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### Critically Examining UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security

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# i n t r o d u c t i o n

## *Critically Examining UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security*

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### Abstract

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Here, we introduce the articles that comprise this special issue of *IFJP*, entitled, 'Critically Examining UNSCR 1325'. The aim of this special issue is to examine the implementation of UNSCR 1325 and its implications for women's activism and for peace and security. Given that the articles in this volume approach UNSCR 1325 from various perspectives and in different contexts, our aim in this introduction is to point out a number of conceptual, policy and practical issues that are crucial in the debates around UNSCR 1325 specifically, and women, peace and security more broadly. We do this in four parts: first, problematizing the resolution in relation to changes in global governance; second, examining the Resolution's assumptions about (gendered) agency and structure; third, examining the Resolution's assumptions about the links between conflict and gender; and, fourth, comparing different contexts in which 1325 is implemented. To some degree, differences between contributors may be accounted for by different understandings of feminism(s) as a political project. Different feminisms may underpin different visions of peace and, consequently, different projects of peacebuilding. Ultimately, this volume, while answering the questions that we originally posed, throws up new questions about transnational feminist praxis.

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### Keywords

UNSCR 1325, gender, security, women, war, peace, participation, violence

### INTRODUCTION

On 31 October 2000, the United Nations Security Council unanimously passed Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (or, '1325' for short), calling for women's increased participation in conflict prevention and resolution initiatives, as well as their protection during conflict. The UN has heralded

1325 as a landmark document that promises to protect women's rights and guarantee their equal participation in peace processes (for example, United Nation Secretary General. (UNSG) 2008). The Resolution's adoption is considered by many to be an historic milestone since it marked the first time that the UN Security Council dealt specifically with gender issues and women's experiences in 'conflict' and 'post-conflict' situations and their contribution to conflict resolution and prevention (Cohn 2008). Previous UN resolutions had treated women as victims of war, in need of protection. However, 1325 also recognized women as agents in building peace and guaranteeing security.

Many feminist scholars and activists have lauded 1325 as highly significant for women's anti-war and peace activism.<sup>1</sup> The Resolution appears to build on a significant body of feminist scholarship highlighting men's and women's differential experiences of war, conflict and post-conflict,<sup>2</sup> redefining sexual violence as a weapon of war, rather than an 'unfortunate byproduct' (Chinkin 1994; Seifert 1994; and others), and recognizing the significant role played by women at the grassroots level in rebuilding the lives of their communities after conflict (Sorensen 1998). UNSC Resolution 1325 also seems to draw on feminist literature documenting the historic role of women's/feminist groups around the world in mobilizing against war, violence and militarism (Cockburn 1998, 2007; Waller and Rycenga 2001; among others).

The Resolution constructs a link between social (gender) change and political (conflict) transformation in mainstream international policy and has paved the way for new programs and measures at the international, governmental and non-governmental level. At the time of writing, the Resolution has been translated into more than 100 languages and 25 National Action Plans have been drafted to assist implementation at the country level.<sup>3</sup>

Yet, the ways in which this link between social and political dynamics is conceptualized, and whether and how this is applicable to widely diverging conflict scenarios needs to be interrogated. Several authors have urged a more critical engagement with UNSCR 1325, both in terms of its conceptual foundations as well as policy-related practical impacts.<sup>4</sup>

The contributions to this volume (by academics, practitioners and activists) critically examine UNSCR 1325 in terms of its implementation and relevance to women's activism in different parts of the world as well as its conceptualizations of approaches to gender, peacebuilding and conflict resolution.<sup>5</sup> They provide both theoretical/analytical critiques of the resolution, as well as examining the policy and implementation levels. More specifically, this volume addresses the following questions:

- To what degree is Resolution 1325 actually being translated into programs and measures on the ground and with what outcome for women's lives and for peace and security?
- What are the implications of the Resolution's focus on armed conflict, as opposed to other forms of structural violence, for peace and security?

- How do women activists in conflict areas use UNSCR 1325? How do they reconcile, if at all, the universality of the resolution with the particularity of different conflict situations?
- Is the privileging of a universal gender identity in understanding women's experiences and responses to conflict, above other social categories – such as, nationality, class, ethnicity or religion, among others – a useful tool or an obstacle to women's activism?
- What does the formulation, adoption and/or implementation of 1325 tell us about the nature of post-Cold War global governance?

Given that the articles in this volume approach UNSCR 1325 from various perspectives and in different contexts, our aim in this introduction is not to present a coherent theoretical framework. Rather we would like to point out a number of conceptual, policy and practical issues that are crucial in the debates around UNSCR 1325 specifically, and women, peace and security more broadly. We attempt to summarize some of the answers to the above research questions as presented by our contributors in four parts: first, problematizing the resolution in relation to changes in global governance; second, examining the Resolution's assumptions about (gendered) agency and structure; third, examining the Resolution's assumptions about the links between conflict and gender; and, fourth, comparing different contexts in which 1325 is implemented.

## THE PATH TO UNSCR 1325 AND CHANGES IN GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

The origins of 1325 lie in the UN world conferences on women and long-term lobbying by women's and civil society organizations concerned with gender, development and conflict. The issue of women, conflict and peace received intense debate at the Third World Conference on Women in Nairobi in 1985 (Cockburn 2007: 139). It was, however, only once Boutros Ghali's Agenda for Peace in 1992 had introduced a bottom-up approach of *peacebuilding* to mainstream conflict resolution (to complement the dominant state-centric, top-down approach of *peacemaking*) that women achieved a major breakthrough with the Beijing Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995. The Platform emphasized the importance of a gender perspective and women's contributions for sustainable peacebuilding and identified '[t]he effects of armed or other kinds of conflict on women, including those living under foreign occupation' (United Nations [UN] 1995) as one of its 12 major areas of concern and urging governments, international organizations and civil society to take strategic actions.

A review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action at the 23rd special session of the General Assembly on 'Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century' (Beijing +5) found that the critical area of concern 'Women and Armed Conflict' had not been sufficiently addressed, let alone implemented. As a result, the NGO Working

Group on Women and Armed Conflict (NGOWG) was founded to lobby the UN for the passage of a UN security council resolution that would help ensure that the issue of women, peace and security would be properly addressed. In October 2000, Namibia, which had earlier that same year passed the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations, took up the presidency of the UN Security Council. It responded to the NGO Working Group's lobbying by agreeing to sponsor a session on Women, Peace and Security. In preparation for this session, an Arria Formula meeting was held on 23 October 2000 giving civil society organizations and representatives the opportunity to present their experiences and raise their concerns to Security Council members. A week later, on 31 October 2000, UNSCR 1325 was passed unanimously.<sup>6</sup>

The increasing concern among activists for the impacts of conflict on women and women's participation in peacebuilding and conflict resolution was mirrored in the theoretical shift in international relations (IR) theory away from the (neo-)realist state-centered to a more holistic, agent-centered conceptualization of security, proposed particularly in the field of critical security studies (see e.g. Booth 2005) and feminist IR (e.g. Peterson 1992; Tickner 1992). The need to take into consideration the *human* dimension of security, and for rethinking security from a feminist perspective, was famously called for by Ann Tickner already in the early 1990s:

Not until the hierarchical social relations, including gender relations, that have been hidden by realism's frequently depersonalised discourse are brought to light can we begin to construct a language of national security that speaks out of the multiple experiences of both women and men. (Tickner 1992: 66)

UNSCR Resolution 1325 opens with 10 pre-ambular paragraphs referring to broad normative standards embraced by the international community through legal principles, human rights and humanitarian law, as well as previous UN resolutions, declarations and documents, such as the Beijing Platform for Action, the United Nations Charter, the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action. Its 18 operational paragraphs cover 3 main themes. First, the resolution recognizes women's contribution to peacebuilding and conflict resolution and calls for their increased *participation* at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international conflict prevention and resolution initiatives. Second, it highlights the gendered aspects of war and armed conflict demanding the *protection* of women's rights, including shielding women and girls from gender-based violence and other violations of international law. Finally, the resolution calls upon local actors, member states, but also the UN system itself, to adopt a *gender perspective* in peace operations, negotiations and agreements.

In terms of its recognition of women's role in peacebuilding and conflict resolution and women's differentiated experiences of war, 1325 appears to build on feminist scholarship and activism. However, Carol Harrington's article in this volume questions celebratory accounts that view feminist/women's

activist lobbying inside and outside the UN as the main initiators of this shift in conceptualizations of peace and security for

fail[ing] to analyze how the collapse of the Soviet Union transformed discourse on both 'women' and 'human rights' as problems for international government. In the post-Cold War order the US poses as leader of the democratic world and defender of women and children against brutal men who instigate 'new wars' characterised by mass rape.

Yet, the increase in peacekeeping in response to these 'new wars' 'creates environments in which sexual violence, abuse and exploitation flourish'. Resolution 1325, Harrington argues, 'speaks to these tensions within contemporary peacekeeping operations, proposing the technical solution of gender mainstreaming' (Harrington this volume). What her article suggests is that 1325 constitutes a tool for dealing with the new realities of post-Cold War international security rather than transforming them. This raises two questions about the link between 1325 and feminism: (a) does feminist activism and research really challenge the international security architecture? Or (b) does 1325 really build on feminist activism and research?

Sheri Gibbings's article, based on ethnographic research among gender advocates at the UN, including the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), demonstrates how 1325 and the discourses in support of it have omitted some significant feminist aims. She finds that '[p]rior to the passage of UNSCR 1325, WILPF-UN often portrayed women as agents of peace, but also provided an explicit critique of militarism and masculinity'. Discursive speech norms at the UN, however, later curtailed feminist critiques of militarization and militarized masculinities in conflict, instead requiring a unique focus on the positive, 'utopian' representation of women as 'bridge-builders' and 'peacemakers' (Gibbings this volume). One of the least studied aspects of the resolution (including within this volume) is the tracing of what sort of feminism is represented in 1325 and, consequently, with what implications. One could argue that, rather than transforming international security agendas, 1325 marginalizes anti-militarist feminism in advocating for international peace and security. The innovative conceptualizations of human security and the inter-relationship between gender and war dynamics advanced in critical and feminist IR scholarship thus have yet to be fully embraced by the mainstream international agenda on women, peace and security (see also Väyrynen 2004).

## CRITICALLY EXAMINING UNSCR 1325: GENDER, STRUCTURE AND AGENCY

Several articles in this volume point to the tensions in the Resolution between highlighting the significance of women's agency in peace and security and failing to address structural factors that may constrain women's agency.

Laura Shepherd's contribution argues that a positive shift has taken place in the Council's language with regard to the 'women, peace and security' agenda: while 1325 portrays women mainly as victims, the later Resolutions add a discursive representation of women as actors, agents or even 'superheroines'. Although these developments may give rise to optimism, Shepherd also points out that structural causes (such as poverty) that inhibit women acting as agents with truly transformative potential are still not included in the mainstream international organizations' analytical framework. She critiques the way in which discourses around the 'women, peace and security' agenda equate women's agency with women's capacity to act, warning that 'this agency is both a rupture in the familiar representation of women-as-victim and an additional burden for (some) women to bear' (Shepherd this volume). Nevertheless, she concludes that the move away from victimization to a more plural (yet fragmented) representation of female subjectivity in conflict offers possibilities for feminist critical engagement and perhaps even transformation. Indeed, Margaret Owen of Widows for Peace for Democracy argues persuasively that 1325 and its subsequent resolutions have the potential to support a particularly vulnerable subset of women in post/conflict, that of widows. However, feminist and other activists must lobby to ensure that widowhood issues are included within the remit of the 'women, peace and security' agenda (Owen this volume).

This optimistic analysis is not necessarily shared by other contributors to this volume. In the case of Palestinian women's organizing (Farr this volume), the overall structure of the so-called peace process marginalizes women and civil society actors in general. This is despite a long history of Palestinian women's activism in resistance to Israeli occupation. As Vanessa Farr argues, 'Put starkly, no matter what instruments they use to help them position their peacebuilding arguments, Palestinian women are trying to organise a response to a process that clearly does not prioritize or value women's voices for peace' (Farr this volume).

Although the earlier essentialist representations of women as victims or peacebuilders might have been fragmented by later resolutions on 'women, peace and security', nevertheless, women continue to be represented in UNSCR 1325 and related mainstream policy documents solely in gendered terms. An articulation of the intersections between gender and other social categories and structures along which oppression, marginalization and violence occur (including nationality, class, ethnicity, religion, sexuality and age) is completely absent and even actively prevented in such representations. This has particular consequences for how women's agency is perceived, as Sheri Gibbings illustrates in her contribution to this volume. She describes a visit of two Iraqi women activists to the UN in 2003, where they addressed an informal group of gender advisers, NGOs and government representatives. Rather than speaking about 'gender concerns', the women condemned the US- and UK-led invasion of Iraq and the lack of support from the UN. Despite 1325 calling for more women's participation in peacebuilding and conflict resolution initiatives, the 1325 advocates attending this meeting were embarrassed

by the 'angry comments' made by the Iraqi women. The event 'illustrated that powerful norms exist around the Women, Peace and Security agenda, and that certain performances could be anticipated and expected, while others were discouraged' (Gibbins, this volume). Gibbins's conclusion thus is less optimistic than that of Shepherd: as long as UN language continues to work with 'utopian visions' (of women as peacemakers), transformative agency might remain impossible. This suggests that the lack of recognition of structures of global capitalism, imperialism and (neo-) colonialism (structures within which the permanent UN Security Council members are deeply implicated) by advocates of 1325 may contain women's agency with regards to ending war and conflict.

#### CRITICALLY EXAMINING UNSCR 1325: DECONSTRUCTING THE LINKS BETWEEN GENDER AND CONFLICT

Despite the fact that 1325 does not condemn war and conflict (Cohn 2008), nonetheless, it does construct a link between gender violence and international security (Shepherd 2008). Several contributions to this volume examine this purported link and its implications for gender security and gender justice. Laura McLeod's contribution emphasizes the need to investigate the ways in which different actors understand the interlinkages between (post-)conflict and gender dynamics. Analysing the Serbian context (a case study generally considered a 'post-conflict' scenario) she argues that "'post-conflict" is a discourse with contested temporal and spatial aspects [and, just as "conflict",] a state of existence crafted in particular highly politicized ways, where certain ways are thrown into focus and others downplayed' (see also Vaughan-Williams 2006; Zalewski 2006; McLeod this volume). She examines the 'post-conflict' and/or 'gender security' discourses offered by three different actors in Serbia: the UN, the government and Women in Black. She finds that the conceptualizations of the interlinkages between gender and (post-)conflict among these three actors differ and have different political and policy implications: from controlling small arms to critiquing militarism. Ultimately, McLeod argues that this diversity of conceptualisations are productive 'in opening up spaces and choices for a variety of perceptions about what the achievement of gender security means' (McLeod this volume).

Sahla Aroussi's analysis of gender justice and accountability for wartime sexual violence problematizes the ways in which gender violence is conceptualized and instrumentalized in the UN's 'women, peace and security' agenda. Finding that 'a very narrow concept of justice focused on criminal prosecution is employed', which not only creates hierarchies of victims, but also glosses over the links between (structural) inequality and vulnerability/insecurity, she calls for 'broaden[ing] the way we think about accountability and drawing on non-legal remedies that deliver real justice for victims'. Moreover, she cautions us 'to be careful that dispensing justice for women victims does not become a political cover up for interventionist policies that have nothing to do with women's

well being' (Aroussi this volume). A mission to eradicate gender-based violence and 'empower' women may end up being a justification for foreign (military) intervention, thereby maintaining global hierarchies (see also Harrington, this volume). We must therefore continue to ask how gender-discriminatory practices (and more importantly their linkages with structural factors) in war-torn countries can be addressed without falling into the traps of 'colonial feminism' (Ahmed 1992; Orford 2002; Al-Ali and Pratt 2009).

A critical feminist approach thus should not only demand that gender (rather than women) becomes an integral part of conflict analysis and conflict resolution, but also remain wary as to *how* 'gender' is used and with what political implications. We might ask, for example, if – as has been the case in recent developments in IR literature – the focus of study becomes 'identity' (such as, 'ethnopolitics'), what role does a gender analysis play? Studies arguing that 'states characterized by gender inequality are more likely to experience intrastate conflict' (Caprioli 2005: 161) or finding that 'domestic gender equality has a pacifying effect on state behavior on the international level' (Caprioli 2000: 51) put gender at the center of their analyses while sidelining global structural causes of war and/or the ways in which gender-discriminatory norms and practices may be a symptom, rather than a cause, of war and violence. As Yuval-Davis and Anthias (1989) have shown, gender identity is often essentialized and instrumentalized to demarcate ethnic (or other) boundaries and construct conflict dynamics. There is a risk that conflict and peacebuilding analysis and practice fall victim to neo-colonial, civilizationary stances claiming the need to liberate women in other parts of the world from – what are often dubbed 'cultural' or 'traditional' – gender-discriminatory norms and practices. With this argument we do not want to downplay the crucial role that identity-related factors play in conflict, but rather call for the need to look carefully at the ways in which gender identities are constructed and politicized, and which role these play in comparison with (and in intersection with) more structural, material causes of war. This, of course, depends on context.

#### CRITICALLY EXAMINING UNSCR 1325 IN DIFFERENT CONTEXTS

Since its passing, the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security and international, governmental and local organization have striven to develop strategies to implement 1325 (see, for example, Anderlini 2007).<sup>7</sup> Several empirical studies have been prepared by the UN and independent experts (e.g. Rehn and Sirleaf 2002; UN 2002); the UN has drafted a System-wide Action Plan (see UNSG 2008); a Peace Commission has been established in 2005 raising hopes it could support 1325 (see NGOWG/UNIFEM 2005; Ekiyor 2006); and subsequent resolutions dealing with gender and conflict have been drafted (UNSCR 1820 [2008], 1888 [2009], 1889 [2009]).<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, evaluations have largely criticised slow advances in the implementation of 1325 at country and UN levels.<sup>9</sup>

Contributions in this issue consider the implementation and usage of UNSCR 1325 as well as the outcomes that such political translations have for women's lives and for peace and security in different contexts. They look at different policy levels, ranging from grassroots, to non-governmental, governmental and supra-national actors, as well as different geographical areas, covering Serbia, Palestine, Iraq, the UK and cross-country comparative cases.

McLeod's study on Serbia, Farr's study on Palestine and the interview with Sundus Abbass about Iraq, draw attention to the different contexts in which local women activists use UNSCR 1325, with different implications. McLeod analyses how Women in Black in Serbia use UNSCR 1325 to make visible and try to implement their radical feminist (re-)conceptualization of security, away from militarism toward a more human-focused conceptualization of security involving reconciliation and deep structural changes. Such interpretations are not mirrored in the governmental Serbian National Action Plan nor in the agenda of the UNDP's South-Eastern European Arms Clearinghouse. Nevertheless, McLeod argues that the tensions between these different conceptualizations of gender security can pave the way for discussion and deliberation over the meaning of gender security. However, different contexts may be more or less amenable to such deliberations.

In Palestine, as Farr shows, although some women's organizations find 1325 useful in their work on women's security and empowerment and to get a hearing in international circles, the asymmetry between Israel and the Palestinians is so pronounced that 1325 has not yielded any tangible results. Moreover, many ordinary Palestinians are understandably distrustful of the UN and, consequently of 1325, as a path to justice (see also Richter-Devroe 2009, 2011; Farr this volume). Iraqi women's rights activist Sundus Abbass believes that 1325 does provide a framework for women's peace and security activism, and has helped women in framing their demands (successfully) for a 25 per cent quota in parliament. Yet, she argues that the UN has failed to systematically implement the Resolution in the context of its mission in Iraq, particularly with regards to the protection of women refugees and women who are kidnapped and trafficked, which has become a huge problem in the context of violent conflict, weakened state institutions and the limited rule of law following the fall of the Ba'th regime (Abbass this volume).

On the other hand, 1325 may actually become an obstacle to achieving gender justice and security in some contexts. Aroussi's study compares 112 peace agreements signed between the adoption of UNSCR 1325 and the end of 2008, finding that only five of these include provisions linked to accountability for gender-based violence. In other words, even the UN's narrow conceptualization of (gender) justice for victims of sexual violence (mainly through sanctions and prosecutions) has not been included in peace agreements. However, even those five agreements that do include

significant gender sensitive provisions on transitional justice [...] have been characterised by very high levels of international involvement and pressure

and the presence of the ICC in the country. This international involvement, while it may have facilitated the inclusion of model provisions on justice for gender based violence, both in the cases of Uganda and Sudan has created significant threats to the peace process and resulted in peace agreements that carry very little hope of implementation.

(Aroussi this volume)

In these contexts, it is not only necessary to question the utility of 1325 as a framework for gender justice for victims of sexual violence, but also to understand the ways in which foreign intervention in the name of 'gender justice' may actually undermine peace and reconciliation.

Gibbings' ethnographic study at the UN sheds light upon the discrepancies between international and local agendas concerning women, peace and security. Her article not only tells the story of the two Iraqi activists labeled 'angry' by the UN gender advocates, but also the contrasting story of Basma Fakri's address to the UN Arria Formula meeting in 2005, which followed the speech norms of the UN. Gibbings demonstrates how 1325 risks constraining some women's agency, but also how the UN's agenda on 'women, peace and security' and its associated speech norms risks exacerbating divisions among local women's movements and between women's movements in different contexts. Resolution 1325, as Gibbings (this volume) argues,

is supplemented by a scalar logic where representatives of women who come to speak to the Security Council are situated as local and connected to grassroots organizations, while also being allied to the transcendental goals of the UN, which is imagined as 'above'.

When 1325 calls for empowering women and supporting so-called indigenous women's peace strategies, we thus need to ask critically *which* women and *which* indigenous strategies? By selecting certain local actors and portraying their forms of agency as legitimate and as 'not tied to local politics, ethnic or class divisions' (Gibbings this volume), 1325 and the 'women, peace and security' agenda render other actors and their forms of agency as deviant. Yet, at the local level, the NGO-ized women's groups that attempt to formulate their demands using 1325 often fail to mobilize women at the grassroots. The liberal peacebuilding agenda that is privileged by the UN and gender advocates working at/through the UN represents a limited strategy for those women's movements engaged in a more radical agenda of social and political transformation. Women's 'resistance' to global capitalism and forms of colonialism (rather than 'peacebuilding' *per se*), for example, is not supported by the 1325 agenda, although women might in fact find their involvement in such initiatives 'empowering', perhaps even more so than their participation in the 1325 gendered peace agenda (see also Richter-Devroe 2009, 2011).

Interventions by the international community to 'empower' and 'protect' women (through providing technocratic, legalistic gender mainstreaming

and humanitarian relief) are legitimized by 1325 and may replace the mobilization of genuine political will and commitment, treating symptoms rather than structural root causes of war. The case studies in this volume call into question the purported universality of UNSCR 1325, but also the attempts to make hegemonic the liberal 'women, peace and security' agenda.

## CONCLUSION – BEYOND UNSCR 1325: TOWARD FEMINIST PEACEBUILDING?

Returning to the questions regarding the implementation of UNSCR 1325 and its implications for women's activism and for peace and security that we originally posed for this volume, we find that the contributors provide different, often contradictory, answers. Resolution 1325 is being translated into programs and measures on the ground in some places but with different consequences for women in Serbia (McLeod) versus women in Sudan and Uganda (Aroussi). In Palestine (Farr), Iraq (Abbas) and Nepal (Owen) women activists are using 1325 to frame the demands specific to the contexts in which they work, yet only in Nepal have activists yielded tangible results. The gender focus of 1325 and the subsequent resolutions provide a strategic tool for feminist engagement for some contributors (McLeod, Shepherd), while other contributors illustrate how the 'women, peace and security' agenda delegitimizes some women's agency (Farr, Gibbings). Several contributors suggest that the Resolution's focus on armed conflict, as opposed to other forms of structural violence, is problematic in that it marginalizes discussion of those structural factors that are an obstacle to women's agency (Shepherd) and may even exclude consideration of violence against women that is not strictly a 'weapon of war', such as random rapes, trafficking and kidnap (Abass, Aroussi). Nevertheless, other contributors to this volume do not regard the focus on armed conflict *per se* as the problem but rather the essentialized representation of women within the Resolution (Gibbings), the selective implementation of the Resolution (Farr, Owen) and the way in which the Resolution may be instrumentalized to bolster US global hegemony (Harrington). Contributors are divided over whether 1325 and the 'women, peace and security' agenda represents a shift toward a more inclusive, gender-sensitive global governance, whether it undermines women's grassroots struggles for justice and security or whether it is mere rhetoric that changes little in practice.

To some degree, differences between contributors may be accounted for by different epistemological and ontological approaches. Some privilege women's agency while others privilege structures in evaluating the significance of 1325. To a certain extent, these different approaches are, themselves, embedded within different understandings of feminism(s) as a political project. The power of 1325 and its associated discourse is, arguably, that it appropriates some key concepts in feminist theorizings (namely, the gendered dimensions of war and peace). However, the focus on gender as an analytical category (typical of

liberal, radical and cultural feminisms) marginalizes discussion of 'the intersectionality of structural inequalities at the national, regional and transnational levels' (Al-Ali and Pratt 2009: 18) that are integral to other strands of feminist thinking – namely, post-colonial and Marxist feminisms. Different feminisms may underpin different visions of peace and, consequently, different projects of peacebuilding. Ultimately, this volume, while answering the questions that we originally posed, throws up new questions about feminist praxis:

- How can we mobilize, support and demand women's active involvement in conflict resolution and peacemaking without romanticizing, homogenizing and/or essentializing their diverse experiences and forms of activism, or providing a justification for foreign (military) intervention?
- How can we understand and support non-liberal forms of women's political agency?
- How can the political force of the international feminist peace/anti-war/justice movement be maintained if difference is accounted for?

These questions are not necessarily new for transnational/international feminists and women activists. However, Resolution 1325 and the 'women, peace and security' agenda make it essential that we revisit these questions. The final evaluation of 1325 may depend on how we answer them.

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## Notes

- 1 While pointing out possible potentials of UNSCR 1325 authors, of course, also highlight contradictions and/or shortcomings inherent in the resolution. See, for example Hill (2002), Hill et al. (2003), Cohn (2004, 2008), Cohn et al. (2004), Whitworth (2004), Cockburn (2007), Anderlini (2007).
- 2 See Enloe (1993, 2001), Cockburn (1998), Lorentzen and Turpin (1998), Sorensen (1998), Jacobson (1999), Jacobs et al. (2000), Meintjes et al. (2001); among others.
- 3 These 25 countries are Austria, Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Canada, Chile, Cote d'Ivoire, Denmark, DRC, Holland, Estonia, Finland, France, Iceland, Liberia, Nepal, Norway, Philippines, Portugal, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Uganda and the United Kingdom. See <http://www.peacewomen.org> for updates.

- 4 For such critical enquiries see, among others, Orford (2002), Otto (2009, 2010), Chinkin and Charlesworth (2006), Shepherd (2008) and Cohn (2008).
- 5 This edited volume emerged from a series of panels organized at the international joint meeting of the Brazilian Association of International Relations and the International Studies Association, July 2009, in Rio de Janeiro. We would like to thank all the participants in those panels for the stimulating discussions that led to this special issue.
- 6 See Anderlini (2007), Whitworth (2004), Hill et al. (2003) and Cockburn (2007: 132–43) for a more detailed account on the build-up to the passing of UNSCR 1325.
- 7 See <http://www.peacewomen.org> for an up-to-date account of activities and strategies developed to support and enforce the implementation of 1325 in different country contexts.
- 8 For full details, see UNSC (2008, 2009a, 2009b).
- 9 For such critical evaluation see, for example, NGOWG (2004, 2005) as well as Abbas, Aroussi, Farr and Owen in this volume.

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