

Routledge Studies in Gender and Global Politics

GENDERING PEACE

UN PEACEBUILDING IN TIMOR-LESTE

Sarah Smith



Gendering Peace

In 1999, after 24 years of violent military occupation by Indonesian forces, the small country of Timor-Leste became host to one of the largest UN peace operations. The operation rested on a liberal paradigm of statehood, including nascent ideas on gender in peacebuilding processes. This book provides a critical feminist examination of the form and function of a gendered peace in Timor-Leste.

Drawing on policy documents and field research in Timor-Leste with national organisations, international agencies and UN staff, the book examines gender policy with a feminist lens, exploring and developing a more complex account of 'gender' and 'women' in peace operations. It argues that gendered ideologies and power delimit the possibilities of building a gender-just peace and contributes deep insight into how gendered logics inform peacebuilding processes, and specifically how these play out through the implementation of policy that explicitly seeks to reorder gender relations at sites in which peace operations are deployed. By utilising a single case study, the book provides space to examine both international and national discourses and contextualises its analysis of Women, Peace and Security within local histories and contexts.

This book will be of interest to scholars and students of gender studies, global governance, international relations and security studies.

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UN Peacebuilding in Timor-Leste

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List of abbreviations

ABRI	<i>Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia</i> – Armed Forces of the Republic of Indonesia
AGE	Advisory Group of Experts
APODETI	<i>Associação Popular Democrática Timorese</i> – Timorese Popular Democratic Association
ASDT	<i>Associação Social Democrática de Timor</i> – Social Democratic Association of Timor
CAVR	<i>Comissão de Acolhimento, Verdade e Reconciliação</i> - Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CEP	Community Empowerment Project
CNRT	<i>Conselho Nacional de Resistência Timorese</i> – National Council of Timorese Resistance (umbrella resistance organisation established 1998, dissolved 2001)
CNRT	<i>Conselho Nacional da Reconstrução Timorese</i> – National Congress of Timorese Reconstruction (political party established 2007)
DPKO	United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations
Falintil	Armed Forces for the National Liberation of East Timor
F-FDTL	<i>Falintil-Forças Armadas de Defesa de Timor-Leste</i> – Failintil-Defence forces of Timor-Leste
FOKUPERS	<i>Forum Komunikasi Untuk Perempuan Lorosae</i> – East Timorese Women's Communications Forum
Frelimo	<i>Frente de Libertação de Moçambique</i> – Mozambique Liberation Front
Fretilin	<i>Frente Revolucionária de Timor-Leste Independente</i> – Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor
GAU	Gender Affairs Unit
GFFTL	<i>Grupo Feto Foinsa'e Timor Lorosa'e</i> – East Timor Young Women's Group
HIPPO	High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations
INGO	International Non-Government Organisation

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InterFET	International Force in East Timor
IRC	International Rescue Committee
LADV	Law Against Domestic Violence (Timor-Leste)
LGBTQ	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer
MFA	<i>Movimento das Forças Armadas</i> – Armed Forces Movement (Portugal)
MINUSTAH	United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti
MONUC	United Nations Mission in Democratic Republic of Congo
NAP	National Action Plan (implementing Women, Peace and Security)
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OIOS	United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services
OMT	<i>Organização da Mulher Timorese</i> – Organisation of East Timorese Women
OPE	Office for the Promotion of Equality
OPMT	<i>Organização Popular da Mulher Timorese</i> – Popular Organisation of East Timorese Women
PNTL	<i>Polícia Nacional Timor-Leste</i> – National Police Timor-Leste
RDTL	<i>República Democrática de Timor-Leste</i> – Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste
SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (the acronym used by the UN for incidents involving their own staff)
SEM	Secretary of State for the Support and Socio-Economic Promotion for Women (formerly SEPI)
SEPI	Secretary of State for the Promotion of Equality (now SEM)
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
SMSG	Special Representative of the Secretary-General
TCC	Troop Contributing Country
TNI	<i>Tentara Nasional Indonesia</i> – Indonesian military
UDT	<i>União Democrática Timorese</i> – Timorese Democratic Union
UNAMET	United Nations Mission in East Timor
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission on Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women (now UN Women)
UNMIBH	United Nations Mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina

UNMIK	United Nations Mission in Kosovo
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNMISSET	United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor
UNMIT	United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste
UNOTIL	United Nations Office in Timor-Leste
UNPOL	United Nations Police
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNTAET	United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor
UN Women	United Nations Development Fund for Women (formerly UNIFEM)
VPU	Vulnerable Persons Unit
WPS	Women, Peace and Security



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1 Introduction

In October 1999, after 24 years of violent military occupation by Indonesian forces, Timor-Leste became host to one of the largest United Nations (UN) peace operations, one whose efforts rested on a liberal paradigm of statehood. The UN Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) was also one of the first peace operations to include a Gender Affairs Unit, an early embodiment of Women, Peace and Security frameworks, the inaugural resolution of which was adopted one year after the establishment of UNTAET. UNTAET held executive and legislative authority in the territory, and so Timor-Leste did not gain formal independence until 2002. This was not the end of UN operations, though, which maintained a presence in the country until 2012; presidential and general elections held in 2017 were the first to be organised without UN assistance.¹ Throughout the 13-year period of peace operations, ‘gender’ was a feature on the UN agenda. Missions subsequent to UNTAET saw gender and Women, Peace and Security adopted and implemented across various platforms, with focus on areas that often reflected broader international trends at the time. Indeed, the years from 1999 have held significant developments for both the post-conflict recovery of Timor-Leste and for Women, Peace and Security within the UN.

Given this convergence, this book examines gender – as a policy, practice, goal and constitutive logic – in successive UN peace operations in Timor-Leste. Thirteen years of UN intervention make Timor-Leste an important case study for examining how both gender policy and gendered power operate in the liberal peace paradigm. While Timor-Leste is hailed as a success story of peace- and state-building, even a cursory glance at data on the position of women, and inequality broadly, provides a telling insight into the limitations and possible contradictions of these efforts. There is a common set of data that is often pointed to in assessing gender equality and ‘gender relations’ in Timor-Leste. In regard to formal equality, it boasts the highest representation of women in parliament in the Asia-Pacific region, a position that was cemented following the first general elections in 2001, and one that has been maintained since. The new country was quick to ratify the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women and enshrined equality between women and men in its constitution. In 2010,

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with the support of the UN operation at the time, a Law Against Domestic Violence was implemented, seeking to curb high rates of family violence. Economically, women are marginalised, although this must be considered in the context of minimal economic development for the broader population as well, especially for those who reside outside the capital, Dili, where much of the state-building efforts have been focused.

Yet the arguments in this book suggest that such indicators are not the only measure by which peace operations can be assessed as *gendered* and *gendering*. The arguments here demonstrate limitations in how ‘gender’ is conceptualised and practiced in peace operations, examining in particular the ‘gender component’ of peacebuilding – the policy and practice of gender, how it has been incorporated into peace operations, who it captures and touches, what subjectivities are made visible and which obscured – in the case study of Timor-Leste. It demonstrates that gendering peace operations is not so much something to ‘achieve’ as an ongoing process that occurs both explicitly (such as in gender policy) and implicitly (via the gendered logics that inform how security and peace are understood). It focuses on the actions and activities of the UN in implementing gender policy, which as an institution has sought to define the practice of peacebuilding (Call 2008, 6). As mandates for UN peace operations have expanded, the term ‘liberal peace’ has been applied to such efforts, as the operations adopt the hallmarks of instituting a liberal democratic state. Since the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, such efforts have included a gender component that seeks to reshape gender relations in the model of liberal equality.

Gender is understood as referring to the socially, culturally and politically constructed and constitutive assumptions attached to women and men based on perceived gender dichotomies. These constructions and assumptions produce a “gendered social life” (Harding 1986, 17–18). There are multiple variations of this gendered ordering; gender relations and identities are negotiated, inscribed and reproduced through day-to-day interactions, through national and international political discourse, in institutions and by individuals. As well as understanding efforts to build peace as gendered – that is, it is constituted by gendered identities and is informed by gendered logics – it is also ‘gendering’, in that peace operations rely on and reproduce dualistic understandings of gendered subjects (Shepherd 2010, 76) that critically intersect with race, class and ethnicity (Martin de Almagro 2017). In its institutional use, the term ‘gender’ has been applied to the areas, units, policies and practices that stem from successive Women, Peace and Security resolutions, and more often than not pertain exclusively to ‘women’.

The examination of the gendered component of peace operations is conducted in tandem with situated analysis of the case of Timor-Leste to show that actors, agents, structures and subjectivities at mission sites are not simply subject to a gendered peace, but also work towards and articulate goals in terms of rights, equality and peace. In this regard, the book

examines the position and role of national women's organisations – while noting limitations with this categorisation, discussed in more detail in the chapters that follow – that partnered with successive UN peace operations in Timor-Leste. This layer of analysis is essential in understanding how a gendered and gendering peacebuilding process is situated and contextualised and in examining who is captured in the liberal vision of gender that has been attached to international interventions to building peace.

Two connected arguments are made. First, international peace interventions serve a gendering function, consistent with the broader liberal paradigm within which they sit and the visions of statehood these interventions embody. The gender component of peace operations serves to define 'women' and how and where they 'fit' into the state, and it obscures those issues, activism and subjectivities that do not reflect this framework. In the case of Timor-Leste, limited notions of women's protection and participation, two key pillars of Women, Peace and Security, were implemented and were often done so in isolation from each other. In this regard, the book pays attention to the intersections of race and class as well as gender. It is argued that it is not possible to consider the gendered/gendering nature of peace operations without attendant consideration of the racialised politics of power and histories of colonialism and imperialism.

The second argument is that the gender component embedded in peace operations is negotiated via extant relations of power between differently located actors. The negotiation discussed here complicates dichotomous understandings of 'international' and 'local' that populate significant amounts of policy and scholarly literature, although this is not to dispute the need for processes that are contextually relevant. As the 2015 Global Study on the implementation of resolution 1325 argued, "instead of universal practices, there is a need to understand local realities and a greater need for localisation of national and international programmes" (Coomaraswamy 2015, 168). Likewise, Laura Shepherd and Nicole George have argued for "meaningful recognition of localised histories" (2016, 298) in implementing Women, Peace and Security. While not disputing these calls, the analysis and arguments here challenge flattened one-dimensional understandings of both 'local' and 'international' and present a more detailed account of how power circulates between and within such constructed spaces. The case study provides an opportunity to pay attention to localised, and disputed, histories.

The remainder of this chapter is structured into four parts. The next section details the development of the liberal peace paradigm within post-Cold War and post-9/11 geopolitics, which has seen the emergence of an array of concepts in seeking and instituting peace and security: new wars, humanitarian intervention, responsibility to protect, the conceptual merging of security and development, and corollary academic theorising on international relations and security. The discussion then moves to the gender component of peace operations and how this has evolved in policy and practice, examined through the lens of critical feminist theory. The third section

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introduces the case study of Timor-Leste, as the experience of 24 years of violent military occupation provides essential context to examine the building of a gendered peace post-occupation. In keeping with the above, this section and the chapters that follow pay attention to 'localised histories'. Finally, an outline of the book and the arguments within is given.

Building peaceful states

The practice of building and keeping peace has evolved markedly in the post-Cold War era. In a now well-told story, the abating of Cold War tensions led to a perfect storm of opportunity and context in which liberal interventionism could find its rationale. A relatively freer Security Council established more peacekeeping missions and ones with much broader mandates. There was space for rethinking security and insecurity among academic and policy circles, away from narrow traditional understandings of security pertaining to strategic/military security between states. Both the referents of security and what was understood to constitute a threat expanded (Buzan 1983; Fierke 2015, 44–85), although states remain the chief referent and actor in global security debates. The causes and consequences of 'new' conflict were understood as multifaceted and complex, connected to a globalising political economy, identity-based and largely protracted (Kaldor 2013). Conflicts in Somalia, Sierra Leone, Congo and Sudan, as well as the break-up of Yugoslavia, all seemed to confirm this narrative (Kaldor 2012).

Conflict, in these cases, was often viewed as connected and related to issues of underdevelopment and illiberalism – poverty, inequality and weak state institutions were all seen to contribute, and conflict in turn made these issues more endemic. Thus, practices of peace- and state-building expanded beyond negotiating ceasefires between armed groups; they should additionally institute representative state institutions and, ideally, initiate processes of human development. Best representing the conceptualisation of a 'nexus' between security on the one hand and development on the other, the term 'human security' appeared in the 1994 UN Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report. The report argued for the reorientation of security around individuals and contended that what really threatened most humans were issues of poverty, hunger, health, environmental degradation, political repression, community violence and the insecurity inherent in conflict zones (UNDP 1994; see also Boutros-Ghali 1992). This formulation of human security connects human rights concerns with the more traditional focus on state security, in that increases in human development and material living standards are argued to lead to a decrease in violent conflict, following the 'new wars' logic.

From this view and situated within burgeoning normative contexts such as humanitarian intervention and the responsibility to protect, traditional peacekeeping was no longer sufficient to respond to complex and protracted

conflicts with poorly defined ‘battlefronts’. Conflicts in Cambodia, Somalia, Rwanda and Bosnia provided fertile proving ground in which peacekeeping mandates, and the logics of building peace that underpin them, were broadened, tested and rethought. UN failure in the latter two cases – now well documented (see Wills 2009, 28–38) – somewhat tempered these early expansionary peacekeeping visions. Inquiries established by the UN found significant shortcomings in the operation and implementation of these missions and exposed gaps between the rhetorical commitments of expanding peacekeeping functions and the conceptual and material resources made available to the missions in practice (UNGA 1999; UNSC 1999d; Bellamy & Williams 2010, 93). These peacekeeping failures led to what Bellamy and Williams (2010, 93) have described as a period of “hesitant introspection” by the UN and the rising prominence of prioritising humanitarian agendas over state sovereignty (see Annan 2000; Orford 2003, 1–13).² In this way, liberal interventionism figured as a means to the security of the individual and, in turn, the state and the international state system.

Underpinning the rationale of expanded, reformed peace operations are philosophical traditions holding to liberal ideologies on both the form and function of states and what constitutes and perpetuates ‘peace’. Liberal ideologies are fundamental to contemporary approaches to building peace, and it is for this reason that the practice is referred to in the literature as ‘liberal peacebuilding’. The liberal peace, broadly speaking, incorporates the cornerstones of liberalism and a modern liberal democratic state; that is, democratisation, rule of law, human rights and a free and globalised market (Heathershaw 2008; Newman, Paris & Richmond 2009; Richmond & Franks 2009). What is referred to in academic literature as liberal peacebuilding is institutionally referred to as multidimensional and/or integrated peace operations, and indeed, Timor-Leste is considered an example of successful multidimensional approaches to peacekeeping (see UN 2013).

There are a number of assumptions underpinning the ideology of liberal peace. One is that of the democratic peace theory, which holds that liberal democratic states are unlikely to go to war with each other (Doyle 1983). Michael Doyle, for instance, claims that “even though liberal states have become involved in numerous wars with non-liberal states, constitutionally secure liberal states have yet to engage in war with one another” (1983, 213). Although the arguments are often opaque, there are two elements to the liberal peace’s causal theory: first, that institutional restraints prevent war between democracies, either through public opinion or checks and balances in domestic political institutions; and second, that democratic “norms and culture”, such as a shared commitment to peace, account for the absence of war between democratic states (Layne 1994, 6). The foundation of democratic peace theory is generally attributed to eighteenth-century German philosopher Immanuel Kant and his 1795 thesis *The Perpetual Peace* (see Doyle 1983; Layne 1994; Owen 1994). Democratic peace and democracy promotion reached its zenith as a foreign policy tool in the United States’

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invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, launched ostensibly under the rubric of democracy promotion and humanitarian intervention. The demonstrable falsity of these claims is routinely evidenced by critical perspectives that challenge the naturalised power obscured and reinforced in liberal interventions, discussed in more detail below.

The norms perpetuated in liberal peace operations hold that conflict is something internal to and located within the conflict-affected, fragile or failed state (see Orford 1997). Rebuilding institutions and relations within these sites then will produce and uphold a sustainable peace, a logic that patently ignores relations of (inter)dependency and power – such as between the ‘global north’ and ‘global south’ – as causal in conflict. This logic follows similarly to that of modernisation assumptions in development theory, and indeed in part constitutes the merging of security and development fields (see Duffield 2010; Stern & Öjendal 2010). The ‘security-development nexus’ from this perspective “emerges as the juncture through which the conditions of and for security mutually reinforce those for development and progress” (Stern & Öjendal 2010, 17). Not only has the nexus been rendered dysfunctional in underdeveloped, failing or conflict-affected states, but such failure also threatens those (developed) states where both security and development are perceived as achieved. This is perhaps best reflected in Kofi Annan’s claim that

[e]xtreme poverty and infectious diseases threaten many people directly, but they also provide fertile breeding ground for other threats, including civil conflict. Even people in rich countries will be more secure if their Governments help poor countries defeat poverty and disease.

(cited in UN 2004, vii)

In development circles, as economic prescriptions for development popular in the 1970s and 1980s failed to deliver any substantive change to the progress of poor nations, this failure was attributed to weak governance structures and lack of capacity within those states (Hickel 2014, 1357–1358). Thus development expanded to include governance reforms as well (consistent with liberal norms of polity) and, influenced by Amartya Sen’s capabilities approach, defined ‘human’ development as that which improved the capabilities, choices and functions of individuals (Hickel 2014, 1358). Human development and governance components have similarly become attached to liberal peace interventions, and the long period of intervention in Timor-Leste shifted periodically from traditional military security and peacekeeping concerns to broad-based human development. The aim of liberal peace interventions is to transform conflict and post-conflict societies into well-functioning, internationally legitimate states, and the human development aspect rests on and reproduces a vision of modern neo-liberal subjecthood.

In essence, liberal peacebuilding “posits a very specific vision of how a free society should be constructed and how its component parts should

interrelate” (Hughes 2009, 218). Yet critical perspectives contend that the institutional shift from traditional peacekeeping to complex peace operations has not meant a transformation of the international political economy nor its outcomes for postcolonial, poor and weak states (Orford 1997; Jabri 2013). Through a Foucauldian governmentality frame, peacebuilding embodies a transformative principle that seeks to transform the “dysfunctional and war-affected societies that it encounters on its borders into cooperative, representative and, especially, stable entities” (Duffield 2001, 11). The shift from peacekeeping to multidimensional peace operations is, as Jabri claims, a shift in the UN’s remit towards the reshaping and transformation of societies, one that would correct the failure of states, reforming them so they can govern internally as well as participate in the global political economy (2013, 10). For this reason it is also vital to historicize peace operations in relation to colonialism and imperialism (Agathangelou & Ling 2003), discussed in more detail in the following section. From critical feminist perspectives, the form and function of peace operations can be challenged, given they operate on the patriarchal and militarised logics of statehood, politics and economics. Despite the humanitarian rhetoric, it remains that militarised responses are justified as the most legitimate, if not only, response, which has negative implications for the security of those in the states that are subject to such interventions (Orford 2003, 11–12).

Gendering states, gendering peace

With the adoption of the Women, Peace and Security agenda and the mainstreaming of gender throughout UN peace and security operations, gender relations and the position of women relative to men has become deeply embedded in the rhetoric of peace and stability. This book is very much indebted to the works of feminist and critical scholars who have identified gendered identities and ideologies as profoundly influenced by, and influencing of, instances, processes and labels of conflict, war and peace (Tickner 1992; Enloe 2000, 2014; Hansen & Olsson 2004; Shepherd 2008; Sjoberg & Via 2010). Feminist international relations and security work has unpacked taken-for-granted categories and ontologies, ones that have worked to obscure the operations of gendered power. Feminist scholars have established a field of literature that re-visions security and peace from a feminist perspective, have challenged the absence of women’s voices and women’s experiences from international security politics, and have exposed gendered power in international relations (Blanchard 2003).

There are many ways that ‘gender’ is understood and utilised within this scholarship. Feminist and gender perspectives have brought significant attention to the particular experiences, vulnerabilities and contributions of women in war and peace. During and after conflict, gendered inequalities between women and men manifest in particular forms of gendered insecurity and violence for women, both direct and structural (True 2012,

136–160). Others have critiqued traditional war narratives that perpetuate a historical blindness to the diversity of women's experiences in war and the violence committed against them. These critiques have exposed that women are admitted into traditional war narratives in only essentialised ways that serve the continuance of war and violence; that is, wars are fought to protect vulnerable citizens, namely women and children (Stiehm 1982; Sjoberg & Gentry 2007; Enloe 2014). As Sjoberg and Gentry argue, “states perpetuate a gendered ‘protection racket’ which marginalises women while appearing to foreground their interests” (2007, 4).

As women's actual experiences of war have historically been disregarded, so too have they been marginalised in post-conflict reconstruction and had their access to formal peace processes limited. In post-conflict moments, there is a dominant rhetoric of ‘returning’ to or ‘restoring’ an idealised pre-conflict past (Pankhurst 2008a, 2008b). Yet, as feminist security scholars have shown, for women this can mean the reinstitution of gender norms, often via the stabilisation of the state, that have traditionally subordinated them to patriarchal power (Handrahan 2004, 440; Pankhurst 2008a).

Scholars have concomitantly delineated norms of ideal-type masculinities that imbue these same discourses and which foreground men's roles and experiences, perpetuating patriarchal power (Enloe 2014). Gendered structural relations and militarism weave hegemonic understandings of both masculinity and femininity, wherein masculine symbols and traits are privileged over the subordinated feminine (Tickner 2001). This does not necessarily mean all men or masculinities are privileged, but rather that all feminised statuses are devalorised (Peterson 2010, 18). Thus, it is important to pay attention to gender as a structural power, one that mediates experiences and structures the position of individuals and groups in relation to each other. Here, gender is not simply referring to assumptions about individual behaviour but is more broadly “a way of categorizing, ordering, and symbolizing power, of hierarchically structuring relationships among different categories of people” (Cohn 2013, 3). According to Harding, a gendered social life is produced through the distinct yet related processes of “assigning dualistic gender metaphors to various perceived dichotomies” and, in turn, appealing to these categories to order social activity, such as in the gendered division of labour (1986, 17–18).

In addition to ‘making women visible’ and exposing the gendered structures that mediate individual experiences in conflict processes, more critical perspectives provide an ontology of gender that refutes claims of an essentialised experience or subjectivity and, indeed, directly challenges theorising that does so (see Harding 1986, 27–28; Wilcox 2011). Also interested in discourse, identities and ideologies, this view highlights *productive* (gendered) power. Judith Butler's oft-cited concept of performativity is instructive here, which posits that there is nothing prior to or essential in gendered experiences and bodies, but rather gendered identities and beings are constantly (re)produced via performance and interaction (2006). In this view, gender is

not an internal ‘thing’ that resides within the body but is always external, discursive, performative and culturally mediated.

Drawing on post-structuralism and semiotics, it is argued that discourse constitutes meaning, privileging some knowledge while subjugating others, and producing and making knowable only that which is signified through discourse and symbolism (Foucault 1972; Shepherd 2008). Whereas structural (gendered) power highlights the structural (extant) positions of individuals, as well as the role of structural relations in shaping social experience and opportunity, productive power “is the constitution of all social subjects with various social powers through systems of knowledge and discursive practices of broad and general social scope” (Barnett & Duvall 2005, 20). Through systems of signification, meaning-making and performance (Foucault 1972; Butler 2006), gender is discursively constructed and made knowable in a way that makes visible some subjectivities while obscuring others (Shepherd 2008). Likewise, gendered ideologies, systems and subjects are themselves reproduced through practices and articulations of security (Shepherd 2007). Such analytic tools have been applied to conflict and peace broadly, and to the Women, Peace and Security agenda specifically, examining the co-constitution of gender (and gendered bodies), violence and security (Shepherd 2007, 2008; Wilcox 2011). Women, Peace and Security, and its set of discourses, holds productive power itself, reifying a certain ‘woman subject’ (Shepherd 2008; Martin de Almagro 2017). As Maria Stern and Marysia Zalewski argue, “[w]e ‘know’ that when we speak woman, we re-constitute her, we construct and delimit her through our stories about her” (2009, 619). Such analytic tools are essential in examining the operation of gender policy in peacekeeping, as they expose the gendered power that lies behind how issues are constructed and who or what becomes the subject of such policy prescriptions.

These different epistemologies and ontologies of gender provide useful frames to examine both gender policy and logics in peace operations. While the adoption of the Women, Peace and Security agenda has certainly added ‘women’ and (rhetorically) ‘gender’ (see Stern & Zalewski 2009) to the UN’s peace and security operations, it has done little to dislodge structural hierarchies that have historically produced gendered, and other, relations of power. Moreover, the policy resides within a distinctly gendered institution in that the UN and its security operations are “productive of ideas about appropriate masculinities and femininities which in turn have a wider cultural impact than the bounds of the institution itself” (Cohn 2013, 15). Given how gender policy is assigned and attached to particular subjects, post-structural perspectives point to how gender programming itself operates to constitute gendered subjectivities and gendered bodies (Wilcox 2011). This frame can be linked with critical perspectives on peace operations wherein ‘gender’ is understood and practised within the confines of neo-liberal rationalities (Reeves 2012) and makes “possible new techniques within an overall economy of power in North-South relations” (Doty 1996, 128).

A notable achievement of feminist transnational activism, Security Council resolution 1325 and subsequent resolutions on Women, Peace and Security have led to 'gender' becoming embedded in the discourse and practice of peace operations, seeking chiefly the protection, participation and empowerment of women. The Women, Peace and Security agenda has coalesced around the pillars of protection, prevention, participation, and relief and recovery (Porter & Mundkur 2012, 29–31; Oudraat 2013, 618). Yet in 2015, the Global Study on the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda found that gender considerations continue to be given insufficient scope in practice, that women continue to be marginalised in peace processes and in post-conflict reconstruction, and that sexual and gender-based violence continues throughout conflict and post-conflict zones, with little admonition for perpetrators (Coomaraswamy 2015). There are evident limitations, then, in how this gender policy has been practised and in the extent of its implementation, attributable to institutional norms that see gender as a 'soft' issue (thus productive of relational and hierarchical conceptualisations of gender) and that continually subordinate gender perspectives to militarised and patriarchal security assumptions. The way 'gender' is conceptualised and operationalised in peace operations structures how, when and why (some) women and 'women's organisations' gain visibility and access to institutional peacebuilding processes.

There have been a further seven Security Council resolutions on Women, Peace and Security since resolution 1325, and these demonstrate the refinement of how Women, Peace and Security, and gender, in peace operations is understood. Each resolution has both inward- and outward-facing dimensions (Dharmapuri 2013, 6–7), meaning each seeks to institute gender equality within the UN as an institution, and in host populations through peace operations. In addition to these resolutions, in 2010 then Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon developed a seven-point action plan for women's participation in peacebuilding (UNGA & UNSC 2010). It stated that women were "crucial to shoring up the three pillars of lasting peace: economic recovery, social cohesion and political legitimacy" (UNGA & UNSC 2010, 3) and the action plan it developed to achieve these goals is closely aligned with the strategies espoused by Women, Peace and Security resolutions, namely increasing the number of women in senior and other positions and gender expertise at senior levels of the UN; reviewing existing protocols; demonstrating how all UN-funded programs benefit both men and women, and ensuring a percentage of UN funds go specifically to programs addressing gender and/or women; improving women's representation in post-conflict governance; and preventing and responding to sexual and gender-based violence, including improving legal support services.

Adding women to existing structures without changing the ways those structures operate takes a characteristically liberal feminist approach to women's participation; that is, it seeks formal representative equality between men and women without questioning the gendered ideologies that

underpin the unequal distribution of power or how these responses perpetuate a socially produced category of ‘woman’ that is unequal and violable (Brown cited in Shepherd 2007, 242). Heidi Hudson has called this a “liberal additive” approach (2012). As demonstrated in the chapters that follow, it also leads to technocratic solutions in which gender work becomes women’s work and this work, in turn, is marginalised. Claire Duncanson has argued as well for stronger critiques of neo-liberalism as part of the Women, Peace and Security agenda (2016, 16), which highlights how peace operations circumscribe Women, Peace and Security via their perpetuation of a globalising patriarchal neo-liberalism. What this means then is that while ‘gender’ increasingly appears in peace operation discourse and policy, there is no explication of gendered ideologies, structures or discourses and how they are themselves constitutive of peacebuilding practice (Shepherd 2017).

Gender analyses also need to be nuanced, with attention to intersections of race, class and geography. Peace interventions have been viewed by many as a neo-colonial practice that attaches conflict to particular sites, obscuring interconnections with a global political economy and to powerful (‘developed’) states that contribute the largest proportions to global arms manufacturing (Pugh 2004; Darby 2009; Meger 2016; Shepherd 2016). From this view, the Women, Peace and Security agenda serves to reinforce interventions by rehearsing colonial narratives of saving victimised ‘Third World women’ from the deprivations of conflict and, implicitly and explicitly, from the violence of uncivilised men who populate these conflict landscapes (Mohanty 1988; Kapur 2002; Pratt 2013). This critique is positioned within broader challenges to liberal world order, ones that bring to the fore historic inequalities between communities and peoples and the perpetuation of these via international institutions and interventions, foreign aid and democracy promotion (Doty 1996, 127–144; Orford 1997).

Like colonial projects before them, a rhetoric of protecting victimised Third World women is embedded within the discourse of intervention, even though militarised interventions subvert feminist aims and can ultimately exacerbate gendered insecurities (Hunt 2006; see also Orford 2002, 276). The most prominent case here is that of US interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq in the War on Terror, framed in the immediate post-9/11 period as wars for women’s rights (Shepherd 2006; Lee-Koo 2008). Yet violent, militarised, and now protracted war-mongering has done nothing to secure the rights of women nor collective security in a context of ongoing conflict, degraded infrastructure, economic decline and political fracturing (Cornell 2002; Al-Ali & Pratt 2009). The discourse of ‘protecting women’ served to support the military and political aims of, primarily, the US, which had little to do with the needs and interests of Afghan or Iraqi women, did not pay attention to the extant gender orders within these sites, and reproduced gendered ideologies that inform foreign policy and power politics (Shepherd 2006).

In addition, there is a ‘politics of space’ in peacebuilding discourse and practice (see Orford 1997; Shepherd 2017). Peace interventions are characterised

as occurring broadly between two categories of actors: ‘local’ and ‘international’. These categories rest on the raced and gendered politics of power discussed above, locating conflict and instability in ‘local’ structures and agents, while the ‘international’ can objectively intervene, institute various political, military and economic changes, and depart, with any remaining instability due to local governance issues. Obstacles to building peace are located in the local realm, and this is also true of the Women, Peace and Security aspect, as extant “discriminatory social norms” and patriarchal cultures present obstacles to the smooth translation and implementation of ‘gender’ in peacebuilding (see for instance UNGA & UNSC 2010, 7).

In addition to institutional discourses and practices, it is important to pay attention to how such policies connect with, order, instrumentalise or are instrumentalised by, and empower or disempower different groups and individuals at peace operation sites. Audrey Reeves (2012) and Elisabeth Prügl (2004) have both argued that the disciplinary power propagated by international institutions both co-opts *and* empowers feminist knowledge, challenging those frames that deploy a zero-sum analogy. It is ostensibly those in conflict zones that should benefit the most from Women, Peace and Security, not simply by ‘making war safe for women’ but through the amelioration of gendered practices that perpetuate conflict and instability. How individuals in different locations utilise (or do not utilise) Women, Peace and Security, or how they engage with it in peace operations within national borders speaks to the multiple narratives that can be told of Women, Peace and Security beyond what may traditionally be thought of as its institutional home and textual shortcomings (Pratt & Richter-Devroe 2011, 496–499; Basu 2016). For instance, the advocacy of national actors in Ukraine led the government to adopt a National Action Plan (NAP) on Women, Peace and Security (Order of the Cabinet of Ministries of Ukraine 2016). In another case, the experience in Ireland demonstrates the politics in defining ‘post-conflict’ space and peace processes generally: while both Ireland and the UK have adopted NAPs, neither sufficiently responds to the post-conflict demands of Northern (and southern) Irish women and their experience in peace processes (Hoewer 2013). Indeed, no iteration of the UK NAP on Women, Peace and Security has made reference to the conflict in Ireland (see HM Government 2018 for the most recent NAP).

In addition to feminist work querying the nature of security, works on the gendered nature of the state and of nationalism are also significant, given that, as described in the previous section, the state is the focus of the peacebuilding efforts of international institutions (Peterson 1992; Tickner 1995; Pettman 1996, 2–17; Yuval-Davis 1997; Young 2003; Kantola 2007). The state remains the dominant referent and lens through which conflict, peace and security are understood and sought. Much like in the case of Women, Peace and Security, feminists have had an uneasy relationship with the state, oscillating between “embracing the state as the only institution that can realize women’s human rights and redress patriarchal structures,

and critiquing the state as a site of masculinist power that legitimizes these patriarchal structures through domestic and foreign policies” (Parashar, Tickner & True 2018, 2). In postcolonial sites, independence has not necessarily produced states that have protected their citizens from abuses and provided the freedom envisioned in anti-colonial movements (ibid, 1). These gendered lenses on the state as both avenue and obstacle for gender equality and women’s freedom are essential in examining the gendered and gendering nature of peace operations in Timor-Leste. It is not simply the UN missions and international donors that have produced obstacles to gender security, but the institutionalising of a patriarchal state and the power therein.

Soumita Basu has argued that in taking the actions, or deliberate non-actions, of differently placed actors on Women, Peace and Security seriously, we can understand the agenda as ‘written’ beyond its so-labelled ‘international’ or institutional location (2016). Rather than assessment of the ‘good or bad’ character of gender programming in peace operations – although it will become evident that my stance is often critical – this book seeks to engage with

the *types* of engagements between feminist movements and international institutions, the *kinds* of agencies they make possible, the way in which hegemonies and hierarchies are being questioned or reproduced in these engagements [and] the way in which institutions are being radicalised *and* movements tamed.

(Prügl 2004, 80, emphasis added)

As will be discussed throughout, this book primarily falls on the side of movements being tamed rather than institutions radicalised.

Timor-Leste: occupation, intervention, independence

Timor-Leste³ comprises the eastern half of the island of Timor, with the western half, West Timor, being a province of Indonesia. Timor-Leste was colonised by the Portuguese, who came to the island as early as 1514, establishing the first colonial settlement there 50 years later (Dunn 2003, 13). James Fox has described the entire Timor Island, both the eastern and western halves, as a diverse landscape peopled by a diverse population and therefore “not one place but many” (2000, 1). For much of the colonial period, Timor-Leste remained a neglected outpost of Portugal’s empire, providing little in the way of monetary or geographic gains besides excellent trade in sandalwood. As Cummins notes, it is misleading to claim that Timor-Leste was subject to colonial rule for over 400 years given the lack of control exerted over the territory until consolidation in the early twentieth century (2014, 20). Power struggles between different groups – Portuguese and Dutch colonialists, local elites – characterised much of the early colonial period. There was some Portuguese interference in local politics, however,

and political tensions were exacerbated through the practice of indirect rule, with the Portuguese inserting themselves into political arrangements by, for example, using village chiefs to collect taxes when Portuguese coffers required (Jolliffe 1978, 48; Dunn 2003; McWilliam & Traube 2011). In 1974, political events in Portugal opened space for East Timorese demands of decolonisation and independence.

Following an overthrow of Portugal's monarchy in 1910, a right-wing dictatorship, the *Estado Novo* ('new state'), was established in 1926 under Antonio Salazar, who remained head of state until 1968. Salazar was "ideologically and culturally traditional, anti-liberal, Catholic [and] ultra-conservative", rejecting democracy and instituting a dictatorial regime (Pinto & Rezola 2007, 358). As Western Europe boomed in the 1960s and 1970s, Portugal's economy stagnated (Story 1976). The *Estado Novo* ignored demands for decolonisation from its overseas territories, which included Mozambique, Angola and Guinea-Bissau, as well as Timor-Leste. On 25 April 1974, the Armed Forces Movement (MFA) overthrew the Salazar regime in a *coup d'état* that became known as the Carnation Revolution. The MFA opposed the regime's stalling of decolonisation in Portugal's African territories and had refused to fight in the resultant wars (Story 1976, 421). In Timor-Leste, the Carnation Revolution triggered processes of decolonisation as Portugal's military and political influence in the country was significantly weakened.

In this context, East Timorese political parties began to form, differentiated mostly by their positions on Timor-Leste's future status: as an independent country, as maintaining ties to Portugal, or as having independent status within Indonesia (Hill 1976; Jolliffe 1978; Dunn 2003, 45–65). One of these political groupings, the *Associação Social Democrática de Timor* (ASDT – Social Democratic Association of Timor), would later become Fretilin (*Frente Revolucionária de Timor-Leste Independente*, the Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor), which was, and remains, symbolic of East Timorese resistance to Indonesian occupation and constituted the pro-independence front. The *União Democrática Timorese* (UDT – Timorese Democratic Union) initially favoured continuing links with Portugal, whereas the *Associação Popular Democrática Timorense* (APODETI) favoured integration with Indonesia (Hill 1976). At this time Indonesia was headed by the Suharto Government, which had gained power following an anti-Communist coup and then consolidated its control with the mass killing of roughly 500,000 supposed communists and their supporters in 1965 and 1966 (Candio & Bleiker 2001, 67). In the climate of the Cold War, this fact crucially gained support for Indonesia from the US and its allies, and Australia especially did not want a newly independent, fragile, and potentially Communist-leaning state on its borders. Indeed, in the lead up to their military occupation of Timor-Leste, Indonesia had been establishing a pretext for the invasion by purporting that Fretilin represented potential communist leadership (Candio & Bleiker 2001, 65; CAVR 2005, section 3.6).

Following a brief civil conflict between Fretilin and UDT, and sensing the imminent Indonesian invasion, Fretilin claimed the independence of Timor-Leste on 28 November 1975, hoping this would cement the illegality of any military occupation in the eyes of the international community. On 7 December 1975, Indonesia launched an assault on the capital, Dili, and subsequently gained control of the territory (see Jolliffe 1978, 1–11). The UN, although largely impotent, did not condone the invasion, stating the Indonesian incursion was against the principles of the UN Charter and the right of the East Timorese people to self-determination (UNSC 1975), and they reiterated this again in 1976 with another Security Council resolution calling for withdrawal of Indonesian forces from the territory. In the 1980s, however, interest in Timor-Leste waned and “Australia [in particular] played an active role in thwarting the General Assembly discussion of the issue” (Maley 2000, 65). International actors did little and, indeed, were largely complicit in Indonesia’s initial invasion and the following decades of oppressive occupation in Timor-Leste. Australia denied publicly its intelligence on Indonesia’s intent to occupy, even when five Australian journalists were killed during Indonesian military incursions in the western border regions of Timor-Leste (Ball 2001). As an ally in the anti-Communist camp of Cold War international relations, successive Australian governments recognised Indonesian sovereignty over Timor-Leste (Ball 2001).

The Indonesian occupation period in Timor-Leste was characterised by oppressive military tactics, disenfranchisement of the East Timorese population, large-scale internal displacement and widespread human rights violations. Upper estimates of the death toll are approximately 200,000 East Timorese deaths (Candio & Bleiker 2001, 66). The Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation (CAVR – *Comissão de Acolhimento, Verdade e Reconciliação*) established in Timor-Leste reported the military strategy of the occupation regime:

Once committed to military intervention, ABRI [*Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia* – Armed Forces of the Republic of Indonesia] was dominant during the early years of the occupation: by increasing military violence they sought to achieve the political objectives of pacification and integration. To do this, they brought the conflict to every level of East Timorese society, involving East Timorese men, women and children in combat, intelligence torture and killings to control the population. By the late 1980s, when full-scale military conflict shifted to clandestine resistance...the military again sought violent solutions to the problem. Death squads and paramilitaries in the mid-1990s became forerunners to the widespread militias formed in 1998–1999.

(CAVR 2005, section 4.1, para 1)

The resistance movement, sustained throughout the 24-year occupation period, can be grouped into three fronts: (1) the armed front – the military

wing of Fretilin, known by its acronym Falintil (*Forças Armadas da Libertação Nacional de Timor-Leste* – Armed Forces for the National Liberation of East Timor); (2) the clandestine resistance – the civilian support base that spread throughout the country (and internationally), which provided Falintil access to material resources, carried messages in and out of Falintil bases and obstructed Indonesian forces where possible; and (3) the diplomatic front – representing Timor-Leste in the international arena and continually campaigning for recognition of Timor-Leste's sovereignty and right to self-determination in forums such as the Security Council and UN Conferences on Women. International connections with resistance fronts were maintained throughout the occupation period, especially among a network of diaspora in Mozambique, Australia, Indonesia and the US. Perhaps the most well-known face of the diplomatic front was José Ramos-Horta, who continually lobbied the UN and its member states to support Timor-Leste's goal of self-determination.

In the 1990s, the international political climate began to shift. Indonesia was increasingly urged to hold a referendum on the question of Timor-Leste's future and their legitimacy in Timor-Leste began to erode (Maley 2000, 66–67). The security situation in Timor-Leste, however, remained ominous, with the Indonesian military and the militia they supported violently repressing internal demands for independence. Indonesia and Australia repeatedly claimed that the militia were actually East Timorese-formed groups who wanted integration with Indonesia, rather than the Indonesian military-created and supported proxies they were (Ball 2001; Candio & Bleiker 2001). Key events in Timor-Leste brought international awareness to the violence occurring in the territory and to the question of Timor-Leste's future. The Santa Cruz massacre occurred in 1991, in which hundreds of peaceful protesters gathering at the Santa Cruz cemetery in Dili were fired upon by Indonesian armed forces. The presence of two international journalists, Amy Goodman and Allan Nairn, who managed to smuggle out footage of the massacre, meant the brutal footage was internationally publicised and significantly decreased the legitimacy of Indonesia's position on Timor-Leste.

In 1999, following a series of peace dialogues, an agreement was signed between the UN, Indonesia and Portugal, known as the 5th May Agreements (UNGA & UNSC 1999). This agreement stated that a referendum would be held to determine the future status of Timor-Leste, outlining a framework for 'special autonomy' for Timor-Leste within the Indonesian Republic. The framework was to be put to the East Timorese population for consideration in a referendum: if accepted, the UN would initiate the "procedures necessary for the removal of East Timor from the list of Non-Self Governing Territories... and the deletion of the question of East Timor from the agendas of the Security Council and General Assembly" (UNGA & UNSC 1999). If rejected, the Government of Indonesia was to terminate its occupation of Timor-Leste and arrangements were to be made for a "peaceful and orderly transfer of authority in East Timor to the United Nations" (UNGA & UNSC

1999). The agreement held that the UN was to establish a support mission in Timor-Leste to facilitate the referendum – the UN Mission in East Timor (UNAMET) – with a mandate that had provisions for civilian police officers to advise Indonesian police officers and to supervise ballot boxes; military liaison offices to maintain contact with Indonesian armed forces; a political component to monitor and assess the fairness of the referendum; an electoral component for voter registration; and an information component to explain to the East Timorese population the terms of the referendum and the proposed autonomy framework (UNSC 1999a). It was therefore a political mission with no peacekeeping capacity, and, under the 5th May Agreement, Indonesia was to retain responsibility for security. There was no precedent for the UN conducting a vote as outlined in the 5th May Agreement and under such circumstances – that is, “with an abundance of spoilers and no credible security guarantees” (Maley 2000, 67–68).

The results of the ballot, eventually held on 30 August 1999, were decisive: of Timor-Leste’s eligible voting population, 78 per cent rejected the proposed autonomy framework, thus casting their vote for independence. The backlash against the referendum outcome was swift and violent, following a predetermined plan that aimed to reverse the referendum result by demonstrating the inherent instability of Timor-Leste (Fernandes 2004, 76–85). Indonesian-supported militia followed a ‘scorched earth’ policy, while the Indonesian military – in charge of the security situation under the 5th May Agreement – stood by. Thousands were killed, hundreds of thousands were forced across the border into West Timor, and many more were internally displaced. The aftermath of the referendum result was the culmination of months of intimidation and violence that had been building throughout 1999 (see Dunn 2001).

UNAMET had neither the mandate nor capacity to cope with such violence. UNAMET offices were attacked and staff were under siege inside the Dili-based UN compound after the referendum result was announced (Martin 2000). Numerous accounts characterise the final days of UNAMET as ones of fear, particularly when the mission was instructed to withdraw international staff, leaving local personnel to an almost certain death (Martinkus 2001; Cristalis 2009).

On 15 September 1999, a multinational Australian-led peacekeeping force was authorised by the UN Security Council: the International Force for East Timor (InterFET). InterFET was mandated with supporting UNAMET and is viewed as largely successful in responding to the immediate security situation in Timor-Leste. In the mandate that authorised InterFET (UNSC 1999b), the UN Security Council welcomed the organisation of a transitional administration to which authority in Timor-Leste would be transferred. In October 1999, UNAMET was replaced with UNTAET, under which InterFET was subsumed.

UNTAET represents a watershed moment for the development of comprehensive, integrated peace operations, beyond the realm of traditional

peacekeeping, incorporating significant development and state-building goals. UNTAET came under the authority of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and is thus institutionally defined as peacekeeping, yet its mandate and role took on key functions of state-building, especially given its hold on legislative and executive authority until 2002. There was little precedent for a mission the same size and scope as UNTAET, although a handful of transitional administrations have been undertaken elsewhere (Bellamy & Williams 2010, 255–278). The transitional administration in Kosovo (UNMIK) became an unofficial model and development plan for UNTAET (Lemay-Hebert 2011, 192–193).

For its duration, UNTAET held executive and legislative authority over Timor-Leste, with power centralised in the hands of the transitional administrator, the Special Representative to the Secretary-General: the late Sergio Vieira de Mello. Security Council resolution 1272 (UNSC 1999c) allowed de Mello, as transitional administrator, to enact new laws and regulations and to amend, suspend or repeal existing ones. UNTAET also worked in close partnership with the World Bank, which took responsibility for spending on development and reconstruction (La'o Hamutuk 2000). As Timor-Leste was not an independent country until 2002, the World Bank instead granted funds via UNTAET for reconstruction programs (La'o Hamutuk 2000). In October 1999, the World Bank led a Joint Assessment Mission, partnering experts with East Timorese counterparts to assess the reconstruction needs in the immediate aftermath of the referendum. The subsequent report was tabled at a donor conference in Tokyo on 17 December 1999, co-chaired by Sergio de Mello and the World Bank's Vice President Jean-Michel Severino. At the Tokyo donor conference, a total of US \$522.45 million was pledged: US \$148.98 million for humanitarian activities and US \$373.47 million for civil administration, reconstruction and development (UN 2000).

Following independence and the end of UNTAET, the UN Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET, 2002–2005) was established. Broader peacebuilding, state-building and development roles were severely scaled back in UNMISET compared to UNTAET; however, the significant military component remained, and UNMISET maintained control of the National Police Force (PNTL – *Polícia Nacional Timor-Leste*) until 2004. UNMISET was established as Timor-Leste gained its independence, and as such, the mission was mandated to provide support to the country's new governance structures along with its centralised policing role. UNMISET was operational until 2005, when it was succeeded by the UN Office of Support in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL), a small political mission designed to support capacity-building in state institutions and the PNTL. UNOTIL was established under the authority of the Department of Political Affairs, rather than the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, which meant peacekeeping had officially ceased in the country and peacekeepers had departed.

UNOTIL represented what was supposed to be the drawdown of UN involvement in Timor-Leste. However, in 2006 a violent crisis broke out in

response to political grievances within the PNTL and also between the PNTL and the national military, which were loyal to particular political elites (UN Special Commission 2006). Both UNTAET and UNMISSET instituted weak security institutions in Timor-Leste for the sake of political expediency, thus making the 2006 crisis both foreseeable and a possible consequence of inadequate peacebuilding (Rees 2003). The resulting instability led to a renewed militarised international security presence in Timor-Leste. In 2006, the UN Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT, 2006–2012) was established, which reclaimed control over PNTL and was a security sector-focused mission. The predominant priority of successive UN peace operations in Timor-Leste remained a traditional security focus: ensuring the integrity of the state's borders and monopolising the use of force in the state's hands. While peace operations have evolved from traditional peace-keeping, they are very much imbued with a military understanding of security, statehood and, consequently, peace, and this has also been the case in Timor-Leste.

In general, peace operations in Timor-Leste have focused their attention more readily on the national space, thus reflecting the liberal peace model that seeks to reconstruct a state with a central administration that exercises authority over a bounded territory, the Westphalian state (Paris 2002, 654). In Timor-Leste, this has meant that the associated activities, outcomes and benefits have remained centralised in the capital. A study released in 2005 on the economic impact of UNTAET and UNMISSET found that 80 per cent of the economic benefits had remained in Dili, with a majority of the local job creation occurring in the centre (Carnahan, Gilmore & Rahman 2005, iii; Moxham & Caparic 2013, 3124). In addition, the main benefactors were the well-educated and those with some wealth already (Carnahan, Gilmore & Rahman 2005, iii). This centralisation of peace operations, both politically and economically, has had significant implications in terms of the gendered and gendering nature of the peace being built and, additionally, is reflected in the operation of national politics to date.

Overview of the book

This book seeks to move beyond debates of what 'works' in liberal peacebuilding, a debate that seems mostly informed from the perspectives of those outside of sites of intervention. Throughout this work, I was forced to confront the claim that 'it is not possible to say anything meaningful about peacekeeping from one example'. I do not dispute the insightful and necessary contributions from works that conduct their analysis across multiple case studies, those that work chiefly in policy documents and/or those that trace the institutional lineage of peace operation development; indeed, this book is indebted to these works. Rather, I claim that it is in fact possible to say something meaningful about the impact and practice of peace operations from the 'one example' of the people and groups within them

who “have interpreted or engaged the practice and agents of intervention” (Sabaratnam 2011, 798). This book examines the gender policies and discourses that were produced within the context of peace operation intervention in Timor-Leste. In seeking to examine how gender policies ‘worked’ at the site of peace operations, it quickly became apparent that these policies mingled with the sociopolitical history and context of where they operated. In this way, adopting a single case study – although I would challenge the idea that Timor-Leste, or any state, is a ‘single’ viewpoint, experience or subject – provides space for examining the operation of the liberal peace project in tandem with the social and political history of Timor-Leste, and for acknowledging the multiple influences that impact how peace interventions are understood or experienced.⁴

In addition to research in secondary sources, I conducted 31 individual and 2 group semi-structured interviews with East Timorese women’s organisations and NGOs, with UN peace operation and agency staff, INGOs and government ministers (see list of interviews).⁵ Interviews were primarily conducted in Timor-Leste over two research periods in 2012 and 2013. Participant interviews were incorporated into the research design in order to gather knowledge that “only those with certain experiences can know” (Ackerly & True 2010, 168). Following a feminist research ethic, which “demands that we apply the same criteria to the analysis of documents from institutional or elite sources as from lower-status organizations, groups or individuals”, data collected from multiple sources was given the same consideration (Ackerly & True 2010, 179). The book structure reflects the themes that emerged from interviews, namely the policy development and tensions that coalesced around participation and protection, the two central pillars of Women, Peace and Security, as well as the struggles and desires of East Timorese activists who sought change within and through peace operations and within their own government and society. I do not claim to present a precise account of ‘women’s experiences’ in Timor-Leste, but rather bring to the fore the historical and continued activism for gender equality and for peace in Timor-Leste. I pay especial attention to activism and advocacy that coalesced explicitly around women’s rights and gender equality or which was propagated by self-identified ‘women’s organisations’.

The next chapter provides the historical and political backdrop to the East Timorese case in terms of women’s activism, involvement in the resistance struggle for independence, and the establishment of pre-independence women’s organisations. It was this context into which peace operations were deployed, and it was subsequently these organisations and collectives that they engaged with in Timor-Leste in gender projects. Part of this examination is the process of getting ‘gender’ onto the UN agenda, in Timor-Leste and more broadly, and indeed, the two are intertwined. East Timorese women’s activism was central to the appearance of a Gender Affairs Unit in the first significant peacebuilding intervention in the country, and there were strong debates throughout on what gender equality was and how it should

be achieved. This history has been largely overlooked by framings that characterise peace operations as ‘bringing’ gender to Timor-Leste and thus ‘creating’ a women’s movement.

Chapters 3 and 4 critically examine two mandates of the Women, Peace and Security agenda, women’s participation/representation and women’s security, respectively, with particular reference to their operation in Timor-Leste. In regards to participation, analysis of Timor-Leste demonstrates how the ideological framework of liberal peacebuilding circumscribes women’s participation in peace operations. Rather than a panacea for gender inequities, participation follows the liberal tradition of adding women without any fundamental change to gendered relations of power and the policies ignore the broader socio-political context at the mission site. Chapter 3 therefore examines how women’s participation was structured in national and village politics, and in security sector reform, and shaped by the confines of liberal statehood. Likewise, Chapter 4 examines the mandate of women’s protection and its centrality to the UN’s Women, Peace and Security agenda. In Timor-Leste, protection centred on domestic violence, particularly following the 2006 crisis period. While welcome, the focus on domestic violence is found to exclude recognition of a continuum of militarised gender violence in Timor-Leste, one perpetuated by the presence of peace support operations as well. Like women’s participation, the mandate of women’s protection is informed by racialised and gendered logics and deeply characterised by relations of power across and within state and institutional spaces.

Chapter 5 serves to highlight that individuals are not merely subject to gendered peacebuilding processes, but rather engage and interact with them. This chapter pays close attention to the role of national women’s organisations in Timor-Leste, the resistance they faced (and posed), and the negotiations they undertook with international interveners, state actors and the broader population. In peace operations, women’s organisations are construed as contributing the ‘local’ perspective and are taken as representative of ‘local’ women’s activism and perspectives, which was the case in Timor-Leste. The chapter demonstrates how the gender component of peace operations, as currently conceptualised, does not allow space for divergent forms of women’s activism or intersectionality, nor does it acknowledge tensions between differently positioned actors in the national space. The argument presented here reveals a more nuanced picture in which a number of considerations are important to understanding resistance to gender, and this includes tensions between ‘local’ and ‘national’ actors and the presence of highly centralised peace operations that compound and perpetuate these tensions. Yet in institutional accounts, the weaknesses of centralised peace operations are often construed as the inherent (patriarchal) deficiencies of the post-conflict state and its population.

Chapter 6 locates the preceding arguments explicitly in the literature on ‘localising’ peace – the ‘local turn’ (Hughes, Öjendal & Schierenbeck 2015;

Leonardsson & Rudd 2015) – which is evident in both scholarly literature and institutional reviews that seek to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of peace operations. The chapter examines how the figure of the local has been constructed and deployed in both peace studies and peace operations, drawing on critical feminist and postcolonial works. Despite the limitations demonstrated in the Timor-Leste case, not least in relation to the centralised nature of peace missions, the chapter finds that current conceptualisations of the ‘local’ perpetuate the same ontological and epistemological problems; it is a discursive construction that structures intervention. To date, the ‘local turn’ in peace studies has paid insufficient attention to gender (and race, class, ethnicity, religion and sexuality) as a category of analysis, as both a socially mediated and produced identity and as an organising logic, and for this reason, the categories produced within are necessarily deficient.

Notes

- 1 At the time of writing, the East Timorese parliament had been dissolved by President Francisco ‘Lu Olo’ Guterres and a new round of elections called due to disputes over who would take parliamentary leadership after election results failed to return any party to majority power (see Murdoch 2018). The new elections were held in May 2018, as this manuscript was being finalised. Some reports suggest that political uncertainty is resulting in population movement from the urban centre to rural districts as well as internationally (such as over the border into Indonesia) for fear of conflict as a result (see East Timor Law & Justice Bulletin 2017).
- 2 Such shortcomings did not go unnoticed in other locales. As Desmond Ball explains, militias in Timor-Leste initially tried to dislodge InterFET via aggression and propaganda: “[The Indonesian armed forces] doubt InterFET’s staying power drawing analogies with Somalia [where the killing of UN peacekeepers prompted their withdrawal in 1993]” (2001, 58).
- 3 ‘Timor-Leste’ was the name adopted by the territory at independence. The territory was referred to as ‘East Timor’ during the Indonesian occupation period, and ‘Portuguese Timor’ during the colonial period. This book uses ‘Timor-Leste’ throughout to reflect the territory’s current name.
- 4 I am deeply indebted to the work of Meera Sabaratnam (2011, 2017) for this framing.
- 5 Interviews were conducted with Swinburne University ethics approval (SUHREC Project No. 2012/083).

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