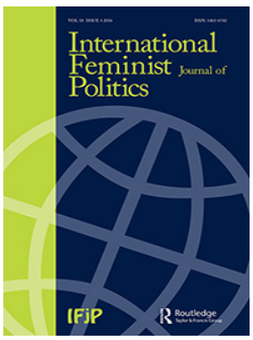

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The politics of gender in the UN Security Council resolutions on women, peace and security

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ABSTRACT

Women's groups have worked diligently to place gender and women's vulnerability on the transnational security agenda. This article departs from the idea that negotiating and codifying gender and women's vulnerability in terms of security represent a challenge to mainstream security contexts. By contrasting the UN Security Council resolutions on women, peace and security with feminist theory, this article aims to analyze what is considered to be threatened when women's vulnerability is negotiated. The article identifies two approaches to the gender/security nexus: *gendering security*, which involves introducing ideas regarding gender-sensitive policies and equal representation, and *securitizing gender*, which proceeds by locating rape and sexual violence in the context of war regulations. We demonstrate that, although these measures are encouraged with reference to women's vulnerability, they serve to legitimize war and the male soldier and both approaches depoliticize gender relations.

KEYWORDS Gender; security; war; peace; UN Security Council resolution 1325

Introduction

Women's groups have worked for decades to place gender and women's vulnerability on the transnational security agenda: from the Fourth World Congress on Women in Beijing in 1995 and the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security (WPS), which was unanimously adopted in 2000, to the adoption of resolution 2122 in 2013. Along with the discourse on gender equality and changing security relations around the world, these organized demands have engendered the introduction of new issues to the UN security agenda, such as the conditions of women in war, rape as an integral part of warfare and women's representation and participation in repatriation and peacebuilding missions. Recognizing and codifying some feminist insights, feminist scholars have deemed the resolutions to be exceptional politics and an important tool in improving women's conditions (Bergoffen 2008; Sylvester 2009). However, the resolutions have also been criticized as essentialist and for neglecting distributive needs (Shepherd 2008).

Arguably, the introduction of ideas of women's vulnerability and gender equality has affected the discourse on security. Checklists, manuals, information on best practices

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and other tools have been developed to implement the resolutions on transnational and national levels. In addition, several countries and the UN have specifically targeted women in their recruiting efforts.[1] These changes affect the idea of security. However, they occur in a context of previously established ideas of what security is and who women are.

Intrigued by the differing views among feminist scholars, we believe that introducing women's vulnerability into the security agenda, as in the WPS resolutions,[2] presents challenges to mainstream security contexts and to the way in which security is conceptualized. By contrasting the WPS resolutions with elements of feminist security theory, this article aims to analyze how the problems of including women's vulnerability are negotiated in a "high politics" context – in this case, the UN Security Council. How is gender represented in the resolutions? What features of mainstream security are reproduced? Departing from an analysis of how the two main strategies the resolutions proscribe to address women's vulnerabilities – representation/participation and the criminalization of rape – are motivated, we argue that although the resolutions explicitly focus on security in terms of *women and peace*, what is actually at stake is the importance of *men and war*.

We begin with a discussion of the WPS resolutions and previous research. Then, we elaborate on some features of feminist security theories.[3] The empirically-based sections first address the formulation of the problem in terms of women's vulnerability and then discuss the following two main responses to the problem: (1) the participation and representation of women and (2) the criminalization of rape and sexual violence.

The resolutions on women, peace and security

Our investigation of the political implications of gender and security is based on the seven UN Security Council resolutions on Women, Peace and Security, adopted between 2000 and 2013, primarily resolution 1325 (UNSC 2000), the first and most studied WPS resolution. Resolution 1325 begins by calling for the prosecution of crimes against women in armed conflict and peace processes, the increased protection of women and girls during war, the appointment of more women to UN peacekeeping operations and field missions and the increased participation of women in decision-making processes at all levels. This resolution can be situated in a discursive environment of (international) security and (gender) violence (Shepherd 2008, 14).

Resolution 1820 from June 2008 has had a particular influence on reaffirming resolution 1325 in its condemnation of all forms of sexual violence in armed conflict. The resolution recognizes sexual violence as a tactic of war and a security issue and argues that the different manifestations of sexual violence "can be defined as a war crime" (UNSC 2008, §4). Resolutions 1325 and 1820 were followed by five additional WPS resolutions, all intended to clarify and strengthen WPS policies: 1888 (2009) on the appointment of a Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General, 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106 (2013) and 2122 (2013). These seven resolutions are usually regarded as a collective body of commitments to women, peace and security (Barnes 2011).

The body of WPS resolutions produces a specific understanding of women and security that underpins the bulk of actions taken on transnational and national levels with direct reference to the WPS resolutions. To date, more than forty countries have adopted national action plans on WPS. The resolutions have also led to transnational institutional arrangements, such as the appointment of a Special Representative of

the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence and the Inter-Agency Taskforce on Women, Peace and Security to facilitate the implementation of the resolutions. As the construction of gender and security in the WPS resolutions has come to inform institutional arrangements, which may lead to "long-term policy consequences" (Baumgartner and Jones 1993, 88), it is even more important to study and understand the ideological underpinnings of the resolutions.

As human security developed into a UN priority, including the designation of the Security Council, gender security became relevant (Kronsell 2011, 6, 139; see also Harrington 2011; Pratt and Richter-Devroe 2011). A starting point for the linking of gender to war and peace can be traced to the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Projects, reports and NGO activities followed, but resistance toward gender issues within the UN was still considerable. In March 2000, the ambassador of Bangladesh, Anwarul Chowdury, then president of the UN Security Council, made a statement on International Women's Day pointing to the importance of women's participation in peace processes. The Working Group on Women, Peace and Security and other advocacy groups played a crucial role in passing the UN Security Council resolution 1325. The governments of five countries – Bangladesh, Canada, Jamaica, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom – are also regarded as critical to its final adoption (Barnes 2011).

The WPS resolutions are the outcome of political negotiations in a setting characterized by power relations (Baumgartner and Jones 1993), in which a specific understanding of gender and security has been generated. Women's groups had lobbied for years to place women's issues on the high politics agenda; however, as Cynthia Cockburn (2007, 2011) underlines, these efforts fell mostly within an antimilitaristic framework and were generated from a feminist understanding of gender relations. These ideas failed to make an impact in political negotiations.

Despite the existence of the WPS resolutions, feminist scholars maintain that gender issues are marginalized from the broader peace and security policy of the UN. Another problem noted in feminist research is that resolution 1325 does not confront the structural roots of gender inequalities, including entrenched understandings of patriarchy, masculinity and militarized power (Barnes 2011). Further, the basic causes of conflict are not addressed in the resolutions (Porter 2007). Similarly, Elisabeth Porter (2007) criticizes the concept of peacebuilding in the UN for being too narrow and maintains that peace must be linked to security and justice, and freedom from poverty, exclusion and oppression (118). Several other features are noted in earlier analyses of the WPS resolutions. One of the most discussed features is that concepts of gender equate women and femininity with peace, whereas men and male norms remain absent from the texts (Shepherd 2008).

In this article, we draw on insights from previous feminist research and criticism while viewing the WPS resolutions as representations of negotiations regarding how to fit gender into prevalent ideas of security. We also maintain that introducing gender into the security agenda in the form of women's vulnerability can constitute a challenge and perhaps a threat to previous ideas of security.

Security and women's vulnerability

Feminist security studies criticize the lack of gender awareness and the state centeredness of mainstream conceptualizations of security.[4] This critique is combined with the proposition that women's lives and perceptions of (in)security should constitute the

starting point for a reconceptualization (Sjoberg 2010). Feminist notions of security thus concern changing gender relations rather than viewing security as the protection of a specific referent, such as cherished values or state borders. The feminist proposition to redefine security by departing from women's vulnerability does not involve the introduction of a new referent but rather suggests a new way of thinking, viewing gender security as a route to societal change.[5]

In outlining the future of feminist international relations studies, Ann Tickner and Laura Sjoberg (2011, 224) argue that feminist security scholarship increasingly focuses on what they call the "interdependence, interlinking, and inseparability of human social interactions." This approach places the emphasis of security not on a specific, easily labeled referent of security but rather on the possibility of the political.[6]

This idea of security can be contrasted with ideas of military or national security, where a securitized issue is defined by being elevated from the normal political sphere into the "hyper-politicized" sphere of security (Hansen 2012). Such a move ceases normal public discussions on how the problem is understood and what solutions are preferable. When a matter is securitized, the public debate is limited to legitimizing the security narrative. Securitization then allows for a range of political options that are not available in the sphere of ordinary politics (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998; Hansen 2012). Accordingly, the political space opened by securitization relates to the freedom of elite security actors to use measures beyond the rules of democracy. In a way, securitization, which is often understood as a form of politicization, thus also constitutes depoliticization, closing the debate and the possibilities of reframing or reformulating a problem (see Jansson 2012).

Our understanding of the feminist project to claim the security concept is that it aims for the political power vested in the concept of security to move an issue to the top of the political agenda and to turn it into an indisputably important issue, while including a different idea of what political processes should be activated.[7] Rather than removing an issue from normal politics, feminists claim security as a way to enhance political mobilization. This approach becomes especially visible in Sjoberg's (2011) claim that feminist security theorizing is also sensitive to "voices that are not normally heard in global politics" (121). The question of who can "speak security" (Hansen 2000, 2012; Wibben 2011) is a search for a more inclusive political sphere, whereby the power of speaking security is problematized from an intersectional approach in which women's voices and the differences among women in terms of class and ethnicity are considered. However, if the spheres of security and politics are clearly separated, as indicated by theories on securitization (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998; Hansen 2012), then the feminist conceptualization becomes problematic. In that case, feminist theory must reformulate not only security but also the political and its relation to security.

In feminist security studies as well as in the WPS resolutions women's vulnerability is an important concept for both feminist security studies and the WPS resolutions. The feminist idea of vulnerability is an existential notion that relates to the unjust distribution of resources and voice/agency. In the feminist security tradition, women's insecurities are understood as immediate threats, such as the threat of violence from men, and as more long-term insecurities in women's lives, such as legal, political and economic injustices. However, both immediate threats and long-term insecurities are considered to result from established and unjust power relations between women and men.

In mainstream theories, vulnerability refers to a situation that may lead to instability and conflict but that lacks the acuteness of a "proper" security issue (Liotta 2005; Gaillard

2010). The depiction of an acute threat is thus constitutive of what becomes a security issue in traditional theories (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998). Conceptualizations of security that lack a problematization of gendered structures are unable to conceptualize men and patriarchy as a threat. Therefore, from such a theoretical position, feminist security studies lack the notion of a proper "threat" or "enemy."[8] In addition, feminist demands for security to include more voices and political negotiations conflict with ideas of security as a way to frame political disputes, to override normal democratic procedures and to use force.

The outline of these theoretical differences leads us to analyze the WPS resolutions as representations of an ongoing securitization process that indicates a continuous struggle over the construction of security. We are interested in how the problem is defined as exceptional and how it calls for extraordinary measures. Our primary purpose is to determine what is at stake in these discussions, and throughout the article we confront our interpretations of the WPS resolutions with feminist theory.

Women's vulnerability

As shown in many previous studies, the WPS resolutions describe women as a particularly exposed group. For example, resolution 1325 expresses the concern that "civilians, particularly women and children, account for the vast majority of those adversely affected by armed conflict". Resolution 2122 (2013) expresses "concern at women's exacerbated vulnerability in armed conflict and post-conflict situations" and details several violations of women's rights in such situations. These descriptions of vulnerability serve to justify the placement of gender on the security agenda and legitimize the introduction of specific measures.

The WPS resolutions refer to a vulnerability that arises specifically in conflict and post-conflict situations. This distinction informs the specific measures detailed in resolution 1325, which stipulates the need to "account for the special needs for women and girls" in regard to mine clearance and mine awareness programs, refugee camp design and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) processes (UNSC 2000, preamble). Given the general tone of the rest of the resolution, mine clearance and refugee camp design appear to be rather unusual features on the surface, but it has been documented that these phenomena affect women's safety. For example, in refugee camps the location of different facilities (e.g. toilets) has been shown to affect the risk of rape and sexual assault. Further, mine clearance is often accomplished according to the patterns of movement by males. However, because of a sexual division of labor, women and girls use different routes when performing their chores. Women's needs are thus defined as special because they differ from those of men. Women's bodies are regarded as problematic because they are sexed, whereas men's bodies are simply not discussed in the resolutions, even though it can be argued that conflict situations place all human beings in a specifically exposed situation.

The otherness of women constitutes the basis on which to locate the specific expressions of vulnerability in conflict situations. Women's corporeal difference is used to motivate measures beyond what is considered standard security procedure. Thus, in the WPS resolutions women's vulnerability is based on two interrelated fundamentals: women's sexed difference and the conflict situation.

The descriptions of women's vulnerability in the resolution are consistent with certain observations by feminist scholars (Reeves 2012). Women face sexual violence in war,

women representatives are lacking in international decision making and peace negotiations, and DDR processes are not developed to consider women's needs. However, in the feminist tradition, women's vulnerability is considered to result from gender power relations being acted out. Further, women's vulnerability does not arise from war, even if conflicts emphasize the workings of power relations. Women's vulnerability is thus not regarded as a specific feature of war but rather as a problem that is continuous and persistent. Violence in war zones and peace zones are connected (Santos, Moura, and Roque 2010). Zillah Eisenstein (2007, 12) formulates the problem of the continuity of violence in terms of the existence of a parallel "form of war" against women occurring at all times, regardless of whether a context is defined as war or peace (see also MacKinnon 2007; Oliver 2007).

Moreover, the feminist relational explanation of women's vulnerability turns this concept into a political negotiation, positioning women as the bearers of protest and revolt, ascribing them agency and considering them participants in warring (Pettman 1996). By contrast, in the WPS resolutions, the problem is defined as one of (conflict) situations in which women find themselves, and sexual difference is constructed as something that women embody. Women are thus left with one option: to become victims who are protected by someone else. The construction of the problem in the WPS resolutions thus places the problem in women's bodies and implicitly presents the adult male body as the "normal" body, i.e. the standard of security politics.

We will now analyze the responses to women's vulnerability: the participation and representation of women and the criminalization of sexual violence.

Participation and representation

The formulation of women's special needs requires gender-sensitive policies and a series of measures are described in resolution 1889:

> The Security Council … [r]ecogniz[es] the particular needs of women and girls in post-conflict situations, including, inter alia, physical security, health services including reproductive and mental health, ways to ensure their livelihoods, land and property rights, employment, as well as their participation in decision-making and post-conflict planning, particularly at early stages of post-conflict peacebuilding. (UNSC 2009b)

The endeavors to meet women's vulnerabilities are closely associated with women's human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment. However, not only the problem but also the responses must be warranted. Women's empowerment and gender equality are important for peace and stability:

> The Security Council … [r]eaffirm[s] that women's and girls' empowerment and gender equality are critical to efforts to maintain international peace and security, and emphasiz[es] that persisting barriers to full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) will only be dismantled through dedicated commitment to women's empowerment, participation, and human rights, and through concerted leadership, consistent information and action, and support, to build women's engagement in all levels of decision-making. (UNSC 2009b)

In this quote, gender equality is considered to be crucial for the prevention and resolution of conflict. For this reason, no institutional limits appear to be placed on where women should be included. Participation in peacekeeping and peacebuilding and representation in decision-making bodies during peace negotiations and in postwar situations are all considered important.

Feminist scholarship on the assumptions of resolution 1325 notes that the resolution constructs women as more peaceful than men and that the resolution is built on this essentialist idea (Elshtain 1995; Shepherd 2008; Sjoberg 2011). The legitimacy of promoting women's representation and gender equality, which are key features of the resolutions, is based on the same logic that applies to women's vulnerability, i.e. women's otherness.

In line with the problem of women's vulnerability in conflict situations, women in peacekeeping missions are described as having a much-needed competence because mediators and cease-fire monitors with knowledge of sexual violence are lacking (UNSC 2009a, preamble). It is also argued that women feel more secure in reporting violence to other women, thus the presence of women in peacekeeping missions "may encourage women from local communities to report acts of sexual violence" (UNSC 2010). Accordingly, the answer to the complicated question of *what* women represent seems to be simply "women." Women are neither representatives of warring parties nor members of other groups involved in war.

Even when women participate in local armed forces and necessarily participate in war, their function is still to represent women: the "presence of women peacekeepers may encourage local women to participate in the national armed and security forces, thereby helping to build a security sector that is accessible and responsive to all, especially women" (UNSC 2009a). It is striking that there is no discussion about men as either the representatives or the represented. In this sense, representation is a women-only idea.

Fundamental to the idea of women as representatives of other women is the proposition that women have common traits and interests and constitute a group. However, there is one clear separation within this homogenous group: the representatives are separated from the represented. Representatives are ascribed agency, whereas the represented are victims.

To be granted the position as representatives/protectors of women, representatives must be empowered and appointed by (the men in) the state where they are citizens, or by the UN. Thus, women, who are protected by men, are encouraged to protect other women. In this "chain of protection" as we call it, women participate as protectors while they are simultaneously protected themselves. The motivation for introducing women includes a limitation of their mandate: to represent women. The conditions for women and men differ regarding the expectations for the security work they perform. Consequently, a specific responsibility is placed both individually and collectively on women: to contribute to women's security and to a more gender-equal peace (see Eduards 2013).

In addition, being included as representatives necessitates adjusting to the prevailing way of behaving. As shown by Sheri Lynn Gibbings (2011), women allowed to speak about security in the UN need to conform to the informal protocol that maintains that when women are talked about, it should be done on a positive note. Besides, the resolutions seem to presuppose that women embrace central democratic and liberal values and therefore advocate for "election preparation and political processes, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programs, security sector and judicial reforms, and wider post-conflict reconstruction processes" (UNSC 2013b, §4). Only when "embody[ing] the universal principles of peace and security as opposed to local (tribal or ethnic) interests" are women allowed to speak as representatives of other women, Gibbings concludes (2011, 531).

Accordingly, the position of women protectors is ultimately conditioned by their subjection to the supremacy of a state or of the UN. The differentiation of women as either representatives/protectors who are part of the solution, or vulnerable victims who are part of the problem, constructs women according to a logic that places protected women in a subaltern position (Spivak 1988; see also Gibbings 2011; Reeves 2012). No signs of vulnerability accompany agency and voice. If you are vulnerable, you are a victim and become voiceless. Representation imposes differentiation among women that silences other possible differences, such as class, race/ethnicity or geographic position. The implications of the WPS resolutions are that when women protect other women, the relationship is considered devoid of *gender* power. Even if the relation is hierarchical, no dominance arises because both parties are of the same sex.

When vulnerable women are protected by other women in the chain of protection, men are saved from their responsibility of promoting gender equality and addressing the effects of male violence on women. In a sense, men become less omnipotent because they are viewed as inferior to women with respect to specific tasks. More importantly, men are able to "wash their hands" because they become freed of implicit accusations of engaging in the subjugation of women while "protecting" them.

Feminist security studies arguably aims to stress the need for political conflict to renegotiate and reshape gender relations (Eduards 2002; Tickner and Sjoberg 2011) and to open the political sphere for a negotiation of differences and power relations among women. The WPS resolutions seem to engender the opposite result, as they neglect differences among women, constitute women as a homogenous group, and treat relations among women as nonhierarchical. The problem of male–female relations as a potentially power-laden relation is solved by removing men from the equation, replacing male peacekeepers with women to address other women at the scene of war. This solution is motivated by the idea of ensuring the comfort and respecting the preferences of protected women, but our interpretation is that it equally serves to protect male peacekeepers from being accused of reproducing gender inequality.

Criminalization of sexual violence

Rape and sexual violence are generally treated differently from other vulnerabilities of women in the WPS resolutions. Although women's special needs are met by gender-sensitive policies or representation, rape and sexual violence are framed as crimes at the outset:

> The Security Council … [e]mphasizes the responsibility of all States to put an end to impunity and to prosecute those responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes including those relating to sexual and other violence against women and girls, and in this regard stresses the need to exclude these crimes, where feasible from amnesty provisions. (UNSC 2000, §11)

The framing of rape and sexual violence as different from other vulnerabilities is mirrored in the clear division of the WPS resolutions into two trajectories, where resolution 1820 is followed by resolutions 1888 (2009), 1960 (2010) and 2106 (2013). In these resolutions, the main themes are impunity, the strengthening of international law and measures against rape and sexual violence. Rape and sexual violence are constituted as war crimes by connecting them with the Rome Statute, international law and genocide. By contrast, the other follow-up resolutions address gender equality more generally. For example, resolutions 1889 (2009) and 2122 (2013) are linked to women's human

rights and are widened to include a range of problems, such as "cultural discrimination and stigmatization, including the rise of extremist or fanatical views on women" (UNSC 2009b, preamble), as well as educational deficiencies and marginalization. These resolutions develop an increased focus on women's participation and representation.

The construction of rape and sexual violence as crimes incorporates a specific idea of responsibility (Aroussi 2011). Other vulnerabilities, including women's special needs in DDR processes, exposure to mines and to "normal" violence owing to, for example, deficient refugee camp design, are addressed through representation and gender-sensitive policies. Conversely, rape requires legal measures that impose personal responsibility because rape and sexual violence necessarily include the existence of a perpetrator. The construction of rape and sexual violence as crimes thus potentially allows for a discussion of how gender relations, violence and power are connected.

The logic for discussing sexual violence in the UN Security Council is that such violence threatens peace and stability. As part of resolution 1325 and the other WPS resolutions, sexual violence is also linked to women:

> The Security Council … [is d]eeply concerned also about the persistent obstacles and challenges to women's participation and full involvement in the prevention and resolution of conflicts as a result of violence, intimidation and discrimination, which erode women's capacity and legitimacy to participate in post-conflict public life, and acknowledging the negative impact this has on durable peace, security and reconciliation, including post-conflict peacebuilding. (UNSC 2008)

Here, violence against women impedes peace because it negatively affects women's role as agents of peace. If women are important actors of reconciliation in a post-conflict situation, protecting them from the horrors of war is a way to protect a peacebuilding resource. This rationale can even be restated as securitizing women because they are essential to the peace process.[9]

However, the second part of the quote allows for a different interpretation, in which women's role in peace and stability situates them as objects. The warring parties will be more inclined toward reconciliation if "their" women are not raped or exposed to sexual violence. This interpretation also renders rape intelligible as a tactic of war, as it causes harm not only to women but also to the warring enemy. In resolution 1820, rape and sexual violence "can constitute a war crime, a crime against humanity, or a constitutive act with respect to genocide" (UNSC 2008, §4). In this resolution, protection is connected not to the equal conditions of women (Eisenstein 2007), but rather to the idea of the genes of the population and to national unity.

A fundamental threat to cherished values, such as national reconciliation and peace, is represented in the (sexualized) bodies of women. This interpretation is supported by statements specifically arguing for the importance of punishing perpetrators as part of reconciliation efforts: "[E]nding impunity is essential if a society in conflict or recovering from conflict is to come to terms with past abuses committed against civilians affected by armed conflict and to prevent future such abuses" (UNSC 2009a, preamble; see also UNSC 2013a, §1). In this interpretation, the violated female body becomes an important obstacle to the construction and maintenance of peace. According to Sjoberg (2013), "wars are not only fought 'for women' but also through them, on the (actual and represented) bodies" (222). The idea proposed by the WPS resolutions is that minimizing sexual violence in war enhances prospects for peace. In this way, women's bodies are turned into an important mediating factor.

To address the security problem of sexual violence and rape, the WPS resolutions propose prevention, documentation, assistance to victims and legal measures. In this context, women's representation is discussed in terms of contributing knowledge as gender advisors, documenting crimes because abused women will likely speak to other women and assisting victims through local women's organizations. Women at risk should be protected and, in certain cases, evacuated. Prevention is a question of military leadership, protocol, information and, more importantly, a signal that sexual violence and rape is not tolerated behavior: "The Security Council … [r]eiterat[es] the need for civilian and military leaders to combat impunity and enforce accountability, and that inaction can send a message that the incidence of sexual violence in conflicts is tolerated" (UNSC 2010). In this resolution, rape becomes a question of leaders' and individual perpetrators' responsibility, and demands for justice and inclusion of rape as a crime in international law are logical consequences.

As the WPS resolutions focus more closely on judicial measures, their wording becomes increasingly gender neutral. Indeed, the preambles of the resolutions state clearly that women and children, especially girls, are most often the targets of sexual violence. However, the executive sections of the resolutions emphasize legal institutions, states and responsible parties. Although victims and "survivors" (UNSC 2009a) are frequently discussed, perpetrators are barely mentioned and are described only as "parties to armed conflict": "The Security Council … [r]equests … information regarding parties to armed conflict that are credibly suspected of committing patterns of rape or other forms of sexual violence, in situations that are on the Council's agenda" (UNSC 2009a). In this quote, the scope of the crime is limited to warring parties, the systematic use of rape and sexual violence, and "situations that are on the Council's agenda." Therefore, perpetrators seem to be noteworthy only if their crimes are repeated (patterns of rape) and if they occur in certain situations, i.e. in wars.

In contrast to the notion in feminist security studies that rape and sexual violence constitute acute threats to women on a daily basis regardless of whether the context is defined as peace or war (Eisenstein 2007; MacKinnon 2007), the resolutions argue that it is the context that defines rape and sexual violence as acute.[10] Therefore, sexual violence and rape in this specific sense are considered different from both peacetime sexual violence and the "ordinary" violence of war. Thus, wartime rape and sexual violence are regarded as a specific and illegitimate form of violence that must be abolished, whereas other forms of violence defined as legitimate can persist.

Our interpretation is that as the attention to gender and women's vulnerability in war has increased, the legitimacy of war is challenged. In addition, wartime rape highlights the horrors of war in general and undermines central security narratives that build on the idea or myth that war is undertaken to protect women and children (Tickner 2001, 2005). Accordingly, rape and sexual violence threaten the legitimacy of war and the idea of just war. If a feminist notion of rape and sexual violence as continuous and transcending the boundary between peace and war were acknowledged, the possibility of regulating war would be at stake.

Conclusion

Women's bodily integrity in war has been given great importance in the rhetoric on global security. The link between women's vulnerable position and their physical safety renders efforts to reduce their vulnerability an indisputable good. Particularly

because protecting women and children is part of the discourse that legitimizes war and security in the first place (Tickner 2001; Young 2003; Stiehm 2010), women's vulnerability may be formulated as an acute and existential threat that requires exceptional responses. However, increased representation of women and the criminalization of rape could very well fit into the agenda of normal politics and have in fact been used rather extensively in nonsecurity contexts. Despite the rather normal character of the demands, the WPS resolutions are still debated and found to be provocative. In that sense, the WPS resolutions can still be considered "exceptional politics" (Sylvester 2009).

In these resolutions we have noted two main approaches to addressing the gender/security nexus. The first approach can be understood as gendering security, where women's specific and vulnerable conditions during and after war are met with practices to promote women's rights and an increased representation of women. While gender representation and attention to women's rights can be used as means for enhancing women's conditions and political agency, the way these practices are constructed in the WPS resolutions inserts women into a chain of protection. The positively charged values of gender equality and women's solidarity with other women are appropriated for military purposes, increasing the legitimacy of the war system in a context where gender equality is celebrated as a sign of civilization and the hallmark of "good" states. Further, these practices serve to protect male soldiers from finding themselves in compromising situations where they can be accused of exercising gender power. Under the auspices of gendering security, what is really protected is the male soldier.

The second approach can be understood as securitizing gender, which plays out by locating rape and sexual violence in the context of war regulations. For example, in the case of rape as a weapon of war, women's bodily vulnerability is decoupled from the perpetrator by strategically focusing on the regulation of the illegitimate act. That human beings must be spared the worst atrocities of war is a longstanding idea (e.g. the Geneva Conventions and the Rome Statute): nuclear bombs, chemical weapons and – as an element of current WPS discourse – rape are not allowed. This way of addressing sexual violence turns this violence into a "proper" security matter and involves primarily making warfare legitimate. The rules of war are fundamentals of security and, as such, a cherished value to secure. To be able to legitimately securitize any issue with violence as the proposed solution, it is crucial to argue that the fight will be "fair" and that "we" will not rape women on "our" behalf.

Therefore, in our interpretation both of these processes serve to legitimize *war and the male soldier*, i.e. they turn war into the prime value that must be protected. In the *gendering security* process, women are regarded as valuable agents of peace and security and used to eliminate the possibilities for male soldiers to be exposed to situations in which gender inequality can be an issue. In contrast, in the *securitizing gender* approach, the rape act is considered to be a problem that must be excluded from war. The two processes can also be analyzed in terms of a *depoliticization* of unequal gender relations.

According to our reading, the introduction of women's vulnerability and gender equality into a mainstream security context questions the very heart of the security concept: the idea of just war and the benevolent male soldier. Even if the results of the negotiations, i.e. the WPS resolutions, serve to reestablish these values, the nagging unease of the more fundamental challenge inherent in introducing women's vulnerability remains. In this sense, placing gender and women's conditions in war on the agenda of powerful organizations such as the UN Security Council provides a

lingering opportunity for feminist contestations of present security narratives and the questioning of war as a practice of protection.

However, feminist and mainstream conceptualizations of security follow different logics. In feminism, good living conditions for women, defined as equality, justice and liberation, are values in themselves. When gender equality is constructed in a way that turns it into a utility to legitimate a system of war and "a belief in hierarchy, obedience and the use of force" (Enloe 2007, 4), this construct has to be contested, even if it is, as we have noted, transformed into the more attractive idea of masculinist protection (see Young 2003). In the words of Judith Stiehm, "the goal should not be to make war more humane but to eliminate it" (Stiehm 2010, 23).

To securitize women's vulnerability and give it a persistent value that cannot be doubted are legitimate feminist aspirations. In the WPS resolutions, however, the recognition of women's special needs comes at the price of depoliticizing gender inequality, which may favor women in the short term. However, depoliticization goes against basic ideas of feminism, which defines gender as relational, political processes that constantly require reconsideration and renegotiation.

When the Security Council resolutions on WPS are used for the securitization of war, feminist questions of gender equality, justice and women's needs for security are appropriated for violent purposes. Thus, women's vulnerability is not securitized in and of itself because such a process would require a problematization of prevailing gender relations. Rather, women's vulnerability is considered if and only if it is constructed as a threat to the legitimacy of war. The problem of speaking in favor of securitization as a feminist strategy is, as we have aimed to show, that feminists speak in a context entrenched in gender power, and a context in which threats to security is conceptualized as conflicts and solved by military means. Even in the discourse on women, peace and security, the male soldier appears to be the ultimate referent.

Notes

1. Despite recruitment efforts, the number of women in peacekeeping operations remains low. In 2012, only 3 percent of military personnel and 10 percent of police personnel were women (UN 2015). Although funding has increased over the years, resources for gender advisors and gender projects are also scarce (see Farr 2011; Reeves 2012).
2. By "the WPS resolutions" we refer to the body of resolutions labeled "Women and Peace and Security" adopted between 2000 and 2013, i.e. resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888, 1889, 1960, 2106.
3. For early discussions of feminist understandings of security, see Spike Peterson (1992), Jill Steans (1998) and Ann Tickner (2001). For an overview of feminist security studies (FSS) as a distinct tradition, see Laura Sjoberg (2013) and Annick Wibben (2011).
4. Detraz (2012); Tickner (2001); Wadley (2010); Wibben (2011). We use the concept of "mainstream theories" as a contrast to the elements of feminist theory we are discussing. We are well aware that "mainstream theories" is a wide concept that includes several different notions of security, but we argue that in the respect we discuss them, they are all subject to the same feminist criticism.
5. Even if it is debatable whether this is the aim of all feminist security theory and activism, we find that scholars such as Wibben express certain unease in defining the project as bringing in new referents. Wibben's (2011) idea that feminist security studies should allow interventions clearly indicates the aim to change gender relations.
6. We use the term "the political" to denote a sphere open for negotiations of conflicts of interest. We are inspired by Chantal Mouffe's (2005) notion of the political, even though we do not subscribe to her idea that the left-right conflict is the primary conflict that needs to encompass all politics.
7. For a discussion on problems of using security as a strategy, see Hudson (2010).

8. Buzan's (2004) critique is directed to the concept of human security, arguing that such a broad notion of security will not be useful to guide political preferences. However, in more general terms, this critique sheds light on mainstream conceptualizations of the acuteness necessary for successful securitization. In that sense, the critique is also applicable to the feminist notion of security that we describe in this article. On the relation between gender security and human security see, for example, Hoogensen and Stuvøy (2006) and Boyd (2015). For a discussion of human security and its critics, see Chandler (2008).
9. See MacKenzie (2009) for a discussion of gender in the DDR process in Sierra Leone. She shows that women are actually desecuritized in this process and encouraged to return to the private sphere, while men are securitized as important for future conflicts.
10. For a discussion of the problem of deciding the time limits for what counts as war and post-conflict, see McLeod (2011) and Levine (2015).

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