Intersectionality and Peacebuilding in Bougainville: An Analysis of the United Nations' Policy and Practice and its Impacts on Gender and Peace

By

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Abstract

Since the end of the 10-year civil conflict in Bougainville, Papua New Guinea, in 2001, the territory has been the subject of a number of peacebuilding programs and policies in which the United Nations (UN) has participated extensively. Many of these international gender-based projects have been implemented in collaboration with local women's Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and focused on notions of "hybrid" peace. Despite its attempt to mediate between local and international norms and interests, this approach has faced much criticism in the field of Critical Peace Studies (CPS). This has led to a stagnation in knowledge production in debates about how to build a sustainable and lasting peace that incorporates local perspectives without essentializing and dichotomizing the 'local' and the 'international'.

This thesis aims to contribute to the field of CPS by analyzing the possibilities of using intersectionality as an analytical lens to shed new light on debates about gender and peace. Specifically, it undertakes a Discourse Theoretical Analysis of the UN's policy and practice in relation to the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) Agenda in Bougainville, which build on UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000). The thesis argues that the liberal ideal of peace that is behind this international organization reproduces an idea of women that neglects broader local and international structures of power and discrimination. This omission ultimately impacts local women's capacity for action and the outcome of peace processes. Through showing what is missing when intersectionality is left out of peacebuilding practices, the thesis proposes that using this lens could have helped these projects overcome some of their limitations. In the case of policies, the thesis shows how these projects could have reached a wider range of society, giving more importance to local CSOs and their roles. The thesis also contrasts the idea of agency that informs the UN's projects with local understandings and experiences of motherhood, matrilineality and religion – concepts that, I argue, have shaped women's experiences of the conflict and activism for peace. More broadly, the thesis provides a template for rethinking how liberal concepts of empowerment, equality, and emancipation shape liberal peace, how they are deployed by the UN, and how they could be modified to take better account of local experiences and realities.

Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of original research; it contains no materials accepted for any other degree in any other institution and no materials previously written and/or published by another person, except where appropriate acknowledgement is made in form of bibliographical reference.

I further declare that the following wordcount for this thesis are accurate:
Body of thesis (all chapters excluding notes, references, appendices, etc.): 24081 words
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Signed: Paula Jou Fuster

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Table of Contents

List of Abbreviations

ABG – Autonomous Bougainville Government

AusAid – Australian Agency for International Development

BICWF – Bougainville's Interchurch Women's Forum

BHOR – Bougainville House of Representatives

BRA – Bougainville Revolutionary Army

CPS – Critical Peace Studies

CSO – Civil Society Organization

DTA – Discourse Theoretical Analysis

E4P – Equality for Peace

IWDA – International Women's Development Agency

LNWDA – Leitana Nehan Women's Development Agency

NAP – National Action Plan

NCR – Nazareth Center for Rehabilitation

OGE – Office for Gender Equality

PNG – Papua New Guinea

RAP – Regional Action Plan

UN – United Nations

UNDP – United Nations Development Program

UNPBF – United Nations Peacebuilding Found

UNPOB – United Nations Political Observer Mission

UNSC – United Nations Security Council

UNSCR 1325 – United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325

VAW – Violence Against Women

WPS – Women Peace and Security

Peacemaking has always been a part of our culture,

even when the white man arrived in our shores.

– Josephine Tankunani Sirivi, *As Mothers of the Land* (2004, 176)

1. Introduction

Bougainville is an Autonomous Region of Papua New Guinea (PNG), which experienced an internal armed conflict that lasted over 10 years (1988-2001). The conflict broke out due to the local population's discontent with a copper and gold mine, which had implications for indigenous identity and ties to the land, a significant ecological impact, and created feelings of exploitation among Bougainvilleans. Due to the matrilineal nature of Bougainvillean society (based on land transfer and custody), women have an important position in the family and social structures. For these reasons, they played a key role in promoting peace and associated negotiations, which culminated in the Bougainville Peace Agreement that was signed in 2001. The agreement's implementation was supported by a United Nations Political Observer Mission (UNPOB), which had been in place since 1998[1]. Many of the local organizations in which women participated at this time and which played a significant role in these peace negotiations – for instance, the Leitana Nehan Women's Development Agency – continue to exist and work for the promotion of peace through local grassroots activities to this day.

Source: Geology.com (2020)

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[1] It was established with the aim to monitor, observe, and report the implementation of the Lincoln (1997) and Arawa Agreements (2001).

This thesis undertakes a Discourse Theoretical Analysis (Shepherd 2008) of the rationale behind the United Nation (UN)'s influence – through policies and projects – in Bougainville and how it relates to local women's organizing and peace activism. The approach that the UN has taken in Bougainville, which has involved local structures of governance and civil society actors in their projects, has been many times labelled as "hybrid" and has faced many criticisms both practically and academically (I discuss these further in the Literature Review). Using intersectionality as an analytical lens, this research undertakes a discourse analysis of the Policy for Women's Empowerment, Gender Equality, Peace, and Security in Bougainville (2016) and the report of two UN projects developed between 2015-2017. This policy and projects have been chosen because they form of the UN Peacebuilding Priority Plan (2015-2017) for the Autonomous Region of Bougainville, which is the most recent peacebuilding plan developed in the region. They are also the only projects developed with a specific focus on gender and peacebuilding inside the plan. Through this approach, the thesis exposes how international and local power structures shape women's peacebuilding experiences and how these structures can be (re)produced by international peacebuilding institutions through their discursive practices. It further demonstrates that missing these perspectives in the drafting and implementation of the UN's policies and practices ultimately impacts local women and their capacity for organizing and activism.

This introductory chapter will first review the aims, research questions and arguments behind this thesis as well as its contribution. Finally, it will give an explanation of the methods to be used and how intersectionality will inform them.

1.1. Aims, Research Questions and Argument

1.1.1. Aims and Argument

This thesis argues that these international and local power structures can be found and reproduced in the UN's liberal agenda of peace, which promotes a specific vision of "women" through discourses centered on empowerment, equality, and emancipation. These notions are related to the liberal logic of peacebuilding as state-building that is central to UN discourse, which contributes to the creation of policies that limit the work and funding of local women's Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). I argue that centering policies and practices that aim to enhance women's participation in politics can neglect the broader power structures that shape

2

women's everyday lives. These structures, which are related to local structures of power, entitlements, authority, and broader global dynamics of imperialism, colonialism, and western influences, shape and condition women's lives and access to peacebuilding resources. In the case of local projects, the omission of the UN's role in the reproduction of these structures has resulted in certain limitations in the initial implementation of the projects by the UN, but also for the continuing implementation by local actors after the project has finished.

To better support this argument, the thesis contrasts the notion of agency contained within the UN's approach to peace to how local practices, beliefs, and experiences – such as motherhood, matrilineality and religion – shaped women's activism and agency during the conflict and prior to the UN's intervention. Through analyzing how a specific construction of motherhood informed women's activism during the conflict, with support of theories on motherhood and radical activism, it shows how local practices of peacemaking during the conflict could be seen from a postcolonial approach to agency (Mahmood 2016). The thesis argues that this agency was obscured by the liberal approach of the UN and imposed discourses on equality, empowerment, and capacity-building.

In a broader context, this thesis seeks to contribute to the creation of theory that comes from the Global South and challenges the liberal peace paradigm: that is, "one which intends to bring peace through the 'institution of a liberal democratic state', often through UN intervention" (Smith 2009, 2). The policy framework that informs most international peacebuilding projects with a gender perspective is the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) and the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda (WPS). This framework has brought international peacekeeping policies and projects to Bougainville and has contributed to the hybrid peace approach that, to some extent, includes local perspectives. My intention is to see how the discourses and concepts used in the WPS agenda conceptualize and address the role of CSOs and women activists. At the same time, I consider how women understand and address experiences that were crucial for women's activism during the conflict such as motherhood, matrilineality and religion. Moreover, the thesis aims to see how the concepts deployed in the WPS agenda are used in UN projects and how these can be related to the limitations faced during the implementation stage of these.

For this reason, this thesis undertakes a Discourse Theoretical Analysis (Shepherd 2008) of policies to implement the WPS Agenda and the UN's report of such projects from 2015 to

2017. As explained earlier, it also relies on intersectional methodologies. This is mainly achieved through "the intersectionality of peace" approach: a novel concept in the field of peace studies that was coined in 2021 by Stefanie Kappler and Nicolas Lemay-Hébert. This approach proposes new perspectives to current debates on Critical Peace Studies (CPS), such as those on hybridity, everyday peace, and narrative studies. Under this term, an exploration of the multiple categories that shape Bougainvillean women's experiences and how they intersect allows the project to: "1) understand hybrid identities without dichotomizing them; 2) read the every day yet with a clear intention of understanding power differentials therein; and 3) understand narratives not as individualised experiences, but instead as ways of accessing larger structural inequalities" (Kappler and Lemay-Hébert 2019, 10).

1.1.2. Research Questions

The research questions that this project intends to answer are the following:

- Why are concepts of religion, motherhood and matrilineality important for local women's activism in Bougainville? How does the policy and practice of the WPS Agenda shape their use? What new concepts in relation to gender and peacebuilding has this international framework brought to the place?
- What broader power structures and forms of discrimination are inherent within the hybrid peacebuilding approach? To what extent was the UN aware of these structures in the implementation of projects and policies in Bougainville?
- In what ways can the use of an intersectional approach help disentangle these power dynamics through an analysis of discourses? Can this approach showcase other understandings of agency besides the UN's endeavors?
- How might we reconcile the differences between local and international understandings of peace in Bougainville, and what insights might be derived from this investigation for thinking about feminist perspectives on CPS more broadly?

1.1.3. Contribution

This thesis aims to contribute to the field of CPS and the development of feminist perspectives in it. International/local perspectives and hybridity on peacebuilding are terms that, as I will show in the literature review, have been discussed in the case of Bougainville and are also part of current debates in the field of CPS. I argue that analysing the policies that enable women's

activism and projects implemented to enhance the WPS Agenda through a feminist intersectional lens can help us underscore specific tensions existing in hybrid approaches to peace, to which broader structures of power they relate, and through which means their challenges could be overcome. In this sense, the intersectional analytical lens that this study uses can reveal how categories such as religion, motherhood and matrilineality shape women's peacebuilding activities. Particularly, the project aims to reveal the structures through which these categories become meaningful in the UN's practices, and the relation they have with peace. Focusing on these interactions, the project it is intended to expose new and specific tensions between local and international perspectives on peace.

Ultimately, this study aims to contribute to the creation of localized theory on gender and peace in Bougainville (George 2018c; 2014). Further, the local approach that I adopt has the potential to produce new knowledge that can help decolonize gender perspectives on peace and peacebuilding and particularly, on the implementation of the WPS Agenda. I believe this could play a part in broader debates in the field of gender studies: mainly, those around global knowledge production dynamics or the relationship between experience, theory and practice. These debates have been brought by significant scholars such as Raewyn Connell (2014) , bell hooks (1991) and Sara Ahmed (2000).

1.2. Methodology

1.2.1. Discourse Analysis

This research relies on Discourse Analysis as the main methodology of inquiry. Since the aims of the project are to see the impact of the UNs discourses on peacebuilding, it is the most appropriate method to analyze what certain concepts mean in different institutional and local spheres. Further, analyzing the discursive foundations behind international projects and policies, as well as how they understand local actors can help assessing impact that these projects have in them. This kind of analysis can further help us understand what needs to be improved theoretically and practically in the relationship between international and local actors in the field of gender and peace.

Discourse Analysis relies on the assumption that texts have linguistic actions, and that these actions create specific meanings. According to Norman Fairclough, "meaning does not have a pre-existing presence in these words and expressions, it is an effect of the relations that are set

up between them" (Fairclough 2003, 18). Generally, Discourse Analysis is concerned with the functioning of language and the creation of meaning that is established through it in specific social contexts. There are different approaches inside this methodology and theoretical framework such as Foucauldian Discourse Analysis, Textual Analysis, and Critical Discourse Analysis, to name a few. For this project, the approach that I have selected is the Discourse-Theoretical Analysis (DTA).

1.2.2. Discourse Theoretical Analysis: Laura Shepherd's Approach

This project follows the Discourse Theoretical Analysis (DTA) developed by Laura Shepherd. Shepherd uses this approach in most of her work – which is based on gender and UN discourses on peacebuilding, UNSCR 1325 and other policy mechanisms, civil society and local-international encounters (Shepherd 2015; 2017; 2016a; 2016b; 2010; 2008; 2020) – that bears many similarities to the topic and aims of this project. DTA differs from other approaches in the way of conceiving the differences between the "discursive" and "non-discursive realm". This distinction has been previously made by Critical Discourse Analysts such as Norman Fairclough (2003). In fact, Shepherd's perspective does not differentiate between these two realms of discourse. In other words, she does not agree with the existence of a "non-discursive" part of discourse – an idea that comes from the Foucauldian perspective of Discourse Analysis, which Shepherd follows to a large extent. Shepherd subscribes to the notion that "discourse analysis consists of not – of no longer – treating discourses as groups of signs (signifying elements referring to contents or representations) but as practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak" (Foucault 1972 cited in Shepherd 2008, 19).

An important aspect for Shepherd which Foucault does not discuss extensively is the significance of notions of "representation". To include this in her methodology, Shepherd takes the work of Jacob Torfing (1999) and Roxanne Doty (1996) to create the analytical strategies used in her work. This is what she considers Discourse Theoretical Analysis. This approach allows her to "identify, problematize and challenge the ways in which 'realities' become accepted as 'real' in practices of IR" (Shepherd 2008, 20). Through this type of analysis, Shepherd seeks to expose the "tensions and inconsistencies that are product or productive of the contact of […] discourses of gender, violence and (international) security" (Shepherd 2008, 6). This way, the conceptualization of discourse that informs her research values "the ways in which practices of (re)production, (re)presentation and (re)legitimization are all 'discursive'

6

practices and the ways in which these practices relate to the concept of discourse" (Shepherd 2008, 20). She sees discourses as "systems of meaning-production rather than simply statements or language, systems that 'fix' meaning, however temporarily, and enable us to make sense of the world" (Shepherd 2008, 20). However, she does not see them as a totality. As for Laclau, Mouffe and Doty, Shepherd argues that the identities fixed in a discourse are of partial nature, and this is where discourse analysis can engage. According to Shepherd, "discursive practices maintain, construct and constitute, legitimize, resist, and suspend meaning, and it is these practices that theorists can analyze using DTA" (Shepherd 2008, 21).

For Shepherd, DTA is useful because it understands discursive practices as practices of power, and this allows her to investigate "the interrelationship of power and representational practices that elevate one truth over another" (Der Derian and Shapiro 1989 cited in Shepherd 2008, 23). And here, she relies on Judith Butler's work to explain how representations can be seen as sources for the (re)production of knowledge, meaning that they are symbolic systems which create certain possibilities and, therefore, they are "never merely descriptive, but always normative and, as such, exclusionary" (Butler 1994 cited in Shepherd 2008, 24). Not only does she has used this methodology for analyzing policy documents, but also in relation to UN peacebuilding discourses, with sources based from reports and interviews (Shepherd 2017).

This perspective fits the methodological aim of my project, which is to undertake an analysis of the Policy for Women's Empowerment, Gender Equality, Peace, and Security (2016) and UN reports – the Equality for Peace and Planim Save Kamap Strongpela – of projects that were undertaken in the same period of time (2015-2017). The intention is to see how the international resolution and subsequent local policy on WPS have brought the use of specific concepts and understandings of peace, and how local customary concepts or values that have shaped women's experiences in conflict – matrilineality, motherhood and religion – are related to this. That is to say, I aim to see how these concepts encounter international discourses of WPS and, ultimately, how they shape women's activism in the place. The thesis also aims to see which new concepts have been brought to the place by international actors and have informed peacebuilding practices and impact local actors. In summary, the intention is to make visible the meanings of production attached to these concepts locally and internationally, and to reveal how they encounter each other, the tensions this might produce, and how they are resolved. For this reason, the previously explained methodological design will be followed to analyze the primary sources. In addition, the research is supported by an informal conversation with Helen

Hakena, a Bougainville activist for peace who experienced the conflict and has collaborated with the UN.

1.2.3. Intersectionality: Informing the Method

This project is also informed by an intersectional approach. As I show in the literature review, intersectionality as a theory or method has not been extensively incorporated into peace research. Indeed, many projects which focus on gender and peace also lack this perspective (Kappler and Lemay-Hébert 2019; S. Smith and Stavrevska 2022). I identify an intersectional lens as crucial to my research for two key reasons: first, because the intention is to see how specific constructions of women's activism in Bougainville are related to local understandings of matrilineality, motherhood and religion. Hence, the methodology needs to understand how certain factors shape identities and experiences. Second, because international peacebuilding projects and policies are not exempt from the power structures they aim to overcome, and many times do not acknowledge their influence in them. In this sense, an intersectional approach can reveal how deeper and broader structures of power affect peacebuilding and impact its outcomes.

When examining UN projects on gender and peace, the role that gender plays in peacebuilding should be analyzed in connection with "race/ethnicity, class, sexuality and other important personal, institutional and symbolical axes of signification," as Gloria Wekker puts it (Wekker 2018, 55). As a result, intersectionality can be used as an analytical tool to analyze not only how different identities shape women's experiences when building peace and how these identities are navigated to enact social change, but also to see under which broader structures of power their capacity for action is framed when facing the UN's practices. Indeed, the perspective I adopt in this thesis relies on the "intersectionality of peace" approach (which I discuss further in the Literature Review). Under this term, an exploration of the multiple categories that shape Bougainvillean women's experiences and how they intersect allows the thesis to overcome several of the debates existing in CPS. As Kappler and Lemay-Hébert argue,, this allows us to "bring power back in the conversation, and this contributes, along with other approaches, to take a hard look at power dynamics at play in the (re)production of social structures" (Kappler and Lemay-Hébert 2019, 175). Notwithstanding, the way in which intersectionality informs the method is to focus on exploring how identities shape lived experiences and how structures of power influence them, trying to avoid treating

8

intersectionality as an abstract concept. On the contrary, it is used, as Yvette Taylor puts it, "as something that breaths, lives and moves" (Taylor 2010, 45). In general terms, this project avoids treating Bougainvillean women's lives as the experiences that complement or support a theory but rather, as the basis for rebuilding and reshaping it. Hence, the intention is also to see the implications of these perspective for CPS debates and current debates in relation to gender and peacebuilding in the case of Bougainville. In addition, this endeavor will also help expose what is missing when intersectionality is left out of peacebuilding policy and practice, and how this impacts women's activism.

This project connects intersectionality to Discourse Analysis through its use as an analytical lens. As Shepherd explains, the intention of this type of DTA is to see how certain "assumptions about bodies and behaviors, space, legitimacy, and power already structure much of what we (think we) know about peace and security" (2017, 5) and to identify "the ways in which policy institutions such as the UN both consciously and unconsciously (re)produce ways of understanding bodies" (2017, 3). What this project aims to add here is an analysis of how these assumptions are shaped also by intersectional factors which influence experiences and therefore impact behaviors, space, legitimacy, and power. Finally, it sees to demonstrate how these assumptions are seen and reproduced in international discourses through the drafting of reports and the policy frameworks that enable them.

1.3.   Chapter Overview

Following this introduction, chapter 2 presents a review of the current literature in CPS and discuss how concepts that are based on gender perspectives, such as intersectionality, can contribute to the field. It emphasizes on CPS literature on Bougainville and identifies the existing gaps of feminist intersectional research on it. Chapter 3 consists of a review of Bougainville's conflict and how women participated in it, placing importance on how motherhood, religion and matrilineality shaped women's activism and how this can be seen through theories of motherhood and activism as a form of agency. This chapter also reviews the WPS Agenda and how it has taken shape in the Pacific – specifically, through the Pacific Regional Action Plan – and in Bougainville more concretely. This discussion seeks to expose some of the critiques it has faced from postcolonial perspectives and how this project aims to address these problems in its analysis.

After this broader theoretical and contextual introduction, chapter 4 will examine the Bougainville Policy for Women's Empowerment, Gender Equality, Peace and Security (2016). The intention is to see how women's CSOs are constructed; what roles intersecting notions of matrilineality, motherhood and religion play within it; as well as the approach that the policy takes in relation to the WPS Agenda and how it connects with local peacebuilding actors. The second analytical chapter will move to an analysis of the evaluation report of the UN Equality for Progress project and Planim Save Kamap Strongpela, both developed between 2015 and 2017. Here, I aim to see which discourses the UN adopts when evaluating how the WPS Agenda is implemented in Bougainville, which concepts it uses in relation to women and how can this impact them. It also considers whether intersectionality is used in the UN's praxis and if not, how it could contribute to some of the limitations the reports found in the projects.

The final chapter summarizes the main arguments made within the thesis around how the UN's approach to peace, the concepts it promotes and the lack of an intersectional lens in it results in a limitation of local women's activism.

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

This chapter provides an overview of the theoretical field of Critical Peace Studies (CPS) –the primary field with which this thesis seeks to engage – how this field has addressed the conflict in Bougainville, and which gaps exist in the current literature. The chapter proposes the use of a feminist intersectional lens to bring new insights to the case and to current debates in CPS more broadly. To better grasp these debates, the chapter begins by examining the history and evolution of the UN's liberal peace approach, the critiques it has faced, and how this has resulted in a local turn in peacebuilding. The chapter addresses the central theoretical concepts to this local turn such as hybridity, everyday peace, and narratives. It then moves to expose the main debates in CPS and how feminist studies have shed light on them, reviewing the use of intersectionality studies and how this can move the debate forward but has not received much attention yet. After this broader introduction of the field and how feminist research fits in it, the two reminding sections revolve around how this literature has been developed in the case of Bougainville and exposes the gaps that this research aims to address. In short, the main argument advanced within this chapter is that feminist intersectional approaches can bring new insights into current debates in the field of CPS and demonstrates how these insights relate to the case of Bougainville, where no analysis with this perspective exists yet. Ultimately, it demonstrates using this approach in studies of gender and peace in Bougainville can help disentangle some of the structural power dynamics underlying international and local cooperation on peacebuilding and how they impact local peacebuilders.

2.1. Hybridity, Narratives and Everyday Peace: The 'Local Turn' in Peacebuilding

After the end of the Cold War, the international political scenario was shaped by the need to respond to several emerging intrastate conflicts, such as Rwanda, the disintegration of the Former Yugoslavia and its subsequent conflicts, or Somalia. These conflicts were partly the result of the reshaping of international structures of power after the disintegration of the USSR and the imminent influence of the liberal democratic values exported by the US. In this scenario, the UN found an end to a period that largely constrained its mandate to act as a promoter of peace and security. Conversely, it was recognized as the main institution to promote peace and contain conflict through all its means. In this period, UN peacekeeping changed from "traditional" missions – which usually consisted of observation tasks – to multidimensional peace missions, which ranged "from helping to build sustainable institutions

of governance, to human rights monitoring, to security sector reform, to the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants" (United Nations Peacekeeping, n.d.). Alongside this expanded scope, there was also a significant increase in the number of peace operations. From 1989 to1994, for instance, the UN authorized over 20 peace operations in several countries[2]. The normative approach behind these operations has been labelled as 'liberal peace'.

"This paradigm has in its core the 'security-development nexus', emphasizing that liberalism and democracy are *sine qua non* conditions for the maintenance of security within the inter-state system" (Oliveira dos Santos 2019). This ideology could be seen in reports such as the "An Agenda for Peace" (1992) promoted by UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali. However, failures in many of these countries' missions reflected how the UN's toolbox to address conflict was not effective, and lead to a broader criticism to this liberal paradigm of peace and how it was applied by the West in post-conflict settings (Leonardsson and Rudd 2015). At the same time, discourses on the need to emphasize the role of local communities and local civil society actors started to appear, proposing an approach that would build peace from 'below' (Lederach 1997; Curle 1994). As a response to these critiques, the UN built a new approach in the year 2000, during the mandate of Kofi Annan, which emphasized the role of building local capacity and the promotion of local government structures. However, this new generation of peacebuilding approaches "still adheres to the notion of a liberal peace, promoting democratisation, marketisation and human rights, yet supposedly through a coherent and participatory approach" (Leonardsson and Rudd 2015, 827). Despite efforts by the UN to acknowledge local actors and collaborate with local governance structures to promote peace, several criticisms appeared among scholars, mainly arguing that liberal, top-down, Western approaches to peace continued to exist and impact the outcomes of peace (Van Leeuwen, Verkoren, and Boedeltje 2012; Roland 2010). As a response to these critiques, the field of CPS has introduced new concepts that prioritize local approaches to peace in recent years. This scholarly work has used the term 'post-liberal peace' to reflect these new approaches.

Many scholar studies have applied these perspectives in cases such as Somalia (Ken Menkhaus 2006); Guatemala, El Salvador or Colombia (Brancati 2006); Israel, Northern Ireland and

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[2] Some of them being Angola, Cambodia, El Salvador, Mozambique, Western Sahara, Somalia, Ethiopia, Namibia, Rwanda, Georgia, Liberia and Haiti.

South Africa (Bollens 1998); Nepal (International Alert 2007); and even Bougainville (Stuart Kent and Barnett 2012). This shift has been many times labelled the 'local turn' in peace studies literature (Leonardsson and Rudd 2015; Ojendal, Schierenbeck, and Hughes 2018). Essentially, the 'local turn' refers to those critiques to the "inability to engage those individuals and collectives that are claimed to be the actual beneficiaries of peace operations" (Smith 2018, 138). Concepts that have been central to this 'turn' include "everyday peace", "hybridity" and the use of "narrative studies".

Everyday peace advocates for the recentralization of everyday experiences in post-conflict peacebuilding scenarios, which have been many times overlooked by liberal peace missions. This approach seeks to portray the local as "subjects and objects rather than becoming agential, liberal citizens" (Richmond 2009, 324). It takes as its starting point the notion that there is power and agency located in the everyday and it should be acknowledged as a means to construct peace (Autesserre 2014; Kappler 2014). Analysis of the "everyday" mainly come from the field of studies of everyday life, which started to be developed from the end of the 1940s (Olson 2011). Henri Lefevre (1947), for instance, was one of the first philosophers to analyze everyday life inside capitalism. Oliver Richmond argues that this term was brought to peace studies as a way "to uncover structural or discursive forms of violence, and to emphasize resistance and solidarity in the face of sovereignty and forms of power, biopolitics and governmentality" (Richmond 2009, 326). These studies have helped acknowledge that intervention is not only related to politics at the higher level, but it also affects and impacts the everyday life of conflict-affected communities.

Very much connected to the "everyday", hybridity was also developed as a theory to question binaries in peacebuilding discourses and to demonstrate how they relate to a deeper network of power dynamics. This concept was developed mainly in the late 1990s and early 2000s as a consequence of critiques on the liberal peace paradigm. As Syaiful Anam suggests, "the critiques upon the liberal peacebuilding and the attention towards the local accordingly have shifted the discourse of peacebuilding to a more accommodative and emancipative approach by hybridizing the liberal with the local" (Anam 2018, 39). Similar to the "everyday", hybridity has been mainly taken from the fields of anthropology, sociology and post-colonial studies (Mac Ginty 2010). Nicolás Lemay-Hébert has identified two complementary strands in these theories: the first "focuses on the interplay between international and local practices, norms and institutions, as a way to emphasize local agency in its interaction with outside forces and/or

to engage with local actors beyond the nation-state." The second "is more focused on transcending universalizing theories to include the plurality of social orders" (Lemay-Hébert and Freedman 2017, 5).

Finally, narratives have been seen as a method to better grasp the stories of conflict and interventions from a local perspective, particularly in terms of its capacity to give peace and conflict a specific time and space, therefore, showing subjective realities of specific contexts and how they shaped experiences (Inayatullah and Dauphinee 2016). Consequently, narratives were incorporated into the methodologies of CPS to better understand how local realities exist and are shaped by conflict and peace interventions. In this sense, understanding interventions from the point of view of those who have experienced them can be useful to overcome the local-international dichotomy many times existing in the researcher's gaze. Also, they are useful to disentangle the abstract part of concepts such as conflict and peace, and locate it into a specific time, scenario and gaze, thus making these concepts more graspable (Inayatullah and Dauphinee 2016; Edkins 2013).

2.2. Feminist Approaches to Critical Peace Studies: Proposing Solutions to the Main Dilemmas

Even if these approaches were mainly developed to overcome previous hurdles in the field, they have also faced criticism and dilemmas. In this section, I will identify the main critiques in relation to hybridity, everyday peace, and narrative studies, and show how feminist research has addressed these and brought new perspectives to the field. Finally, I will argue that informing the method through an intersectional lens can help move these debates forward and bring new insights into the field.

As mentioned in the previous section, scholars developed hybrid approaches to peace studies to emancipate from the international-local dichotomies existing previously. However, as several scholars have shown how, far from avoiding this type of dichotomizing, hybrid studies have often ended up reproducing these problems (Jabri 2013; Hameiri and Jones 2017). This has mainly happened through the creation of new dichotomies such as national/regional or transnational – instead of international/local. Feminist scholars such as Laura McLeod have noted how hybridity as a concept has many similarities with feminist scholarship on post-conflict but, divergently, the latter can show how the feminist perspective allows for a more nuanced understanding of the power relations embedded in interactions between international

and local (McLeod 2015). Other scholars such as Nicole George and Lia Kent have shown that even when local structures of governance are included in peacebuilding interventions, the gendered dynamics of liberal approaches to peace continue to exist (George and Kent 2017).

Concerning everyday peace literature, feminist scholars have pointed out to the fact that recognizing agency in the 'local' is not enough, meaning that these kind of analyses have many times struggled to speak of power and the different forms this might take in the local (Iñiguez de Heredia 2018). This analyses have disguised how power differences can work in the realm of the private, thus impacting specific practices of everyday peacebuilding such as care work (Vaittinen et al. 2019). Care practices is a sphere where feminist research has engaged widely, showing how the binary between public and private is artificially constructed and that care practices are part of a wider informal economy that is shaped by gendered power asymmetries (Fraser 2016; Martin de Almagro and Ryan 2019). Further, concepts brought by feminist scholars, such as the continuum of violence, have helped acknowledge how specific forms of violence and inequalities can persist after the conflict, and how many times, public/private dichotomies have been blind to them (Cockburn 2004).

In the case of narratives, there is the risk of individualizing and essentializing experiences (Graef, da Silva, and Lemay-Hebert 2020). However, this might occur when structural factors that influenced these narratives are not considered. Again, feminist approaches can inspire us to not only look at experiences as individual, but also to look at the ways these narratives can be also produced by broader social, economic and political dynamics (Woodiwiss, Smith, and Lockwood 2017). As an example, Maria Stern shows how mainstream security discourses in Guatemala did not reflect specific forms of insecurity that were experienced by women and marginalized ethnic groups (Stern 2006).

Even if, as exposed in the previous paragraphs, feminist research has important contributions for CPS, the engagement of this field with Gender Studies has been many times questioned, particularly because of not bonding sufficiently with feminist proposals. Some scholars have argued that feminist contributions have not received enough engagement and analysis by part of this branch of knowledge (McLeod and O'Reilly, 2019). Notwithstanding, research by feminist scholars in the field points to the need for theories and concepts that help us better understand how interlocking structures of discrimination and oppression, their relation to global political and economic structures and impact in local daily practices of peacebuilding,

take place. Consequently, research in the field of intersectionality not only to helps underscore and emphasize these structures in peacebuilding, but also cast new light on the current criticisms in CPS.

2.2.1. Intersectional Approaches to Peace

Kappeler and Lemay-Hébert (2021) have successfully pointed out the value of intersectional approaches to peace analysis to overcome the current challenges that the 'local turn' is facing. In their perspective, an intersectionality of peace approach "does not deny the hybridity of experience and allows to integrate research on the everyday and the narratives that emerge therein, yet without being blind to the power relations that shape the formation of identities in peacebuilding contexts" (Kappler and Lemay-Hébert 2019, 161). As Smith and Stavreska also note, "using an intersectional approach, helps us understand what peace, in the positive sense, can mean, acknowledging the plurality of subjectivities, systems of oppression, and agencies that are created and enacted as a result" (Stavrevska and Smith 2020, 3).

This approach draws attention to power dynamics existing in CPS through analysis of privilege, inequalities and how these are lived by different people, including the researcher. In this sense, intersectionality can also be used as a tool to reflect on one's positionality in relation to their research. I find the perspective posed by Jennifer Fish and Jennifer Rothchild (2009) helpful here, specifically in their claim that "the movement to acknowledge identity and power differentials in isolation from an examination of how intersections impact the ultimate production of knowledge precludes researchers from pursuing richer complexities within the research process, particularly when research is carried out by women attempting to understand the oppression of other women" (Fish and Rothchild 2009, 279). It is clear then, that there is a need to introduce theoretical notions of intersectionality not only in relation to research projects, but to the researcher themselves and the knowledge-production dynamics. This perspective is also useful for thinking about the relation of project workers and reporters with local communities participating in these, as is the case of the projects analyzed in Bougainville. As other authors also point out, "the individuals and institutions engaged in both peace research and peacebuilding are constituted by intersectional identities and experiences" (Stavrevska and Smith 2020, 3).

Having pointed out the importance of intersectionality for this field of research, it is worth mentioning that intersectionality should not be treated as an abstract concept (Y. Taylor 2010), and it has faced many discontents when traveling from its origins in the lives and experiences of Black feminists to academia (Salem 2018). To avoid reproducing these dynamics, it is worth defining how intersectionality will be used and approached in this project, specifically. Owing to the need to understand how intersectional experiences shape women's peacebuilding activities in Bougainville, but also the effects of missing an intersectional lens in international peacebuilding projects and policies, this project mainly relies on intersectionality as an analytical tool. To better explain this, it is worth defining what I specifically refer to when I refer to intersectionality. Since this project is not centered at analyzing dynamics based on race, class or gender, as many others usually do when they refer to intersectionality, but at other experiences such as motherhood, matrilineality and religion, I take Bilge and Collins definition as a base, since it allows to go further than these previous analyses:

> Intersectionality is a way of understanding and analyzing the complexity in the world, in people, and in human experiences. The events and conditions of social and political life and the self can seldom be understood as shaped by one factor. They are generally shaped by many factors in diverse and mutually influencing ways. When it comes to social inequality, people's lives and the organization of power in a given society are better understood as being shaped not by a single axis of social division, be it race or gender or class, but by many axes that work together and influence each other. Intersectionality as an analytic tool gives people better access to the complexity of the world and of themselves (Collins and Bilge 2020, 13).

This definition is useful for two reasons. First, it allows us to consider motherhood, matrilineality and religion as factors that influence women's lives and experiences during and after Bougainville's conflict, and thus, analyses of agency and legitimacy in relations to these concepts are possible, if we understand them as intersecting. Second, it allows us to see interactions between the international and the local as shaped by many factors, ultimately being affected and reproducing power dynamics that impact peacebuilding projects. "The issue of intersectionality is, therefore, at the very core of understanding peace, who gets to define it, how that definition or vision is implemented and studied, and, ultimately, whose voices, experiences, and agencies are marginalized and silenced in these processes" (Stavrevska and Smith 2020, 3). This what this research aims to uncover in the case of women in Bougainville: who gets to define peace, how it is implemented and whose agencies are marginalized.

This project aims to see, through this lens, how peace is defined through the specific power relations framed between international and local interactions. Furthermore, it considers how

17

women's voices are incorporated compared to how they were deployed during the conflict, opening a debate between the UN's liberal visions of agency and local agencies, informed through postcolonial theories. Ultimately, analyzing these complex sets of power relations can help understand the impact of missing the intersectional lens in peacebuilding projects but also, how international perspectives of peace can impact the local through the reproduction of these same power structures.

2.3. Gender and Peace in Bougainville: Placing the Debates in the Specific Context

Even if, as shown in the next chapter, women's groups have been and continue to be one of the key local actors in peacebuilding, scholarship focused on gender and peacebuilding in Bougainville is less abundant. This section will review where scholarship on feminist perspectives in CPS have focused on Bougainville, and which are the main arguments that have been made. Principal contributions have been made by Nicole George, who has studied the Pacific region and highlights local cooperation and gender perspectives. She has conducted significant research on the implementation of the WPS Agenda in the Pacific region and in specific countries such as Fiji, the Solomon Islands, and Papua New Guinea (George 2014; 2018a; 2011).

Regarding Bougainville, George has studied the role and experiences of women as peacebuilders during and after the conflict. She also gives importance to global-local perspectives and how local organizations use international policy frameworks, mainly UNSCR 1325, to bring about local action (George 2018). In relation to this, her analysis usually relies on the theory of "friction" in global-local peacebuilding (Björkdahl and Höglund 2013). George uses this theory to analyze the difficulties women face to promote peace as part of a set of ruptures and discontinuities – or frictions – that have taken place during the peace transition and how, many times, the WPS Agenda is invoked to legitimize their place as peace activists (George 2018d). In addition, her analysis of WPS implementation in Bougainville suggest that it promotes the gendering component of "women-peacebuilders" which through a rhetoric of feminization, obscures more complex dynamics in women's leadership that are not as "successful" as has been recounted (George 2016). In this sense, George has pointed out at specific points of grievance that women have faced in the peacebuilding process and how these have limited their authority. Generally, her investigations draw from primary sources taken

from interviews and second-hand sources such as reports or development agencies' literature. Most of her articles contribute to posing questions to hybridity and global-local peace approaches, showing how sometimes, engaging with the 'local' does not acknowledge more complex power-dynamics that women experience in the local but are also outcome of international frameworks' influence – such as the WPS Agenda. Ultimately, she argues that in some cases it helps women and in others, it is prejudicial to the legitimacy of their role as peacebuilders.

Despite these advancements, George's analysis lacks an intersectional methodology or theory through which power-dynamics can be analyzed. In fact, one of her main conclusions is that "this shared scepticism about experiences of peace indicates that sharper tools and methods may be required if we are to understand more accurately how gendered disparities of power persist within the hybrid peace, even when some evidence seems indicative of progress" (George 2018a, 1331). This is a challenge that this project seeks to address. An intersectional analysis of the interactions between women's CSO and international institutions, and how they shape peacebuilding experiences, could bring new insights to the questions that George raises on hybridity in Bougainville. Therefore, a deeper insight into the role that specific factors such as religion, motherhood or gender play in the local and how identities are negotiated to adapt to international frameworks (and vice versa) can reveal the tensions between local and international perceptions of peace, and how they limit women's progress as peace actors in Bougainville.

The role of women's local CSOs in Bougainville has also been analyzed by some scholars. One of the organizations that has been the focus of research is the Leitana Nehan Women's Development Agency (LNWDA). Two main scholars have discussed this organization. On the one hand, Makuwira (2007) focuses on the relation between aid agencies and the organization. By analyzing the relationship between LNWDA and the contributions of the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAid) through the International Women's Development Agency (IWDA) as an intermediary actor, Makuwira concludes that there are significant contradictions in the partnership relations between these three institutions. As he argues, the result-oriented nature of this partnership has produced new layers of accountability that end up limiting local initiatives. At the same time, focusing on quantifiable outcomes of the projects has resulted in a decrease of attention to essential practices of peacebuilding, such as trauma-management (Makuwira 2006). In other words, this relation, based on accountability towards

19

AusAid's interests, hinders some factors of peace activism in Bougainville and thus, limits LNWDA's capacity for action. On the other hand, Peter Ninnes' analysis, which is mainly based on discourses, shows how concepts such as gender, development and peace have changed in the history of the organization. His research shows how the use of these concepts has changed through time and the influence that international peacebuilding frameworks has exerted on them. According to Ninnes, this has resulted in a shift towards a more liberal discourse.

Both Makuwira and Ninnes have collaborated in the production of an edited book (Ninnes Bert Jenkins, Hakena, and Jenkins 2006) on the role of LNWDA along with Helen Hakena, the founder and director of the organization. The book documents and analyzes the history and evolution of this organization, and how it has adapted to different circumstances – local and international – to continue doing its work since the conflict. The book draws from primary sources from the organization, as well as interviews and local testimonies from workers and volunteers. It brings into focus and evaluates the project "Strengthening Communities for Peace", which was undertaken in cooperation with AusAid and IWDA.

Another key contribution to studies of women's organizations in Bougainville is *As Mother of the Land* (Sirivi and Taleo Havini 2004). This book is a collection of women's first-hand experiences of the conflict and post-conflict situation in Bougainville, as well as tracing the birth of the Bougainville Women for Peace and Freedom organization[3]. The book contains many personal accounts of local women and their experiences as actors that promoted the resolution of the conflict and posterior peacebuilding activities.

Finally, the organization Conciliation Resources has produced several reports and studies on the role of women in peace processes and peacebuilding in Bougainville (Garasu 2013; Kirkham, Close, and Yousuf 2018; Garasu and Carl 2002), with contributions by Sister Lorraine Garasu, a key activist in the place and founder of the Nazareh Rehabilitation Center of Bougainville (NCR), who participated in the peace talks. Their reports analyze the role of gender, customs and religion in women's grassroots activism and propose different suggestions or topics of interest to continue strengthening the role of women in the place nowadays. Their report shows mixed results of attempts to bring gender inclusion in the peace process and post-

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[3] One of the first organizations created during women's activism during the conflict.

conflict settlement. The main challenges remain in the inclusion of women in policy making and political spaces. Gender relationships were identified as a limited narrative to women's participation. Indeed, they suggest that "It is also necessary to rethink international and local engagement strategies on gender. It is important to promote local ownership and consider community visions of balanced gender relations in Bougainville in order to support the development of a more gender-balanced political settlement" (Kirkham, Close, and Yousuf 2018, 16) pointing out to some gender-sensitive topics to take into account when talking about hybridity and peace.

2.4.   Intersectionality, Peace Research and Bougainville: Finding the Gaps

As demonstrated in the above sections, there is a small body of literature on gender and peace in Bougainville. However, no scholars have approached this topic from an intersectional lens, nor do they draw from intersectional methodologies to conduct their analyses. Hence, there is a gap in terms of how this approach could contribute not only to extend knowledge on women's roles in peacebuilding in Bougainville, but also to existing debates on hybridity, the global/local binary and everyday peace, as it has been previously argued by Stefanie Kappler and Nicolas Lemay-Hébert (2021).

Analysis of UN narratives in Bougainville informed by an intersectional approach and with a central emphasis on intersectionality have not yet been developed. It is worth mentioning here that work by Sarah Smith (2019) in relation to the UN missions in Timor-Leste can be used as a very good point of departure to understand gendered logics in UN peacebuilding practices. In her analysis, Smith mainly demonstrates how peace operations are both gendered and gendering. Among the actors and structures involved in gendering peace, Smith pays specific attention to the position of local women's organizations. She argues that "the gender component of operations serves to define 'women' and how and where they fit into the state, and it obscures issues, activism and subjectivities that do not reflect in this framework" (Smith 2019, 3). She also focuses on the intersections of race, class, and gender, highlighting the role of racialized politics and histories of colonialism in creating gendered peace subjectivities. As Smith argues, this gendered component of peace is negotiated via different power relations between international and local actors. I argue that these gendering factors of peace can also be found in UN post-conflict peacebuilding programs in Bougainville, and similar dynamics could be found through a study of how international WPS policies and practices that interact

with local actors. Bougainville and Timor-Leste are similar contexts: they are both small territories in the Pacific that have experienced armed conflicts related to neocolonial practices, and they have been the subject of UN missions and post-conflict interventions.

In this case, I focus on the concepts of motherhood, matrilineality and religion, how they are deployed and understood by Bougainville local actors and how they facilitate (or not) women's peace activism. Also, I aim to see what roles these concepts play in different local and international dynamics, and how they are connected to international frameworks such as the WPS Agenda. This approach will contribute to revealing the gendering effects of discourses and if the way in which local organizations strategize to work with global organizations ends up producing essentialized notions of "womanhood" and "femininity," and which problems can this cause in the long run.

As Laura Sepherd explains in her book *Gender, UN Peacebuilding, and the Politics of Space* (2017), the intention of this type of analysis is to see how certain "assumptions about bodies and behaviors, space, legitimacy, and power already structure much of what we (think we) know about peace and security" (Shepherd 2017, 5) also, to identify "the ways in which policy institutions such as the UN both consciously and unconsciously (re)produce ways of understanding bodies" (Shepherd 2017, 3).

2.5.   Conclusion

This chapter has shown the existing academic debates in CPS scholarship, and how feminist contributions relate to them. It has also exposed how these debates have been translated to the case of Bougainville, and how intersectional approaches to this case, which have not been developed yet, could contribute to shed new light in them.

3. Local and International Context

This chapter will provide an overview of the conflict in Bougainville, and how it impacted women, as well as the international political context that is related to gender and peacebuilding -the WPS Agenda - and informs peacebuilding projects in the place. It is divided in two main sections: the first one pays specific attention to how experiences of motherhood, matrilineality, and religion shaped women's experiences and legitimacy in activism during the conflict; and the second one, gives a brief review of the UNSCR 1325 and the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda and its local implementation. This sets the contextual scene for the following chapters, which constitute the analysis of this thesis.

3.1. "Mothers of Bougainville's Peace": Motherhood, Religion, Matrilineality and Legitimacy in Peacebuilding

This section seeks to analyze local understandings of motherhood in Bougainville, and to consider how these understandings have shaped women's activism during the conflict and subsequent peace negotiations. Emphasis is placed on how these understandings have helped women in Bougainville to gain legitimacy as peace actors during and after the conflict. In this respect, the argument will rely around how three factors – the Christian religion, coloniality and matrilineality – have shaped a specific notion of motherhood and have helped women in Bougainville to advance peace. This section also provides a brief overview of the conflict in Bougainville and how it was experienced by women to provide context for the subsequent analytical chapters. Finally, the section connects the specific case of Bougainville to broader literature on motherhood, radical activism, and peace – particularly, to ideas of "mothering relations as a resource for resisting war and making peace", as explained by Sarah Ruddick (2001). Although the topics of motherhood, matrilenality, religion and women's activism for peace in Bougainville have already been studied by several scholars (whose work I draw upon within this section), links between them and theories on motherhood and activism are yet to be established.

3.1.1. Matrilineality, Motherhood and Religion: The Bougainville Context

Due to the matrilineal nature of Bougainvillean society (based on land transfer and custody), women have an important position in the family and social structures. They are often referred to as "mothers of the land" and "mothers of Bougainville" (Sirivi and Taleo Havini 2004). The

idea of motherhood in Bougainville is not only shaped by the relations women have as custodians of the land, but also to Catholicism, which is a daily spiritual practice that shapes social relations in the place. This Catholic ideal of motherhood is very much tied to religious beliefs that relate to (the Virgin) Mary. These beliefs were brought to Bougainville by Australian and American missionaries of the Society of Mary from 1902 (Hermkens 2011). As documented by Hermkens, "the acceptance of Mary seems to have resonated with the importance of family relations […] from whom the principle of matriliny and women's roles as mothers is central" (Hermkens 2011, 17).

At the same time, colonial practices interfered with traditional gender roles, especially from the 1960s onwards. Women's distinct relation to the land was damaged by the patriarchal values of administrative officers and missionaries, who constantly undermined their status (Ogan 1972). However, thanks to appeals to motherhood, women conserved part of their role in society. Motherhood is very important in Bougainvillean society and has specific meanings that go further than the capacity to bear and raise children. In fact, women who advocate for peace explain how they reclaimed their matrilineal role as "mothers of the land" to organize and gain legitimacy as peace actors (Sirivi and Taleo Havini 2004; Ninnes Bert Jenkins, Hakena, and Jenkins 2006). The intersecting experiences of religion and matrilineality have shaped a specific vision of "motherhood" in Bougainville. Understanding how these ideas were mobilized to promote peace activism during the conflict and enact agency can help us understand the specific roles of women in regards to peacebuilding, and how this relates to their social status today.

The following section will elaborate on how women experienced the conflict and organized in groups and advocated for peace. I will draw upon testimonies and stories recounted by women who witnessed the conflict. For this reason, the book *As Mothers of the Land* (2004), which is a collective testimony book, will be used as a main source to outline the history of the conflict and how it was experienced by women. For enabling future connections between these experiences and the topic discussed, special emphasis is placed on how religion, matrilineality and motherhood are central to women's experiences of the conflict and their organization into post-war activism.

3.1.2. Women in Conflict: Experiences, Social Organization and Negotiations

When the conflict began in 1988, many women fled from their villages to avoid the violence of the PNG army. During that period, they faced a lot of violence and threats, including from the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) soldiers. Even women who were civilians, or had been mistaken by relatives of BRA soldiers, suffered high forms of gendered violence, including rape. An example is Josephine Tankunani's case: her life on the run started when she was 7 months pregnant. Before fleeing to the jungle, she wondered, "will the baby be safe in the damp, wet jungle? Will I be okay in labour with my first baby?" (Sirivi and Taleo Havini 2004, 15). She ended up having her child in the jungle after 2 days of labour and several complications.

PNG imposed a blockade on Bougainville in 1990 which formally lasted until 1994. No resources entered in the region and supplies were short. During this time, the situation for women worsened. As it was recounted by Tankunani:

> During the 10 years of war on Bougainville, mothers and children suffered the most because of the total blockade imposed on us by the PNG Government. There were no hospitals, no stores, no schools, and no permanent secure homes in which to bring up our children. We could not get help from anywhere else. Prayer was our only solace. Through prayer we were able to support those who needed emotional help in mourning and offer hope for our survival (Sirivi and Taleo Havini 2004, 16).

It is important to emphasize how mothers, who suffered during the shortages, relied on religious practices such as praying to support each other emotionally. During the blockade, many women died after giving birth because of the conditions they faced in the jungle and the lack of medical supplies. There were also shortages of supplies for children, who struggled to survive and grow. For women, suffering gendered violence also meant suffering violence towards their culture and their roles. As Daphne Zale points out, "in Bougainville, women are the custodians of our land and, by attacking them, the opponent aims to destroy the very roots of our communities" (Sirivi and Taleo Havini 2004, 47). Violence came from all parties in the conflict and was experienced at all levels.

At the same time, life in the jungle brought people from different places together to experience a sense of community. They cooperated and collaborated to get food, medical supplies and provide help to each other, even to take care of and educate each other's children. It was in this period when women started grouping and created communal activities to end the war: "No

longer prepared to live on the run and become statistics in a war, women began grouping together in various ways throughout the island. The imperative to create a future worth fighting for led women to create new communal initiatives" (Sirivi and Taleo Havini 2004, 69). These community-based engagement activities culminated in the creation of the Bougainville Inter-Church Women's Forum (BICWF),[4] which organized the first Women's Peace Forum in 1996 in Sydney, Australia, with over 700 participants. As Garasu, one of the founders of the BICWF explains, "[w]omen from the three main line churches and from across the island participated at the Forum. At the workshops they freely voiced their fears about the conflict. They formed strong working groups from all the districts of the island and put in place some concrete plans on how they would work towards a lasting solution to the conflict" (Garasu 2013, 28). These examples demonstrate how the experiences of mothering and religion shaped and enabled women's activism. In this case, the role of religious institutions and beliefs was key to bring the Peace Forum into reality.

Since then, women have continued organizing and providing support to communities. In the peace talks held at Lincoln, New Zealand, in 1998,[5] "women drew up an adjoining statement on peace, […] which called for greater inclusion in the peace process: 'We, the women, hold custodial rights of our land by clan inheritance. We insist that women leaders must be party to all stages of the political process in determining the future of Bougainville'" (Garasu 2013, 29). Even if prior to the conflict, women did not have much influence in local politics, they advocated for their inclusion in the peace talks and in post-conflict Bougainvillean politics. Some of the participants felt the responsibility to be there as mothers who had suffered during the war, and that this was a responsibility that was tied to their matrilineal role in society: "I had every right to stand up as a mother to represent the mothers and children who suffered during the war. I was willing to take responsibility and I felt in my heart that it was the chance for me to speak about our women's experiences of war", stated Josephine Tankunani (Sirivi and Taleo Havini 2004, 129). The joint statement issued by women at the Lincoln Peace Talks acknowledged the matrilineal role of women and the influence that it had in community-building practices: "As mothers of the land, we take seriously our responsibility to rebuild peace in our hearts and create a peaceful environment that will improve the quality of all our

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[4] This organization was created by Lorraine Garasu during the conflict to promote dialogue between different churches and advocate for peace.
[5] The Lincoln Peace Talks were a second round of peace talks held in New Zealand after the Burhan Peace Talks in 1997. These talks formalized the process and schedule for achieving peace. Topics such as withdrawal of the PNG Army, weapons disposal and the 1998 Ceasefire Agreement were discussed. For more information, see Tapi (2000) .

lives" (Sirivi and Taleo Havini 2004, 150). In fact, women's groups were recognized as key actors in the drafting of the final peace agreement, which took place in 2001 in Arawa because of their ability to talk to different parts and negotiate (Garasu 2013). The post war Constitution (2004) included three reserved seats for women in the parliament to ensure their future participation in politics. As other scholars have argued, "the focus on motherhood was used frequently to legitimate women's calls for peace, and saw women refer to their matrilineal cultural roles which stipulated that they were 'mothers of the land' with a sacred obligation to protect Bougainville and its people from further violence" (George 2016, 7).

Not only was the matrilineal role important, but as Hermkens points out, the strong feelings of attachment to Marian traditions of the Catholic faith[6] also contributed to women's responsibility and legitimacy as peace makers (Hermkens 2011). In some cases, feelings of maternity, pain, suffering and the comfort and strength given by 'Mama Maria'[7] were part of the mother identity (Hermkens 2011). Since the end of the conflict, women have continued to fight to reestablish their traditional roles as mother which, as Hakena and Jenkins explain, had been "eroded by colonialism prior to 1975, the mining operations and their associated social disruption, and by the ten years of civil war" (Ninnes Bert Jenkins, Hakena, and Jenkins 2006, 92). In all, it is clear how it was an intersection of experiences of Catholicism, the social responsibilities given by the matrilineal nature of society and experiences of motherhood what shaped women's activism and demands for a space in peace-making during the peace process.

3.1.3. Mothering, Peace and Radical Activism

The case of women in Bougainville, although being very particular, can be related to broader literature on mothering, peace, and radical activism. The following section will review some of the main theories surrounding these concepts to see how they can be applied in the case of Bougainville, to see how women's peace activism can be seen from a critical motherhood perspective. In this respect, I will use this literature to argue how a specific construction of motherhood in relation to matrilineality, religion and colonialism has been developed in Bougainville and how this, connected to the emotional labor undergone by women during the conflict, has been a source for them to claim political space as peace activists.

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[6] Catholic tradition centers on the veneration of the Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus, through practices such as praying, singing, pious acts, poetry, or music.
[7] Used to refer to Virgin Mary.

One of the most recognized scholars who has addressed the issue of motherhood and antimilitarism is Sara Ruddick. Her theories of maternal thinking, which are mostly presented in *Maternal Thinking: Towards a Politics of Peace* (1989), argue that there is a specific "maternal moral" that also becomes part of a specific political reasoning. While not arguing that this is something biologically innate to women, Ruddick demonstrates how specific forms of seeing and analyzing the world arise from the experiences and practices of mothering, and how these values lead to opposition to militarism and war. In other words, "the work of mothering and fathering, and the thinking that this work fosters, inform and strengthen a culture of peace" (Ruddick 2001, 8). She does not only relate mothering to a woman-lead activity, but considers it can be also undertaken by man, or in fact, "refer to anyone who assumes serious responsibility for children's welfare and makes the work of child care an important part of their lives" (Ruddick 2001, 10). Although other scholars have argued that mothering is a social construct – and thus, the subsequent relations that can come from this practice (Scheper-Hughes 1996) – it is true that "only by intentional design, rather than by any natural predisposition, do women devote the thinking and practices of motherhood to peacekeeping and world-repair rather than to war-making and world destruction" (Scheper-Hughes 1996, 357). Following these arguments, the case of Bougainville shows how it was through specific local influences of Christianity and matrilineality that the development of responsibility and morality to act towards peace emerged among women.

While no studies have applied Ruddick's concept of maternal thinking to the Bougainville context, research on mothering activism for peace has been conducted in several other cases such as Sri Lanka, Liberia, Argentina, South Africa, and Nigeria. This practices have been conceptualized under the term "motherwork" (Hill Collins 1994) which, within feminist scholarship, is understood as "the exercise for political agency through maternal activism" (Lawson and Flomo 2020, 1866). It has been argued that "women mobilise motherwork, rooted in maternal activism, to express themselves as political subjects and to claim their dignity in absence of other options" (Lawson and Flomo 2020, 1866). Authors such as Patricia Hill Collins have emphasized the importance of analysing how structures of racism, colonialism, class and understandings of racial-ethnic women's motherwork also shape mothering relations, and the importance to consider them into our analysis (Hill Collins 1994).

Scholars such as Lawson and Flomo show how in specific contexts such as Liberia, motherwork activism can lead to long-lasting peace solutions established through local

customs, such as the case of the Peace Huts[8]. In a similar line, the activism developed by women in Bougainville was grounded in their customary roles as "mothers of the land" and for this reason, they were more likely to be respected as negotiators. Further, Lawson and Flomo state that it is important to distinguish between the emotional labour dimension related to motherwork, to not confuse it with portrayals of women as "natural peacemakers". They argue that a "critical" perspective to the concept of embodied labour is important because "it disrupts the notion that Liberian women's mobilisation for peace stems solely from their 'innate' peace-loving nature; rather, is more likely shaped by a confluence of these material factors (Lawson and Flomo 2020, 1868). Again, approaching the case of Bougainville in these terms suggests that women not only were mobilised by a sense of loss but also due to a feeling of social responsibility brought about by their matrilineal condition and religious practice, as explained in the previous section.

Throughout these discussions, a contradiction on maternal activism and the reinforcement of patriarchal notions of "motherhood" arises. In this respect, research on motherhood and radical activism has been successful in un-instrumentalizing motherhood and exposing the radical potential within it. Research conducted by Naber in the case of Egypt and the Arab Spring (2021) has shown, through post-colonial perspectives, how "mothering is co-constituted not only through patriarchy but also through the structural realities of socioeconomic oppression, racism, and/or colonialism" (Naber 2021, 64). Naber shows different practices of radical activism within mothering that challenge "conventional feminist concepts of motherhood that have historically devalued mothers of color, colonized mothers, and mothers from the global South for whom activism is intertwined with motherhood rather than resisting it" (Naber 2021, 64). In this sense, notions of mothering in Bougainville were hampered not only by colonialism but the sociopolitical oppression suffered by women under it, whose matrilineal role was constantly undermined. Naber argues that in Egypt, mothering was "not mobilized as an identity role but as one practice intertwined with others" (Naber 2021, 66). Similarly, I argue that the practice of motherhood in Bougainville was shaped by other practices such as faith and matrilineality. Together, these factors have created a specific notion of motherhood that is very much related to social consciousness and responsibility for the community, which also arose from the period of living in the jungle during the conflict and the emotional labor involved.

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[8] Peace Huts are spaces for women to mediate local disputes, act as watchdogs on justice and police institutions, prevent VAW and raise community awareness and trauma-healing, among others. It comes from the Palava Hut System, the century-old local model of conflict and dispute-solving in Liberia.

However, in the case of Bougainville, women mobilized as mothers, rather than using maternal activism, to challenge conventional conceptions of motherhood in practices of radical activism, as Naber describes in the case of Egypt.

3.1.4. Women and Political Participation

Although women were very successful in organizing for activism in Bougainville, and notions on motherhood – shaped by matrilineality and religion – were key in the emergence of their activism, their inclusion in current politics is an ongoing issue. Women have 3 reserved seats in the Bougainville House of Representatives (BHOR). In the elections held in 2020, two women were elected as ministers (Papua New Guinea Post Courier 2020). Regarding the BHOR, women won 1 open seat, which resulted in a total amount of 4 women, being this a 10% of representation. It was 14 the number of women candidates for open seats, and 27 for the reserved seats from the 440 candidates that participated in the BHOR, being this still a small amount. Similarly, only two of the 25 persons who run for president seats were women. Notwithstanding, the 2020 elections have been considered a record in terms of women participating for open seats (M. Taylor 2020). Even if they have gained recognition and several seats in congress, women remain underrepresented in political organizations and suffer high rates of gender-based violence. For Nicole George, these issues are part of Bougainville's "untold story" (George 2016, 12). Notwithstanding, women continue to work for their inclusion in politics and for the end of gender-based violence in the territory.

Many of the women's groups that were established during the conflict also continue their practices in connection to international organizations and other CSOs. The fact that women claimed their roles as peacebuilders in relation to motherhood may be one factor preventing their inclusion. As George writes, "[t]hese narratives have also cemented a powerful sense that links peace and order with women's everyday obedience to the mothering ideal" (George 2018b). In this sense, it is important to consider how local structures of authority also impact and limit the role of women and, equally, which international structures of power might also be limiting their participation. These two factors will be analyzed more in depth in the following chapters.

3.2. International Policy Frameworks and their Influence in Bougainville: Resolution 1325 and the WPS Agenda

This section will present an overview of UNSCR 1325 and the WPS Agenda. which constitute the policy framework under which most of the projects on gender and peace in Bougainville take place. The section introduces UNSCR 1325 and some of its main criticisms, examines how it has been implemented in the Pacific context and in Bougainville specifically, to demonstrate how some of the main criticisms also constitute part of the actual challenges for the framework's implementation on the ground in Bougainville.

3.2.1. The Women Peace and Security Agenda: Intersectional and Postcolonial perspectives

Resolution 1325 on WPS was approved in 2000 by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). It was the first-time this international body devoted a full resolution to women's experiences in all stages of conflict and post-conflict. The resolution acknowledged the gender-specific implications of conflict and peace, which had been very much claimed and advocated by local and international civil society actors for some time (Joy 2018). It also paved the way for the development of several follow-up resolutions which expanded the thematic agenda set by 1325.[9] Together, these resolutions and several policy mechanisms developed by different UN bodies form what is known as the WPS Agenda (Basu and Naga 2021, 212). This agenda is based on four main pillars: participation, prevention, protection and relief and recovery. Due to the binding character of UNSC resolutions, this agenda been implemented by all Member States and actors in the field (Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, n.d.). For this reason, most countries have adopted this agenda in their policymaking in different ways, the most common being through the creation of a National Action Plans on WPS (NAP). As Mirsad Jacevic argues, "If properly designed, and implemented with serious commitment, including political will and adequate funding, these plans have shown a potential of being a tool for making this agenda institutional" (Jacevic 2019, 467).

Notwithstanding, there are several criticisms, challenges or shortcomings that have been identified with this agenda. One of the most important has been the inclusion of intersectional perspectives in the formulation of NAPs. Even if – as explained in the methodology and literature review – this project uses intersectionality as an analytical tool, other research has

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[9] These include UNSCR 1820 (2008), 1888 (2008), 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106 (2013), 2122 (2013), 2242 (2015), 2467 (2019) and 2493 (2019).

stressed how using intersectionality as a theory and method is crucial for WPS policymaking, yet this has not been extensively done. An example is the work of Smith and Stavreska (2021), who have argued that WPS NAPs have "a limited extent to which the lessons of intersectionality have so far been integrated" (Smith and Stavrevska 2022, 2). Their research shows how most NAPs use intersectionality only to express 'inter-group' difference, which does not go further from the structure of sex-based groupings. As they argue, "this limits the possibility of seeing complex and intertwining threats to individual and collective security" (Smith and Stavrevska 2022, 12). In addition, the categorization of vulnerable women in women/gender terms poses difficulties "to account for their interests and needs that may fall outside gender concerns and makes visible that marginalisation only where it intersects with 'gender'" (Smith and Stavrevska 2022, 12). In the case of Bougainville, a discursive analysis of the policy related to WPS can show in which terms women are conceptualized and how this creates new exclusions or is related to categorizations of 'vulnerability'. Moreover, using an intersectional lens to analyze women's experiences and how specific traits of these can shape their activism can bring new insights on how agency can be conceptualized differently from 1325. Chapter 3 of this thesis seeks to address these issues through a policy analysis of the Policy for Women's Empowerment, Gender Equality, Peace and Security.

Another criticism has come from the postcolonial school of thought. Generally, it has been critiqued how the Global South is thought of as a site for case studies for the WPS agenda. Scholars also argue that the agenda has been developed to promote western concepts and practices through topics such as "the politics of 'best practices' and 'case studies', and narratives of 'gender equality' and 'empowerment' and the overall epistemic violence and marginalization practiced by WPS advocates" (Parashar 2018). In this sense, scholars argue that the WPS literature does not acknowledge the peace activist role that many women in the South already had before this agenda. Other scholars argue that "the the global narrative of UNSCR 1325 must take account of divergences from the canon – understood as differing interpretations, resistances and subversions – particularly, as these manifest in the Global South, which tends to be marginalized at the international level" (Basu 2016, 363). In this sense, gaps between the international and local approaches to UNSCR 1325 and the WPS Agenda show how sometimes the WPS policy framework does not "fully reflect specific local realities"(Basu 2016, 371). This thesis picks up these critiques to show how local realities are adapted and considered in international projects and its influence in policymaking. Specifically, it demonstrates how broader narratives of equality and empowerment might obscure

experiences or beliefs of motherhood, matrilineality and religion behind practices of peacebuilding and thus, can be marginalizing them.

3.2.2. WPS Regional in the Pacific Islands: A Regional Action Plan

In the Pacific Islands, women had already been engaging with activism for peace before UNSCR 1325 was passed. The region, which experienced several conflicts in the 1990s, saw women in different places getting organized and advocating for peace, although activism had been present since the post-World War II period, especially in case of antinuclear activism and activism during the Cold War (George 2011). Some examples are the Solomon Islands, Fiji, Timor-Leste and Bougainville. Even though it was not a doubt for women in the region that this resolution would help their activist roles (which many times suffered violent threats) be legitimized and respected, "their challenge lay in building institutional awareness of this policy framework amongst the region's male-dominated political elite" (George 2014, 318). For this reason, a network of organizations from different islands was established in 2000, with women participants from Fiji, Bougainville, the Solomon Islands and Tonga, among others. The project, known as the Pacific Peace Women Project (FemLink Pacific), promoted awareness of the WPS Agenda around national governments and regional institutions. In part due to their activism, the Pacific Regional Action Plan (RAP) on WPS was approved by the Pacific Islands Forum in 2012. The plan includes three different focus areas for gender mainstreaming[10] in conflict prevention, women's participation, and protection of human rights in humanitarian crises and post-conflict scenarios (Pacific Islands Forum 2012).

The fact that women peacebuilders in the region rely on UNSCR 1325 as a policy framework that will help advance peace brings into question intersections between the local and the global in relation to peacebuilding. As George argues, "rather than invoking the "international" as a realm that threatens the security of women, today it is more common for activists to consider how the "international" supports the peace ambitions of the region's women, particularly through continued development of the WPS policy framework" (George 2014, 320). In this respect, George suggests that the WPS Agenda has limited tools to leverage between the global and local influence dynamics that take place in the region and how they fuel insecurities. As

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[10] Defined by the UN Economic and Social Council as: "The process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels" (Economic and Social Council 1997)

an example, some of the threats that are not mentioned in the Pacific RAP are masculinized institutional governance and environmental threats such as rising sea levels (George 2014). Several challenges have also been identified regarding the need to operationalize real women's inclusion – mainly through the allocation of funding and resources – rather than stating simple links between women's participation and the durability of peace (Bhagwan-Rolls and Rolls 2018). The influence of international values into local WPS policies and projects is something that this project seeks to address, especially in relation to how these discourses, accompanied through funding limitations, can end up restraining local activism.

3.2.3. The WPS Agenda in Bougainville: Challenges of Bringing the International into the Local

When UNSCR 1325 was approved in 2000, Bougainville's conflict was in the process of resolution. Even though women were active in promoting these negotiations, they were largely excluded from the peace process and peace agreements (Braithwaite et al. 2010). Since then, women have continued to face difficulties in promoting peace and political inclusion.

Nicole George argues that the difficulties women face in promoting peace are in part due to a set of ruptures and discontinuities that took place during the peace transition. This is part of what she describes as the "architechture of entitlement" that determines actors' authority to promote peace in Bougainville, and has resulted in women's invocations of the WPS Agenda to legitimize their role as peacebuilders. As George argues, "in Bougainville, this has therefore inclined women to 'translate' the provisions of the WPS agenda in ways that fit within the prevailing local architecture of entitlements and to avoid any further gender-restrictive backlash" (George 2018b, 483).

This kind of "WPS-oriented advocacy", George argues, has influenced how women translate the WPS pillars. In this respect, the agenda is mainly used as a tool to remind people of women's roles in peacebuilding and conflict prevention and is linked to their socio-cultural roles. However, this narrative also reproduces a feminized notion of the women peacebuilder. As a result, "local invocations of women's peacebuilding capacities tend to emphasize women's agency in conflict, but simultaneously reinforce cultural institutions reflecting women's maternal authority, sacred virtue, and obligations" (George 2018b, 484). This discourse is similar to that explained in the previous section through which women relied on notions of motherhood, matrilineality and religion to claim their space as peacebuilders.

The instrumentalization of the WPS Agenda in this local Southern context can be related to Swati Parashar's critique of WPS. As seen in the case of Bougainville, the fact that WPS is based on western concepts such as emancipation or equality impacts the ways in which Southern activists must adapt to it even though it does not reflect local norms and customs: "It fails to highlight the complexities of these conflicts in which states are parties waging wars against their own citizens, but it also ensures that theories and approaches from the Global North provide the normative knowledge and framing for understanding these case studies" (Parashar 2018, 832). In this sense, it is worth questioning the notions of "agency" that the WPS Agenda promotes, and how it fits (or does not fit) in the case of local activists from the South. As argued by postcolonial authors such as Saba Mahmood, agency can be found in practices that do not seek emancipation but reproduce socio-cultural dynamics (Mahmood 2016). Connecting this to the Pacific context, it has also argued that there is a "need to problematize the romantic secularism that slights indigenous women's engagements in apparently banal Christian settings because they seem to advance hegemonic missionary, male, and national agendas of conversion, domestication, and modernization, rather than empower women" (Douglas 2002, 2).

As I demonstrate it in this project, this divergence between ideas of agency represents a friction between local and international policymaking that ends up impacting the role of (women) activists. Ultimately, it can explain, in part, why women feel the need to strategize and adapt to specific concepts to use the WPS Agenda as a means for advocating for political inclusion and representation. In order to see the ways in which this happens in Bougainville, how concepts of motherhood, matrilineality and religion are understood by 'international' projects and policies is of significant relevance to see how this relates to WPS policy and practice – which takes place in the form of projects and evaluations. Finally, how the narrative of western feminism grounded in WPS affects local communities can also be analyzed by scrutinizing, under an intersectional analytical lens, why the projects faced certain difficulties or limitations. That is to say, which structures of power and discrimination (global and local) might these projects be ignoring and how is this because of the way they conceptualize and represent women?

4. Policy for Women's Empowerment, Gender Equality, Peace and Security

4.1. Introduction: Aims and Approach of the Chapter

This chapter examines the Policy for Women's Empowerment, Gender Equality, Peace and Security (2016). Through a Discourse Theoretical Analysis, this chapter analyses how the subjects and actors involved in the policy are formed through its discourse. Particularly, and as this type of analysis proposes, the chapter values how women and civil society are constructed through the mechanisms of (re)presentation, (re)production and (re)legitimization. The chapter argues that this policy conceptualizes and represents women, civil society groups, their needs, and thus the practices to achieve them, in a discourse that is influenced by the terminological approach of the UN's WPS Agenda, which follows a liberal, western-centered narrative of women and gender. This is shown through the discursive tensions found between the concepts of empowerment, inequality, and emancipation in comparison to the use of concepts that shape women's local socio-cultural experiences and peacebuilding practices such as matrilineality, motherhood and religion. The chapter demonstrates that these concepts are placed in an inferior position in favor of a more general narrative of "assisting" and "empowering" women, which ultimately limits the real impact of the policy, and notably, local activist groups' work.

The Policy for Women's Empowerment, Gender Equality, Peace and Security proposal was approved in 2013 by the Office of the Bougainville Executive Council and finally drafted in 2016. Its main aim was to propose actions for mainstreaming gender equality, specifically in government departments and programs, within the administration of Bougainville. UN Women[11] and development agencies assisted in its formulation. Local women's organizations were also consulted in two two-day workshops in 2011 and 2013. The policy includes a specific section on Women, Peace and Security (2.9), which outlines the influence of this framework and reviews the role of women as peacemakers. The policy is divided in two main sections: context and vision; and framework for implementation. In the first section, a broad situational analysis of women in Bougainville is provided. Here, emphasis is placed on education, health, violence, land and agriculture, the economy and decision-making. The second section is

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[11] UN institution that works for the promotion of gender equality through programmes, policies and standards based on Human Rights.

centered on explaining the main strategies for implementing the policy, its monitoring and evaluation.

As Laura Shepherd argues, "[i]n order to understand how best to implement policy we first need to understand 'how' a policy means, not just what it means" (Shepherd 2010, 144). This includes how the actors involved in it are constructed through the policy discourse. This analysis provides a basis for understanding the policy framework through which women's local activism takes place. Hence, the intention is to understand the mechanisms and actions it proposes, and which actors are involved. For this, importance is placed on the role and constructions of civil society. Central questions that the chapter considers include: what is the role of women's Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)? Are they central or peripheral? Which CSOs are mentioned and involved? Another important topic is the role of international frameworks such as the WPS Agenda: how are they used or relied on? For what purpose? In relation to this, it is also worth questioning: how is the "local" constructed in the policy discourse and which discursive encounters does it face with the international? Here, it is important to see how the policy relates women's contemporary situation to their experiences of conflict. In relation to the central concepts guiding this thesis, the chapter asks: what are the discourses around religion, motherhood and matrilineality? How do these relate to women's identity? Does the policy include an intersectional analysis? And in relation to women's difficulties in engaging in formal political participation, which are the causes identified, and how are these addressed? By considering all these questions, this chapter identifies how this policy 'means' and what this entails for local women's CSOs. The findings are organized into four sections: matrilineality, motherhood, and religion; women's civil society organizations; international policy frameworks; and conclusion.

4.2. Constructions of Women: Matrilineality, Motherhood, and Religion

The topics of motherhood, matrilineality and religion feature in the policy but are not central to its discourse and aims. Rather, they are used to explain women's situation and experiences of the conflict, which are more related to suffering and violence rather than to agency, as I will explain in this section. In this context, the policy fails to recognize the way these concepts have shaped women's activist experiences during and after the conflict -as outlined in chapter 3-, and what role this paucity plays in their actual political underrepresentation.

The policy, which is centered on promoting gender equality, acknowledges the "need to analyze power dynamics, gender relations and gender differences" (The Autonomous Region of Bougainville 2016, 10). When describing women in the place, it explains the significance of the traditional matrilineal role that women have, and links it to the need to understand them as both agents and beneficiaries of development. An example is the section on Women, Land, Agriculture and Natural Resources. Here, the matrilineal role of women in pre-contact society and the disruption of this during the colonial period (1886-1949) is attributed significant importance to understanding why women are undermined in decision-making processes. As the policy explains, this happened in the opening of the Panguna mine,[12] when women's opposition was not considered and thus, they remained marginalized in the final decision (The Autonomous Region of Bougainville 2016, 22). Links with women's situation and their experiences during the conflict are made specifically in relation to health issues and trauma, especially in the case of maternal and reproductive health (The Autonomous Region of Bougainville 2016, 15, 26). These topics are part of a more general narrative centered on inequalities and the underlying factors that create discrimination and violence against women. In this sense, the policy is many times centered on how these factors constitute a source of discrimination, and places importance on how these relate to "access to quality education, economic sources and equal opportunities with men and boys" (The Autonomous Region of Bougainville 2016, 12).

This discourse based on inequalities and discrimination is also a criticism that has been made of the WPS Agenda and its liberal approach to gender. As Shepherd argues, following an ideal of gender mainstreaming is one of the explanations posed for the failure of UNSCR 1325, yet is central in the practices of the UN system (Shepherd 2008, 83). In this case, the policy does not problematize gender mainstreaming but rather reproduces it, and with this, puts equality and empowerment as issues of central importance. This discourse undermines how agency was enacted by women during the conflict and the experiences that shaped it, and thus does not address how women could continue to enact agency through these means. My argument is not against the intention of mainstreaming gender in the policy, but rather is about the fact that making it the center of its discourse can obscure other structures that may limit women's

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[12] The Panguna mine was one of the main factors that spiked the conflict in Bougainville. It was opened in 1972 with the support of the Papua New Guinea government, which was benefiting from its profits. Its ecological impact, unequal distribution of profits and impact on traditional societies of Bougainville were some of the grievances that also lead to an ethno-nationalist sentiment among Bougainvilleans. For more details, see Regan (1998).

participation and activism. An example is the architecture of entitlements that George describes as an actual challenge to women's participation – which I will discuss in this chapter's conclusion. Besides, the constant comparison established between women and men and the difference in their conditions reproduces a gendered binary logic that places women in an inferior position. This comparison creates problems in terms of the acknowledgment of women's agency, which is seen as diminished in relation to colonialism and the conflict and hence, replaced by discourses on the need for "empowerment". In relation to this point, Parashar has argued that the use of such liberal concepts in the WPS Agenda have relegated the Global South to a recipient position, and thus created conditions for them to "adapt" to the agenda (Parashar 2018). We can see how, in this policy, these discourses are adapted to a liberal logic of gender that is found in the WPS Agenda.

Although motherhood and matrilineality are mentioned in the policy (The Autonomous Region of Bougainville 2016, 11, 22, 25), they are positioned as factors related to discrimination rather than informing agency or activism – as suggested in chapter 3. The question of religion and its relationship to women's condition, values or activism is not mentioned. Even though colonialism is mentioned in a small section (The Autonomous Region of Bougainville 2016, 22), no questions on ethnicity, class or other power structures and their role in creating specific identities in relation to the category of "women" is established. Hence, women are treated as a singular category, with no intersectional approach or acknowledgement of the importance or benefits that this perspective could have for the policy. As Smith and Stavreska have argued, the view that intersectionality as a theory and method offers in relation to power, identities, organizing frameworks and their effects in lived experiences can benefit the WPS Agenda by facilitating a more nuanced understanding of women's conditions in the aftermath of conflict, and can point to key factors to facilitate their inclusion in post-conflict scenarios (Smith and Stavrevska 2022).

In general terms, we can see how local concepts interact with international liberal notions of "equality" or "empowerment" in the policy. The way in which these are structured places more importance on the need to reach the liberal ideals of gender issues rather than trying to understand what entitlements limit women's participation. In this sense, the local customary concepts that shape women's activism are mentioned but fall into a secondary place compared to the main aim of the policy. This raises questions regarding how women could relate their traditional roles and identities to their activism and search for political participation. Since

these discourses are found inside a policy – which is an institutional tool to bring about action – I argue that they play a role in enabling and delimiting the space for women's activism, as related to how they are conceptualized.

4.3.   Women's Civil Society Organizations

Women's CSOs are generally seen as principal actors that contribute to bringing the WPS Agenda and its principles into practice. As previous research has found, they not only set the agenda but are key to their implementation (Björkdahl and Selimovic 2018). For this reason, it is interesting to see how these organizations are constructed in the policy and which responsibilities or meanings are they given. For instance, it makes a difference whether they are they positioned as recipients of the policy or actors in its implementation. In relation to policy studies, "how" a policy means is also viewed through how target populations are constructed. As Ingram and Schneider argue, the target groups that are chosen to direct a policy "reflect a political calculous that includes effectiveness, ease of implementation, availability of resources and, importantly, elected legislators desire to align themselves positively with widely held public values of how different sorts of people should be treated" (Ingram and Schneider 2017, 259). In this case, analysing which target groups are included in the policy and which are not can give us a sense of the role of civil society, what is understood by it and how it relates to women activists, and to what extent they are considered recipients of this policy. This is what this section will do.

In the first part of the policy, which is centered on the context and vision, little attention is paid to the role of CSOs and their work. In fact, only the Nazareth Centre for Rehabilitation[13] (NCR) is mentioned in the section on Gender Based Violence (2.5). This raises questions about who the main partners are that are involved in the implementation of the policy. In the second part of the policy, which consists of the framework for implementation, CSOs start to appear as relevant. Here, the Bougainville Women's Federation[14] (BWF) is mentioned as a partner to strengthen relations with, as part of the role of the Office for Gender Equality (OGE) of strengthening partnerships with "community and faith-based organizations" (The Autonomous

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[13] This organization was founded in 2001 and works to respond to gender-based violence and its victims. For more information, see: https://www.facebook.com/Nazareth-Centre-for-Rehabilitation-1855402341194736/

[14] BWF is an umbrella organisation that advocates for the representation and inclusion of women in post-conflict Bougainvillean politics by coordinating women's groups and a young women's leadership programs. For more information, see: https://www.facebook.com/Bougainville-Womens-Federation-1393307517660195/

Region of Bougainville 2016, 31). In fact, this organization was created to promote and coordinate women's groups: one of its objectives is to fund and manage capacity for women's programs. In one section (4.2.3), the importance of CSOs for the implementation is very much endorsed.

Even if supporting and strengthening CSOs as key actors in the development of the policy is acknowledged, a different scenario can be seen when we look into the 8 policy mechanisms that are set. These mechanisms are based on providing training, assistance, expertise, and support mainly to government offices and departments. Only civil society is mentioned in the goal relating to the enhancement of "communication and information sharing with the public" (The Autonomous Region of Bougainville 2016, 39), and the BWF is acknowledged as an actor involved in it. However, it is not clear if "the public" refers to civil society, international actors, or others. Also, the policy aims to "empower women's organizations through capacity-building, education and training as well as provision of information and sources" (The Autonomous Region of Bougainville 2016, 33), but is not centered on supporting – economically, financially or technically – the projects developed by organizations on their own or in cooperation with international organizations. As Helen Hakena, director of the Leitana Nehan Women's Development Agency[15] (LNWDA), explained in an informal conversation, this is one of the main difficulties that CSOs face regarding the policy. Consequently, I argue that local CSOs are seen mainly as recipients of the policy instead of actors of change and implementation, and thus, no budgetary nor specific programs are related to them. This paucity directly limits their possibilities for developing local programs. As Hakena also suggested, this problem of funding should be directly related to the WPS Agenda as a whole, which should include mechanisms to ensure funding when it comes to implementation at the local level.

Generally, CSOs play a secondary role in the policy. They are not seen as key actors for its implementation but rather, recipients of different forms of assistance. Women's CSOs are also grouped into one organization that is seen to represent them all, with nearly no distinctions made in terms of their work nor perspectives on peacebuilding and security. Not specifying their roles or how they could benefit from the policy creates difficulties for their activism, which is central to the improvement of women's situation and conditions. This suggests a

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[15] LNWDA is a local women's organization that was created in 1992 during the conflict to assist women and continues to work in peacebuilding practices today. For more information, see:
https://leitananehanwomensdevelopmentagency.wordpress.com/about/

tension within the main discourse of the policy, which tends to recognize their roles but does not promote specific actions to enhance them.

4.4.   Women, Peace and Security Agenda: How the International Influences the Local

This section will look at how discourses on the WPS Agenda, mentioned in section 2.9 of the policy relate to a specific discourse of peacebuilding and how it relates to local discourses as well, and how does it impacts women activists.

In the policy, women's leadership as key to ending the conflict is recognized, and importantly, women are identified as key actors for peacebuilding. However, the notions of peace and security are described as "interlinked and cannot be separated because they both touch on family responsibility, privacy, economic security, freedom of movement and expression, and freedom from financial hardship, as well as food security, health care and development" (The Autonomous Region of Bougainville 2016, 25). Again, and as stated in the first section of this chapter, these are liberal values that are part of the WPS Agenda and are reproduced in subsequent policies as an adaptation of its language. Even the title of the policy, "Policy for Women's Empowerment, Gender Equality, Peace and Security," aligns with this language.

However, the liberal peace discourse contrasts with a more local perspective that is also found in this section. There is a paragraph that mentions the exclusion of women from peace dialogues and negotiations, and also acknowledges that an "absence of women [is] still evident in government policy development" (The Autonomous Region of Bougainville 2016, 25). Here, their key roles are recognized and emphasis is placed on the importance of valuing traditional socio-cultural roles to promote conflict prevention: "Prevention of future conflict depends on using and strengthening community, traditional and local authority and state institutions, and ensuring these systems work cooperatively to allow the benefits of development to reach all members of society" (The Autonomous Region of Bougainville 2016, 25). This discourse contrasts with the liberal values that the policy promotes in other parts. This is another example of how the international encounters the local, and how these convene in policy writing. It also represents a hybridized approach, where even if following an international liberal approach, local socio-cultural norms and structures of governance are enhanced. As mentioned in section 4.1. of this chapter, this is part of the current UN's approach to peace but continues to obscure

power structures that are embedded in their own international practice of peacebuilding. Although this hybrid form of policymaking can strengthen the work of civil society without attempting to interfere with local socio-cultural values, the omission of local actors in the policy mechanisms and the centrality of liberal values in them leaves the local in a secondary place, and thus, raises questions in terms of how the two can be convened without one being favored more than the other one. Finally, the work done by UN Women with NCR is mentioned (The Autonomous Region of Bougainville 2016, 26), but no prescriptions for cooperation between international organizations and local ones are given, nor mechanisms to enhance this kind of cooperation.

This section has shown how some of the liberal values and concepts of the WPS agenda encounter local concepts in the language of the policy. It has argued that, far from including both discourses in an equal position, the way liberal values are portrayed and related to government authorities leaves local organizations in second place. This is even more evident when we look at the actors involved in the policy mechanisms and funding, as suggested previously.

4.5. Conclusion

This chapter has shown how the Policy for Women's Empowerment, Gender Equality, Peace and Security, through its structure and discourse, creates specific meanings related to women, CSOs and international-local frameworks. The policy has a clear focus on discrimination and mainstreaming gender to promote equality and empowerment. This is achieved through the use of international liberal concepts that encounter local ones, which are expressed through an acknowledgement of women's roles and giving importance to traditional roles to build peace. Notwithstanding, the latter remains secondary. Further sources of inequality, such as social structures and specific gender dynamics, are not mentioned. An important missing point is the role of entitlements in the post-conflict scenario. Entitlements are very important to understanding women's situation in Bougainville. As George argues, "the interplaying customary, faith-based, national, and international institutions give shape to the architecture of entitlement that has determined how women participated in the conflict, and how they have experienced the gendered continuities" (George 2018b, 940). These institutions are not questioned in the policy and no mechanisms to address them are established; no questions on what entitles women to act (or not) as peacebuilders is asked – and no relation to the role of

concepts that shape their identities such as motherhood, matrilineality and religion is acknowledged in this – and thus, this topic is not adequately addressed.

The omission of these questions is also connected to a constant binary logic between women and men that poses women as inferior and in need of "empowerment". This discourse obscures how local agency and activism can take place. It thus explains why the policy is centered on capacity building and does not complement it with promoting resources and funding to assist financially the institutions that are already in place and have been working for several years.

5. Equality for Progress and Planim Save Kamap Strongpela: Evaluation Reports Analysis

5.1. Introduction: Aims and Approach of the Chapter

This chapter consists of an analysis of the End of Project Evaluation Report of two peacebuilding projects developed by different United Nations (UN) bodies – UN Women, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) – in Bougainville, which were presented in the same report in 2017. The projects are Equality for Progress (E4P) and Planim Save Kamap Strongpela (Plant Knowledge, Grow Strong). Both projects were funded by the UN Peacebuilding Fund (UNPBF). The evaluation of both programs was undertaken by the same group, which was external to the persons involved in both projects. The authors of the report are two men: Lawrence Robertson, an American thematic consultant for Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) that has conducted several evaluations for UN programs on development, peacebuilding and gender equality; and Kerry Pagau, a national consultant on Human Development, based in Papua New Guinea. The evaluation has been done through three main methods: document reviews, interviews and focus groups.

These reports have been selected for several reasons. First, and most important, finding resources on Bougainville is not an easy task, and these were some of the very few published reports by the UN Women office in Papua New Guinea. Second, they are the only two projects that were developed with a central focus on WPS as part of the UN Peacebuilding Priority Plan for Bougainville (2015-2017), which is the time frame that this project analyses. Third, both projects are very different in terms of scope and target. One is centered in empowering women to participate in state-politics and the other on developing local conversations in South Bougainville to address Violence Against Women (VAW) and heal trauma. This difference between addressing local communities and governance structures can be seen as one of the paradoxes of the UN's liberal peacebuilding approach: one project prioritizes the participation of women in state-politics as means to construct gender-just peace; while the other prioritizes the dynamics of local conversations to address violence against women (VAW) and build community conciliation. Focusing on these two projects is thus representative of two levels of the UN's approach and its framing and thus, conceiving, addressing, and impacting women in diverse ways. I chose to analyze the evaluation of the reports – rather than the reports

themselves – because this would not only allow me to detect the ideological reasonings and discourses behind the design of the projects, but also because the implications of the lack of an intersectional lens can be seen through the evaluation of what worked or not, and the limitations of each project. It could be the case that these limitations or difficulties found during the implementation of the project are related to the omission of broader structures of power or experiences that impact women's lives.

The first project, E4P, was centered on promoting peace through enhancing women's participation in politics and was implemented with the Bougainville Women's Federation (BWF). It was implemented in governmental institutions such as the Department of Community Development and the Bougainville House of Representatives (BHOR). It was designed to last 18 months but ended up lasting 25, from July 2015 until February 2017. The main practices it involved were related to capacity-building for elected women in the BHOR, the establishment of the Office for Gender Equality, assisting in the development of the Policy for Women's Empowerment (which I analyzed in the previous chapter), and the establishment of a Gender Committee in the 6th Parliamentary Committee in BHOR. The second project, Planim Save, is centered on ending VAW and treating post-conflict trauma in South Bougainville, which is one of the regions that was most affected by the conflict and has received less assistance from the government and international organizations. It started in February 2015 and finished in February 2017, and was implemented with the support of the Nazareth Centre for Rehabilitation (NCFR). The project aimed to bring local action to address conflict-related trauma and VAW through practices like training community counsellors and community facilitators, raising awareness on family and sexual violence, human rights, trauma and peacebuilding through community conversations, training local government officials and strengthening referral pathways to Family Support Centers and hospitals.

Before beginning with the analysis, it is worth clarifying that my engagement with these reports is not centered on discussing their suitability or pertinence in relation to Bougainville. Rather, it is in the discursive articulations of the way these reports came to be written, what their discourses value, the ideological underpinnings behind them, and how this is involved in the projects. For these reasons, my priorities are constructions of the local, the portrayal of women, civil society and their situation, and the relation between practices (or methods) used to develop the projects with these ideals and their reported effectiveness (or not). Ultimately, I aim to expose the implications of the lack of an intersectional lens in informing not only the projects,

but also their reporting. This is because the first thing that I encountered while analyzing the reports was the complete lack of reference to motherhood, matrilineality and religion, and how this influences peacebuilding practices. Thus, one of the main questions informing this chapter is: what is exactly missing when an intersectional lens is omitted? Other relevant questions are: in relation to CPS debates, how is the relation with the local constructed in the projects and with the government? In which ways does this figure in the UN discourse? Which are the values behind this project and how do they relate to the UN's understanding of the local? How do the two projects relate to each other and with peacebuilding dynamics as a whole? In relation to intersectionality, do they acknowledge the influence of certain structures of discrimination that might shape different person's experiences regarding conflict and peacebuilding? How do they portray or understand women and their agency?

The chapter is divided into an analysis of each project separately, and a concluding discussion of the main points raised. The chapter argues that the liberal ideal of peace can be found through different discursive sites in both reports, especially E4P, and that the lack of an intersectional lens has resulted in several limitations to both projects, especially Plaim Save. These limitations are related to the hybrid approach the projects promote, which ends up dichotomizing between international and local, giving a conceptual and spatial legitimacy to the international. I show how intersectionality is a tool that could have gone some way to preventing these shortcomings, and thus, help avoid such dichotomizing.

5.2. Project 1: Equality for Progress

The E4P project was centered on empowering women to participate in the institutions and government of Bougainville. This idea can be clearly seen in the Theory of Change[16] that the project follows:

> If the women of Bougainville (MPs, former candidates and community leaders) have the capacity and opportunity to participate in political and peace building processes and priority setting, and if an enabling environment for women's meaningful participation is created […] then the inclusivity and the legitimacy of the Bougainville Peace Agreement implementation and prospects for peaceful transition and referendum will be improved (Robertson and Pagau, 2017, 13).

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[16] In project planning, a Theory of Change describes why there is a need for the project and how change will happen through it.

This ideal follows a logic of peacebuilding as a state-building practice that is central to the UN's discourse of liberal peace, but also has specific assumptions about women, capacity building and empowerment that are implicit within it. This idea is also related to the WPS Agenda since it directly alludes to the 1st pillar, increasing women's participation. This section will show how the discourse around this project is centered on this logic and how it portrays the role of the "international" (as embodied through the institutions of the UN) as an actor that can assist in it. It also demonstrates how this reproduces the notion of legitimacy to the international as a spatial and conceptual domain (Shepherd 2017). It then moves to analyze how notions of empowerment and capacity-building are related to the latter, and thus reproduce a conceptual idea of "women as superheroines" (Cohn, Kinsella, and Gibbings 2004) through the discursive administration of these responsibilities to them to be able to participate in politics. Finally, it argues that the previous point is related to a specific vision of "third-world women" (Mohanty 1988) as agentless. In this way, the project fails to acknowledge how specific forms of discrimination can limit women's participation. This chapter suggests that an intersectional approach could shed light on these.

5.2.1. Peacebuilding: State-Building?

In the R4P theory of change, there is also a causal relationship established between women and peace, which states that "if women can participate in peacebuilding, then prospects for peace will be improved" (Robertson and Pagau 2017, 13). This discourse not only categorizes women as an homogenous group "viewed as 'peacemakers' with similar needs, interests and agencies, simply because of their gender" (Baldoumus et al. 2020, 10), but it also reproduces the notion of women as natural peacemakers. The fact that women participating in politics will necessarily lead to peace essentializes women's roles and experiences, does not acknowledge the diversity within them and, as I discussed in chapter 3, is one of the main critiques to WPS policy (Parashar 2018, 830).

At the same time, there is no mention of the structures that might limit women's participation in government and how this could relate to specific social situations or experiences such as mothering, class, and economic capacity. Rather, the whole project is centered on training and building capacities as a means to "empower" women. Scholars such as Smith have argued that "narratives of participation serve to produce the social category of (the ideal, liberal, yet subordinated) woman while obscuring the role of institutions in this reproduction" (Smith

2018, 57). This focus leaves us to assume that women are seen as not involved in politics because of a lack of capacity or, at least, that this is one of the main reasons for their limited participation. We can see this assumption through statements such as: "UN Women and UNDP are well equipped to develop training […] to improve the skills and knowledge of newly elected women" (Robertson and Pagau 2017, 10). This logic of "empowering women through training" (19) and the aim to "promote women's empowerment through political leadership" (18) reproduces notions of peacebuilding as state-building in the sense that it only relates women to peace in terms of access to state institutions and participation in politics[17]. As Shepherd argues, this dynamic "[i]s bound by constrictive logics of both gender and space that ascribe to the state a degree of power, authority, and legitimacy, but ultimately leave undisturbed the hierarchies operative in the international system that afford legitimacy to the "international" as a spatial and conceptual domain" (Shepherd 2017, 35). Through enhancing women's participation in the state, and in promoting the work of institutions such as UN Women or UNDP to help do this, this discourse reproduces the spatial and conceptual domain of the "international",as a legitimate actor to intervene.

The involvement of international actors in this discourse, as evident in statements such as "UN Women and UNDP should consider developing programming to encourage and strengthen the competitiveness of women" (Robertson and Pagau 2017, 32), positions them in this spatial and conceptual legitimacy that is attributed to the "international". With the idea of ascribing legitimacy to the "international", Shepherd refers to discourses which promote 'local' communities as in need, and the international community as able to help them "locating expertise at the UN level rather than local level" (Shepherd 2017, 59). This ideological positioning suggests a general idea of women as in need of empowerment to participate in the state and thus, in peacebuilding, something international organizations can assist in. As I will argue in the following two subsections, this logic is tied to representations of women as "responsible" for the limitations to their participation in politics and assigns them a specific notion of agency (Madhok and M. Rai 2012). Both characterizations obscure larger structures of discrimination that could have been underscored through an intersectional lens as I further explicate in 7.2.3.

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[17] The project does not acknowledge any other domains such as economy or education.

5.2.2. Empowerment and Capacity-Building: Women as Superheroines?

The narrow narrative of capacity-building as means of accessing politics places responsibility directly on women and their skills, in comparison with men. This narrative can be seen in statements found in the evaluation such as "without strengthening the capacity of newly elected women, women local officials are unlikely to represent and administer as well as their more experienced male colleagues" (21). Since women have been longer excluded from the formal political realm, they inevitably will not have as much experience as men, yet relevant skills and experience can be acquired through training. However, not considering how this training might be coupled with the everyday care practices that these women continue to undertake apart from training places a degree of responsibility of their own management of these practices. In addition, that enhancing women's capacity is only done by projects centered on elected women and not on structures that might make them have less knowledge on certain topics – such as education in the political system – gives them a degree of responsibility for their own situation. I argue that not only training elected women could be a source for empowerment and participation in politics, but also improving their access to basic education, financial capabilities or conciliation of everyday tasks.

This capacity-building as empowerment logic places a high degree of responsibility on women, which I refer to in this section as a "super heroine" complex. As Cohn, Kinsella, and Gibbings argue in relation to women's inclusion in peacemaking, there is a need to ask "which women are included and are we expecting more from women (super heroines) than men?" (Cohn, Kinsella, and Gibbings 2004, 136). Similarly, Shepherd emphasizes that there is a need to question assumptions about capacity not only in problematizing how women are many times perceived as victims, but also how they are expected to be "[s]uper heroines, agents of their own salvation, capable of representing the needs and priorities of others and with the capacity to effect positive transformation in their given environments" (Shepherd 2011, 511). The ideology behind this project reflects this amount of responsibility.

Equally, it is important to acknowledge that the same international institutions that promote this discourse (specifically, UNDP and UN Women) have a degree of implication in the global power structures that it (re)produces. As Smith argues, "framing 'empowerment' as something that can be instituted through intervention from exogenous actors belies the fact that it operates within global power structures that undermine equality and disempower to begin with" (Smith

2018, 59). Thus, empowerment is not separate from the state-building discourse but rather, both logics go together: they are embedded in the liberal discourse of peace. These discourses can be seen in the evaluation report through sentences such as "the gains made in women's political empowerment are embedded in ABG institutions" (29) when referring to the sustainability of the project and its long lasting impact. The central role of training and capacity-building to improve women's access to politics represents them as responsible for their inclusion, rather that suggesting a change in the structures that preclude them from participating in these spheres. It is also pertinent here to ask which women participate in politics, and why are certain women excluded from them.

5.2.3. Agency and "Third World Women"

This narrative of empowerment is very much related to depictions of homogeneous "third world women" as agentless that feature in many western discourses. As Mohanty argues, "it is in the production of this 'third world difference' that western feminisms appropriate and colonize the constitutive complexities which characterize the lives of women in these countries" (Mohanty 1988, 65). By reproducing this discourse, the analyzed report obscures these "constitutive complexities", is unable to understand them and thus, it cannot not address them. An intersectional analysis of which women are excluded from the political realm, by which reasons, and how to acknowledge this in the project would help avoid such obscuring of the complexities faced to achieving political participation. It should be recognized that the women targeted in this project are literate and educated women who have already achieved a certain space in politics which, as mentioned in Chapter 3, is still very small. Further, this problematic notion of agency is related to liberal discourses of women as responsible for their participation. This notion is reproduced in an individualistic or collective way that treats women as "acting for the overall interest of women more broadly", and is blind to the roles of gendered and racialized bodies assumptions behind these (Martin de Almagro and Ryan 2019, 14). I suggest that a focus on how agency was enacted by women during the conflict to bring negotiations forward, and how it was shaped by the intersection of specific experiences of motherhood, religion and matrilineality – as I outline in Chapter 5 – would help us understand what leads women to act as peacebuilders, and how to enhance these roles and experiences to promote their participation in the formal political sphere.

51

In a similar way, emphasizing the interlocking social, cultural, political and economic structures that prevent women from participating in politics, and engaging in a deeper exploration of how women face different situations according to specific conditions such as mothering, economic difficulties and disabilities, could help address these structures rather than opting for a sole focus on women. Salem's work, for instance, can help visualize how intersectional categories are formed and why they intersect in terms of production of exploitation and oppression. As Salem writes, "production here is conceptualized not simply as producing material life and property but also producing social relations, values, norms an dispositions" (Salem 2018, 409). In the case of Bougainville, this perspective emphasizes how colonialism and imperialism are part of this capitalist- structure and can be reproduced by "modernizing" notions of state-building and gender equality, which can disempower and reproduce inequalities (Federici 2012). This approach would also help avoid the "local-international" binary logic that consistently informs hybrid peacebuilding projects (Anam 2018).

This section has argued that the liberal notion of agency found in this project, centered in "empowering" women through access to political participation, obscures the existence of broader power relations that limit women's access to politics. If including an intersectional lens that acknowledges the importance of how other social structures might limit women's participation into politics, the policy could also address these realms -such as economy or education- and not only make women responsible for improving the access to their own participation.

5.3. Project 2: Planim Save Kamap Strongpela

In contrast to E4P, Planim Save is centered on local action towards addressing VAW and trauma healing in communities of South Bougainville. It was implemented in partnership with NCFR. However, it faced some difficulties during the implementation process, which I discuss in the below sections. This section reviews the main limitations that the reports found in the projects and relates them to broader structures of power. It argues how, if developed and implemented through an intersectional lens, the projects could have avoided such limitations.

The Theory of Change of the project, which was developed by the UN organisms -UNDP and UN Women- that implemented it, stated in the beginning of the report:

If communities have access to alternative localized gender-based violence and trauma healing processes led by experienced community actors and are further empowered through local level community plans and initiatives aimed to prevent gender bias, and if communities have access to coordinated support services, then the communities will feel safer and more cohesive, resort to less frequent violence and will be able to move on from past grievances and focus on the future (14).

The theory of change and design of the project shows how capacity-building is again a central ideological driver. However, this project is focused on training counselors and facilitators to undertake community conversations. In the evaluation, it is stated that "locally generated methodologies to address community issues" are highly relevant to address these topics in Bougainville (Robertson and Pagau 2017, 7). However, this methodology lacked an intersectional lens that, as I will argue, relates to the main limitations faced during the implementation of the project. As mentioned in chapter 1.2 of this project, I will approach intersectionality through Bilge and Collin's conceptualization, which values how "people's lives and the organization of power in a given society is shaped not only by a single axis of social division, be it race or gender or class, but many axes that work together and influence each other" (Collins and Bilge 2020, 78-79). This approach enables me to address the importance of different local structures that conform everyday practices, but also how international structures and their reproduction through language, reporting, funding and other mechanisms can limit their outcomes.

5.3.1. Limitations: Language

When analyzing the evaluation of the material for the trainings, there are two different discourses. On the one hand, UN staff considered that the "materials were highly relevant, both in what they cover (issues) and how they cover them in an empowering manner" (24). On the other hand, trainees reported some difficulties mainly based on language, skills and lack of addressing specific topics.

In regard to language, materials were only available in English and no translations to the local language of Tok Pisin were made. This is a factor that already limited many participants in terms of their participation in the training sessions developed during the implementation of the project, but also affected how the knowledge and methods in the training sessions were used during community conversations. As the evaluation report details, facilitators suggested that

"the manual was designed to be used for training of trainers rather than to support the direct delivery of services to the public" (28) and that they had "to adjust methods themselves to target less educated community members" (28). Similarly, the evaluation report argued that the content was "too much for the community to manage" and that "levels of discussion and terms used were often seen to be at a high level by community members too" (28). These comments all points to the fact that the communities and trainees lacked familiarity with the language and concepts used in the implementation of the project, and that no questions of literacy or English competencies were considered in the planning stage of the project. In this sense, the difference in people's access to resources was not adequately considered. The fact that the UN works with English as a main language already creates a binary between the local and international and limits local access to its own resources. In addition, it creates a condition for adaptation since, to be able to work with these institutions, communities need to be able to have a strong knowledge of English.

5.3.2. Limitations: An Intersectional Lens

Further to the matter of language, some topics that were not tackled in the training produced limitations during the community conversations, such as disability, abortion and family planning, the last of which is a sensitive topic for Bougainville's Catholic society (28). As mentioned in the report, "it was not clear what the program's guiding on this topic was or how this guidance was translated into action by facilitators in community conversations" (28). There was a lack of understanding of how topics such as religion could have influenced the topics discussed in the conversations. As I argue in Chapter 5, religion was an important factor that informed and enabled women's activism for peace during the conflict. As Helen Hakena explained to me,[18] Catholic women lead peace mobilizations and the Church supported them in their actions. Given the weight of Catholicism in Bougainville, engaging with it demonstrate an awareness and understanding of people's daily cultural beliefs, values and practices. These limitations point to the need to consider how different systems of discrimination or inequalities have to be understood to implement projects locally in an effective and sensitive manner. As Smith and Stavreska point out, "in conflict-affected societies, intersectionality helps in understanding not only the kinds of violence people might suffer but also the varied interests, needs, agencies, and views toward what constitutes inclusive and sustainable peace"

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[18] Director of the Leitana Nehan Women's Development Agency, which whom I had an informal conversation.

(Stavrevska and Smith 2020, 1). Other scholars also note that the researcher or practitioner's positionality cannot be understood as existing outside the place where projects are being implemented. Rather, this is also part of their own gaze, which intersects with the unequal power relations (Kappler and Lemay-Hébert 2019; Fish and Rothchild 2009). It is here that topics such as language, literacy and others could have been noticed as part of the facilitator'' own positional reflections.

Intersectionality can also help understand the importance of daily practices as religion, as embedded in this set of agencies and views of what can constitute sustainable peace. Other practices such as food provisions were very important for the community conversations. As expressed in the evaluation report of the project, it was "an important part of working effectively in the cultural context of Bougainville, especially for working with women who would otherwise have to work to prepare food for their families" (Robertson and Pagau 2017, 27). That UN could provide food for the trainings and conversations to take place alleviated some care tasks that are usually undertaken by women. This fact raises the question of which other daily tasks that women usually do for the community – such as mothering, teaching, feeding and cleaning – are important for peacebuilding in Bougainville and how can these be incorporated in the UN's approach. In other words, care practices are part of the set of interests, needs and agencies of peace; they are part of the global economy that sustains the world but many times they are unrecognized, unprotected, unpaid and feminized (Fraser 2016). In relation to peacebuilding, they are some of the main practices where everyday peacebuilding is found (Vaittinen et al. 2019). Further, the intersectionality of pPeace approach proposes to read everyday practices but acknowledges the power differences within them. As Kappler and Lemay-Hébert argue, "[t]he everyday lies at the intersection of categories of oppression (gendered, racial, economic, political), but also categories of privilege and how these categories intersect" (Kappler and Lemay-Hébert 2019, 174). We can see how gendered practices of caregiving and mothering, for instance, intersect in everyday practices of peace but, due to their informal economic condition, are overlooked by these kinds of international projects.

5.3.3. What Happens After the UN? Limitations for Future Implementation

As the evaluation report argues, the time allocated to this project's implementation was clearly not enough for it to achieve its aims, which were to reduce the violence and trauma left from the 12-year conflict in Bougainville. Trainees stated that they would find it difficult to continue

undertaking community conversations without the resources given by the UN. This was especially the case in relation to transport and food which, as argued in the previous section, was important in the cultural context for conversations to take place. In this respect, the long-term local implementation without these international actors was not so evident. This limitation shows how some projects are developed to be implemented in the short term and with the assistance of the UN, which then posits this actor as a requirement for the programs to work and creates a sort of dependency towards the "international".

The limitations of the duration of the project are also related to several dynamics of how the UNPBF works, which has a limit of 2 years for projects. These limitations include time, financing and reporting, which were seen as problematic during the project by the facilitators and trainees. One of the main conclusions of the report evaluation is that "peace-building fund rules and procedures are exhausting" (8) and that "The PBF should considered ways to support longer-term recovery through mechanisms that are longer than the two years" (33). As other research on partnerships between international and local institutions has shown, having many layers of accountability demands on projects end up limiting and obstructing local initiatives (Makuwira 2006). This is also related to how accountability is made and affects to the local participants. Some of the beneficiaries of Planim Save reported that "the end-line questionnaire was too long and difficult for them to complete" (27). Reporting is embedded in the funding dynamics of these international organizations and as such, reproduces the legitimacy and conceptual space given to the "international" as a superior entity. A co-authored book about LNWDA states that "through their years of experience, they (local organizations) have become adept at writing applications, reporting on project progress, and acquiring donor funds" (Ninnes Bert Jenkins, Hakena, and Jenkins 2006, 132). Hakena also explained this dynamic to me when she mentioned that one of the first things that the UN taught them when they arrived was how to write reports. These problems of reporting are also related to the literacy, knowledge, and level of English of the local communities involved, but also to their time and emotional abilities to reflect on everything they have worked on.

In all, the structural the limitations of the UNPBF time period, and the exhausting procedures of reporting, limit the action of local participants to continue undertaking the work they did with cooperation of the UN, since it might entail the use of resources they don't have and cannot access.

5.4. Conclusion

This chapter has shown how these UN projects, E4P and Planim Save, even if having a "local" approach and collaborating with local organizations, reproduce a liberal logic of UN peacebuilding as state-building. This is also a gendered logic that refers to women's empowerment and participation as access to political spheres. However, the global structures in which the state institutions, international organizations and persons are embedded, and how these limit women, are not considered in the projects nor their evaluation. Some of the consequences of the lack of an intersectional lens in both projects have been shown in relation to topics such as language, literacy, reporting and funding dynamics, care practices or religious topics, which were described as problematic and limiting in the report. Taking this one step further, these topics are embedded in these interlocking structures of oppression that exist between the local and international and are also part of colonial and imperial structures and practices, which are reproduced by the UN through its liberal ideal of peace.

Ultimately, through obscuring the responsibility of the UN in perpetrating these dynamics – through practices such as funding and creating dependency – and portraying its institutions as able to help bring change, these projects reproduce the conceptual and spatial legitimacy the "international" is given, without problematizing the values and structures it perpetrates (Shepherd 2017). Attached to this ideal are two conflicting visions of women. First, the agentless who need to be "trained" and capacitated to act in certain spheres and scenarios; and second, the "superheroine" version who takes responsibility for knowledge and fights against inequalities without considering any structure (local or international) that enforces them. This vision clearly contradicts the notion of agency – more located in tradition and custom (Mahmood 2016) – that I described in Chapter 5, which was shaped by cultural ideas of matrilineality, motherhood and religion, and their relation to conflict experiences and peace activism. As shown, there is a spiritual aspect of women's activism during the conflict that is not mentioned nor considered by the projects.

To conclude, this chapter has shown how intersectionality as a theory or method did not inform the UN's projects, nor their reporting, and the implications it had. An intersectional lens not only shows how some of the limitations of the projects could have been overcome, but also helps underscore how interlocking systems of discrimination and oppression that are perpetrated by international and local actors impact peacebuilding. Ultimately, this emphasis

contributes to avoiding dichotomizing between international and local actors, thus lifting the legitimacy attributed to the international but also, understanding how everyday practices that influence peacebuilding might also be constrained by these dynamics. More broadly, the chapter as shown what "is missing" when intersectionality is missing, and how this ultimately impacts the local, which every time is more diffuse and agentless in this kind of "hybrid" Projects.

6. Conclusion

In February this year, the Autonomous Bougainville Government announced that the Panguna Mine, a central factor spiking the previous conflict in Bougainville, would reopen after being closed for 30 years. This decision was made by landowners and the local government, who expected the profits from the mine to provide economic support for the future independence of Bougainville from Papua New Guinea (PNG), which 98% of the population had voted for in the 2019 referendum and which was set out in the 2001 Peace Agreement. Local women's groups supported the decision to reopen the mine, with the expectation that it would contribute to a lasting and sustainable peace, as well as respect women's landowner status, with whom peace in the territory is rooted (Wilson 2022). The role of the United Nations (UN) and PNG will be key in Bougainville's process toward independence, which is expected to occur by 2025. Unquestionably, the region will be the subject of further complex interactions between local and international actors in the forthcoming years. The UN will be one of the actors in this regard since one of the main goals of the new Bougainville Government is to be recognized by the international community and acquire full UN membership (Regan 2021). In this scenario, women's and gender issues will be core topics to be addressed not only in terms of political participation, but in relation to all aspects of state- and peacebuilding process.

This thesis reflected upon the intersections between gender and peace in Bougainville by focusing on the interactions between the local and the international during the early stages of post-conflict (2015-2017). Specifically, it examined both the local Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) policy in Bougainville and evaluation reports of two UN projects with the intention of seeing what discursive (re)presentations, (re)productions and (re)legitimizations of global and local power were taking place, and how these ultimately impacted women, CSOs and women's roles as peacebuilders. An intersectional lens was used to disentangle not only how these power structures manifest locally and internationally, and the role of the UN within them, but also how the omission of the complexity of these structures in the creation of policies and projects directly impact their outcomes and efficiency. Moreover, the thesis contrasted local notions of agency and how they informed women's activism during the conflict – specifically through the notions of motherhood, matrilineality and religion – to the idea of agency reproduced by the UN. Through this comparison, the thesis demonstrated how intersectional experiences that shaped local practices of peacemaking during the conflict have been disguised into discourses

centered on emancipation, equality, and empowerment. The thesis has argued that centering policies and projects in these concepts has neglected the existence of specific power structures – local and international – that shape women's lives. These reframings had specific impacts and implications to the role of women as peacebuilders and how they relate with the UN as an international institution. As I demonstrated, these concepts – empowerment, emancipation and equality – are strongly related to the liberal ideal of peace promoted by this institution and are mostly centered in state-building and the promotion of democracy, which often obscures the broader power dynamics in which it participates. These conclusions serve to reevaluate the UN's relation with this region, which has been subject of several post-conflict interventions and peacebuilding projects (such as the case of Timor-Leste). They also have broader implications for the field of CPS and the inclusion of gender perspectives within it. Mainly, the use of intersectionality as an analytical lens helped disentangle the power dynamics present regarding gender and peacebuilding in Bougainville. This lens has been crucial in showcasing other understandings of agency besides the UN's. The following discussion will be therefore divided into three sets of conclusions or implications derived from the thesis: practical, theoretical, and methodological.

6.1.   Practical Implications

This thesis has shown the implications of the lack of an intersectional approach to the policy and practice of the WPS Agenda in Bougainville. I argued that this absence has obscured how local practices, beliefs, and experiences – such as motherhood, matrilineality and religion – have shaped women's activism and agency in Bougainville. The omission of these concepts by the UN's practice – which, as I demonstrated in Chapter 3, were central to women's roles in ending the conflict – is further linked to a legitimization of the "international" character of this institution and its approach to building peace. Such a framing gives the UN a larger and more superior spatial and discursive dimension through concepts such as empowerment, equality and emancipation, compared to the local organizations with which it works (Shepherd 2017).

In the case of Bougainville, this power dynamic has created a hierarchization of structures that limit women's relations to peacebuilding to those informed by the WPS framework: empowerment, capacity-building, and participation. By not acknowledging the broader structures of power and discrimination that impact women in Bougainville, and its implications or responsibility within them, the UN reproduces this epistemological discrimination towards

60

women peacebuilding groups. The process ultimately reduces the space for women's action to that of cooperating with the UN through projects and policies that are framed by the UN's liberal approach to peace and peacebuilding. Including intersectional perspectives in WPS policy and practice would enable the UN to gain a closer awareness of the local and global structures of power and address them accordingly. It would also enable the UN to understand better how topics such as religion or gendered daily practices influence the ideology and condition of the people they work with, thus overcoming some of the limitations faced during the implementation of the projects, as shown in the case of Planim Save in Chapter 5.

6.2.   Theoretical Implications

Theoretically, this thesis has shown some of the benefits of incorporating intersectional analyses in peace research and has built on new literature on this topic developed by Smith and Stavreska (2020, 2022) and Kappler and Lemay-Hébert (2019). In connection with this research, the thesis has shown how exposing broader structures of power or systems of oppression can be useful for disentangling local-international power dynamics, thus avoiding dichotomizing these terms without an awareness of the power dynamics contained therein. Most importantly, the thesis has demonstrated how intersectional analyses also allow us to see how the intersection of specific experiences – in this case, motherhood, religion and matrilineality – shape local forms of agency, and how this understanding can be used to enhance local agency and thereby challenge the liberal notions of this concept that are embedded in UN discourse. In this case, understanding intersectionality not only as a concept that addresses structures of race, class, and gender but, as Bilge and Collins (2020) propose, by acknowledging that there are "many axes that work together and influence each other", the experiences of agency and peacebuilding can be better understood. To this end, the study of motherhood, matrilineality and religion has helped recognize how understandings of agency are shaped by cultural practices and beliefs, as postcolonial scholars such as Mahmood (2016) point out. The approach to agency reflected in this thesis directly brings into question the logics of empowering, capacity-building and equality behind the UN's discourse and how they impact Pacific Island contexts specifically, as seen in Chapter 5.

6.3.   Methodological Implications

Further, the thesis has demonstrated how intersectionality as an analytical lens can inform Discourse Theoretical Analysis by helping to disentangle how power structures and systems of

oppression are embedded in discourses. It was not possible to employ a methodological approach centered in oral history or ethnography – mainly due to distance and resources, but also ethically in terms of the impact to and vulnerability of the persons this would involve. However, by employing intersectionality as an analytical lens, the thesis revealed how structures in discourses – through policies and projects – impact people's lives. In addition, in light of the critiques that narratives also face in CPS (Graef, da Silva, and Lemay-Hebert 2020), this perspective allowed me to give a degree of centrality to women's experiences of the conflict without essentializing them. It was a major concern to not reproduce the same binaries I was trying to overcome and to carefully decide how to refer to and understand women not as mere case studies, but as actors whose experiences and histories count and influence the outcome of the thesis. Here, I wish to acknowledge that the informal conversation with Helen Hakena was very useful to understand better how these concepts shaped activism and how they were related to women's roles during the conflict.

Regarding future research, there are many significant issues like international influences, militarization and regional politics or Covid-19 and environmental threats, which Hakena emphasized in our conversation, that could be investigated in relation to Bougainville. Research could involve the gendered aspects of these topics and how they can impact peacebuilding into the future. As an example, current research focuses on the environment-gender-conflict nexus and how this will be key to the political scenario we are entering, which is characterized by the growing impact of climate change in conflicts and vulnerable communities (Smith, Olosky, and Fernández 2021; Yoshida, Bond, and Kezie-Nwoha 2020). In this case, small island states and the indigenous women living in them are experiencing a very significant threat and, as shown in this thesis, their activism and how international policies and practices impact them should not be overlooked. These threats could be further studied in the case of Bougainville and other Pacific contexts such as Timor-Leste using an intersectional lens, to reveal the specific impacts and how to respond to them.

To conclude, this thesis has shown how liberal discourses of gender and peace can be found in the UN's projects and policies that are implemented locally. Even if cooperating with local organizations and addressing grassroots activists, reproducing the liberal peace paradigm and the ideal of agency fixed within it obscures broader power dynamics and creates specific limitations which are mostly faced by the recipients of the projects and policies. As suggested earlier in this conclusion, this thesis has emphasized the importance of rethinking how this

paradigm – and the concepts attached to it – can ultimately impact the actors it is supposed to assist. Such a reorientation would improve the outcomes and implementation of international projects which, as Helen emphasized, have been central to the development of peacebuilding since the end of the conflict. Particularly, this thesis has shown how the use of an intersectional lens can help informing this reevaluation. This concept has been widely used and developed – as a theory, method and form critical praxis (Collins 2015) – by Gender Studies scholars, and it contains a revolutionary potential that has been eroded by Western academia in recent times (Bilge 2013; Salem 2018). At the same time, intersectionality is yet to be extensively incorporated into peacebuilding project, peace studies, and peace research (Stefanie Kappler and Lemay-Hébert 2019). I argue that the UN, as the main international institution concerned with the promotion of peacebuilding, could play a critical role in incorporating intersectionality in its policies and projects. Consequently, through a more nuanced understanding of the power differentials existing in post-conflict scenarios and emphasizing theories and practices informed by this concept that come from the Global South, this institution could participate in enhancing the radical potential of intersectionality and inform a new paradigm of peacebuilding that is more gender attentive.

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