender awareness in the context of international relations and politics. The resolution acknowledges that women and girls bear the brunt of much armed conflict, the necessity to prevent and prosecute sexualised and gender based violence against civilians, and the urgency to consider the specific needs of women and girls in conflict contexts. Importantly, UNSCR1325 for the first time stresses the importance of women's equal participation in peacekeeping on all levels, and urges member states to increase women's representation in national, regional and international institutions. This is arguably one of the crucial tenets of the resolution and has been the main focus of my research venture.

There have been a range of follow-up resolutions adopted in the years since UNSCR1325, all reiterating the main aims of UNSCR1325, with different emphases.[38] The most recent one,

[38] The most recent ones deserve specific mentioning, since UNSCR 2106 (2013) "signals an important paradigm shift in how the international community does gender" as it is the first resolution that mentions men and boys as affected by sexualised violence (Dolan 2014, p.80). Other follow up resolutions are 1820 (2008) and 1888

Resolution 2122 (2013), deserves special mentioning, as it "encourages"[39] contributing countries to increase the number of women amongst their troops and police officers and to ensure gender training for all deployed individuals. UNSCR2122 also "encourages" the UN to provide adequate training guidelines and mentions the intention of a High Level Review in 2015 to gauge the implementation and effect of UNSCR1325 so far.[40] Since these follow-up resolutions only occasionally add to the initial outline of action and intentions of UNSCR1325, UNSCR1325 has remained an umbrella term, the main tool and guiding resolution for both governmental and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), as well as researchers, politicians and activists. This is how I use and refer to UNSCR1325 in my study, too.

The passing of UNSCR1325 was only possible due to the persistent, strategic work and pressure by various women's NGOs on the UN body and is a product of intensive consultation with NGOs and the UN NGO Working Group as well as the support of UN member states, specifically Canada and Namibia (Miller et al. 2014; Barnes 2011). However, the resolution also more broadly represents part of a larger genealogy of concerns over women's equal rights in the international arena that also culminated in the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), adopted in 1979 and the Beijing Platform for Action adopted at the 4th World Conference on Women in 1995. In addition, the emergence of UNSCR1325 also specifically relates to the gendered nature of conflict that first gained broad attention during the Yugoslav wars in the early 1990s, where reports of sexualised violence as a 'weapon of war' gained massive attention and was henceforth acknowledged as a war crime. It was moreover increasingly hard to ignore the very gendered nature of the UN's peacekeeping efforts that had been repeatedly highlighted by reports of sexualised and misogynist atrocities and exploitation committed by UN peacekeepers, whether in context of Cambodia, Timor Leste, Bosnia, the DRC or Somalia (Grady 2010).[41]

(2009), reaffirming UNSCR1325 and specifically addresses sexualised violence during conflict. UNSCR1889 (2009) further highlights the issue of women's equal participation on all levels of negotiation and peace building. UNSCR1960 (2010) refers to the reporting, analysis and prosecute perpetrators of sexualised violence. UNSCR2106 (2013) calls for an end to impunity for perpetrators of sexualised violence and for the operationalization of UNSCR 1325.

[39] Note the weak language.

[40] UN Women is currently conducting this High Level Review. For more information, see http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/women-peace-security/1325-review-and-global-study

[41] Nevertheless, it is also important to keep in mind Simić's (2012)critique of the blanket prohibition of all sexual relations between peacekeepers and local women by the UN. Instead of allowing women the freedom of choice and agency in choosing to have sexual relations with peacekeepers, the complete ban on sexual contact effectively "treats all women as victims" and hence adds to a victimization of local women (Simić 2012, p.167).

Today, reports about peacekeepers' sexual abuse of those they are supposed to protect also feature repeatedly in the media.[42] Yet, the mechanisms to prosecute peacekeepers have proven to be rather ineffective (Simić 2010). UNSCR1325 aimed to, among other things, address the gendered problems in peacekeeping through increasing women's representation and through employment of a gender perspective in its peacekeeping structures and planning. Moreover, feminists increasingly engaged in a broader international political arena as researchers and policy makers, working to highlight the gendered structures and power relations of what was previously understood as gender neutral, such as the emerging notion of human security. This increased focus on people rather than states, as elaborated in the previous chapter, also contributed to UNSCR1325 and the broader gendering of the security sectors.

2.2 Problems with UNSCR1325

Despite the 'watershed' nature of UNSCR1325, many authors have pointed to a range of problems of implementation and inherent shortcomings of the resolution. Firstly, although UNSCR1325 aimed to address different issues within peacekeeping as conducted by the UN, it did so mostly by calling on member states to make changes and made little commitments itself. Importantly, the UN did not realize any mechanisms to ensure the actual implementation of the resolution by member states. This is a similar dynamic to peacekeeping contexts more broadly, as member states are responsible for preparation, training and disciplining of peacekeepers. Hence, the UN is not made directly responsible by adopting UNSCR1325, producing it rather as a symbolic call for action.[43]

In fact, different studies have found that UNSCR1325 has had very little direct effect. For instance, there has been little advancement in participation of women in peacekeeping efforts, with only 3.5% of military peacekeepers in UN missions were women in 2014 (Fröhlich et al. 2014).[44] The impunity for peacekeepers has not changed much, with very little attention paid

[42] At the time of writing, a new scandal developed, in which a report about the abuse of children by French peacekeepers in the Central African Republic (UN mission MINUSCA) was leaked to French officials. The UN aid worker who had forwarded the information to France, supposedly because the UN did not act upon the accusations and prove of the abuse, has been suspended (Laville 2015). This incident is just the tip of the iceberg of the ways that UN peacekeepers have been involved in grave human rights abuses when on mission and painfully illustrates the way that such crimes are being dealt with within the United Nations.
[43] See Shephard (2008) for an insightful in depth study of the symbolic productions of and within UNSCR1325.
[44] According to Beilstein (1998), in 1993, there were only 1.7 % women in military deployments to UN peace missions. Hence, within 21 years, women's proportionate participation as military peacekeepers has only increased by 1.8%.

to tackling sexualised violence perpetrated by members of peace keeping missions, and hardly any peacekeepers get punished for these crimes (Jansson 2013; Dharmapuri 2011; Willett 2010; Onyejekwe 2005).[45] There has also been little change in the training and preparation of peacekeepers for their missions, with no direct increase in the budget for peacekeeping training and little support from the United Nations to its member states to support the implementation of gender specific training for peacekeeping, as called for by UNSCR1325 (Dharmapuri 2011). It has also been argued that the imprecise or 'woolly' wording has led to little force behind the resolution (Gumru & Fritz 2009). On the other hand though, this has also had a positive effect as it is easily adaptable to various contexts and cultural understandings. This is a contentious argument, as the wording and content of the resolution is clearly culturally specific, such as the inherent notions of female victimhood. Nevertheless, in my research the imprecise wording has proven to have positive effects for those engaging and using the resolution for greater attention to gender perspectives in training and the military in general.

The UN eventually acknowledged the lack of implementation mechanisms and in 2008 the Secretary General called for all member states to implement a National Action Plan (NAP) for UNSCR1325. As mentioned, my research team revealed that the countries with NAPs actually sent fewer women to peace missions than those that have not (Fröhlich et al. 2014). Thus it appears, at least with regards to representivity in military deployments that NAPs have had no effect on the implementation of 1325.[46]

Researchers and activists have pointed to various further inherent weaknesses in the resolution and the UN system that are at the root of the problems with the implementation of UNSCR1325. For the purpose of my study, it is more important to highlight some of the most pertinent problems inherent in discursive productions of 'women' and 'gender' within UNSCR1325 from a deconstructivist approach. As I will show in Chapter 4, these discursive productions are directly linked to my participants' narratives of their work with UNSCR1325 and their experiences during peace missions.[47]

[45] This is especially due to the fact that every contributing state is responsible for actions against peacekeepers who have committed crimes, leaving the UN out of any responsibility and making it easy for member states to brush over their peacekeepers committed atrocities.
[46] In 2014, there were 43 National Action Plans (Iknowpolitics 2015).
[47] For further reading on the institutional shortcomings of UNSCR1325, please refer to Chinkin and Charlesworth (2006), Dhamapouri (2011) and Willett (2010).

UNSCR 1325 reinforces and reifies conservative and uncritical notions of gender essentialisms that effectively work against feminist projects of critical gender analyses and transformative feminist approaches in peace and conflict situations aiming to overcome patriarchal and neo-imperial power relations. The bulk of the resolution is based on various essentialisms of gender, especially relating to the identity of women.[48] As mentioned earlier, gender essentialisms are also intimately connected to patriarchal socio-political structures, which are based on the naturalisation of gender characteristics and their hierarchies. Gender essentialisms work to produce gender binaries and roles as fixed and given instead of showing that gender is always in-the-making (El-Bushra 2007; Butler 1990). This happens through, on the one hand, reproducing conservative assumptions about what 'woman' is and how she behaves (in conflict situations) as well as by not pointing out that 'man' is a gendered identity that needs to be problematized (Carpenter 2006). Binary gender difference is taken for granted through the basis of the resolution and its contextualization within the field of WPS and especially peacekeeping homogenizing and universalizing act, in which women are understood as a unitary, homogenous group of Others. This group does not have to be differentiated by class, age, religion, political affiliation or cultural location, but only in terms of gender/sex.

A related problem, which is rather implicit, is the conflation of 'gender' with 'women', a very common and oft-criticized pitfall in much gender/women legislation.[49] This works to re-centre the centre, to position men and boys as the norm, as un-gendered, while women and girls can never escape their difference to 'mainstream', due to their genderedness. It also discursively produces women as a special interest group, which further reinforces the already special status of women in context of military peacekeeping or the military generally. The mainstreaming of gender perspectives then appears unnecessary; the implication is that we are, after all, dealing with a minority that does not belong 'here' (peacekeeping) anyway.[50]

[48] This is however also rather characteristic for policies or resolution, as these (are supposed to) build upon research and specific knowledge. Within policies themselves, there is not supposed to be reference to research or findings, which clearly makes these texts very difficult to take for granted, without even a reference to research that informs the specific policy. This then necessitates the question whether or how much the UN and other governing bodies can be agents of transformation in a feminist sense. Clearly, the UN and liberal notions of statehood and democracy are highly gendered and masculinist.

[49] See for instance Charlesworth (2008).

[50] This discourse is clearly evident in UN peace missions, as there is hardly any gender disaggregated data available and gender is not even recognized or referred to in reports of headquarters without a specific gender officer (Puechguirbal 2010)

The gender essentialisms in UNSCR135 proscribe men and women to stereotypical gender roles, and deny the possibility for action outside of these stereotypes. UNSCR1325 mentions women always in connection with children, simultaneously assuming that women are the exclusive caretakers while also presenting women as equal to children (or girls), at least in context of need for protection and civilian status (Puechguirbal 2010; Otto 2009; Sivakumaran 2007). Moreover, it is assumed that women-and-children affected by conflict are necessarily civilians, completely ignoring the many women actively engaged in armed conflict and many men not involved in fighting. This discursively produces all (local) men as potential aggressors, while all women-and-children are considered innocent and without agency in conflict contexts. This, in turn, reifies women and children as innocent, morally pure and inherently peace affinitive. The supposed natural peace affinity of women is then argued to make them as 'especially useful' as peacekeepers (Simić 2010).

The essentialization of woman-nature as inherently peaceful and maternal effectively produces women not-as-political, as soft and passive, as clearly and always opposed to war making, which is more aggressive and assertive than peaceful peacemaking for which women could, according to UNSCR1325, be useful (Simić 2014).[51] These essentilaisms could be understood as affirmative, in the sense Fox (1996) and Helms (2003) have used the concept of affirmative essentialisms. They argue that gender essentialisms can also work to turn the initial intention of essentialisms inside out: the same qualities that are seen as making women inadequate as soldiers, such as empathy, ability to cooperate and peace affinity, are the exact same qualities that the argument for increased women in peace missions is now based on (at least to a large part).

Importantly though, this essentialization limits women's contribution to peacekeeping to the non-fighting arena, directly contradicting what is called for in the resolution: the increased involvement of women in *all* areas of peacekeeping missions. Hence, women are only 'useful' as gendered women in the peace missions, but never as soldiers; it is only their specific femaleness that justifies their participation (Simić 2014; Heinecken 2013a). Women can

[51] Peaceful peacemaking is the role attached to women in context of UNSCR1325. This means that women's participation is especially and mostly necessitated in '"efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, [...] conflict prevention and resolution" (§5), "maintenance and promotion of international peace and security" (§10), "as military observers and civilian police, human rights and humanitarian personnel", i.e. in the peaceful part of peace making (or as observers of the military part), contrasting the implication of men as those 'enforcing' peace (of course, there are contestations regarding the possibility of either variant of peacemaking, with many feminists arguing the latter to be a paradox (e.g. Cynthia Cockburn).

therefore never escape their genderedness. UNSCR1325 confines them to traditional notions of womanhood, lacking any possibility of transformation or substantial gender analysis.

Because civil society still mainly uses UNSCR1325 as a tool for rallying for gender perspectives and women's rights in (post)-conflict contexts, we are now in a contradictory entanglement where patriarchal and conservative notions of gender are used to justify women's rights and gender transformation. The resolution has also had rather discouraging results on the broader discourses in the Women, Peace and Security literature and practice. For instance, Charlesworth (2008) has noted how the idea of inherent peacefulness of women is becoming an 'orthodoxy' in international institutions.

Similarly, the literature on WPS has shown tendencies to produce women as peaceful and fall into the same discursive productions of binary essentialisms as UNSCR1325; Carreiras (2010) for instance highlights that women generally improve peace missions.[52] As such, there is now research about the actual enhancement of operational effectiveness by having women as part of the mission, reiterating the genderedness of women while ignoring the genderedness of men and basing women's equal rights on their 'usefulness' in peacekeeping. Similarly, Heinecken (2013) has argued that the increasing importance of UNSCR1325 in discourses around peacekeeping has led to a change of basing women's inclusion into peacekeeping from human rights approach to the 'added value' of women. This is, as I will show, especially damaging within a South African context as the post-apartheid discourse of equal human rights appears to being co-opted by these popular discourses around women's specific additions to peacekeeping.[53]

The recently increasing emergence of gender and security engagements and scholarship, seems to be stuck in a rut of essentialisms. Although this is a rather discouraging state of the art, I think that we need to also bear in mind that although the resolution has inherent pitfalls, its roots come from a point of feminist engagements for gender justice that goes beyond mere essentialisms and conventional notions of female victimhood and male perpetrators. Hence, I

[52] Also see Heinecken (2013b), Olsson (2000)or Stiehm (1997).
[53] Many feminists have also reinforced the idea of women as inherently peaceful, such as for instance widely and repeatedly articulated during the recent 100th anniversary of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom in The Hague, seemingly oblivious to the effect this has on the position of women in international politics. Blanchard (2003) further points out Reardon's (1996) book "Sexism and the War System", while Sarah Ruddick (1990) also highlights women's maternal role as creating women as inherently peaceful.

believe that, despite its problems created through travelling through the UN system and past various ideologies and worldviews, its effects can and do incite processes and engagements that effectively reconnect to the initial transformative vision and power of the resolution.

Since I am interested in the effect and understanding of UNSCR1325 in the context of South Africa's military peacekeeping, I will now outline a brief history of UN peacekeeping engagements and its political and gendered implications. This serves to create a background upon which to understand South African peacekeeping engagements, in order to situate and make sense of the conceptualisation and implementation of UNSCR1325 by SANDF.

2.3 Peacekeeping

When South Africa started engaging in UN peace missions at the end of the 1990s, peacekeeping was deep into a process of crucial changes from the end of the Cold War, with operations vastly increasing in size and number as well as addressing the changing nature of conflict (Whitworth 2004; Kaldor 1999; Duffey 1998). The first peacekeeping mission was initiated by the UN in 1948.[54] At the outset, peacekeeping was understood as monitoring ceasefires or separation of armed forces after inter-state wars through unarmed military personnel and were dependent on the consent of all parties involved (Pugh 2013; Marten 2004). Today, much of peacekeeping happens without the direct consent of fighting fractions; peacekeepers are armed and increasingly involved in fighting action. The changes in peacekeeping after the Cold War have mostly been a result of the Security Council now being able to act more effectively, authorising more missions with broader mandates, and due to the changing nature of conflicts (Duffey 1998). Kaldon (1999, p. 2) describes that these 'new wars' "involve a blurring of the distinction between war, organised crime and large-scale violations of human rights", based on identity-politics and hence have lead to an enormous increase in civilian casualties and refugees.

[54] In this fist mission unarmed peacekeepers were deployed in order to monitor the ceasefire between Israel and its Arab neighbours. The specific definition of peacekeeping depends on how broad the term is understood, as either only encompassing the UN efforts under the banner of peacekeeping or broader as being any effort engaged in conflict resolution, such as by the League of Nations or the Westphalia treaties (MacQueen 2006). For the purpose of this thesis, I will refer to peacekeeping as referring to the UN style efforts of peacekeeping missions.

However, some postcolonial critics have argued that the new rationale of increased peacekeeping engagements is not due to the increase and change in conflict, rather peacekeeping missions work to legitimise sustained militarisation even after the Cold War, pointing to the political meaning of peacekeeping as a rather paternalist act of 'Western' nations over weaker states (Orford 1999; Whitworth 2004). While seemingly a noble and selfless task aimed at saving civilians, these scholars have shown that military peacekeeping is often motivated rather by imperial tendencies, aiming to increase powerful states' influence and secure political and economic interests.[55] The basic idea of building peace is arguably based on a notion of liberal peace of democratic societies, which should be expanded to all peoples across the world (Marten 2004). This also means that only democratic societies modelled on the western liberal notion of a nation state and capitalist economic system can really be at peace, which becomes especially obvious when one considers the deployment of peacekeepers only to certain conflicts and not others. In effect, peacekeeping missions are not un-political interference for the greater good or motivated by humanitarian concerns, but rather have a very specific aim of creating societies that fit into the liberal democratic capitalist world system. They do not negatively affect other states with their insecurity – and do not threaten the status quo of this world system. These missions therefore also have to be seen as democratising or westernisation missions, with the explicit aim of creating institutions and a governing system modelled along the Western liberal ideal (Pugh 2013; Marten 2004). This completely refutes the various baseline norms upon which the UN has rested, such as state sovereignty, the right of every state to "choose its political, economic, social and cultural system, without the interference on any form by another state" and the right of self-determination of peoples (UN Declaration 1965 in Pugh 2013, p. 400). Hence, it has been widely argued that peacekeeping is rather a form of neo-imperialism, aiming to impose certain governance systems and later economic structures upon weaker states with the aim of stability, influence and world system maintenance (Marten 2004).

With the cessation of the Cold War, direct political influence on states decreased and peacekeeping has become "perhaps the major instrument of diplomacy available to the United Nations for insuring peace and international security" (Rubinstein cited in Whitworth 2005,

[55] It is of course important to also not ignore the real benefit peace keeping missions have for many civilians and the conundrum of a 'responsibility' of the international community to protect civilians from atrocities. Unfortunately, a broader discussion of these problems is out of the scope of this thesis. See Chandler(2004), Marten (2004), Orford (1999), Razack (2004), Rubinstein (2010), Whitworth (2004) for further reading.

p3). The size and frequency of deployments of peacekeepers expanded dramatically.[56] Considering these numbers, Whitworth (2004) argues that the international militarisation through peacekeeping deployments emerges as a crucial international trend.

As a result of the failures of UN peacekeeping for instance in Rwanda or Srebrenica, where ethnic mass killings were committed under the direct eyes of UN peacekeepers, the mandate for peacekeeping now involves the direct use of force not only for self-protection but also for the protection of civilians. This was a massive change in the way that peacekeeping was understood and effectively practiced. These changes are continuing with the new mandate of the Force Intervention Brigade in the UN mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO), which extends the mandate of MONUSCO peacekeeping forces to carry out offensive attacks on insurgents in the DRC (Nduwimana 2014).[57] As such, the UN is now directly involved in actual *war making* instead of only peacekeeping, further raising questions of the actual political mandates of the UN and its powerful members.

Despite its call with UNSCR1325 and some of its follow-ups to specifically provide training for peacekeepers that relates to gender and sexualised violence, that would prepare both male and female peacekeepers for the broader tasks of peacekeeping, the UN does not provide (and also does not have) any resources for training soldiers for the specific peace mission situation or expectations.[58] Some countries, such as South Africa, can afford specific peace mission training initiatives or courses, but according to Andre Roux (2015), a consultant trainer and former peacekeeper, many forces are sent to peace missions without any kind of preparation other than their basic military training.[59] Hence, peacekeepers are not trained, prepared or equipped to deal with the difficult context and tasks in peacekeeping missions (Lyytikäinen 2007). [60]

[56] In 1992, 12,000 military peacekeepers were deployed, by the end of 1994, a total of 79,948 peacekeepers were in UN missions and in October 2010 the number of UN peacekeepers rose to 98,596 (Pugh 2013; Slim 1995).
[57] This mandate was adopted under UN SC resolution 2098, after the emergence and successes of M23 rebels in the Kivu region (Nduwimana 2014).
[58] There are some guidelines provided by the UN, but no direct training or support for training.
[59] However, the South African Peace Mission Training Centre is financially supported by the USA, UK and Canada (Helfrich 2013).
[60] Because of this, some organisations are investing heavily in the training of peacekeepers, such as Training for Peace by the Norwegian government. Training for Peace is an initiative that trains civilian and police personnel for peace missions in various skills. There are gender advisor trainings and specific trainings relating to sexualised violence and abuse in context of conflict for police personnel.

The lack of training is also partially due to the inadequacy of financing for peacekeeping (Pugh 2013).[61] While national militaries are responsible for all the training, mission readiness, transport and equipment of their deployed forces,[62] the UN pays national militaries a salary per soldier, plus small stipends for food, etc. Peacekeepers receive a much higher wage when on peace mission deployment than when in their home country, a great incentive especially for soldiers from lower income countries to volunteer for missions (in addition to the important practical experience). Schoeman et al. (2010) for example found that one of the main motivations for South African peacekeepers to volunteer for peace missions was the much higher income; my interviewees similarly mentioned it as a very welcome benefit. This motivation questions the 'benevolent' nature of peacekeeping and hence the conduct of military peacekeepers.

Importantly, peace missions today are 'multidimensional'. Instead of only focusing on keeping parties from fighting, tasks and responsibilities now refer broadly to 'lay[ing the] foundations for peace', which paradoxically includes increasing the presence and competencies of military personnel (Marten 2004). As such, peacekeeping is not what it appears to be, i.e. the *keeping of peace*, but rather works to create conditions of negative peace, the absence of fighting, in order to start the process of building peace.[63] According to the UN DPKO website peacekeeping aims to "maintain peace and security, [...] to facilitate the political process, protect civilians, assist in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants; support the organization of elections, protect and promote human rights and assist in restoring the rule of law".[64] It therefore appears to now include elements of peace enforcement, which refers to the application of force, peacebuilding, and humanitarian action. This is an important change in the understanding of peacekeeping, as now many more tasks and responsibilities are attributed to both civilian and military peacekeepers.

[61] By tendency, 'richer' nations supply monetary resources to UN peacekeeping while less wealthy countries supply personnel, especially troops. Bangladesh and India have for instance been amongst the top troop contributors for the last years, while the USA and Germany are the biggest financial providers for UN peacekeeping (Pugh 2013).

[62] Nevertheless, many argue vehemently that peacekeeping, especially its military components, are too expensive and that instead money should be invested in 'non-violent' means of peace building, especially those involving grassroots and civil society initiatives (WILPF 2015).

[63] Galtung (1969) highlighted the importance to distinguish between negative and positive peace, with pointing out that the latter referring not only to the absence of armed conflict but also the absence of structural violence and presence of positive relationships.

[64] http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/operations/peacekeeping.shtml

Although the deployments have increased a lot since the 1990s, Marten (2004, p.13) points out that peacekeeping has "not even create[d] much forward momentum in that [democracy and peace] direction". This was due to the ineffective control of the UN over peacekeeping personnel and the lack of operational goals of the missions. Moreover, the changing nature of conflict based on both guerrilla tactics and identity politics with global interconnections and effects have, according to Kaldon (1999), not been adequately addressed by international peacekeeping. Without a clear enemy and target, without a clear demarcation of front and rear, whom could be a target for force or whom should be protected as 'civilian', peacekeepers are in very difficult positions that no one seems to have been able to adequately solve yet.

Importantly, the role of the peacekeeper has been expanded to the extent that it appears very unclear as to what the exact role and responsibility of the soldier peacekeeper is (MacKay 2003). Initially peacekeepers were soldiers without guns and hence lacking the characteristics of a warrior, leading scholars to argue that peacekeeping 'feminizes' soldiering (Whitworth 2004; Sion 2008). While this is still true to a certain extent, especially due to the discursive meaning of peacekeeping as a noble task, through the increased use of force, at times even offensive, the traditional warrior soldier seems to be back in the game - and with this militarized masculinity understood as based on strength, toughness and compulsory heterosexuality, is put back into the peacekeepers' identity without much questioning (Duncanson 2009).This also increasingly questions the idea of military peacekeeping as an appropriate terrain for women, since there remain contestation of women's suitability for combat, based on women's supposed inherently peaceful and lack of bodily and emotional strength (DeGroot 2001).

These conditions produce contradictory expectations and 'fuzzy' roles for peacekeepers (Battistelli et al. 1999). While on the one hand expected to *diffuse* conflict and aggression, to *mediate* and protect and *support* civilians in their everyday lives, peacekeepers are also supposed to remain warrior soldiers with militarized masculinities as the hegemonic norm in most militaries (Duncanson 2009).

It appears that women military peacekeepers are now being used as tools to resolve these mismatches and confusions by arguing their presence somehow naturally decreases negative effects of militarised and aggressive masculinity (Simić 2010). UNSCR1325 plays a major part in this, as it directly links women peacekeepers to feminized tasks in peacekeeping. It seems that women are the peacekeeper-social workers of peace missions. The social worker-

peacekeeper refers to the increased social responsibility, especially attributed to female peacekeepers, of engaging with local communities and supporting women and children in conflict contexts.[65]

Being trained as a soldier to wage war and potentially only motivated by higher income, it appears almost logical that the conundrums of high expectations, little to no training and 'fuzzy' nature of peace missions create massive problems for the peacekeepers, the mission and especially the civilians seeking protection by peacekeepers. It seems, women are used as a tool to ease the complexity and paradox of the soldier-peacekeeper and its shocking effects by also introducing the peacekeeper-social worker (DeGroot 2001). The direct paradox of a soldier – peacekeeper – social worker therefore is one of the crucial contemporary dilemmas of peacekeeping and the Women, Peace, Security agenda.

[65] Female peacekeepers' presence in peacekeeping missions has also been argued to keep male soldiers in check to prevent them from engaging in sexual relations or prostitution with local civilians, or even sexually abusing locals (Karim & Beardsley 2013; Simić 2010). Instead of interrogating why men commit these horrific atrocities on local population and other soldiers, the discourse now argues that women should come and fix it.

3. Gender in South Africa's Past and Present: The State, the Military and Peacekeeping

South Africa has come a long way in the last 25 years, from white authoritarian minority rule under apartheid to an inclusive democracy based on the ideals of equality and a 'rainbow nation'. After centuries of colonial and racist oppression, the country went on a path of transformation when in 1990 Nelson Mandela was freed from prison after 27 years and the African National Congress (ANC), the major opposition party, was unbanned. Transformation of South Africa included all sectors of society, specifically and importantly the security sector, which had previously been the critical tool to violently and ruthlessly enforce minority rule. The construction of the rainbow nation has contributed to South Africa seeing itself as a regional leader. It has framed its foreign policy to include a contribution to regional peace and has been one of the major contributors to peacekeeping missions in Africa. Gender equality has been enshrined within the constitution of the 'New South Africa' as a result of a long history of the women's struggle. This has impacted significantly on the transformation of the country's security structures, especially the defence force, which has shown a considerable commitment to gender equality within its structures and external deployments.

3.1 Women in the South African Defence Force

The apartheid state was a heavily militarised institution based on an ideology of racial and national superiority of Afrikaners, heavily oppressing all peoples who were not white,[66] although black South Africans bore the brunt of the oppressive and violent state. Kynoch (1996, p.411) describes the militarization of South African society as a result of the regime's investment in regional hegemony:

> In defending apartheid, the regime in Pretoria engaged in a systematic campaign of destabilisation designed to bring its neighbours to heel. Military invasions, raids, sabotage, support of dissident groups, and assassinations were all part of the National Party Government's 'total

[66] South Africa's white population is made up of Afrikaans and English speakers. Although apartheid was dominated by Afrikaners, it did not discriminate against English speaking whites. Instead, all whites (whether South African or foreign) were heavily privileged.

> strategy' that employed violence as a key element in its regional policy to achieve economic, military, and political hegemony.

The South African Defence Force (SADF) was the 'armed wing' of the apartheid government and enforced minority rule without mercy. SADF was a highly racist and oppressive institution itself, marginalising (white) women working for the force, with not only an impossibility of advancement for 'non-whites', but also with ethnically divided battalions, such as the 'Zulu 121' or 'Swasi 111' (Kynoch 1996). The force was based mostly on conscription for white men. They made up about 80% of SADF, while a small number of 'non-white' career officers and some white career soldiers served, too (Callister 2007; Franke in Howe 1994).

Since the 1960s the defence budget had steadily increased with the parallel increase in armed oppression and war waging by the state domestically and in the region. Although initially under civilian oversight, the force became increasingly self-regulated in the 1980s. During negotiations between the apartheid government and ANC leaders between 1990 and 1994,[67] a clandestine arm of the SADF, called 'third force', incited and fuelled violence in Townships between ANC and other opposition party followers. There were serious and founded worries that this 'third force' could stage a coup or engage in so much destabilizing of the negotiation process that would lead the country into a fully fledged civil war, despite the ANC already having announced an end to the armed struggle in 1990 (Howe 1994) .

The apartheid state was not only based on oppressive racial hierarchies but also on systematic sexism, excluding women from various public areas and constituently assuming women's dependence on men (Seidman 1999).[68] While black women had to bear double discrimination (and still do), it is also important to note that white women, although incredibly privileged through their skin colour, were also heavily controlled and restricted by a state politics based on white masculinist supremacy.[69]

Nevertheless, white women served as members of SADF during the Second World War, and although they were barred again afterwards, in 1971 Defence Minister P.W. Botha[70] initiated

[67] These led to the first democratic elections in 1994.
[68] Note that at the same time as women were generally seen as dependent on their husbands, the meagre wages of black male migrant workers were legitimised by the argument that their families were *not* dependent on remittances since they lived in subsistence farming Bantustans. This created an almost triple burden on many black women who were not allowed to work in cities but had to stay in the disfranchised areas of Bantustans.
[69] Until 1953, white women were legal minors to their husbands, despite already having been granted suffrage in 1930 (Coquery-Vidrovitch 1997).
[70] P.W. Botha later became president.

the establishment of a 'Civil Defence Women's College' (Unterhalter 1987).[71] In the following years more and more job categories were opened to women and the recruitment of women increased, reaching its peak in 1981, when 12.5 % of the SADF was made up of white women. Women of colour were completely excluded from the SADF (Unterhalter 1987; Grundy 1983). Women were not allowed in combat and mostly served to "release a lot of men from administrative work for fighting" (Cape Times in Unterhalter 1987, p. 110). Women were hence seen in stereotypical feminine ways, as supportive, caring and doing the symbolic work of uniting the white nation, keeping the traditional division of labour completely intact; their nickname as "Botha's babes" clearly illustrates this. Nevertheless, all women underwent very similar training as men and also served as pilots, radar operators or telecommunication officers; however, their training also included courses on femininity, as to teach military women to retain their womanness within a masculinised environment (Unterhalter 1987). The retaining of femininity has been a rather coherent trend in militaries across the world after including women in their services (Cock 1989), still continuing today, as I will show in the fourth chapter.

3.2. Women in the Struggle Movement

African women's activism against racist policies started as early as 1913, when women staged the first protest march against the pass laws (Coquery-Vidrovitch 1994). The ANC, founded in 1912, created a women's section in 1920 for 'auxiliary members'. This later transformed into the ANC Women's League, while women were only granted equal participation in all structures in 1959 (Coquery-Vidrovitch 1994). Even though there was a strong black women's movement in South Africa,[72] the fight against apartheid always had precedence, leading to women being considerably sidelined in the ANC. While women's anti-apartheid activism was mostly focused around 'motherist ideals', these issues were the most pressing issues for the majority of women who were more often than not the sole bearers of familial responsibility (Geisler 2000). In contrast to white women's motherist framing of apartheid nationalism, black women "embraced, transmuted and transformed the ideology in various ways, working

[71] Unterhalter (1987) argues this was a move to foster political unity amongst the white minority and to elevate the issue of security in national discourse, is despite a lack of immanent internal or external threat at the time.
[72] The Women's Charter of 1956 in fact preceded and informed the widely popularised Freedom Charter, which was the document on which the new democratic constitution was based (McClintock 1991).

strategically with traditional ideology [of motherhood] to justify untraditional public militancy" (McClintock 1993, p.75).

As the biggest and eventually most effective anti-apartheid armed force, the armed wing of the ANC, Umkhonto ke Sizwe (MK), recruited women from the start in 1961 for various tasks, although they were few.[73] According to Geisler (2004), women made up about 20% of the MK forces at the end of the 1980s, although very little is known about MK fighters generally and even less about women as members of the MK. Similar to women's sidelining by the ANC, it appears that female fighters were ostracized in MK. The few stories that exist are rather contradictory, some pointing to support for women fighters amongst the male comrades (Sedibe 2013), other arguing that harassment and sexism were rampant (e.g. Geisler 2000; Curnow 2000). Nevertheless, women trained with men, lived with men in the extremely harsh conditions of exile military training camps in the bushes of Angola, Mozambique or the like. There is no agreement amongst scholars whether MK female fighters did (Nathan in Heinecken 1998) or did not fight in combat roles (Cock 1994). Whichever the case, Cock (1994) rightfully points out that women were crucial in clandestine operations and supportive roles, which were not less dangerous due to the nature of guerrilla warfare where rear and front are not easily distinguished (Sedibe 2013; Gasa 2007). Importantly, there has been very little acknowledgment of female fighters in the armed struggle.[74]

Although SADF and MK both were forerunners by including women in their ranks from comparatively early on, women in SADF were to serve a specific gendered division and hierarchy, while emancipation and women's 'empowerment' had always been on the agenda of MK, at least in rhetoric (Cock 1994). The female MK fighter was celebrated as an icon of liberation and revolutionary womanhood, often also depicted carrying a child (see Miller 2009). Women featuring widely and centrally in the anti-apartheid struggle movements especially from the 1980s onwards, when their activism also increasingly focused on feminist

[73] The largest increase of women in the armed guerrilla force occurred after the 1976 Soweto uprising, a crucial turning point of politicisation for vast amounts of young black men and women to take up arms against the oppressive government. The 1976 Soweto Uprising was a culmination of student protests that had spread nationwide against the introduction of Afrikaans as language of instruction in all schools as part of the Bantu Education Act. Thousands of students marched in Soweto on June 16th 1976 to protest the apartheid language policy and general racial oppression (Mafeje 1978). The protests were crushed violently by apartheid police, shooting life ammunition at the students, killing at least hundreds of students. June 16th now is Youth Day, a national holiday in South Africa.

[74] In fact, only two women openly talking about their experiences and pointing to intense marginalisation within the integrated SANDF and ANC structures generally (Sedibe 2013; Curnow 2000). This marginalisation of female fighters is unfortunately rather characteristic for many independence wars in Southern Africa, for instance in Zimbabwe and Mozambique (Curnow 2000; Essof 2005).

ideals of equal rights (Seidman 1999). With growing international attention to women's rights and gender issues, the South African women's movement increasingly gained political momentum and, during the negotiation phase, resulted in a united force putting gender equality on the agenda of all areas of negotiation.

3.3 Gender in the 'New South Africa': From SADF to SANDF and the 'Rainbow Nation'

South Africa's transition to democracy has been widely lauded as incredible, since many had expected the outbreak of a fully fledged civil war. Although the negotiation years were characterised by outbreaks of violence, especially in Townships,[75] the transition is considered a peaceful one. Contrary to most other countries that transitioned from colonial or otherwise oppressive rule to democracy, where women and their specifically gendered rights issues were excluded from transitional negotiation and subsequently the democratic state, South African women's activists ensured women participated equally. The ANC had, after decades of internal discussions, clearly acknowledged the importance of women's liberation for a democratic society (Walker in Geisler 2000, p.608). In addition, in 1992 women's organisations united to form the Women's National Coalition (WNC), which ensured crucial gains during negotiations, such as gender quotas for parliament (Hendricks & Valasek 2010). As such, not only racial justice was considered necessary for the new South Africa, but also gendered justice.

The South African constitution includes equality and non-discrimination as central pillars, while also incorporating affirmative action as a mechanism for creating substansive equality, with specific mention not only of race but also gender and sexuality. Chapter two, section nine of the Constitution (1994), which was repeatedly referred to by my interviewees, reads:

> The state may not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds, including race, gender, sex, pregnancy,

[75] These outbreaks were termed 'black on black violence', arguably aiming to signify the chaotic character of the struggle movement and its inability to lead the nation to a democratic state. However, there is now substantive evidence that these outbreaks of violence were directly fuelled by the SADF, supporting and supplying weapons to struggle opposition groups, such as the Inkatha Freedom Party, attacks on train commuters and assassinations of ANC leaders (Cock 1994).

> marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth.

In line with this, South Africa created an elaborate 'Gender Machinery', including the Commission for Gender Equality, Ministry for Women, Children and the Disabled, the Office of the Status of Women and mainstreamed gender in various governments departments, such as defence, local government or education.

The importance attested to gender equality and women's rights also affected the creation of the new national defence force in crucial ways. Creating a new, democratic defence force was one of the central aspects of the negotiation process between the ANC and NP negotiations, which resulted in an Interim Constitution in 1993. The new South African National Defence Force (SANDF) was created through the incorporation of the eight major armed forces, which were hostile; the SADF and former Bantustan defence forces and non-statutory forces made up of the MK, Azanian People's Liberation Army and the 'self-protection units' of the Inkatha Freedom Party (Heinecken 1998; Mills & Wood 1993). This was not only a structural transformation of the former SADF force but completely overhauled the political motives and purpose of all military organisations – in accordance to the complete overhaul of the country's society. As such, the new SANDF was to be based on voluntary enlistment, transparency, be under civilian control[76] and bring defence policy in line with the country's new progressive constitution (Le Roux 2005). In addition, the mandate of the defence force changed from a primary focus on state centred security to the principle of human security (Memela-Motumi 2009). Importantly, SANDF was to be representative of the country's population, which, next to a racially adequate make up, also included adequate representation of women in the force. Hence gender transformation first and foremost included a numerical representation of women. The two largest contributors, SADF and MK, already had a considerable number of women amongst their ranks. Nevertheless, gender transformation also related to a change in the institutional culture from discriminatory to inclusive and egalitarian, for instance producing and implementing the Gender Mainstreaming Strategy in 2008. This policy refers also to a 'soft' gender transformation, meaning increase of gender awareness by its leaders and general personnel and the eradication of sexist discrimination.

[76] As mentioned above the SADF was effectively under no civilian control since the 1960s, operating on the ideology of a 'total onslaught' against communism and any opposition (Heinecken 2005).

Although initially envisioned as an equal process of integration, the 'non-statutory' forces, were integrated into SADF structure, creating a situation where all but previous SADF personnel was retrained to suit the structure of the new force.[77] The treatment of former MK women fighters also showed how sexism was rampant during this integration phase; Jackie Sedibe (2013) for instance explains how, although she was a Major General in the MK, she was downgraded to the junior rank of a Brigadier when integrated into SANDF, being commanded by her previous male juniors from the MK. Nevertheless, affirmative action and fast tracking was put into place in order to contribute to transformation and hence the creation of a more representative force, both for political but also legitimacy reasons. While racial transformation was pushed rather vehemently with good success; gender balancing has to date been less successful. From 20% women in the integrated force in 1994, SANDF had 19% women in 1998, 21% in 2003 and 29% in 2014.[78]

The political and structural change of integration also meant that a new purpose for South Africa's military needed to be found in order to justify its existence, since the country has had no imminent external threats requiring national defence. The integration of the different military wings into one national defence force was a crucial part of nation-building. This nation-building has been essential in the South African transition to democracy, as the country's vastly diverse peoples had lived in extreme hostility to each other and now had to become identified with a uniting notion of belonging, in order to "share and work together in the common objective of eradicating poverty and creating a prosperous, non-racist and non-sexist South Africa" (Mandela in Jenkins & du Plessis 2014, p.24). The new proclamation of South Africa as a 'rainbow-nation', initially coined by Archbishop Desmond Tutu, celebrating and uniting diversity, has arguably been crucial to popular national discourse in post-apartheid South Africa. The rainbow nation has been able to create national pride based on the idea of

[77] This must have been an incredibly difficult and traumatic process for former freedom fighters; the enemy was now the military instructor and superior. Many must have felt re-traumatised, being drilled and trained by the very same men that killed their comrades and families.

[78] As comparison, in 1994 38% of the force were black, while 45% were white. By 2003, this had already changed to 62% blacks and 25% whites, creating an almost adequate racial representivity within less than 10 years (Le Roux 2005). In 2004, there were, according to census data, 79% blacks and 9.5% whites, 8.8% Coloureds and 2.4% Asians in South Africa (Kane-Berman & Tempest 2004)

South African exceptionalism through the peaceful transition from the divisions of apartheid to a democratic state.[79]

Although I believe that post-apartheid South African nationalism has had many positive effects, it does, as all nationalisms, depend on the creation of an 'Other' to define the nation. As such, the terminology of strength in diversity has created a new national boundary, this time not within the state but as the state; foreigners are no allies anymore, as they were during the decades of the struggle,[80] but rather the alien. "The 'rainbow nation' is being built on the exclusion of the black African 'other', the Makwerekwere." (Trimikliniotis et al. 2008, p.1331).[81] The state's actions have been very much in accordance with these sentiments, on the one hand creating very strict immigration policies for Africans and its institutions systematically harassing and ostracizing black African foreigners (or those thought to be) (Trimikliniotis et al. 2008). The nationalist sentiments have led to recurring deadly riots of 'xenophobia' against African immigrants (Croucher 1998).[82] In fact, border protection now is one of the main responsibilities of the force, in addition to peacekeeping deployments (Stott 2002). At the time of writing, SANDF forces were also for the first time deployed to conduct 'raids', mostly in city centres, supposedly against crime, while it was clear that especially undocumented immigrants were targeted (Sonke Gender Justice 2015).

The nation building project has resulted in the in the creation of a national identity that is based on inclusivity, that depends on citizenship and territorial integrity. In fact, I would argue that the nation building project also included notions of neo-imperialism based on South Africa's exceptionalism and comparative 'development' and 'progress'. As such, many South Africans understand themselves often as opposed to other Africans, who are often produced as 'backwards' or as criminals, taking advantage of South Africa's comparable wealth that is supposed to be of benefit for South Africans only. Black African foreigners, especially those in lower socio-economic strata of the society are argued to 'steal' jobs and take advantage of the

[79] However, the idea of the rainbow nation is also based on essentialised notions of (ethnic) difference, potentially creating further divisions among population groups that had been entrenched during divide and rule and the creation of two imagined communities during apartheid (Baines 1998).
[80] As referred to above, the ANC heavily depended on allies, especially on the African continent, but also the USSR, to win the struggle against apartheid. Many African nations harboured MK fighters and ANC exiled leaders for decades.
[81] Makwerekwere is a slang word used for black African foreigners in South Africa.
[82] During the process of writing this, three people were killed in violent attacks on African foreigners in different areas around Durban, leading to refugee camps being set up and thousands of foreign nationals taking refuge from looting and torching South Africans (BBC 2015).

little resources available to poor South Africans. South Africa is produced as the 'land of milk and honey', endowed with much of what is lacking in the rest of the continent (Peberdy 2001).

3.4 South Africa's International Peacekeeping Involvements

The status of exceptionalism of peaceful transition in South Africa, especially compared to many other African countries, has also influenced South Africa's foreign policy. With its history of malevolent regional hegemony during apartheid days, South Africa has tried and succeeded in positioning itself as a regional power through benevolent involvement.

The moral and political hegemonic positioning of South Africa has sought to impact not only through economic expansion but also, and increasingly, through benevolent foreign policy focused on engagements to boost peace and development on the continent. African countries and the world expected South Africa to become the powerhouse of the continent, as Solomon (2010, p.132) argues in his analysis of South Africa's international engagements: "[e]xpectations were that [South Africa] would become a source of human security for Africa's long-suffering masses." The foreign policy objective has been to work for a "better South Africa, a better Africa and a better World" (The Department of Intenrational Relations and Cooperation 2012). Peacekeeping deployments have come to constitute a crucial pillar of these aims.

Since 1999 South Africa has contributed military, civilian and police personnel to 14 UN, AU and SADC peace missions. Since then, SANDF soldiers have been deployed to UN missions in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Ethiopian/Eritrean border and Sudan, to name a few. South Africa has also contributed to peace diplomacy in various countries and is a crucial contributor to the creation of the African Standby Force (AU) and in its Southern African brigade (Solomon 2010). Today, South Africa contributes military personnel to the DRC (MONSUCO), South Sudan (UNMISS) and Darfur in Sudan (UNAMID). South Africa is the world's 15th largest contributor to UN peace missions, deploying 2,110 military personnel at the time of writing (UNDPKO 2015).

In addition to its general high military contributions to peace missions, South Africa is also a leader with regards to 'gender balance' within its military force deployments, sending

comparatively many women (Fröhlich et al. 2014). The country's gender foci in peace and security structures is influenced by international legislation ratified by the state, such as CEDAW , the Beijing Platform for Action, Maputo Protocol and UNSCR1325, having at least indirect effect on the elaborated success in mainstreaming gender into all policy areas of the new democracy. Moreover, regional governance bodies, specifically the African Union (AU) and Southern African Development Community (SADC) play a crucial role in guiding and shaping South African peacekeeping engagements and its gender agenda.

Both the African Union (AU) and SADC have implemented an impressive array of gender related policies and treaties. [83] Both organisations are also in the process of creating regional security structures and have consistently incorporated gender dimensions into these;[84] importantly both AU and SADC have adopted UNSCR1325.[85] However, much of these commitments have remained on paper without meaningful implementation (Diop 2011). With a lack of political will much of the power behind policies and calls to action remain on paper. Nevertheless, the power of policies and declarations should not be underestimated. Especially Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and individuals within government structures who push the gender agenda, such as some of my interviewees, make constant use of these international commitments, reminding political elites and the country of its pledges for women's rights.

In the context of the AU and SADC commitment to gender foci in peace and security issues, South Africa has so far stood out as a great example in the region. Women have been part of military peace mission deployments from the first South African deployment. South Africa is a leader with regards to sending many women as soldiers to UN peace missions. Between 2014 and 2009, South Africa's female soldiers and military experts made up 15% of its overall deployment, while the worldwide average was at a mere 3.5 percent of all deployed forces being female (Fröhlich et al. 2014, np). Although this is still very much below the goal of 30%

[83] For instance, the Maputo Protocol from 1995 was adopted by the AU in 2003 and ratified by South Africa, and relates to a broad agenda of women's security and women's equality, albeit not specifically in conflict contexts (Diop 2011).[83] In addition the AU implemented the Solemn Declaration of Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA) in 2004 as a way to enforce the Maputo Protocol, which also specifically refers to the implementation of USNCR1325.

[84] These refer for instance to aims to strengthen women's political participation on high levels through strict guidelines aiming to have gender parity within the AU structures by 2020 or the AU launch of a new 5 year Gender, Peace and Security Programme in June 2014, highlighting its continued efforts to put the gender agenda centre stage in its work (African Union 2015).

[85] As such, UNSCR1325 was adopted by the OAU, but the transition to the new organisation arguably gave an opportunity to further the principles of already adopted treaties, such as UNSCR1325 (Diop 2011).

representation of female peacekeepers, as aimed at by SANDF, it is one of the highest percentage.

Yet, South Africa has not come up with a National Action Plan (NAP). According to my interviewees, the creation of an NAP stalled as there was no agreement in the state departments whether to focus on domestic or international issues. At the time of this study, parts of the defence force are in the process of drafting an NAP, which would be a further step towards creating gender equal force.

Since the gendered composition of peacekeeping deployments directly depends on the national make up and structures of the military, SANDF policies and regulations relating to gender also directly impact on South Africa's deployments to missions. Although there are various gender policies within SANDF, the most important one is the overall "Gender Mainstreaming Strategy" from 2008. While such a policy is already a breakthrough for a military and I find it overall a good document with important guidelines for the force, it has some substantial problems. The policy exclusively focuses on women as part of a gender mainstreaming strategy instead of seeing gender more holistically, pertaining, especially in context of a military, to masculinities as much as femininities. Other policies referring to gender in SANDF are the Defence White paper (1996), which highlights that adequate representivity in terms of gender and race are crucial to the legitimacy of the force, the White Paper on South African Participation in Peace Missions (1999) which points to South Africa's commitment to mainstream gender in all its missions and the recent Defence Review (Memela-Motumi 2009).[86] Moreover, SANDF has a Sexual Harassment policy, aiming to combat gender based and sexual harassment, which is assumed to be widespread in SANDF, mostly based on the heinous overall SGBV statistics in the country and the masculinist and traditionally sexist environment of the military. However, it is hardly ever talked about within SANDF and its occurrence is not publicized (Hendricks 2012).

South Africa has also been very invested in engaging with UN regulations and was the first of UN deploying contingents to introduce Gender Advisors to its missions and create Gender Focal Points in its areas of deployment. It has also established a Peace Mission Training Centre

[86] Although the Defence Review makes little mentioning of gender specifically, the mere inclusion of both gender-specific pronouns and a specific reference to non-sexism and gender equality needs to be seen as progressive, especially in context of defence regulation that is usually rather masculinist and gender neutral.

(PMTC)[87] that offers various courses for peacekeepers, amongst them a Gender Advisor course offered since 2009 and a Gender for Instructors course. The SANDF has moreover worked with various CSOs, for instance by inviting experts to teach units at the PMTC and now also aims for 40% of its new recruits to be women (Heinecken 2013b).

Although these commitments and achievements show SANDF's investment, at least on paper, in the constitutional mandate of gender equality, these policies are not always followed up with appropriately, leaving much room for non-compliance without retribution – one of my interviewees argued that no one is "cracking the whip" (Officer Kumalo). Still, SANDF has implemented a lot of institutional mechanisms aimed at gender equality within its structures and also works with gender perspectives in all its trainings; something that is definitely not easy in context of the sexist environments of military institutions (Hendricks 2012).[88]

Moreover, while the SANDF remains a masculinist institution dominated by men, it has convincingly worked on its image as a gender equal employer and empowerment agent for women. A lot of advertising material that I came across during my research, such as the 'Soldier' magazine, calendars, flyers, booklets, etc. of the force always have women pictured on it, clearly working to push women's position as soldiers in the general consciousness of its personnel and those interested in the force. There is also an annual Gender Conference organised by the Department of Defence and many activities during South Africa's 'Woman's Month', August.

3.5 Effects of the 'Gender Agenda' in SANDF and its Deployments

Although SANDF is one of the top contributors of women to peace mission deployments, significantly fewer women go on deployment (15%) than are in the actual force. According to statistics given to me by participants, SANDF has 25% women in its uniformed personnel and 19% in its 'tooth', i.e. those in combat. Importantly, deployment to peace missions is on a voluntary basis. Yet, peace mission deployments are broadly seen as beneficial to military careers, since 'practical experience' is usually required to rise through the ranks. However,

[87] The PMTC was established in 2007 and is funded with help of the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom (Helfrich 2013).

[88] Moreover, the two previous directors of the Transformation Department at SANDF are passionate women's rights activists. For instance, Jackie Sedibe was already a women's rights activist in her time as an MK fighter. See for instance Sedibe's (2013) article "The role of Women in MK – From Leadership in the Trenches to Leadership in Government and Society".

social conditions, such as the bearing the main burden of family care, often keep women from volunteering for peace missions (Memela-Motumi 2014; Mohale 2013).

Interestingly, Heinecken (2013b) argued that through UNSCR1325, the discussion of female peacekeepers within SANDF and the Department of Defence has changed from a human rights approach in line with the constitutional mandate to arguments based on 'the special contribution of women' to peace missions. The author further argues that this discourse has in fact had a negative impact on the broader attitudes regarding women's deployment, since her participants mostly saw female soldiers as not as strong and tough as male soldiers. This appears to also be resonating with Schoeman et al's (2010) findings in their study with male and female peacekeepers deployed to the DRC. They found that only 59% of the male interviewees accepted women in their ranks, while almost all female respondents felt they were accepted. This might hint towards an overt acceptance of women in SANDF with a hidden disapproval of their equal deployment.

Leadership is understood to be crucial with regards to women's equal participation during deployments. Schoeman (2010) for instance found that some of the women she interviewed as part of a study on gender in SANDF peace mission deployments complained that their superiors actively dissuaded them from volunteering for peace missions. Where women are positioned while on deployment is also a question of leadership. Many male and female respondents in Schoeman's (2010) study pointed out that women were often retained on the base and not posted to external jobs, such as patrols. Hence, even though many women are in peace missions, they seem to be deployed mostly in supporting roles.

Importantly, SANDF trains male and female soldiers together, although Heinecken (2013b) and Alchin (2014) both found that some of their interviewees argued that men helped women out during training and hence it is actually not the same for male and female soldiers. A big issue for gender equality during external deployments are the facilities. Many studies point to the lack of adequate facilities for a mixed force, since military facilities have traditionally been build for male only contingents (Heinecken 2013b; Hendricks 2012).[89]

[89] However, there are also less grounded arguments, seemingly more based on stereotypical ideas of female hygiene, pointing to women requiring more luxurious ablution n facilities, more water or more hygienic conditions during patrols (Heinecken 2013a).

Similar to the general discourse on female peacekeepers, Schoeman et al (2010) found that their female respondents argued that they were trusted easier by local populations. However, male respondents disagreed. Interestingly, while most female peacekeepers interviewed by the researchers had had contact with local women, this contact was mostly confined to trading or socialising and the peacekeepers were actually quite reluctant to argue that they made these women feel safer. Considering the above mentioned indications that women stay within the base a lot of the time also renders the possibility of women's positive impact on communities questionable. Similarly, Alchin (2014) found that SANDF women in her group discussions on their experiences in peace missions did not see a long term positive effect on local women and were generally rather reluctant about contact with local communities.

Despite women being attributed a positive effect on their male peers, such as keeping them from harassing locals,[90] it is generally agreed upon by research with South African but also other national militaries that women soldiers rather integrate and adapt to the masculinist environment instead of affecting direct change amongst their peers (e.g. Mohale 2013; Alchin 2014). In fact, the discipline of SANDF soldiers has repeatedly been at the centre of critique. There have been various serious allegations of sexual abuse and misconduct against South African peacekeepers and it has been argued that South African peacekeepers have promoted prostitution, sexual assault and harassment, drinking and general misbehaviour in its deployment area in the DRC (Jansson 2013; Holt & Hughes 2004).

Considering the broader context of SANDF's engagement in transformation and gender equality, it becomes clear that despite great strides in the organisations, much still needs to be done to work towards a defence force that is equitable and conducts peacekeeping in a positive, adequate and productive way. In the following chapter, I describe and analyse my interviewees' discourses and experiences around the conceptualisation and implementation of UNSCR1325. Many of the broader tendencies that I have described so far came up during our conversations, showing the impact and renegotiation of global discourses on women, gender and military peacekeeping.

[90] This is a very problematic idea and I would have liked to exclude this supposed effect of women peacekeepers as to not further give it leverage within the discussion but thought it important as it is so prevalently used by those arguing for inclusion of women soldiers into peacekeeping based on women's added values.

4. SANDF Member's Perspectives: Conceptualisation and Implementation of UNSCR1325

My conversations with SANDF members on their understanding and experience with UNSCR1325 had many of contradictions and contestations. On the one hand everyone agreed that SANDF is making important improvements towards creating a gender equal force, in which no difference is made between male or female soldiers, while at the same time, everyone had stories of overt and covert sexism and discrimination to tell. All interviewees who worked with gender in one way or another knew and had an opinion about UNSCR1325 and it became clear that the resolution was a crucial tool for furthering SANDF's engagements with gender.

Contradictions surrounding the difference and sameness of men and women were also prominently articulated by my interviewees. These tensions were dealt with in a variety of ways. While on the one hand gender was made invisible through degendering the soldiering tasks, arguing that both men and women can fulfil them, gender was essentialized very similarly to the broader discourses of inherent female peacefulness and victimhood as I have outlined in context of UNSCR1325. This idea of femininity nevertheless also served as a major argument to highlight women's inadequacy for soldiering. Moreover our conversations made the incongruence and contradictions between broader discourses and actual reality within peace mission deployments visible. However, despite the essentialisms, many of my participants also engaged in serious and in-depth questioning of normalized masculinist military structures, norms and practices, pointing towards encouraging dynamics of gender transformation past the 'numbers game'. The limited premises of UNSCR1325 appear to be slowly overcome within some of SANDF's gender structures.

4.1 The Gender Agenda: Equality for All

According to my interviewees, UNSCR1325 has had an important impact on the SANDF and its members. Although South Africa's general national effort of transformation, as just outlined, clearly affects its policies on gender in the national defence force and therefore in its peace mission deployments, it appears through my conversations with different members that UNSCR1325 specifically has had an important impact on the ways that gender transformation

is understood and practiced in SANDF. These conversations confirm my expectation that UNSCR 1325 has been a crucial tool for women's rights advocates to further women's equal participation, both in terms of numbers, as well as critical engagements with gender in the South African security sector. Similar to the broader discourses on WPS and peace missions, UNSCR1325 is being used by members in SANDF as a tool to rally for increased gender awareness, training and the inclusion of women into deployments and the military generally. This has been rather successful, at least regarding the number of women in the military and its peace missions, the policies available and the specific gender trainings mentioned earlier.

UNSCR1325 and the broader WPS stance by the UN[91] were instrumental for these trainings, as Officer Kumalo, a senior female officer, explained. Officer Kumalo has been working on gender within SANDF and has also been involved with work at the PMTC. When requesting the approval of a 'Gender Advisors Course' as part of the training in the PMTC, the leadership of SANDF was reluctant to give permission until the recommendation was made by the United Nations. She elaborated that although the UN was confused as to why a national military was seeking approval by the UN, it issued a statement which convinced the SANDF leadership to give permission and resources to the creation of a gender advisor course. The endorsement by the United Nations clearly had an immense impact on the decision of the SANDF leadership: gender training was not seen as necessary until the United Nations recommended it as part of its broader WPS agenda.

Members of the PMTC also asserted that they used UNSCR1325 as a framework for their courses on gender; Officer Kumalo even called it the "Bible of gender". Some of my interviewees were also aware that UNSCR1325 had its shortcomings, but consistently repeated the importance of the document for their work within SANDF: "Of course we are very happy to have 1325, *half a loaf is better than nothing*. So at least we can eat. We have got a mandate, hey, we have got a mandate," (added emphasis) as Officer Kumalo put it. Despite some of its problems, such as weak language or its unbinding nature, she highlighted how important the existence of the resolution is.

My findings therefore show that UNSCR1325 has had a *direct influence* on the South African National Defence Force, especially, but not exclusively, on the way that South African soldiers are being prepared for missions and in effect also on the national efforts and engagements with

[91] Although the actual coherence and political commitment by the United Nations has, at least at times, been questionable, as I elaborated in Chapter 2.

gender by the SANDF generally. Next to the national mandate to 'transform'[92] SANDF, there is also much to gain from working to be an international role model for peacekeeping, a status that was attributed to SANDF in 2007 when it was named as a best practice example by the UN (Fröhlich et al. 2014). As such, while it is still debatable how much of an effect UNSCR1325 has on individuals on the ground in conflict regions, it was crucial for increased gendered perspectives within SANDF, be it only because of the aim to please international governing bodies and be seen as a 'role model' and leader in Africa (Kolawole 2002).[93] While South Africa does not have a national action plan yet, it has incorporated many of the aims and recommendations of UNSCR1325 and its follow-up resolutions in national policy and training curricula.

Whereas all participants within the broader gender structures or affiliated with it knew the resolution well, three of my interviewees, Officer Pinenaar, a male lower-ranking officer, Officer Steyn and Officer Sithole, both female middle-ranking officers, all of whose work was unrelated to gender training or policies, did not know of UNSCR1325. They are probably a more representative sample of SANDF members, as the gender structures of the organisation is rather small compared to its approximate 78,000 members in total. Yet, these three participants have peace mission experiences, albeit not as soldiers. Hence they were never in direct confrontational situations while on duty in the peace missions. Nevertheless, they still had strong arguments and feelings about gender equality and argued that women should be equally included in SANDF and its deployments; but I had to ask them to illicit these opinions, which was not always the case with members of the gender structures who were more passionate about the topic.

Importantly, all interviewees said that South Africa is doing well with regards to gender equality within its defence force and its efforts to send women to peace missions. Interviewees pointed out that significant steps had been taken to promote women and to implement the mandates of South Africa's constitution within SANDF and its deployments, while the international esteem also seemed to play a crucial role. Officer Roberts, a senior male officer who has mostly worked with policy issues, says, "South Africa has advanced a hell of a lot, as far as putting women in key positions". There is also a clear understanding that South Africa is one of the top performing countries with regards to gender balance and aims for gender

[92] For a discussion on the meaning of this please refer to the introduction of this thesis.
[93] This clearly relates also to South Africa's elaborated efforts to establish itself as a regional and continental power (as outlined in the previous chapter).

perspectives in peacekeeping deployments. As mentioned earlier, different studies, including mine, confirm these accomplishments (e.g. Heinecken 2013; Hendricks 2012; Schoeman 2010). Interviewees showed considerable pride in their institution and also the country generally, arguing that South Africa has some of the world's most progressive policies and regulations for gender equality and women's empowerment. This is in accordance with the broad national and international discourse around South Africa's exceptionalism and influenced the imperial discourses that I will discuss below.

However, many of my interviewees also stressed that the 'gender agenda' has been put on a backburner in recent years. There was wide concern about a of lack women in decision making positions and that women are very much needed especially here, instead of just 'playing the numbers game' in the lower ranks. Officer Dhlamini, a senior female officer who served in the MK and has been working for SANDF on gender issues, argues that despite affirmative action measures, women are not being promoted to higher ranks, "[b]ecause right now, we don't know if we are going backwards or what. But out of, like, the last year's succession, I mean promotions, uuhm, 13 women were promoted from Lieutenant Colonel to Colonel and 55 men. So, if that level that is what is happening, what is going to happen higher?" She expressed frustration that there were big strides being made after integration and transition to democracy, but the last few years have not brought much progress. In fact, data I was given by SANDF staff suggests that this cannot be dismissed as personal frustration: In 2014, there were no female Generals or Lieutenant Generals (the two highest ranks) and only 9% of Major Generals are women.[94] However, women are 'over-represented' in middle tier positions, relative to their overall representation of 25% amongst uniformed staff, making up 41% of Captains and 40% of Lieutenants.

Especially interviewees within the gender structures of the SANDF argued that gender transformation can only be properly implemented if women are also in charge. While the broader political climate under President Jacob Zuma surely contributes to the frustration and slow progress on gender issues in South Africa,[95] the questions of the extent and reasons of this

[94] I was told that these are 5 women, which would mean there are 50 men in the same position.
[95] Hunter (2011, p.1108) for instance describes Jacob Zuma as a "'traditional patriarch' who might roll back post-1994 legislation promoting gender equality." He lives a traditionally Zulu polygamous lifestyle and was acquitted of a rape charge in 2006 in a very questionable ruling based on "traditional Zulu masculinity" (Robins 2008, p.422).

slowing down should further be investigated in future studies; also since the WPS agenda is still gaining momentum within South Africa and the broader international security discourses.

Despite arguing that progress has been made within the SANDF regarding women's integration and gender equality within the force, everyone also agreed that sexism was still an everyday experience for women in SANDF.[96] All my interviewees had stories to tell of experiencing discrimination and sexism against themselves or their colleagues, although not everyone called it out as such. Officer Steyn, a lower ranking female officer who has been to a peace mission and states that she loves her job, for instance points out that it is more difficult as a woman in the SANDF because women sometimes have to prove themselves. Many interviewees articulated outrage and disagreement on some of the blatantly sexist practices of some senior members and many commanders in peace missions. Officer Louw was deployed to a peace mission a while ago and is now involved in training. She described how she had to share a room with all other women during deployment, although she was the most senior ranking amongst them, while her male colleague with the same rank was allocated a single room. Sexist and discriminative practices within SANDF have been pointed out by different researchers, especially Heinecken (2013), Heinecken and Wan der Waag-Cowling (2009), Hendricks (2012), Mohale (2013) and others.[97] Although I see these tendencies and practices as highly problematic and further research on them as crucial, in my analysis, I chose to focus on different themes, since I aimed to investigate the conceptualisation and implementation of UNSCR1325 specifically, and how these experiences and concepts relate to the essentialist claims made in the resolution and broader WPS literature. Nevertheless, it is against all these stories of everyday and extraordinary sexism that I aim to discuss the contradictions and contestations as well as problematic and positive tendencies of gender discourses, practices and questions by my participants.

In line with the broader national discourse and lauding of SANDF's successes for gender equality, all of my interviewees said they understood and supported the goal of 'equality' generally and also specifically regarding gender and within the armed forces. Hence, almost everyone agreed that women should not be excluded from any area of SANDF or peacekeeping

[96] As I pointed out earlier, in this study I did not include investigations about other forms of discrimination, such as on the basis of sexuality.
[97] Researchers studying other national forces made similar findings, such as in Israel (Sasson-Levy 2003), the United States of America (Turchik & Wilson 2010) or Sweden (Estrada & Berggren 2009).

deployments, squarely approving the mandate of UNSCR1325. While this was the general trend, Officer Venter, a senior ranking female officer who did not have peace mission experience, often held more conventional opinions about women within the military. Although part of the broader gender structure of SANDF, Officer Venter was the only one who did not agree with the mandate of UNSCR 1325, which I am interested in: the call for an increase in women as part of military peacekeeping deployments as equals. She was argued that women should only be deployed as part of the tail of the military, i.e. the supportive structures, and not in the tooth, the direct combat units, because female soldiers could never be as capable in combat as men.

Yet, everyone else agreed, either directly or indirectly, with the UNSCR1325 mandate to increase women's presence in *all areas* of peacekeeping. While the space of this thesis does not permit a deeper engagement with Officer Venter's narrative specifically, it shows that diversity amongst SANDF members, even those within the 'equal opportunity structures' of the organisation, is much broader than my sample might suggest. Moreover, it highlights the power of gendered essentialisms I will discuss later in this chapter. In order to gain a better understanding of the approaches to gender equality and women's inclusion in SANDF, a more comprehensive study of the different departments involved in transformation and those working within it, would be helpful.[98]

A minority of my interviewees, namely Officer Venter and the three officers who do not work with gender, saw equality as either already existent or not a crucial problem. They were also not concerned with a lack of women in higher positions or with commitment to increase the number of women in SANDF or peace missions. Officer Venter argued that "everyone has the same opportunities now" and that, although the issue of gender equality is still important to discuss and work with, for instance with regards to sensitization,[99] affirmative action is not required anymore.[100]

Nevertheless, for most of my participants, their support of women's equal participation in SANDF and its deployments was directly tied to the national efforts for universal equality as

[98] In addition, some of my interviewees' also mentioned party affiliated and racial tensions within different sections of the gender structures at SANDF, highlighting the usefulness of further research.
[99] As far as I understood through our interview, sensitisation in this context refers to trainings and workshops that focus on underlying sexism, aiming to 'sensitize' SANDF members to these forms of discrimination.
[100] Considering that she holds an important post within the gender structure, I found her arguments rather surprising. Nevertheless, as mentioned, a more in depth discussion of her arguments are not in the scope of this thesis and I will mostly focus on the other 12 interviewees.

part of the new 'rainbow nation'. For instance, Officer Mazibuko, a senior female officer who had been a member of MK and has since been rallying for gender issues in SANDF, points out: "Because if you question the being of a certain gender, in some areas, there is a problem. Why? When we talk democracy, we talk inclusive society. In all the spheres. Look at our constitution, the bill of rights chapter two. It is inclusive." She argues that in a democracy, there should not be any area of society closed off to certain parts of the population; an argument that is, in fact still debated in many 'Western' democracies.[101] This discourse is part of the broader South African nation building narrative, as outlined in the previous chapter. Although I believe that there is a chance of political correctness and social desirability bias, I believe that the rainbow nation and equality discourse is in fact very encompassing and powerful and that, at least superficially, most of my interviewees support it.[102] Nevertheless, more research would be useful here, too, as for instance in Schoeman et al.'s (2010) study the majority of male respondents said they did not accept women within their ranks.

4.2 De-Gendering

Although equal rights were highlighted in my interviewees' accounts, it appeared that they mostly based their arguments for women's equal access and deployment on a degendering discourse, highlighting that women can do what men can do. Gender was argued *not* to be a crucial characteristic dividing male and female soldiers. While there was variety in the depth of the degendering, at times attributing it to both men and women, the gendered nature of the institution was hardly considered, rendering the degendering often a masculinization, as happens in many 'mainstreaming' ventures that effectively become 'malestreaming', referring to the reiteration of normalised masculinity within most institutions (Solhjell 2014).

By using different examples and personal stories, everyone but Officer Venter argued that generally, women are able to do what men can do. Through denouncing the power or strength of gendered difference either through telling stories of experiences or through more politically

[101] I am referring here to the broad discourse of development, in which 'Western' nations are understood as more 'progressive' than 'Southern' developing nations. But women are, for instance, still officially barred from trying out for US elite military units and completely from combat until 2013 and the Dutch still bar women from trying out for the marines (Lawrence 2013).

[102] However, the superficial nature of support for transformation and equality is for instance shown by the recent debates about decolonisation of education and the meaning of statues of colonial and apartheid leaders in public areas. The one side of these discussions points out the pervasive effect of South Africa's colonial heritage that still disadvantages millions, while the other side argues that South Africa has moved past this and is now a democracy in which everyone is equal, ignoring and hence reifying underlying inequalities.

based arguments, most of my interviewees were able to rationalise that women should be allowed to do the same as men in SANDF. In order to support this argument, many interviewees highlighted that the soldiering tasks are the same for everyone and that women are succeeding in their work. This on the one hand directly worked to denounce predominant gender stereotypes and arguments but on the other hand, may also have been motivated by the broader national discourse of non-discrimination as mentioned above. Officer Mazibuko, a senior female officer who served in the MK and has worked within SANDF's gender structures, points out tellingly: "[...] yes, I am a woman, but how do I differ?" By asking how she differs from a male soldier, she argues that there is, in fact, no real difference between male and female soldiers. Importantly, this is the same discourse as officially embraced by South Africa and the Department of Defence specifically, by stipulating complete non-discrimination for SANDF members based on sex or gender, a very rare official stance by a national military.[103]

In addition, many of my interviewees argued that SANDF needed 'the right person for the right job', meaning that gender is not a characteristic that directly affects suitability for a specific 'job'. This is a de-gendering discourse on the one hand, because it argues that we should not consider gender as a variable when we consider suitability for a job or post. However, the supposed gender neutrality of this argument was also used by some interviewees as a statement against affirmative action and gender quotas. Officer Steyn points out: "For me personally, I think, the right person for the job. If they, if 10 women come here and they can do the job that's fine, if 10 men come here and they can do the job, that's fine. I don't think it must be 50/50 women and men." This kind of 'gender neutrality', especially within a masculinist organisation such as the military, is upon closer examination a very gendering process, as ability is considered within the framework of the organisation, which is gendered, too.

Baaz and Stern (2012) also highlighted similar degendering tendencies in their study of the contradictory negotiations of women soldiers in the Congolese national armed forces. The soldiers argued that there was no gender or sex difference between male and female soldiers which would make women less suitable for combat. Through highlighting personal characteristics that are not attached to gender, both my and Baaz and Stern's (2012) interviewees, at least in a narrow sense, engaged in a process of degendering soldiering and

[103] Despite this, other discriminatory practices are evident. For instance SANDF was found guilty of unlawful discrimination against people living with HIV. In 2008 the Pretoria High Court ruled that the SANDF's practice of excluding all HIV positive individuals from recruitment, external deployment and promotion in the military as unjustified and discriminatory. However, SANDF appears to have failed in complying with the sentencing and allegedly still discriminates against HIV positive individuals (Mkize 2014).

peacekeeping. This shows the importance to pay attention to change and variation in gender discourses over time and space, even in highly gendered institutions, such as the military, as argued earlier.

Importantly, because the military is still understood as a male space and because my interviewees were sharply aware of this, their arguments mainly focused on establishing that women can do what men can do within the military. For instance, Officer Kumalo asserts that soldiers need to "respect the fact that a woman can also do that which you [male soldier] can also do". While this makes sense within a masculinist environment, especially since military performance has traditionally been based on physical strength as well as toughness and degendering especially worked to denounce stereotypical notions of femininity as weak, fragile and fearful, it was also deployed to degender male soldiers by describing their 'feminine' traits, such as emotional stress or fearfulness. Importantly, this did not serve to feminize soldiers in the sense of devaluing or mocking them, but rather as a way to illustrate that male and female soldiers experience very similar, if not the same, problems, such as emotional distress, during deployment. This is what Officer Louw referred to when she explained, "[t]hat is why I am saying we need to deploy ready people. Some men also, they are not ready mentally." As such, many of my interviewees made a case against gender as an organising principle within the SANDF, both through telling about their own experience or more hearsay stories. The equality and non-discrimination ideology of the 'new South Africa' is proven and highlighted through degendering of the soldier; everyone should be able to (try to) do the same, i.e. have the same opportunities, because everybody in fact is the same – a South African.[104] This shows how gender transformation within SANDF, in the sense of subverting or challenging gendered structures, is taking shape.

As the argument for equality within SANDF was enabled through degendering, this discourse was in turn enabled through highlighting that male and female soldiers had to undergo the same training and had to pass the same physical ability and psychological tests in order to enter the military, its different units and to be deemed fit for external deployment. While degendering was more balanced in the argument on potential soldiering ability, discussions on training were less nuanced and based on normalised military masculinity.

[104] Considering the violent xenophobic and racist attacks, both verbally, politically and physically on foreign nationals from African or South-East Asian countries apparently positions them as not equal to South Africans within the country.

All of my participants argued, sometimes repeatedly, that gender integrated training was proof that male and female soldiers had the same abilities and capacities and hence served as the main tool to advocate for equal treatment and deployment of male and female soldiers to peace missions. Discussing some SANDF member's gendered stereotypes, senior Officer Dhlamini argues passionately: "The physical strength for them to walk this long, I mean if you are an Infanteer, it is part of your training. It is not an issue....it cannot. And 'Ha are the women ready?' We are doing the same training!" Officer Dhlamini highlights the identity of infantry soldier instead of their gender, which degenders the soldier because of having undergone the specific training for it.

Therefore, for most of my interviewees, after military training, gender is not considered a deciding factor for deployment, but that military training works to make everyone the same: a soldier. This argument also served to show the irrationality and political motivation behind discrimination against female soldiers that I mentioned above. Officer Louw for instance describes how having gone through the same training, she felt that she should be treated the same as male soldiers: "I would say, that with us, as soldiers, are subjected to the same training, male and female. So maybe we are expected to do the same, in everything. So I say, we need to be treated the same."

The "erasure of difference" is a very prevalent and widely theorised characteristic of military (and other institutional) training and speaks to my discussion of military institutions in chapter one; hierarchies and complete obedience are established and enforced through teaching soldiers that they are all the same, everyone needs to listen and do (Whitworth 2014, p. 159). On the other hand, Heinecken (2013) and Schoeman et al. (2010) found that some SANDF peacekeepers argued that despite undergoing the same training, men and women "don't train the same" (Heinecken 2013, p.12). Their participants argued that women are often treated differently during trainings, for instance through trainers not being as strict with female as with male soldiers, or that the gendered dynamics of the trainings create a situation where male (*read:* strong) soldiers help out female (*read*: weak) soldiers (Schoeman et al. 2010; Heinecken 2013b). However, this was not mentioned at all by any of my participants, on the contrary. Officer Mazibuko points out that SANDF training is the same for everyone, regardless of

gender: "And the training is the same. The training is not, for women is not softer because you are a woman. So you have to prepare for all the eventuality out there."[105]

Nevertheless, since I did not specifically probe participants' direct training experience consistently, they might have engaged in the discourse of training as degendering from a more ideological ground, without directly relating it to their own training experience, which might also have been over 20 years ago and potentially within the apartheid military.[106] Therefore, I agree with Hendricks (2012), who also highlighted the importance to study the gender trainings by SANDF in order to actually understand the implementation of gender perspectives within SANDF; and whether the degendering actually takes place.

On the other hand, Sasson-Levy and Amram-Katz (2007) found similar degendering effects in their study about newly integrated gender training of the Israeli military. Their quantitative data revealed that men and women performed very similarly during training and that differences of performance within gender groups were bigger than between them. Although I did not analyse any performance data of SANDF training, this is coherent with my interviewees' accounts. However, what becomes clear in my interviewees' narratives as well as in Sasson-Levy's and Amram-Katz's (2007) study is that regarding training, regendering might be more a masculinisation. Although training is argued to be 'gender neutral', within an organisation that is based on masculinist notions of behaviour and the body, training is highly gendered, too. Since training has been based on traditionally masculine norms of bodily strength and endurance, it is effectively a masculinization of the soldier, whether male or female (Peterson 2010; Sion 2008), which refers to my earlier outline of 'malestreaming' instead of mainstreaming. In fact, Heinecken and Cowling (2009) found in their study that women in combat and infantry units in the SANDF feel inferior and that they have to adapt to a masculinist ideal of the soldier, further pointing towards the masculinist nature of SANDF training. The invisible masculinist structure of the military was also highlighted through various tendencies in my interviewees' accounts. Especially male interviewees tended to conflate people and soldiers with men, while only specifically pointing out women as gendered, showing that there is hardly any interrogation of what it means to do the military training except

[105] It has also been argued that the effectively different training leads to a lowering of standards and effectiveness of the military (Schoeman et al. 2010; Carreiras 2010). However, only Officer Venter engaged in this argument and no other participant brought it up.

[106] As previously mentioned, non-statutory forces were re-trained as part of integration into SANDF, whereas previous SADF members were not trained anew.

to point out that women can do it, too. Officer Louw makes this masculinisation clear by stating "I was trained like a man" in order to qualify her deployment in a peace mission.

The fact that gender is discussed in all basic training courses could be seen as a way to tackle this invisible genderedness of the institution. Although some scholars have questioned the effectiveness of this training, my conversations with trainers showed a deep engagement with gender as a socio-political construct, which I will further elaborate on in the last part of this analysis.

4.3 Re-Gendering

At the same time as my interviewees argued that men and women have the same soldiering capabilities, at least after undergoing training, they also point out that they cannot accomplish the same tasks. The tension between equality, sameness and difference became visible in my participants' accounts: women and men are the same regarding soldiering, but women are still different, [107] effectively highlighting the normalized masculinist nature of SANDF. This difference of women has been the basis on which UNSCR1325 is based; women (and children) are set apart from the unnamed rest of the world, which do not need mentioning because men are the norm. The degendering appears to be related to the idea of equality and sameness, whereas the regendering of women serves to highlight their 'added qualities' they bring to peacekeeping, which, in turn, are based on essentialized notions of femininity. While these essentialist notions are not exclusively reiterated within broader WPS discourses, in my eyes these WPS discussions specifically encourage essentialization through UNSCR1325 and its follow-ups.

In context of the broad sameness and degendering discourse just outlined, this same but different argument is a re-gendering; setting apart female from male soldiers. This often even happened at the same time as the de-gendering, for instance in Officer Tshabalala's account regarding his experience of having deployed to multiple peace missions:

> […] so there is nothing that they [women] cannot be able to do that we are not doing. So of course yes, somewhere somehow, during the training or

[107] This appears to be similar to other contexts of gender mainstreaming and women's inclusion into institutions. See for instance Benschop and Verloo (2006) or Mukhopadhyay (2004).

> mentoring actually, there must also be mentoring, because somewhere somehow erhm eh eh eh you will see that you must be …. there will always be certain differences. And you, you cannot take them away. But the idea behind it is that they must be always given a chance.

Officer Tshabalala points out that at the same time as women can do what male soldiers can do, they still need mentoring because there are certain differences between men and women, even as soldiers that cannot be 'taken away' by training. Hence, although he initially and repeatedly mentions that since men and women do the same training and hence should be given the same opportunities, he arguably degenders the soldier, but then directly moves on to regender women, through highlighting their difference – or lack – as soldiers. My other participants also engaged in contradictory accounts of the same but different discourse, which highlights the sameness of men and women as soldiers, but then regenders women by pointing out traditionally feminine qualities that supposedly make women soldiers specifically useful for peacekeeping.

Officer Dhlamini, who has worked for years within the gender structures of SANDF, directly shows this contradiction of same and difference of ability with specific focus on women's added feminine qualities in this extract of our conversation:

> Dhlamini: "[…] Men don't bring anything special, you know. It's not a question of men being born ready and women need extra work to then be ready. That is really not the case. "
>
> Marieke: "I would say that a counter argument would be that men are socialised to be more rational and less emotional and hence more suitable for the military."[108]
>
> Dhlamini: "Yes, but it's training [sounds a bit subdued], it's training. Yes yes. You can then make up for it. [...] [Gender stereotypes] can be dangerous as well. There is nothing wrong with men conceding that women do have innate you know, qualities, that make things slightly better, I mean. They do."

[108] This probing was not a standard probe I used with many other officers, since Officer Dhlamini is one of the senior officers working on gender and seemed to have a very differentiated understanding and knowledge of gendered dynamics and discussions, which made me comfortable asking such a rather critical question.

On the one hand, she argues that there is no difference between the actual ability in the field of male and female soldiers, and even if there was, women can "make up for it" through training. Yet, just a minute after that she highlights that women do have "qualities" that are specifically useful in peace missions. First, she de-genders the discourse on soldiering ability, while just after that she re-genders it through an essentialist notion of 'female characteristics'.

While some interviewees mentioned these qualities directly and in various contexts, I asked every interviewee about their opinion whether women add anything specific to peacekeeping.[109] All of my participants, with the exception of Officer Pinaar,[110] framed their arguments of added qualities by women peacekeepers as relating to women's communal role within societies, arguably directly linked to invariably female quality of motherhood – the traditional epitome of womanhood. These added qualities were very similar to the ones outlined in chapter two and included the argument that woman soldiers engage more easily and often with local communities, are more empathetic, easier approachable, especially for local women and engage with community up-liftment projects.

Although some mentioned that it is not only women but also men who engage with community projects during their deployment, the broader agreement was that women are the ones concerned with community up-liftment, since men were much more individualistic. Almost all interviewees mentioned that female peacekeepers are more easily accepted and more trusted by local populations and easier to talk to, compared to male peacekeepers. The ability of women to gather more information about what is needed within communities because they more easily talk about everyday necessities with locals, but also regarding military intelligence, was also mentioned frequently. Officer Kumalo points out how women are specifically 'useful' here: "Uhm, on the military side... intelligence. Intelligence which will later benefit the, the local population, men and women, they can gather intelligence better... because we can talk. I mean we talk *mos*,[111] women, I mean look at us, just take the time that it took us from the

[109] Although I did not specifically ask my interviewees whether women bring anything to the military but did ask them whether women bring anything specific to peace missions, there appeared to still be a tendency to validate women's participation in the military exclusively due to the added value of women in peacekeeping. For instance, when I asked whether there is a point to have women in the SANDF and spend resources, interviewees conceded that there was a point because women add their specific qualities and can do things during deployment that male soldiers cannot. However, peacekeeping is currently the only external deployment and also most defining feature of the SANDF. Hence, it makes sense to refer to peacekeeping when talking about SANDF.

[110] Officer Pienaar appeared to be invested in showing that men and women are exactly the same, except for the problem of maternity leave that created problems for him as he had to juggle scheduling while some of his female staff was on leave.

[111] South African expression to underline what has been said; could be translated to 'you see' or 'listen'.

reception to here [...]" referring to our small talk while walking to the office for our interview. This trust and ability to connect to locals is specifically highlighted with regards to talking about and sharing experiences about sexualised violence. Hence, women are positioned as necessary in peacekeeping due to their specific positionality as women, which supposedly creates a 'sisterly solidarity' with local women. This is one of the main arguments posited by UNSCR1325 and related policy discourses, justifying the increased participation of women in peacekeeping missions.[112]

However, Officer Kruger, an experienced SANDF member who has been to a peace mission, albeit not as soldier, and now works with gender policies, points out repeatedly that the UN has to grant permission for any community work. This means that these involvements are not informal as often described in anecdotal evidence of how women are helpful in peace missions through their informal and almost natural collaboration with 'locals' and the 'local community'.

Despite the perceptions that women are easier to connect to locals, none of the former female peacekeepers I talked to had direct contact with locals, as described in the discourses by their colleagues and the broader WPS community.[113] Hence, I did not find evidence that suggests that women actually do get better access to local communities, or access at all. In fact, the four women (admittedly, that is a small number) that had direct peace mission experience, mentioned that they were too scared to go outside of the base by themselves, especially without male soldiers as protection, and that they made friends with locals, but only those employed by the UN. Three of these women are not soldiers, but were deployed in other capacities and hence probably did not feel able to defend themselves in potentially harsh contexts. However, Officer Louw is a trained soldier but still mentioned that she was scared to go outside the base. Interestingly, the same former female peacekeepers who said that they were too scared to leave the base also argued that women peacekeepers are useful due to their better community acceptance and sociability. This seems to show that despite their own experience during missions, the dominant discourses of WPS and UNSCR1325, which are built on gender essentialisms, have huge effects on my participants. Hence, as mentioned regarding SANDF

[112] This sexualised violence was always assumed to be at the hands of men. Moreover, sexualised violence in context of international security and peacekeeping is implicitly only spoken about as perpetrated by fighting fractions or members of armed forces. Very seldom is intimate partner violence or other forms of non-stranger sexualised violence addressed as part of a security problem (Meger 2015).

[113] While Officer Kruger argued that the women in the missions she visited during her deployment were very engaged in community work, her role in deployment did presumably not bring her into contact with locals. She did not refer to herself when she pointed out that women were involved.

gender policies, UNSCR1325 has directly affected my participants' views on gender and peacekeeping.

There is in fact considerable amount of research confirming this lack of support for women peacekeepers' increased community interaction. Sion (2008) showed that women, because they are mostly confined to the base due to the tasks they were assigned, had much less chances of engaging with locals than male soldiers. She also found that female soldiers were not very interested in contact with locals nor showed empathy with them. My interviewees, despite mentioning that they are interested in the 'different cultures', did not argue that they found it important or considered it their responsibility to talk to and support local women as peacekeepers. In addition, it is important to keep in mind that researchers have found that monetary incentives account for a considerable amount of peacekeepers' motivation to deploy (Schoeman et al. 2010). Simic (2014) and Schoeman (2010) also highlight the fact that interaction with local populations for female peacekeepers is discouraged and practically difficult, since movement within many areas of peace missions is restricted. Moreover, Heinecken (2013) found in her study of South African peacekeepers that in her participants' experience, local women did not reach out to peacekeepers regarding SGBV, but rather talked to members of NGOs. It is also important to highlight that ordinary military peacekeepers are not trained to deal with such issues.[114] This means that the broad arguments meant to support women's participation in peace missions are not only based on essentialized notions of femininity as discussed in chapter two, but also do not seem to hold true.

Nevertheless, the level of interaction between peacekeepers and locals very much depends on the local circumstances, such as cultural specificities and mission context.[115] Heinecken (2013) for instance mentions that contact to local populations was impossible for her participants in Sudan, as local men would not talk to female peacekeepers and local women were too scared to talk to any peacekeeper.[116] Generally, the ways that gendered power relations play out in peace missions depends on the interplay of the specific mission, the socio-cultural and

[114] There are some courses, for instance by the Training for Peace programme, that trains peacekeepers (in this case police) on SGBV and how to deal with it in the peace mission context. However, this is by far not the norm.

[115] For instance, cultural contexts of Sudan are very different to the DRC and missions close to an Internally Displaced Person's (IDP) camp are very different to those in rural areas surrounded by villages. In addition, the level of fighting and the landscape are important, too, since for instance hilly and bushy regions are less safe than flat wasteland.

[116] I also find it questionable whether civilian survivors of SGBV in contexts of high militarisation would approach a soldier, out of all peace mission personnel (even if female), to talk about her experiences.

economic context as well as the ways that peacekeeping contingents are made up, were trained and relate to each other (Carreiras 2010).

On the other hand, many scholars found that female peacekeeping personnel elevates the legitimacy of the peacekeeping troops and that female peacekeepers are more trusted, especially by local women. For instance, Bridges and Horsfall (2001) found in their own study that military women mentioned that their presence made a difference as to how well their contingents were perceived by local populations.

Clearly, there have not been coherent results about the actual perception of and engagement by female peacekeepers with local populations. Since my sample only featured four women with direct peace mission experience, and notably only one woman who served as a soldier, the question of women's actual roles and experience cannot be answered in a satisfactory way. Because women's experiences in the military and even more so in peace missions are full of contradictions and diversity, much more research needs to be done in this area. Moreover, local populations' perception and experiences with male and female peacekeepers deserved much more attention than it has received so far and are not less crucial to understand the mentioned dynamics than the actual peacekeepers' experiences.

4.4 Essentialisms

Importantly, all these 'added characteristics' that female peacekeepers are supposedly bringing to peace missions are based on essentialist notions of femininity and all relate directly to women's inherent nature. Whether they actually do bring them or not is important, but it is equally important to crucially interrogate the discursive and political work these arguments are doing.

My participants saw women as naturally more communal and peaceful, being approachable and always concerned with those around them. Those are the same essentialisms that feature prominently also in the broader WPS discourse, which I believe directly influenced my participants' arguments, especially since many of my interviewees did not have direct peace mission experience and could not rely on these to inform their arguments. Most of these gender essentialisms are affirmative. These essentialisms were consistently repeated by my participants, showing how much impact the essentialist discourse of the WPS community has on their work and perceptions.

However, the negative effects even of affirmative essentialisms in context of my study become obvious when highlighting how they are all in one way or another related to women's bodily difference and their specific location as (potential) mothers. This homogenises all female soldiers, allows their gendered identity to trump all other identity fractions and locks them and their work into a feminized position vis-à-vis their male counterparts. According to Peterson (2010), feminization is a devaluation within the system of patriarchy and I would argue even more so within a masculinist organisation as the military.

Motherhood is mentioned by almost all interviewees as probably the most important feature dividing men and women with regards to their abilities and sensibilities necessary or lacking in individuals sent to peace missions. Women's ability to be mothers is argued to enable women to be more empathetic, more approachable, have better social skills and emotional resilience. For instance, Officer Mazibuko argues

> […] as a woman, maybe right now, you don't have babies, but I have babies, I know the pain... of giving birth. So the pain that is felt by those victims out there, women and children who are the most vulnerable people. You know if you are a woman you look at it, and you see that's my child. You know, you know how to carry a baby, you get what I mean. Those feelings, they are coming back. Yes. Those feelings of humanity, those pains come back and what do they tell your mind? They tell your mind to come up with something to rescue the situation.

Officer Mazibuko stated that women's ability to have children naturally makes them more empathetic to local populations. Motherhood has been central to efforts to legitimize and ground the argument of women's inherent peacefulness (Skjelsbaek 2001)[117] and hence especially important in peace missions.[118] In addition, interviewees mentioned women's domestic 'skills' as added qualities they bring to peace missions. Officer Steyn, the middle ranking officer who had been to a peace mission, mentioned that without women deployed, the

[117] However, it is also important to keep in mind that during the struggle, motherhood was very much militarised, with women rallying for the struggle, for instance using images of armed women carrying babies (see Miller 2009).

[118] It is important to also mention that this importance of (potential) motherhood for the production of woman as having an affinity towards peace has been dominating feminist peace activism (Jacoby 2010). Hence, the essentialisms of women as mothers and thus women's peacefulness has been reified by some feminists, too. In fact, at a recent worldwide gathering of over 1000 pacifist feminists, the WILPF 100th anniversary conference, the notion of women's inherent peacefulness was consistently upheld. Women's position as mothers has though, also been crucial for a lot of their activism, for instance in Bosnia (Helms 2013).

men in her unit "wouldn't want to clean, although they have to but they wouldn't want to. They wouldn't do stuff that they know they should.[...] They don't want to cook, we help them." It appears that essentialisms here, as shown by Helms (2013, p.15) in the context of donor activities in Bosnia-Herzegovina, work to reify women's roles as specifically understood to be "extensions of their domestic roles".

While the notion of women's universal motherhood is in one way used as an argument for their inclusion in SANDF and peace missions, it is at the same time used to highlight their inadequacy for deployment due to their bodily difference, specifically menstruation and supposed enhanced need for hygiene. When I asked Officer Kruger, "And … why is it [lack of abolition facilities] a bigger problem for women?" she responded,

> I think it is because of our sanitation. I really think so. Because the hygiene is really... and what, what you do during menstruation? You know I had to take the [hormonal birth control] injection before I left. Because uh mi bleeded too much. I can't even walk when I'm bleeding[…] . So that body is difficult and we will never be able to change that. So biologically, we have a, a thing.

The 'difficult body' that women are trapped in renders them inadequate to many soldiering tasks, according to many of my interviewees. This has also been a very common and long held argument against women as soldiers generally. Cock (1989, p. 59) for instance mentions the same sentiments from sources in the 1980s, highlighting how "women are incapacitated through physiological functioning such as menstruation". In addition, Sion (2008, p.578) tellingly argues: "Menstrual blood acts as a symbol through which gender identity is reflected, bringing to the surface what had otherwise been erased. Emphasis of the most inherent differences between men and women is used against women as an excuse to exclude them." In addition, Officer Pienaar argues that women are difficult to have on the team even when not deployed because of pregnancies and maternity leave.

Relatedly, all women and some men in my interviews mentioned the inadequate nature of the facilities in deployment. I was told that often, all women have to share one bathroom or bedroom, while men have many more facilities available.[119] In addition, there have been many complaints about the inadequacy of military equipment for women, which was also brought up

[119] In some units, women were not even deployed until 2010 because of the lack of facilities that could cater for mixed groups.

by some of my participants. The extra work and resources required to adapt the facilities and equipment for a mixed sex defence force are often used to argue against women in the military and peace missions. Women are hence blamed for the normalized masculine structure of the military and peace missions, arguing that women have special needs and requirements, while all along, they had just been shut out.[120]

Motherhood is also used as an argument to explain why comparatively few women join military peace missions, due to their responsibility and attachment to their children. Motherhood therefore serves as a crucial differentiation between male and female soldiers, pointing to similar 'women-and-children' discourses in UNSCR1325 as mentioned in chapter two. Fatherhood on the other hand was only mentioned by one interviewee and hence not understood as comparatively significant. This further highlights the demarcation of social roles and caring responsibilities, with women bearing the sole responsibility for care and reproductive work, while constructions of (militarized) masculinity exclude men from the possibility to care emotionally and practically for their children.

4.5 Making Sense of the Contradictions

While the contradictions of degendering to regender were very confusing to me at first, at a closer look, they make a lot of sense and fit well into the broader discussions around WPS and women and the military. My participants' contradicting arguments show similar characteristics as oft-cited tendencies of 'equal but different' discourses surrounding attempts for mainstreaming. However, relating to the specific context of peacekeeping, in which affirmative essentialisms are doing much of the work for rallying for 'equality', new paradoxes emerge. Since the degendering and discourse of training justifies the inclusion of women into the military and peacekeeping due to men and women's sameness in soldiering ability, it also effectively debunks the argument that women peacekeepers can create a difference in missions due to their 'feminine' behaviour and positive female qualities. This logic discredits the main arguments used in UNSCR 1325 and the broader WPS discourse as I described in chapter two: women should be part of peacekeeping due to their 'special contribution' of inherent peacefulness. In order to convincingly make the argument for women in peace missions, the

[120] This is of course the same argument that has been used for centuries against any kind of equality between men and women, with the feminine always being produced as needy, inadequate and faulty vis-à-vis the male.

difference of women seemingly needs to be asserted, basing women's participation on their feminine qualities and female sexed bodies, while this same argument simultaneously works to exclude women.

Whitworth (2004) points out that the discourse of gender mainstreaming in the UN will only be accepted and practiced as long as it does not question the basic tenets of the organisation's workings. Similarly, the elaborated discourses of women adding their essentially female qualities to peacekeeping can therefore be seen as a way to do mainstreaming, i.e. adding women and a 'gender perspective', without questioning the organisation's basic set of norms and practices of militarized masculinities and hierarchies. This is of course no news in context of uncountable failed attempts to 'mainstream' gender within institutions that by existence are based on gendered assumptions and norms (see e.g. Benschop & Verloo 2006; Mukhopadhyay 2004).

Hence, although women in military structures have a much stronger tradition and political support in South Africa than elsewhere, the idea of 'gender' as a critical engagement and questioning of social structures apparently is hard to deal with for SANDF. Instead, gender seems to have "become a safe idea" (Enloe 2001, p. 111) that does not question any broader structures but is merely used as a problem solving tool, focused on including women instead of aiming for deeper transformation (Enloe ibid; Kronsell 2012). The discourses on women in peacekeeping by SANDF therefore featured both those enabling women to engage in soldiering and at the same time hinders the substantive equality that my interviewees saw as the goal of their work.

At the same time, it is important to also interrogate the notions of motherhood that come out of the interviews from an African feminist or womanist perspective. African feminism or womanism directly links women's power to their motherhood, which has traditionally been women's source of power in many African contexts (Kolawole 2004).[121] As such, I believe that the understanding of female qualities as positive and useful – even in the context of armed conflict – has an important influence on the ways that the interviewees make sense of UNSCR1325. This relates to the affirmative nature of the essentialisms, as mentioned above. While of course it is still necessary to be wary of the ways that women are positioned when

[121] It is difficult for many of us, including myself, who were socialised in 'Western' feminisms, especially with a liberal feminist outlook, to connect motherhood to sources of power and authority, since we have been told that women need to get out of their domestic roles in order to gain power.

focusing on motherhood and their familial roles, this different understanding is crucial to make sense of UNSCR1325 as it is made sense of, rallied for and implemented within the South African context.

Nevertheless, even when I take womanism and African feminist politics into account and consider affirmative functions of essentialisms, the 'specifically female qualities' remains an inherent paradox for women soldier peacekeepers. In the role of a soldier and a social worker, as described in the broader WPS and UNSCR1325 discourses, already not accepted as a 'normal', masculine soldier, they now appear also to be expected to fulfil the duties that exclude them from this specific soldier identity. Simic (2014, p. 190) similarly points to the "impossible situation" for female peacekeepers. While the idea of the soldier is not as clear cut within the SANDF, due to its stated focus on building instead of destroying, there still appears to be a chasm for women who are expected to bring what is needed to peace missions, while at the same time these exact qualities supposedly exclude them from being 'good' soldiers. Whitworth (2004, p. 172) similarly argues that empathetic, caring people are not the ones sought after by militaries, but "the ultimate irony is that these may be the very qualities that are required of anyone involved in missions aimed at keeping, creating, promoting, or maintaining something called peace."

What all these positive 'additions' that women are argued to bring to peacekeeping missions render visible is that even as soldiers deployed on peace missions, the sexual division of labour is well intact and women are expected to do the double, or even triple shift. Similarly to the way that working civilian women are expected to do care and reproductive work in addition to their income generating jobs, female soldiers are expected to care for communities and local women and children, in addition to their regular activities as soldiers. While it is argued that the work with local communities is all peacekeepers' job, the elaborated discourse renders it to be an exclusively female territory. Through this, the confusing position and role of the soldier-peacekeeper- social worker that I elaborated in the second chapter is seemingly solved, since women are supposedly naturally inclined for these tasks. It appears to me that the gender perspective in peacekeeping as deployed by UNSCR1325 and reified by my participants (at least in discourse)[122] is a mere problem solving tool: instead of questioning the nature of peacekeeping and usefulness of military peacekeepers as community workers, women are added and because they are naturally good at the 'soft side' of peacekeeping, nothing needs to

[122] My findings cannot give an indication about the practical implications of this, as mentioned above.

change except adding women to the game. In fact, this is one of the few long standing arguments for including women in militaries: "to relieve men for more important jobs", though today women need to do it all, while at the same time as women are 'added', their roles are devalued through being feminised (DeGroot 2001, p.32; Peterson 2010).

Moreover, some interviewees even mentioned that female soldiers emotionally support their male colleagues, since they find it easier to speak to a woman and since women are more prone to engage in personal conversations with those in their surroundings. Hence, female soldiers are not only expected to do their regular duties as soldiers within the mission and work for the local community up-liftment, but also do emotional work in order to support their male colleagues – a triple shift! Women are taken as the sole bearers of responsibility to uphold the UN's call for "taking into account […] the views expressed by women of affected local communities" (UNSCR1820) for conflict resolution and protection of civilians. Men on the other hand are "left off the hook", since these tasks are better done by women (Simić 2014, p.190).

While it is understood by some members in the management of SANDF whom I interviewed that it is not helpful to base women's inclusion into SANDF and peace missions on these 'added characteristics', there is no interrogation of the possible (or real) negative consequences of this approach. Cock (1989, p. 59) points to the problems with such gender essentialisms when discussing apartheid SADF: "The crucial theme is that there is no contradiction between femininity and serving the SADF. Thus the ideology of gender roles is preserved." The affirmative essentialisms of UNSCR1325 and broader WPS discussions hence contribute to reifying of gender roles instead of subverting them as supposed under the banner of gender transformation in SANDF.

4.6 Imperial Notions

In addition to utilising the 'women add to peacekeeping' discourse for making sense of the confusing expectations of soldier-social worker-peacekeeper in multidimensional peace missions, the idea of the 'empowered' South African woman also seemed to serve as a way to produce South Africa as 'progressive' and 'modern' compared to locals and to other peacekeeping contingents. Many scholars and activists have highlighted that neo-colonial notions of primitivity, superiority and the saviour narrative are prevalent in peacekeeping

discourses (Razack 2004; Whitworth 2004; Kadar 2013). The idea of progress has been tied to democracy and the idea of human rights, with women's rights and position within society being highlighted as a crucial marker of 'development'.

My participants continuously highlighted South Africa's progress and development compared to the rest of the continent, as was clear by Officer Roberts, who has been working specifically on policy issues:

> […] there is so much pressure put on South Africa, because we are like the United states in Africa, you know what I mean. We are the ones with... [pause] [we are] supposed to be the best economy and, and the... uhm and we are seen as the, the lifesaver in Africa. […] not everybody wants to, everybody wants to play a role but they haven't got the funds... so South Africa is [pause] burdened with this thing of having to take on Resolutions 1325 on its own and and and and trying to be the superman in Africa.

As alluded to in chapter three, South Africa sees itself and has been seen by most of the international community as a continental role model, as Officer Roberts put it, the 'superman' of Africa, a country that has almost 'made it' and now has the responsibility to 'civilise' the rest of the continent, as I also mentioned in chapter three (Solomon 2010).

In fact, it is argued by Neocosmos (2008, p.590) that South Africa does not see itself as part of Africa, but rather understands Africa as "the place of the other". Officer Sithole, a middle ranking female officer who was deployed to a peace mission, for instance tells me that she "also met my African family that side [the peace mission area]". Although I believe that she is coloured and I did not ask her whether she identifies as "African", her quote is rather telling: she considers "that side" to be Africa, while 'this side', South Africa, is not Africa, really. "That side" is othered, showing how places of conflict where SANDF deploys for peace missions are understood as places of the Other; those constantly referred to as 'locals' or the 'local community' are hence othered, too.

While of course it appears rather paradoxical that South Africans would see other Africans in an orientalist manner similar to that which has been and still is attached to South Africans themselves by Europeans (or others), the orientalizing of 'other Africans' makes much sense in the context of repeated incidents of Xenophobic/racist (partially deadly) attacks on

foreigners in South Africa. Through its peacekeeping engagements, South Africa constructs itself as the democratic role model, the epitome of equality and freedom. My interviewees appear very much engaged in constructing the nation through a sense of superiority and responsibility for the Other. This is described by Whitworth (2004, p.185) as the "subject-constituting project of the colonial encounter" in peacekeeping. The South African national project gains more meaning through its peacekeeping/colonial encounter, which produces South Africa as the 'superman', but also provides the "raison d'être" for SANDF (Whitworth 2004, p.25). My interviewees appeared to construct the civilizing mission of SANDF and its success as the main reason to engage in peacekeeping.

Participants also saw their own military and soldiers as advanced compared to both the country of deployment and other UN peacekeeping contingents, mostly other 'developing nations'.[123] For instance, Officer Steyn, who deployed to a peace mission but not as a soldier, said that they "taught" other contingents in their base about gender equality: "I don't know if you know but their...women in their [the other contingents'] culture is nothing. So when they came to our camp they expected the same but we did tell them: 'listen, you are coming into our camp, you must respect our, our way of doing things.' And then they did. They understood." Officer Steyn refers here to equal treatment of male and female soldiers within the base. Through positioning the other contingent as oppressively 'cultural', South African soldiers 'taught' them gender equality, thus framing the South African contingent as more 'progressive' than the other deployed soldiers.

The construction of South Africa as 'civilising the continent' also relates to the intimate entwinedness of the WPS discourse with ideas of 'development' and 'progress'. 'Gender equality' and 'women's empowerment' have been on the developmental agenda for decades, and similarly serve as civilizing missions here, too.[124] This argument is based on the tendency to represent the 'local woman' as inherently victimised by the primitive 'local man'. Officer Mazibuko explained that female peacekeepers created projects that were "intended to assist the local women, who are always the victims. You know in the war torn counties." This discourse is in accordance with the way that women are positioned in the vast majority of UN related policies and documentation on women in contexts of wars and hence also UNSCR1325: predominantly as (potential) victims, especially of sexualised violence (Whitworth 2004).

[123] Sweden and the USA were mentioned as 'advanced' with regards to gender equality.
[124] See Abu-Lughod (2002).

Officer Kruger described local men as perpetrators saying "[t]he [host country] males, I don't know, I don't think you would want to have a relationship with them. When you look at... I saw terrible DVD on them, how they rape. [...] so they don't respect..." Officer Kruger argues that female SANDF soldiers would not want to have relations with 'those men' because of how they rape, yet, South Africa is the country with the highest incidence of sexualised violence (van den Berg et al. 2013). This shows how the discourse of South Africa as the superman for the 'local' is infused with orientalised and neo-colonial notions of the saviour complex – albeit this time, the saviour is a black woman.[125]

The positioning of 'local' versus South African women appears to effectively work to establish the 'us' and 'them' relationship, where 'we' go and help 'them' to create and keep peace for them. Women are, as highlighted by Anthais and Yuval-Davis (1989), markers of the 'us' and 'them' communities. 'Our' women are 'empowered' or 'free' while 'local' women are oppressed under the archaic cultures in host communities. The victimised local woman needs to be protected, hence South Africa is "saving brown women from brown men", as Spivak (1989) would say – just this time the saviours are mostly brown, too.

Hence, the gendered politics of peacekeeping as explained so far do very similar work as those described in the 'war on terror' by Khalili (2011). She argues "[...] [white female US soldiers] essentially help reproduce a geopolitical dominance in which the ostensible gender equality in the imperial metropole reinforces racial hierarchies in the conquered and occupied colonies and peripheries." (ibid, p.1484). Although not racial hierarchies in a 'Western' sense (where race relates only to the colour of someone's skin), my participants discourses about women in peacekeeping also worked to reinforce racial hierarchies within the peacekeeping contexts, through positioning the South African as progressive, as better, vis-à-vis local populations, but interestingly also vis-à-vis other peacekeeping contingents. Hence, women peacekeepers within my participants' narratives seem to become vehicles for nationalist and imperial ideology.[126] Different feminisms have also worked in this manner, for instance, the idea of having to 'liberate' Muslim women from the shackles of their Islamic tradition serves to 'modernize' Muslim women in the name of feminism (Abu-Lughod 2002).

[125] In one sense this is due to demographics, yet, more importantly, the notion of 'African Renaissance' as mentioned in the previous chapter, refers to an African 'brotherhood' in which South Africa sees itself as the leader. Hence, the black saviour refers to a specifically African version of the civilising mission.
[126] Interestingly, the Other contingents were, in my conversations, mostly portrayed as from Islamic countries, creating interesting parallels with the global 'war on terror' ideology in which Muslims are the epitome of misogynistic and 'backwards' peoples.

A similar discourse appears to be used by my participants to both legitimize the peace mission itself and more specifically female peacekeepers deployment there. By arguing that South African female peacekeepers would serve as role models for local women and show them that women, too can be soldiers, some of my interviewees positioned women's deployment as crucial tool for bringing 'empowerment', and maybe even 'democracy' to the local communities. For instance, after Officer Kruger said that "there, the women and the children is mostly responsible for everything" to highlight the misogynistic social relations in the host community she argued

> Kruger: We can definitely uhm support [local women] regarding relationship and role model, OUR South Africans definitely [...].
>
> Marieke: Specifically women?
>
> Kruger: Specifically women, yah.

She stated that especially female South African peacekeepers are role models to local women, as their soldiering deployment proves their emancipation, especially vis-à-vis the 'local women'. This does the work of legitimizing both the deployment of women peacekeepers but also the peace missions generally, as especially the 'local women' (and children) are understood to be civilians, while male civilians are still not as vulnerable as women.[127] While this could be understood as a broader conventional gender stereotype based on women as the 'weaker sex', my participants' arguments specifically position 'local' women as (potential) victims of 'local' men, pointing to the very similar discourses as in UNSCR1325, which positions local women inherently as victims and local men as (potential) perpetrators, as I elaborated in chapter two, and hence also highlight the imperial notions of gendered peacekeeping discourses.

4.7 Positive Tendencies

It is clear that there are many problematic tendencies within my interviewees' accounts, as I have shown, ranging from the specific attribution of 'softer' skills to women based on the idea of an essentially peaceful and maternal female nature to the narrative of a saviour complex for South Africa as Africa's superman. I have argued that these discourses are based on the

[127] As I elaborated above, women and children are understood as civilians whereas men are often seen as potential perpetrators and in one way or another implicated in the fighting.

premises and broader explanations of UNSCR1325 and its related resolutions as well as discourses. The 'orthodoxy' that Charlesworth (2008) writes about with regards to the essentialization of women's 'added qualities' and to justify imperial discourses appears to be proven by my participants' accounts. However, importantly, I also encountered very encouraging tendencies in my conversations with SANDF members who are working directly or indirectly with gender. These positive tendencies relate especially to the critical engagements with normalised and militarised masculinities in SANDF but also broader South African society.

My participants appeared to have in depth understanding of gender, as they acknowledged that gender is a *social construct* that provides gender roles for men and women, which can, according to Officer Louw "change over time", instead of being naturally given. This is a significant deviation from the essentialist and naturalized notions of gender as attached to most militaries and peacekeeping deployments, and that I described in the previous sections of this analysis. Moreover, different participants highlighted that there are different masculinities and femininities, even within the military, further contradicting essentialist notions of gender. The essentialization of womanhood as mentioned above is in direct contradiction with this perspective of constructivism. This contradiction, in context of the following positive tendencies and the more often than not anecdotal arguments about 'women's added qualities', show how pervasive and powerful the discourses produced by and with UNSCR1325 and its follow-ups are. As I showed, the essentialist nature of gender roles are so normalised within the WPS discourse and in broader South African society and that these participants work within, that it is hard not to fall into the trap of using these arguments for advocating for women in peacekeeping.

Moreover, some of my interviewees did not merely equate gender with women, as for instance in many SANDF policies. Almost everyone who was familiar with the meaning of a gender perspective highlighted that gender refers not only to women and women's issues, but just as much to men, too. Officer Kumalo for instance argues that "gender is not only on women." This is significant, since the application of a gender perspective to both men and women in SANDF is a crucial change from broader institutional gender discourse. Hence, in these accounts, men are effectively gendered, instead of masculinity being accepted as the invisible, non-gendered norm that does not need to be problematized as discussed in the degendering section above. This is remarkable in context of a (masculinist) state institution, let alone a military, as it questions the normalization of the masculine nature of these organisations. But

it is also crucial in context of the WPS discourse, which usually equates gender with women, such as explicitly in UNSCR 1325.

The genderedness of men relates to the ways that my participants criticized current forms of masculinity within SANDF arguing that it is crucial for men to change in order to create a more gender equal and gender sensitive force. Although there were some arguments highlighting the importance of female soldiers to undergo leadership training in order to gain more assertiveness, my participants suggested that it is especially men who need to undergo gender training in order to become re-socialised into a more inclusive and less misogynistic worldview.

Engaging men in gender training in SANDF appears to have been successful, at least in a quantitative sense, according to my interviewees, as many men are now enrolling in Gender Advisor and Gender for Instructor courses at the PMTC. While this only refers to men signing up for these courses and might have to do with male soldiers' aim for career advancement, undergoing such training should have an effect on these soldiers. Nevertheless, the actual meaning of these increased enrolment numbers ultimately depends on the content and depth of the training and its possibility to induce questioning and attitude as well as behavioural change amongst soldiers. Hence, further study of the content and conduct of the gender trainings at SANDF would be useful in understanding these effects.

Nevertheless, being able to motivate men to engage in a quest for gender transformation is a great achievement, especially within a military institution, in which male members are usually motivated to reify its masculinist construction, instead of subvert it (Whitworth 2004). It is also important to mention that some of my participants were very aware that many women also hold oppressive gender perceptions and hence that gender training for women is no less important as for men.

Interestingly, many of my female participants who worked within the gender structure of SANDF saw men's involvement especially as a necessary strategy to advance their goal of gender transformation in terms of increasing women's participation but more so the broader masculinist structure and attitudes within SANDF. They pointed out that 'male champions' are needed in order to meaningfully drive the gender agenda within SANDF. With 'male champions', my interviewees referred to men in SANDF who were supporters of gender equality; since SANDF is a male dominated (I would add masculinist) institution, interviewees argued that men were better positioned to convince other men in SANDF of the importance to

engage with gender in their work and broader society. Officer Dhlamini, who has long worked within management structures to further gender perspectives in SANDF, pointed out:

> When it comes to gender issues... but I must say that it gets frustrating. But the solution is to have male champions, because most strategy posts are held by men. So it is important that they understand and buy into this agenda. You know because that then, if they understand, then it's, it's easy.

Because she assumed that men listen better to men and are more accepted within SANDF generally, Officer Dhlamini argued that 'male champions' can do important work for gender equality within SANDF. As such, she understood the idea of male champions more as a strategic move. Officer Tshabalala also highlighted that his positioning as a male trainer on gender eases male soldiers in talking about their opinions and experiences.[128] Officer Mthembu, who teaches certain basic gender modules in some training courses, mentioned that his trainees better understand that gender is both for men and women, because he as a man is conveying the training. In addition, I believe the development of changing the focus to men for the responsibility to contribute the 'gender agenda' is crucial for more meaningful transformation beyond the numbers' game and hence to circumvent 'malestreaming'. This is a refreshing change compared to many other spheres where gender equality often appears to be solely the responsibility of women, as for instance the 'triple shift' mentioned above.

These engagements with men for gender equality are already important positive changes from much of gender mainstreaming work in state institutions, and more so militaries. What they point towards is, that at least members who work within the 'gender structures' of SANDF engage in a critical engagement with and problematization of military masculinities within the institution and, as just mentioned, also broader South African society. This is crucial since masculinities normalized, especially in bastions of male power, such as the military (Kronsell 2006). The questioning of the masculinist norm is even more significant if we consider Whitworth's (2004) argument that militarized masculinity has to be constantly confirmed and reinforced, since it is especially fragile.[129] This engagement appears to go past the degendering

[128] While I think it is crucial to pay attention to SGBV against men, especially in contexts of conflict, I am not convinced that many SANDF officers have to deal with such issues. That being said, one of my interviewees actually mentioned a specific incident of a male SANDF peacekeeper having been raped or sexually assaulted.
[129] The extremely heteronormative nature of the military and both militarised masculinity, as highlighted for instance by Peterson (in Sjoberg & Via 2010), and femininity are however not questioned at all.

notions elaborated on earlier, which mostly focused on degendering women, without gendering men, even while those framings purported not to see anyone as gendered. This was furthermore illustrated by the way that my participants showed their awareness of the structural nature of gendered inequality both within the SANDF and in the broader society, not only but also through the mentioning of patriarchy as a reason why their work is important and why gender transformation is difficult to do in SANDF.

The fact that they apparently saw the structural and systemic nature of gendered inequality suggests that participants were aware of the broader implications of their work, instead of merely aiming to add women. This also became clear as my participants pointed out that this attitude change also needs to happen in soldiers' private lives, where men need to take on domestic and caring responsibilities. The societal context of SANDF was therefore brought into the discussion by interviewees, as some argued that their work is hard because South African society is structured by intense patriarchal ideologies, despite wide ranging policies to tackle gender inequality. This is also particularly crucial since masculinities in South Africa have, according to Cock (2001), been constructed to be highly violent, with manhood being tied to gun ownership, aggression and brutality since the apartheid era.

I believe that these contestations of normalized military and civilian masculinity relate to broader national discussions about masculinities in South Africa, especially since the rape trial against Jaocob Zuma in 2006 and the work of Sonke Gender Justice as well as other organisations that have brought men's roles for a just South Africa into the conversation (Peacock 2013). Researchers have found that masculinities are changing in South African society, but that they are full of contradictions and contestation (van den Berg et al. 2013; Peacock 2013; Walker 2005). Since SANDF does not exist within a social or political vacuum, gendered constructions and questionings of broader South African society surely affect those within SANDF.[130] Within the context of societal changes (although small), SANDF members who work to destabilise and change the gendered power relations and culture in SANDF are in a good position to also further their current tendencies of critical questioning that works for change beyond adding and stirring.

Therefore, contrary to findings by different scholars, such as Simic (2014), Heinecken (2013) or Kronsell (2012) or Persson (2013), who point out the lack of critical engagements and mere

[130] Moreover, the societal context of peace missions also plays a crucial role of how male and female peacekeepers relate and behave.

token gender work, the gendered approach in SANDF appears to be more substantial. My interviewees' accounts show that at least some of SANDF's members are questioning normalised masculinity and men's exemption from gender transformation. While the gender discourses within SANDF, specifically as it refers to peacekeeping, has been directly influenced by UNSCR1325, as I showed earlier, the work with gender in the force appears to show tendencies to surpass its premises, engaging in much more critical and substantial questioning and transformation.

Of course caution is necessary, since my study only included a small number of interviewees and these crucial engagements were only articulated by members who directly work with gender training or policy and hence are not representative of the broader SANDF. Yet, gender trainers and policy makers are positioned to have a large impact on broader SANDF members. The potency of the highlighted questions will nevertheless be considerably weakened through the still masculinist surrounding within which the training and policy implementation is happening. More research sensible to tendencies of critical questioning of the masculinist culture of the military, such as normalisation of masculinity and feminisation of women's tasks, is desirable in order to assess how much of these critiques are actually permeating throughout the organisation.

Most importantly, as Officer Kumalo pointed when discussing the ways that gender training affects especially men in very masculine rankings, such as combat: "it started the conversation." While there are still a lot of flaws and much more work to do within the gender structures but the SANDF as an organisation as well, much has been done and is happening. The 'half loaf', as mentioned by Officer Kumalo in describing the effect of UNSCR1325 on SANDF, has been used to build new areas of questioning that were previously not possible, while SANDF appears to have started making a proper, well rounded meal out of the half loaf provided by the UN with UNSCR1325 and its limited gender engagements.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

Although I agree that a world without militaries would be best for all of us, I believe that unfortunately at least for now, this is a utopia still far in the future. Similarly, we are far away from Hendricks' (2012, p.6) question "if gendered power relations and ideologies are transcended, can the military still function as a military or have we changed the institution's very essence?" Although it is a very optimistic and ultimately important question to ask, there is still a long road ahead of us until we face this question with any kind of *practical* urgency. For now, I believe, being faced with an increase in armed conflict and increasingly aggressive and violent organisations that kill, abuse and torture thousands of women, men and children with complete disregard for 'human rights', despite the many problems, military peacekeeping is one of the few tools available for international intervention for protection of civilians.

In this context, I believe that we should work towards military institutions that represent a democratic and just society and are enabled to fulfil their tasks of protection in peacekeeping with necessary skills and commitment.[131] For that, internal structures and attitudes need to change towards just and politically engaged leadership, in order to work towards a just and politically representative military. Since militaries are based on inherently gendered ideas of inclusion, exclusion and power, working to change gendered ideologies and power relations within armed forces is crucial.

Peacekeeping and militaries are "full of contradictions" (Whitworth 2004, p.4) and sites of constant contestations around gender, power and politics. My preceding analysis highlighted the most important and intriguing contestations and contradictions that my participants engaged in during our conversations about their opinions and understandings of gender perspectives and experience in SANDF and its peacekeeping deployments. Since peacekeeping is conducted by national militaries, which are responsible for the readiness and discipline of their soldier-peacekeepers, the national implementation and conceptualisation of international resolutions and treaties, such as UNSCR1325, are crucial to understand the effects and effectiveness of these. In my study, I aimed to investigate the ways that UNSCR1325 for

[131] I am decidedly against any pre-emptive wars and against non-UN mandated military actions based on the ideology of a 'war on terror' or other agendas that in fact relate more to an aim for geopolitical and economic influence and dominance.

women's increased participation and a gender perspective in peacekeeping, has been understood and implemented in the South African National Defence Force.

At the backdrop of much critical voices highlighting the problematic nature of UNSCR1325 and many of its follow up resolutions, I found that some SANDF members who work within the organisation's gender structures have been using UNSCR1325 for their work aimed at creating a gender equal force by both rallying for increased representation of female soldiers and also to diminish gendered stereotypes and discrimination. UNSCR1325 was crucial for the implementation of different gender focused regulations and policies. Nevertheless, while UNSCR1325 served as a political tool and even 'Bible' for this work, there are tendencies within my participants' narratives that point towards an awareness of the limited potential of the resolution and to an overcoming of the problematic notions of the resolution. UNSCR1325 therefore served as 'half a loaf', which was understood to have its problems but at least gender work within SANDF could build on it and strategically use it to rally for gender focused training courses, gender mainstreaming and the increased deployment of women to peace missions.

Simic (2014) for instance showed that the ways that UNSCR1325 and its follow up resolutions are framing female peacekeepers seemingly alleviates the chasms between soldier and peacekeeper identities and responsibilities. It appeared in my conversations with SANDF members that the same is happening in SANDF. While most participants argued that soldiers' gender is not the most important factor in military capabilities and peacekeeping deployments, arguing that everyone is equal and could do the same and hence engaged in a degendering discourse , they also highlighted the importance of women soldiers' added qualities to peacekeeping.

Therefore, UNSCR1325 has not only had a positive impact on SANDF and its work for women's re-presentation, gender sensitivity and equality in peacekeeping, but has also produced similar distortions of the gender agenda, equating a gender perspective with adding women, based on essentialized female qualities as a way to justify their participation. While a few of my participants recognized and accepted the danger of gendered essentialisms, despite their affirmative nature, and argued against the political and practical utility of these discourses, they nevertheless engaged in them as much as their less critical colleagues. This means that the human rights approach upon which the new 'rainbow nation' and also the transformation of SADF to SANDF had been based appears to become diminished. By engaging uncritically in

the discourses of these essentialisms, although mostly affirmative, the sexual division of labour and of symbolic power is well intact, positioning female soldier peacekeepers as solely responsible for the soft skills in peacekeeping and feminising these tasks, ultimately diminishing any critical gender perspective.

To argue that women peacekeepers are better because they are natural social workers is clearly an easy, cheap, quick and most importantly a dangerous way out of these questions and contradictions. Dangerous for everyone involved: women soldiers are faced with expectations they cannot fulfil, with gendered stereotypes that serve to disenfranchise them and that put immense pressure on the individual female soldier. Dangerous for local populations because female soldiers are perhaps as little willing and able as male soldiers to adequately care for local communities, women, children or men who might even have endured sexualized violence, risking victims to become re-traumatized or even worse. Dangerous for the mission, because the chasm between expectations, politics and reality/ability can have detrimental effects for the overall mandate to protect locals and create peace. Locals will be much less willing to trust anyone, whether woman or man in uniform if they are not able or willing to support them in the ways they need.

Nevertheless, despite the paradoxes and problematic implications of these discourses based on gender essentialisms, I find it important to highlight that many women probably are more easily able to do the jobs ascribed to them: to engage with local communities, to support community projects and to help local women in cases of sexual violence. Highlighting the problems of assumptions and arguing that these assumptions are not true are two different things; what I am arguing is not that women do not, more often than men, engage in community work and are better able to support women, due to their positionality and experiences. However, employing these characteristics as naturally women's affinity and specifically useful tasks risks their eligibility as soldiers, as mentioned by Officer Kumalo and Dhlamini. It is problematic to only base women's inclusion in peace missions on these affirmative essentialisms. However, on top of that, these essentialisms, although affirmative, render women in a position of triple shifts and triple responsibilities.

The tendency to revert to gender essentialisms to solve contradictions of the soldier-social worker-peacekeeper highlight that a decision needs to be made about what is expected from military peacekeepers and how to prepare them adequately for these tasks. Because currently,

the vast majority of peacekeepers who are deployed as soldiers, are enabled to act in their soldiering capacity but not as mediators, aid workers or SGBV counsellors.

I agree with Whitworth (2004, p.139) that ultimately, we need to also engage in "fundamental rethinking of what those missions seek to accomplish, how they are conducted or by whom". More in depth questioning and discussion of the broader political motivation of peacekeeping needs to happen as well deal with the direct and urgent necessity of everyday practice of peacekeeping. If we are serious about gender perspectives in militaries and specifically in peacekeeping, then we need to question some of the basic tenets of these institutions. The questioning of men's role in 'doing gender' and the questioning of masculinity is the first step – especially in a context where a gender perspective means adding women and stirring. This on the one hand refers to broader geopolitical power structures and hegemonies, such as elaborated in previous chapters, but also to the specific roles of peacekeepers and their training.

This means that peacekeepers need to be trained and socialised differently. All that the specific training and preparation aims towards is changing the ways that peacekeepers soldiers are being prepared for the mission. This is based on the idea that as peacekeepers, soldiers need to be re-socialised from aiming to destroy to aiming to protect (at least if that remains the focus of peacekeeping, which is nevertheless questionable considering the offensive mandate in the DRC). While South Africa provides comparatively extensive training for their peacekeepers and although there are training initiatives aimed at enabling soldiers or commanders to understand and adequately react e.g. to incidents of sexualized violence, understand cultural circumstances or engage with communities, these courses are not a requirement but understood as additional expertise. Moreover, these trainings are funded by foundations, NGOs or other structures, instead of the UN or troop sending countries and are simply too little and too short. The United Nations needs to take responsibility and become more able to engage in their peacekeeping preparation. This requires more funding. However, considering the current intensified militarisation of peacekeeping, especially through the mandate for offensive operations in the DRC, calls for increased in budgets for military peacekeeping need to be made with a lot of caution.

Ultimately, peace keeping and building should not be a responsibility of military agents – instead of asking for more money to prepare soldiers to be social workers, it might be much more useful and ethical to strengthen community and grassroots peace building efforts (where possible). Instead of having outsiders, on top of that soldiers, deal with sensitive and politically

charged issues such as sexualised violence, communities should be enabled and supported to deal with these issues themselves. Nevertheless, we cannot shift the burden of peacekeeping on communities directly affected by conflicts.

The (affirmative) gender essentialisms discussed in UNSCR1325 and my participants' accounts appear much more problematic in the context of SANDF, compared to other militaries where the question of gender or equal opportunity is considered irrelevant or problematic for the armed forces. Women in SANDF have come a long way and a 'critical mass' of women is close to being realized. Moreover, as I showed in the last part of my analysis, some of the SANDF members who work with gender in training and policy have in-depth and politicized knowledge about gender and the structural implications of patriarchal societies and organizations, such as SANDF and South Africa. Having achieved gender mainstreaming in training and specific gender focused training courses is an immense step for a military organization, which stands chance of being jeopardized through the reliance on gendered essentialisms. Members arguing that we need to dismantle patriarchy and work towards a gender just world, is another step that is unthinkable in most other militaries.

However, through relying on the same discourses of UNSCR1325 and, as I showed, old established myths about women in context of militaries will diminish the achievements made by members working for gender. I have shown some of the contradictions and I hope that SANDF members working with gender will move past these essentialisms, no matter how affirmative they may seem in the short term. The questions about men's usefulness and the broader masculinist ideology that have been shown to be at the root of many problems of militaries deployed to peacekeeping is crucial for any transformation of masculinist institutions. Without asking these questions more openly, more publicly and more broadly, transformation in SANDF wan only go so far – and might ultimately fail in its broader and deeper goals.

I believe that SANDF, or at least members of its gender structures are surpassing the problems of UNSCR1325 by asking critical questions and engaging in political work that moves beyond the mere reifying of gendered divisions and gender essentialisms. This questioning goes beyond the mere normalisation of masculinism through engaging in degendering discourses that purport men and women are the same. The idea of the 'half loaf' therefore also suggests that more ingredients are necessary to cook up a full recipe for SANDF's mandate for gender transformation, even though SANDF is positioned in a specifically favourable position of

South Africa's national project of transforming from apartheid injustice to post-apartheid equality. Yet, the recognition of this amongst some of my interviewees points to their understood necessity that more instruments and change is required.

Duncanson (2009) argues that peacekeeper masculinities an also have positive attributes and that they can work to challenge militarism. I think such alternative peacekeeper masculinities and femininities are in the making in SANDF, or at least about to be in the making. As alluded to, the questioning of masculinity appears to also be influenced by a broader questioning of South African masculinity. Sonke has been on the forefront of a global change in feminist movements, brining men into the picture, highlighting the negative effects of militarised, violent etc. masculinities for the broader society. Instead of pointing the fingers to women, Sonke points it to men, supporting men to ask questions about their socialisation and everyday lives in a South African society that is still very much based on militarised and violent masculinities.[132] SANDF and Sonke have, according to one of my main interviewees, been working together for certain trainings. Sonke has delivered modules to SANDF members at the PMTC, showing a collaboration that is giving even more hope to a deeper questioning of normalised militarised masculinity in SANDF, making the imagination of a truly transformed and not merely adapted SANDF possible. Importantly also in the context of current violence in South Africa against foreigners, the demarcations of us, benevolent peacekeepers, and them, primitive locals, needs to be questioned and the neo-imperial discourses countered instead of entrenched.

Moreover, much more research is necessary to understand peacekeeping as it happens 'on the ground' and how it affects local populations and peacekeepers. The effectiveness of peacekeeping training, not only with gender foci, can also only be established by conducting more in depth and prolonged research. It would also be interesting to study the history of gender policies in SANDF more and investigate whether my participants' arguments that the gender agenda had been put on a backburner, hold true.

It is also crucial to study the ways WPS pertains to domestic issues in South Africa, since its NAP will most probably be internationally focused. Similarly, the NGO work on WPS is still in its early stages in South Africa. While I could speak to some members of the working group

[132] The projects of Sonke span a very wide array of engagements, from a Fatherhood campaign aiming to create a culture of concerned and present fathers to work with prison inmates and global collaboration with the Men Engage network. For more information: http://www.genderjustice.org.za/

on gender, peace and security, their focus is also outside of South Africa instead of on domestic issues. Yet, in context of a misogynistic society still working to overcome it sexist past, gender is one of the crucial characteristics making people live in danger and insecurity in South Africa. Moreover, with the recent military engagements 'against' xenophobia and criminal foreigners, in which SANDF members were deployed in townships and inner city areas to on the one hand, curb recent xenophobic/afrophobic violent protests and attacks, while on the other hand searching and arrest African foreigners, points to the other characteristic that is crucial for insecurity, next to poverty, nationalism.

I would like to conclude with a quote by Madlala-Routledge (2008, p.90), who argues that "feminist consciousness will assist African men resist androcentric militarized neo-colonial masculinities". I believe it does, too. Especially because of the cooperative approach of African feminisms, which focus on working with men for a better communal future, there is considerable power to also transform the military. How far that is possible, I am not sure, but SANDF and its members appear, together with the rest of the country, be moving in the right direction.

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Appendix

Interview Guide

How long have you been in the military?

Why did you choose to join the military?

What is your position in SANDF at the moment?

How would you describe the progress of 'gender transformation' in SANDF?

Have you been to a peace mission?

Tell me about your experience working in the PKO...

Were there women deployed with you on the mission?

How was it in the mission as a woman? /How did you feel with regards to having women the mission?

Do you think your experience was different than that of your female/male colleagues? How?

What was the most difficult task/experience during your deployment? Why?

Why do you think there are less women in PK missions than in the military generally?

Are there certain things in the military and/or PKOs that are specifically hard/easy for women/men?

Do you think women can contribute something specific to the effectiveness of PKOs?

Do you think there is a point in focussing on higher numbers of female recruits for SANDF? Why/why not?

Have you heard of gender mainstreaming? What do you think of it?

Have you heard of UNSCR 1325? Or other UN resolutions regarding PK and/or Gender?

If yes, do you think it's important? If no, do you think a resolution like UNSCR1325 (explain shortly what it's about) is important or not? Why?

Have you had specific training on gender or UNSCR 1325, either as part of normal SANDF training or specific PKO training?

How would you describe a 'gender perspective'?

Is there anything you would like to mention that we have not discussed yet?