

**Examining the Impact of  
Peacekeeping Operations on Soldiers'  
Militarized Masculinities: The Case of  
Korean Peacekeeping Soldiers**

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**Submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
to Trinity College Dublin, University of Dublin**

**2023**

## Declaration

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## **Abstract**

Gender studies of militaries and the dynamics of war suggest that ideas of militarized masculinity are central to the creation of soldiers who are willing to fight and perhaps die in combat. With the rise of national militaries' involvement in peacekeeping operations, feminist scholarship has asked whether employing soldiers as agents for peace is appropriate, or whether involvement in peacekeeping shapes different forms of militarized masculinities. Some scholars argue that due to militarized masculinities that are often associated with violence, aggressiveness, and misogyny, soldiers are unlikely to be effective at achieving peace. On the contrary, other scholars argue that involvement in peacekeeping can produce alternative militarized masculinities that adopt some important qualities for effective peacekeeping such as empathy, respect, and equality. To contribute original research to feminist literature on this question, the thesis examines the impact of peacekeeping on soldiers' militarized masculinities with the case study of Korean soldiers. The field research involved two rounds of interviews with two groups of Korean men: a group consisting of men who completed military service in Korea but who were not deployed in peacekeeping operations; and a group consisting of men who were deployed in various types of peacekeeping abroad. By comparing these two groups, the thesis concludes that while involvement in peacekeeping does not fundamentally challenge the gender norms traditional militarized masculinities rely on, it does contribute to constructing alternative militarized masculinities which are more open to empathy, respect, caring and equality.

## Summary

Peacekeeping had long been regarded as a substantive alternative to the traditional use of military forces. However, since it became known to the public that multiple instances of use of sexual or excessive violence against civilians were committed by international military personnel in peacekeeping operations, feminist scholarship has questioned whether soldiers are appropriate agents to achieve long-term peace and security. Particularly the concept of militarized masculinity, characterized by physical strength, aggressiveness, risk-taking, and denigration of women and femininity, has offered a useful analytical point in explaining why soldiers cannot be effective at achieving peace. However, some scholars have suggested that involvement in peacekeeping can lead to the construction of alternative militarized masculinities, which could be more effective at building peace.

To contribute original research to feminist literature on this question, the thesis employed the concept of masculinity, with a particular attention to militarized masculinity, as a theoretical framework. Masculinity is not a coherent or fixed object but it is socially constructed and changeable. In addition, masculinity does not exist as a singular form. Masculinities are multiple, dynamic and contradictory due to their being actively constructed. They are constructed in relation to social definitions of a man's place and the changing contexts men find themselves in. This insight can also be applied to the construction of militarized masculinities. Although militarized masculinities are traditionally defined by hypermasculine attributes and behaviors, due

to the contradictory and ambiguous nature of masculinity, they are open to the possibilities of change and subversion.

Based on the multiplicity and complexity of the construction of masculinities, Claire Duncanson has sought to identify the impact of peacekeeping on soldiers' militarized masculinities. She stresses the emergence of themes in the narratives of British soldiers, such as respect, empathy, and equality that are traditionally feminized in the military. Despite the dominance of warfighting ethos among British soldiers, Duncanson argues that the positive potential for the construction of alternative militarized masculinities should be taken more seriously because it could lead to a more fundamental challenge to gender hierarchies traditional militarized masculinities rely on.

For the field research, I adopted interpretive grounded theory that involved two rounds of interviews with two groups of Korean men: a control group consisting of 10 men who completed military service in Korea but who did not experience deployment in peacekeeping; and a group consisting of 14 men who were deployed in various types of peacekeeping abroad. Before undertaking the field research, I conducted a literature review on constructions of militarized masculinities in contemporary Korean society as a background for understanding the ways in which involvement in peacekeeping impacted on the Korean soldiers' masculinities. Through this, it was revealed that in varying degrees masculine ideals in Korean contemporary society have been associated with militarized norms and practices as the popular expectation that all young men should willingly serve in the military have remained uncontested for a long time. Therefore, completion of military service has been considered as a means to prove 'normal' manhood in

Korean society. Based on core principles and techniques of interpretive grounded theory and understandings gained from literature review, I compared and analyzed results of the interviews with two groups of Korean men.

Through comparative analysis, it was demonstrated that there were similarities and differences between the two groups. For the construction and performance of ideal masculinity, the role of good family provider and completion of military service were seen to be very important for both groups. Both groups tried to distance themselves from men who were stuck in traditional gender roles but becoming a good family provider was a central element to claim their masculine status. A difference between the two groups was the extent to which each group was critical of traditional gender norms. While most participants in the first group identified masculine norms and thought that they needed to try to meet these norms, many participants in the second group did not want to define what men should be like, problematizing the oppressive impact of traditional gender roles on their identities and lives. Military service was also very important for both groups as a crucial marker of normality in adult manhood. However, there was a significant difference in the meanings participants attached to military service between the two groups. While the first group tended to view military service as a waste of time or as time of acquiring important qualities and skills for future socio-economic life, the second group placed special value on their military service because of peacekeeping experiences. Almost all participants in the second group felt good about helping and protecting people in situations of conflict and came to value peace and the security of ordinary people beyond state borders.

Another notable similarity between the two groups was their stereotypical views on female soldiers, based on naturalized gender differences. There was a shared assumption that women are vulnerable sex with a weaker physical and psychological condition and on the grounds of this, the gendered division of labor in national militaries and peacekeeping operations was justified. Both groups thought that integration of women into combat units would weaken combat effectiveness and thus, female soldiers must be as capable of fitting in as their male colleagues for combat roles. In peacekeeping, participants in the second group took women's roles of care and support for granted as women were viewed as inherently kind, gentle, empathetic and nonthreatening. They thought that because of these feminine attributes, female soldiers could make a unique contribution to peacekeeping. In summary, women were generally not regarded as equals and female soldiers were looked at less professional than her male counterparts.

Despite unchallenged gender stereotypes between the two groups, this research found that involvement in peacekeeping could contribute to shaping different forms of militarized masculinities, which were more open to embody attributes, values and practices traditionally associated with femininity. Most peacekeeping soldiers came to value peace and the security of ordinary people and valorized the humanitarian aspect of peacekeeping. Particularly, some soldiers, who had chances to interact with the host population, disrupted the Self/Other binary by building relationships with local people through empathy, caring, respect and equality, not through domination or demonization. Based on this result, the thesis concludes that there is

positive potential that involvement in peacekeeping can promote the construction of alternative militarized masculinities which can be more effective at achieving sustainable peace and security in conflicted societies.



## Acknowledgements

First and foremost, praises and thanks to God, my refuge and strength, for your unlimited love, grace, and blessings throughout my intense research work. I have experienced your guidance and protection day by day and have grown in you. You are the one who let me overcome all the difficulties and complete my research. I will keep on trusting you, seeking your wisdom, and living in your presence.

I would like to express my deep and sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Gillian Wylie, for her intellectual support, encouragement, motivation, and sincerity. Her guidance, insights and genuine empathy have always inspired and helped me in all the time of research and writing of the thesis. It has been a great privilege and honor and pleasure to work and study with her. I will always appreciate it.

I am immensely grateful to Prof. Samuel Y. Pang, United Graduate School of Theology, Yonsei University, for offering me the opportunity to study International Peace Studies in Ireland. His teaching on ethical theological reflections on the Other has reminded me of which direction I should go. His teaching and inspiration will also remain invaluable in my lifelong learning process.

I am also extremely grateful to my parents for their unconditional love, continuous support, and caring. They have always encouraged me to develop my potential and to enjoy exploring my own world bravely. I cannot thank them enough for all that they have done for me. They are always my best friends, personal good counsellor and beloved parents. I also express my thanks

to my brother, his wife and their dearest son. I thank my Ghanaian brother Emmanuel and his wife Sun for their prayer and caring as well. This endeavor would not have been possible without my family.

I must also thank all of the research participants, who willingly shared their personal experiences and stories with me. I deeply appreciate their time and trust towards me. Particularly, I would like to express special thanks to Dr. Yong Hyuk Cho and former Lt. Commander Hoseok Jang, who provided extensive help for recruiting participants.

I am extending my thanks to my research colleagues and friends who have supported me to complete the thesis. It has been an amazing experience building genuine relationships, encouraging and helping each other, and having lots of fun together. I am deeply grateful for our true friendship.

Finally, my thanks to go all the people who have helped me to finish my research directly or indirectly.

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## List of Abbreviations

ANA	Afghan National Army
ANP	Afghan National Police
AU	African Union
AVMS	All-Volunteer Military Service
CMO	Civil-Military Operation
DADT	Don't Ask, Don't Tell
GPE	Global Political Economy
IR	International Relations
KDF	Kenya Defence Forces
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender
MNF	Multinational Forces
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
PKO	Peacekeeping Operation
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
PSO	Peace Support Operation



PTSD	Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
TCC	Troop Contributing Country
UN	United Nations
UNSCR 1325	United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325
WPS	Women, Peace, and Security



# Introduction

## Background

The United Nations (UN) has deployed over fifty-peacekeeping operations into conflict and post-conflict zones since 1948. The goal of peacekeeping is to bring stability to a destabilized country by the presence of representatives positioned by the international community.<sup>1</sup> However, as feminists have argued, peacekeeping operations were to a large extent gender-blind throughout the post-Cold War period.<sup>2</sup> Peacekeeping was “blind to the way that war impacts on men and women differently, the way that it is experienced differently by men and women, and finally, the way that gender as a relational power dynamic underpins and sustains the war system”.<sup>3</sup> However, since the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) in 2000 (hereafter, UNSCR 1325), this blindness has been replaced with a wealth of research, initiatives and subsequent resolutions aiming to mainstream gender into peacekeeping.<sup>4</sup>

Although UNSCR 1325 served as the foundation for gender-sensitive policy formation in the sphere of peace and security, it has received significant challenges from academics and

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<sup>1</sup> Aolain, Fionnuala Ni et al. (2011), *On the Frontlines: Gender, War, and the Post-Conflict Process*, Oxford University Press, p. 105

<sup>2</sup> Duncanson, Claire (2016), *Gender & Peacebuilding*, Polity, p. 20

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 21

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 9

policymakers.<sup>5</sup> Some feminists have pointed out that gender in UNSCR 1325 is used as a synonym for women, resulting in all the focus being on women, rather than men, masculinities and militarism.<sup>6</sup> In a similar vein, while literature on war has made significant use of the conceptual and practical consequences of the term 'masculinity', this term has been much less applied to and understood to be relevant in the post-conflict context.<sup>7</sup> However, given that peacekeeping missions are more than 95 percent male<sup>8</sup> and they could bring with them varying aspects of gender norms and masculine behaviors that transpose into local society,<sup>9</sup> more attention must be paid to masculinities to fully grasp the impact of peacekeepers' presence on practices of masculinity amongst peacekeepers and their impact on the lives of the host population.

As an attempt to fill this gap, some feminists have examined the use of national militaries as peacekeepers, with a particular focus on the concept of militarized masculinity. Militarized masculinities are defined as "specific configurations of gendered characteristics and behaviors that are visible at the levels of individuals, families, communities, and states".<sup>10</sup> Characteristics of

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<sup>5</sup> Sjoberg, Laura (2017), *Gender, UN Peacebuilding, and the Politics of Sphere*, Oxford University Press, pp. 77-78

<sup>6</sup> Duncanson, *Gender & Peacebuilding* p. 36

<sup>7</sup> Aolain et al., *On the Frontlines: Gender, War, and the Post-Conflict Process*, p. 50

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 111

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 50

<sup>10</sup> Parpart, Jane and Patridge, Kevin (2014), "Soldiering On: Pushing Militarized Masculinities into New Territory" in Mary Evans et al. (eds), *The SAGE Handbook of Feminist Theory*, SAGE Publications, p. 551

physical strength, toughness, rationality, aggression, and risk taking have been historically associated with militarized masculinity.<sup>11</sup> Based on this, a wealth of feminist scholarship has questioned the use of military personnel for peacekeeping purposes,<sup>12</sup> pointing out that hyper-masculine military culture and militarized masculinity have had longstanding relationships with soldiers engaging in sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) or excessive violence against civilians.<sup>13</sup> For example, since the allegations about the involvement of UN peacekeepers in sexual violence against primarily women and children gained some official credence in the early 1990s,<sup>14</sup> multiple cases of SEA by peacekeepers were followed by reports from Cambodia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Haiti, the Democratic Republic of Congo, East Timor, Liberia, and Sierra Leone.<sup>15</sup> Based on this, Whitworth argues that the introduction of peacekeeping forces actually has served to increase some local people's insecurity rather than alleviate it.<sup>16</sup> On the contrary, Duncanson suggests that peacekeeping contributes to producing a new form of militarized masculinities, which could be more effective at achieving peace. Despite the importance of issues surrounding soldiers' role

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<sup>11</sup> Wegner, Nicole (2021), "Helpful Heroes and the Political Utility of Militarized Masculinities", *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, Vol. 23, No. 1, p. 8

<sup>12</sup> Duncanson, Claire (2013), *Forces for Good? Military Masculinities and Peacebuilding in Afghanistan and Iraq*, Palgrave Macmillan, p. 18

<sup>13</sup> Simic, Olivera (2009), "Who Should be a Peacekeeper?", *Peace Review: A Journal of Social Justice*, Vol. 21, No. 3, p. 400

<sup>14</sup> Simic, Olivera (2009), "Rethinking 'sexual exploitation' in UN peacekeeping operations", *Women's Studies International Forum*, Vol. 32, No. 4, p. 288

<sup>15</sup> Karim, Sabrina and Beardsley, Kyle (2016), "Explaining sexual exploitation and abuse in peacekeeping missions: The role of female peacekeepers and gender equality in contributing countries", *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 53, No. 1, p. 101

<sup>16</sup> Whitworth, Sandra (2004), *Men, Militarism, and UN Peacekeeping: A Gendered Analysis*, Lynne Rienner Publishers, p. 12

and identities in peacekeeping, however, these issues still remain understudied, particularly among non-Western militaries. In this context, the thesis examines how involvement in peacekeeping influences soldiers' militarized masculinities by analyzing the case of South Korean soldiers who were deployed in peacekeeping.

### **Research Aims and Questions**

The aim of the thesis is to contribute original research to feminist literature on using soldiers as actors to build peace, by analyzing the impact of peacekeeping on the construction of Korean soldiers' militarized masculinities. To achieve this aim, the thesis, based on the concept of masculinity, which is defined not only as a set of attitudes and practices culturally deemed appropriate to men,<sup>17</sup> but also as a process, an identity that is never complete but always in the making,<sup>18</sup> examines the multiplicity and complexity in the construction of Korean soldiers' masculinities and how these masculinities were influenced by peacekeeping. Through this process, the thesis explores whether involvement in peacekeeping contributes to producing new forms of militarized masculinities.

To achieve the aim of this research, I developed the following central research questions.

1. What impact does involvement in peacekeeping operations have on soldiers' militarized masculinities?

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<sup>17</sup> Buchbinder, David (1994), *Masculinities and Identities*, Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, p. vii

<sup>18</sup> Morgan, David H. J. (1992), *Discovering Men*, London: Routledge, p. 46

2. To what extent does involvement in peacekeeping relate to (reproduce, reinforce, transform, or challenge) the dominant discourse on gender which military organizations are based on?

### **Justification**

The thesis engages with feminist scholarship in Peace Studies and International Relations (IR) on the use of soldiers for peacekeeping. One group of feminists argues that the contradictions which exist between proper soldiering and peacekeeping can be largely counterproductive to achieving long-term peace and security.<sup>19</sup> Other scholars argue that the military is a critical agent of peacekeeping due to its protective role in the harsh environment of the post-conflict period and that the experience of peacekeeping can reshape militarized masculinities.<sup>20</sup> Although the importance of discussion of this issue has been articulated by some scholars and policymakers, there are still few works that explore the relationship between peacekeeping practices and soldiers' masculinities. A handful of feminist scholars have tried to delve into how militarized masculinities are constructed and contested in diverse peacekeeping operations (Razack, 2004; Whitworth, 2004; Duncanson, 2009; 2013), but there is a notable gap in these academic endeavors between the Western and non-Western world. That is, although non-Western countries have become the predominant troop contributors to peacekeeping, the way in which

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<sup>19</sup> Whitworth, *Men, Militarism, and UN Peacekeeping: A Gendered Analysis*, p. 16

<sup>20</sup> Krishnasamy, Kabilan (2015), "Civil Community-Peacekeeper Relations in UN Peacebuilding: The Case of South Asian Peacekeepers", *Asian Journal of Peacebuilding*, Vol. 3, No. 2, p. 193

non-Western peacekeepers engage with peacekeeping remains quite under-researched.<sup>21</sup>

Therefore, a core contribution of the thesis is to fill this gap existing in the feminist literature on peacekeeping.

The thesis also provides valuable insight to the extensive and multifaceted body of literature on peacekeeping. According to Fortna and Howard, the literature on peacekeeping can be divided into three waves. While the first wave focused mainly on peacekeeping in wars between states during the Cold War, the second wave largely focused on disillusionment, failure and dysfunction of peacekeeping after the end of the Cold War. The third and the most recent one, reflecting a resurgence in peacekeeping, has been newly concerned with systematic and methodologically rigorous analysis (both quantitative and qualitative) of basic empirical questions about the effect of peacekeeping:<sup>22</sup> whether peacekeeping is best conducted by the UN or by other organizations or regional actors; the effectiveness of the use of force; and the impact of peacekeeping not only on stable peace but also on other goals such as democratization.<sup>23</sup> In the third wave of scholarship on peacekeeping, some scholars have featured the unforeseen consequences and outcomes of peacekeeping not only on troop-contributing militaries and nations but also on the host countries. For example, Dwyer identified that military deployment as part of peacekeeping missions triggered army mutinies in some West African countries as

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<sup>21</sup> Gilmore, Jonathan (2015), *The Cosmopolitan Military: Armed Forces and Human Security in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Palgrave Macmillan, p. 11

<sup>22</sup> Fortna and Howard, "Pitfalls and Prospects in the Peacekeeping Literature", p. 283

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 284



peacekeeping created new material grievances and a sense of injustice among peacekeepers and exacerbated tensions within the contributing country's military.<sup>24</sup> Jennings identified that peacekeeping economy, characterized by the exploitation of, in particular, women's and girls' sexual labor, could reinforce assertion of male dominance over women's productive and reproductive labor, as a means of controlling or eradicating the economic threat that women may pose to men's interests and identities.<sup>25</sup> Since the UN began to implement more complex peacekeeping operations, there have also been studies on the effects of peacekeeping on soldiers' medical and psychological well-being.<sup>26</sup> Despite the more theoretically and methodologically mature studies of the most recent wave, however, according to Agyekum, the post-deployment aspect of peacekeeping missions remains under-analyzed in the literature.<sup>27</sup> What is more, very few studies feature the soldiers' perceptive thought processes, retrospection, or narratives<sup>28</sup> (Mäki-Rahkola and Myrntinen, 2014; Henry, 2015; Agyekum, 2020; Vela, 2021). In line with the third wave of literature on peacekeeping, the thesis offers insightful examinations of soldiers' narratives in the post-deployment phase.

## **Methodology**

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<sup>24</sup> Dwyer, Maggie (2015), "Peacekeeping abroad, Trouble Making at Home: Mutinies in West Africa", *African Affairs*, Vol. 114, No. 455, p. 207

<sup>25</sup> Jennings, Kathleen M. (2010), "Unintended Consequences of Intimacy: Political Economies of Peacekeeping and Sex Tourism", *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 17, No. 2, p. 231

<sup>26</sup> Agyekum, Humphrey Asamoah (2020), "Peacekeeping Experiences as Triggers of Introspection in the Ghanaian Military Barracks", *Africa Spectrum*, Vol. 55, No. 1, p. 52

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 51

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 53

To examine the impact of peacekeeping on Korean soldiers' militarized masculinities, this study was divided into three different phases: (1) a desk-based literature review which is focused on the construction of militarized masculinities in contemporary Korean society; (2) interviews with Korean men who completed military service in Korea but who did not experience deployment in peacekeeping; (3) interviews with Korean men who were deployed in various types of peacekeeping abroad. Interviews in the second phase served as a control group against which to assess the results of interviews in the third phase.

I adopted an interpretive grounded theory approach throughout the entire fieldwork process. In so doing, I sought interpretive understanding of how participants constructed meanings and actions associated with their militarized masculinities rather than a variable analysis that produces abstract generalizations. Data collection in the second phase took place through semi-structured interviews in 2020 in Korea. In total, 10 participants took part in the research and all of them were veterans. Data collection in the third phase took place in 2021 and all interviews were conducted online due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In total, 14 participants took part in the research. Among them, 8 participants were professional soldiers and 6 were veterans. Data analysis was conducted through three types of coding procedures. The research methodology, including research ethics, research reflexivity and approaches to data collection and analysis will be covered more extensively in chapter 3.

### **Definition and Scope of the Thesis**

The burgeoning literature on peacekeeping has brought with it a proliferation of definitions, distinctions, and taxonomies of the concept.<sup>29</sup> This means that the term 'peacekeeping' has not been given a fixed and detailed meaning, and many of the terms used by politicians and commentators to describe various UN activities lack a precise and universally accepted definition.<sup>30</sup> In *Peacekeeper's Handbook*, the International Peace Academy (1984) defined international peacekeeping as "the prevention, containment, moderation and termination of hostilities between or within states, through the medium of a peaceful third party intervention organized and directed internationally, using multinational forces of soldiers, police and civilians to restore and maintain peace".<sup>31</sup> In 1992, the former UN Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali defined peacekeeping as the deployment of a United Nations presence in the field, with the consent of all the parties concerned, which expands the possibilities for both the prevention of conflict and the making of peace.<sup>32</sup> However, as the nature of contemporary peace operations has become multidimensional, which leads to blurring the lines between peacekeeping, stabilization, counterinsurgency, counterterrorism, atrocity prevention, state-building, and regime

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<sup>29</sup> Fortna, Virginia Page (2008), *Does Peacekeeping Work? Shaping Belligerents' Choices after Civil War*, Princeton University Press, p. 4

<sup>30</sup> O'Neill, John Terence and Rees, Nicholas (2005), *United Nations Peacekeeping in the Post-Cold War Era*, Routledge, p. 4

<sup>31</sup> International Peace Academy (1984), *Peacekeeper's Handbook*, Pergamon Press, p. 22

<sup>32</sup> Boutros-Ghali, Boutros (1992), *An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peace-keeping*, para. 11-12, United Nations, available at [http://www.un.org/ruleoflaw/files/A\\_47\\_277.pdf](http://www.un.org/ruleoflaw/files/A_47_277.pdf) [accessed: 11 October 2021]

consolidation tasks,<sup>33</sup> the term peacekeeping becomes more difficult to define. Because of this, while some studies of peacekeeping include efforts to contain or terminate hostilities, or even to prevent hostilities, others restrict the definition to efforts to prevent the recurrence of war once a ceasefire is in place. Regarding the use of force, while some studies continue to restrict the definition of peacekeeping to consent-based missions that are authorized to use force solely for self-defensive purposes, others include peace enforcement missions that relax this condition considerably.<sup>34</sup>

With varied definition of peacekeeping, debates about which actors and institutions can authorize and conduct peacekeeping operations most effectively have continued.<sup>35</sup> Most studies still restrict their analysis to peacekeeping operations undertaken by the UN but others include peacekeeping missions mounted by regional organizations or other coalitions of states. Such missions are often authorized and legitimized by a UN resolution, as, for example, in Bosnia, Liberia, and Afghanistan.<sup>36</sup> Given that the demand for peacekeeping has grown over the past decade and peacekeeping is facing a shifting conflict dynamic, characterized by increasing regionalization and globalization, as well as, at times, the presence of unconventional threats,

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<sup>33</sup> Williams, Paul D. (2017), "Global and Regional Peacekeepers: Trends, Opportunities, Risks and a Way Ahead", *Global Policy*, Vol. 8, No. 1, p. 126

<sup>34</sup> Fortna, Virginia Page and Howard, Lise Morjé (2008), "Pitfalls and Prospects in the Peacekeeping Literature", *Annual Review of Political Science*, Vol. 11, No. 1, p. 285

<sup>35</sup> Bellamy, Alex J. and Williams, Paul D. (2005), "Who's Keeping the Peace?: Regionalization and Contemporary Peace Operations", *International Security*, Vol. 29, No. 4, p. 158

<sup>36</sup> Fortna and Howard, "Pitfalls and Prospects in the Peacekeeping Literature", pp. 285-286

the engagement of non-UN actors in peacekeeping alongside UN operations appears to become the norm rather than the exception.<sup>37</sup> A number of studies have also highlighted the empirical trend towards a proliferation of peace operations conducted by non-UN actors in the peacekeeping sphere.<sup>38</sup> According to Bellamy and Williams, with the partial exception of Africa, UN peace operations remain absent from many of the world's most troubled areas, including the Balkans, Chechnya, Colombia, Palestine, and Sri Lanka, and these gaps have been partially filled by non-UN actors.<sup>39</sup>

In addition, although the UN Security Council remains the most authoritative institution on issues of international peace and security across the globe, including peacekeeping operations, the UN has never had a monopoly on them.<sup>40</sup> Chapter VIII of the UN Charter encourages 'regional arrangements' to peacefully resolve conflicts that occur within their neighborhoods,<sup>41</sup> but it is incumbent upon the regional organizations or other agencies not to use enforcement action to settle disputes without the prior authorization of the Security Council.<sup>42</sup> Boutros-Ghali noted that

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<sup>37</sup> United Nations Secretary-General (2015), *Partnering for Peace: Moving towards Partnership Peacekeeping*, United Nations Security Council, available at <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/790913?ln=en> [accessed: 12 October 2021]

<sup>38</sup> Bara, Corinne and Hultman, Lisa (2020), "Just Different Hats? Comparing UN and Non-UN Peacekeeping", *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 27, No. 3, p. 341

<sup>39</sup> Bellamy and Williams, "Who's Keeping the Peace? Regionalization and Contemporary Peace Operations", p. 164

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 157

<sup>41</sup> Williams, "Global and Regional Peacekeepers: Trends, Opportunities, Risks and a Way Ahead", p. 127

<sup>42</sup> International Peace Academy, *Peacekeeper's Handbook*, p. 17

"regional arrangements or agencies can render great service if their activities are undertaken in a manner consistent with the Purposes and Principles of the Charter".<sup>43</sup> By examining contemporary peace operations conducted by three different non-UN actors, individual states, coalitions of the willing, and regional arrangements, Bellamy and Williams concluded that none of the operations assessed fundamentally challenged the core elements of the UN system. With few exceptions, actors have continued to legitimize their peacekeeping operations by acquiring Security Council authorization or subsequent support and gaining the agreement of the host government.<sup>44</sup> That is, although the UN was not the primary actor in these operations, the UN Charter's core norms were not violated.<sup>45</sup> Therefore, in this situation, where non-UN peacekeeping operations are increasing and some non-UN actors such as the African Union (AU) are playing increasingly important roles, examining UN peacekeeping in isolation without accounting for the presence of non-UN actors in the same conflicts or overlooking the contribution and effectiveness of non-UN missions may lead to biased findings.<sup>46</sup>

Based on this understanding of peacekeeping, to examine the impact of peacekeeping on soldiers' militarized masculinities, the thesis encompasses the cases of Korean men who were deployed in conventional UN peacekeeping operations but also those who served in non-UN

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<sup>43</sup> Boutros-Ghali, *An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peace-keeping*, para. 63

<sup>44</sup> Bellamy and Williams, "Who's Keeping the Peace?: Regionalization and Contemporary Peace Operations", p. 171

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., p. 194

<sup>46</sup> Bara and Hultman, "Just Different Hats? Comparing UN and Non-UN Peacekeeping", p. 342

missions. However, given that several former and current senior UN figures have insisted that non-UN operations lack the experience, bureaucratic structure, and resources necessary to conduct peacekeeping effectively and no other organization can consistently generate as much international legitimacy for its missions as the UN,<sup>47</sup> the thesis covers only cases in which South Korea (hereinafter referred to as Korea) sent its troops after the UN Security Council had passed resolutions. This is in line with the approach the Korean government adopts to peacekeeping. According to Korea's Defense White Paper (2008), international peacekeeping activity is divided into UN peacekeeping operations and those of multinational forces (MNF), since "MNF PKO can be considered to be under the broad concept of UN peacekeeping activities as their missions are assigned by UN Resolutions".<sup>48</sup> Therefore, the thesis includes interviews with personnel who served in the US-led coalition's operation in Iraq, the mission by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)-led Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Afghanistan, and anti-piracy activities near Somalia as part of the US-led multinational naval task force. There was a domestic debate regarding Korea's troop dispatch to Iraq and Afghanistan as the aims of these US-led interventions were not primarily about achieving peace for ordinary civilians, but during the whole process of debates and negotiations, Korea made it clear that its troops were only there

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<sup>47</sup> Bellamy and Williams, "Who's Keeping the Peace?: Regionalization and Contemporary Peace Operations", p. 160

<sup>48</sup> Republic of Korea Ministry of National Defense (2008), *Defense White Paper 2008*, ROK Ministry of National Defense, pp. 133-134, available at [https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/155624/South%20Korea%202008\\_eng.pdf](https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/155624/South%20Korea%202008_eng.pdf) [accessed: 14 October 2021]

for peace and reconstruction and not for combat missions.<sup>49</sup> The efforts to secure peace and human safety and contribution to the post-war stability in Iraq and Afghanistan were stressed as an important element of taking part in these missions.<sup>50</sup> Counterpiracy operations off the coast of Somalia under the control of the Combined Maritime Forces were not traditional peacekeeping activities but Korea put as much emphasis on the contribution to international efforts to promote peace and stability as on the protection of national interest.<sup>51</sup> In conclusion, based on the nature of the Korean troops' role, the Ministry of Defense considers all these non-UN missions as peacekeeping operations.<sup>52</sup>

### **Thesis Structure**

The thesis is organized into 6 chapters. **Chapter 1** introduces the key theoretical framework underpinning the research. The chapter begins by examining the concept of gender in the feminist approach to International Relations and explores the theoretical development of masculinity. The chapter also examines the concept of militarized masculinity, which has been a predominant explanation of peacekeepers' involvement in misconduct or crimes in peacekeeping.

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<sup>49</sup> Kim, Tae-hyung (2013), "South Korea's Overseas Troop Dispatch Policy", *Asian Politics & Policy*, Vol. 5, No. 2, p. 173

<sup>50</sup> Republic of Korea Ministry of National Defense (2006), *Defense White Paper 2006*, ROK Ministry of National Defense, p. 119, available at [https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/155726/SouthKorea\\_English2006.pdf](https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/155726/SouthKorea_English2006.pdf) [accessed: 14 October 2021]

<sup>51</sup> Republic of Korea Ministry of National Defense (2012), *Defense White Paper 2012*, ROK Ministry of National Defense, pp. 114-115, available at [https://media.nti.org/pdfs/ROK\\_2012\\_White\\_Paper.pdf](https://media.nti.org/pdfs/ROK_2012_White_Paper.pdf) [accessed: 15 October 2021]

<sup>52</sup> Howe, Brendan and Kondoch, Boris (2014), "Northeast Asian Perspectives on UN Peacekeeping", *Journal of International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 18, No. 3-4, p. 148



Lastly, the chapter introduces the concept of peacekeeper masculinity as suggested by Duncanson, with a particular focus on the potential of peacekeeping for constructing different types of militarized masculinities. **Chapter 2** presents the construction of militarized masculinities in the Korean context through historical analysis of different phases in contemporary Korean society. Through this, the chapter provides the background for understanding the ways in which involvement in peacekeeping impacts the gendered practices of traditional soldiering. **Chapter 3** presents the research methodology. The chapter addresses how I used existing theories to develop a theory grounded in my data and the practical methods and techniques applied to data collection and analysis. The chapter concludes with a discussion of my role as a researcher through a self-reflexive process. **Chapter 4** presents findings from the interviews with Korean men who completed military service in Korea but who did not experience deployment in peacekeeping. The chapter presents the detailed explanations of four main themes that emerged in the participants' narratives, with particular attention to how these findings conform to or challenge existing feminist analysis of militarized masculinities. **Chapter 5** presents findings from the interviews with Korean men who were deployed in various types of peacekeeping operations. The chapter presents the detailed explanations of five main themes that emerged in the participants' narratives, with particular attention to whether involvement in peacekeeping reproduces or challenges the dominant discourse of militarized masculinities. **Chapter 6** presents a final comparative analysis based on the findings of chapter 4 and chapter 5. The chapter presents similarities and differences between the two groups of Korean men and finally offers

conclusions on the impact of peacekeeping on Korean soldiers' militarized masculinities. In the concluding chapter, I reiterate the aims and approach taken in the thesis and stress the contribution of this research to the discussion of 'peacekeeper masculinity'. The key findings are reiterated, and final conclusions and recommendations for future research offered.

# Chapter 1. Constructing Masculinities in the Military and Peacekeeping Context

## Introduction

The recent wave of research on peace operations has made significant progress in answering the question of whether peacekeeping is actually successful in building peace and security in post-conflict settings. While some scholars have reached a consensus that peacekeeping works,<sup>53</sup> critical scholarship has problematized the impact of peace operations on those most affected by peacekeeping, pointing out the need to raise broader political questions about the actual practices of peace operations, their contested meanings, and their internal contradictions.<sup>54</sup> While peacekeeping effectiveness in the traditional approach was explored mainly with reference to its ability to decrease the number of casualties or ensure ceasefire monitoring, the aim of modern peacekeeping is to create conditions conducive for sustainable peace, not restricted to reduction of violent death by sending enough troops.<sup>55</sup> With the growing attention to a broad range of peacekeeping components other than military factors, peacekeeping support operations (PSOs) have become far more multidimensional. In addition to supervising cease-fires, peacekeepers are

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<sup>53</sup> Nordas, Ragnhild and Rustad, Siri C. A. (2013), "Sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers: Understanding Variation", *International Interactions*, Vol. 39, No. 4, pp. 511-512

<sup>54</sup> Whitworth, *Men, Militarism, and UN Peacekeeping: A Gendered Analysis*, p. 14

<sup>55</sup> Brosig, Malte and Sempijja, Norman (2017), "What peacekeeping leaves behind: evaluating the effects of multi-dimensional peace operations in Africa", *Conflict, Security & Development*, Vol. 17, No. 1, pp. 22-23

expected to promote national reconciliation and respect for human rights, to organize and monitor elections and to engage in aid for reconstruction work.<sup>56</sup> In this context of addressing the complexity existing in PSOs, gender mainstreaming has gradually come into vogue in post-conflict settings.<sup>57</sup> The United Nations defined gender mainstreaming as 'the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies and programmes, in all areas and at all levels', whose ultimate goal is 'to achieve gender equality'.<sup>58</sup>

However, despite the attempts to mainstream gender by the UN and its member states, multiple instances of the use of sexual or excessive violence against civilians have been committed by international military personnel in peacekeeping operations. For this reason, many feminist scholars have questioned whether soldiers are the appropriate agents to achieve long-term peace and security, because the militarized masculinities of soldiers are inevitably inimical to work of peacekeeping.<sup>59</sup> However, others have wondered whether involvement in peacekeeping could

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<sup>56</sup> United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support (2016), *Understanding and Improving Engagement with Civil Society in UN Peacekeeping: From Policy to Practice*, New York: UN, p. 32, available at [https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/engagement\\_with\\_civil\\_society\\_in\\_un\\_peacekeeping-web.pdf](https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/engagement_with_civil_society_in_un_peacekeeping-web.pdf) [accessed: 25 June 2019]

<sup>57</sup> Aolain et al., *On the Frontlines: Gender, War, and the Post-Conflict Process*, p. 10

<sup>58</sup> United Nations (2002), *Gender mainstreaming: An overview*, New York: UN, p. v, available at [http://www.google.ie/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0ahUKEwigvdaumsrVAhVnDsAKHZ2tCWEQFggqMAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.un.org%2Fwomenwatch%2Fosagi%2Fpdf%2Fe65237.pdf&usq=AFQjCNENixtCckX\\_zgO3MIIDUqRyAzdoSQ](http://www.google.ie/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0ahUKEwigvdaumsrVAhVnDsAKHZ2tCWEQFggqMAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.un.org%2Fwomenwatch%2Fosagi%2Fpdf%2Fe65237.pdf&usq=AFQjCNENixtCckX_zgO3MIIDUqRyAzdoSQ) [accessed: 29 July 2021]

<sup>59</sup> Duncanson, *Forces for Good? Military Masculinities and Peacebuilding in Afghanistan and Iraq*, p. 18

itself play a role in the construction of alternative militarized masculinities.<sup>60</sup> These questions are at the heart of the thesis. As the basis for further analysis, this chapter develops a theoretical framework which conceptualizes masculinity, with particular focus on militarized masculinities. To get a better understanding of militarized masculinities, this chapter examines the feminist approach and the concept of gender first. By demonstrating the complexity of gender and how this complex gender relations permeate all facets of public and private life and affect our ways of understanding and interpreting the world, the notion of masculinity in systems of gender relations is then examined. Based on this, the third section examines the concept of militarized masculinities, which has been a predominant explanation of peacekeepers' misconduct, particularly SEA against local women. However, to approach militarized masculinities in a more nuanced way, recent studies on gender, war and militarism which disrupt the traditional conceptualizations of militarized masculinities are also examined. Lastly, this chapter explores the discourse of alternative militarized masculinities, the concept of 'peacekeeper masculinity', as suggested by Duncanson, focusing on whether the role as peacekeepers could contribute to constructing different types of militarized masculinities.

### **1.1. Feminist Approaches and the Concept of Gender**

The dramatic changes in world politics in the last few decades have promoted disciplinary development within IR, and this has led to the emergence of new ways of understanding world

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<sup>60</sup> Duncanson, Claire (2009), "Forces for Good?: Narratives of Military Masculinity in Peacekeeping Operations", *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, Vol. 11, No. 1, p. 63

events. Whereas the World Wars of the first half of the twentieth century involved the transgression of great powers across international boundaries,<sup>61</sup> most of the conflicts of the second half have taken place inside or across the boundaries of weak states. Although at least one of the great powers were frequently involved in these conflicts, many of them have not been fought to protect international boundaries but over ethnic or religious issues, or issues of national identity and national liberation.<sup>62</sup> Moreover, during and after the Cold War, fundamental shifts in power and the rise of new and influential actors on the world stage created great changes in international competitiveness and economic power.<sup>63</sup> This led to a demand for a better understanding of what goes on in the world, how to predict future events and how to interpret the consequences of change.

Feminist approaches to IR theory first made their appearance in the late 1980s responding to this dramatic change of world order.<sup>64</sup> Feminists adopt gender as a central category of analysis, which constitutes a significant difference from conventional IR theory.<sup>65</sup> Feminist theories offer a powerful set of criteria to examine and critique the meaning of central concepts in IR such as

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<sup>61</sup> Tickner, J. Ann (1992), *Gender in International Relations: Feminist Perspectives on Achieving Global Security*, Columbia University Press, p. 19

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., p. 20

<sup>63</sup> Kolodziej, Edward A. (2005), *Security and International Relations* (Second Edition), Cambridge University Press, p. 127

<sup>64</sup> Tickner, J. Ann (1997), "You Just Don't Understand: Troubled Engagements Between Feminists and IR Theorists", *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 41, No. 4, p. 611

<sup>65</sup> Tickner, J. Ann (2001), *Gendering World Politics: Issues and Approaches in the Post-Cold War Era*, Columbia University Press, p. 5

power, sovereignty, and security,<sup>66</sup> by using gender as a fundamentally significant framework for understanding how power relations and patriarchal social structures are created and maintained.

The concept of gender, however, is neither simple nor well defined. Gender is not a box that someone can check on their taxes or membership in the traditional biological sex categories, male and female.<sup>67</sup> While sex categorization is a part of gender analysis, feminists commonly define gender, in the symbolic sense, as a set of variable but socially and culturally constructed characteristics.<sup>68</sup> Gender is the socially constructed expectation that persons perceived to be members of a biological sex category will have certain characteristics. These can be constructed differently across time, place, and culture, interacting with other factors to produce political and social relations while being produced by them.<sup>69</sup> Gender is a property held by and read onto people, states, and other actors and objects in global politics. Gendering is a process between and among those actors, which is not static or universal, but relational and changing.<sup>70</sup> Even when people are unaware of gender role in their thoughts, behaviors, and actions, it constitutes

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<sup>66</sup> Grant, Rebecca (1991), "The sources of gender bias in international relations theory" in Rebecca Grant and Kathleen Newland (eds), *Gender and International Relations*, Open University Press, p. 4

<sup>67</sup> Sjoberg, Laura (2013), *Gendering Global Conflict: Toward a Feminist Theory of War*, Columbia University Press, p. 5

<sup>68</sup> Tickner, "You Just Don't Understand: Troubled Engagements Between Feminists and IR Theorists", p. 614

<sup>69</sup> Sjoberg, *Gendering Global Conflict: Toward a Feminist Theory of War*, p. 5

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 46

a shared cognition and consensus essential in shaping their ideas and relationships, and furthermore, it often governs global political interactions.<sup>71</sup>

Although gender consists of broad sets of attributes and tendencies, which are distinguished from the sex binary,<sup>72</sup> it usually tends to be understood and adopted in various fields as a binary concept. That is, the assumption that individuals embody either masculine or feminine traits and tendencies constructs the gender binary.<sup>73</sup> Bosson et al. argues that most – though not all – human societies and cultures operate under the framework of the sex/gender binary, in large part because this binary tends to simplify social interactions, organize labor division, and maintain order in social institutions. However, this binary also oversimplifies the complexity of the natural world.<sup>74</sup> Besides, as the numbers of nonbinary individuals who fall outside the sex and gender binaries have risen, some scholars have begun to approach gender in a way that destabilizes binary distinctions between women and men, as well as the heterosexual/homosexual divide in order to recognize the fluidity, instability, and fragmentation of identities and a plurality of gendered subject positions.<sup>75</sup>

One of the crucial non-binary gender-related concepts is gender identity, 'which describes an individual's personal sense of gender and is conceptualized as a spectrum with "male" and

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid., p. 47

<sup>72</sup> Bosson, Jennifer K. et al. (2019), *The Psychology of Sex and Gender*, Sage, p. 32

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., p. 34

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Richardson, Diane (2006) "Bordering Theory" in Diane Richardson, Janice McLaughlin and Mark E. Casey (eds), *Intersections between Feminist and Queer Theory*, Palgrave Macmillan, p. 22



“female” at either end point’.<sup>76</sup> Many people – referred to as cisgender – experience a match between their assigned sex at birth and the gender with which they feel a sense of belonging. On the other hand, transgender individuals experience a mismatch between their assigned sex at birth and their psychological sense of their gender.<sup>77</sup> Using the term ‘transgendering’, meaning the wish for or enactment of processes that entail the crossing of the borders that the initial binary classification has created, Ekins and King suggest four major modes of transgendering:<sup>78</sup> medically assisted ‘body migrating’, which is a permanent form of transitioning from one gender to another;<sup>79</sup> moving backward and forward across the gender border, only temporarily resting on one side or the other;<sup>80</sup> ‘ungendering’ those who seek to nullify maleness/masculinity or femaleness/femininity and denying for themselves the existence of a binary divide;<sup>81</sup> and moving beyond gender by redefining selves, bodies, body parts, sexualities, and gender within the existing system.<sup>82</sup> However, this separation of modes does not intend to lose the importance of investigating their interrelations. That is, individuals who are in transgendering trajectories live their lives in relation to those modes and their interrelations.<sup>83</sup> Gender identities can also vary among intersex people who are in a condition in which the biological components of sex such

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<sup>76</sup> Eisend, Martin and Röβner, Anna (2022), “Breaking Gender Binaries”, *Journal of Advertising*, Vol. 51, No. 5, p. 558

<sup>77</sup> Bosson et al., *The Psychology of Sex and Gender*, p. 36

<sup>78</sup> Ekins, Richard and King, Dave (2006), *The Transgender Phenomenon*, Sage, p. 34

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., p. 35

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., p. 97

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., p. 143

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., p. 181

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., p. 223

as chromosomes, hormones, genitals, and internal and external sex organs do not consistently fit the typical male or female pattern.<sup>84</sup> Intersex people are often assigned male or female at birth, but they may identify with another sex later in life, continue to identify with their assigned sex, or identify as nonbinary.<sup>85</sup> In addition, some people are agender, meaning that they do not feel a sense of belonging to any category of sex.<sup>86</sup> These complex conceptualizations of gender identity not only recognize a wider range of gender identities, but they also allow for dynamic identities such as 'gender fluid', which describes people whose gender identities shift noticeably across time and situation. Based on this, Deaux and Stewart argue that 'one's gender identity is a negotiated process, to be conceptualized as an active verb rather than a static noun'.<sup>87</sup>

Like the gender binary, the heterosexual/homosexual binary is also deeply embedded in all aspects of social life, particularly in the very language with which people think about gender and sexuality.<sup>88</sup> According to Jackson, while the term 'sex' can be reserved to denote carnal or erotic acts, 'sexuality' as a broader term refers to all erotically significant aspects of social life and social being. Therefore, sexuality cannot be reducible to the heterosexual/homosexual binary – 'although this is an important aspect of its social organization – but of the multitude of desires

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<sup>84</sup> Bosson et al., *The Psychology of Sex and Gender*, p. 34

<sup>85</sup> Eisend and Rößner, "Breaking Gender Binaries", p. 558

<sup>86</sup> Bosson et al., *The Psychology of Sex and Gender*, p. 36

<sup>87</sup> Deaux, Kay and Stewart, Abigail J. (2001) "Framing Gendered Identities" in Rboda K. Unger (ed), *Handbook of the Psychology of Women and Gender*, John Wiley & Sons, p. 87

<sup>88</sup> Jackson, Stevi (2006) "Heterosexuality, Sexuality and Gender: Re-thinking the Intersections" in Diane Richardson, Janice McLaughlin and Mark E. Casey (eds), *Intersections between Feminist and Queer Theory*, Palgrave Macmillan, p. 39

and practices that exist across that divide'.<sup>89</sup> In other words, heterosexuality is just one of a number of sexualities, given that sexual orientation category labels include gay, lesbian, bisexual, heterosexual, polysexual, pansexual, and asexual.<sup>90</sup> Despite this, sexuality has been understood primarily in terms of hetero-homo binary<sup>91</sup> and heterosexuality has been a key site of intersection between gender and sexuality, and one that reveals the interconnectedness between sexual and non-sexual aspects of social life. As an institution, heterosexuality is, by definition, 'a gender relationship, governing relations between men and women, ordering not only sexual life but also domestic and extra-domestic divisions of labor and resources'.<sup>92</sup> Despite the increased visibility of alternative sexualities, interconnections between gender, heterosexuality and the heterosexual/homosexual divide have come to be naturalized as taken for granted features of social life,<sup>93</sup> and this hetero-homo binary reacts back on gender, reinforcing gender binaries.<sup>94</sup> Put simply, there has been a strong assumption that 'normal' masculinity and femininity and 'normal' sexual desire find their expression through heterosexuality.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Ibid., p. 42

<sup>90</sup> Bosson et al., *The Psychology of Sex and Gender*, p. 38

<sup>91</sup> Jackson, "Heterosexuality, Sexuality and Gender: Re-thinking the Intersections", p. 41

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., p. 44

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., p. 48

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., p. 57

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., p. 39

Despite this complex and multidimensional aspect of gender, which plays a profound role in structuring social and political life and performing several related functions in it,<sup>96</sup> in International Relations, gender is frequently understood and employed in terms of the masculinity/femininity binary and seen as belonging in private life. That is, gender is considered as antithetical to the real business of politics and as synonymous with women and femininity. Some conventional theorists think that feminist theories are relevant to a narrow set of issues that particularly concern women or things that women are stereotypically assumed to be good at such as peace.<sup>97</sup> However, feminists reject the interpretive utility of the idea of separate spheres, maintaining that to study women in isolation perpetuates the fiction that the experience of one sex has little of nothing to do with the other.<sup>98</sup> As Sjoberg points out, being male or female is not an indicator of gender. Instead, masculinities and femininities are genders and produce gendering. Women can be masculine, and men can be feminine; men or women can be masculinized and feminized.<sup>99</sup> The terms 'masculine' and 'feminine' point beyond categorical sex difference to the ways men differ among themselves, and women differ among themselves, in matters of gender.<sup>100</sup> However, what the term 'gender' emphasizes is an entire system of relationships<sup>101</sup> such as the relationships

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<sup>96</sup> Wilcox, Lauren (2009), "Gendering the Cult of the Offensive", *Security Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 2, p. 219

<sup>97</sup> Sjoberg, *Gendering Global Conflict: Toward a Feminist Theory of War*, p. 45

<sup>98</sup> Scott, John (1986), "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis", *American Historical Review*, Vol. 91, No. 5, p. 1056

<sup>99</sup> Sjoberg, *Gendering Global Conflict: Toward a Feminist Theory of War*, p. 46

<sup>100</sup> Connell, R. W. (2005), *Masculinities* (Second Edition), Polity Press, p. 69

<sup>101</sup> Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis", p. 1057

both between masculinity and femininity, and between dominant and subordinate masculinities.<sup>102</sup> Therefore, gender is not just about women. Although it is true that feminist enquiry gives primacy to various women's experiences – who are usually at the margins of society and interstate politics - at the theoretical and practical level<sup>103</sup> and is about recovering women's activities,<sup>104</sup> feminist work is not interested in promoting women at the expense of men and others who fall outside the men/women category.<sup>105</sup> Gendered analysis, as a way to decode meaning and to understand the complex connection among various forms of human interaction, develops insight into the reciprocal nature of gender and society and into contextually specific ways in which politics constructs gender and gender constructs politics.<sup>106</sup>

However, feminist theories do not exist as one coherent form and include a wide variety of multidisciplinary approaches. They are developed from diverse standpoints such as realist, liberal, constructivist, critical, post-structural, and post-colonial perspectives. These perspectives yield difference, disagreement, and dissonance within feminism, which can provide contradictory insights about and predictions for global politics.<sup>107</sup> For example, feminist security studies

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<sup>102</sup> Sharoni, Simons and Welland, Julia (2015) "Introduction: revisiting the relationship between gender and war: reflections on theory, research, activism and policy" in Simons Sharoni, Julia Welland, Linda Steiner and Jennifer Pedersen (eds), *Handbook on Gender and War*, Edward Elgar Publishing, p. 10

<sup>103</sup> Grant, "The sources of gender bias in international relations theory", p. 4

<sup>104</sup> Tickner, "You Just Don't Understand: Troubled Engagements Between Feminists and IR Theorists", p. 615

<sup>105</sup> Sjoberg, *Gendering Global Conflict: Toward a Feminist Theory of War*, p. 45

<sup>106</sup> Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis", p. 1070

<sup>107</sup> Sjoberg, *Gendering Global Conflict: Toward a Feminist Theory of War*, p. 4

scholars have given primacy to the security arena, while feminist global political economy (GPE) scholars have given primacy to the economic arena. Some feminists have argued that human trafficking can only be prevented by legalizing prostitution, and others have argued that trafficking can only be stopped by enforcing laws against prostitution.<sup>108</sup> As Sjoberg argues in her feminist war theorizing, however, the difference, disagreement, conflict, and argument in feminisms should be seen as the substance of feminisms rather than as a substantive problem for feminisms.<sup>109</sup> By acknowledging that the diversity of feminist thought is no handicap and should not stand in the way of conducting research on the gendered nature of conventional theory,<sup>110</sup> feminist theory can have divergent goals: asking questions and raising problems rather than attempting to solve them; exchanging ideas rather than seeking absolute truths; provoking discussion rather than making conclusive statements.<sup>111</sup>

Despite their differences, feminists concur on certain substantive issues. Most contemporary feminist perspectives take the gender inequalities and gender hierarchies in conventional international theory as a basic assumption.<sup>112</sup> Gender hierarchies are based on a set of culturally determined binary distinctions such as public versus private, objective versus subjective, self versus other, reason versus emotion, and autonomy versus relatedness; the first of each pair of

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<sup>108</sup> Ibid., p. 50

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., p. 53

<sup>110</sup> Grant, "The sources of gender bias in international relations theory", p. 4

<sup>111</sup> Sjoberg, *Gendering Global Conflict: Toward a Feminist Theory of War*, p. 55

<sup>112</sup> Tickner, *Gender in International Relations: Feminist Perspectives on Achieving Global Security*, p. 18

characteristics is typically associated with masculinity, the second with femininity.<sup>113</sup> In most cultures and societies, masculine attributes have traditionally been rewarded with social advancement or the holding of political office.<sup>114</sup> This reveals that gender is a way of signifying relationships of power. The social reproduction of gender in individuals reproduces the gendered societal structure; as individuals act out gender norms and expectations in face-to-face interaction, they are constructing gendered systems of dominance and power.<sup>115</sup> According to this view, one of the common misconceptions about gender - that feminists are always thinking that gender is the primary and only explanation for phenomena in global politics - is not true. By understanding gender as power and looking at the ways that gendered power configures and is configured by events in world politics,<sup>116</sup> feminist scholars examine how gender interacts with other social structures including race, class, nationality, and sexuality.<sup>117</sup> This reveals what constitutes unjustified asymmetry between women's and men's political, economic, and social positions, how these unequal social structures are maintained and reproduced, and how these can be overcome. The unequal power relations not only distinguish between values associated with masculinity and femininity, but they also create a hierarchy among masculinities based on

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<sup>113</sup> Ibid., p. 8

<sup>114</sup> Kennedy, Caroline and Dingli, Sophia (2016), "Gender and Security" in Alan Collins (ed), *Contemporary Security Studies* (Fourth Edition), Oxford University Press, p. 156

<sup>115</sup> Lorber, J. (1994), *Paradoxes of Gender*, New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, p. 6

<sup>116</sup> Sjoberg, *Gendering Global Conflict: Toward a Feminist Theory of War*, p. 45

<sup>117</sup> Connell, *Masculinities*, p. 75

a hegemonic vision of masculine virtue,<sup>118</sup> which is detailed in the next section as a way to approach militarized masculinity.

## 1.2. Theoretical Development of Masculinities

In recent years there has been a concerted attempt, primarily through feminist and pro-feminist scholarship, to examine how men and masculinities are just as gendered as are women and femininities. Though for a long time gender was largely seen as a matter of and for women, men were generally seen as ungendered and naturalized.<sup>119</sup> Men have been treated as an internally undifferentiated group rather than as a socially constructed category incorporating disparate individuals exhibiting a spectrum of physical and psychosocial characteristics, interests, and inclinations.<sup>120</sup> However, this is no longer the case and it has provided a link between the growing research field of men's studies, known as masculinity studies and critical studies of men, feminist accounts of patriarchy, and sociological models of gender.<sup>121</sup>

Given that gender is a way of structuring social practice, not a special type of practice<sup>122</sup>, no masculinity arises outside the system of gender relations.<sup>123</sup> This means that masculinity exists in

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<sup>118</sup> Wilcox, "Gendering the Cult of the Offensive", pp. 219-220

<sup>119</sup> Hearn, Jeff (2003), "Foreword: On Men, Women, Militarism, and the Military" in Paul R. Higate (ed), *Military Masculinities: Identity and the State*, Praeger Publishers, p. XI

<sup>120</sup> Kovitz, Marcia (2003), "The Roots of Military Masculinity" in Paul R. Higate (ed), *Military Masculinities: Identity and the State*, Praeger Publishers, p. 3

<sup>121</sup> Connell, R. W. and Messerschmidt, James W. (2005), "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept", *Gender and Society*, Vol. 19, No. 6, p. 830

<sup>122</sup> Connell, *Masculinities*, p. 7

<sup>123</sup> Ibid., p. 71



relation to femininity, and so long as the notion of femininity exists so will masculinity.<sup>124</sup> Connell argues that scholars need to focus on the processes and relationships through which men and women conduct gendered lives rather than attempting to define masculinity as an object, such as a natural character type, a behavioral average, or a norm.<sup>125</sup> In this vein, masculinity can refer to a set of attitudes and practices culturally deemed appropriate to men, but more broadly could encompass a discourse, a power structure, a psychic economy, a history, an ideology, and identity, a behavior, a value system, or even an aesthetic.<sup>126</sup>

An important early source of studying masculinity was empirical social research, most of which described the construction of masculinity in specific settings. This included local gender hierarchies and local culture of masculinity in school (Willis, 1977), in male-dominated workplaces (Cockburn, 1983), in village communities (Herdt, 1981 ; Hunt, 1980),<sup>127</sup> and studies of sexualities and athletic careers (Messner and Sabo, 1990 ; Connell, 1992).<sup>128</sup> These studies produced a much more detailed, specific and differentiated view of men in gender relations and confirmed the plurality of masculinities and the complexities of gender construction for men.<sup>129</sup> Therefore, it is not tenable to talk of masculinity in the singular. As Connell points out, the relations between

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<sup>124</sup> Whitehead, Stephen M. (2002), *Men and Masculinities*, Polity Press, p. 34

<sup>125</sup> Connell, *Masculinities*, p. 71

<sup>126</sup> Higate, Paul and Henry, Marsha (2004), "Engendering (In)security in Peace Support Operations", *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 35, No. 4, pp. 483-484

<sup>127</sup> Connell and Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept", p. 832

<sup>128</sup> Connell, *Masculinities*, p. XIV

<sup>129</sup> Connell and Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept", p. 832

the different kinds of masculinity, not as fixed categories, should be recognized. There are relations of alliance, dominance and subordination. These relationships are constructed through practices that exclude and include, that intimidate, exploit, and so on.<sup>130</sup> It has also become increasingly clear that different masculinities are produced in the same cultural or institutional setting.<sup>131</sup> Valdés and Olavarría showed that even in a culturally homogeneous country such as Chile, there was no unitary masculinity because patterns varied by class and generation. In another homogenous country, Japan, Ishii-Kuntz traced the emergence of diverse masculinities in recent social history, with changes in childcare practices.<sup>132</sup>

In addition, that masculinities are plural and multiple implies that they differ over space, time and context, and are rooted in the cultural and social moment, and are, thus, inevitably entwined with other powerful and influential variables such as sexuality, class, age, and ethnicity.<sup>133</sup> Gutmann showed in his studies on Mexican machismo how the imagery of machoism developed historically and was interwoven with the development of Mexican nationalism. He suggested four patterns of masculinity in the working-class urban settlement he studied, insisting that even these four were crosscut by other social divisions and were constantly renegotiated in everyday life.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> Connell, *Masculinities*, p. 37

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 36

<sup>132</sup> Connell and Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept", p. 835

<sup>133</sup> Whitehead, *Men and Masculinities*, pp. 33-34

<sup>134</sup> Connell and Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept", p. 835

A focus only on gender relations can prevent the acknowledgement of multiple masculinities collapsing into a fixed character type.<sup>135</sup>

The field of critical studies of men and masculinities has also demonstrated that the multiplicity and diversity of masculinities is partly shaped by the different forms and locations of workplaces – the sites of work and of masculinity. These sites are likely to vary according to occupation, industry, culture, class, and type of organization. Accordingly, the dominant masculinities evident in small and family-run businesses may be significantly different from those that pervade large multinational corporations.<sup>136</sup> In addition, as mentioned above, multiple masculinities can be found within a given culture, even within a single institution.<sup>137</sup> For example, managerial masculinities are hegemonic within organizations in the sense that those in senior positions enjoy comparatively high salaries and ancillary remuneration packages through secretarial support, company cars, pensions, and other material and symbolic benefits.<sup>138</sup> Compared to those in high-status managerial positions, however, those at the less senior levels or non-managers may represent the different ways that specific forms of masculinity are constructed and persist in

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<sup>135</sup> Connell, *Masculinities*, p.76

<sup>136</sup> Elias, Juanita and Beasley, Christine (2009), "Hegemonic Masculinity and Globalization: 'Transnational Business Masculinities' and Beyond", *Globalizations*, Vol. 6, No. 2, p. 295

<sup>137</sup> Connell, R. W. (2002) "Masculinities, the reduction of violence and the pursuit of peace" in Cynthia Cockburn and Dubravka Zarkov (eds), *The Postwar Moment: Militaries, Masculinities, and International Peacekeeping*, Lawrence & Wishart, p. 35

<sup>138</sup> Elias and Beasley, "Hegemonic Masculinity and Globalization: 'Transnational Business Masculinities' and Beyond", p. 297

relation both to femininity and to other forms of masculinity.<sup>139</sup> In more general terms, it can be said that multiple masculinities connect with multiple sites.<sup>140</sup>

Hegemonic masculinity is a useful concept to explain the complex relationship between different types of masculinities and power relations. It refers to a particular idealized image of masculinity in relation to which images of femininity and other masculinities are marginalized and subordinated.<sup>141</sup> This concept, formulated three decades ago, has considerably influenced recent thinking about men, gender and social hierarchy. It has provided a link between the growing research field of men's studies, popular anxieties about men and boys, feminist accounts of patriarchy, and sociological models of gender.<sup>142</sup> The concept of hegemonic masculinity has been applied in diverse cultural contexts and to a considerable range of practical issues,<sup>143</sup> such as the dynamics of classroom life in education studies (Martina, 1995), the relationship between masculinities and a variety of crimes in criminology (Messerschmidt, 1993), and men's health practices including risk-taking sexual behavior (Sabo and Gordon, 1995).<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> Ibid., p. 294

<sup>140</sup> Higate, Paul R. (2003), "'Soft Clerks' and 'Hard Civvies': Pluralizing Military Masculinities" in Paul R. Higate (ed), *Military Masculinities: Identity and the State*, Praeger Publishers, p. 29

<sup>141</sup> Barrett, Frank J. (1996), "The organizational construction of hegemonic masculinity: the case of the US Navy", *Gender, Work and Organization*, Vol. 3, No. 3, p. 130

<sup>142</sup> Connell and Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept", pp. 829-830

<sup>143</sup> Ibid., p. 835

<sup>144</sup> Ibid., p. 833

The concept of hegemony, deriving from Antonio Gramsci's analysis of class relations, refers to a historical situation, a set of circumstances in which power is won and held.<sup>145</sup> At any given time, one form of masculinity rather than others is culturally exalted.<sup>146</sup> Therefore, to understand the different kinds of masculinity demands an examination of the practices in which hegemony is constituted and contested.<sup>147</sup> This can involve the examination of the gendered processes of commercial mass media, advertising, persuasion and differential representations of masculinity; the gendered division of labor and the social definition of tasks and work; and the activities of the state and the law.<sup>148</sup> Hegemonic masculinity embodies the currently most honored way of being a man, and it requires all other men to position themselves in relation to it.<sup>149</sup> However, hegemonic masculinity need not be the common pattern in the everyday lives of boys and men. Rather, it works in part through the production of exemplars of masculinity such as professional sport stars, and symbols that have authority despite the fact that most men and boys do not fully live up to them.<sup>150</sup>

The concept of hegemonic masculinity is far more complex than the accounts of essences in some masculinity books would suggest. It is a question of how particular groups of men inhabit

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<sup>145</sup> Carrigan, Tim., Connell, Bob and Lee, John (1985), "Toward a New Sociology of Masculinity", *Theory and Society*, Vol. 14, No. 5, p. 594

<sup>146</sup> Connell, *Masculinities*, p. 77

<sup>147</sup> Carrigan, Connell and Lee, "Toward a New Sociology of Masculinity", p. 594

<sup>148</sup> Hearn, "From hegemonic masculinity to the hegemony of men", p. 57

<sup>149</sup> Connell and Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept", p. 832

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 846

positions of power and wealth, and how they legitimate and reproduce the social relationships that generate their dominance.<sup>151</sup> However, the hierarchy of masculinities is not a pattern of simple domination based on force. Cultural consent, discursive centrality, institutionalization, and the marginalization or de-legitimation of alternatives are widely documented features of socially dominant masculinities.<sup>152</sup> The following example shows how the relations among multiple patterns of masculinity are not simple. In a white-supremacist context, black sporting stars may become exemplars of masculine toughness, while the fantasy figure of the black rapist plays an important role in sexual politics among whites. Hegemonic masculinity among whites sustains the institutional oppression and physical terror that have framed the making of masculinities in black communities.<sup>153</sup> That is, black men may accept certain aspects of hegemonic masculinity but may be marginalized in relation to the authorization of hegemonic masculinity.<sup>154</sup>

For this reason, to achieve a better understanding of hegemonic masculinity and the dynamics of multiple masculinities, researchers need to incorporate a more holistic approach of gender relations, recognizing the mutual conditioning of gender dynamics and other social dynamics.<sup>155</sup> It has been common in historical writing to see some social change and movement as coming from outside gender such as from technology or class dynamics. According to Connell, however,

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<sup>151</sup> Carrigan, Connell and Lee, "Toward a New Sociology of Masculinity", p. 592

<sup>152</sup> Connell and Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept", p. 846

<sup>153</sup> Connell, *Masculinities*, p. 80

<sup>154</sup> Hearn, "From hegemonic masculinity to the hegemony of men", p. 57

<sup>155</sup> Connell and Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept", p. 846

this change is also generated within gender relations and it has become more clearly defined in the last two centuries with the emergence of a public politics of gender and sexuality.<sup>156</sup> In *Male Fantasies*, Klaus Theweleit traced some savage processes that produced the sexual politics of fascism in the aftermath of the women's suffrage movement and German defeat in the Great War. More recently, women's liberation and defeat in Vietnam have stirred new cults of true masculinity in the United States, from violent adventure movies such as the Rambo series, to the expansion of the gun cult and paramilitary culture.<sup>157</sup> These all can be understood through the change of structures of gender relations over time. Therefore, to understand the making of contemporary masculinities, much closer attention to the gender dynamics and to the historical interplay of femininities and masculinities needs to be given.<sup>158</sup>

Like the exact nature of masculinities, which is constantly subject to change as a result of generational differences in gender attitudes and practices, structural changes in the gender order itself, and changes in the social structures with which the gender order is linked,<sup>159</sup> hegemonic masculinity is also open to change. Challenges to hegemony are common, and so are adjustments in the face of these challenges.<sup>160</sup> For example, Hondagneu-Sotelo and Messner traced the movement toward more egalitarian patterns of shared authority and division of labor

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<sup>156</sup> Connell, *Masculinities*, p. 82

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 84

<sup>158</sup> Connell and Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept", p. 848

<sup>159</sup> Connell, R. W. and Wood, Julian (2005), "Globalization and Business Masculinities", *Men and Masculinities*, Vol. 7, No. 4, p. 348

<sup>160</sup> Connell and Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept", p. 835

occurring in Mexican immigrant families. While many men acted as the undisputed patriarchs in their family in Mexico, immigration to the US changed men's and women's relative positions of power and status in the larger social structure of power. This led to eroding men's patriarchal authority in the family and empowering women. According to Hondagneu-Sotelo and Messner, all these processes did not go uncontested, and some were more conflictual than harmonious, but collaboration, not domination, characterized them.<sup>161</sup> It may be too hasty to proclaim that gender egalitarianism was achieved in interpersonal relations among Mexican immigrants but this movement shows that hegemonic masculinity can be challenged and more progressive change in hierarchical gender orders can be made. Therefore, "the conceptualization of hegemonic masculinity should explicitly acknowledge the possibility of democratizing gender relations, of abolishing power differentials, not just of reproducing hierarchy".<sup>162</sup>

The concept of hegemonic masculinity has also been used extensively in order to capture the way in which certain ideas about being a soldier and a man dominate in military cultures, with important implications for the gender order as a whole.<sup>163</sup> That is, militaries and the act of making war have become significant factors in wider conceptions of what it means to be a man and how manhood has been constructed. The testing, or measuring, of manhood in militaristic terms, has

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<sup>161</sup> Hondagneu-Sotelo, Pierrette and Messner, Michael A. (1994), "Gender displays and Men's Power: The "New Man" and the Mexican Immigrant Man" in Harry Brod and Michael Kafuman (eds), *Theorizing Masculinities*, SAGE Publications, pp. 211-213

<sup>162</sup> Connell and Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept", p. 853

<sup>163</sup> Duncanson, Claire (2015), "Hegemonic Masculinity and the Possibility of Change in Gender Relations", *Men and Masculinities*, Vol. 18, No. 2, p. 234



had far reaching consequences both in terms of theorizing masculinity but also in the everyday lives of men.<sup>164</sup> For this reason, theorists of both militarism and of masculinity have pointed to the intimate connection between military organizations and hegemonic representations of masculinity.<sup>165</sup> At the same time, the point above from Hondagneu-Sotelo and Messner should not be overlooked in considering the potential for the construction of alternative militarized masculinities, involving less domination and confrontation but more empathy, respect and equality. This complex concept of militarized masculinities is detailed in the next section.

### **1.3. Militarized Masculinities**

The concept of militarized masculinities emerged as a means of identifying and explaining the operation of gendered identities within the armed forces. Although the definitions of militarized masculinities vary, there has been a consensus within gender studies, cultural studies, and sociological literature that there exists an array of gendered cultural attributes informing the practice of military life, identifiable as features of masculine military identity.<sup>166</sup> These attributes have historically included toughness, aggression, courage, control, and domination<sup>167</sup> and this particular ideal of masculinity has been marked by many of the common attributes of civilian-

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<sup>164</sup> Godfrey, Richard (2009), "Military, masculinity and mediated representations: (con)fusing the real and the reel", *Culture and Organization*, Vol. 15, No. 2, p. 205

<sup>165</sup> Whitworth, *Men, Militarism, and UN Peacekeeping: A Gendered Analysis*, p. 160

<sup>166</sup> Woodward, Rachel (2003), "Locating Military Masculinities: Space, Place, and the Formation of Gender Identity in the British Army" in Paul R. Higate (ed), *Military Masculinities: Identity and the State*, Praeger Publishers, p. 44

<sup>167</sup> Eichler, Maya (2014), "Militarized Masculinities in International Relations", *Brown Journal of World Affairs*, Vol. XXI, No. 1, p. 82

based masculinities, such as being sure of oneself, decisive, unemotional and competitive.<sup>168</sup> However, the central configurations of gendered practices that label militarized masculinities are assumed to have their own exclusive link to violence. The important thing is, as many social theorists of gender and the military have suggested, 'human beings are not born to be combat ready, and despite being to varying degrees "pro-military", the civilian environment is not equipped to create combat readiness'.<sup>169</sup> Soldiers are carefully constructed through deliberate social practices as a means of operationalizing a unique mandate - waging war – in a strictly ordered hierarchical organization, the military.<sup>170</sup> In addition, the qualities demanded by militaries – preparedness for violence and a corresponding willingness to subordinate oneself to hierarchy and authority – must be self-consciously cultivated.<sup>171</sup> The difference between an ordinary man and a professional soldier is profound. Therefore, as Ehrenreich puts, 'a transformation is required'.<sup>172</sup>

The military's important method of transforming young men into soldiers is control,<sup>173</sup> and because of this, Goffman categorizes the military as a 'total-institution'. Goffman conceptualizes

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<sup>168</sup> Godfrey, "Military, masculinity and mediated representations: (con)fusing the real and the reel", p. 206

<sup>169</sup> Harrison, Deborah (2003), "Violence in the Military Community" in Paul R. Higate (ed), *Military Masculinities: Identity and the State*, Praeger Publishers, p. 73

<sup>170</sup> Kovitz, "The Roots of Military Masculinity", p. 9

<sup>171</sup> Whitworth, *Men, Militarism, and UN Peacekeeping: A Gendered Analysis*, p. 155

<sup>172</sup> Ehrenreich, Barbara (1997), *Blood Rites: Origins and History of the Passion of War*, New York: Henry Holt, p. 10

<sup>173</sup> Harrison, "Violence in the Military Community", p. 74

a total institution as 'an all-encompassing system that is isolated from the outside world by physical, communicative, and social boundaries in order to control most aspects of its subjects' lives'. Mental hospitals, nursing homes, concentration camps, jails, and monasteries are examples of total institutions. Goffman explains that upon enrollment, inmates are stripped of the social identities that they embodied in the outside world. With the dissipation of their social identities which serve as markers for differentiation, subjects within the total institution become indistinguishable to such an extent that they are an interchangeable part of a homogenous entity. Identity and connections with the outside world are effaced and redefined by the precepts of the institution.<sup>174</sup> Likewise, new recruits' ties to the broader society are cut off or severely restricted and almost every aspect of their lives becomes controlled and regimented by the distinct new world, the military.<sup>175</sup> The military world has its own unique set of norms of behavior and dress, its own judicial system, rights and responsibilities, and this distinct new world is quite literally separated from the society around it, usually fenced off and patrolled by armed guards, with any movement in or out strictly controlled.<sup>176</sup> Due to this particular feature of military life, some micro-sociological studies on the military institution have underlined how much power the military institution has over the activities of its members and highlighted the total control that it

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<sup>174</sup> Rauf, Ateeq A. et al (2018) "Consumption within a soft total institution: Discursive inculcation in the Tablighi Jamaat", *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, No. 42, Vol. 6, p. 855

<sup>175</sup> Gill, Lesley (1997), "Creating Citizens, Making Man: The Military and Masculinity in Bolivia", *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 12, No. 4, p. 533

<sup>176</sup> Whitworth, *Men, Militarism, and UN Peacekeeping: A Gendered Analysis* p. 158

has over the training practices that take place within it.<sup>177</sup> By wearing a distinctive uniform, consulting military priests, doctors, lawyers, and social workers, rather than their civilian counterparts, recruits come to believe that civilians are incapable of understanding military life and they are encouraged to become more or less insular within the military world.<sup>178</sup>

The process of military indoctrination begins immediately upon arrival through the exhaustive military training known as basic training or boot camp, which is a degrading process, where leaders deconstruct the recruits' civilian status and give them a new identity.<sup>179</sup> Basic training serves as a key site for profound transformational relationships between men, their bodies and the military.<sup>180</sup> According to Santtila et al, the main purpose of the basic training is "to prepare soldiers both mentally and physically for the military environment and subsequent training. In addition, the aim is to support soldiers in their continuous learning processes and to ensure a progressive improvement in their physical fitness over the entire duration of their military service".<sup>181</sup> To achieve this goal, most modern state militaries have remarkable similarities in contemporary practices of basic training. They entail a carefully designed and executed process

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<sup>177</sup> Barnao, Charlie (2019) "Military Training. Group, Culture, Total Institution, and Torture", *Sociological Review*, No. 9, Vol. 2 p. 293

<sup>178</sup> Harrison, "Violence in the Military Community", p. 74

<sup>179</sup> Redmond, S. A. et al. (2015), "A brief introduction to the military workplace culture", *Work*, Vol. 50, No. 1, p. 14

<sup>180</sup> Basham, Victoria M. (2015) "Gender and Militaries: the importance of military masculinities for the conduct of state sanctioned violence" in Simons Sharoni, Julia Welland, Linda Steiner and Jennifer Pedersen (eds), *Handbook on Gender and War*, Edward Elgar Publishing, p. 31

<sup>181</sup> Santtila, M. et al. (2015), "Optimal Physical Training during Military Basic Training Period", *The Journal of Strength and Conditioning Research*, Vol. 29, No. 11, p. 154

by senior officers and often supporting civilian specialists.<sup>182</sup> During the several weeks of basic training, new recruits undergo tests of physical endurance and sleep deprivation, and are forced to participate in numerous arbitrary, often mundane, and irrelevant tasks. By its end, recruits should conform to the official attitudes of military conduct, be able to follow orders instantly without question, and commit themselves to the larger group over any personal or individual commitments they previously held.<sup>183</sup>

The military's strategies or techniques for creating soldiers involve constant harassment and the promotion of elitist attitudes.<sup>184</sup> New recruits are humiliated, denigrated, and emptied of the achievements of their previous lives by being told repeatedly that nothing they did prior to coming to boot camp was important.<sup>185</sup> The tactics used to humiliate and degrade the recruits vary across militaries. While in some militaries physically brutalizing new recruits remains acceptable by officers or senior members, there are other militaries where physical punishment is in principle prohibited, and drill instructors often have at their official disposal only the threat of violence and verbal assaults. Even in militaries that ostensibly outlaw physical violence toward new recruits, unofficial hazing, or initiation rituals are regularly conducted in the presence of superior officers.<sup>186</sup> For example, newcomers in the Bolivian military are referred to as *saran*, or

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<sup>182</sup> Whitworth, *Men, Militarism, and UN Peacekeeping: A Gendered Analysis*, p. 155

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 156

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 161

<sup>185</sup> Harrison, "Violence in the Military Community", p. 74

<sup>186</sup> Whitworth, *Men, Militarism, and UN Peacekeeping: A Gendered Analysis*, p. 156

mange, by their superiors for violations of military discipline, misunderstanding commands, and not carrying out required exercises. They suffer the abuse of commanding officers and the dominance of a more experienced group of conscripts known as the *antiguos*, or old-timers, who entered the service six months earlier.<sup>187</sup> The vacuum created in recruits' self-esteem by this harassment is then filled with the new soldier identity that the military wishes to provide.<sup>188</sup> Gradually, the early insults and complaints from superior officers are replaced with occasional words of praise or encouragement for tasks well done, especially if done in concert with other fellow soldiers.<sup>189</sup> Through this process, recruits learn to be proud of themselves in a whole new way and acquire a new sets of skills and a new support system.<sup>190</sup>

Group bonding is crucial to the military culture and ethos as it is one of the ways in which the army can marshal the capabilities of each individual member for the pursuit of a common goal. This is constructed and maintained by conventional military training and non-conventional methods such as drinking together and informal initiation rites.<sup>191</sup> In many military communities, family metaphors are applied to relationships between comrades, who are frequently described

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<sup>187</sup> Gill, "Creating Citizens, Making Man: The Military and Masculinity in Bolivia", p. 534

<sup>188</sup> Harrison, "Violence in the Military Community", p. 74

<sup>189</sup> Whitworth, *Men, Militarism, and UN Peacekeeping: A Gendered Analysis*, p. 157

<sup>190</sup> Harrison, "Violence in the Military Community", p. 74

<sup>191</sup> Winslow, Donna (1999), "Rites of Passage and Group Bonding in the Canadian Airborne", *Armed Forces & Society*, Vol. 25, No. 3, pp. 429-430

as a "band of brothers", and these fraternal relationships are identified as a key for survival.<sup>192</sup> As Barnao notes, in military life, the main agent of socialization is the primary group, characterized by intimate face-to-face association and cooperation. This is the basic unit, a small group of soldiers with whom the individual soldier shares most of his military experience. The unity between the individuals within this group produces common and profound feelings of belonging<sup>193</sup> and this bonding tends to become particularly strong in situations of stress, danger and deprivation, especially where escape is impossible in the face of a threat from outside the group.<sup>194</sup> Winslow's research on the culture of Canadian Airborne Regiment showed well how the use of initiation rituals encouraged the primary group bonding despite its disturbing and apparently raced and sexualized nature. In Airborne, 'Zulu warrior' consisted of a soldier dropping his pants, standing on a chair, and having a length of toilet paper inserted in his buttocks. The paper was then ignited and he had to down a beer and pull out the paper before it scorched his bottom.<sup>195</sup> However, as one soldier put, this ritual was not seen as hazing and someone who did not want to join would not be ostracized. Rather, Zulu warrior was a smoker or initiation ritual at which Airborne soldiers demonstrated to their peers that they were enthusiastic to be part of the unit, and they felt closer-knit and united after it.<sup>196</sup> Ultimately, group bonding

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<sup>192</sup> Green, G. et al. (2010), "Exploring the ambiguities of masculinity in accounts of emotional distress in the military among young ex-servicemen", *Social Science & Medicine*, Vol. 71, No. 8, p. 1483

<sup>193</sup> Barnao, "Military Training. Group, Culture, Total Institution, and Torture", p. 294

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 295

<sup>195</sup> Winslow, "Rites of Passage and Group Bonding in the Canadian Airborne", p. 448

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 449

constructed through all these processes including institutional training and more informal daily social interactions, made each military unit so cohesive that under the stress of combat its members would be psychologically prepared literally to die to save one another's lives.<sup>197</sup>

What many feminist scholars have seen as problematic in military socialization is that the military's organizational structure and meaning system together incorporate a number of mutually informing binary oppositions, such as war/peace, death/life, strong/weak, military/civilian, defenders/defended, friend/enemy, and uniformity/diversity. It is onto these sets of oppositions that gender is mapped: men/masculinity is associated with the former and women/femininity with the latter, embodying, in part, impediments to operational effectiveness.<sup>198</sup> By using a socially constructed polarity between masculine and feminine or adopting an idea that men and women are fundamentally different, the military unites 'real' military men and distinguishes them from non-masculine men and women.<sup>199</sup> Soldiers must deny all that is deemed to be feminine and this is accomplished throughout the training process.<sup>200</sup> During basic training, instructors encourage stereotypically masculine behaviors from recruits by using female-associated words to denigrate them. For example, Hockey's anthropological record of infantry in the British Army confirmed this. Falling behind in any of the numerous physical activities, recruits invariably aroused their instructor's derision, equating this lack of physicality

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<sup>197</sup> Harrison, "Violence in the Military Community", p. 74

<sup>198</sup> Kovitz, "The Roots of Military Masculinity", p. 6

<sup>199</sup> Harrison, "Violence in the Military Community" p. 75

<sup>200</sup> Whitworth, *Men, Militarism, and UN Peacekeeping: A Gendered Analysis*, p. 161



with being women or comments that 'girls can do better', that 'you bunch of girls are always at the back!', or that 'act like men and not like a bunch of wet tarts!'.<sup>201</sup> Barrett's study on masculinities constructed within the US Navy also showed that all of the masculinities achieved meaning in contrast to definitions of femininity.<sup>202</sup> The officers in the Navy reported that, from the first day of training, recruits who complained or did not keep up with others were the targets of gendered insults: they were called girls, pussies, weenies, and wimps by the instructors.<sup>203</sup> That is, being a man means not being like women. 'This notion of anti-femininity lies at the heart of contemporary and historical conceptions of manhood, so that masculinity is defined more by what one is not rather than who one is'.<sup>204</sup>

The construction of masculine bodies is important to understand how the patriarchal dichotomy between 'tough warriors' and 'supportive dependent women' is produced and maintained. Body is critical to the conceptualization of the ways in which gender identities are formed and performed. It is through the body that the transformation from civilian to soldier is experienced and expressed.<sup>205</sup> This is associated with socially constructed bodily needs and functions that are

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<sup>201</sup> Hockey, John (2003), "No More Heroes: Masculinity in the Infantry" in Paul R. Higate (ed), *Military Masculinities: Identity and the State*, Praeger Publishers, p. 17

<sup>202</sup> Barrett, "The organizational construction of hegemonic masculinity: the case of the US Navy", p. 140

<sup>203</sup> Ibid., p. 133

<sup>204</sup> Kimmel, Michael S. (1994), "Masculinity as Homophobia: Fear, Shame, and Silence in the Construction of Gender Identity" in Harry Brod and Michael Kafuman (eds), *Theorizing Masculinities*, SAGE Publications, p. 126

<sup>205</sup> Woodward, "Locating Military Masculinities: Space, Place, and the Formation of Gender Identity in the British Army", p. 51

linked to hegemonic definitions of masculinity.<sup>206</sup> Women's bodies are often regarded as weak, leaky and reproductively problematic, reinforcing the idea that women are not naturally suited to military service whereas men are.<sup>207</sup> Indeed, at times of combat, the body is placed at risk, threatened with danger, and subjected to deprivation of food or sleep, and exposure to fire or the elements. Therefore, physical inadequacy is portrayed as being weak and womanly and thus deemed to be the antithesis of warrior behavior.<sup>208</sup> For example, in men's interviews in Barrett's study, women were depicted as emotionally unstable, less able to endure physical challenges, and unable to tolerate the harsh conditions of ship life.<sup>209</sup> This gendered construction of men's and women's bodies reinforces not only the hegemony of men as a social grouping in the military, but also men's rightful place as society's warriors.<sup>210</sup>

The construction of men's bodies also revolves around the construction of heterosexuality. Although the idea of uniform heterosexuality has functioned more at the level of rhetoric rather than reality in militaries,<sup>211</sup> and the evidence suggests that the inclusion of sexual minorities has

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<sup>206</sup> Morgan, David H. J. (1994), "Theater of War: Combat, the Military, and Masculinities" in Harry Brod and Michael Kafuman (eds), *Theorizing Masculinities*, SAGE Publications, p. 167

<sup>207</sup> Basham, "Gender and Militaries: the importance of military masculinities for the conduct of state sanctioned violence", p. 36

<sup>208</sup> Hockey, "No More Heroes: Masculinity in the Infantry", p. 17

<sup>209</sup> Barrett, "The organizational construction of hegemonic masculinity: the case of the US Navy", p. 140

<sup>210</sup> Basham, "Gender and Militaries: the importance of military masculinities for the conduct of state sanctioned violence", p. 36

<sup>211</sup> Higate, Paul R. (2003), "Concluding Thoughts: Looking to the Future" in Paul R. Higate (ed), *Military Masculinities: Identity and the State*, Praeger Publishers, p. 209

had no impact on military effectiveness,<sup>212</sup> the inscription of heterosexuality into all aspects of culture in armed forces persists, even in militaries where sexual minorities are admitted.<sup>213</sup> The idea that 'real men' chase women, and 'real men' should be sexually athletic at every available opportunity establishes direct links between the bodies of women and the bodily needs of men.<sup>214</sup> This heterosexist culture, at the more overt level, generates homophobia with references to queers and warnings about not bending over in the presence of those whose heterosexual masculinity might be in question.<sup>215</sup> Up until 2000, the British armed forces routinely excluded sexual minorities from the ranks and homosexuality was considered incompatible with service in the armed forces. This is unsurprising given that the British military characterized sexual minorities as 'threats' to operational effectiveness and national security; as 'ill' and 'unnatural'; and sexually predatory, especially towards younger recruits.<sup>216</sup> In the account of gendered narratives of war and conflict by Sjoberg, traits identified with queer, non-traditional, or difficult-to read gender presentations are associated with uncertainty, mystery, exoticism, and danger, while traits identified with masculinity are associated with bravery in war-fighting and traits identified with femininity are associated with the need for protection from wars.<sup>217</sup> Peterson points out that the

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<sup>212</sup> Basham, "Gender and Militaries: the importance of military masculinities for the conduct of state sanctioned violence", p. 37

<sup>213</sup> Ibid., p. 38

<sup>214</sup> Hockey, "No More Heroes: Masculinity in the Infantry", p. 18

<sup>215</sup> Morgan, "Theater of War: Combat, the Military, and Masculinities", p. 167

<sup>216</sup> Basham, "Gender and Militaries: the importance of military masculinities for the conduct of state sanctioned violence", p. 37

<sup>217</sup> Sjoberg, *Gendering Global Conflict: Toward a Feminist Theory of War*, p. 90

normalization of heterosexism entails male entitlement to women's sexuality, bodies, and labor. Women's bodies are relegated as objects of male sexual gratification and the means of ensuring group continuity. According to Peterson, the hegemonic masculinity constituted by heterosexist practice normalizes the subordination of women and naturalizes abuse of women as an expression of male power against women and insufficiently masculine men.<sup>218</sup> This was shown well in the comments of Airborne soldiers in Winslow's study. Men who spent a great deal of time together felt a need to prove that they were not homosexuals by going out and getting themselves a woman. In one soldier's explanation, woman was depicted as a machine, an object that soldiers would use as much as possible and talk about as much as possible because afterwards there wouldn't be any women around.<sup>219</sup>

The naturalness of the patriarchal notion of a masculine-feminine polarity that involves the creation of soldiers simultaneously constructs the 'other', whether that be women, people of color, or homosexuality, and subsequently constructs the 'self' vis-à-vis this other. In order for intense bonding among soldiers to be maintained, self and other must remain both distinct and separate.<sup>220</sup> Young soldiers learn to deny, indeed to obliterate, the 'other' within themselves.<sup>221</sup>

The military has often justified exclusionary laws and policies on the grounds of preserving

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<sup>218</sup> Peterson, V. Spike (1999), "Political Identities/Nationalism as Heterosexism", *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 40

<sup>219</sup> Winslow, "Rites of Passage and Group Bonding in the Canadian Airborne", p. 446

<sup>220</sup> Whitworth, *Men, Militarism, and UN Peacekeeping: A Gendered Analysis*, p. 162

<sup>221</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 161

combat effectiveness. Proponents argue that combat effectiveness and unit cohesion are best achieved in homogeneous combat units.<sup>222</sup> In a 'cult of masculinity' with a core principle of exclusion, women and homosexuals are viewed as outsiders and deviants in a man's world.<sup>223</sup> For some observers, the presence of women within militaries is both a symptom and a cause of the decline of the advanced military. By this view, it would be difficult to attract young men to join militaries that include women, gay men, and lesbians, and more difficult to train them to bond with their fellow soldiers.<sup>224</sup> In this vein, most soldiers in Winslow's research were convinced that human right legislation, requiring the Armed Forces to stop discriminating against women and against racial and sexual minorities, would weaken the military and contribute to its acceptance of unqualified soldiers.<sup>225</sup> One soldier's comment concerning homosexuality reflected how gay men were dehumanized in the Airborne: 'We can't accept homosexuality because it represents weakness. I've heard of guys getting dragged off to the toilets and getting their kneecaps and wrists broken by banging them on toilet doors. One guy got his leg broken, boot-kicked, just so he would leave.'<sup>226</sup> From this case, it is identified that the exclusivity culture of

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<sup>222</sup> Dunivin, Karen O. (1994), "Military Culture: Change and Continuity", *Armed Forces & Society*, Vol. 20, No. 4, p. 535

<sup>223</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 536

<sup>224</sup> Whitworth, *Men, Militarism, and UN Peacekeeping: A Gendered Analysis*, p. 162

<sup>225</sup> Razack, Sherene H. (2004), *Dark Threats & White Knights: The Somalia Affair, Peacekeeping, and the New Imperialism*, University of Toronto Press, p. 70

<sup>226</sup> Winslow, "Rites of Passage and Group Bonding in the Canadian Airborne", p. 446

military, which encourages soldiers to construct their identities through radical othering, could condone vicious treatment of members of so-called socially subordinate groups.<sup>227</sup>

Given that manifestations of misogyny take a variety of forms, from the serial murder and horrific mutilation of women to protracted objectification such that women are ideologically constructed in terms purely of their disembodied sexual characteristics,<sup>228</sup> shades of misogyny can be commonly found across a range of masculinized contexts such as building sites, rugby clubs, police force or the prison service.<sup>229</sup> Although the military is by no means the only site where all-male groups tell sexual jokes, stories of sexual conquest, share pornography and denigrate women, it is true that everyday practices involving the denigration of women and the reinforcement of hyper-masculinity are frequently overlooked or encouraged by military personnel, despite being officially banned.<sup>230</sup> Whereas other rule-breaking behavior such as stealing is not tolerated, disparaging women, because of its perceived value in sustaining the hegemonic masculine culture of militaries, not only goes unchecked, but is enabled.<sup>231</sup> Furthermore, in this culture, the environment in which violent and demeaning hazing practices are more likely to be tolerated and even considered beneficial for young men can be created

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<sup>227</sup> Harrison, "Violence in the Military Community" p. 75

<sup>228</sup> Higate, "'Soft Clerks' and 'Hard Civvies': Pluralizing Military Masculinities", p. 36

<sup>229</sup> Ibid., p, 37

<sup>230</sup> Ibid., p. 35

<sup>231</sup> Basham, "Gender and Militaries: the importance of military masculinities for the conduct of state sanctioned violence", p. 35

relatively easily.<sup>232</sup> Much of the scholarly work on war and conflict has examined how this hyper-masculine military culture and militarized masculinity have longstanding relationships with extreme violence against women.<sup>233</sup> It is for this reason that the concept of militarized masculinity has been the predominant explanation of why male peacekeepers engage in sexually exploitive activities in peacekeeping operations.<sup>234</sup>

As noted in the concept of hegemonic masculinity, not all soldiers fit the hegemonic model in the military that requires emotional control, physical fitness, the willingness to use aggression and violence, and risk-taking.<sup>235</sup> However, this model acts as a cultural ideal in more or less overt ways, and thus, all soldiers negotiate their masculinity in relation to it.<sup>236</sup> In terms of this, militaries are seen as sites of production and reproduction of hegemonic masculinity.<sup>237</sup> Put another way, militarized masculinity has discursive effects on the everyday lives of men although it is an idealized, even fictional version of masculine performance, one that few can ever achieve.<sup>238</sup>

Historically, part of the explanation for this connection rests with the fact that significant numbers

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<sup>232</sup> Allan, Elizabeth J. (2004) "Hazing and gender: analyzing the obvious" in Hank Nuwer (ed), *The Hazing Reader*, Indiana University Press, p. 282

<sup>233</sup> Morgan, "Theater of War: Combat, the Military, and Masculinities", p. 166

<sup>234</sup> Higate and Henry, "Engendering (In)security in Peace Support Operations", p. 481

<sup>235</sup> Hinojosa, Raman (2010), "Doing Hegemony: Military, Men, and Constructing A Hegemonic Masculinity", *The Journal of Men's Studies* Vol. 18, No. 2, p. 180

<sup>236</sup> Duncanson, "Hegemonic Masculinity and the Possibility of Change in Gender Relations", p. 234

<sup>237</sup> Cogan, Alison M. et al. (2019), "Intersections of US Military Culture, Hegemonic Masculinity, and Health Care among Injured Male Service", *Men and Masculinities*, Vol. 22, No. 3, p. 2

<sup>238</sup> Godfrey, "Military, masculinity and mediated representations: (con)fusing the real and the reel", p. 206

of men served in military organizations, whether in times of war or peace. What is more, these men were expected to carry the marks of their military service with them when they returned to civilian life.<sup>239</sup> From the fieldwork exploring the relationship between military service and homelessness among ex-servicemen, Higate found out that ex-service homeless individuals and those who secured paid employment shared a surprising degree of military residues, that is, military-masculine gender ideology.<sup>240</sup> A strong desire to rekindle camaraderie with other men, the emphasis on a fit and resilient body, and the reluctance to seek assistance in times of need including emotional crisis were identifiable patterns.<sup>241</sup> This shows that military experience produces broad tendencies in values, beliefs, attitudes, and actions that members of the military may carry over into civilian life.<sup>242</sup> Popular culture has also participated in the perpetuation of these normative ideas of militarized masculinity by appropriating veterans' stories for entertainment and rewriting them into an extreme model of stoic and unfailingly agentic masculinity. In this way, militarized masculinity influences societal norms for men, which in turn influences norms of militarized masculinity in an iterative cycle.<sup>243</sup>

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<sup>239</sup> Ibid., pp. 205-206

<sup>240</sup> Higate, Paul (2001), "Theorizing Continuity: From Military to Civilian Life", *Armed Forces & Society*, Vol. 27, No. 3, p. 453

<sup>241</sup> Ibid., pp. 453-455

<sup>242</sup> Higate, "'Soft Clerks' and 'Hard Civvies': Pluralizing Military Masculinities", p. 34

<sup>243</sup> Shields, D. M. (2016), "Military Masculinity, Movies, and the DSM: Narratives of Institutionally (En)Gendered Trauma", *Psychology of Men & Masculinity*, Vol. 17, No. 1, p. 65



As noted above, militaries promote hyper-masculine values and behaviors. However, the fact that the exact nature of relationships between men and militaries are themselves various and plural should not be overlooked when individual military identities are explored. There are militarized masculinities, and not just singular universal militarized masculinity.<sup>244</sup> Several empirical studies have shown that military organization cannot be seen straightforwardly as a site for the construction of a single embodied masculinity.<sup>245</sup> For example, Woodward showed that multiple militarized masculinities were constructed within the British Army with reference to two different locations – the army’s training areas and within the domestic confines of military barracks. According to Woodward, the rural areas where most training took place provided the backdrop, a challenging location against which the recruits were pitted.<sup>246</sup> To deal with the challenges of both the training and its location, soldiers must be ‘fighting fit’. Given many recruits’ urban background, and lack of affinity for the natural environment,<sup>247</sup> the rural location was very important in that it was the setting for the provision of circumstances in which emotions such as excitement, fear, and a sense of challenge could be stimulated and then overcome by acquiring the necessary physical and mental attributes. That is, the rural served as the medium through which specific values associated with the model of militarized masculinity were

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<sup>244</sup> Higate, ““Soft Clerks” and “Hard Civvies”: Pluralizing Military Masculinities”, p. 29

<sup>245</sup> Morgan, “Theater of War: Combat, the Military, and Masculinities”, p. 174

<sup>246</sup> Woodward, Rachel (2000), “Warrior Heroes and Little Green Men: Soldiers, Military Training, and the Construction of Rural Masculinities”, *Rural Sociology*, Vol. 65, No. 4, p. 646

<sup>247</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 648

transmitted to soldiers.<sup>248</sup> However, the rural training area was not the sole space in which the process of construction of militarized masculinities was developed. The domestic space of the barrack block also provided the setting for the inculcation of soldierly values.<sup>249</sup> In this space, order, cleanliness, and hygiene were promoted unremittingly. New recruits were instructed on the maintenance of that space to predetermined standards and subjected to regular room inspections. While the care of domestic space was a task associated, culturally and socially, with women and femininities, training soldiers in the care of their domestic environment was an essential part of basic training.<sup>250</sup> That is, through interaction with and response to these different environments, recruits find new ways of using, occupying and presenting their bodies, which is designed explicitly for the production of soldiers.<sup>251</sup> Regarding this seemingly paradoxical femininity in the masculine figure of a warrior-soldier, Welland notes that soldiering subjectivity is achieved through the expulsion of, not the 'feminine' traits of cleanliness, obedience, and domesticity, but through the demarcation and separation from, messiness, disorganization, and uncontrollability.<sup>252</sup>

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<sup>248</sup> Ibid., p. 650

<sup>249</sup> Woodward, "Locating Military Masculinities: Space, Place, and the Formation of Gender Identity in the British Army", p. 49

<sup>250</sup> Ibid., p. 50

<sup>251</sup> Ibid., p. 52

<sup>252</sup> Welland, Julia (2013), "Militarised violences, basic training, and the myths of asexuality and discipline", *Reviews of International Studies*, Vol. 39, No. 4, p. 897

Barrett's study of masculinities within the US Navy illustrated how multiple masculinities could coexist in an organization. By focusing on the differentiation of masculinities within various sites within the Navy, this study deconstructed a universal image of masculinity and outlined a variety of alternative masculinities and strategies various groups of men used to create, negotiate, and maintain masculine identities. According to this study, the US Navy had three combat specialties (surface warfare, aviation, and submarine warfare) and numerous support communities (including supply corps, medical corps, intelligence, and general unrestricted line).<sup>253</sup> The specialty that evoked the highest status among naval officers was aviation. Aviators came closest to embodying the ideal of hegemonic masculinity. They emphasized their masculinity in terms of risk taking in the face of danger, representing other traditional preserves of men, such as boldness, technical mastery of complex machinery, courage, autonomy, and aggressive heterosexual activity.<sup>254</sup> Naval officers who operated surface ships made up the largest community in the US Navy. They drew upon the ideas of enduring hardship and calmly demonstrating competence in the face of pressure.<sup>255</sup> The organizational practices such as surveillance, testing, recording, and keeping career records made the officers yearn for the opportunity to demonstrate their coordination and agility of physical movements and rational processing of complex information under conditions of extreme stress.<sup>256</sup> Supply officers were considered 'non-operational support' and

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<sup>253</sup> Barrett, "The organizational construction of hegemonic masculinity: the case of the US Navy", pp. 130-131

<sup>254</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 134

<sup>255</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 136

<sup>256</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 138

occupied the lowest status in the Navy. They had fewer opportunities to demonstrate the hallmark of the hegemonic ideal in the naval culture. The gendered nature of this status hierarchy was expressed in the insulting terms used to describe supply officers such as 'supply pussies', or 'suppo weenies'.<sup>257</sup> Some supply officers compensated for feelings of inferiority with regard to combat specialists by displaying power in other ways, such as withholding the flow of supplies and the appropriation of funds. They drew on masculine themes of rationality and responsibility as a source of identity.<sup>258</sup> This study showed that militarized masculinities operated in relation to one another, rather than as a single monolithic gendered military identity.

Soldiers in militaries across the world – state and non-state, democratic and autocratic, offensive and defensive, small and large – have been expected to demonstrate the best sort of masculinity. Expectations of ideal soldiers are that they be brave, loyal, stoic and deal with the atrocities of war in order to provide protection to the civilian women and children that they are fighting to protect, to maintain, and to rejoin.<sup>259</sup> Historically, this warrior hero model has prevailed as a key symbol of masculinity,<sup>260</sup> requiring all other men to position themselves in relation to it. Although this model is not assumed to be normal in the statistical sense, male privilege has been granted to many men by the circulation of hegemonic ideas about masculinity.<sup>261</sup> This is why it

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<sup>257</sup> Ibid.

<sup>258</sup> Ibid., p. 139

<sup>259</sup> Sjoberg, *Gendering Global Conflict: Toward a Feminist Theory of War*, p. 61

<sup>260</sup> Morgan, "Theater of War: Combat, the Military, and Masculinities", p. 165

<sup>261</sup> Basham, "Gender and Militaries: the importance of military masculinities for the conduct of state sanctioned violence", p. 31

is important to explore how certain military forms of masculine performance pervade the everyday lives of men and impact the construction of gender order as a whole. However, it should not be underestimated that the warrior hero model, as one type of militarized masculinities, is always open to subversion and contradiction as well as reproduction.<sup>262</sup> This implies that the impact of military service on soldiers' identities and behavioral outcomes can be individually based although soldiers are commonly expected to practice hegemonic masculinity as a warrior hero.<sup>263</sup> That is, there is always variation in how military experiences influence service members' individual identities, which leads to the multiple constructions of militarized masculinities.

As suggested above, the concept of militarized masculinity has been a significant tool to unpack complicated ways in which individuals are produced as gendered subjects, and those individuals identify themselves and perform gender within military institutions and settings.<sup>264</sup> Authors writing on militarized masculinities have frequently pointed to the inculcation and prioritization of particular traits within the soldiers,<sup>265</sup> which are understood as being forged through

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<sup>262</sup> Woodward, "Warrior Heroes and Little Green Men: Soldiers, Military Training, and the Construction of Rural Masculinities", p. 644

<sup>263</sup> Brooke, Erika J. and Peck, Jennifer H. (2019), "Does the Military Make the (Wo)man? An Examination of Gender Differences Among Incarcerated Veterans", *Crime & Delinquency*, Vol. 65, No. 14, p. 1927

<sup>264</sup> Henry, Marsha (2017), "Problematizing military masculinity, intersectionality and male vulnerability in feminist critical military studies", *Critical Military Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 2, p. 187

<sup>265</sup> Welland, "Militarised violences, basic training, and the myths of asexuality and discipline", p. 884

widespread and pervasive dichotomies such as masculine/feminine, strong/weak, and heterosexual/homosexual. While the former terms are tightly aligned with soldierly attributes, the latter terms are usually excluded from understandings of what it is to be militarized and masculine, and instead come to represent what a militarized masculine subject is not.<sup>266</sup> That is, many scholars argue that the dominant conception of masculinity within militarized contexts is largely defined by being not feminine, weak, and queer.<sup>267</sup> However, as military systems have undergone profound changes within the last decades, such as the introduction of new technologies in warfare, stronger involvement in non-traditional military missions other than war,<sup>268</sup> and the inclusion of diverse bodies, e.g., lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) military service personnel,<sup>269</sup> some recent work on militaries, masculinities, and war has challenged the common wisdoms of militarized masculinities, revealing the fluidity and porosity of the boundary upon which the gender order of the military relies. By paying attention to the marginal of masculinities and war (e.g., women and non-heterosexual soldiers, non-white contractors in private security markets) and looking beyond combat soldiers to other

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<sup>266</sup> Ibid., p. 885

<sup>267</sup> Belkin, Aaron (2012), *Bring Me Men: Military Masculinity and the Benign Façade of American Empire 1898-2001*, Columbia University Press: New York, p. 4

<sup>268</sup> Koeszegi, Sabine T. et al. (2014), "The War against the Female Soldier? The Effects of Masculine Culture on Workplace Aggression", *Armed Forces & Society*, Vol. 40, No. 2, p. 229

<sup>269</sup> Van Gildar, Bobbi J. (2017), "Coping with Sexual Identity Stigma in the U.S. Military: An Examination of Identity Management Practices Prior to and After the Repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell"", *Identity: An International Journal of Theory and Research*, Vol. 17, No. 3, p. 156

subjectivities of war (e.g., veterans, drone operators),<sup>270</sup> this work demonstrates the complexities, contradictions, and instability of militarized masculinities.

The presence of women soldiers contributes to complicating understandings of militarized masculinities. According to Zalewski, the connection between militarized bodies and men has become less reliable due to the increasing formal participation of women in the military activities. That is, the prior undoubtedness of the association between 'male military bodies' and classic imaginaries of male muscularity, epitomized in the idealized figure of the military man, can no longer hold.<sup>271</sup> Ombati's work on the Kenyan women combatants in the war against al-Shabaab insurgent in Somalia showed how traditional gender role definitions were reproduced and challenged by women's soldiering. Many women combatants in the Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) were deployed alongside men in the campaign to dislodge the al-Shabaab militants. The media was awash with images, pictures and articles of female soldiers in martial action, professionally preparing for and participating in combat, carrying weapons, jumping out of warplanes, and riding on tanks.<sup>272</sup> The KDF spokesperson said that female combatants were as good as their male counterparts and allayed fears that women would be less suited to or qualified for

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<sup>270</sup> Chisholm, Amanda and Tidy, Joanna (2017), "Beyond the hegemonic in the study of militaries, masculinities, and war", *Critical Military Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 2, pp. 99-100

<sup>271</sup> Zalewski, Marysia (2017), "What's the problem with the concept of military masculinities?", *Critical Military Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 2, p. 201

<sup>272</sup> Ombati, Mokua (2015), "Feminine masculinities in the military: The case of female combatants in the Kenya Defence Forces' operations in Somalia", *African Security Review*, Vol. 24, No. 4, p. 408

combat.<sup>273</sup> However, at the same time, women soldiers were expected to raise the morale of their male colleagues and make the army a home away from home.<sup>274</sup> Sasson-Levy, in her work on the construction of gender identities among women soldiers in Israel, argued that while women soldiers in masculine roles challenged the dichotomized military gender order and gave women soldiers a sense of personal power and authority, these women adapted themselves to the androcentric norms of the military, which associate power and authority exclusively with masculinity.<sup>275</sup> This work shows that soldiering carried out by a range of gendered and 'othered' bodies can cast into doubt the firm connections between militarism and masculinity and gendered and sexed binary corporeality,<sup>276</sup> though the gender regime of the military is particularly resistant to change.<sup>277</sup> In this vein, some feminist scholars stress the need to integrate female bodies into military institutions in order to disrupt hegemonic militarized masculinity.<sup>278</sup>

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<sup>273</sup> Ibid., p. 409

<sup>274</sup> Ibid., p. 410

<sup>275</sup> Sasson-Levy, Orna (2011), "Research on Gender and the Military in Israel: From a Gendered Organization to Inequality Regimes", *Israel Studies Review*, Vol. 26, No. 2, p. 81

<sup>276</sup> Zalewski, "What's the problem with the concept of military masculinities?", p. 202

<sup>277</sup> Sasson-Levy, "Research on Gender and the Military in Israel: From a Gendered Organization to Inequality Regimes", p. 92

<sup>278</sup> Cockburn, Cynthia and Hubic, Meliha (2002) "Gender and the peacekeeping military: A view from Bosnian women's organizations" in Cynthia Cockburn and Dubravka Zarkov (eds), *The Postwar Moment: Militaries, Masculinities, and International Peacekeeping*, Lawrence & Wishart, p. 116; Hooper, Charlotte (2001), *Manly States: Masculinities, International Relations, and Gender Politics*, Columbia University Press, p. 231; Duncanson, Claire and Woodward, Rachel (2016), "Regendering the military: Theorizing women's military participation", *Security dialogue*, Vol. 47, No. 1, p. 12



Military culture has traditionally been heteronormative and homophobic and thus presents a series of challenges to LGBT military service personnel who choose to come out to comrades and military leaders.<sup>279</sup> They are likely to face harassment, ostracism, or violence from their fellow service personnel.<sup>280</sup> Despite these existing threats, some studies examining the experiences of gay and lesbian soldiers demonstrate how queer identities can simultaneously reiterate and disrupt heteronormativity. In the study on the identity management practices of non-heterosexual service members in the US military, Van Gildar found out that many LGB soldiers employed the same identity concealment strategies that they employed prior to the repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" (DADT) policy.<sup>281</sup> Due to the continued social demands for conformity and the stigmatization of LGB identities, most participants in this study chose to cultivate network ignorance, an identity management strategy grounded in secrecy and closedness that involves performing heterosexuality in everyday activities and interactions, avoiding conversations related to romance, sex, or LGBT identities, and segmenting individual's personal and professional lives.<sup>282</sup> However, after the repeal of DADT, some soldiers adopted three new strategies grounded in openness: combating microaggressions; correcting misperceptions; and discontinuing overt fabrication. For example, two lesbian soldiers corrected others who insinuated the wrong gender pronoun when asking about these soldiers' romantic partners. In addition, for one gay soldier,

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<sup>279</sup> Van Gildar, "Coping with Sexual Identity Stigma in the U.S. Military: An Examination of Identity Management Practices Prior to and After the Repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell"", p. 156

<sup>280</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 157

<sup>281</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 166

<sup>282</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 162

coming out served as an opportunity to educate his heterosexual comrades about other sexualities and to let them know that being gay does not mean weakness. He described this encounter as especially positive, in that he was able to challenge dominant stereotypes.<sup>283</sup> Although many of the LGB persons who employed these new strategies did not make the decision to serve openly,<sup>284</sup> it was revealed that even small changes to self-presentation behaviors could open a space where gendered boundaries surrounding the pervasive nature of heterosexism and homonegativity are challenged and confused.<sup>285</sup> The most recent study on the active duty service members' perceptions of transgender people serving in the US military also showed that hegemonic discourses about heteronormative conformity could be disrupted. In this study, recognizing the benefits of diversity within the military, many of the heterosexual and LGB service members expressed broad support for transgender military service, which contradicts a belief that transgender service members degrade unit cohesion and readiness.<sup>286</sup>

Chisholm's autoethnographic research about various masculinities that were brought into neoliberal security markets in Afghanistan also demonstrated that hegemonic conceptions of militarized masculinities could change when they colluded with neoliberal market logics.<sup>287</sup>

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<sup>283</sup> Ibid., p. 167

<sup>284</sup> Ibid., p. 172

<sup>285</sup> Bulmer, Sarah (2013), "Patriarchal Confusion?: Making Sense of Gay and Lesbian Military Identity", *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, Vol. 15, No. 2, p. 150

<sup>286</sup> Dunlap, Shannon L. et al. (2020), "Support for Transgender Military Service from Active Duty United States Military Personnel", *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*, Vol. 18, No. 1, p. 137

<sup>287</sup> Chisholm, Amanda (2017), "Clients, contractors, and the everyday masculinities in global private security", *Critical Military Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 2, p. 124

Chisholm, as both a researcher and client, focused on the everyday encounters between the clients, including herself, and two archetypes of security contractors, white men and the Gurkhas – Nepalese men with collectively over 200 years of military history.<sup>288</sup> While Western men's position as professional and valued contractors was immediately given, Gurkhas had to prove their value to the Western clients. This was a product of the broader security market that has sustained Western whiteness and Western security training as the necessary skills one must have to perform security. Western clients could trust Gurkhas because their natural martial masculinities have been refined and professionalized through years of service with the British military.<sup>289</sup> However, through everyday gendered encounters, in particular with female clients, professionalism of white contractors was called into question. White men's gaze upon female clients, and their flirty, misogynistic jokes during social times, alongside their expressed attitude towards women in general, were seen as a source of insecurity. On the contrary, many women's feelings of security with Gurkha contractors came through their ability to be respectful to the client, to keep a friendly distance from the client, and to blend into local populations easily. Chisholm admitted that these valuations of Gurkhas could reproduce an oriental imagining of these men that naturally separates them from their Western contractor counterparts.<sup>290</sup> However, by showing the ways in which security value came through the racial and gendered encounters between the client and contractor, Chisholm demonstrated that hegemonic masculinities as

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<sup>288</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 127

<sup>289</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 134

<sup>290</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 132

articulated within traditional military spaces, when brought to the market, did not always maintain the same privileged space as the archetype for security. In other words, the marginal men and masculinities in market evaluation could be the preferred masculine performances among the clients.<sup>291</sup>

By engaging with the experiences of veterans transitioning from military to civilian life in Western states, Bulmer and Eichler argue that the process of unmaking militarized masculinities destabilizes the boundary of military/civilian and their implied masculine/feminine gendering, which has been an empirical focus of feminist research about the making of militarized masculinities. The process of transition for veterans is not so straightforward. It involves the negotiation of masculinities and femininities across military and civilian spheres in complex, and often contradictory, ways.<sup>292</sup> According to Bulmer and Eichler, feminist scholarship has tended to privilege veterans' military identity at the expense of the civilian identity they are in a process of acquiring, positing the assumption that veterans are forever beholden to their militarized identities, or are always already militarized.<sup>293</sup> This view of a clear-cut militarized identity is problematic in that it does not account for the ambiguities and tensions of lived experiences which exceed such a straightforward categorization.<sup>294</sup> For example, injured veterans are often

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<sup>291</sup> Ibid., p. 138

<sup>292</sup> Bulmer, Sarah and Eichler, Maya (2017), "Unmaking militarized masculinity: veterans and the project of military-to-civilian transition", *Critical Military Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 2, p. 162

<sup>293</sup> Ibid., p. 171

<sup>294</sup> Ibid., p. 173

pictured with their children in poses which suggest intimacy and emotional connectedness, traits which are typically associated with the femininity. This representation of war-wounded veteran body is itself a site of conflicted meaning, suggesting both resilience and vulnerability, violence and peace, failure and triumph. That is, injured veterans are simultaneously at the center and margins of hegemonic masculinity.<sup>295</sup> Another example is that veterans may have an ambivalent attitude towards the military or the activities of that military, and yet remain proud of their service. Many British veterans from Gulf War Syndrome blamed the military for making them sick and avoiding responsibilities for that sickness, yet they remained fiercely loyal to that military. All these examples show that the oppositional process of militarization and demilitarization co-exist through the complex interplay of multiple ever-shifting and precarious distinctions which do not nest neatly.<sup>296</sup>

Daggett argues that the use of drones in combat can queer the experience of killing in war as new drone geographies and bodies cannot be located along traditional gendered maps that orient killing in war. The hegemonic masculinity of the warrior is defined against both the feminine and the queer, marking the 'straight' path of combat, whose familiar landmarks such as enemy, courage and combat provide moral and practical bearings for killing in war.<sup>297</sup> However, these bearings no longer make sense for drone warfare, which radically deviates from two of its

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<sup>295</sup> Ibid., p. 172

<sup>296</sup> Ibid., p. 173

<sup>297</sup> Daggett, Cara (2015), "Drone Disorientations: How "Unmanned" Weapons Queer the Experiences of Killing in War", *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, Vol. 17, No. 3, p. 362

main axes: the home-combat and distance-intimacy binaries. These two axes are interrelated in space and time, and together, they locate the pinnacle of hegemonic warrior masculinity at the site of intimate killing in the midst of combat, with other experiences judged by their proximity to this point.<sup>298</sup> Drone operators often find themselves uncomfortable along the home-combat binary as they are 'deployed-at-station', a novel military concept for 'in-betweenness' of killing with drones. Since drone operators are protected from death, they are disqualified from performing as 'real' warriors as their bodies are not sited in combat.<sup>299</sup> The distance-intimacy axis orders the technologically mediated experience of killing, ranging from close combat to long-range bombers and missiles. The distance enabled by long-range technologies makes it possible for soldiers to deny the humanity of victims and thus to kill large numbers of people, which they otherwise would not have been capable of doing.<sup>300</sup> However, drone warfare produces a contradictory moment of this axis. That is, there is a maximal distance between shooter and target, putting drones beyond long-range bombers, but at the same time there is an odd intimacy made possible by the drone cameras and surveillance capabilities.<sup>301</sup> This means that the use of drones can not only reinforce the techno-cultural distinction between 'their' space and 'our' space but also make drone operators feel guilt and grief.<sup>302</sup> In summary, drone warfare

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<sup>298</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 365

<sup>299</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 363

<sup>300</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 365

<sup>301</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 366

<sup>302</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 372

makes visible the instability and complexity of militarized masculinity and ruptures the heroic warrior model.<sup>303</sup>

Military culture is typically described as male dominated and hyper-masculine and traditional expressions of hegemonic masculinity are presumed.<sup>304</sup> Militaries, as masculine spaces where the associations of certain qualities with men are cemented and naturalized,<sup>305</sup> tap into masculine assets of soldering by contrasting them with images of femininity.<sup>306</sup> However, this does not mean that militaries produce a single monolithic gendered military identity. Rather, across a range of work within feminist international relations and critical men and masculinities, it has demonstrated that militarized masculinities are pliable, plural, and practiced in contingent and contradictory ways in many empirical contexts.<sup>307</sup> The intersection of various factors including race, class, ethnicity, and gender as well as the differing military experiences of soldiers in an array of military settings contributes to producing multiplicity and complexity in the making of militarized masculinities.<sup>308</sup> Besides, as the role and composition of militaries has changed,

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<sup>303</sup> Millar, Katharine M. and Tidy, Joanna (2017), "Combat as a moving target: masculinities, the heroic soldier myth, and normative martial violence", *Critical Military Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 2, p. 362

<sup>304</sup> McAllister, Lauren et al. (2019), "Masculinities and emotional expression in UK servicemen: 'Big boys don't cry'?", *Journal of Gender Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 3, p. 258

<sup>305</sup> Hooper, *Manly States: Masculinities, International Relations, and Gender Politics*, p. 231

<sup>306</sup> Ombati, "Feminine masculinities in the military: The case of female combatants in the Kenya Defence Forces' operations in Somalia", p. 404

<sup>307</sup> Henry, "Problematizing military masculinity, intersectionality and male vulnerability in feminist critical military studies", p. 186

<sup>308</sup> Sasson-Levy, "Research on Gender and the Military in Israel: From a Gendered Organization to Inequality Regimes", p. 91

scholars have challenged some of the fundamental understandings of previous scholarship, such as binaries of masculine/feminine and heterosexual/homosexual.<sup>309</sup> In reality, while the ideal of militarized masculinity depends on disavowing unmasculine practices (e.g., weakness, subordination, queerness), the military also incites the unmasculine (e.g., teamwork, obedience, self-sacrifice), and forces service members to inhabit in it in order to be disciplined and conform to power.<sup>310</sup> All these studies demonstrate the complexity, ambiguity and instability of militarized masculinities.

As one of the factors that complicate understandings of militarized masculinities, some scholars suggest that growing employment of the military on peace operations and other non-traditional security tasks can affect soldiers' military identities.<sup>311</sup> For example, Op Den Buijs et al. demonstrated that soldiers from Belgium, Estonia, Canada and the Netherlands identified with both warrior and peacekeeper roles at the same time, and a preference for one role was not linked to a dislike for the other.<sup>312</sup> However, the impact of involvement in peacekeeping on the soldiers' masculinities has not frequently been examined. Therefore, the next section explores

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<sup>309</sup> Bulmer and Eichler, "Unmaking militarized masculinity: veterans and the project of military-to-civilian transition", p. 164

<sup>310</sup> Belkin, *Bring Me Men: Military Masculinity and the Benign Façade of American Empire 1898-2001*, p. 24; Titunik, Regina F. (2008), "The Myth of the Macho Military", *Polity*, Vol. 40, No. 2, p. 147

<sup>311</sup> Op Den Buijs, T. et al (2019), "Warrior and peacekeeper role identities: associations with self-esteem, organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior", *Journal of Military Studies*, Vol. 8, No. 2019, p. 3

<sup>312</sup> Ibid., p. 11



whether peacekeeping operations can contribute to construction of alternative militarized masculinities and whether these new types of masculinities can challenge the hegemonic model by utilizing the concept of 'peacekeeper masculinity', as suggested by Claire Duncanson.

#### **1.4. An Alternative Discourse of Peacekeeper Masculinity**

All peace operations involve military personnel, though they may or may not be armed. In some operations, military personnel are unarmed, and their main tasks are simply to watch and report on what they see. They monitor a cease-fire, the withdrawal of troops, or other terms of an agreement. In contrast to this, some peace enforcement missions involve substantial military forces to provide security and to ensure compliance with a cease-fire. They have a mandate to use force for purposes in addition to self-defense.<sup>313</sup> Although not all missions are alike, many feminist scholars have critiqued the use of military personnel for peacekeeping purposes, because of their particular attention to the way in which military identities are commonly constructed based on dichotomous hierarchical thinking.<sup>314</sup> Peacekeepers are usually considered as heroic, advanced, civilized protector while people in lands of conflict are seen as primarily backward, weak, passive victims of war and the uncivilized, barbaric hordes.<sup>315</sup> This is in line with the criticism of Mutua, a harsh critic of human rights activism. In what Mutua describes as the

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<sup>313</sup> Fortna, Virginia Page (2008), *Does Peacekeeping Work? Shaping Belligerents' Choices after Civil War*, Princeton University Press, pp. 6-7

<sup>314</sup> Duncanson, *Forces for Good? Military Masculinities and Peacebuilding in Afghanistan and Iraq*, p. 18

<sup>315</sup> Duncanson, "Hegemonic Masculinity and the Possibility of Change in Gender Relations", p. 237

Savages/Victims/Saviors dynamics, human rights activists paint the aggressors as The Savages, the people violated as The Victims, and themselves as The Saviors, fighting the Savages on behalf of the Victim.<sup>316</sup> In this narrative, the Saviors embody gendered and racialized masculinities, which are as connected to ideas of civilization, progress, democracy as they are to ideas of violence, aggression and misogyny.<sup>317</sup>

However, given that militarized masculinities are diverse and complex, male peacekeepers as military men can no longer be considered as a homogeneous group.<sup>318</sup> Peacekeepers' identities are neither fixed nor settled. They are multifaceted and dynamic and repeat the cycle of shaping and reshaping in the face of changing circumstances. Therefore, it is necessary to recognize the ways in which social identities are complex and heterogeneous, and the ways in which this social subject is composed of multiple and contradictory positioning or subjectivities.<sup>319</sup> Identities are not simply constructed as an aggregation of separate elements. Markers such as gender, class, race and nation mutually constitute, reinforce, and naturalize one another to make numerous different identities.<sup>320</sup> For this reason, although male peacekeepers have in common some

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<sup>316</sup> Haynes, Dina Francesca (2006) "Client-Centered Human Rights Advocacy", *Clinical Law Review*, Vol. 13, No. 1, p. 387

<sup>317</sup> Duncanson, *Forces for Good? Military Masculinities and Peacebuilding in Afghanistan and Iraq*, p. 33

<sup>318</sup> Higate and Henry, "Engendering (In)security in Peace Support Operations", p. 484

<sup>319</sup> Cossins, Anne (2003), "Saints, Sluts, and Sexual Assault: Rethinking the Relationship between Sex, Race, and Gender", *Social and Legal Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 1, p. 87

<sup>320</sup> Duncanson, *Forces for Good? Military Masculinities and Peacebuilding in Afghanistan and Iraq*, p. 32

aspects of masculinities, it needs to be recognized that performances of masculinities are interconnected with performances of other social identities.<sup>321</sup>

Moreover, the unique peacekeeping environment can play a role in shaping peacekeepers' complex and contradictory masculinities. On the one hand, peacekeeping missions operate in rapidly evolving and dangerous environments. Fragile states, a surge in extremist non-state groups and increasingly hostile ground conditions have rendered more complex peacekeeping mandates that seek to maintain peace and security and protect civilians.<sup>322</sup> On the other hand, the core principles of peacekeeping ensure that the activity never becomes wholly, or properly, militaristic, which disrupts prevailing notions of military purpose and structure.<sup>323</sup> This tension and contradiction that emerge from the clash between proper soldiering and peacekeeping requirements may shape complex and diverse soldier/peacekeeper identities. That is, some peacekeepers may construct alternative masculinities more suited to conflict resolution,<sup>324</sup> while others who feel that their masculinities can be threatened by peacekeeping duties may attempt

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<sup>321</sup> Harnois, Catherine E. (2017), "Intersectional Masculinities and Gendered Political Consciousness: How Do Race, Ethnicity and Sexuality Shape Men's Awareness of Gender Inequality and Support for Gender Activism?", *Sex Roles*, Vol. 77, No. 3, p. 143

<sup>322</sup> Portmess, Lisa and Romaya, Bassam (2015) "Digital Peacekeepers, Drone Surveillance and Information Fusion: A Philosophical Analysis of New Peacekeeping", *Theoria: A Journal of Social and Political Theory*, Vol. 62, No. 145, p. 5

<sup>323</sup> Kovatch, Bonnie (2016), "Sexual exploitation and abuse in UN peacekeeping missions: A case study of MONUC and MONUSCO", *The Journal of Middle East and Africa*, Vol. 7, No. 2, p. 170

<sup>324</sup> Duncanson, "Forces for Good? Narratives of Military Masculinity in Peacekeeping Operations", p. 77

to reconstitute or express their masculinities through acts of violence.<sup>325</sup> Therefore, to examine the impact of peacekeeping operations on soldiers' militarized masculinities, peacekeepers' complex identities and the multilayered nature of the peacekeeping context should be examined together, not reifying or homogenizing the category of militarized masculinities.

Vela's study shows this aspect well. According to Vela, the high level of insecurity in the context of robust peacekeeping in Mali created a space in which militarization was reinforced for the mission and its peacekeepers, in tension with civilian practices and goals.<sup>326</sup> Vela notes that having to work in what military peacekeepers saw as a particularly hostile environment and only being in contact with Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) made them more prone to understand the mission in terms of its military assets, to push for military solutions to problems, and to judge their interactions with civilian peacekeepers and the civilian components of the mission through a military lens. In this case, hierarchization, othering, and the us/them binary were reproduced.<sup>327</sup> However, resistance to militarization was also observed from the same peacekeepers at different moments. Some soldiers had to exchange the enemy-centered tactics of an offensive mission for the population-centered tactics of a peacekeeping mission. This adaptation led these soldiers to express that their relationship to the Malian population, as a population in need of help, was

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<sup>325</sup> Alexandra, Kylie (2011), "Peacekeepers' Privilege and Sexual Abuse in Post-Conflict Populations", *A Journal of Social Justice*, Vol. 23, No. 3, p. 373

<sup>326</sup> Vela, Vanessa Gauthier (2021), "MINUSMA and the Militarization of UN Peacekeeping", *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 28, No. 5, p. 838

<sup>327</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 852

significant to their sense of purpose as soldiers.<sup>328</sup> This study shows that militarization, as a multilayered process, can be reinforced but simultaneously be resisted or adapted by soldiers in the peacekeeping context, which is closely linked to the complexity of construction of soldiers' militarized masculinities in peacekeeping.

Focusing on this complexity, Duncanson argues that alternative British militarized masculinity was identified as a result of an increased focus on peace operations. According to her, much feminist literature tends to acknowledge and discuss the multiplicity, complexity, and dynamism of masculinities in theoretical terms, but to lose sight of it in empirical applications. To fill this gap, Duncanson examined autobiographical accounts of four British soldiers who were involved in peacekeeping in Bosnia in the 1990s in 2009 and the narratives of British soldiers who were deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq in 2013. In each case, Duncanson identified the instances where the traditional gender discourse and the hegemony of the traditional warrior masculinity were reinforced, and where the traditional linkages and differentiations were challenged. The soldiers involved in Bosnia experienced a tension between the desire to be a warrior and the desire to be effective in bringing about peace.<sup>329</sup> Because of this tension, the soldiers found peacekeeping activities such as minimal use of force and negotiation emasculating.<sup>330</sup> At the same time, however, at other points in their accounts they positioned peacekeeping as masculine

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<sup>328</sup> Ibid., p. 854

<sup>329</sup> Duncanson, "Forces for Good?: Narratives of Military Masculinity in Peacekeeping Operations", p. 68

<sup>330</sup> Ibid., p. 69

by claiming that peacekeeping was tougher, more dangerous and more challenging than war or by valorizing the core principles of peacekeeping such as the ability to control the use of force. There were also occasions when traditionally feminized practices including building friendships, drinking coffee and chatting with locals were linked to effective soldiering.<sup>331</sup> While the traditional discourse linking soldiers to masculinity, toughness and action was reinforced in the former case, an alternative discourse of militarized masculinities, linking soldiering and masculinity to peacekeeping rather than war fighting emerged in the latter.<sup>332</sup>

With regard to relations with local people, a Self/Other binary was dominant among soldiers. While there was lack of attention to women in their accounts, which could be indicative of how little the popular perception that men are soldiers and women are wives, mothers, sex workers, or passive victims in need of protection was challenged,<sup>333</sup> local soldiers were frequently presented as hyper-masculine, aggressive, violent, and irrational. British soldiers expressed frustration about limited use of force and envy towards those who could do the activities of fighting, but this did not mean that they regarded these combatants as ideal soldiers or men. This construction of the Other not only constructed British soldiers as controlled, disciplined, civilized, intelligent and physically fit, but as superior.<sup>334</sup> In this discourse, the role of peacekeepers as guarantors of stability, bearers of democracy and protectors of human rights

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<sup>331</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 70

<sup>332</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71

<sup>333</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>334</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 74

and of the oppressed was to bring calm professionalism, order, peace and security to irrational, emotional, primitive, fearful and hysterical people.<sup>335</sup>

Duncanson acknowledges that peacekeeper masculinity can be problematic because of its construction through feminized others and questions whether it fully challenges the hegemony of the warrior model of masculinity. However, she argues that it would be a mistake to dismiss the discourse of peacekeeper masculinity.<sup>336</sup> Any disruptions to the traditional linkages associating militarized masculinities with aggression and the privilege of masculinity over femininity and peace have the potential to be more significant than many feminists allow.<sup>337</sup> In the narratives of British soldiers involved in the mission in Bosnia, there were not many instances where the soldiers constructed peacekeeper masculinity through relations of empathy, equality, and respect. However, there were also some examples of the soldiers valorizing practices of peacekeeping including skills and values traditionally feminized and disparaged. While not denying the importance of feminist critique of peacekeeper masculinity, Duncanson suggests that the construction of peacekeeper masculinity can be a challenge to both militarism and oppressive masculinities.<sup>338</sup>

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<sup>335</sup> Orford, Anne (1999) "Muscular Humanitarianism: Reading the Narratives of the New Interventionism", *European Journal of International Law*, Vol. 10, No. 4, pp. 692-693

<sup>336</sup> Duncanson, "Forces for Good?: Narratives of Military Masculinity in Peacekeeping Operations", p. 75

<sup>337</sup> Ibid., p. 76

<sup>338</sup> Ibid., pp. 76-77

Duncanson also problematizes the determinism of feminists' skeptical positions on military intervention. Feminist skeptics tend to see military interventions as neo-colonial ventures, which structure every action within them, rendering small instances of soldiers' agency meaningless. The neo-colonial structure of military interventions robs soldiers of their agency to contribute to peace.<sup>339</sup> According to Duncanson, this position is normatively, theoretically and empirically problematic. The normative problem is that this denies the possibility of change. It leaves no room for people to work towards a better world or even to envisage change.<sup>340</sup> The theoretical problem is one of inconsistency. Most feminist scholars deploy an intersectional analysis, which sees other social divisions such as race, class and ethnicity as being as important as gender in constituting individual identities, which are multiple, complex, dynamic and fluid.<sup>341</sup> They also perceive agency as a crucial avenue through which structures can be challenged.<sup>342</sup> Therefore, it is inconsistent to see structures such as neo-colonialism as limiting the potential for gender identities to shift and change, including in quite fundamental ways.<sup>343</sup> The empirical problem is that such an account of the world is inaccurate. By offering examples of peacekeeper masculinity being constructed through relations of care, empathy, equality and mutual respect in the British soldier narratives from the missions in Afghanistan and Iraq, Duncanson disagrees with the over-

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<sup>339</sup> Duncanson, *Forces for Good? Military Masculinities and Peacebuilding in Afghanistan and Iraq*, p. 162

<sup>340</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6

<sup>341</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3

<sup>342</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8

<sup>343</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 162



determinism and pessimism in much feminist skeptic literature that all military interventions are necessarily imperial, and that soldiers merely participate in the empire-building games of elites.<sup>344</sup>

Despite the potential for the construction of alternative militarized masculinities in the British soldiers' narratives, such as discrediting the war-fighting approach as hyper-masculine, Duncanson admits that a 'war-fighting' masculinity still remains dominant over the valorization of activities associated with peacekeeping.<sup>345</sup> This tension is also institutionalized in the new doctrine of the modern British Army as a result of operating in the complex peace operations, which links soldiering to practices central to peacekeeping such as minimizing the use of force and building relations with local civilians but at the same time prioritizes a war-fighting ethos for the British military's credibility and effectiveness.<sup>346</sup> A profound contradiction and tension around war fighting and peacekeeping is reflected in the soldiers' narratives as well. Many of the soldiers' narratives refer to operations in the Balkans, whether they were there or not, in derogatory ways, as easy, unchallenging and not real soldiering.<sup>347</sup> One soldier reflects on his time in Bosnia, where he felt like he'd "gone backwards" after his training to "low level" peacekeeping.<sup>348</sup> Even in Iraq and Afghanistan, peacekeeping activities such as reconstruction or mentoring and training local security forces are often described as inferior and feminized by

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<sup>344</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6

<sup>345</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 73

<sup>346</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 77

<sup>347</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 93

<sup>348</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 94

soldiers.<sup>349</sup> For many soldiers, the idea that peacekeeping is not challenging is based on a particular understanding of the word 'challenging' - a military understanding of how much combat is involved, rather than the challenges of achieving peace, reconciliation and justice in the post-conflict period.<sup>350</sup>

Although a war-fighting ethos is a strong theme in the British soldiers' narratives, however, there is also disruption to the valorization of combat, which goes beyond a certain tension around attitudes to violence.<sup>351</sup> That is, there are examples of an active valorization of activities associated with peacekeeping. Duncanson acknowledges the significant risk of valorization of peacekeeper masculinity, such as 'sensitive masculinity of the humanitarian soldier-scholar', as suggested by Khalili.<sup>352</sup> The soldier-scholars advance a notion of war-fighting which ostensibly takes into account political nuances, aims to win over civilian populations, and deploys a liberal discourse of salvation and humanitarianism. Not only is the soldier-scholar the ultimate in civic virtue, but he is also the embodiment of international wisdom, war-fighting prowess, and a kind of knowingness about the world. Soldier-scholars are not interested in the hyper-masculinity of the warrior king, deploy the language of 'hearts and minds' much more easily and see their wont as being the wielders of softer or smarter power.<sup>353</sup> Khalili notes that this new form of warrior

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<sup>349</sup> Ibid., p. 95

<sup>350</sup> Ibid., pp. 94-95

<sup>351</sup> Ibid., p. 83

<sup>352</sup> Khalili, Laleh (2011) "Gendered practices of counterinsurgency", *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 37, No. 4, p. 1475

<sup>353</sup> Ibid., p. 1487

masculinity regenerates itself through the figure of the soldier-scholar and recreates power hierarchies.<sup>354</sup> Therefore, as a smokescreen, the subordinate model of peacekeeper masculinity can make militarized masculinities seem more progressive and humane while masking the retention of power and wealth in the hands of the few.<sup>355</sup> Despite this, Duncanson argues that there has not been enough attention paid to the implications of soldiers valorizing peacekeeping practices as an example of the destabilization of gendered dichotomies (masculine war/feminized peace) that feminists have long advocated as a crucial strategy for achieving gender equality.<sup>356</sup>

Some narratives indicate that some soldiers are motivated by the aims of peacekeeping, achieving peace and security for ordinary people. For example, Patrick Hennessey, who served as an officer in an infantry regiment of the British Army and deployed on operational tours of Iraq and Afghanistan, positions combat as the ultimate test of being a soldier.<sup>357</sup> He links demonstrating masculinity to soldering and fighting. However, he is also motivated to some extent by army's aim of being a 'Force for Good'. The way he makes his point about the complexity of wars which aims at creating security rather than defeating enemies is notable.<sup>358</sup> Likewise, Captain Leo Docherty expresses an interest in and commitment to the stabilization and peacekeeping aspects of operation in Afghanistan. He is attracted to both the aims and the

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<sup>354</sup> Ibid., p. 1491

<sup>355</sup> Duncanson, *Forces for Good? Military Masculinities and Peacebuilding in Afghanistan and Iraq*, p. 93

<sup>356</sup> Ibid., p. 84

<sup>357</sup> Ibid., p. 80

<sup>358</sup> Ibid., pp. 74-75

practices of nation-building and finds these 'fascinating', 'honorable' and 'thrilling'.<sup>359</sup> Patrick Bury, a Platoon Leader in Afghanistan in 2008, also values the peacekeeping elements of the operation. The idealism of 'Force for Good' interventions in other countries encourages his altruistic ideals of military service and makes him more want to get involved in promoting justice, democracy and equality. Doug Beattie, a late entry officer, valorizes peacekeeping activities as well: "An idea that you are doing what is right, that you are helping people; the belief that someone higher up the pecking order is backing you to the hilt; it gives you a sense of purpose, reassurance. It spurs you on".<sup>360</sup>

Despite some examples of soldiers valorizing peacekeeping, it is risky for most soldiers to valorize peace<sup>361</sup> because soldiers are trained physically and psychologically to attack and defeat an enemy<sup>362</sup> and peacekeeping activities such as getting involved with the locals, drinking tea, and building friendships are traditionally feminized, which are totally different from combat.<sup>363</sup> For this reason, at times in the soldiers' narratives, there is an attempt to construct peacekeeping as a particularly challenging, difficult and important practice and to delink it from associations with soft, naïve, or do-gooding activities.<sup>364</sup> Peacekeeping is also made masculine through

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<sup>359</sup> Ibid., p. 84

<sup>360</sup> Ibid., p. 85

<sup>361</sup> Ibid., p. 91

<sup>362</sup> Tobin, J. (2015), "Occupational stress and UN peacekeepers", *Irish Journal of Psychological Medicine*, Vol. 32, No. 2, p. 206

<sup>363</sup> Duncanson, *Forces for Good? Military Masculinities and Peacebuilding in Afghanistan and Iraq*, p. 88

<sup>364</sup> Ibid., p. 89

linkages to traditionally masculinized virtues such as heroism and courage. The traditional association of combat with bravery and courage is disrupted and peacekeeping activities are positioned as more masculine.<sup>365</sup> Linking peacekeeping to masculinity is a complex negotiating act carried out by soldiers, involving the valorization of that which has been traditionally disparaged as feminine, while making sure one's individual masculinity is not questioned.<sup>366</sup> At the British Army's institutional level, making peacekeeping manly is an important mechanism used to legitimize the commitment to that which is related to peace.<sup>367</sup> Since a new approach, 'brain-power rather than fire-power', for all NATO forces in Helmand in Afghanistan was introduced in 2010, in recognition of the need to focus less on fighting the insurgents, with its risk of civilian casualties, and more on winning the trust of the population, there has been attempts to position activities associated with peacekeeping as masculine, appropriate soldierly task in the British Army.<sup>368</sup> For instance, the term 'courageous restraint' was adopted through associating it with self-control, expertise, training and discipline.<sup>369</sup> However, it is true that old school warriors see the figure of soldier-scholar, counterinsurgency and the entire family of stability operations to which it belongs as a diminishment of the inherent masculinity of the military.<sup>370</sup> One General said in an interview in 2000 that "too many humanitarian missions could

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<sup>365</sup> Ibid., p. 90

<sup>366</sup> Ibid., p. 91

<sup>367</sup> Ibid., p. 89

<sup>368</sup> Ibid., p. 91

<sup>369</sup> Ibid., pp. 91-92

<sup>370</sup> Khalili, "Gendered practices of counterinsurgency", p. 1487

turn the professional British Army into a 'touchy-feely' organization, more concerned with widows and orphans than fighting". Many other senior officers also believed that 'too great an emphasis on PSO would result in British forces becoming a peacekeeping gendarmerie with a diminished reputation'.<sup>371</sup> Although the valorization of war-fighting still dominates over the valorization of peacekeeping activities in the soldiers' narratives, Duncanson emphasizes the significance of alternative model of militarized masculinity, which could disrupt a binary which has been so vitally important in perpetuating militarism and war.

The notable thing in British soldier autobiographical reflections from Afghanistan and Iraq is there are instances where British soldiers destabilize colonial Self/Other binaries and construct relations of empathy, respect, care and equality, although in many occasions, peacekeeper masculinity is constructed in relation to both the feminized and/or racialized civilian Others or the hyper-masculinity of racialized belligerent.<sup>372</sup> One theme about the insurgents is the idea that the insurgents are perfidious, a devious enemy lacking all morality and observing no rules, refuse to play fair, and therefore display an inferior masculinity to that of the British soldier.<sup>373</sup> However, there are some more positive constructions of the Other. Some soldiers note that fighters are not always demonized or Islamic fundamentalists, but often just ordinary people, fighting because there are few alternative ways of making a living, because of a need to defend

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<sup>371</sup> Ibid., p. 1488

<sup>372</sup> Duncanson, *Forces for Good? Military Masculinities and Peacebuilding in Afghanistan and Iraq*, p. 103

<sup>373</sup> Ibid., p. 107

their land and livelihoods, or out of a sense of revenge.<sup>374</sup> Despite this momentary empathy and understanding, British failure to achieve security has often been explained on the basis that the mission was just impossible, not because of the scale of the task or resources, but because of the inherent backwardness, violence and barbarism of the natives. Regarding the indigenous security forces, British soldiers tend to position them as backwards and in need of help, and the British as both superior and benevolent. The British soldiers, as experts, are sent to mentor and train the childlike novices.<sup>375</sup> Constructing Iraqis and Afghans as radical Others who are useless, lazy, and corrupt appears to make the achievement of security less likely because the construction of radical Others reinforces the 'dangerous brown man' discourse that makes it difficult to see Iraqis and Afghans as partners for peace.<sup>376</sup>

On the contrary to this dominant way in which Afghan and Iraqi people are constructed, there are examples of soldiers interacting with the same local people and having a chance to build up relations. Some British soldiers describe Afghan and Iraqi trainees as loyal, brave, and lovely. Duncanson does not exclude the possibility that soldiers would want to avoid sounding racist or be well aware of the importance of describing their job in terms of partnership and empowerment. However, some of the soldiers' descriptions of the relationships which are built up over the course of their duty appear to be full of details which grant the relationships authenticity.<sup>377</sup> For

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<sup>374</sup> Ibid., p. 108

<sup>375</sup> Ibid., p. 122

<sup>376</sup> Ibid., p. 126

<sup>377</sup> Ibid., p. 128

example, Captain Doug Beattie, despite much denigration of the Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP), showed respect and empathy in his encounters with the Afghans. He formed a particular bond with a Captain in the ANP, Shahrukh. When Shahrukh was killed in battle, Beattie felt anguish, frustration, unbearable grief comparable to losing a relative. Besides, the more he remembered, the more saddened he became about the plight of the Afghans. He also found out that Afghans were not much different from him.<sup>378</sup> This is a clear disruption to radical Othering. According to Duncanson, this complex mix of disparaging and empathizing seen in the soldiers' narratives demonstrates that there is a more complex story than one of demonization and stereotyping.<sup>379</sup> Therefore, the idea of Self/Other can be disrupted more often than skeptical feminists allow.<sup>380</sup>

Drawing on the literature of how the 'New Man' operates in various contexts to prevent fundamental changes, feminist skeptics have argued that minor acts of decency at the individual level may act as a form of smokescreen. The discourse of softer or hybrid masculinities allows political and military elites to claim that soldiers are 'Forces for Good', but this disguises the reality of the exploitation which is at the heart of imperial interventions. In this way, any gains which are made in terms of highlighting the dynamism and multiplicity of models of masculinity are either minor and irrelevant or damaging smokescreens.<sup>381</sup> However, as Duncanson suggests,

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<sup>378</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 128-129

<sup>379</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 131

<sup>380</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 130

<sup>381</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 142-143



being attentive enough to the positive potential of any shift is as important as being alert to the risks and dangers of peacekeeper masculinity. Considering that peacekeeper masculinity is an improvement on war-fighting masculinity as it addresses some of the concerns about using soldiers for peace, soldiers enacting peacekeeper masculinity could be less likely to be involved in the problems towards civilians including SEA. What is more, they could be more effective at achieving peace and security even if only at a basic level.<sup>382</sup> The instances of peacekeeper masculinity being constructed through relations of respect, empathy, equality and recognition of similarities and shared experiences imply that peacekeeper masculinity should be taken more seriously since these alternative militarized masculinities can disrupt the hierarchical nature of gendered dichotomies, not just substituting dichotomy or creating new hierarchies.<sup>383</sup>

## **Conclusion**

To answer the key question of the thesis, whether involvement in peacekeeping operations could contribute to the construction of alternative militarized masculinities, this chapter develops a theoretical framework which conceptualizes masculinity, with particular focus on militarized masculinities, and then examines the discourse of peacekeeper masculinity. Although the UN has integrated a gender perspective into peace operations and made efforts to prevent peacekeepers from involvement in any kind of abuse against local populations, gender-based violence by peacekeepers is still a major problem in peacekeeping contexts. Several feminist scholars have

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<sup>382</sup> Ibid., p. 143

<sup>383</sup> Ibid., p. 145, 149

drawn attention to the way in which gender identities of peacekeepers are related to the persistence of this problem, focusing on the concept of militarized masculinities. With considerable cross-cultural consistency, soldiers, who are tough, brave, physically and psychologically strong, disciplined, and heterosexual, are considered as ideal and there is pressure on men to conform to this form of masculinity. This gendered organizational structure of the military can embed a misogynic version of masculinity that enables sexual violence.<sup>384</sup> Because of this, critical feminists have found using soldiers as agents for peace problematic.

However, masculinities are multiple, dynamic and contradictory and are not homogeneous, but are likely to be internally divided in the same cultural or institutional setting.<sup>385</sup> This means that multiple, diverse masculinities can be constructed in the military although military organizations are rigidly associated with the production of a particular form of masculinity, warrior masculinity. This multiplicity and complexity of models of masculinity suggest that soldiers can construct alternative militarized masculinities by participating in peacekeeping operations.

Duncanson, who suggests peacekeeper masculinity as an alternative discourse of militarized masculinities, argues that peacekeeper masculinity can disrupt radical Othering that dehumanizes the out-group as the enemy when it is constructed through relations of empathy, equality, and respect. This construction of peacekeeper masculinity is particularly difficult to encourage in violent contexts, where one loses comrades and experiences extreme fear day after day, but not

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<sup>384</sup> Alexandra, "Peacekeepers' Privilege and Sexual Abuse in Post-Conflict Populations", p. 371

<sup>385</sup> Connell, "Masculinities, the reduction of violence and the pursuit of peace" p. 36

impossible. Therefore, the potential of peacekeeper masculinity to dismantle the structure of hierarchical dichotomies in the peacekeeping context should not be dismissed as a smokescreen. Most research into militarized masculinities and peacekeeper masculinities has been undertaken in the context of Western militaries, leaving under-researched the construction of masculinities in the context of the non-Western militaries who compose the majority of peacekeeping troops. This thesis contributes to filling this gap with a study of Korean soldiers in peacekeeping. Based on the understanding of militarized masculinities and peacekeeper masculinity, the next chapter examines the construction of militarized masculinities in contemporary Korean society as a background to understanding the empirical work of the thesis. After this, a further chapter examines how involvement in peacekeeping missions impacted the peacekeeping soldiers' masculinities by comparing and contrasting the cases of Korean men who were conscripted for service in Korea with others who were deployed in various types of peacekeeping abroad.

## Chapter 2. The Construction of Korean Militarized Masculinities in the Contemporary Era

### Introduction

As identified in the previous chapter, the concept of militarized masculinity is central to a gender analysis of soldiering in all contexts including peacekeeping. This chapter therefore focuses on the construction of militarized masculinities in the Korean context as a precursor to understanding the ways in which involvement in peacekeeping impacts the gendered practices of traditional soldiering among Korean soldiers. Given that expectations of masculinities, as well as individuals' performances of masculinities, are shaped by the institutions and broader social contexts in which men are situated,<sup>386</sup> militarized masculinities are also produced within and beyond public militaries at multiple sites. Therefore, it would be inaccurate to point out a single cause for the construction of militarized masculinities in the Korean context. To get a better understanding of Korean militarized masculinities in the contemporary era, gendered assumptions based on neo-Confucianism which has considerably affected the gender order from traditional society up to the present are examined briefly first. Bearing in mind that militaries reflect society's changes as well as its core values,<sup>387</sup> rather than existing in isolation from the

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<sup>386</sup> Harnois, "Intersectional Masculinities and Gendered Political Consciousness: How Do Race, Ethnicity and Sexuality Shape Men's Awareness of Gender Inequality and Support for Gender Activism?", p. 144

<sup>387</sup> Dunivin, "Military Culture: Change and Continuity", p. 538

wider society,<sup>388</sup> the next section examines how militarized masculinities have been configured and reconfigured through the contemporary history of Korea (from the 1950 to the present).

## 2.1. Gender Norms Built on Neo-Confucianism

Since it was adopted as state orthodoxy by the founders of Korea's Choson or Yi dynasty (1392-1910), neo-Confucianism has had a profound influence on many facets of Korean life as a whole.<sup>389</sup> Neo-Confucianism served as a blueprint for ordering and integrating Korea's political and social life for over five hundred years, upheld by the aristocratic *yangban* elite.<sup>390</sup> It provided principles that shaped human relationships and formed part of the entire normative sociopolitical order.<sup>391</sup> It also set the moral foundation for both private and public life.<sup>392</sup> Particularly, in Korean Confucianism, family was seen as a prototype of social structure and life, as well as an emotional and a physical unit, and filial piety was an integrating and stabilizing influence to ensure the reproduction of values across generations. In this context, heterosexuality was a key social and ethical norm. Both heterosexual marriage and birth were related to the ancestral cult and the duty of filial piety. The former increased the number of descendants and the latter was considered

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<sup>388</sup> Duncanson, "Hegemonic Masculinity and the Possibility of Change in Gender Relations", p. 236

<sup>389</sup> Cheng, Sea-ling (2000), "Assuming Manhood: Prostitution and Patriotic Passions in Korea", *East Asia: International Quarterly*, Vol. 18, No. 4, p. 52

<sup>390</sup> Lett, Denise Potrzeba (1998), *In Pursuit of Status: The Making of South Korea's "New" Urban Middle Class*, Harvard University Press, p. 13

<sup>391</sup> Deuchler, Martina (1992), *The Confucian Transformation of Korea: A Study of Society and Ideology*, Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, p. 25

<sup>392</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11

as a means of earning continuity in the family lineage and the ancestral cult. For this reason, Koreans were eager to have sons who were supposed to be successors of the family, take care of their elderly parents, have responsibility for ancestor worship.<sup>393</sup> Therefore, although Confucianism basically regarded the union between man and woman as the root of all human relations and the foundation of human morality, male had precedence over female. This hierarchy was considered imperative for the proper functioning of human order and restraining sexual indulgence and selfishness.<sup>394</sup>

The neo-Confucian ideal of manliness was self-discipline, ascetic restraint, and passion for self-cultivation. Confucian gentlemen assumed power through moral rectitude. They were expected to have mastered their own desires and act as the moral example for the family, the kin group, and society.<sup>395</sup> The courageous fighter did not represent the dominant paradigm of ideal manliness in late Choson society, nor were violence, physical prowess and toughness required as proof of manhood in the daily life of the dominant classes.<sup>396</sup> Neo-Confucianism claimed that 'men of the pen enjoyed political dominance over men of the sword', and 'it was a gentleman

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<sup>393</sup> Kim, Young-gwan and Hahn, Sook-ja (2006), "Homosexuality in ancient and modern Korea", *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, Vol. 8, No. 1, p. 60

<sup>394</sup> Deuchler, *The Confucian Transformation of Korea: A Study of Society and Ideology*, p. 231

<sup>395</sup> Kim, K.O. (1996), "The Reproduction of Confucian Culture in Contemporary Korea: An Anthropological Study" in Tu W.M. (ed), *Confucian Traditions in East Asian Modernity: Moral Education and Economic Culture in Japan and the Four Mini-Dragons*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, p. 215

<sup>396</sup> Tikhonov, Vladimir (2007), "Masculinizing the Nation: Gender Ideologies in Traditional Korea and in the 1890s-1900s Korean Enlightenment Discourse", *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vo. 66, Np. 4, p. 1039

scholar, not a martial warrior, who represented hegemonic masculinity under the Confucian order.<sup>397</sup> That is, the ideal man for *yangban* was a man of unusual study skills, and of balance and restraint whose sense of duty and righteousness could be praised as lofty and principled without being violent.<sup>398</sup> Although the *yangban* made up no more than 10 percent of the total population, the Confucian worldview of the *yangban*, the dominant class, became the common sense of the society as a whole.<sup>399</sup> In light of the shifting, fluctuating, and contested nature of masculinity, however, it could be said that constructing an image of singular “traditional Korean masculinity” would be an attempt in essentialist overgeneralizing.<sup>400</sup> The old Korean manhood norms were bifurcated along class lines. Contrary to *yangban*, fighting prowess was accepted as a part of ideal manliness in the traditional society of commoners, *non-yangban*. For local *yangban* in the less Confucian provinces, who got little chance of political appointments in the central bureaucracy, sometimes, aggressive heterosexual activity and violence were seen as the means to demonstrate their manliness.<sup>401</sup> Put simply, there existed a complex range of diverse masculinities in traditional Korean society but a distinction between hegemonic and subordinate masculinities was clearly made mainly along class lines.

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<sup>397</sup> Moon, Seungsook (2005), *Militarized Modernity and Gendered Citizenship in South Korea*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, p. 47

<sup>398</sup> Tikhonov, “Masculinizing the Nation: Gender Ideologies in Traditional Korea and in the 1890s-1900s Korean Enlightenment Discourse”, p. 1042

<sup>399</sup> Lett, *In Pursuit of Status: The Making of South Korea’s “New” Urban Middle Class*, p. 17

<sup>400</sup> Tikhonov, “Masculinizing the Nation: Gender Ideologies in Traditional Korea and in the 1890s-1900s Korean Enlightenment Discourse”, p. 1037

<sup>401</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1041

Although masculine norms were different according to class, region, and other factors, the gender order was rigidly hierarchical in traditional Korean society. That is, the position of women in all classes was clearly subordinate to that of men. 'Woman, as a being accorded an inferior position, had to obey her superiors: when unmarried, she had to follow her father's orders; when married, those of her husband; when widowed, those of her son'.<sup>402</sup> By granting political and economic prestige to men, neo-Confucian ideology allowed women to have status and authority only within the domestic sphere.<sup>403</sup> Education for women was indoctrination, whose purpose was to instill in women the ideals of a male-oriented society and to fill the role of married women.<sup>404</sup> Although women were supposed to assume leadership in the domestic realm, the extent of their influence and radius of action depended primarily on the position they received by marriage.<sup>405</sup> As a wife and mother, women were regarded as the embodiment of the essential virtues of social morality, a repository and teacher of the moral and cultural ideals upon which the entire society was structured. They were anticipated to play a role in preserving and strengthening the society against the unwelcome incursion of low morality.<sup>406</sup> In this vein, women's task to keep domestic peace and customs pure was directly correlated with sustaining the neo-Confucian value systems of the country.<sup>407</sup> With regard to physical violence, it predominantly belonged to men in Choson

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<sup>402</sup> Deuchler, *The Confucian Transformation of Korea: A Study of Society and Ideology*, p. 231

<sup>403</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 280

<sup>404</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 258

<sup>405</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 263

<sup>406</sup> Hoffman, Diane M. (1995), "Blurred Genders: The Cultural Construction of Male and Female in South Korea", *Korean Studies*, Vol. 19, pp. 117-118

<sup>407</sup> Deuchler, *The Confucian Transformation of Korea: A Study of Society and Ideology*, p. 232



culture, but it was not fully monopolized by men. Only in order to defend one's reputation as a chaste woman, the use of violence, sometimes lethal, went unpunished and even praised.<sup>408</sup>

A binary model of gender based on heterosexuality and the rigid gender hierarchy in traditional Korean society continued to have a great impact on the construction of masculinities and femininities throughout the modern history of Korea. This means that even after the Choson dynasty fell, gendered assumptions from neo-Confucianism played a significant role in constructing new standards of masculinity in different phases of Korean society. For example, despite noticeable social changes such as modernization processes in the late Choson,<sup>409</sup> or the spread of anti-colonial nationalism during the Japanese occupation<sup>410</sup>, a sharp distinction between woman's inner or domestic sphere and the man's outer or public sphere was maintained. This binary conception continued to affect Koreans' perceptions of gender roles and hegemonic masculinity in the contemporary era. Based on this, the next section examines the construction of Korean militarized masculinities through historical analysis of four different phases in contemporary Korean society.

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<sup>408</sup> Tikhonov, "Masculinizing the Nation: Gender Ideologies in Traditional Korea and in the 1890s-1900s Korean Enlightenment Discourse", p. 1044

<sup>409</sup> Choi, Hoon (2012), "Brothers in Arms and Brothers in Christ? The Military and the Catholic Church as Sources for Modern Korean Masculinity", *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics*, Vol. 32, No. 2, p. 77

<sup>410</sup> Kim, Elaine H. and Choi, Chungmoo (1998), "Introduction" in Elaine H. Kim, and Chungmoo Choi (eds), *Dangerous Women: Gender and Korean Nationalism*, Routledge: New York and London, p. 5

## **2.2. The Construction of Militarized Masculinities in Contemporary Korean Society**

In the contemporary era, the social construction of masculinities in Korea was profoundly influenced by sociopolitical and economic changes within and outside Korea. Among various historical events during this period, there were four important ones that were directly associated with the construction of masculinities in Korean society: the Korean War; state-led rapid industrialization in the postwar setting; democratization and modernization; and neo-liberalization. Based on this, the following section examines how these four historical events in Korean society influenced the construction of Korean militarized masculinities in the contemporary era.

### **2.2.1. The Korean War and Its Impact on Postwar South Korean Society**

The Korean War (1950-1953), which occurred five years after Japanese colonial rule came to an end over the entire peninsula, hugely influenced the interaction between great power diplomacy, competing national interests, domestic politics and individual personalities.<sup>411</sup> As an attempt at postwar recovery, the elites in South Korea strongly sought to build a powerful modern state. They tried to establish powerful central government structures, which brought a number of formerly self-sufficient and self-regulatory local communities under firm central control through universal education, an expanding transport and communication network, and the provision of government services. In particular, for national defense, the modern conscription system, which

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<sup>411</sup> Buzo, Adrian (2002), *The Making of Modern Korea*, Routledge: London and New York, p. 86

began to be enacted in 1949, and the operation of a powerful military became an undeniable priority in the postwar setting, not just politically but personally as well.<sup>412</sup> Both state elites and ordinary Koreans strongly supported and believed in universal military service of male citizens and for this reason, the implementation and legitimization of conscription has been sustained for more than a half-century.<sup>413</sup> As Kwon states, it does not seem to be an exaggeration to say that almost every Korean man and woman has some experiences related to the male-only conscription and accumulated individual or collective memories, images, and opinions of it.<sup>414</sup>

In line with this, as one of the biggest changes caused by the Korean war, the size of the South Korean military grew tremendously to emerge as a relatively strong institution: from some 5,000 men in 1946 to 50,000 by 1950, and up to some 600,000 by 1953.<sup>415</sup> The expansion of the military was closely related to the Rhee, Syngman (the first president in South Korea, 1948-1960) regime's policy against the northern communist countries. Korea, as a divided state bordering a rival, communist state, prioritized the maintenance of a high level of military capability in order to cope with the perceived external and internal threats. Under this postwar environment, Korea

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<sup>412</sup> Kwon, In-Sook (2005), "How Identities and Movement Cultures Became Deeply Saturated with Militarism: Lessons from the Pro-democracy Movement of South Korea", *Asian Journal of Women's Studies*, Vol. 11, No. 2, p. 14

<sup>413</sup> Choi, Hee Jung and Kim, Nora Hui-Jung (2017), "Of Soldiers and Citizens: Shallow Marketisation, Military Service and Citizenship in Neo-Liberal South Korea", *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, Vol. 47, No. 4, p. 519

<sup>414</sup> Kwon, "How Identities and Movement Cultures Became Deeply Saturated with Militarism: Lessons from the Pro-democracy Movement of South Korea", p. 49

<sup>415</sup> Kohli, Atul (2004), *State-Directed Development: Political Power and Industrialization in the Global Periphery*, Cambridge University Press, P. 68

became a deeply homogenous and centralized state in terms of its patriotism and anti-communism.<sup>416</sup> After the war, millions of young men were pressed into army life, were trained to be literate and to master diverse modern technologies. Particularly, the US military authorities and Korean political leaders were fully aware of the importance of literacy education and made significant investment during the period of reconstruction and state-building. According to Kim and Kang, who examined educational reforms during Soviet and US military occupation in North and South Korea, respectively, in South Korea, implanting anti-communist awareness was an important objective of literacy education led by the US military authorities, since the conflict between left-wing and right-wing political factions were fierce at that time.<sup>417</sup> As a result, some military men could become part of a new elite in a postwar Korean society.<sup>418</sup> For Korean people, who had struggled against the immense power and reach of the Japanese Empire and experienced a brutal war, the most salient conviction was that national security could only be guaranteed by a strong state capable of building a strong military.<sup>419</sup> That is, nationalist enthusiasm and military virtue reinforced each other.<sup>420</sup> The significance of military strength and

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<sup>416</sup> Son, Key-young (2011), "From a Garrison state to a Humanitarian Power?: Security Identities, Constitutive Norms and South Korea's Overseas Troop Dispatches", *The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis*, Vol. 23, No. 4, p. 562

<sup>417</sup> Kim, Sun and Kang, Sungwoo (2021), "Literacy education, ideology and politics; the case of Soviet and US military governments in the two Koreas", *History of Education*, Vol. 50, No. 1, p. 74 (67-88)

<sup>418</sup> Buzo, *The Making of Modern Korea*, p. 86

<sup>419</sup> Kwon, Insook (2001), "A Feminist Exploration of Military Conscription: The Gendering of the Connections between Nationalism, Militarism and Citizenship in South Korea", *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, Vol. 3, No. 1, p. 27

<sup>420</sup> Pratt, Keith (2006), *Everlasting Flower: A History of Korea*, Reaktion Books, p. 195

militarized training was tied together with the nation's existence, which meant physical weakness of the nation led to a weakened mental strength, and that threatened the nation's academic progress, and that, in turn, threatened the existence of nation itself.<sup>421</sup> As a result, an emphasis in military organization on hierarchy and military ethos began to extend to many phases and aspects of personal life as well as throughout the public sphere in Korean society.<sup>422</sup>

In line with the spirit of patriotism and militarism, until the early 1960s, war-fighting masculinity was prevalent in Korean society. War-fighting masculinity focuses on the defeat and disruption of the enemy by applying constant and unacceptable pressure, and on the principles of war such as maintenance of morale, offensive action and concentration of force.<sup>423</sup> Korean films, particularly Korean War films, which were popular during this period, represent well the creation of a hegemony that illuminates the operation of gender, and in particular masculinity.<sup>424</sup> *The Repulse* (*Gyeoktwe*, Lee Kang-cheon, 1956), as a representative commercial film of the 1950s, embodies a hegemonic masculinity through the heroic soldiers fighting against the Chinese

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<sup>421</sup> Tikhonov, "Masculinizing the Nation: Gender Ideologies in Traditional Korea and in the 1890s-1900s Korean Enlightenment Discourse", p. 1056

<sup>422</sup> Son, "From a Garrison state to a Humanitarian Power?: Security Identities, Constitutive Norms and South Korea's Overseas Troop Dispatches", p. 562

<sup>423</sup> Duncanson, *Forces for Good? Military Masculinities and Peacebuilding in Afghanistan and Iraq*, p. 77

<sup>424</sup> Howson, Richard and Yecies, Brian (2016), "The Role of Hegemonic Masculinity and Hollywood in the New Korea", *Masculinities and Social Change*, Vol. 5, No. 1, p. 66

army.<sup>425</sup> The soldiers are described as 'just warriors', which is what Elshtain suggests for the ideal-typical soldier. The just warriors are willing to commit heinous violence but only for the cause of protecting self, family, state, and nation.<sup>426</sup> The combat soldiers in *The Repulse* were regarded as a masculine guarantor of security, justice, democracy and freedom, while the Chinese army was portrayed as a brutally aggressive and violent enemy.<sup>427</sup> This link between soldiering and coming into manhood had a profound impact on the construction of masculinities in the next stage of Korean society as well.<sup>428</sup>

### **2.2.2. State-led Rapid Industrialization in the Postwar Korean Society**

While the administration of Rhee focused primarily on issues of Korean unification based on anti-communism and on maximizing US aid,<sup>429</sup> Park Chung-hee, who took power in 1961 until 1979 through a military coup, focused on the building of a modern state that would close the military gap with the North and the economic gap with Japan and the West as rapidly as possible.<sup>430</sup> Throughout these years, Korea transformed itself from a poor, agrarian society into an ostensibly prosperous and modern nation. While this made Korea one of the East Asian

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<sup>425</sup> Choi, Young-jin (2017) "Birth of Wartime Heroes and Historical Changes in Korea" [한국적 전쟁영웅의 탄생과 시대적 변화] in Cho, Sunghwan et al. (eds), *History of South Korea's National Defense [대한민국 국방사]*, National Museum of Korean Contemporary History, p. 288

<sup>426</sup> Sjoberg, Laura (2014), *Gender, War, & Conflict*, Polity, p. 62

<sup>427</sup> Choi, "Birth of Wartime Heroes and Historical Changes in Korea", p. 289

<sup>428</sup> Kwon, "A Feminist Exploration of Military Conscription: The Gendering of the Connections between Nationalism, Militarism and Citizenship in South Korea", p. 28

<sup>429</sup> Lee, Steven Hugh (2001), *The Korean War*, Pearson Education, p. 32

<sup>430</sup> Buzo, *The Making of Modern Korea*, p. 111

economic miracles, dramatic social changes caused by rapid industrialization engendered a society characterized by enormous cultural complexities and contradictions.<sup>431</sup>

As a strong anti-communist, Park believed that restoring political order and promoting economic development were essential for preserving national security from the communist threat.<sup>432</sup> Park's own values and real-world pressures combined to facilitate a highly purposive leadership that reinforced inherited state institutions and exploited nationalism as a mechanism for legitimizing repression and for harnessing the energies of various social groups for economic development. Park tried to reconstruct a militarized, top-down, repressive, growth-oriented state. Having clarified his goals, Park put many of his military associates in charge of important bureaus and ministries, and economic ones, which facilitated intra-elite cohesion.<sup>433</sup> Some observers pointed out that policy making, especially in the economic sphere, and its implementation increasingly came to be executed as if it were a "war plan". Park's regime was active in other areas: repressing the opposition, building political support with some groups, imposing the will of the new state on the society as a whole, and undertaking significant top-down mobilization.<sup>434</sup> As a result, the vision of a rich state and strong military was widely shared, not just in the military

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<sup>431</sup> Chong, Kelly H. (2006), "Negotiating Patriarchy: South Korean Evangelical Women and the Politics of Gender", *Gender & Society*, Vol. 20, No. 6, p. 704

<sup>432</sup> Kohli, *State-Directed Development: Political Power and Industrialization in the Global Periphery*, p. 87

<sup>433</sup> Ibid., p. 88

<sup>434</sup> Ibid., p. 91

but also among the younger technocracy, the business sector and the rural sector, as well as among ordinary citizens.<sup>435</sup>

The Park regime's strategy for the rapid industrialization in the 1960s and 70s was to transform and to selectively emphasize certain Confucian values in order to establish a modern work ethic suited to an industrial society.<sup>436</sup> In pre-capitalist Korea, agriculture was the source of all wealth while commerce was seen as a base profession that was associated with greed and moral abasement and manual labor was seen as the lowest sort of work. Besides, as stated above, in the neo-Confucian world view, 'gentleman scholars' were idealized and the perception of work remained quite negative until the colonial rule.<sup>437</sup> To develop a new perception of work which could overcome the traditional disregard for manual labor and make people commit to industrial labor, the government tried identifying participation in labor with a contribution to national development including a defense against the communist North, a solution to poverty, and a strengthening of sovereignty.<sup>438</sup> Certain virtues of Confucian values, such as respect for authority and elders, competitive education, principles of self-reliance and self-cultivation, were also stressed as a necessary background and powerful motivating force for people's participation in

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<sup>435</sup> Buzo, *The Making of Modern Korea*, p. 133

<sup>436</sup> Kim, Andrew Eungi and Park, Gil-sung (2003), "Nationalism, Confucianism, Work Ethic and Industrialization in South Korea", *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, Vol. 33, No. 1, p. 37

<sup>437</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39

<sup>438</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41



industrial work.<sup>439</sup> As a result, such economic nationalism got widespread consent from Korean workers and people.

This process of industrialization promoted changes in hegemonic masculinity during this period as well. Through the experience of colonial power and brutal war, brave combat warriors, who were protective soldiers of weak civilians and their nation, became an ideal type of man. However, the embodiment of the self-sacrificial patriotic spirit and a disciplined, well-trained body with good combat skills was no longer enough to be a national hero. Then ideal men must also be able to contribute to overcoming social ills and strengthening the nation through hard work.<sup>440</sup> In this social atmosphere, sublimating an individual's aspiration toward the causes of nation, civilization, or glorious sacrifice was viewed as requiring not only inner, moral rigor but also a good measure of bodily strength and discipline.<sup>441</sup> Some slogans by which the government attempted to propagate the positive meaning of industrial work and industrialization represented how nationalistic sentiments were combined with the militaristic aspects of masculine norms to achieve economic development: 'Constructing while Fighting' (*ssaumyeonseo geonseolhaja*); 'Export is the Only Way to Survive' (*soochoolmani salgilida*); 'Exports as Total War' (*soochool chongryukjeon*); 'Trade as War' (*mooyukjeonjaeng*). In particular, workers were called industrial

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<sup>439</sup> Tu, Wei-ming (1993), "Confucian Traditions in East Asian Modernity: Exploring Moral Authority and Economic Power in Japan and the Four Mini-Dragons", *American Academy of Arts & Sciences*, Vol. 46, No. 8, p. 8

<sup>440</sup> Choi, "Birth of Wartime Heroes and Historical Changes in Korea", p. 298

<sup>441</sup> Tikhonov, "Masculinizing the Nation: Gender Ideologies in Traditional Korea and in the 1890s-1900s Korean Enlightenment Discourse", p. 1046

or export soldiers (*saneob jeonsa* or *soochool jeonsa*),<sup>442</sup> and they were the male heroes who embodied hegemonic masculinity at that time.

The social construction of militarized masculinities as a dominant masculinity was reinforced by both the work ethic in the workplace and the state's conscious efforts to forge positive popular attitudes toward military service. Despite the difficulty in assessing factors that contribute to motivating productive labor in any definitive way, some authors point out that military-like organization of the workforce with nationalist mobilization was an important element for the militarized industrialization process in Korean society. According to Kohli, the peacetime economy during the Park's regime required a warlike mentality, especially in the workplace. Workers in many factories wore uniforms, had short haircuts, and displayed their rank on tags.<sup>443</sup> The code of conduct for employees was also similar to that of military organizations. Regarding this, the combination of the state's military style administration and the Confucian ethic provided the rationale for workers' subordination to their superiors in the workplace.<sup>444</sup> Employees saluted their superiors and were subject to strict regulations and orders. Lunch was served at the factory

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<sup>442</sup> Han, Jongwoo and Ling, L.H.M. (1998), "Authoritarianism in the Hypermasculinized State: Hybridity, Patriarchy, and Capitalism in Korea", *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 42, No. 1, p. 64

<sup>443</sup> Kohli, *State-Directed Development: Political Power and Industrialization in the Global Periphery*, p. 100

<sup>444</sup> Kim and Park, "Nationalism, Confucianism, Work Ethic and Industrialization in South Korea", p. 44

cafeteria, which was itself organized by rank. Particularly, deviant behavior, laziness, and political dissent were not tolerated.<sup>445</sup> This corporate culture is still partly left in the present time.<sup>446</sup>

Besides, state policy to establish a close linkage between military service and employment contributed to the making of a popular perception that 'a man has to serve in the military to play a man's role'.<sup>447</sup> According to Moon, the dramatic social transformation in postwar Korea occurred by adopting the concept of 'militarized modernity'. The core element of this militarized modernity involved the extensive integration of men's military service into the organization of the economy. Completion of military service was not only the precondition for any type of employment, including any self-employment that required the state's approval, but also recognized as work experience in the conventional and legal practices of employment, which resulted in higher pay and faster promotion for veterans.<sup>448</sup> In addition, the military service extra-points system, which was introduced under the Military Relief Recipients Employment Act in 1961, guaranteed that former conscripts received 5 percent of full marks as extra scores in employment tests and interviews in the public sector and some designated private sectors.<sup>449</sup> This system was

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<sup>445</sup> Kohli, *State-Directed Development: Political Power and Industrialization in the Global Periphery*, p. 101

<sup>446</sup> Lee, Jinyoung and Parpart, Lane L. (2018), "Constructing gender identity through masculinity in CSR reports: The South Korean case", *Business Ethics: A European Review*, Vol. 27, No. 4, p. 312

<sup>447</sup> Moon, *Militarized Modernity and Gendered Citizenship in South Korea*, pp. 52-53

<sup>448</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39

<sup>449</sup> Kwon, "A Feminist Exploration of Military Conscriptation: The Gendering of the Connections between Nationalism, Militarism and Citizenship in South Korea", p. 34

reaffirmed and strengthened through law revisions and its gradual expansion over time meant the increasing symbolic significance of military service in the labor market.<sup>450</sup> The intertwining of military service with the overall working of the labor market played a crucial role not only in sustaining the universal conscription system but also in forming the modern masculine subjectivity of the family provider by offering men relatively stable employment in large firms.<sup>451</sup>

In terms of gender roles, this rapid industrialization also showed complex outcomes and opportunities to be seized from the postwar moment. On the one hand, industrialization presented the chance for women to move out of their socially, culturally, or economically defined roles in the struggle to attain more public roles.<sup>452</sup> That is, women could find some room for transcending the traditional gender norms and shaping their lives in what they saw as more positive and secure ways. Many women began to enter into the workforce and they took low-paying menial or factory work, especially in textiles, the main industry of Korea's industrial revolution,<sup>453</sup> which could be seen as a transformative change in women's lives in the traditional society. On the other hand, however, Confucian strictures for women were still prevalent at this time. Korea's masculine developmental state used a Confucian hierarchical metaphor of familial relationships: the state as father or husband, corporations as its first son, and society as mother

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<sup>450</sup> Moon, *Militarized Modernity and Gendered Citizenship in South Korea*, p. 41

<sup>451</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 64

<sup>452</sup> Aolain et al., *On the Frontlines: Gender, War, and the Post-Conflict Process*, p. 102

<sup>453</sup> Lee, *The Korean War*, p. 72

or wife and factory workers as filial daughters.<sup>454</sup> Therefore, most women workers were categorized as those who should be taken care of by the paternalistic state corporations.<sup>455</sup> Womanly work just required diligence without brilliance and women should be careful not to bring any shame to their family through sloth or carelessness.<sup>456</sup> Despite the process of industrialization and modernization, women were often viewed as docile, helpful, and cheap to employ, whereas men were characterized as independent, responsible, and aggressive.<sup>457</sup> Consequently, the structure of male dominance over women remained basically intact.

As the Rhee regime remained preoccupied with the politics of survival and focused on the rapid rebuilding of the war-torn society, hegemonic masculinity under his regime was closely linked to the core characteristics of combat warriors, who embody brave and strong personalities, healthy bodies, and a willingness to endure sacrifice and suffering for the family and state.<sup>458</sup> In contrast to this, during almost two decades under the Park regime, state-directed economic growth was set as a national goal. For achieving this, the government systematically utilized propaganda and state policies and the selective emphasis on certain traditional values, and created military-like hierarchical structures in the workplace. As a consequence, the type of

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<sup>454</sup> Kim, Hyun Mee (2001), "Work, nation and hypermasculinity: the 'woman' question in the economic miracle and crisis in South Korea, *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 1, p. 57

<sup>455</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 59

<sup>456</sup> Han and Ling, "Authoritarianism in the Hypermasculinized State: Hybridity, Patriarchy, and Capitalism in Korea", p. 67

<sup>457</sup> Lee and Parpart, "Constructing gender identity through masculinity in CSR reports: The South Korean case", pp. 312-313

<sup>458</sup> Choi, "Birth of Wartime Heroes and Historical Changes in Korea", p. 296

'industrial soldiers' emerged newly as an ideal man, who would work very hard, in spite of difficult work conditions, with a military mindset. However, as the Park regime collapsed and dramatic political change occurred in the 1980s, Korea's modernization and democratization was accelerated and this led to an inevitable change in gender relations. Based on this, the next two parts explain the construction of new discourses of masculinities in the 1990s and the early twenty-first century.

### **2.2.3. Democratization and Modernization of the Korean Society**

After Park's assassination, General Chun Doo Hwan declared martial law and formally seized power in 1980. However, in time opposition forces grouped and in June 1987 gathering protests against his rule brought demonstrators onto the street of Seoul. They forced political concessions, including direct popular presidential elections, which brought twenty-six years of military-backed authoritarian government to an end.<sup>459</sup> In this period, on the one hand, the impact of militarized culture combined with certain Confucian norms was still deep. For example, the profound acceptance of hierarchy and the preference for consensus decisions remained widespread.<sup>460</sup> However, on the other hand, with the cumulative forces of modernization and enormous wealth, South Korean culture and attitudes were under pressure to transform with changes to family structure, growing awareness of international norms, and the decline of patriarchal and generational authority. Traditional appeals to frugality and collective sacrifice became

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<sup>459</sup> Buzo, *The Making of Modern Korea*, pp. 144-145

<sup>460</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 160

unconvincing as Koreans began to enjoy the fruits of individual achievement and as the new middle class was less restrained by the collective values of their parents' generations.<sup>461</sup> As a result, traditional gender roles were challenged and new strands of masculinity emerged with changes in popular perception of military service.

Korea's self-identification as an advanced country, and a democratized and globalized society provided general conditions for the general public to become comfortable and sympathetic with the spirit and vocabulary of human rights. Consequently, various issues including political freedom in North Korea, gender equality, migrant foreign workers, and the disabled began to be addressed seriously.<sup>462</sup> One of the discernible political, social changes during this period was that the LGBT community emerged as a social minority group and issues of sexual orientation and gender identity became part of public discourse, however this did not significantly challenge the traditional perception of gender and sexuality in Korean society.<sup>463</sup> Sexual minorities did not receive considerable public attention and were an unpopular subject in academic fields too.<sup>464</sup> According to Bong, the military authoritarian regimes were particularly inimical to sexual minorities because they adopted and enforced the gender order of neo-Confucianism, which disparages homosexuality since it was likely to disrupt the kinship tradition that stresses

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<sup>461</sup> Ibid., p. 167

<sup>462</sup> Bong, Youngshik D. (2008), "The Gay Right Movements in Democratizing Korea", *Korean Studies*, Vol. 32, pp. 86-87

<sup>463</sup> Na, Tari Young-Jung (2014), "The South Korean Gender System: LGBTI in the Contexts of Family, Legal Identity, and the Military", *The Journal of Korean Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 2, p. 358

<sup>464</sup> Ibid., p. 87

traditional gender roles, duty, and family over personal priorities and preferences. As a result, the binary and hierarchical conceptualization of gender that regards homosexuality as a foreign and un-Korean value was solidified, and sexual minorities were predominantly discussed and examined as a peripheral topic even after the political liberalization.<sup>465</sup>

Since the gay rights movement as political activism began in the early 1990s, efforts were made to rectify and enhance the collective image and legal status of sexual minorities, such as the publication and circulation of magazines such as 'Buddy' and 'Another World' (*Ttodarun Sesang*) as a means of promoting self-identification as homosexuals and a critical attitude toward bias and discrimination in society among readers.<sup>466</sup> Despite these efforts, however, the social norms and legal foundations that marginalized and demeaned homosexuals were not substantially challenged. Homosexuality in general was characterized as a perversion and some Korean people saw it as a genetic disorder or psychological imbalance.<sup>467</sup> The roots of this negative attitude toward homosexuality, as Na suggested lie in the Korean family system, which clearly relied on oppositional binary genders in neo-Confucianism. To marry someone of another gender and produce an offspring was considered to be the fulfillment of one's duty as a national subject. In this context, homosexuals were stigmatized in that they failed to continue the family line.<sup>468</sup>

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<sup>465</sup> Ibid., p. 88

<sup>466</sup> Ibid., pp. 89-90

<sup>467</sup> Kim and Hahn, "Homosexuality in ancient and modern Korea", p. 63

<sup>468</sup> Na, "The South Korean Gender System: LGBTI in the Contexts of Family, Legal Identity, and the Military" p. 360



Therefore, gender nonconformity was seen to significantly trouble the existing social system, which reproduced the perception of homosexuality as a threat to the heteronormative family.<sup>469</sup>

While the transition to democracy and the experience of globalization did not lead to considerable changes in public perception of heterosexuality as a basic element of social norms, it led to the emergence of new dominant type of masculinities, which centered on employment. The discourse on "salaryman", i.e., a middle-class man and full-time salaried employee, has played a significant role in establishing the link between full-time labor and normative ideals of masculinity in Korean society up to the present time.<sup>470</sup> Taga explains that this term has different connotations in different contexts. Within the job context, there is a dualistic gender discourse, "salaryman" and "office lady", who generally has no chance for promotion and mainly serves as an assistant for male employees. In this context, salaryman represents male privilege and centrality in the company. In the family context, full-time housewife is another side of the dualistic gender discourse. Here, a salaryman as a breadwinner represents not only the heterosexual man but also the provider for a woman.<sup>471</sup> In the Korean context, salarymen were generally depicted as white-collar workers who worked long days after which they joined colleagues at business meetings in bars, drinking well into the night. As salarymen were expected to show overriding

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<sup>469</sup> Ibid., p. 361

<sup>470</sup> Lee and Parpart, "Constructing gender identity through masculinity in CSR reports: The South Korean case", p. 313

<sup>471</sup> Taga, F. (2005), "East Asian Masculinities" in M.S. Kimmel, J. Hearn, and R. Connell (eds), *Handbook of Studies on Men and Masculinities*, Routledge: New York and London, p. 132

loyalty and commitment to the corporation where they worked, they could not spend much time with their family and did not want to be bothered with managing family issues or households.<sup>472</sup>

As a standard associated with salarymen became the normative ideal of masculinities, Koreans' perceptions of military service also changed. A study by the Korean Women's Development Institution in 2017 shows that there has been a big change across generations in the way in which Korean men make sense of their military service. The first group of men who completed military service during the late 1960s and the early 1970s, the period of rapid industrialization, regarded military experience as an essential step for building mental strength as well as physical prowess to become a mature, real man.<sup>473</sup> One of the most popular songs used during basic training and marches in the Korean military, 'Real Men' (*chinjja sanai*), represents a category of men who was idealized by this group of men. The term *sanai* connotes a man at the pinnacle of physical strength and visceral courage. This song also describes soldering as the most glorious and honorable act men can ever perform.<sup>474</sup> This first group of men deemed hyper-masculine militaristic culture as wrong practices to be corrected but they saw this militaristic culture as a necessary evil for building a strong national army.<sup>475</sup> For the second group of men who

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<sup>472</sup> Kim, Allen and Pyke, Karen (2015), "Taming Tiger Dads: Hegemonic American Masculinity and South Korea's Father School", *Gender & Society*, Vol. 29, No. 4, p. 512

<sup>473</sup> Ma, Kyunghye et al. (2017), *Crack in Hegemonic Masculinity and Changing Men's Life: Based on the Differences between Men* (지배적 남성성의 균열과 변화하는 남성의 삶: 남성들 내부의 차이를 중심으로), Korea Women's Development Institution, p. 88

<sup>474</sup> Moon, *Militarized Modernity and Gendered Citizenship in South Korea*, pp. 49-50

<sup>475</sup> Ma et al., *Crack in Hegemonic Masculinity and Changing Men's Life: Based on the Differences between Men*, p. 89

completed military service during the 1980s, there was a tendency to interpret the time of their military service as a generative period in which to learn how to behave in the workplace. They responded that experiencing the transition from the individual-centered self to the group-oriented self and the hierarchical and collective system of the military helped them get along with people from various walks of life and adapt to organizational life in the workplace.<sup>476</sup> In the context of divided Korea, while the relatively older generation viewed military service as enormous self-sacrifice for the state and a necessary time that served to develop masculine traits, the younger generation became less willing to be mobilized for war preparation as they became more concerned with achieving and maintaining high standards of living in the period of dramatic economic growth.<sup>477</sup> For these younger men, the ideal warrior with tough mentality and a fit and disciplined body was not seen as a representation of hegemonic masculinity. Despite this difference, however, both groups of men saw the value of completing military service as a way of getting full Korean citizenship and as a necessary step for finding a job and settling in Korea.<sup>478</sup>

#### **2.2.4. Neo-liberalization of South Korean Society**

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<sup>476</sup> Moon, Seungsook (2002), "The Production and Subversion of Hegemonic Masculinity: Reconfiguring Gender Hierarchy in Contemporary South Korea" in Laurel Kendall (ed), *Under Construction: The Gendering of Modernity, Class, and Consumption in the Republic of Korea*, University of Hawai'i Press, p. 95; Ma et al., *Crack in Hegemonic Masculinity and Changing Men's Life: Based on the Differences between Men*, pp. 90-91

<sup>477</sup> Moon, *Militarized Modernity and Gendered Citizenship in South Korea*, p. 38

<sup>478</sup> Ma et al., *Crack in Hegemonic Masculinity and Changing Men's Life: Based on the Differences between Men*, pp. 93-94

The end of the Cold War and the ongoing changes within and outside Korea has led to the globalization of Korean society, based on the ideological onslaught of neoliberalism.<sup>479</sup> Although there is no single definition of neoliberalism because the specific ways in which neoliberal reconfiguration takes place vary by time and national contexts, shared identifiable core aspects of neoliberalism take the form of deregulation from the state and emphasis on individual freedom and responsibility.<sup>480</sup> Neoliberalism was amplified following the democratic transition from an authoritarian developmental state, and the financial liberalization and opening of the Korean economy throughout the 1990s.<sup>481</sup> Particularly, the Asian financial crisis in 1997 was seen as a historic moment in terms of the implementation of full-blown neoliberalism in all sectors in Korea,<sup>482</sup> from economic operations, to labor relations, welfare, education and even self-management of appearance and emotions.<sup>483</sup> This resulted in the emergence of 'neoliberal subjectivities', which placed strong emphasis on individuality, style, self-managing and responsibility.<sup>484</sup> Under the situation of enhanced labor flexibility, the demise of job security, and

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<sup>479</sup> Bowles, Paul (2014), "Globalization and neoliberalism: A taxonomy with implications for 'anti-globalization'" in Henry Veltmeyer (ed), *Development in an Era of Neoliberal Globalization*, Routledge, p. 95

<sup>480</sup> Choi and Kim, "Of Soldiers and Citizens: Shallow Marketisation, Military Service and Citizenship in Neo-Liberal South Korea", p. 516

<sup>481</sup> Lee, Kang-kook (2011), "Neoliberalism, the financial crisis, and economic restructuring in Korea" in Jesook Song (ed), *New Millennium South Korea: Neoliberal capitalism and transnational movements*, Routledge, p. 31

<sup>482</sup> Ibid, p. 33

<sup>483</sup> Choi and Kim, "Of Soldiers and Citizens: Shallow Marketization, Military Service and Citizenship in Neo-Liberal South Korea", p. 517

<sup>484</sup> Abelmann, Nancy et al. (2009), "College rank neo-liberal subjectivity in South Korea: the burden of self-development", *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 2, p. 230

retrenchment of both state and corporate support for social welfare, the younger generation needed to be the manager of their own lives as 'a CEO of a company called life in the context of neoliberal transformation'.<sup>485</sup> The study by Abelman et al showed well the way in which contemporary Korean college students constructed their neoliberal subjectivities and coped with the burden of self-development in the neoliberal context.<sup>486</sup> Despite differences in college rank, class, gender, and family background, all students aspired to active, vital, and cosmopolitan lives, which were distinguished from the ones of the collectivist subjects of earlier generations.<sup>487</sup> They realized that this new mode of being was a requirement for leading a productive life in a rapidly transforming and globalizing world. In particular, for students whose arena extended beyond Korea in an age of radical liberalization, competition did not end at the boundaries of the state. They tended to consider being domestic as the feminine in direct contrast with masculine images of free circulation in a wide and increasingly global arena.<sup>488</sup>

The emergence of neoliberal subjectivity has led to significant changes in the displaying practices of masculinities as well. Among the various technologies of self-management, men's self-care focused on their own bodies and well-being has played an important role in both

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<sup>485</sup> Seo, Dongjin (2011), "The will to self-managing, the will to freedom: The self-managing ethic and the spirit of flexible capitalism in South Korea" in Jesook Song (ed), *New Millennium South Korea: Neoliberal capitalism and transnational movements*, Routledge, p. 95

<sup>486</sup> Abelman et al., "College rank neo-liberal subjectivity in South Korea: the burden of self-development", p. 243

<sup>487</sup> Ibid., p. 229

<sup>488</sup> Ibid., p. 230

generating and affirming a new ideal of Korean contemporary masculinities that depart from traditional norms. While men who focused on body image or were passively dependent on the gaze of other people were traditionally associated with femininity,<sup>489</sup> men's turning to their bodies in the neoliberal era is related to a critical link between hegemonic masculinity, male self-regard, and overall self-esteem.<sup>490</sup> Particularly, after the financial crisis, competition in employment has become more intense and women's increasing social and economic power has begun to impact on the whole society. That is, a cognitive landscape that historically gave men automatic rights for entry into culturally dominant positions have to be reconfigured.<sup>491</sup> In order to preserve their hegemonic roles, it becomes required that men should be successful in the maintenance of body and image and take a more active role in protecting and promoting their appearance.<sup>492</sup> This could explain why men are increasingly critical consumers for industries that cater to appearance including not only typical male activities, such as bodybuilding, but also the beauty market, such as fashion, weight loss, and plastic surgery. This has been evidenced in the fact that Korean men have aesthetic surgery in increasingly significant numbers and more male college students contemplate some form of aesthetic surgery.<sup>493</sup> In addition to focus on physical

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<sup>489</sup> Frank, Elena (2014), "Groomers and Consumers: The Meaning of Male Body Depilation to a Modern Masculinity Body Project", *Men and Masculinities*, Vol. 17, No. 3, p. 280

<sup>490</sup> Weber, Brenda R. (2014), "What Makes the Man? Television Makeovers, Made-over Masculinity, and Male Body Image", *International Journal of Men's Health*, Vol. 5, No. 3, p. 291

<sup>491</sup> Weber, "What Makes the Man? Television Makeovers, Made-over Masculinity, and Male Body Image", p. 292

<sup>492</sup> Ibid., p. 304

<sup>493</sup> Holliday, Ruth and Elfving-Hwang, Jonna (2012), "Gender, Globalization and Aesthetic Surgery in South Korea", *Body & Society*, Vol. 18, No. 2, p. 59

appearance, the softness that lay in men's individual personalities is seen as an important element of ideal manhood as well. That is, soft masculinity embodies a significant lack of traditional manly characteristics such as aggressiveness and sexual dominance.<sup>494</sup> Instead, it stresses more sensitive and caring attitudes towards women, who are treated as friends, not as sexual objects.<sup>495</sup> The male characters in many Korean dramas seem to fulfill the criteria of ideal men, who had both manly charisma and feminine tenderness.<sup>496</sup> They contain feminine aspects and seldom express their masculinity in direct actions but they are not feminized. These qualities of male characters appeal to and are admired by both female and male viewers.<sup>497</sup>

These changes caused by the neoliberal reconfiguration of Korean society has also changed the way in which the younger generation perceive military service. According to Moon, the apparent hegemony of consensus in favor of conscription among Koreans began to unravel in the context of dramatic changes throughout the 1990s.<sup>498</sup> Particularly, young people of the 'new

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<sup>494</sup> Louie, Kam (2012), "Popular Culture and Masculinity Ideals in East Asia, with Special Reference to China", *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 71, No. 4, p. 935

<sup>495</sup> Song, Geng (2016), "Changing Masculinities in East Asian Pop Culture", *East Asia Forum Quarterly*, Vol. 8, No. 2, p. 5

<sup>496</sup> Jung, Sun (2011), *Korean Masculinities and Transcultural Consumption: Yonsama, Rain, Old boy, K-Pop Idols*, Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, p. 47

<sup>497</sup> Lin, angel M. Y. and Tong, Avin (2007), "Crossing Boundaries: Male Consumption of Korean TV Dramas and Negotiation of Gender Relations in Modern Day Hong Kong", *Journal of Gender Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 3, p. 225; Ainslie, Mary J. (2012), "Korean Soft Masculinity vs Malay hegemony: Malaysian masculinity and Hallyu fandom", *Korea Observer*, Vol. 48, No. 3, p. 613

<sup>498</sup> Moon, Seungsook (2005), "Trouble with Conscription, Entertaining Soldiers: Popular Culture and the Politics of Militarized Masculinity in South Korea", *Men and Masculinities*, Vol. 8, No. 1, p. 69

generation' (*Sinsedae*), who emerged as children of the affluent urban middle class by the early 1990s, raised questions about the popular acceptance of military service as a men's sacred duty. They were heavily affected by consumer individualism, which appeared to be incongruent with the communal character of military life such as heavy emphasis on hierarchy and collective orientation.<sup>499</sup> In response to increasing discontent with the burden of military service, the state tried to improve the military's abject conditions and introduced new policies and practices to reduce the inconvenience of military life.<sup>500</sup> However, while the main factor of resistance to military service by the previous generation was related to fear of physical hardship or abuse as well as the lack of food, clothes, and other basic consumer goods,<sup>501</sup> for the younger generation, it seems to be tied increasingly to practical calculation as the age of conscription overlaps with the peak period for higher education, or early career development.<sup>502</sup> Among conscripts, especially those coming from urban middle-class families, a perception that serving in the military is 'wasting the prime time of one's life' has become widespread.<sup>503</sup> Since more men, as neoliberal subjects, frequently invest their identities in particularly individualized, competitive workplace

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<sup>499</sup> Ibid., p. 70

<sup>500</sup> Moon, "The Production and Subversion of Hegemonic Masculinity: Reconfiguring Gender Hierarchy in Contemporary South Korea", p. 96

<sup>501</sup> Moon, "Trouble with Conscription, Entertaining Soldiers: Popular Culture and the Politics of Militarized Masculinity in South Korea", p. 70

<sup>502</sup> Song, Kristen Younghee (2015), "Between Global Dreams and National Duties: The Dilemma of Conscription Duty in the Transnational Lives of Young Korean Males", *Global Networks*, Vol. 15, No. 1, p. 61

<sup>503</sup> Moon, "Trouble with Conscription, Entertaining Soldiers: Popular Culture and the Politics of Militarized Masculinity in South Korea", p. 71



projects, such as the search to validate masculine identity through career progress and self-development,<sup>504</sup> distaste for military service has intensified. Particularly, due to the state's vigorous pursuit of various globalization and neoliberal policies, the number of young Koreans who travel, study and emigrate abroad has increased dramatically.<sup>505</sup> In this circumstance, young Korean males have to deal with the dilemma between their quest for becoming global and their obligation to complete military service.<sup>506</sup>

However, this change in popular perception of military service does not necessarily mean that there is a strong challenge to the tight linkage between military service and hegemonic masculinity in Korean society. Despite the fact that many young Korean males are concerned about the disadvantage of being removed from civilian sectors<sup>507</sup> and that militarized culture and behavior are seen negatively in wider society,<sup>508</sup> military service is still considered as a necessary step for achieving 'normal' adult manhood, and the shared common military

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<sup>504</sup> Collison, David L. and Hearn, Jeff (2006), "Men and Masculinities and Workplace Diversity/Diversion: Power, Intersections, and Contradictions", in A. Konrad et al. (eds), *Handbook of Workplace Diversity*, Sage, p. 304

<sup>505</sup> Kwon, Young In and Roy, Kevin M. (2007), "Changing Social Expectations for Work and Family involvement among Korean Fathers", *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, Vol. 38, No. 2, p. 287

<sup>506</sup> Song, "Between Global Dreams and National Duties: The Dilemma of Conscription Duty in the Transnational Lives of Young Korean Males", p. 72

<sup>507</sup> Moon, "The Production and Subversion of Hegemonic Masculinity: Reconfiguring Gender Hierarchy in Contemporary South Korea", p. 97

<sup>508</sup> Lee, Jin et al. (2019), "Warriors in suits: A Bourdieusian perspective on the construction and practice of military masculinity of Korean men", *Gender, Work and Organization*, Vol. 26, No. 10, p. 1479

experiences among men still have a profound impact on 'normal' male subjectivity.<sup>509</sup> Recent scholarship on the transnational lives of young Korean males shows that military conscription not only structures their 'normal' life but also continues to remain an important, culturally recognized badge of masculinity. In the study by Choi and Chung, narratives of Korean male young adults living in the US revealed that two-year compulsory military service is an essential means to secure both legal and cultural citizenship, which allows Korean men to be recognized as normative Korean males.<sup>510</sup> Song's study also showed that many Koreans still often regard those who are qualified for conscription as competent human capital possessing 'normal' personhood.<sup>511</sup> This was shown through statements of one participant in her study, who got exempted from military service unexpectedly because of a newly developed kidney problem. This event not only made him very concerned about having stigma attached to being a 'disqualified' man for military service but also challenged his own perception of himself as a healthy, athletic man.<sup>512</sup> The study by Lee et al. on the construction and practice of militarized masculinities in Korean society also revealed that military service is still regarded as a rite of passage for achieving adult manhood among young Korean males. By conducting interviews with Korean men who completed military service and joined large corporations after military service, Lee et al. argued

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<sup>509</sup> Choi, Hee Jung and Chung, Ga Young (2018), "Divergent Paths toward Militarized Citizenship: The "Unending" Cold War, Transnational Space of Citizenship, and International Korean Male Students", *Korea Journal*, Vol. 58, No. 3, pp. 83-84

<sup>510</sup> Ibid., p. 96

<sup>511</sup> Song, "Between Global Dreams and National Duties: The Dilemma of Conscription Duty in the Transnational Lives of Young Korean Males", p. 71

<sup>512</sup> Ibid., p. 68

that Korean men's militarized masculinities are transferred to the workplace and serve as a crucial standard to evaluate others.<sup>513</sup> Participants in this study tended to think less of those who did not fulfil their military service on active duty, believing that these men may have psychological or physical problems. Those who completed service in an alternative form were seen as less competent and non-veterans including women were seen as not willing to make sacrifices for the organization, compared to veterans.<sup>514</sup> This shows that even for neoliberal subjects, who are less influenced by the remembered trauma of the Korean War and the national propaganda of building a strong army, but more by the individual freedom and flexibility for accumulation of human capital, military service still remains crucial in constructing hegemonic masculinity in Korean society.

Although neo-liberalization of Korean society has led to significant changes in people's life style and values, perceptions of gender roles, and constructions of masculinities, there has not been a notable challenge to heteronormativity. As noted above, with democratization and modernization of Korean society, sexual minorities began to wage a civic movement, but persons with nonconforming sexual orientation or gender identity are still deemed unfit and in violation of the heteronormative binary gender system.<sup>515</sup> This is particularly represented well in the

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<sup>513</sup> Lee et al., "Warriors in suits: A Bourdieusian perspective on the construction and practice of military masculinity of Korean men", p. 1467

<sup>514</sup> Ibid., p. 1481

<sup>515</sup> Na, "The South Korean Gender System: LGBTI in the Contexts of Family, Legal Identity, and the Military" p. 357

Korean military law. The Regulations on Physical Examination of Recruits define homosexual orientation as a form of disease and mental disturbance. In response to inquiries by gay rights organizations, the Office of Military Manpower Administration defended this practice primarily in terms of protecting the military's organizational interests. This implies the possibility that gay draftees are likely to cause humiliation and discomfort among servicemen and undermine morale because they have a very different sexual desire from that of ordinary people.<sup>516</sup> Gay servicemen or draftees who actually seek counseling are advised to be taken to military hospitals for intensive mental care that sometimes includes HIV tests, and some are granted discharge from military service for medical reasons. To submit hard evidence that the servicemen are being discharged for legitimate medical reasons, medical officers require the servicemen to submit photographs or video clips showing their involvement in sexual acts with another male.<sup>517</sup> This shows that homosexual members in the military are subjected to unwarranted scrutiny and maltreatment.

Na also argues that the military criminal law is the one and only place where homosexuality is explicitly mentioned and criminalized in Korea. In Article 92-6 the law defines sexual acts between members of the same gender as molestation and punishes sodomy and other sexual acts even when they take place with mutual consent. Besides, Article 92-6 of the Military Criminal Law has been applied to prosecute soldiers who met and had sex off base and who used gay dating

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<sup>516</sup> Bong, "The Gay Right Movements in Democratizing Korea", p. 90

<sup>517</sup> Ibid., pp. 90-91

apps. These soldiers were arrested and imprisoned.<sup>518</sup> This has produced a climate of secrecy and shame surrounding homosexual acts and identities throughout society.<sup>519</sup> For this reason, Na argues that the military regulates bodies, enforces heterosexuality, and pathologizes and even criminalizes those that deviate from such regulations and norms.<sup>520</sup> Gitzen, who examined the narrative of homoerotic soldiers existing within the narrative of soldiering and process of militarization in Korean society, argued that the repetition of erotic stories and representations of soldiers as homoerotic subjects suggest the potential of queer survivability and affective or erotic connections beginning in the military.<sup>521</sup> At the same time, however, he acknowledged that the routinization of heterosexuality would be very hard to challenge because for Koreans, men going to the military is as ordinary as marriage, getting a job, having a family, and all other aspects of life. This ordinariness contributes to cementing the construction of the soldier as a straight, male body.<sup>522</sup>

The most recent study on views on transgender soldiers in Korean society demonstrated that a dichotomous categorization of the human sexes based on anatomy is prevalent and based on this, many Koreans oppose transgender people serving in the military. In 2021, Byun, the first

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<sup>518</sup> Gitzen, Timothy (2022), "Narratives of the homoerotic soldier: the fleshiness of the South Korean military", *Cultural Studies*, Vol. 36, No. 6, p. 1007

<sup>519</sup> Na, "The South Korean Gender System: LGBTI in the Contexts of Family, Legal Identity, and the Military" p. 365

<sup>520</sup> Ibid., p. 366

<sup>521</sup> Gitzen, "Narratives of the homoerotic soldier: the fleshiness of the South Korean military", p. 1008

<sup>522</sup> Ibid., p. 1014

transgender soldier in Korean to come out in public, and who was forcefully discharged after gender affirming surgery, died by suicide. Byun, a staff sergeant, wished to continue to serve as a female soldier but the military imposed a compulsory discharge due to 'physical and mental characteristics'.<sup>523</sup> Lee et al investigated online news articles and comments regarding Byun's case. Of 1046 comments, 549 comments opposed transgender soldiers, and 15.5% of them showed negative opinions on surgical transition.<sup>524</sup> While some comments in favor of transgender soldiers did not agree with the implication that gender affirming surgery would negatively influence Byun's ability as a soldier, 25% of supportive comments addressed the necessity of proving Byun's current suitability as a female soldier. In terms of human rights, while all supportive comments backed Byun's human rights as a trans woman, some opposing comments stressed the human rights of Byun's female and male colleagues. That is, the human rights of cisgender female soldiers in taking a shower, getting dressed, and sleeping could be violated if they were to stay with a trans woman. In a similar vein, considering that Byun was a tank driver, which is a position appointed to male soldiers in the Korean military, allowing a trans woman to be trained with male soldiers could limit the men's freedom in dressing, urination/defecation, and encampment.<sup>525</sup> After Byun's death, the Minister of Defense mentioned the need for researching the inclusion of transgender people in military service, but no such study concerning

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<sup>523</sup> Lee, Jeehye et al. (2022), "Anonymous view on transgender soldiers: content analysis of online news headlines and comments in South Korea", *BMC Public Health*, Vol. 22, No. 2085, p. 1

<sup>524</sup> Ibid., p. 4

<sup>525</sup> Ibid., p. 10

Byun's case has been published yet.<sup>526</sup> Contrary to broad support for transgender military service from active-duty US military personnel, which was discussed in chapter 1, the literature reviewed here reveals that Korean society is still very conservative and less tolerant towards the LGBT community as compared to other countries and binary concept of gender remains dominant.

## **Conclusion**

Through historical analysis of different phases of contemporary Korean society, this chapter has examined how Korean men make sense of their military service and construct militarized masculinities with reference domestic and international political and economic contexts. Since the trauma of the Korean War, military service has been considered as a sacred obligation of citizens and men who fail to complete their service have been formally and informally marginalized. Even though dramatic socioeconomic changes have resulted in the shift of cultural meanings and ideals of manhood, hegemonic masculinity in Korean society is often (though not exclusive) associated with militarized norms and practices. While older generations under the military-backed authoritarian regime tend to seek the masculinities of patriotic combat warriors, younger generations place an emphasis on securing full citizenship and normal manhood through military service. Despite this difference, a perception that successful completion of military service is a precondition for reaching fully participatory adult manhood seems to remain very crucial to many Korean men, across different periods and generations. Another important

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<sup>526</sup> Ibid., p. 2

element of hegemonic masculinity in contemporary Korean society is heterosexuality. Despite several efforts to make people with non-heterosexual orientation more visible and to recognize and expand their rights, heteronormativity constructed through particular histories and cultures in Korean society remains unchallenged.<sup>527</sup> As noted in the broad application of military criminal law, mandatory military service has substantially contributed to tightening the link between ideal manhood and heterosexuality by extending the exceptionality of the military time-space in governing people's sexual acts far beyond the military.<sup>528</sup> In the empirical study to follow in this thesis, the construction of militarized masculinities in a group of young men who have recently completed military service will be detailed and then compared to the masculinities constructed by men who have served in Korean peacekeeping missions. Before examining the construction of Korean soldiers' militarized masculinities and the impact of peacekeeping on them, the next chapter addresses the methodology I adopted for the field research before the further chapters outline and analyze the main findings.

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<sup>527</sup> Na, "The South Korean Gender System: LGBTI in the Contexts of Family, Legal Identity, and the Military" p. 368

<sup>528</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 365



## Chapter 3. Methodology

### Introduction

Chapter 1 introduced the theoretical framework underpinning this research, the concept of militarized masculinities. Chapter 2 surveyed the literature on the constructions of militarized masculinities in contemporary Korean society. This chapter 3 presents the research methodology. To assess the impact of peacekeeping experiences on Korean soldiers' militarized masculinities, I conducted two rounds of interviews with two groups of Korean men and compared these two groups. The first group consisted of men who completed military service in Korea but who did not experience deployment to peacekeeping and the second group consisted of men who were deployed in various types of peacekeeping operations abroad. For comparative analysis, I employed the idea of 'case-control group', which is widely used in studies from epidemiology to sociology. A case group contains the individuals who are the subjects of the study, and a control group consists of individuals who are akin to the members of the case group for the independent variables (e.g., age, gender) but differ from them in the subject of the study (e.g., treated patients vs untreated patients).<sup>529</sup> Based on this, in this research, the first group served as a control group against which to assess the experience of men who got involved in peacekeeping in the second group (case group).

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<sup>529</sup> Szekér, Szabolcs and Vathy-Fogarassy, Ágnes (2019), "How Can the Similarity of the Case and Control Groups be Measured in Case-Control Studies?", *IEEE International Work Conference on Bioinspired Intelligence*, p. 33

To perform the practicalities of data collection and analysis, I adopted a grounded theory approach, whose goal is to develop a theoretical framework of studied phenomenon.<sup>530</sup> Grounded theory is 'most commonly used to generate theory where little is already known, or to provide a fresh slant on existing knowledge'.<sup>531</sup> That is, the central aim of this methodology is building theory, rather than testing theory.<sup>532</sup> Given the lack of an integrated theory in the literature regarding peacekeeper masculinity, particularly from a non-Western perspective, an inductive approach that allowed theory to emerge from the lived peacekeeping experiences of Korean soldiers appeared to be very appropriate and relevant. In addition, grounded theory is also well suited for research into identity construction specifically because this methodology facilitates a better understanding of the complex dynamics of social processes.<sup>533</sup> Given that the concept of masculinity is defined not only as a set of attitudes and practices culturally deemed appropriate to men,<sup>534</sup> but also as a process, an identity that is never complete but always in the making,<sup>535</sup> grounded theory fits well this research's purpose. Given that grounded theory methods aim to build a theory grounded in the data themselves, when to conduct the literature

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<sup>530</sup> Starks, Helen and Brown Trinidad, Susan (2007), "Choose Your Method: A Comparison of Phenomenology, Discourse Analysis, and Grounded Theory", *Qualitative Health Research*, Vol. 17, No. 10, p. 1374

<sup>531</sup> Goulding, Christina (2002), *Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide for Management, Business and Market Researchers*, Sage, p. 42

<sup>532</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 107

<sup>533</sup> Lee et al., "Warriors in suits: A Bourdieusian perspective on the construction and practice of military masculinity of Korean men", p. 1472

<sup>534</sup> Buchbinder, *Masculinities and Identities*, p. vii

<sup>535</sup> Morgan, *Discovering Men*, p. 46

review and how to use existing theories have been a source of much debate.<sup>536</sup> Therefore, the first section addresses how I used preconceived theories to obtain fruitful insights from my data and to build a theory grounded in these data. The second section addresses the basic assumptions/core principles of interpretive grounded theory and how these were applied to data collection and analysis. Particularly, as I used the method of 'case-control' studies, selecting a control group that was similar in certain characteristics and different in a specific property from the case group was important.<sup>537</sup> Therefore, selection criteria for this research are detailed in the section of data collection. Regarding the way to approach and analyze data, Charmaz stresses that grounded theory methods can complement other approaches, rather than stand in opposition to them.<sup>538</sup> Based on this, the third section explains the concept of introspection, which was adopted as a complementary method to analyze the data. The last section addresses how I engaged in a self-reflexive process as researchers in interpretive approaches are considered to be part of what they study, not separate from it. That is, researchers construct theories through their past and present involvements and interactions with people, perspectives, and research practices.<sup>539</sup> Therefore, a self-reflexive process was very important for the analytic goal of

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<sup>536</sup> Goulding, *Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide for Management, Business and Market Researchers*, p. 163

<sup>537</sup> Szekér and Vathy-Fogarassy, "How Can the Similarity of the Case and Control Groups be Measured in Case-Control Studies?", p. 33

<sup>538</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9

<sup>539</sup> Charmaz, Kathy (2006), *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide through Qualitative Analysis*, SAGE Publications, p. 10

attending to the participants' accounts with an open mind<sup>540</sup> and of evaluating my role as a researcher to assure trustworthiness.

### **3.1. Using Existing Theories and Developing a Grounded Theory**

Grounded theory method stresses discovery and theory development through direct contact with the social world studied rather than logico-deductive reasoning which relies on prior theoretical frameworks.<sup>541</sup> Glaser and Strauss, originators of grounded theory, focused on how fruitful insights can be obtained from existing theory, pointing out that many researchers often stifle potential insights by virtue of too strict adherence to existing theory. For this reason, they argued that to cover much literature before commencing research could increase the probability of destroying one's potentialities as a theorist.<sup>542</sup> However, this does not mean that researchers should embark on their studies without the general guidance provided by some sort of orienting theoretical perspective.<sup>543</sup> Glaser and Strauss also acknowledged that it is impossible to erase from researchers' mind all the theories they know before they begin their research. Rather, they claimed that lining up what one takes as theoretically possible or probable with what one is

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<sup>540</sup> Starks and Trinidad, "Choose Your Method: A Comparison of Phenomenology, Discourse Analysis, and Grounded Theory", p. 1376

<sup>541</sup> Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide through Qualitative Analysis*, p. 164

<sup>542</sup> Glaser, Barney G. and Strauss, Anselm L. (1967), *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*, Aldine Transaction, p. 253

<sup>543</sup> Locke, Karen D. (2001), *Grounded Theory in Management Research*, Sage, p. 34

finding in the field is desirable.<sup>544</sup> That is, researchers need to read in related areas from the start and allow the data to direct the literature to inform the emerging theory and vice versa.<sup>545</sup> In line with this, before conducting interviews, I drew on existing theory of militarized masculinities to grasp the complexity and dynamism of the construction of militarized masculinities while I was careful not to limit the analysis to conform to preconceived theories rather than extend, challenge or change them to fit the situation.<sup>546</sup>

Because of the lack of theory in the area of peacekeeper masculinity, I drew mainly on Duncanson's work that suggests the concept of peacekeeper masculinity and periodically returned to this source during data collection and analysis. I used the concept of peacekeeper masculinity as a starting point, not an end, to form interview questions, to look at data, to listen to participants, to think analytically about the data, and to develop fresh ideas.<sup>547</sup> While I tried to remain attentive to the role of existing theory in sensitizing myself to the conceptual significance of emerging concepts and categories,<sup>548</sup> I also tried to remain as open as possible to the perspectives and voices of those studied. This was because emerging theory should be supported by extracts from interviews, which show the fit between conceptual abstraction and

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<sup>544</sup> Glaser and Strauss, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*, p. 253

<sup>545</sup> Goulding, *Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide for Management, Business and Market Researchers*, p. 165

<sup>546</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 164

<sup>547</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17

<sup>548</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 42

reality.<sup>549</sup> Through this process, I was able to develop fresh theoretical interpretations of the data rather than committing myself exclusively to one specific preconceived theory.

### **3.2. Foundations and Principles of Interpretive Grounded Theory**

Among the various versions of grounded theory methodology, interpretive grounded theory fits the aim of this research better than the positivist approach of qualitative research. While positivist theory "seeks causes, favors deterministic explanations, and emphasizes generality and universality", which could result in narrow, reductionist explanations with simplistic models of action, interpretive theory emphasizes understanding rather than explanation, allows for indeterminacy rather than seeking causality, and gives priority to showing patterns and connections rather than to linear reasoning. That is, an interpretive approach assumes emergent, multiple realities; facts and values as inextricably linked; truth is provisional; and social life is processual. The very understanding gained from the theory rests on the researcher's interpretation of the studied phenomenon or process.<sup>550</sup> In line with this, Charmaz assumes that any theoretical rendering offers an interpretive portrayal of the studied world, not an exact picture of it.<sup>551</sup> Therefore, those who take an interpretive approach could be said to aim to show the complexities of particular worlds, views, and actions.<sup>552</sup> Bearing this in my mind, I sought

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<sup>549</sup> Ibid., p. 44

<sup>550</sup> Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide through Qualitative Analysis*, pp. 126-127

<sup>551</sup> Ibid., p. 10

<sup>552</sup> Ibid., p. 132

interpretive understanding of how participants constructed meanings and actions associated with their militarized masculinities rather than a variable analysis that produces abstract generalizations.<sup>553</sup>

The defining components of grounded theory practice include: simultaneous involvement in data collection and analysis; constructing analytic codes and categories from data, not from preconceived logically deduced hypotheses; constant comparison during each stage of the data analysis; advancing theory development during each stage of data collection and analysis; memo-writing to elaborate categories and specify relations between categories; and theoretical sampling.<sup>554</sup> Particularly, as one of the core principles of grounded theorizing, constant comparison was very useful to see not only internal differences among participants in each group but also similarities and differences between the two groups. Through analyzing and comparing data, I defined ideas that best fitted and interpreted the data as tentative analytical categories. An iterative cyclical research process in which I moved back and forth between collecting and analyzing data also helped me to avoid adopting uncritically participants' views, to take a fresh look and create novel concepts and categories rather than relying on stock disciplinary categories, and to compare data with emerging categories.<sup>555</sup> Theoretical sampling, as another core

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<sup>553</sup> Endres, Sigrid and Weibler, Jürgen (2020), "Understanding (non)leadership phenomena in collaborative inter-organizational networks and advancing shared leadership theory: an interpretive grounded theory study", *Business Research*, Vol. 13, No. 1, p. 282

<sup>554</sup> Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide through Qualitative Analysis*, pp. 5-6

<sup>555</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 23-24

principles of grounded theorizing, means seeking pertinent data to develop an emerging theory.

The main purpose of theoretical sampling is to elaborate and refine the categories constituting the theory,<sup>556</sup> which involves recruiting participants with differing experiences of the phenomenon so as to explore multiple dimensions of the social processes under study. The researcher continues to add participants to the sample until she reaches theoretical saturation.

Although it is almost impossible to predict what sample size will saturate a given theory, typical grounded theory studies report sample sizes ranging from 10 to 60 persons.<sup>557</sup> I used theoretical sampling in the later stages of each round of interviews in order to narrow my focus on emerging categories, to identify variations within a category, and to specify relations among categories.<sup>558</sup>

When inconsistencies or gaps in my categories appeared, I looked for ideas through studying my original data and then returned to the field to gather focused data from other participants to answer analytical questions and to fill conceptual gaps.<sup>559</sup> Applying this method was a challenge to the myth of a rigid separation between data collection and analysis<sup>560</sup> and a

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<sup>556</sup> Ibid., p. 96

<sup>557</sup> Starks and Brown Trinidad, "Choose Your Method: A Comparison of Phenomenology, Discourse Analysis, and Grounded Theory", p. 1375

<sup>558</sup> Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide through Qualitative Analysis*, p. 107

<sup>559</sup> Ibid., p. 29

<sup>560</sup> Ibid., p. 6



replacement of “the positivist notion of testing a hypothesis by the notion of ongoing interpretation and shifting between data and emerging theoretical categories”.<sup>561</sup>

### **3.2.1. Data Collection**

Data was gathered through intensive interview, which is considered to fit grounded theory methods particularly well. Such interviews, which included partly open-ended questions and partly focused questions, on the one hand, were open enough to capture the participants’ experiences and the meanings behind their answers, and on the other hand, allowed me to become more focused on developing theoretically enriched categories.<sup>562</sup> The combination of open-ended and focused questions encouraged participants to describe and reflect upon their experiences in ways that would seldom occur in everyday life<sup>563</sup> and enabled me to achieve clarity from participants’ views and to stay close to their lived experiences.

After ethical approval for the first-round of interviews was granted by the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee on the 30<sup>th</sup> April 2020, interviews were conducted between July and August in 2020. The research ethics application, which includes information on how data would be gathered, anonymized and stored with sensitivity to ethical

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<sup>561</sup> Endres and Weibler, “Understanding (non)leadership phenomena in collaborative inter-organizational networks and advancing shared leadership theory: an interpretive grounded theory study”, p. 283

<sup>562</sup> Ibid.

<sup>563</sup> Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide through Qualitative Analysis*, p. 25

concerns, the Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form and the interview guide for both rounds of interviews are included in the Appendices.

For comparative analysis, selecting a control group who had similarities with a case group except for the experience of peacekeeping was very important. For this, three factors were included in the criteria for participant selection: age; education level; and employment status. As discussed in chapter 2, since the late 1990s, neo-liberalization of Korean society has led to a dramatic change in ideal manhood and this has also affected the Korean young men's views on military service. Based on the expectation that neoliberal manhood would be closely associated with the construction of militarized masculinities, I recruited men who have come to adulthood and who completed military service in the neoliberal phase of Korean society. Therefore, I excluded men over the age of 40. In addition, given that only a small number of Korean men who achieve outstanding performance with good credentials during service in Korea are usually considered to be entitled to serve in peacekeeping operations abroad, I expected that the second group would have characteristics of a privileged group of Korean society. Based on this, education level and employment status, which are one of the indicators of social class in Korean society,<sup>564</sup> were included in the criteria for selecting a control group. Therefore, I recruited men who held at least a bachelor's degree and who worked as full-time professionals.

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<sup>564</sup> Lee et al., "Warriors in suits: A Bourdieusian perspective on the construction and practice of military masculinity of Korean men", p. 1472

Participants were recruited through snowball sampling, which began with my personal networks. After completing an interview, each participant was asked to refer other men who would be interested in discussing their military life and understanding of masculinity for this research. At the time of recruitment, the purpose and nature of the study was explained, questions from the participants were answered, and the written informed consent was provided and completed. Interviews lasting 75-90 minutes were performed with ten participants. Seven interviews were conducted face-to-face at a coffee shop of the participants' choosing in Seoul with only me and the participant present, and three interviews were conducted online. Interviews were electronically recorded for subsequent transcription and analysis.

Demographically, six participants served in the Army and four participants served in the Air Force (see Table 1 on page 132). All of them were in their late twenties to late thirties at the time of interviews. Six participants served as short-term enlisted soldiers and four participants served as commissioned officers, who were recruited by application and selection. Nine participants followed a similar life trajectory of attending college, completing military service, returning to college and entering the workforce<sup>565</sup> and one participant extended his service after the completion of mandatory service but left the military to pursue a civilian career. I concluded the interview process at ten participants because new concepts did not emerge, and saturation and redundancy were present.

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<sup>565</sup> Lee et al., "Warriors in suits: A Bourdieusian perspective on the construction and practice of military masculinity of Korean men", p. 1472

Although the list of issues changed constantly to accommodate both emerging themes and my increasing understanding in each interview, I included similar questions on some issues to evaluate and better compare the themes.<sup>566</sup> Because the primary focus of the interviews was the impact of military service on the participants' militarized masculinities and the corresponding relationship between military service and ideal manhood in contemporary Korean society, I started with a general request that participants define ideal masculinity in the Korean context. Responses to this question provided general information from which more specific inquiries could be made concerning the meanings associated with masculinities constructed in the military. Participants were asked to elaborate on their military life and commonly included questions were about participants' (1) perceptions of military norms and culture, (2) perceptions of military jobs they performed, (3) difficulties adapting to the military environment, (4) relationships with other soldiers, and (5) perceptions of female soldiers. Through conversations about these topics, I grasped how participants interpreted their military life, the impact of military service on their masculinities and their perception of gender relations, including gender roles and gender equality.

After ethical approval for the second-round of interviews was granted by the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee on the 25<sup>th</sup> March in 2021, interviews were conducted between April and July in 2021 with participants who had served in Korean

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<sup>566</sup> Endres and Weibler, "Understanding (non)leadership phenomena in collaborative inter-organizational networks and advancing shared leadership theory: an interpretive grounded theory study", p. 283

peacekeeping missions abroad. They followed much the same process as the first-round of interviews. I recruited fourteen men through snowball sampling. All interviews were conducted online due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Demographically, eleven participants served in the Army, two in the Air Force and one in the Navy (see Table 2 on page 196). Because of the fact that the number of Korean veterans who participated in peacekeeping operations is much smaller than that of the Korean men who completed military service in Korea without peacekeeping experience, upper age limit was raised from 40 to mid-40s. Apart from this, other criteria were the same as the first round of interviews (e.g., education level, employment status). Participants were between the ages of early thirties to mid-forties. While the current status of all participants from the first-round of interviews was civilian, in this round, eight participants remained in the military as professional soldiers and six were civilian at the time of interview. However, given that all professional soldiers had to complete mandatory military service first in their 20s before becoming professional soldiers, it could be said that these 8 participants shared a similar life trajectory with other participants in both groups.

The primary focus of the interviews was to see if involvement in peacekeeping contributes to the construction of different type of militarized masculinities, e.g., 'peacekeeper masculinity' Duncanson refers to. To evaluate and compare emerging themes between the two groups, I asked some of the same questions from the first-round of interviews. (e.g., definition of ideal masculinity, perception of military norms and culture, the relationship between military service and ideal masculinity). To examine the impact of peacekeeping operations on their masculinities,

each man was asked to elaborate on his peacekeeping experience and I added some peacekeeping-specific questions to the interview guide. Questions were about participants' (1) motivation for peacekeeping, (2) pre-deployment training, (3) perception of peacekeeping, (4) performing peacekeeper roles (5) perception of female peacekeepers, and (6) the impact of peacekeeping on their identities and personal lives. To acquire a better understanding of the impact of peacekeeping on their militarized masculinities, I also asked probing questions about the experience of interaction with the host population, how gender-related issues were addressed in the peacekeeping context, and important qualities soldiers need to embody to serve as peacekeepers. This set of questions allowed me to see the variations in the way peacekeeping impacted the participants' construction of Self/Other and their militarized masculinities. I finished data collection at fourteen participants as gathering fresh data no longer sparked new theoretical insights, nor revealed new properties of core theoretical categories.<sup>567</sup>

### **3.2.2. Data Analysis**

I analyzed the qualitative data by traveling back and forth between the data and emerging empirical themes and theoretical conceptualizations. This analysis utilized three main types of coding procedures: open, axial, and selective. Initial open coding was completed using line-by-line techniques. Line-by-line coding enabled me to gain a close look at what participants said

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<sup>567</sup> Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide through Qualitative Analysis*, p. 113

and meant and to help to identify implicit concerns as well as explicit statements.<sup>568</sup> As complete thoughts often span numerous lines in a transcript, line-by-line coding forced me to focus on small bits of data rather than complete thoughts and this helped to reduce the likelihood that I would merely superimpose my preconceived notions on the data, providing a more accurate description and grounded analysis of the data.<sup>569</sup> Whenever possible, I labeled the codes in participants' own specialized terms, which provided a useful analytic point of departure and helped to preserve participants' meanings of their views and actions.<sup>570</sup> For data analysis from the first round of interviews, I conducted the first-order analysis, focusing on reducing the relevant categories to a more manageable number.<sup>571</sup> To become more actively engaged in the data and to increase the level of abstraction of my ideas, I also used memo writing, which is a pivotal intermediate step between data collection and data writing.<sup>572</sup> Memo writing helped me to examine participants' implicit, unstated, and condensed meanings from their statements and certain memos directly developed into theoretical categories. After codes were named and categories were constructed, I reviewed the data again to see which, if any, fitted each category.

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<sup>568</sup> Ibid., p. 50

<sup>569</sup> Eisen, Daniel B. and Yamashita, Liann (2019), "Borrowing from Femininity: The Caring Man, Hybrid Masculinities, and Maintaining Male Dominance", *Men and Masculinities*, Vol. 22, No. 5, p. 807

<sup>570</sup> Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide through Qualitative Analysis*, p. 55

<sup>571</sup> Gioia, Dennis A. et al. (2013), "Seeking Qualitative Rigor in Inductive Research: Notes on the Gioia Methodology", *Organizational Research Methods*, Vol. 16, No. 1, p. 20

<sup>572</sup> Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide through Qualitative Analysis*, p. 72

Sometimes the revisited data did not fit well into a category, which led either to abandonment or revision of a category. Through several cycles reexamining initial categories, I generated 25 first-order concepts that captured the participants' experiences with and interpretations of their military service (see Figure 1 on page 133). Through this process, I was able to define broad categories that described the data and to engage in the second state of coding. Axial coding involved sorting, synthesizing, and categorizing the large number of diverse initial codes.<sup>573</sup> I reassembled first-order concepts into groupings based on relationships and patterns within and among the categories identified during open coding, to give coherence to the emerging analysis.<sup>574</sup> The second-order analysis generated 10 emerging categories. At the final stage, I used selective coding steps for the full integration of axial codes and development of theory,<sup>575</sup> asking whether the emerging theoretical themes could help to explain the phenomena observed. I paid careful attention to the meanings that different participants attributed to their military service and to how participants' masculinities were constructed and transformed in the interaction between military experience and civilian cultures. To understand the data at a more abstract level and to position it in the theoretical framework, I integrated my memos and tried

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<sup>573</sup> Endres and Weibler, "Understanding (non)leadership phenomena in collaborative inter-organizational networks and advancing shared leadership theory: an interpretive grounded theory study", p. 285

<sup>574</sup> Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide through Qualitative Analysis*, p. 60

<sup>575</sup> Deeter-Schmelz, Dawn R. et al (2019), "Understanding cross-cultural sales manager-salesperson relationships in the Asia-Pacific Rim region: a grounded theory approach", *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, Vol. 39, No. 4, p. 340



to specify the relations between categories and emerging theoretical concepts. I also searched for theoretical concepts from the relevant literature that could advance my understanding and further develop the emerging categories.<sup>576</sup> As a result, 4 theoretical themes were generated. Although the goal of grounded theory analysis is to produce theory, given the complexity of the construction of masculinities, patterns were not always identified between all categories. In this case, after synthesizing all the data, I tried to build a theoretical concept around a core category that could explain the central phenomenon present in the data.<sup>577</sup> To demonstrate visually how I progressed from raw data to terms and themes in conducting the analyses, I adopted an idea of making a diagram, which was originally used in the work by Corley and Gioia. Corley and Gioia called this graphic representation of their data analysis 'data structure'.<sup>578</sup> Identification numbers (e.g., KX for those who served in Korea, PX for those who served in peacekeeping) were assigned to participants instead of their names to protect their identities. By using the grounded theory key concept of comparing and contrasting, I focused on capturing the participants' experiences and meanings described in the interviews in theoretical terms.

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<sup>576</sup> Endres and Weibler, "Understanding (non)leadership phenomena in collaborative inter-organizational networks and advancing shared leadership theory: an interpretive grounded theory study", p. 287

<sup>577</sup> Starks and Brown Trinidad, "Choose Your Method: A Comparison of Phenomenology, Discourse Analysis, and Grounded Theory", p. 1377

<sup>578</sup> Gioia et al., "Seeking Qualitative Rigor in Inductive Research: Notes on the Gioia Methodology", p. 21

The same steps were utilized for data analysis from the second round of interviews. Through the initial open coding, 36 first-order concepts were generated that grasped the participants' perception of ideal masculinity, perceptions of gender roles in peacekeeping specifically and in larger society more general, life as peacekeeping soldiers, impressions and feelings about their host country and its people, and personal meanings attached to peacekeeping experiences (see Figure 2 on page 197). Through the axial coding, I categorized the first-order concepts into 13 categories according to participants' experiences and interpretations in the different phase of peacekeeping. Lastly, through the selective coding, 5 theoretical themes emerged that were suggestive of the potential for the construction of alternative militarized masculinities through peacekeeping. Throughout the entire process of analysis, I constantly compared conceptual categories and memos of the second round of interviews to those of the first round of interviews. In so doing, I was able to see the similarities and differences between the two groups.

### **3.3. Engaging with Participants' Introspection for Data Analysis**

To better analyze how participants made sense of their complex experiences upon completion of military service/peacekeeping operations, I focused on the concept of introspection, a method common to psychological studies. This idea was derived from the Agyekum's study on the impact of peacekeeping on Ghanaian soldiers in the post-peacekeeping deployment phase. Agyekum argued that only by engaging with soldiers' introspection in the post-deployment context is it

possible to understand how soldiers interpret their peacekeeping experiences.<sup>579</sup> In my research, as the data were obtained from the participants' retrospection, I concentrated my efforts on engaging with their introspective processes. This enabled me to get a deeper understanding of how peacekeeping affected the participants' masculinities in a complicated way.

Gould defined introspection as 'an ongoing process of tracking, experiencing, and reflecting on one's own thoughts, mental images, feelings, sensations, and behaviors'.<sup>580</sup> Introspection takes the form of edited, interpreted, or imaginatively reconstructed 'replays' of one's experiences.<sup>581</sup> Gould divided different types of introspection into two categories: narrative and metacognitive introspection. While metacognitive introspection concerns thinking about thinking and reflects the following of one's own real-time thoughts and feelings, narrative introspection is the telling of one's own story in one's own words, which is usually situated in explicit cultural as well as personal dimensions.<sup>582</sup> Put simply, while metacognitive introspection encompasses a more experimental, psychological approach, narrative introspection reflects a more qualitative, interpretive approach.<sup>583</sup> According to this category, during interviews, narrative introspection

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<sup>579</sup> Agyekum, "Peacekeeping Experiences as Triggers of Introspection in the Ghanaian Military Barracks", p. 53

<sup>580</sup> Gould, Stephen J. (1995), "Researcher Introspection as a Method in Consumer Research: Applications, Issues, and Implications", *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 21, No. 4, p. 719

<sup>581</sup> Lyons, William (1986), *The Disappearance of Introspection*, MIT Press, p. 114

<sup>582</sup> Gould, Stephen J. (2008), "An introspective genealogy of my introspective genealogy", *Marketing Theory*, Vol. 8, No. 4, p. 408

<sup>583</sup> Gould, Stephen J. (2013), "Multimodal Introspection Theory" in Joshua W. Clegg (ed), *Self-Observation in the Social Sciences*, Routledge, p. 146

occurred to my participants, which involved recollection of past events.<sup>584</sup> As Agyekum argued, participants' narratives were informed by the retrospective introspection of their experiences.<sup>585</sup>

Introspection, however, as a research approach, has long been doubted and criticized by positivists and behaviorists as being subjective and unreliable, and being inaccurate by definition due to its post hoc nature.<sup>586</sup> Particularly, as narrative introspection always relies on selective memory work, possible sources of bias or distortion that inhibit the personal narrative from being valid have been suggested, which is one of the most important challenges for its use for research in the social sciences.<sup>587</sup> For this reason, elimination of various biases is of significant importance in the field of introspective methods.<sup>588</sup> However, as mentioned above, what my research sought to do was to develop interpretive understandings of the construction of participants' masculinities, not construct positivist theories for explanation and prediction. This interpretive approach fits the feminist perspective about truth and validity in personal narratives as well. According to Stivers, there is no such thing as "unbiased" knowledge in the sense of knowledge

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<sup>584</sup> Fauquet-Alekhine, Philippe. et al. (2021), "Introspective interviewing for work activities: applying subjective digital ethnography in a nuclear industry case study", *Cognition, Technology & Work*, Vol. 23, No. 3, p. 628

<sup>585</sup> Agyekum, "Peacekeeping Experiences as Triggers of Introspection in the Ghanaian Military Barracks", p. 54

<sup>586</sup> Hackert, B. and Weger, U. (2018), "Introspection and the Würzburg School: Implications for Experimental Psychology Today", *European Psychologist*, Vol. 23, No. 3, p. 218

<sup>587</sup> Orlando, Leonardo (2020), "The fabric of agency: Navigating human potentialities through introspection", *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 51, No. 5, p. 471

<sup>588</sup> Trnka, Radek and Smelik, Vit (2020), "Elimination of bias in introspection: Methodological advances, refinements, and recommendations", *New Ideas in Psychology*, Vol. 56, No. 100753, p.

ungrounded in a set of intellectual assumptions, and this awareness validates the kind of particular, contextual knowledge personal narrative imparts. In this regard, Stivers also claims that frankly subjective knowledge has become a much more respectable way of knowing, even in social science.<sup>589</sup> The Personal Narratives Group, a feminist group working the late 1980s in the US, suggested 'truths', as "a plural concept meant to encompass the multiplicity of ways in which a woman's life story reveals and reflects important features of her conscious experience and social landscape, creating from both her essential reality".<sup>590</sup> In this understanding, reductionist approaches that determine truth in women's personal narratives by their exact factual accuracy, the representativeness of their social circumstances, or the reliability of their memory are disdained.<sup>591</sup> Some biases may have arisen during my interviews because participants may have forgotten or exaggerated something or may have become confused while talking about their experiences. However, in the feminist interpretive approach to personal narratives, these biases still reveal truths. These truths do not reveal the past "as it actually was", aspiring to a standard of objectivity, but instead, provide the truths of participants' experiences.<sup>592</sup>

The leading oral historian, Portelli, also recognizes that life stories are nonobjective, artificial,

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<sup>589</sup> Stivers, Camilla (1993), "Reflections on the Role of Personal Narratives in Social Science", *Journal of Women in Culture and Sociology*, Vol. 18, No. 2, p. 410

<sup>590</sup> Personal Narratives Group (1989), "Origins" in Personal Narratives Group (eds), *Interpreting Women's Lives: Feminist Theory and Personal Narratives*, Bloomington, IN: Indianan University Press, p. 14

<sup>591</sup> Ibid.

<sup>592</sup> Personal Narratives Group (1989), "Truths" in Personal Narratives Group (eds), *Interpreting Women's Lives: Feminist Theory and Personal Narratives*, Bloomington, IN: Indianan University Press, p. 261

variable, and partial,<sup>593</sup> and that some factually 'wrong' statements are still psychologically 'true' and this truth may be equally as important as factually reliable accounts.<sup>594</sup> Bearing this in my mind, I tried to remain attentive to the process of participants' narrative introspection and this enabled me to grasp how they made sense of and interpreted their military experiences and how this impacted the construction of their militarized masculinities.

### **3.4. Self-Reflexive Processes**

An interpretive grounded theory approach acknowledges that the resulting theory depends on the researchers' view and interpretation; it does not and cannot stand outside of it.<sup>595</sup> For this reason, researchers' reflexivity about how their own perspective, preexisting thoughts and beliefs affect data analysis and theory development is very important. As a self-reflexive process, I used the method of bracketing, which refers to the process of setting aside, suspending, or holding researcher's preconceptions.<sup>596</sup> There were two types of suppositions to be bracketed out: internal and external suppositions. While internal suppositions are made up of personal suppositions of the researcher such as personal knowledge, history, experiences, culture, and values, external suppositions center on the phenomenon being studied such as its history,

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<sup>593</sup> Portelli, Alessandro (1998), "What makes oral history different" in Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson (eds), *The Oral History Reader*, Bloomington, Routledge, p. 70

<sup>594</sup> Ibid., p. 68

<sup>595</sup> Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide through Qualitative Analysis*, p. 130

<sup>596</sup> Gearing, Robin Edward (2004), "Bracketing in Research: A Typology", *Qualitative Health Research*, Vol. 14, No. 10, p. 1433

definition, and larger environmental factors.<sup>597</sup> Among six different types of bracketing Gearing presented, I employed reflexive bracketing whose focus is 'to make transparent, overt, and apparent the researcher's personal values, background, and cultural suppositions'. However, in reflexive bracketing, external suppositions are not bracketed out.<sup>598</sup> This approach is different from other types of bracketing (e.g. descriptive bracketing and analytical bracketing) that require researchers to set aside suppositions connected to external phenomena as well.<sup>599</sup> Given that any construction of masculinities is contextually situated in a certain time, place, culture, and situation, it is impossible to remove the larger cultural and institutional suppositions, which are essential to the phenomenon being investigated in this research. For example, my preexisting assumption was that professional soldiers would be more conservative on the traditional masculine ideals than veterans. However, as each wave of data collection was processed, there emerged new themes, which were different from my assumption. After finding this, I endeavored to bracket my own knowledge of militarized masculinities in order to approach interviews more openly. Reflexive bracketing also fits the interpretive approach I adopted. It acknowledges that a phenomenon can be investigated and understood from multiple perspectives and no single truth exists.<sup>600</sup> Despite my attempt to keep original assumptions and judgements separate to remain unbiased to the emerging data, it was impossible to be totally free of my own perspective.

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<sup>597</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1433-1434

<sup>598</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1445

<sup>599</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1439, 1443

<sup>600</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1448

However, reflexive bracketing helped me to identify what my internal suppositions were and to ensure that my prejudices and assumptions did not structure the questioning. Since researchers might be accused of encouraging participants to tell more problematic or sensational episodes by bringing researchers' own biases into the interview,<sup>601</sup> it was very important to reduce the influence of my personal suppositions on the participants' accounts.

In addition to the impact of my preconceptions, I also needed to remain alert to the fact that differences between researcher and participants in race, class, gender, age, and ideologies could affect the direction and content of interviews.<sup>602</sup> I paid careful attention to how my position as a female researcher shaped the interaction between me and male participants. Participants appeared to have an assumption that I, as a female civilian researcher, was unable to fully know or understand military culture and practice. For this reason, they were responsive but adopted assertive positions as if teaching the interviewer about 'men's stuff'. This tendency was also found in the interviews with men conducted by female interviewers in the study on hybrid masculinities by Eisen and Yamashita.<sup>603</sup> That the researcher was a woman may have restrained male participants from talking to the researcher honestly about issues related to their organizations, or may have made them attempt to convey a desirable self-image to a woman of similar age

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<sup>601</sup> Plummer, Ken (2001), *Documents of Life 2: An Invitation to a Critical Humanism*, Sage Publications, p. 156

<sup>602</sup> Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide through Qualitative Analysis*, p. 28

<sup>603</sup> Eisen and Yamashita, "Borrowing from Femininity: The Caring Man, Hybrid Masculinities, and Maintaining Male Dominance", p. 807



and to gain positive evaluation. Nonetheless, as Hale noted in her study on the development of militarized masculinities, gender difference between the researcher and the participants did not necessarily have a negative impact on the research because consideration of this difference was of itself important in relation to issues of gender and identity construction.<sup>604</sup> However, given that an interview situation was somewhat unusual for most participants, where men spoke about their military life to a woman researcher, who was in an authoritative position to lead an interview and to control the interaction, I tried to learn about military culture and practices as an individual who knew relatively little about them. Besides, as the interview centered around the military experience that was not challenging to participants' masculine claims, unlike other topics such as disability or divorce, which could increase men's potential discomfort,<sup>605</sup> participants were generally able to speak openly about their perceptions, feelings, and experiences, regardless of my gender. Engaging in these self-reflexive processes enabled me to see how my ideas and understandings evolved as the research proceeded and to evaluate how my status attributes, particularly gender, affected the interaction with participants.

## **Conclusion**

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<sup>604</sup> Hale, Hannah C. (2012), "The Role of Practice in the Development of Military Masculinities", *Gender, Work and Organization*, Vol. 19, No. 6, p. 708

<sup>605</sup> Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide through Qualitative Analysis*, p. 28

I based the entire research process on interpretive grounded theory and adopted the concept of narrative introspection to approach and analyze the data. In order to remain open to emerging themes and to ensure that my internal suppositions would not overly affect the interview, I employed the method of reflexive bracketing during data collection. I also tried to be attentive to potential biases that could arise from the participant-researcher interaction. Following these approaches, this research revealed the complex dynamics of the construction of militarized masculinities. Having outlined the methodology for this study, the next chapters present the main findings from the two rounds of interviews, respectively, and then a further chapter offers a comparative analysis between the two groups.

## **Chapter 4. Results – Militarized Masculinities among Korean**

### **Conscripts**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter addresses findings from the interviews with Korean men who completed military service in Korea but who did not experience deployment to peacekeeping abroad. Participants' profiles (Table 1) are outlined first and then, as explained in the previous chapter, a data structure (Figure 1) is presented that summarizes my research process and shows the relationships between first-order concepts, theoretical categories and aggregate theoretical dimensions. From this process, four key themes/aggregate theoretical dimensions emerge which reveal the multiplicity and complexity of the construction of participants' militarized masculinities. Therefore, this chapter focuses on detailed explanations of these themes, using quotes from participants. The quotes selected are not intended to be generalized to the entirety of Korean men who complete military service. Rather, I focus on how each participant made sense of their experiences and attached meanings to them. The results show that while in many respects the construction of militarized masculinities of Korean conscripts conforms to existing feminist analysis, the way in which one's militarized masculinities are constructed can differ substantially according to various factors including lived experiences of military service and personal life values. As discussed in chapter 2, these participants are young men who have come to adulthood during the neoliberal phase of South Korean society. Therefore, their masculinities are bound up in the production of

successful neoliberal self and their relationship to militarism is complicated by this. The following sections detail the complexity of the construction of young Korean men's militarized masculinities.

#### 4.1. Participants

**Table 1. Participants' Profiles**

ID	Education level	Military branch	Rank	Duration of Service
K1	Bachelor	Air Force	Ordinary soldier	23 months
K2	Bachelor	Army	Ordinary soldier	22 months
K3	Bachelor	Air Force	Officer	39 months
K4	Bachelor	Air Force	Officer	38 months
K5	Bachelor	Army	Ordinary soldier	22 months
K6	Bachelor	Army	Ordinary soldier	22 months
K7	Bachelor	Air Force	Ordinary soldier	24 months
K8	Master	Army	Officer	36 months
K9	Bachelor	Army	Officer	89 months
K10	Bachelor	Army	Ordinary soldier	22 months

## 4.2. Data Analysis

**Figure 1. Overview of Data Analysis**

### First-order Concepts

1	Presenting a role of good family provider as the most important factor in constructing hegemonic masculinity; mentioning physical strength, competition and self-development as well
2	Seeing winning competitions, self-development, responsibility for personal wellbeing, and competence at work as masculine norms
3	Identifying a gap between self-conceptualization and hegemonic ideals
4	Showing potential for the construction of hybrid masculinities
5	(Dis)agreeing with the perception that completing military service is a rite of passage to get adult manhood
6	Considering military service as a waste of the prime time in their life
7	Identifying structural and cultural similarities between the military and workplace
8	Identifying the importance of job competency and communication skills for military life as well as for civilian life
9	Learning important social skills for organizational life before entering the workplace
10	Being part of the hierarchical and collective system in the military
11	Having (few) difficulties in adjusting to the military environment
12	Taking unconditional acceptance of order
13	Acknowledging the need of hierarchical and top-down military culture and system
14	Exerting power and authority as moving up the ranks
15	Making fun of other soldiers with sexual words
16	Talking about women and sex frequently with other soldiers

17	Seeing individuals in the military who overplayed masculine behaviors, such as using sexual swear words very frequently and boasting of fake/real sexual conquests, with mild contempt
18	Disparaging deviant soldiers who displayed inappropriate behaviors or who did not meet the masculine standards required in the military
19	Considering expressing emotions as weak and inappropriate
20	Seeing that the military tends to foster the expression of toxic masculine traits
21	Seeing the successful completion of military service as important to claim masculine status
22	Identifying homogenizing rhetoric of military service among Korean men in social life
23	Having different experiences and perceptions of female soldiers
24	Having a tendency to see gender differences as natural particularly in male-dominated combat sector
25	Finding a new image of manliness with leadership based on inclusiveness, equality, cooperation and transparency from the exemplary senior personnel in the military

### Second-order Categories

1-4	1'	Pursuing combined masculinities of traditional and neoliberal men
5-6	2'	Having ambivalent attitudes towards military service
7-9	3'	Attaching meanings to military service in terms of accumulation of human capital for the future career
10-14	4'	Getting used to military life and culture
15-16	5'	Sexual objectification of women
17-19	6'	(Un)Acceptable masculinities in the military
20	7'	Negative impact of military service on soldiers' masculinities
21-22	8'	Significance of military service as a means for claiming higher masculine status

23-24	9'	Ambivalence towards female soldiers
25	10'	Positive view on the performance of "softer" masculinities in the military

### **Aggregate Theoretical Dimensions/Main Themes**

1'	1"	Prioritizing a good family provider role
2'-8'	2"	Constructing multiple militarized masculinities
9'	3"	Perceptions of female soldiers
10'	4"	Perceptions of softer masculinities

### **4.3. Findings**

#### **4.3.1. Prioritizing a Good Family Provider Role as an Ideal Masculinity**

All participants were able to identify characteristics they believed men were expected to adopt. Nine out of ten participants believed that men were expected to become a head of the family, as the main support and pillar of the family in an authority position. However, as would be expected from the discussion in chapter 2, men of this generation distanced themselves from "traditional masculine men" who displayed verbal domination, emotional inexpressiveness, and overt misogyny in the workplace and at home. They recognized the importance of egalitarian family division of labor and expressed a desire to be more involved with their children than their fathers were with them. Despite this recognition, the role of man as a family provider was still very important to the construction of their masculinities and self-conceptualization. Many participants assumed heterosexuality as a normative category to establish a family and based their gender identities on the role of successful family provider,

I think a man who can lead a family well is seen to be an ideal man in Korean society. I mean he should be able to support his family financially enough and help them enjoy an affluent life. To become a successful family provider is to become an ideal man. (K1)<sup>606</sup>

Moon claims that the role of family provider as a dominant masculine ideal is the material basis of men's authority as fathers and husbands in modernized Korean society. Failure at this role could lead to a loss of respect and authority in the family, and subsequently, a loss of masculinity.<sup>607</sup> K10's comment showed well how men's earning power served as a significant indicator of manliness and helped them to gain authority from their family members,

When a man gets married, people generally have expectations of what he should do as a man like more financial contribution to buying a house and preparing the wedding. Especially in Korean society, men tend to be assessed by how much his salary is, what kind of car he drives, and how big his house is. Man's earning power seems the most important thing. We've already seen and heard many stories about alienated fathers from their family because they are laid off or fail to provide for their family well. I hate this reality. However, in order to be a respectable father and a husband, men have no choice but to become a good provider. (K10)

Although most participants admitted the importance of the role of good family provider as a means to claim their masculinity, some of them expressed personal disagreement about this norm and experienced internal conflicts between living up to the standards of the ideal man and

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<sup>606</sup> All translations are conducted by the researcher

<sup>607</sup> Moon, "The Production and Subversion of Hegemonic Masculinity: Reconfiguring Gender Hierarchy in Contemporary South Korea", p. 86



living their life the way they would want. That is, their individual conceptualization of masculinity departed from the hegemonic norm,

I am quite against the idea of what man should do and not do. For example, there is a public perception that men should earn money to support a family or that men should not talk about or complain of tough things from the workplace to their family. I have always come into conflict with this 'men's stuff' and feel so tired of it. (K4)

In addition to this gap, in one participant's narrative, there emerged a theme that appeared to parallel the concept of 'hybrid masculinities', as suggested by Bridges and Pascoe, although it was not dominant throughout the entire interview. 'Hybrid masculinities' "refer to men's selective incorporation of performances and identity elements typically associated with various marginalized and subordinated masculinities and femininities".<sup>608</sup> K2 said,

I learned what men should be like from my father, who may be seen as a representative of traditional patriarchal Korean men. I know well how important it is to become a good family provider. However, it is very different from what I want to be like. Men also need to have emotional sensitivity and an aesthetic perspective, and to live in a softer way. (K2)

K2 knew that it would be impossible to live outside the prevailing dominant patterns of masculinity, and thus, regardless of his intention, he acknowledged that he should embody masculine ideals to a certain extent. However, he was the only participant who explicitly associated attributes like 'emotional sensitivity', 'aesthetic perspective', and 'softness' with

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<sup>608</sup> Bridges, Tristan and Pascoe, C. J. (2014), "Hybrid Masculinities: New Directions in the Sociology of Men and Masculinities", *Sociology Compass*, Vol. 8, No. 3, p. 246

masculinity. A growing body of work on hybrid masculinities argues that hybrid masculine practices often work in ways that reinforce symbolic and social boundaries, perpetuating social hierarchies in new and softer ways.<sup>609</sup> That is, men strategically manipulate masculinity and elevate their own status by appropriating traits that have been historically used to marginalize women and gay men.<sup>610</sup> Whether K2's attempt to reject traditional masculinity and construct hybrid masculine identity was for maintaining gender inequality or for challenging it was not clear in his narratives. However, given that hybridization is a cultural process with considerable potential for change,<sup>611</sup> K2's view on the need for constructing 'softer' masculinities could not be dismissed as a subtle attempt to obscure gender inequalities or to create new hierarchies.

The prevalence of good family provider as the hegemonic ideal, despite some disagreement, seemed to affect the participants' perception of gender roles as well. Most of the participants mentioned noticeable changes in gender order in contemporary Korean society, such as increasing percentages of women who are in managerial positions and have licensed-based or exam-based jobs, and regarded this as a desirable trend. They were also aware of the dominant and embedded masculine cultures that defined organizational structures and practices.<sup>612</sup>

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<sup>609</sup> Ibid., p. 255

<sup>610</sup> Eisen and Yamashita, "Borrowing from Femininity: The Caring Man, Hybrid Masculinities, and Maintaining Male Dominance", p. 806

<sup>611</sup> Bridges and Pascoe, "Hybrid Masculinities: New Directions in the Sociology of Men and Masculinities", p. 256

<sup>612</sup> Gress, Douglas R. and Paek, Jeeyon (2014), "Differential Spaces in Korean Places? Feminist Geography and Female Managers in South Korea", *Gender, Work and Organization*, Vol. 21, No. 2, p. 166

However, this did not mean that participants saw women's paid work as being as important in both status and pay as men's paid work. They did not talk about this directly, but because of the men's paramount role of family provider, women's engagement in formal economic activities seemed to be considered as the outcome of a complex and highly gendered set of negotiations and compromises within the household,<sup>613</sup> unlike men who were given automatic rights for entry into the workplace without the need for compromises among family members. In this way, participants could distance themselves from fully participating in non-wage work in the domestic sphere including housework, nurturing children and managing children's education, which was mainly assigned to women. That is, they were ambivalent towards egalitarian gender roles. Due to the impact of changes in gender relations in civilian society, participants supported expanding women's roles in public social life, and seemed to be positive about the emerging practices of nurturing and egalitarian new man. Despite this, their strong reliance on the role of the head of the family showed that they still tended to stick to a gendered distinction between woman's inner or domestic sphere and the man's outer or public sphere, and had anxiety about the decline of authority in the family in case of failure at this role. K10's internal conflicts about changes in traditional gender roles and the image of an 'ideal family' in his mind showed this aspect well,

The number of couples deviating from traditional gender roles is increasing. As a man who wants to live freely, not caring about masculine norms, I find this phenomenon desirable on the one hand. On the other hand, however,

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<sup>613</sup> Ibid, p. 167

I still have certain images of an ideal family, based on the conventional gender roles. Men need to succeed at work and support their families, regardless of their partners' employment status or income. Honestly, I can't say that I'm free from this judgement. (K10)

As suggested in chapter 2, the theme of neoliberal subjectivities emerged from almost all participants as a prerequisite to become a good family head. They mentioned the importance of constant self-development, competitiveness, competence at work, personal responsibility and authorship for their economic and general wellbeing. K7, who worked from home due to the Covid-19 pandemic, was concerned about 'getting too lazy to keep developing himself'. According to him, he could have tried or learned something new as his work schedule became more flexible. However, he did not do so and this made him feel guilty. K5 presented a story of one of his colleagues in the military, who was very successful at time-management and self-improvement,

I had planned to do something productive for myself before military service and I tried some actually. However, it did not last long. Unlike most people including me in the military who wasted their time, there was one man in my barracks who prepared exams for entering college. He studied really hard in his spare time and finally got admitted. (K5)

These statements showed that young Korean men, regardless of where they are or what they are doing currently, feel pressured to embrace neoliberal subjectivities, and their masculinities appear to be highly contingent upon their access to capital through stable, well-paying professional careers. There was a difference in the extent to which participants conformed to and embodied neoliberal trends, but most of them considered qualities associated with neoliberal

subjects to be necessary to construct and perform hegemonic masculinity. That is, embodying neoliberal subjectivities was viewed as a means to become a good family provider, not an end in itself. For example, K1 liked his job and felt fulfilled but found out that his earning power was not good enough to establish his own family. K10 also stated that in Korean society, men's socioeconomic status was judged by some markers such as occupation, education background, and marital status. For both of them, proving heteronormative middle-class masculinity by becoming a good family provider seemed to be more important than enjoying single life as successful neoliberal subjects. Therefore, from this, it could be said that although sometimes participants defined their masculinities in a neoliberal manner, the role of family provider in the heteronormative, male headed household seemed to be the most important in their masculine identities. This also impacted the way in which participants viewed their military service, as they negotiated meanings attached to military service, seeing to what extent it helped or hindered their achievement of the good provider norm. In terms of this, many participants saw military service as a site where men could acquire some important qualities for their future socio-economic life such as responsibility and leadership, rather than a unique experience of obtaining masculine traits which were traditionally associated with the military. The next section addresses how participants' lived experiences of military service combined with their neoliberal manhood affected the constructions of their militarized masculinities.

#### **4.3.2. Constructing Multiple Militarized Masculinities**

Participants' elaboration of their military service showed that multiple masculine discourses and

identities, not as a single monolithic masculinity associated with the military, were constructed during their military life. Their masculinities were shaped and reshaped with reference to changing circumstances in the military. To better examine the complicated construction of militarized masculinities, the first part of this section addresses participants' views on military service. Recognizing that both prevailing features of military structure and culture, and variations existing in the military subculture are important in investigating military identities,<sup>614</sup> next parts address participants' shared experiences of military service and then the construction of multiple militarized masculinities according to various factors.

#### **4.3.2.1. Views on Military Service**

When participants enlisted in the military, most of them were in early adulthood and were very sensitive to the neoliberal pressure to structure their future through pursuit of higher education or early career development. Therefore, it was necessary for them to find a way of managing potential life course conflicts caused by military service.<sup>615</sup> There were varying degrees of reluctance towards conscription among participants for one reason or another but physical hardship or physical separation from their family was barely mentioned. They were mostly concerned about the disadvantage of being removed from civil society, which might make them

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<sup>614</sup> Carreiras, Helena (2012), "Gendered Culture in Peacekeeping Operations", *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 17, No. 4, p. 473

<sup>615</sup> Song, "Between Global Dreams and National Duties: The Dilemma of Conscription Duty in the Transnational Lives of Young Korean Males", p. 43

lag behind others who kept developing themselves within the tightly structured plan for the future. This could be seen as the impact of neoliberal subjectivity on the participants' views on military service. In line with this, military service was perceived as a waste of time or as an interruption in their career development. K5 said,

If possible, getting an exemption from military service would be the best. You could save two years and do something productive and meaningful personally or graduate from college earlier. That means you would have more chances to live a diverse life than others who served in the military. My military life was okay but it is true that I lost my time. (K5)

This statement showed that the meaning K5 assigned to his military life was closely linked to practical calculation. Other participants also mentioned that they felt envy of men who got exempted from military service, questioning what men could gain through military service. One comment from K1, who enlisted in the military while he was working after graduation from college, showed how burdened with self-management he felt in a neoliberal era and how this impacted his view on military service,

In general, I was satisfied with my military life. It was not like a company. I didn't have to take full responsibility for the work given or show initiative. Tasks were done successfully when I just followed the instructions and rules without thinking deeply. While I lived by myself before the military service, living expenses, overwork, human relationships, and so forth were always in my head. Even when my salary got raised it wasn't a simple thing to be happy about because I had to think about savings and money investment plan. But in the military, this kind of things was not my concern any more. (K1)

K1 had some difficulties in his barracks life too. He became subordinate of those who were younger

than him, which is seen as an unpleasant prospect and one to avoid for Korean men,<sup>616</sup> and sometimes he was treated in some inhumane ways by his superiors. Despite this, he described two years in the military as good time to clean his mind, which had been full of stress and pressure about the competitive way of living, and emphasized how mentally comfortable and content he was. K7 also pointed out the positive aspect of military service in that he was able to have enough time to plan his future. Before enlistment, as a college student, he had been very concerned about his future career. In the military, however, he was able to focus on himself without distraction from the gaze or standard of others and to clarify what he wanted to do in his life. As a result, after discharge, he changed his major. As Song suggests, K7 viewed the period before his service as 'downtime' and interpreted the time for military service as a 'generative' period in which to plan 'real' life.<sup>617</sup> There were differences in the views on military service between K5, K1, and K7, but from their comments, it was clear that neoliberal subjectivity was inseparable from the meanings men attached to their military service.

Participants' ambivalent feelings towards discharge from the military also revealed that their views on military service were firmly related to neoliberal subjectivity. K1, K2, K7, and K10 stated

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<sup>616</sup> Song, "Between Global Dreams and National Duties: The Dilemma of Conscription Duty in the Transnational Lives of Young Korean Males", p. 67

<sup>617</sup> Ibid., p. 68



that as the day of discharge came closer, they felt relieved because they could return to civilian life without any problems or physical injuries but at the same time, they felt anxiety and pressure about their future. They were isolated from wider society for a long time and familiar with military life, although this did not mean that a 'military soul' was completely forged inside them. They could not help but worry that they might not be able to keep up with others in college or workplace and to adjust to a rapidly changing society successfully. That is, regarding military service, an ambivalence between concern about being removed from civilian sectors and being liberated from tightly structured and competitive life, and an equal ambivalence towards returning to civilian life, all showed that military and civilian life were not totally separate and participants lived between these two areas even in the military.

In line with continuity between military and civilian life, military service was generally interpreted as men's preparation for their future career and social life. When participants were asked about the common perception of military service as a rite of passage to reach adult manhood, most of them agreed with it in terms of a positive function of military life for their employment. The military was perceived as a site for cultivating a sense of responsibility and independence, learning leadership, cooperation, and ways to interact with people from diverse backgrounds, and gaining a collective orientation and some necessary skills for organizational life in the workplace.<sup>618</sup> Besides, the homogenizing rhetoric of military service in Korean society, as one of

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<sup>618</sup> Moon, "The Production and Subversion of Hegemonic Masculinity: Reconfiguring Gender Hierarchy in Contemporary South Korea", p. 95

the few experiences the majority of adult men share with one another,<sup>619</sup> was also very important. Although most participants did not associate the way to achieve masculine ideals with military service, they could not dismiss the hegemonic meaning of military service as a crucial marker of normality in adult manhood.<sup>620</sup> According to participants, recollecting and sharing military life was one of the entertaining activities in male homosocial groups. Even if individual conceptualizations of masculinity did not fit militarized masculinities, whether men would be able to join this exclusive activity or not appeared to be very important for participants, in order not to be excluded from male homosocial groups.

As participants focused more on the linkage of military service to their future career and socio-economic life, a particular set of attributes typically found in the concept of militarized masculinities, such as aggressive heterosexuality, homophobia, and a sense of invulnerability,<sup>621</sup> was not much referred to as masculine norms directly. Instead, most participants pointed out the different aspect of the impact of military service on them. They acknowledged that they became easily assimilated into military-style organizational culture after discharge from the military, such as militaristic compliance in the workplace. K2 and K5 stated that the Korean men who completed military service tended to become less creative, less autonomous, and less critical

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<sup>619</sup> Moon, "Trouble with Conscription, Entertaining Soldiers: Popular Culture and the Politics of Militarized Masculinity in South Korea", p. 72

<sup>620</sup> Ibid.

<sup>621</sup> Cogan et al., "Intersections of US Military Culture, Hegemonic Masculinity, and Health Care among Injured Male Service", p. 2

of rigid hierarchy and unequal power structures embedded in their workplaces than the men who did not go to the military. According to Lee et al, Korean men in their study who completed military service realized that their militaristic behavior such as the display of aggressiveness and physical dominance could be seen negatively, therefore, they tried to tailor their masculinities to be more acceptable when they returned to college or entered the workplace.<sup>622</sup> That is, militarized masculinities constructed during military service did not disappear but were adjusted and “transferred to men’s organizational positions characterizing them as warriors in suits”.<sup>623</sup> In this understanding, although my participants did not admit that they were highly influenced by hyper-masculine military culture, their way to see what behavior would be considered appropriate or inappropriate, acceptable or unacceptable, and what interests were commonly or not commonly shared within male groups appeared to be tightly associated with military norms and culture. This was reflected in K2’s experiences well. Adjusting to military life was especially hard for K2 as he lived abroad in his childhood and was not used to the militaristic compliance existing in organizational culture in Korean society. However, through military service, he learned the agentic behaviors to locate himself in hierarchical organizations, and what attributes would be considered appropriate and desirable within male groups. K2 said that he was still very critical

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<sup>622</sup> Lee et al., “Warriors in suits: A Bourdieusian perspective on the construction and practice of military masculinity of Korean men”, p. 1479

<sup>623</sup> Ibid., p. 1467

of compulsory military service but due to this, he was able to adapt to his current workplace culture easily.

In summary, military service was viewed as preparation for participants' future socio-economic life as many of them identified cultural, structural similarities between the military and the workplace. Contrary to my expectations, completing military service was not viewed as imperative to acquire traditional masculine traits, such as denial of weakness, emotional control, display of aggressive behavior and physical dominance.<sup>624</sup> However, given that military service still serves as a crucial marker to ensure full citizenship and normative manhood in Korean society,<sup>625</sup> participants considered military service as an important means to claim their 'normal' personhood and masculine status. This view was tightly linked to the construction of participants' militarized masculinities. However, while there was a common linkage between military service and neoliberal manhood across participants, there was also diversification of experiences of militarized masculinities across differing times and locations in the military. Therefore, next parts examine the participants' shared/diversified experiences in the military and their impact on the construction of militarized masculinities.

#### **4.3.2.2. Shared Experiences of Military Life**

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<sup>624</sup> Hinojosa, "Doing Hegemony: Military, Men, and Constructing A Hegemonic Masculinity", pp. 190, 180

<sup>625</sup> Ma et al., *Crack in Hegemonic Masculinity and Changing Men's Life: Based on the Differences between Men*, pp. 93-94

#### 4.3.2.2.1. Basic Training

As Woodward argues, the ways in which participants' militarized masculinities were constituted and expressed were linked to the locations in which those processes occurred.<sup>626</sup> Military socialization of the participants began through the exhaustive military initiation known as basic training or boot camp. Across the literature and contexts, basic training is known to be a process of deconstruction of new recruits' civilian status.<sup>627</sup> Although several empirical studies reveal that the culture of military organizations varies between countries,<sup>628</sup> basic training is most often seen as the site of the production of militarized masculinities since its practice and goal are quite similar across national armies.<sup>629</sup> Participants' experiences of basic training appeared to conform to this view because general descriptions of basic training which appear in writing on military, such as intensive group formation, severe physical exercise, emotional control, and a total cutoff from previous life, without friends and relatives,<sup>630</sup> emerged in participants' narratives as well. This affirmed that basic training plays a profound role in developing militarized masculinities among Korean soldiers too.

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<sup>626</sup> Woodward, "Locating Military Masculinities: Space, Place, and the Formation of Gender Identity in the British Army", p. 46

<sup>627</sup> Soeters, Joseph J., et al. (2006), "Military Culture" in Giuseppe Caforio (ed), *Handbook of the Sociology of the Military*, Springer, p. 251

<sup>628</sup> Ibid., p. 238

<sup>629</sup> Ibid., p. 250

<sup>630</sup> Redmond et al., "A brief introduction to the military workplace culture", p. 14; Soeters et al., "Military Culture", p. 251; Basham, "Gender and Militaries: the importance of military masculinities for the conduct of state sanctioned violence" p. 31

At the start of basic training, participants as new recruits were informed by instructional staff that they should learn the value of conformity and obedience, and rules for exhibiting courage, endurance, and toughness in the face of risk. As the first experience of being cut off from wider society and living in an enclosed administered round of life,<sup>631</sup> the basic training put participants in an extremely stressful environment, coupled with isolation, fatigue, tension and the use of vicious language.<sup>632</sup> Many participants described this initial period of military service as the most physically demanding and mentally stressful training regime but they rarely complained about it. Instead, they pointed out unfamiliarity with the strict disciplinary system and exacting details of what was permissible in the military as a main problem they faced in the basic training. K7 stated,

I just wanted to kill myself during the basic training. Physical activities were really hard but it was tolerable because I saw it as exercise to build physical strength. What was really intolerable was constant scrutiny and criticism and monitoring under isolation. Military is the place like that. That time was horrible to the extent that I wanted to commit suicide. (K7)

K7 questioned himself as to why he had to let other people treat him in a brutal and inhumane way. In every training and inspection, he and other conscripts were reprimanded loudly for their failures, and stress and fear were used to facilitate military socialization, replete with a heavy dose of "in your face" yelling and screaming.<sup>633</sup> Other participants also stressed difficulties when

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<sup>631</sup> Barrett, "The organizational construction of hegemonic masculinity: the case of the US Navy", p. 132

<sup>632</sup> Davidson, Michael J. (2020), "'Hazing' and the Military: A Historical Review of Military Training Traditions", *Naval Law Review*, Vol. 66, p. 138

<sup>633</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 141

they were exposed to new norms, language, and disciplines, rather than the physically exhausting training itself. For example, K6 had eaten food so slowly before the military that he had to train himself to eat much faster in the military. K5 was very nervous when he was taught to lace his combat boots by the instructor. High levels of anxiety prevented him from doing it properly and he felt like he was such a fool. Other than this, to acquire basic military skills such as marching, carrying of arms, salutes, and flag raising, all participants practiced these repetitively to the extent to which automatic responses to the instructors' command were produced. This early phase of initial training was accompanied by the intense fear and anxiety from participants because all previously acquired habits and learned norms and values had to be abandoned. During this phase, they were no longer able to rely on the social position and behavioral forms they held in their previous civilian life.<sup>634</sup>

On the other hand, the experience of strenuous physical training gave the participants a certain sense of comradeship among recruits and confidence that they could do anything, which they barely felt in the military duty station after the basic training. As instructional staff pushed participants to the point of physical and mental exhaustion through drill, circuit training and forced speed marches carrying heavy loads of equipment, participants' focus shifted from self to that of team and group. Physical toughness, aggression, and a refusal to complain and quit were demanded by instructors to recruits as individuals, but at the same the idea that survival was

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<sup>634</sup> Barnao, "Military Training. Group, Culture, Total Institution, and Torture", p. 297

dependent upon the close support and cooperation of one's peers was instilled into the recruits.<sup>635</sup> K1 said,

During the basic training, for 6 weeks we had to run all the time. There was no reason to do those meaningless things. Instructors made us perform a front leaning rest position all of a sudden. There was no reason either. Physical training was also pretty harsh and demanding. All was for making soldiers. But through this process I felt kind of a bond. While living in the barracks after the basic training I hardly had the same feeling because my job in the Air Force didn't need harsh physical activities that much. (K1)

Here, an emphasis is placed upon the linkage between 'making soldiers' and 'physical hardship' and 'bond formation'. K1 knew that being ordered to do 'meaningless' things was deliberately designed to make the recruits relinquish their individuality and freedom, facilitating their transition from civilian to members of the armed forces.<sup>636</sup> He termed this process as 'making soldiers'. Bond formation through strenuous physical activities was also a crucial part of making soldiers, which would not be obtained in the civilian context. Even K7, who was in a deep emotional distress in the basic training, stated that he felt strong comradeship through physical hardship,

I was totally exhausted physically and mentally in the boot camp. We [he and other recruits] went through extremely stressful times together and a strong sense of comradeship was created among us. I don't get in touch with anyone I met in the military at the moment but the relationship with people I knew in the basic training was much better than the one in the barracks life. (K7)

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<sup>635</sup> Hockey, "No More Heroes: Masculinity in the Infantry", p. 18

<sup>636</sup> Davidson, "'Hazing' and the Military: A Historical Review of Military Training Traditions", p. 138



This was consistent with British soldiers' experience in Hale's study. After spending 4-5 weeks in arduous situations for operations in Iraq, British soldiers developed a strong bond among themselves, which was completely different from relationships they had with civilians.<sup>637</sup>

Participants experienced enhanced self-esteem and a profound sense of accomplishment through harsh training as well. Physical hardship was seen as a means of strengthening participants' physical power and prowess. For example, while marching, carrying lots of equipment and wearing heavy boots, K10 had many blisters on his feet and shoulders but he felt good about not quitting and enduring all the pains and discomfort. Other participants problematized backward military culture and ineffective practices associated with it but they did not mention the negative aspects of physical endurance. Particularly for those who described themselves as 'manly men', vigorous-intensity physical activities were preferred. K6 saw basic training as the time for challenging himself and strengthening physical and mental toughness, not for suffering. After completing basic training in the Army, he thought that it would have been better to join the Marines, known for physically demanding military life because he always had a yearning for 'intense and tough' military service. K9 also thought that basic training should have been much more strenuous and harsher when he finished it. Other than these two who were especially eager to attend exhausting physical activities, the rest of participants also valued

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<sup>637</sup> Hale, "The Role of Practice in the Development of Military Masculinities", p. 714

improving their ability to cope with physical demands, which could lead to the development of mental endurance as well. This was consistent with Grimell's argument that the bodies of military members are "one of the most important aspects of creating and maintaining military identities".<sup>638</sup> As Grimell suggests, for all participants, military service was regarded as a predominantly physical endeavor at boot camp, and thus, overemphasis on physical strength was not seen as an abnormality.<sup>639</sup> Rather, it appeared to represent the road to success in the military. Particularly, because a weak body was one of the most feared and unaccepted conditions of military culture,<sup>640</sup> participants tried hard to improve their physical performance, assigning positive meanings to arduous training.

Through basic training, participants were intensively exposed to military norms, language, codes and identity,<sup>641</sup> and as a result, their militarized masculinities were forged. However, too much emphasis on this phase could detract from understanding how other phases of military service (e.g., barracks life, garrison duty, and field training exercise) influence the production of military identities. For example, by entering barracks life after finishing basic training, participants experienced different aspects of military service and this also had a significant impact on their construction of masculinities.

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<sup>638</sup> Grimell, Jan (2019), "Leaving Military Service with a Military Body: Insights for Pastoral Care and Counselling", *Journal of Pastoral Care & Counselling*, Vol. 73, No. 2, p. 107

<sup>639</sup> Ibid., pp. 107-108

<sup>640</sup> Ibid., p. 108

<sup>641</sup> Redmond et al., "A brief introduction to the military workplace culture", p. 14

#### 4.3.2.2.2. Barracks Life

Upon completion of basic training, participants were sent to their own military units and military life began in earnest. They had anticipated that there would be more physically and mentally rigorous trainings in duty stations but barracks life, particularly the domestic confines of barrack blocks, was quite different from their expectations. While masculine attributes such as toughness, stoicism, willingness to take risk, and aggression were stressed in boot camp, physical appearance, hygiene, and the maintenance of the shared squad room to predetermined standards became an important part of soldiers' life in barrack rooms. Many participants stated that they had spent a lot of time to learn how to tidy themselves up and clean their spaces, ending up feeling confused about what soldiers should be like,

There was a cleaning sequence and we had to clean strictly according to that sequence. There was even a correct way to grab a broom and a mop. When I was in a low rank, I got punished many times as I didn't do cleaning properly. But I also punished my subordinates for the same reason when I climbed the ranks. (K5)

For participants, how to make the bed and organize their cabinet, how to control their hair, and what to do to maintain the smartness of the uniformed body<sup>642</sup> were as important as physical training. Most participants saw the value of cleanliness and appearance, and the behaviors corresponding to this value, to be less significant and less appropriate to soldiers' mission at first because these activities in the domestic sphere were culturally associated with femininities.

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<sup>642</sup> Ibid., p. 52

However, in the context, where creating uniformity and minimizing individual differences were promoted, participants gradually accepted these values and norms as soldierly rules they must observe and tried to conform to the exacting standards of all details provided.

Having a gap between expectations and experiences of reality in barracks life, some participants (K6 and K9) felt a decline of motivation or commitment. However, confusion or disappointment from this gap did not last long for most participants because they had to adjust to other important aspects of military service, such as hierarchy based on ranks and encounters with some hyper-masculine aspects of military culture. Next parts explain how certain characteristics of the military impacted on participants' military life and their construction of masculinities.

#### **4.3.2.2.3. Coercive Hierarchy**

All participants stated that the coercive hierarchical structure of seniors and subordinates and the chain of command corresponding to this structure were key to military culture. While participants who served as enlisted soldiers had difficulties building a good relationship with their seniors, the ones who served as commissioned officers were put under pressure to exert authority and power over their subordinates,

I didn't have any trouble with my subordinates but I wasn't on good terms with some superiors. They were immature and silly but I had no choice but to obey them only because they joined the army earlier than me. Now come to think of it, that hierarchical rank system is just ridiculous. All of us were just young and immature guys regardless of the rank. But at that time, rank was everything. (K7)

The rank when I joined the army was Second Lieutenant but it was just like a Private soldier because I didn't know anything about my work at first. I felt like I was an airhead. I was pretty burdened with dealing with that situation and afraid of being embarrassed due to my incompetency. Only if I had full knowledge about my job, I could give the command to soldiers. (K8)

Both of them mentioned stress, tension, and anxiety when they had to be part of a collective and hierarchical military system. Other participants who served as enlisted soldiers also mentioned lots of 'absurd' and 'weird' rules based on hierarchy that existed only in the military,

We were allowed to have certain number of underwear according to the rank. As our rank moved up, we were able to get more underwear. This was not a military regulation or discipline to comply with mandatorily, but just a rule to follow in our barracks life in order to distinguish soldiers based on their rank. The officers knew this but they let it slide because they thought this kind of things was necessary to maintain order. (K10)

Taking seniors' orders unconditionally was one of the most difficult experiences for most participants. As K8 said, in the military, 'I don't know how to do it' or 'let me check it again' was not acceptable to seniors' commands. As soon as senior military personnel issued orders, participants as junior military personnel had to take steps aiming at the execution of those orders. Even when some participants were asked to run a personal errand, which was not work-related duty, it was impossible for them to reject it. A slang term, '*Kkaramyun Kka*', which means 'Just do what you are ordered', describes well the nature of military socialization. Through this process, participants learned absolute obedience to authority and became compliant with the military system.

Despite acknowledging that something ineffective and trivial existed in the strict hierarchical military structure, however, most participants agreed with the need of a high level of hierarchy in the environment where people's lives could be at stake,

When an emergency occurs in the military, the top-down approach based on hierarchy is essential to cope with that situation quickly and effectively. I learned this from my military job. Somebody must give orders and somebody must take them. (K3)

K2 added,

Why does the military have so many hierarchal absurd things? This is what I heard from one of my superiors. He said it is for inculcating values of obedience in soldiers. When we are in combat and asked to do what we are ordered from a commander, we can't question why we should do this or that. Compliance to his order determines matters of life and death. (K2)

This view appeared to be consistent with what Adler and Borys argued in their study on workplace bureaucracy. In organizations characterized by greater power asymmetry, the coercive logic tends to appear as inevitable while the countervailing logic tends to appear utopian and naïve.<sup>643</sup> That is, participants had negative feelings towards rigid hierarchy but regarded it as indispensable to operate military organizations. This ambivalence was experienced deeply by almost all participants as they moved up the ranks.

#### **4.3.2.2.4. Military Ranks**

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<sup>643</sup> Adler, Paul S. and Borys, Bryan (1996), "Two Types of Bureaucracy: Enabling and Coercive", *Administrative Science Quarterly*, Vol. 41, No. 1, p. 81

Military ranks are key to military culture and determine what soldiers should do to meet the unique expectations each ranking encompasses.<sup>644</sup> Most participants stated that being placed in different ranks was a unique experience they could have only in the military and their military life was clearly differentiated according to ranks.

When participants were in the lowest rank, they paid scrupulous attention to learning essential things for military life, such as tradition, rituals and practices of their units, exacting details of the regulations, the correct way to speak and report to seniors, and how to use tools properly like spades and shovels. As the lowest-ranking soldiers, they were put at the center of attention and were always observed and retrospectively evaluated in-depth. At this stage, participants did not have time to think about a lack of privacy or other individual issues. They were overwhelmed by and tired of learning all the new things related to the military but they tried hard to master them to survive the tough military environment and to live the rest of the service period more comfortably.

Building a good relationship with superiors who were living in the same squad room was one of the biggest issues for the lowest-ranking soldiers. To make a good impression on them, participants tried to seem extrovert, ambitious and valorous although these characteristics did not necessarily fit their own personalities. As K9 said, 'being introvert could increase the possibility of being a target of bullying in the military'. According to some participants, senior

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<sup>644</sup> Redmond et al., "A brief introduction to the military workplace culture", p. 13

soldiers often forced lower-ranking soldiers into stressful situations, using verbal and psychological violence in order to take them down a peg or to correct behaviors of newcomers perceived as low-performing. For K7, the issue of not being on good terms with his senior bothered him until that senior was discharged. He said,

My senior was younger than me but I treated him very politely and nicely. However, he disliked me because I seemed laid-back and relaxed even though I was in the lowest rank. Maybe that was seen as inappropriate attitudes of the lowest-ranking soldier. He didn't tell me that straightforwardly but he must have thought that I was cheeky. (K7)

K10 explained the contradiction existing in the hierarchical ranking system,

Senior soldiers had to take responsibility for developing their subordinates into qualified members. When subordinates made a mistake, it was superiors who were punished by officers, not subordinates. However, when subordinates excelled their superiors, some problems might be caused because this could hinder the maintenance of rank order. (K10)

Most participants stated that it was very difficult to build a good relationship and a meaningful connection with others in such a highly bounded and hierarchical military environment. However, for the lowest-ranking soldiers, a good relationship with their superiors seemed to be one of the central factors that made them feel more relieved about their military life. In summary, in general, this period was intense and participants felt very stressed and could not be confident in themselves as competent soldiers. As a result, their masculinities constructed during this phase seemed to be quite precarious.



Passing through the transition period, participants became relatively stable service members. With moving up the ranks from Private to Private First Class, they got used to their duties and knew what kind of behaviors were considered virtuous and deviant. They were no longer in the lowest rank but their daily life did not go as easily as they had anticipated. The job of educating recruits was added to their existing roles and they still had to be very cautious not to offend or upset their seniors. During this phase, participants had planned to invest more time for themselves for productive activities such as reading books, taking online programs for professional certificates, or learning English, but most of them were not able to achieve this goal. Some of them said that they were just lazy, and others said that they did not want to stand out or be seen differently in their groups. According to K10, when lower-ranking soldiers tried doing individual activities in spare time or after bedtime with permission from officers in their unit, other soldiers did not seem to encourage them because it was not for the group. Through this experience, participants came to value the importance of collectivistic military culture, although they found it very oppressive and backward when they joined the military. In summary, at this stage, as the intense military socialization proceeded, participants developed their military identities. That is, they began to conceptualize themselves as soldiers, unlike the phase of the lowest rank.

Most participants tended to associate their military life with issues of power and authority over subordinates when they described their time in the higher ranks, such as Corporal and Sergeant. According to them, while the life of Sergeant was more like that of civilians as it was unofficially

allowed for Sergeants not to actively participate in military training or events, Corporal was regarded as the prime time of military service not only because they were proficient in their roles but also because they felt that they were by far the most 'soldierly' of their ranks. However, how participants defined 'soldierly' varied depending on individuals. While some participants associated soldierly attributes with determination, leadership, and responsibility for their duties, one participant used the term 'militarization' directly to express how he became more aggressive and violent as he moved up the ranks,

Still, I don't understand why I acted like that in the military. What I regret now is I swore a lot. I think that militarization process was applied to me as well. I just swore like a trooper even for a trivial thing. For example, I gathered my subordinates and cursed them when they didn't do shoe-shining. I treated them the way my seniors used to treat me. It was kind of payback but at that time those behaviors were taken for granted. I still feel sorry for them. (K10)

This statement showed an inseparable relationship between becoming soldiers and a militarization process that involves promoting the embodiment of hyper-masculine traits. Although K10 did not have intention to inflict pain and humiliation on his subordinates, he just repeated what his superiors had done to him to his subordinates, for no reason. He described the militarization process as a 'domino effect'. 'Regardless of one's intention, if someone set a certain behavior in motion, this could initiate a succession of similar behavior from other people' (K10).

Although other participants, except K10, did not see themselves become highly militarized during their service, with the feeling of reaching the status of real soldier, they showed ambivalent attitudes towards exerting power and authority their ranks granted to them. When they were lower-ranking soldiers, they thought that coercive hierarchy and having to show absolute obedience to their superiors were unfair, brutal and inhumane. They also knew that genuine trust between subordinates and superiors did not always exist and the hierarchical structure based on ranks did not necessarily form a chain with each individual linked to one another.<sup>645</sup> Despite this, however, most participants, as they became higher-ranking soldiers, did not want to miss the chance to exercise power. K5 explained the behavioral change of one of his subordinates as his rank went up, but K5 did not seem to be critical of this. Rather, he seemed to see this as something very common and understandable,

When one of my subordinates was in lower rank, his seniors dressed him down for his poor work and many mistakes he made. But you know "sometimes, frogs forget that they were tadpoles once too" This expression exactly describes how he was after becoming Corporal. He acted like he had done his job very well in front of his subordinates. The funny thing was he dressed his subordinates down for the same thing he had done before and ordered many things. Maybe this was psychological compensation, which was not uncommon for conscripted soldiers. (K5)

K10's description of his powerless and empty feeling during the transition period of re-entry to civilian life also showed an ambivalence towards the power imbalance experienced in the military,

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<sup>645</sup> Ibid.

I felt futility of life after discharge for a while. Most guys would feel the same way. In the military I moved up the rank to sergeant, the highest rank, and acquired all the military skills and exerted power and authority. In that small community, I was able to have my own way. But after discharge, I realized that I was nothing and had to start from zero. (K10)

In summary, at this stage, the construction of participants' militarized masculinities appeared to center on proficiency in their military job and power and authority granted by their high ranks. Particularly, the military was the first site where participants reached the highest rank in their lives, and using power over others was an important experience to construct their masculinities. Most participants did not say that they dominated others or abused their authority but attaining a superior position seemed to solidify their military identities. Although many participants had difficulties related to relationships with their superiors and saw this coercive hierarchy as 'humiliating' and 'less civilized', in varying degrees, they enjoyed exercising authority and influencing over their subordinates when their rank moved up. In this respect, participants were complicit in power inequality in the hierarchical military structure.

As participants moved up the ranks, their attitudes and behaviors changed as each ranking encompassed different expectations and the degree to which participants were able to exert power varied across the ranks. When participants were in lower ranks, their identities as soldiers were generally not strong as they struggled to adjust to military life. However, as they moved up the ranks and went through intense militarization processes, they became stable military members and their military identities also became solid. Particularly, as one of the most important

means to ensure dominance and superiority over others, higher ranks strengthened participants' militarized masculinities. Participants' experiences of hyper-masculine military culture such as hazing were also related to the military ranks because various types of hazing were usually inflicted by higher rank members. This is dealt with in the next part.

#### **4.3.2.2.5. Hyper-masculine Culture**

As would be expected from the literature on militarized masculinities,<sup>646</sup> all participants pointed out hyper-masculine culture, including hazing, bullying, and sexual objectification of women, as one of the common practices in the military. According to participants, physically abusive hazing was the least common type of hazing due to the strict military rules banning physical violence among service members. However, non-physical forms of aggression such as abusive language were identified as the most prevalent type of hazing in the military. K5 said,

When I was a private soldier, there was one superior who always wanted to pick a fight with me. I was really stressed about him. I think he saw me as an eyesore and that was the only reason why he acted like that. During the service, this kind of things happened pretty frequently not only to me but also to other conscripts. (K5)

K6 recollected one episode which could be categorized as severe abusive practices,

In my barracks, there was one guy who snored so some other superiors didn't let him sleep for two or three days. It was so weird but after that he

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<sup>646</sup> Weitz, Rose (2015), "Vulnerable Warriors: Military Women, Military Culture, and Fear of Rape", *Gender Issues*, Vol. 32, No. 3, p. 165

didn't snore any longer. When he started snoring again, he woke up immediately and then fell asleep without making any sound. (K6)

Sexual harassment was also mentioned,

A senior soldier forced his subordinates to go through the motions of sucking his penis. Then other soldiers around him made fun of him saying, "you are even doing this!" This kind of behavior is not permitted now but when I served, it was just like pulling pranks among guys. (K10)

Sexual jokes were very common. For example, there was one chubby guy in my unit and other guys touched his boobs. There was nothing I could do about it but laugh with others. (K1)

K9 was in the position to take care of the performance and personal wellbeing of his subordinates and had the closest interactions with ordinary soldiers. Mentioning one of his subordinates who was severely bullied, he stressed the need for changes to be instigated at levels of military organization beyond that of individual interactions to deal with bullying/hazing issues. Other participants appeared to see this practice as something to endure to adjust to military life rather than specifically referring to hazing. However, all participants thought that in the military context, where systemic imbalance of power was prevalent, it would be difficult for victims to report abusive behaviors or defend themselves.

Sexual objectification of women constituted a big part of hyper-masculine military culture. Use of prostitution on military leave, detailed depictions of sexual relations, and boasting about sexual exploits were common themes emerging among the conversations between soldiers. Reactions

to this talk varied from person to person. Some participants felt very uncomfortable with objectifying and devaluing women for men's sexual pleasure but they couldn't help listening to their seniors' stories. Other participants found it interesting because it was a new experience they had not had before the military service, but they added to their comment, 'that was just immature, childish talk so there was no difference from the chat among teenage boys who are full of sexual curiosity' (K7). Regardless of how much they were involved in this practice in the military, all participants said that this culture in homo-social settings did not fit their own identities and distanced themselves from men who actively took part in 'sexual dirty talk'. One participant, K7, projected overt displays of sexual prowess and description of women as the passive sex-object onto less educated groups of men. He thought that these men were uneducated and pathetic and had nothing to talk about except for dirty talk. Although only one participant associated men's practice of sexual objectification of women with educational level, this finding was notable in that pressures and demands of good education were intimately linked with the pressures of constructing dominant forms of masculinity.<sup>647</sup> In this regard, academic performance and the type and status of educational institutions men attended seemed to play an important role in assessing other men and creating invisible hierarchies between men even in the military.

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<sup>647</sup> Barber, Christie (2014), "Masculinity in Japanese Sports Films", *Japanese Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 2, p. 140

While domineering practices and the denigration and sexual objectification of women were seen as toxic hyper-masculine military culture, other attributes such as emotional detachment and physical strength were seen as requirements to complete military service successfully. The last part of this section explains how participants tried to embody these traits as a means to better cope with difficulties in the military.

#### **4.3.2.2.6. Emotional Inexpressiveness and Physical Prowess**

As noted in many studies on militarized masculinities, emotional inexpressiveness and physical prowess were important qualities required of military members. Three participants elaborated on traumatic experiences during their service, mentioning how they tried to suppress their emotions. K9 had to cope with the loss of two close comrades. One of them committed suicide and the other died by an accident during the military training. After their deaths, he went through the most distressing time in his life but he was not able to express his severe grief and pain,

I was in the position of commander, whose job was to help other soldiers get over their suffering and stress to make them go back to their normal life. Due to my strong sense of responsibility, I was not completely overwhelmed by the shock and sadness, although their deaths were always in my mind. If I had been in the civilian context, I would have been so sad and depressed. But thanks to my rank, position, and duty I was able to overcome it. (K9)

For K9, emotions seemed to be considered as personal things to handle by himself. Although he said that he was able to overcome the death of his close comrades, this traumatic event crossed his mind whenever he recollected his military life and he felt very sad. Two other participants



also faced the hardest challenge in their life during military service, caused by a sudden death of their close contacts,

In my barrack, there were only 20 people living together and one of them committed suicide. He was one of my closest colleagues and I was the only one who witnessed his death. That was the hardest time in my life. I lost my mind and just cried for 3 days but didn't realize that I needed therapy or something like that. (K6)

While I was serving in the military, my grandmother passed away but I couldn't attend the funeral. That was the toughest time in my life. I didn't talk to others much. Only what I could do was enduring that painful situation. (K10)

These participants tried to withhold expression of their feelings in varying degrees in order to maintain self-control, not to reveal their vulnerabilities and weakness, and not to affect other service members and their performances. This showed that in the military, where the uniformity and the importance of looking out for the team's wellbeing above that of individuals were strongly emphasized, soldiers appeared to internalize the norms that men who did not embody emotional detachment would pose a threat to the effectiveness of military organizations.<sup>648</sup>

Using physical prowess was a common strategy for some participants to claim their masculine status. As many studies have shown, sport is a social context in which men define and portray their masculinity. Sports place men in direct competition, where the demonstration of greater

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<sup>648</sup> Redmond et al., "A brief introduction to the military workplace culture", p. 14

physical prowess often leads to winning and social status and power.<sup>649</sup> K6 pointed out that one of the reasons he was able to adjust to military life easily was his good performance in team sports such as football,

When superiors in my barracks saw me at first, they thought I would have many difficulties during the service because I was very thin and small and looked weak. But I was very good at playing sports and this made me connect with other people quite quickly. (K6)

K8 also benefitted from his being athletic,

There was one noncommissioned officer who was older and served much longer than me but whose rank was lower. He tried to control me at first as I was all thumbs regarding my job although I enlisted as an officer. But I was very athletic, especially good at playing football, and many people wanted to play in the same team with me to win the game. Being athletic helped me to get along with that noncommissioned officer in the end. (K8)

There were preferences for men who had greater physical prowess apparently among the service members and through sports, some participants were able to establish and enhance their masculine credentials, asserting their physical superiority over others.<sup>650</sup>

Due to the distinct and institutional characteristics of the military profession and culture, participants shared some common military experiences, regardless of which branch they served

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<sup>649</sup> Ramaeker, Joey and Petrie, Trent A. (2019), "'Man Up!': Exploring Intersections of Sport Participation, Masculinity, Psychological Distress, and Help-Seeking Attitudes and Intentions", *Psychology of Men & Masculinities*, Vol. 20, No. 4, p. 516

<sup>650</sup> Lamont, Matthew and Milatovic, Maja (2018), "Enacting Masculinities in a Contemporary Subcultural Sporting Event: A Gendered Critique", *Leisure Sciences*, Vol. 40, No. 5, p. 392

in and what roles they had in the military. Physical and mental hardship, rigid hierarchy based on ranks, particular type of gendered culture, and heavy emphasis on emotional inexpressiveness and physical prowess were commonly mentioned as attributes characterizing military life. However, the norms and expectations of hegemonic ideals in the military and participants' individual conceptualizations of their masculinities did not necessarily fit. Most participants had difficulties to adapt to military life and experienced a gap between military norms and their own life values. Despite this, participants tried to comply with militaristic norms and practices since the differentiation between appropriate and inappropriate masculinities was very clear. Men whose behaviors did not embody the hegemonic expectations were easily marginalized and ignored among the peer group of service members.

However, as noted in previous chapters, the military could not be seen straightforwardly as a site for the construction of a single embodied masculinity. According to various factors, participants differed on their lived experiences of military service and the impacts of them on their identities, which led to the construction of multiple militarized masculinities. Therefore, the next part addresses how participants constructed a complex range of masculinities during the military service with reference to the different contexts in which their gender identities were played out.

#### **4.3.2.3. Construction of Multiple Militarized Masculinities**

##### **4.3.2.3.1. Comparison of Officer-Enlisted Soldiers**

The way in which participants thought, acted and claimed their masculinities differed on whether they served as enlisted soldiers or commissioned officers. While the degree to which enlisted soldiers could exert power and influence over others changed according to ranks, upon joining the military, commissioned officers were initially granted authority to train and lead enlisted soldiers. However, most participants who served as officers felt burdened by their position because existing soldiers tended to look down on newcomer officers who were inexperienced and unskillful. In addition, there were so many military personnel in higher position than them that they had to have direct contact with. For officers, building seniority which required obedience from and subordination of enlisted soldiers and dealing with higher-ranking military personnel were very stressful. Due to this, officers did not seem to be able to enjoy power and authority granted by their position as much as enlisted soldiers did.

The position at which participants had started out in the military also made differences in the strategies they adopted to claim their masculinities as privileged over others. Enlisted soldiers mostly explained in detail what had happened within their ranks, mentioning almost nothing about officers. This was a notable difference from the result of Hinojosa's research. According to Hinojosa, enlisted soldiers thought that officers were inexperienced or lazy, looking for the easiest jobs in the military. Becoming an officer with a college degree meant not knowing anything about the military.<sup>651</sup> Unlike this, my participants who served as enlisted soldiers did not claim

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<sup>651</sup> Hinojosa, "Doing Hegemony: Military, Men, and Constructing A Hegemonic Masculinity", pp. 190, 191

their higher masculine status by comparing themselves to officers. They just stressed the ability to perform military roles and ranks as important elements in the construction of military identities. However, participants who served as officers appeared to create bounded space between them and enlisted soldiers, describing personalities of and relationships with their senior officers over the course of their duty. This resulted in creating masculine hierarchies in which officers situated themselves as more professionally trained and knowledgeable about military life. K4 compared some qualities of commissioned officers to those of enlisted soldiers frequently to distance himself from enlisted soldiers,

I know that many men who served as enlisted soldiers exaggerate their military stories like heroic exploits, particularly in front of women. Sometimes they speak what they were heard from others as if it was their own experience. That's why they don't like to talk about military service after discharge when they meet someone who served as an officer. We [officers] were granted access to confidential military information and more authority, and worked with senior officers. For this reason, while they [enlisted soldiers] tend to emphasize how tough their own military life was, we usually talk about comprehensive military structure and management of military organizations. (K4)

Neither did K4 use disparaging remarks about enlisted soldiers nor refer to an ascendancy of one group of men over others in an overt way. However, throughout the interview, he maintained the distinction between us (officers) and them (enlisted soldiers). Although he may have offered a partial and subjective account, overemphasized or misrepresented some events, his narrative style showed how he made sense of his military service and created masculine hierarchies by

constructing privilege over other soldiers and their masculinities. The following statement showed his perception of the status hierarchy existing in the military clearly,

Let me explain what each military rank is like in comparison with positions and roles in the company. Noncommissioned officers are like working-level staff while commissioned officers are more like managers because commissioned officers have more responsibility and decision-making authority. Ordinary soldiers can be seen as interns or part-time workers. (K4)

Not all participants who served as commissioned officers viewed themselves in accordance with gaining the upper hand over enlisted soldiers, regarding power and roles. However, certain terms used by them showed that they unintentionally but inevitably drew on gendered discourse for distinction between two groups of men, commissioned officers and enlisted soldiers. They identified professionalized rationality, responsibility and self-discipline as a source of officer identities and differentiated themselves from forms of less mature masculinity, characterized as unreliability and lack of discipline and autonomy. These characteristics seemed to be projected onto the group of enlisted soldiers. Particularly, whether one could manage his emotions or not under stressful situations was commonly mentioned as a significant indicator to show maturity, which separated officers from enlisted soldiers. K8 said,

We [commissioned officers] used cell phones and had no restrictions on going out after working hours unless an emergency occurred. They [enlisted soldiers] must have felt imprisoned as they were completely cut off from the wider society and lived in an extremely enclosed environment. I could see that they suffered from emotional instability like feelings of loneliness and social isolation. This may be the biggest difference between officers and enlisted soldiers. (K8)

As noted above in K8's statement, 'emotional instability' gave justification to officers to give orders and directives to and discipline enlisted soldiers. Men who served as officers appeared to see conscripts who enlisted in the military after graduation from high school or freshman year in college as male teenagers with 'high testosterone'. These teenagers were 'more likely to be aggressive, violent, more competitive, impulsive, excitable, less reliable, and have a higher sex drive than men with less testosterone'.<sup>652</sup> This identification implied that men who joined the military as officers after graduation from college considered themselves as more mature adult men, who could be much less affected by emotional instability and control themselves better. In terms of this, participants who served as officers thought that they needed to discipline and lead young soldiers to prevent these young males from getting involved in any type of misconduct.

While comparisons of officers to enlisted soldiers emerged in only a few participants' narratives, comparisons between service branches emerged in more participants' narratives. By doing so, participants in certain branches claimed their superior culture and masculinities to others in different branches.

#### **4.3.2.3.2. Military Branch**

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<sup>652</sup> Kirby, James N., and Kirby, Peter G. (2017), "An evolutionary model of conceptualize masculinity and compassion in male teenagers: A unifying framework", *Clinical Psychologist*, Vol. 21, No. 2 , p. 75

What military branch participants served in impacted on the construction of multiple militarized masculinities as well. As each branch had unique mission and roles, participants had a different understanding of what they did and what contribution they made to the national defense. Seven out of ten participants served in the Army and the rest of them served in the Air Force. Regardless of their roles, each participant appeared to take pride in their service branch. Although generalizations cannot be made about the overall state of soldiers' wellbeing in each branch or how rigorous military training was in each branch, sometimes, participants compared perceived characteristics of the Army and those of the Air Force as a way to present their service branch as the better one. The subject of combat readiness and the endurance of physical hardship emerged more frequently in the narratives of the participants who served in the Army than in those of the participants who served in the Air Force. K10, who served in the Army, commented when he was asked what branches he would like to serve in if he had to join the military again,

Without hesitation, I'd choose the Army again because it is the best and strongest branch in the Korean military. It is one of the largest standing armed forces in the world as well. Other branches like the Air Force and the Marines support the ground troops in the real war situation. In the Army, most soldiers were trained to correctly handle and use weapons in extreme and hostile environments and thanks to this, I would be able to transform myself quickly for combat. I could defend my nation with professional combat skills even if war broke out soon. (K10)

For K10, the Army was the one that fought the battles, won the wars and did the most on the ground. He admitted that lots of people in all branches were necessary to make the military operational but went on to imply that the Army actually fought the enemy face-to-face on the



front lines and their fighting abilities were situated above men in other branches. Although the roles of other participants in the Army were less combat involved like administration or assistance of training other soldiers, they agreed that Army soldiers had a stronger sense of duty and were more dedicated and physically fit. According to them, technology played a major role in the blurring of distinction between combat and noncombat, but fighting the enemy face-to-face still seemed to be important for their perception of 'real' soldiers. In terms of this, they were proud of serving in the Army even though some of them had wanted to serve in another branch before enlistment.

Participants who served in the Air Force tended to stress rationality and more developed military culture embodying principles of civil society such as equality and human rights. All three ex-servicemen of the Air Force said that they did not experience significant abuses involving egregious misconduct, which was seen as common for the Army soldiers. Participants in the Air Force generally viewed the Army as too aggressive and hyper-masculine, while the Air Force was viewed as more intelligent and less cruel and abusive. K7 said,

The reason I decided to enlist in the Air Force was there were lots of overly aggressive masculine men in other branches. At least, the Air Force had a selection process of its service members. This was kind of filtering out guys who are hard-ass. I heard that the Army was the worst in terms of that so I went to the Air Force. (K7)

K1 also said,

For many parts of the Air Force, unlike the Army, possession and performance of the professional expertise and skills took precedence over physical ability itself. Put differently, service members were treated according to competency in their work. Low ranking soldiers with good skills could be treated better than their seniors even if they showed inappropriate attitudes. (K1)

K3 added about the relatively advanced military culture of the Air Force,

Of course, military culture is basically hierarchical but in the Air Force, I'd say it is less brutal and more reasonable, compared to other branches. Actually, the Air Force considered corporal punishment and hazing-like conduct as culturally backward. Especially in my specialty, troop information and education, physical aggression was just an old-fashioned military practice. I was pretty shocked when I heard from my friends the stories about brutal violence occurring in other branches. (K3)

Rather than constructing identities marked by an ability to engage in combat as intense fighters, participants in the Air Force emphasized skilled use of specialist equipment and more 'developed' and 'civilized' culture in expressing their military identities.

However, these participants in the Air Force did not completely separate physical ability and aggressiveness from their military identities. They questioned their martial ability by stating that they might not be able to meet the physical-fitness standards of other branches. They were also aware that soldiers in other branches ridiculed them as weak men who were 'not truly fighting' and 'sitting behind a desk'. K3 said,

The frequency of physical training is the biggest difference between the Army and the Air Force. Unlike the Army, we [Air Force] have lots of sedentary work. You know what the US Air Force call us? Chair Force, not

Air Force. We also have physical-fitness test and everybody must pass it but other than that we don't get specific physical training. (K3)

K7 also said,

Honestly, I can't say that I had to endure physical hardship during the service. I was a driver and did some general administration work. My job was physically easier than that of the Army soldiers. I feel like my military service was so easy that it was almost like eating cake. I don't think my military experience was general. (K7)

Another participant K1 also thought that despite the longest duration of service, the task of Air Force would be the easiest, which was a reason to join it. Relating their experiences to the low level of physical hardship and training, K1, K3 and K7 appeared to assume that they had taken less risk and possessed a less physically able and fit body, compared to the Army soldiers. This showed that for them, it was almost impossible to disregard the hegemonic masculine ideal of risk taking, martial ability, and perseverance in the face of difficult physical trials, although they saw themselves as culturally superior to and more intelligent than other branches.

In participants' narratives, inter-branch rivalry did not emerge in such a visible way that referred to other service branches in derogatory terms or spawned dominance over others. However, comparison of the characteristics of their branch to those of other branches was one of the attempts to locate participants' construction of masculinities as dominant over others. Although participants stressed different qualities as soldierly attributes according to their service branch, physical ability was commonly viewed as the basic element of military identities for all participants,

which was addressed in participants' experiences of basic training as well. However, physical performance was not always directly linked to participants' military roles. As shown in Barrett's study, according to military occupations and specialties, soldiers were required to embody different qualities and skills and this resulted in the multiple constructions of militarized masculinities.<sup>653</sup>

#### **4.3.2.3.3. Military Roles**

Military roles and the specificities of professional skills and expertise were referred to by almost all participants as a marker of diverse militarized masculinities. Military roles varied from general administration to combat-related roles and how participants felt about their roles varied from person to person. It was a very rare case but one participant, K3, was assigned the role of creating publicity materials in the Air Force, which he studied in a college. This made K3 more satisfied with his military service than others whose military role was not related to their civilian background. Regardless of how they felt, however, what participants did in the military was important not only for constitution and expression of their military identities but also for maintenance of those identities through memory work even after discharge.<sup>654</sup> As Woodward and Jenkins note, lived experience of soldiering rather than pre-existing conception about how

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<sup>653</sup> Barrett, "The organizational construction of hegemonic masculinity: the case of the US Navy", p. 140

<sup>654</sup> Woodward, Rachel and Jenkins, K. Neil (2011), "Military Identities in the Situated Accounts of British Military Personnel", *Sociology*, Vol. 45, No. 2 , p. 262

soldiers should be was the key to the understanding of participants' individual military identities.<sup>655</sup>

Among various military roles, whether participants took part in combat-related activities or not played an important role in making differences in the construction of their military identities. This appeared to be consistent with Enloe's claim that "to be a soldier means possibly to experience "combat," and only in combat lies the ultimate test of a man's masculinity."<sup>656</sup> That is, as Duncanson notes, ideas about being a soldier differ slightly in different times and places but are still generally connected to combat.<sup>657</sup> K10's experience showed this well. When he served, there was a bombardment from the North on Yeonpyeong Island, hitting both military and civilian targets and subsequently, artillery engagement between South and North took place. During this critical time, he was put into emergency operation as an artilleryman. He had to observe the North Korean military movements for 8 hours every day and be ready to fire artillery in case any sign of armed attack was detected. He explained,

All soldiers including me were in the extremely stressful environment with high tension. I felt the fear of death for the first time in my life because I witnessed some soldiers serving near my unit die. And I really believed there would be outbreak of war. When I was standing by for firing artillery, nothing was allowed to do except for the surveillance of what the enemy was doing. Sometimes I felt like it was just a dream because life cycle

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<sup>655</sup> Ibid., p. 264

<sup>656</sup> Enloe, Cynthia (1983), *Does Khaki Become You?*, Boston, MA: South End Press p. 12

<sup>657</sup> Duncanson, "Hegemonic Masculinity and the Possibility of Change in Gender Relations", p. 234

changed every day. That role was totally physically and mentally exhausting but I had a big pride in what I did to defend my nation. (K10)

Other than this emergency operation, K10 mentioned ceremonial occasions such as passing-out parades and tough military training and talked of his own sense of identification with other service members with whom he had developed comradeship. Unlike K10, K9 had to cope with negative feelings about himself caused by the experience of warlike combat training. He said,

The most impressive military training for me was the one many soldiers wanted to avoid in the Army due to physical hardship, but I liked that training very much as I had combat aptitude. My role in that training was to command my team for fighting against the other team regarded as an enemy with proper combat equipment. It was like a real war and my team was bombarded and totally defeated. In this situation, my team was considered dead. That is, all my subordinates were dead. Once dead, they were put into coffin and not fed until the end of training. I was the only one who survived. When I went down a mountain alone, I was ashamed of myself so much since I failed at my role as a commander. (K9)

He remembered this episode as one of the most disappointing and humiliating experiences during military service. Unlike K10, who felt a sense of achievement and pride in himself, K9 felt incompetent about himself and experienced self-doubt due to the failure at warlike combat training. The common thing from both cases was, however, performing combat-related roles led to the development of strong sense of self as soldiers.

The other eight participants, other than K9 and K10, whose roles were less combat-involved but more administrative and maintenance jobs, had more tendencies to stress the acquisition of some valuable qualities for their real life during the service. While K9 and K10 inscribed more

personal meanings onto their military job itself and linked what they had done to national security issues, the rest of participants tended to associate what they learned in the military with the skills and attitudes that were necessary for their real life after discharge. K1 said,

I did aircraft weapon maintenance for the first two months and then worked as a driver for the rest of the service, which was not very difficult to do. Before enlistment, I used to spread myself too thinly and I wasn't able to finish even one thing properly. I was like that at workplace too. One thing I clearly learned in the military was how to complete my task even if it wasn't going well at the beginning. Through this process, I became to see clearly what problems I had and how to fix and improve them. This lesson still helps me work better at the current company. (K1)

K1's military role had little to do with his current job but he appreciated skills and qualities acquired during his duty as they made him more productive at his workplace. K3, who served in the department of troop information and education, was also able to develop his competency through his military roles,

My role was to create materials to introduce new policies of our branch and educate soldiers because I studied design in the university. This role was really mentally stressful but it was worth it. When I worked before the military service, I didn't have to hang out with diverse people and I just took responsibility only for my part. But in the military, I had to cooperate with others and collective responsibility was the basic principle. Most work done in the military was not an individual activity. This was what I experienced for the first time in my life. Thanks to this experience of working with many senior personnel in the military, now I can know more easily what people in a high position want and reflect it into my project proposal, which could result in winning a contract in the end. (K3)

According to K3, in the Air Force, occupations related to aviation such as pilot and air traffic control occupied the higher status and other occupations such as material supplier or cook tended to be belittled. However, his military identities appeared to be much less affected by that status hierarchy. Rather, how successfully he completed his task with professional expertise played a more significant role in the construction of his military identities.

What participants did in the military played an important role in the development of their military identities. Particularly, participants who took part in combat-related military acts, tended to form strong identities as soldiers and to build affective bonds with their colleagues. This could be because when participants attended rigorous field training exercises, service members were much closer in proximity and shared experiences that differed enormously from any experience civilians were likely to have.<sup>658</sup> Participants whose roles were less combat-related tried to make personal meanings out of their military service in that they obtained the necessary skills for their social and work life. For these participants, themes like hardship in dramatic military events, strong bond formation among service members, or contribution to national defense did not often emerge. Rather, they focused on how human capital acquired in the military could be transferable to the civilian labor market, rather than military skill itself.

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<sup>658</sup> Hale, "The Role of Practice in the Development of Military Masculinities", p. 713



As differentiation of perspectives on military culture suggests, there were multiple constructions of participants' militarized masculinities according to various factors:<sup>659</sup> military ranks; service branch; and military roles. These factors with hegemonic masculine attributes expected of soldiers went hand in hand with each other and resulted in increasing the complexity and multiplicity in the construction of militarized masculinities. However, many researchers in sociology and psychology agree that there are also shared themes among different military cultures and identities.<sup>660</sup> Particularly, feminist scholarship usually associates the construction of militarized masculinities with denigration of femininity, producing skepticism about or aggression towards female soldiers and men who do not comply with hegemonical masculine standards.<sup>661</sup> The next two sections examine if participants' experiences related to female soldiers and softer masculinities conform to or challenge this feminist perspective.

#### **4.3.3. Perceptions of Female Soldiers**

Most participants' views on female soldiers seemed to be based on traditional gendered assumptions. While six participants had direct contact with female soldiers, four did not. Among these six participants, there were only two participants who gained new perspectives on women soldiers during their service. Before having experiences of working with female soldiers in the

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<sup>659</sup> Redmond et al., "A brief introduction to the military workplace culture", p. 10

<sup>660</sup> Grimell, "Leaving Military Service with a Military Body: Insights for Pastoral Care and Counselling", p. 107

<sup>661</sup> Koeszegi et al., "The War against the Female Soldier? The Effects of Masculine Culture on Workplace Aggression", p. 228

military, both participants had stereotyped views on female soldiers, which formed through a gendered contrast to their image of traditional male warriors. However, through direct experiences of female soldiers during their service, they came to question the social construction of women as physically weak and unable to do what men do, and concluded that gender differences were not natural. K3 said,

In my unit, there was one female aviator who seemed to be perfectly qualified for flying. She was really cool. To become successful pilots, candidates must pass so many highly competitive aptitude and physical exams. A lot of people quit but she endured all hardships and took that position in the end. When it comes to running a unit, she was more inclusive, less dominant and tried harder to solve problems with conversation than male leaders. I had a great respect for her. (K3)

K4 also explained,

When I got the basic training, there were some female officer candidates too. Training was pretty tough but all female candidates endured physical, mental hardships and passed the test. They transformed into strong soldiers like male soldiers did. This experience changed my view on women and femininity. Our society has instilled what women should be like. Some of my female colleagues still remain in the military and do a great job. (K4)

Furthermore, K4 pointed out the structural dimension of gender inequality in the military,

One of the big problems in the military is that women soldiers have much less opportunities to get promoted or to reach a higher position, since the military is a male-dominated, masculine institution. Basically, this kind of problem is caused not by the individual competence, but by the system and structure of the military. (K4)

However, most participants seemed to maintain stereotypical views on female soldiers. Most of them depicted themselves as proponents of a wider role for women, praised women's great performance and noted that there should not be gender discrimination in opportunities for promotion and career development. They also understood that female members could be easily sexually objectified and excluded from the unit's culture of 'band of brothers'. Despite having awareness of institutionalized gender norms in the military, however, these participants seemed to consider difficulties women soldiers faced as inevitable and think that women should fit in with their male colleagues and not vice versa, as the military was originally one of the most male-dominated sectors.

Particularly, sexual objectification of military women was viewed as one of the inevitable problems occurring in male-dominated fields. K9 said,

Because women officers are in higher rank than enlisted soldiers, enlisted soldiers treat women officers as their superiors in the same way that they treat male officers in public. However, in private talk among lower-ranking soldiers, women are sexually objectified and this is taken for granted because they are men, who have high sex drive. (K9)

K2 said,

By the time I was discharged, a young woman joined the military as a staff sergeant and a rumor was spread that she had inappropriate relationships with her subordinates. After discharge, I heard from one of my subordinates that she was very promiscuous. But the thing was nobody knew what the truth was. Anyway, regardless of whether it was rumor or not, we [enlisted soldiers] just believed that she enjoyed casual sex with many guys in the military. (K2)

Other than these, participants' descriptions about relationships between male enlisted soldiers and female officers revealed that military women, despite their higher rank with more power and authority, were usually viewed in terms of their sexual characteristics. K2 added, 'there was one middle-aged female Personnel officer. She was thought to be hysterical by her subordinates because she was a middle-aged single woman'. Most participants did not recognize that these views and remarks were deeply misogynic. According to Higate, whereas notions of misogyny are generally understood to refer to the hatred of women, it can take a variety of forms, from the serial murder and horrific mutilation of women to protracted objectification.<sup>662</sup> In this respect, it was revealed that normalization of misogyny was deeply embedded in the Korean military as well.

The gendered division of labor in the military was seen as inevitable by many participants based on innate gender differences. Some participants (K3, K9, and K10) said that female members excelled in administrative tasks as they were much more meticulous than men, but they had a weaker physical condition, which could weaken combat effectiveness. When asked their opinions about expanding women's roles in combat, six participants (K2, K5, K6, K8, K9, and K10) noted that women's innate difference from men would limit their participation in combat operations,

I can't generalize all men and women but men are often said to be better at spatial perception and engineering, while women are said to be way better at clerical work. Even though there are many differences between traditional war and modern combat, given that men usually get higher

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<sup>662</sup> Higate, "'Soft Clerks' and 'Hard Civvies' Pluralizing Military Masculinities", p. 36

scores from the test of driving and flying and controlling a drone, men are more likely to be deployed in combat operations. (K10)

95% of female soldiers work in administration departments and they are outstanding in that sector. However, there is an obvious limitation of their physical strength. So, if we were in real combat, female soldiers would be the ones we [male soldiers] should protect. Another example is field training. When female soldiers were in the field, male soldiers had to do extra guard duty for them because they weren't able to do it by themselves. For men, their workload became double as a result of the presence of women. (K9)

When there were only male soldiers in the field training, building a simple portable toilet was enough. However, with female members, we [male soldiers] had to do more work for them like building women's shower stalls. They [female soldiers] were like the ones we should take care of even in the field training. For this reason, male soldiers saw women soldiers as high-maintenance. (K8)

These statements conformed to the feminist understanding of women in the military. Women were viewed as outsiders and deviants in a man's world.<sup>663</sup> That is, women were otherized. Gender differences tended to be seen as natural and masculinity was positioned as superior to femininity, which was the rationale behind the arguments against the full integration of women into combat units. Those participants implied that women soldiers, who wanted to be assigned to combat roles, must be as capable of fitting in as their male counterparts, emphasizing the essential ability to fight, which was uncompromising to members of the combat unit. That women soldiers were generally not regarded as equals was also reflected in the participants' gendered protection norm, which "confirms men as protectors and women (and children) as those who

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<sup>663</sup> Dunivin, "Military Culture: Change and Continuity", p. 536

need protection".<sup>664</sup> In a harsh environment, female soldiers were seen to need protection by male soldiers because of their innate physical and psychological weakness.

Most participants' perceptions of female soldiers were consistent with what feminist scholars have problematized. Female soldiers were positioned as feminine others because they were not perceived as performing hegemonic notions of masculinity and thus, they were viewed as a source of threats to military effectiveness.<sup>665</sup> However, participants showed more positive attitudes towards men who performed softer masculinities in the military, which seemed to challenge the traditional attributes of militarized masculinities.

#### **4.3.4. Perceptions of Softer Masculinities**

In contrast to the hierarchal norms and domineering practices evident in militarized masculinities, interestingly, most participants valued characteristics in other service members which could be associated with softer masculinities. Their perceptions of softer masculinities were shown in the descriptions of relationships with their superiors in the military. When participants were asked if there had been exemplary service members or someone who deserved respect during their service, five men said no, and the other five said yes. The common characteristics of

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<sup>664</sup> Tidblad-Lundholm, Kajsa (2020), "When are Women Deployed? Operational Uncertainty and Deployment of Female Personnel to UN Peacekeeping", *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 27, No. 4, pp. 674-675

<sup>665</sup> Van Gildar, Bobbi J. (2019) "Femininity as Perceived Threat to Military Effectiveness: How Military Service Members Reinforce Hegemonic Masculinity in Talk", *Western Journal of Communication*, Vol. 83, No. 2, p. 159

senior soldiers participants admired were that they were willing to listen to and help subordinates, and did not exercise absolute power and authority over others and did not require blind obedience from lower-ranking soldiers. K4, who worked as an assistant to the General in his unit, was very impressed that the General treated all his subordinates with politeness and respect,

Because of him [the General], my idea about masculinity changed. He didn't misuse his power and authority and didn't emphasize hierarchy. Instead, he showed so-called 'servant leadership'. As far as I know, nobody talked behind his back. He was such an exemplary, respectable soldier. (K4)

K4, who was interested in gender issues and critical of patriarchal masculinity, found a new model of masculinity in the military, which was distant from traditional militarized masculinities. By comparing two senior officers he worked with, K3 also suggested attributes such as 'caring', 'understanding', and 'respectful' as important elements of good leadership,

While one officer insulted me many times using his high position, another officer was very understating and caring. He tried to communicate with his subordinates rather than giving a command. Even in an urgent situation, he asked me first if I could do a certain task and explained why I should do it, not saying "just do what I order". He seemed to base his work ethic on equal partnership. I could see that through his way of communicating with his subordinates and his attempt to encourage them. (K3)

K4 and K3 thought highly of senior soldiers who were more open to negotiation, cooperation, and equality, while seeing seniors who displayed aggressiveness and physical and verbal displays of domination very negatively.

Those experiences appear to support Duncanson's argument that seniority in age and rank could give soldiers the space to construct and enact alternative masculinities. In comparison to younger soldiers and officers, who need to prove themselves to be strong, older, more senior, and more experienced soldiers have already proved their masculine prowess in earlier operations and thus, they could enact feminized traits without fear.<sup>666</sup> On the contrary, K4 and K3, as young commissioned officers, were required to embody soldierly attributes perfectly and to get assimilated into strict hierarchy from the start of their service. Besides, both of them generally worked with military personnel in elite positions, which made them feel more pressured as even one small mistake did not seem to be allowed. They did not need to prove their physical ability due to their roles but needed to be rational, logical, assertive, and competent all the time. In this environment, as Duncanson notes, it seemed to be very hard for them to feel secure enough in their masculinities to be able to display soft traits.<sup>667</sup> However, this may have created and promoted positive attitudes towards softer masculinities performed by their seniors because K4 and K3 felt respected and encouraged, not humiliated. They saw the potential that softer masculinities, based on humane qualities, not on hierarchy of domination/subordination, could be a new model of leadership even in hyper-masculine military culture.

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<sup>666</sup> Duncanson, *Forces for Good? Military Masculinities and Peacebuilding in Afghanistan and Iraq*, p. 91

<sup>667</sup> Duncanson, "Forces for Good?: Narratives of Military Masculinity in Peacekeeping Operations", p. 76



Contrary to K4 and K3, K5, and K6 experienced softer masculinities through enlisted soldiers and their perceptions of softer masculinities seemed to be more complicated than the cases of K4 and K3. K5 described one of his seniors as 'considerate', 'wise', and 'kind'. Although it was harder for soldiers to be patient and kind to others as they moved up the ranks, K5's senior always tried to be understanding and nice to his subordinates. K6's experience also showed that hegemonic ideals were not necessarily admired by service members. One of K6's seniors joined the military at a very late age and a few senior soldiers who were younger than him wanted to show dominance over him. K6 said,

He was very humble, thoughtful to others and tried to correct wrong military practices such as physical abuse and bullying in his barrack. Many younger soldiers relied on him and asked him help when they had difficulties. He got along well with those younger seniors who wanted to provoke him at last. (K6)

The notable thing was these participants' attitudes towards softer masculinities appeared to be affected by other factors, especially neoliberal manhood. Mentioning softer masculinities embodied by his senior, K5 also pointed out that 'he was not lazy or complacent and tried to do something productive all the time'. 'Unlike most men in the military, he never wasted his time'. Emphasizing this aspect of his senior's military life, K5 stated that he learned a lot about self-development and time-management from him even in the strictly limited military environment. In line with this, K6 added his senior's good personal background to his exemplary behavior and attitudes. According to K6, the fact that his senior graduated from one of the most

prestigious universities in Korea and worked in the financial sector in the US before enlistment may have affected the other soldiers' attitudes toward him. That is, his good personal background with high social position made him more admirable. As noted above, this showed that Korean young males' military identities could not be totally separated from civilian identities again.

Interactions with other male soldiers who displayed softer masculinities enabled some participants to gain a new perspective on ideal masculinity. However, appropriating certain traits that historically have been feminized did not lead to challenging the gendered binary of heterosexual/homosexual. This was supported by the fact that there was an almost complete lack of attention to homosexuality or gay servicemembers. When asked if they experienced serving with gay members in the same barracks, most participants answered 'no' without any comment. Only one participant (K1) mentioned his opinion on gay soldiers in addition to 'no'. This indifference or silence showed how little heterosexuality as hegemonic and normative status was challenged among young Korean males. K1's statement also reflected the bias against the homosexual population. He said, 'There were no gay members in my barracks. Actually, I do not mind their presence in the military unless they approach me'. This implied that persons with homosexuality might be potential sexual predators. This was consistent with what Belkin suggested as a characteristic of American military culture: the imagination of gays as rapists.<sup>668</sup> Belkin noted that 'soldiers abhor the possibility that anything might penetrate their bodies, and

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<sup>668</sup> Belkin, *Bring Me Men: Military Masculinity and the Benign Façade of American Empire 1898-2001*, p. 97

conceptualize warrior masculinity in terms of having a hard, sealed-up, leak-proof, impenetrable body'.<sup>669</sup> Here, homosexuality is constituted as a penetrative identity, and thus, gay soldiers can injure heterosexual peers simply by looking at them.<sup>670</sup>

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has addressed results of the first-round of interviews with ten Korean men, who completed military service in Korea but who did not experience deployment to peacekeeping operations. The overarching purpose of the interview was to examine the impact of military service on participants' construction of militarized masculinities. By serving as a control group, this first group will also allow me to compare them to the second group of Korean men who were deployed to peacekeeping abroad, and to see if involvement in peacekeeping could contribute to the construction of alternative militarized masculinities.

In several respects these interviews affirm what might be expected from the literature on militarized masculinities. Feminist critique of the making of militarized masculinities stresses the centrality of boot camp, hierarchy, emotional detachment, sexual innuendo and misogyny in the making of soldiers and all of these elements were reflected in the interviews with the soldiers recounted in this chapter. However, these interviews reaffirm that the military was not a site for the construction of a single type of militarized masculinity. On the contrary, multiple masculinities

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<sup>669</sup> Ibid., p. 85

<sup>670</sup> Ibid., p. 97

were shaped and reshaped with reference to changing circumstances where participants were placed both in the military and wider society. That is, the interplay between military and civilian cultures and values as a whole shaped and further complicated participants' militarized masculinities. The military still remained a masculinist institution, in varying degrees, and participants were exposed to hyper-masculine military culture and thus, shared some common experiences. However, participants' individual military identities were constructed through intersection of various factors including hegemonic masculinity in wider society, personal meaning assigned to military service, as well as their military ranks, service branch, and military roles.

Participants' perceptions of female soldiers and softer masculinities revealed the contradictory aspect of their perceptions of gender relations well. Due to the recent proliferation of feminism and heightened awareness of gender equality in Korean society, almost all participants negatively assessed men who exhibited hyper-masculine traits and associated those with 'outdated' and 'undesirable' men. Through good relationships with exemplary senior soldiers, some participants saw the potential for constructing softer masculinities and incorporating them into the military culture. However, this did not go further into the dismantling of the binary categorization of masculine/feminine and heterosexual/homosexual. Most participants tended to naturalize gender difference, and based on this, the gendered division of labor and the gendered protection norm were justified. Their lack of attention to gay servicemembers or distorted images of them also showed that hegemonic discourses about heteronormative conformity were not questioned. This

result differed from the case of other national militaries where the conventional conceptualization of militarized masculinity was contested by profound changes in military systems and culture, such as soldering carried out by women and LGBT members and new technologies in warfare.<sup>671</sup>

Military service, as an individualized experience,<sup>672</sup> impacted on the construction of each participant's militarized masculinities in a different way. However, at the same time, military service, which was seen as a necessary step for gaining adult manhood and as one of the few experiences the majority of Korean men could share with one another, played a significant role in forming bonds with other men and in claiming participants' 'normal' masculinities. In addition, many participants showed positive attitudes towards softer masculinities but they were not fully open to equality with women and persons with non-heterosexuality. The next chapter addresses results of the second-round of interviews with Korean men who experienced deployment to peacekeeping abroad and then a further chapter offers final comparative analysis between the results of the two rounds of interviews.

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<sup>671</sup> Koeszegi et al., "The War against the Female Soldier? The Effects of Masculine Culture on Workplace Aggression", p. 229

<sup>672</sup> Brooke and Peck, "Does the Military Make the (Wo)man? An Examination of Gender Differences Among Incarcerated Veterans", p. 1926

## Chapter 5. Results – Militarized Masculinities among Korean

### Peacekeepers

#### Introduction

This chapter presents findings from the interviews with Korean men who experienced deployment in various type of peacekeeping abroad. Participants' profiles (Table 2) are outlined first and then a data structure (Figure 2) is presented. From this process, five key themes/aggregate theoretical dimensions emerge which reveal the impact of involvement in peacekeeping on participants' militarized masculinities. Therefore, this chapter focuses on detailed explanations of these themes, using quotes from participants. The results show both positive potential for and limitations of the construction of alternative militarized masculinities through peacekeeping. Participants came to value peace and the security of ordinary people and constructed others in peacekeeping through relations of empathy, respect, and equality but their preconceived gender norms were not fully challenged.

#### 5.1. Participants

**Table 2. Participants' Profiles**

ID	Education level	Military branch	Rank	Place of deployment	Role	Current status
P1	Bachelor	Air Force	Officer	India/Pakistan	Military observer	Professional soldier
P2	Bachelor	Army	Officer	Afghanistan, Philippines	Medical practice	Professional soldier

P3	Bachelor	Army	Ordinary soldier	Iraq	Security guard	Veteran
P4	Bachelor	Army	Officer	Lebanon	Collecting and analyzing security information	Professional soldier
P5	Doctorate	Army	Ordinary soldier	South Sudan	Medical practice	Veteran
P6	Master	Army	Officer	South Sudan	Legal practice	Professional soldier
P7	Bachelor	Army	Officer	Lebanon	Medical practice	Professional soldier
P8	Bachelor	Army	Officer	Lebanon	Legal practice	Professional soldier
P9	Bachelor	Navy	Officer	Somalia	Translation	Veteran
P10	Bachelor	Army	Ordinary soldier	Iraq	Security guard	Veteran
P11	Doctorate	Army	Officer	Afghanistan	Liaison officer	Professional soldier
P12	Bachelor	Air Force	Officer	Western Sahara	Military observer	Professional soldier
P13	Bachelor	Army	Ordinary soldier	Iraq	Engineering	Veteran
P14	Bachelor	Army	Ordinary soldier	Lebanon	Driving	Veteran

## 5.2. Data Analysis

**Figure 2. Overview of Data Analysis**

### **Frist-order concepts**

1	Presenting taking full responsibility for their own work as the essential quality of ideal men; mentioning a role of good family provider, physical strength, leadership, self-development, and courage as well
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2	Having critical perspective on hegemonic male role norms such as restrictive emotionality, toughness, dominance and avoidance of femininity
3	Seeing military service as helpful to learn and acquire important qualities and skills for organizational life and to become more mature
4	Disagreeing with the view that military service is necessary to get adult manhood
5	Getting motivated for peacekeeping operations by wish to have new experiences or to get away from the current military life (conscripted soldiers) and to develop their career (professional soldiers)
6	Linking the role of the military in peacekeeping operations to the traditional combat role (e.g., seeing peacekeeping operations as a chance to put military training into practice)
7	Getting a pre-deployment training which focused on operational activities with cultural education about the region's indigenous religions, customs, and lifestyles at a basic level
8	Korean troops' placing strong emphasis on the prevention of sexual misconduct between Korean male and female soldiers while barely dealing with issue of SEA against local people by peacekeepers
9	Finding out that there was a difference in the extent to which trainer/trainee stressed the importance of gender training during pre-deployment training
10	Having difficulty in adjusting to peacekeeping environment due to weather, food and language
11	Feeling isolated and bored as they were now allowed to leave the base except for the time of operation
12	Having very limited opportunities to leave the base and interact with local civilian population
13	Perceiving that the rules and regulations of Korean troops were much more rigid than those of other troops, resulting in many restrictions on soldiers' behavior
14	Tending to divide other foreign troops in a binary way such as Western/non-Western, rich/poor, and developed/under-developed countries
15	Getting an impression of host population that they were a bit lazy and powerless, used to getting an international aid and seemed to have no will to develop their country by themselves
16	Feeling empathy for the host population when encountering their suffering and harsh life in a conflict-ridden society
17	Realizing that they had been preoccupied with stereotypes of Muslims due to the influence of media describing Muslims as aggressive, violent, and extreme fundamentalist or terrorist
18	Finding out that local people were very kind, nice and not much different from 'us' by interacting with them
19	Feeling good and fulfilled about helping others in need



20	Feeling bad when they saw foreign soldiers mistreating civilians
21	Learning the complex nature of conflict and coming to understand that each party involved in conflict had their own position and interest
22	Realizing the importance of putting oneself in someone's shoes for conflict resolution
23	Getting PTSD symptoms for a while after returning to Korea in case of experiencing war or quasi-state of war in peacekeeping operations
24	Confirming the brutality and ugliness of the war and its devastating impact on humanity through brutal violence exerted by armed forces
25	Getting a deeper understanding of human nature and behavior (e.g., soldiers' brutal activities were wrong but understandable in that those came out from the extreme fear of death)
26	Identifying the need for presence of women soldiers in that in certain mission, only women soldiers were allowed to approach and deal with local women for cultural and religious reason
27	Identifying a tendency for women soldiers to be allocated the headquarter and to do administrative work in peacekeeping operations
28	Seeing women soldiers as the ones male soldiers should protect during deployment
29	Having a different perception about women's competence in military occupations which have been predominantly taken by men, according to branch
30	Feeling no gender difference in performing duty as soldiers in extreme circumstances such as war
31	Seeing male-dominated culture and structure and resistance to change as the one of the biggest barriers women soldiers face to stay and develop their career in military
32	Associating peacekeeping operations with cultivating 'chivalric code of conduct' such as moral competence, self-sacrifice, and protection of the vulnerable
33	Presenting respect for the host population and their culture, will to help others, awareness of cultural diversity and equality as important qualities required of peacekeeper
34	Feeling proud to serve as peacekeepers in terms of contributing to building peace in conflicted regions
35	Finding peacekeeping experiences very precious and valuable in that they expanded their horizons and became more mature and stronger mentally
36	Getting practical benefit in employment or promotion after peacekeeping operations

### Second-order categories

1' (1-2)	Pursuing masculinities that combine traditionally masculine traits and specific feminine traits
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2' (3-4)	Seeing military service as helpful means to cultivate social skills rather than manhood
3' (5-6)	Being motivated for peacekeeping by different reasons according to position and role in the military
4' (7-9)	Pre-deployment training which focused on the mandated tasks Korean troops were in charge of with less emphasis on the gender training
5' (10-11)	Identifying the causes of psychological stress in peacekeeping operations
6' (12-13)	Characteristics of the way in which Korean troops operated in peacekeeping operations
7' (14-15)	Constructing foreign people as Other through relations of difference and distancing themselves from the Other
8' (16-20)	Deconstructing Self/Other binaries through relations of similarities and empathy
9' (21-25)	Broadening perspective on conflict and conflict resolution through lived experience of peacekeeping operations
10' (26-28)	Identifying the presence of gender stereotype of women soldiers in peacekeeping operations
11' (29-31)	Recognizing the gendered nature of military's institutional setting
12' (32-34)	Placing value on the qualities that could promote the construction of peacekeeper masculinity
13' (35-36)	Positive impact of peacekeeping experiences on individual soldiers' life

### **Aggregate theoretical dimensions/main themes**

1" (1'-2')	Ambivalence towards hegemonic masculinity
2" (3'-4')	Experiences of pre-deployment
3" (5'-6', 9', 13')	Perceptions of peacekeeping
4" (10'-11')	Perceptions of female peacekeepers
5" (7'-8', 12')	Construction of the host population

## **5.3. Findings**

### **5.3.1. Ambivalence towards Hegemonic Masculinity**

Overall, participants showed ambivalent attitudes towards hegemonic masculinity. As would be expected in chapter 3, the association of manly success with steady paid employment and providing for one's family had a strong influence on participants' self-perceptions and beliefs about how others perceived them. Many participants acknowledged that family structures defined strictly by men as a primary breadwinner had declined and been replaced by more egalitarian structures, and that contemporary men and women would not differ as much as older generation once did in their beliefs about the importance of employment to their gender identities. However, employment and financial stability still appeared to be central to most participants' masculinities. Some participants were not reluctant to refer to themselves as an "old-fashioned", "conservative" man when explaining what ideal men would be like,

I'm a bit conservative about how men behave or what men should be like. For example, men should be manly, not be shallow, and be able to take full responsibility as a family provider. I'm not sure if this is an ideal type of men in our society, but for me, qualities which have been traditionally regarded as masculine are still important. (P10)

I was born in 80s and raised in the range of old-fashioned values, which has impacted on the way I've defined what men should be like. Men should be fully responsible for their work, get along with others, and not complain. These are the masculine norms in Korean society and I agree with them so I'm trying to fulfil these norms. (P9)

Some current military personnel presented different qualities that had more to do with military values. For P11, 'commitment to the nation as soldiers' was an important marker for his

masculinities and for P7, 'courage, morality, honor, seeking justice, taking risk, and protecting the vulnerable' were important traits for becoming an ideal man.

However, the noticeable thing was that some participants did not want to define an ideal man or identify masculine norms. Regarding this, current military men were more critical of the social expectations of men than veterans. P2 said,

I don't have certain masculine norms because I think men need to have both masculinity and femininity. Even though I'm currently working in the military, I'm very critical of the idea that men should be manly. Probably this is because the world has changed a lot. (P2)

P12 and P13 also said that they did not have masculine norms to be a 'real man'. P13 added that he had 'only general norms to live as a decent person such as sincerity, honesty and diligence'. While explaining his perception of ideal masculinity, P6 mentioned 'femininity' as well,

The intent of this question [what do you think the important qualities to become ideal men are?] seems to be to see if there is a clear distinction between masculine and feminine traits. Actually, I don't think there are certain masculine traits only men should have or can have in comparison with women and femininity. (P6)

Contrary to my expectations that men in the military would show more traditional gender role beliefs, P2, P12, and P6 did not want to comply with hegemonic masculine standards. They also appeared to be cognizant and critical of the oppressive impact of traditional masculine roles and identities on them, mentioning social changes in gender relations. This could be related to what Dunvin notes. That is, although military culture still embraces combat, masculine-warrior

paradigms with complementary ethics, customs, and socialization processes, other dimensions of military culture reflect some social changes such as more tolerance for diversity and improved attitudes towards gender egalitarianism.<sup>673</sup> Besides, participants as agents, who have the ability to make sense of the environment, could initiate change, make choices with intentionality,<sup>674</sup> and accommodate these changes and position themselves in relation to changing gender norms. For example, P7 as a military man, stressed military values but at the same time he embraced the role of nurturing father. He wanted to get more involved in child care by using parental leave but couldn't do it because the military workplace culture did not encourage it.

Regarding military service, most participants saw it as a helpful means to experience 'real' society, generally characterized by hierarchy and collectivist culture in the workplace, to learn important social skills such as responsibility, communication, and adaptability and to acquire mature personality. Many of them stated that military service could be compared to enduring hardship in one's life and through this experience of overcoming difficulties, men would be better able to cope with difficult situations when returning to civilian life. Two current military men related military service directly to developing mature, desirable masculinities. P11 argued that through military service, where young men experienced coercive hierarchy for the first time in

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<sup>673</sup> Dunivin, "Military Culture: Change and Continuity", p. 539

<sup>674</sup> Schachter, Elli P. and Ventura, Jonathan J. (2008), "Identity Agents: Parents as Active and Reflective Participating in Their Children's Identity Formation", *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, Vol. 18, No. 3, p. 455

their life, young males could learn how organizational life would be and become more mature. P7 also argued that military service could promote the values of morality, honor, leadership, sacrifice, and responsibility. Another current military man (P1) acknowledged a positive relationship between military service and manhood but he confined it only to professional soldiers. According to him, conscripted soldiers were not granted much autonomy, authority and responsibility. In this military structure, it would be hard for conscripts to develop qualities such as problem-solving skills and shrewdness, which were identified as masculine ideals by P1. Other than those three participants (P11, P7 and P1), the other 11 were more or less negative or equivocal about military service as a marker of masculinities. They pointed out that some important qualities for socio-economic life could be obtained through different life experiences, not only through military service, and expressed dissent from the idea that military service is necessary to get adult manhood,

I disagree that military service is a rite of passage to become a real man. People can obtain maturity by going through hard times. However, the military is not only the place where we can experience mental and physical hardships. It can be anywhere in the society. Without military service, depending on the individual capacity, one can acquire various social skills and improve them. (P12)

P3 was more critical of mandatory military service,

Militaristic culture and norms are not valued by people any longer, especially by young people. They are seen very negatively because of their destructive impacts on men. I think the idea that men can become more mature through military service is just for justifying and maintaining

conscription. Sometimes, I had a chat with my friends about military service after discharge but I ended up feeling not good. (P3)

Both participants did not see masculinities produced and promoted in the military as desirable. However, P3's experience of having a chat with friends about military service showed the homogenizing rhetoric of military service among Korean men. Given this, although many participants were critical of military service, completion of military service still appeared to be important in Korean men's masculinities.

In varying degrees, many participants distanced themselves from traditional male stereotypes. However, this did not necessarily rupture the dominance of hegemonic masculinity. Most participants could not deny that the role of good family provider, and military service as a means to achieve 'normal' adult manhood, were very important in Korean society. However, it was notable that some participants saw masculinity as a social construct, asked themselves how the social construction of gender norms impacted on their identities and their male roles, and finally tried redefining masculinities by reflecting social changes in gender relations. Given this background, it might be expected that the participants would bring a more critical view into their time as peacekeepers, rather than accepting gendered binaries in peacekeeping (masculine war/feminized peace) that critical feminist scholarship has problematized.<sup>675</sup> To examine how participants understood gender issues in peacekeeping, the next sections address the participants'

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<sup>675</sup> Duncanson, *Forces for Good? Military Masculinities and Peacebuilding in Afghanistan and Iraq*, p. 84

experiences from the preparation for peacekeeping through to deployment and beyond. This begins with pre-deployment experiences, with a particular focus on gender training, in the section below.

### **5.3.2. Experiences of Pre-deployment**

#### **5.3.2.1. Motivations for Peacekeeping**

Participants appeared to differ on their motivation for peacekeeping according to military status, i.e., whether they were enlisted or professional soldiers. While enlisted soldiers tended to get motivated by the wish to have new, diverse experiences in their life or to have a break from the current military life in Korea, professional soldiers got motivated by more diverse factors. P14 (an enlisted soldier) said,

Military service for 2 years in Korea felt like a waste of time but there was no way to get away from it. Peacekeeping deployment was a good chance to spend time in a more meaningful way, having new experiences. (P14)

Some participants stressed the oppressive aspect of Korean military culture as the primary motivation for deployment,

I just wanted to escape military life in Korea. Individual freedom was totally deprived and there was no right to choose something by my own will. Before enlistment, I studied abroad. Nobody but me had to go to the military. It was the intense feeling of relative deprivation. All these things made it hard for me to endure military service in Korea. (P3)

I enlisted in the military when I was thirty. Most of my superiors were twenty or twenty-one years old and I had to serve and obey them. I really hated



that. In terms of this [coercive hierarchy], overseas deployment was expected to be better, much less hierarchical. (P5)

Among enlisted soldiers, P13's motivation was distinct from others.

The biggest reason for deployment in Iraq was I just wanted to go into the war field. My father was a war veteran and I heard many war stories from him. I still think war is the worst crime against humanity and in terms of that I wanted to experience and feel how real war would be. (P13)

More diverse factors as motivation were mentioned by professional soldiers. Almost all current military personnel mentioned the practical calculation that they would be able to gain advantages such as getting promoted or applying for new jobs in international organizations. P8 said,

I heard from my colleagues that peacekeeping deployment would give a competitive edge in getting promoted over those who had no experience of deployment. They [colleagues] said that the life during deployment might be boring and disappointing because soldiers would be almost locked in the base for 6 months. However, it would lead to benefits for career development. I thought it would be worthwhile. (P8)

Other than career development, the legitimacy of peacekeeping missions and the contribution to world peace and security were mentioned by professional soldiers as well,

Serving in UN peacekeeping operations was different from serving in the operations in Iraq or Afghanistan. In the public eyes, missions in Iraq or Afghanistan were not legitimate enough. On the contrary, for example, the mission in Lebanon is still regarded as the international effort to contribute to world peace as a UN mission. (P8)

Overseas deployment was one of the most valuable experiences soldiers could have. Above all, peace operations were something like a pragmatic contribution to the world, not just like preparation for war. There are still many missions for peace conducted by soldiers. I'm very glad that I participated in this meaningful mission. (P6)

One professional soldier explicitly related peacekeeping operations to appropriate military missions in terms of using force,

Actually, soldiers want to fight. Peacekeeping is not the field for war or combat but we [soldiers] can have indirect combat experiences through peacekeeping by arming ourselves. We [the Korean military] are just preparing and training for combat, not doing real combat. The desire for experiencing real combat was the direct motivation for peacekeeping deployment. Of course, the pride that I was selected for deployment among other great soldiers was also very important to me. (P11)

P11's statement showed that despite the expansion of military's role to operations related to peace and security during the last decades,<sup>676</sup> combat activities and war-fighting ethos were still valorized. This statement, 'we are just preparing and training for combat, not doing real combat', also appeared to be consistent with what Duncanson discovered from the British soldier, Beattie. He expressed his desire for combat action, which came from the longing for doing what he had spent a lifetime being trained for, not from his aggressiveness or death-wish.<sup>677</sup> In a similar vein,

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<sup>676</sup> Broesder, Wendy A. et al (2015), "Can Soldiers Combine Swords and Ploughshares? The Construction of the Warrior-Peacekeeper Role Identity Survey (WPRIS)", *Armed Forces & Society*, Vol. 41, No. 3, p. 521

<sup>677</sup> Duncanson, *Forces for Good? Military Masculinities and Peacebuilding in Afghanistan and Iraq*, p. 83

P11 wanted to put into practice that for which he had trained as a professional to prove his combat ability.

Participants' mixed motivations for peacekeeping such as contribution to world peace, security of others, and indirect combat were important as they could be a sign of challenging the gender hierarchy evident in traditional militarized masculinities and leading to the construction of alternative militarized masculinities.<sup>678</sup> The next part examines if participants' preconceived gender norms were challenged or reproduced by pre-deployment gender training.

### **5.3.2.2. Pre-deployment Gender Training**

Peacekeeping training is recognized as a site wherein the UN institutionalizes, diffuses and implements norms that are intended to govern and discipline peacekeeper subjects.<sup>679</sup> Training on gender involves negotiating understandings of what gender 'is' and 'does', who has or does it, and how it operates in relation to different subjects. According to Holvikivi, gender training matters beyond its instrumental capacity to produce directly measurable behavioral change. It shapes the realm of possible options for how peacekeepers understand themselves in relation to the population they serve and constitutes a practice that is expected to have significant practical and epistemic effects.<sup>680</sup> The UN also stresses that gender training is "a requirement for

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<sup>678</sup> Ibid., p. 85

<sup>679</sup> Holmes, Georgina (2019), "Situating Agency, Embodied Practices and Norm Implementation in Peacekeeping Training", *International Peacekeeping*, p. 57

<sup>680</sup> Holvikivi, Aiko (2016), "Training the Troops on Gender: The Making of a Transnational Practice", *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 70, No. 3, p. 2

improving the effective discharge of the mission's mandate and reducing both harmful forms of behavior by peacekeeping personnel and unintended negative effects of mission policies and programs". In line with this UN policy, peacekeeping troops receive gender training both during their pre-deployment training program in the troop-contributing country and once they arrive on mission.<sup>681</sup>

However, contrary to the UN's emphasis on gender training, almost all participants, except for P6, who was in charge of pre-deployment gender training and investigating sexual misconduct during deployment, rarely mentioned gender training. When they were asked about what the contents or curriculum of the training were, they mostly referred to general knowledge on the establishment and functioning of UNPK and on how peacekeeping personnel can implement their mandates successfully and effectively. The gender factor was not mentioned until I specified the question. Some participants were unfamiliar with the concept of gender and did not understand what gender training meant and asked me to give them an example. I explained briefly why the UN Security Council called for gender perspective to be mainstreamed throughout all peacekeeping processes, presenting the issue of SEA by peacekeepers as an example. After hearing my answer, P14 said,

I didn't pay attention to something related to gender when I got a pre-deployment training in the PKO center. Gender issue was not central to the

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<sup>681</sup> Lyytikäinen, Minna (2007), *Gender Training for Peacekeepers: Preliminary Overview of United Nations Peace Support Operations*, United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (UN-INSTRAW), p. 7, available at <https://www.un.org/ruleoflaw/files/GPSWorkingPaper4-1.pdf> [accessed: 1 November 2021]

training. I think I heard about it [gender training] once or twice but it didn't cover the sexual violence against local women or that kind of issues. It was about something like what we can do and can't do in Islamic culture. For example, we were told "don't look at and talk to women on the street". These were delivered as one of the cultural things but not dealt with deeply. (P14)

For P14, pre-deployment gender training was the first exposure to the concept of gender and was an opportunity to learn how the UN understood gender. However, for him, it appeared that gender was almost synonymous with women and gender issue in peacekeeping context was confined to sexual violence against local women. It was not congruent with what the UN expected of peacekeeping personnel through gender training. P12 referred to gender training as 'sex education',

I had to take a course about gender and submit certificate before deployment. Put simply, it was just like sex education. For instance, "you need to be careful of language especially at women", "you shouldn't do certain behavior to local women". This was the main content of gender training. There was nothing special in it. (P12)

Many participants linked gender training with cultural training components. According to them, cultural training was an important means to create the assurance that peacekeeping soldiers would be adequately prepared not to violate cultural norms in the host country or offend the host population. Gender issues were addressed to develop understandings of the specific cultural environment. P13 said,

In pre-deployment training, we [soldiers] learned that we shouldn't talk to Iraqi women, even looking at them was not allowed because of their [Iraqi]

religion and culture. Respect for local culture was very emphasized. But some local women wanted to pull a prank on us with trying making eye contact or speaking to us. But I never talked to them. (P13)

This statement showed that, as Carson notes in her study on the pre-deployment gender training for Australian peacekeepers, gender was considered relevant as a way of understanding the culture in the peacekeeping country but was not necessarily applied to reflection on peacekeepers' internalized understanding of gender and their behaviors.<sup>682</sup> Most participants saw gender to be equated with women and focused on cultural differences between peacekeepers and the host-population.

Some professional soldiers understood gender training as a means to prevent sexual misconduct between Korean service members during deployment, rather than issues related to masculine culture or power differentials existing in the peacekeeping context. P11 said,

Many cases of misconduct by soldiers have occurred during deployment, such as sexual activities between male and female service members, or even between male members sometimes. Although we were all educated with various cases, problems occurred in the field. For example, there would be no problem if male and female members were in a relationship even in the mission. But the thing is they might have sex in a remote place and get caught, which could become known to the public. (P11)

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<sup>682</sup> Carson, Lisa (2016), "Pre-deployment 'gender' training and the lack thereof for Australian peacekeepers", *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 70, No. 3, p. 286

P8 mentioned the inappropriateness of gender training for prevention of sexual violence by peacekeepers against local women, because of the strict rules governing the movement of Korean troops,

Peacekeeping center provided gender training for prevention of sexual violence against local people but I didn't find it useful or helpful. Basically, the Korean troops didn't allow soldiers to leave the base. How could something happen in this environment? However, of course we were all educated that any kind of sexual misconduct against local people was prohibited. Actually, the prevention of sexual harassment between service members in our troops was much more stressed. "There shouldn't be sexual harassment of or violence against female soldiers". Gender training in our troops was more like this. (P8)

As officers who were responsible for managing and disciplining subordinates, P11 and P8 tended to be more concerned about the negative impact soldiers' actions could have on their own troops or country reputation than on the host population. Both of them appeared to see gender as a tool that supported the pre-existing goals of the mission<sup>683</sup> and to narrow gender issues to sexual violence, conflating gender with women. This limited understanding of gender did not enable them to reflect on how their gender identity impacted on the way they behaved and viewed gender-related issues in peacekeeping operations.

Contrary to other participants who tended to see gender training as an additional part to the main training, P6, as a gender trainer and an investigator of sexual misconduct in peacekeeping, stressed the importance of gender training. He also had a better understanding of gendered

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<sup>683</sup> Holvikivi, "Training the Troops on Gender: The Making of a Transnational Practice", p. 15

aspects of armed conflict, including the different roles, insecurities and vulnerabilities of men and women as well as the impact that conflict could have on gender relations. In addition, although he rarely had an opportunity to interact with the host population due to the Korean troops' regulations, he mentioned gender culture in the host society he observed,

Women in conflict zones were really vulnerable. They were barely protected from crimes or violence. What I saw very often on the street in South Sudan was men sitting in the shade of trees and women laboring. Dowry still existed there. I thought marriage would be an easy way to get cheap labor. Marriage was something like a contract in that country. (P6)

He continued to talk about the vulnerability of South Sudanese women in relation to the prevalence of SEA,

The easiest way to get out of impoverishment for them [South Sudanese women] was selling sex to someone like international workers or peacekeepers who could give money to them. To make matters worse, because of the ongoing conflict between different parties, brutal sexual violence against civilian women by local soldiers or men from other tribes was very prevalent. It was collective violence. Victims suffered extremely and were traumatized. However, there were no proper service and facilities to treat and support them. I'm still very sorry about that. (P6)

He also explained how training and education were carried out in the pre-deployment,

There was a website where we could see the real cases of SEA in the UN peacekeeping, which was used as materials for gender training. The UN gender advisor also came to our troops. Training was regularly conducted with a translator. She [the gender advisor] was African and the level of education was not high. She assumed that the trainee would be only enlisted soldiers, excluding officers, so only basic contents were covered during the training. However, I could see the overall system [of UN] for gender training was very well equipped. (P6)



He continued,

The UN required all the peacekeeping personnel to carry the 4 pages leaflet that included who the gender unit staff were and how to report when gender-related issues occurred. I trained them [Korean soldiers] with the materials provided by the UN, along with their guidelines. I explained the UN policies regarding SEA, the penalty or disadvantage soldiers involved in SEA would get by the UN's regulations, and punishment from the Korean military. I tried to keep emphasizing the need for gender training. (P6)

Despite his attempt to stress the importance of gender training, he found a big gap between the UN's expectation and limited capacity in the Korean troops, which seemed to result from the lack of the Korean troops' political will allotted to gender training. He also mentioned a difference in the extent to which the trainer and trainees allocated importance to the gender-awareness in peacekeeping,

I placed such a strong emphasis on the gender issues that already happened and might happen in the peacekeeping. I also read an article about 'peacekeeper babies' and put it into my teaching materials because the seriousness of this issue shouldn't be overlooked. I explained to the soldiers why this problem happened and how it impacted on the lives of local people. For example, if peacekeeper babies were born between local women and peacekeepers and men [peacekeepers] left them [women and babies] after the mission, those women would get stigmatized and babies would be discriminated in their society because of their mixed-race. Because of this detrimental consequence, I stressed the importance of being aware of gender issues and their impacts on local people. However, it didn't appear that the soldiers understood it properly and took it seriously. I think this is the difference between trainers and trainees. (P6)

P6 was much more passionate and motivated about gender issues than other participants but he also appeared to define and understand gender in a rather limited way. Like other participants, he focused specifically on women, even though the UN training materials employed the terminology of 'gender training'.<sup>684</sup> As Laplonge points out, there was a continuation of the idea that gender existed outside the experiences of male peacekeepers while the term "gender" came to stand for the experiences of unstable women, who were affected by conflict in the mission.<sup>685</sup>

Participants' experiences of pre-deployment gender training confirmed what feminist scholarship has problematized in the approach to gender in peacekeeping. That is, gender was dismissed in favor of aspects of peacekeeping deemed hierarchically important, such as military protocols and caring for military weapons or vehicles.<sup>686</sup> Therefore, gender was not fundamentally integrated into the training process as a whole nor conceived of as an integral and necessary component of peacekeeping.<sup>687</sup> Rather, for most participants, gender training was seen as a way of understanding the peacekeeping context to which they were deployed with a lack of focus on attitudes and behaviors of peacekeepers themselves. Due to this, although they usually understood gender through the lens of sexual violence and focused mainly on this issue, there was barely a chance for them to reflect on their masculinities and the impact of their behaviors

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<sup>684</sup> Holvikivi, "Training the Troops on Gender: The Making of a Transnational Practice", p. 13

<sup>685</sup> Laplonge, Dean (2015), "The Absence of Masculinity in Gender Training for UN Peacekeepers", *Peace Review: A Journal of Social Justice*, Vol. 27, No. 1, p. 96

<sup>686</sup> Aolain et al, *On the Frontlines: Gender, War, and the Post-Conflict Process.*, p. 110

<sup>687</sup> Ibid., p. 123

on the effectiveness of peacekeeping. The equation of gender with women inhibited not only an examination of male vulnerability to gendered violence but also a consideration of how power and patriarchy were reproduced in the peacekeeping practices, which is integral to a critical feminist understanding of gender.<sup>688</sup> Besides, although the UN gender directive, in order to support implementation of gender mainstreaming norms, recommended that all pre-deployment training modules should cover the role and rationale of work for gender equality and the empowerment of women in peacekeeping contexts,<sup>689</sup> nobody made a comment on this aspect. Contrary to the UN's understanding of women's role as key partners for peacekeeping activities,<sup>690</sup> women were usually understood as victims of conflict, which resulted in leaving out the discussion about how to empower women in conflict zones. The issue of gender equality in the workplace of Korean troops was not mentioned either. Therefore, gender inequality was considered to be prevalent only in the peacekeeping countries participants were deployed to. Pre-deployment gender training provided many participants with the first chance to learn the concept of gender, but there was not much importance placed on the gender training by the

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<sup>688</sup> Carson, "Pre-deployment 'gender' training and the lack thereof for Australian peacekeepers", p. 280

<sup>689</sup> Holmes, "Situating Agency, Embodied Practices and Norm Implementation in Peacekeeping Training", p. 70

<sup>690</sup> United Nations (2010), *Introduction to UN Pre-deployment Training Standards for Military Experts on Mission 1<sup>st</sup> edition 2010*, p. 8, available at <http://biblioteca.f59.com.br/documentos/STM%20for%20Military%20Experts%20on%20Mission%20Full.pdf> [accessed: 3 March 2022]

Korean troops, which could be attributed to the fact that gender was still considered as a 'soft' issue, as opposed to a 'core' function of the UN missions.<sup>691</sup>

Although almost all participants had limited understandings of gender, there were notable instances where participants disrupted gendered dichotomies such as masculine war/feminized peace, or superior peacekeepers/inferior local people through lived experiences of peacekeeping in the field. This was reflected in participants' perceptions of peacekeeping, which is addressed in the next section in detail.

### **5.3.3. Perceptions of Peacekeeping**

P2, P5 and P7 served in medical units as peacekeepers. Among all participants, P5, who served in South Sudan, had the most extremely horrifying experiences of civil war during deployment, which decisively affected both his military identity and his perception of peacekeeping. He was very critical of the Korean military culture and struggled with the military indoctrination during service in Korea. However, the war experience in the mission served as a milestone for him to build a strong military identity including the special bond with other service members. Staying armed all the time and dealing with psychological and emotional stress from the war contributed to his applying soldier identities to himself. Even during the interview, P5's military identity was evident, although he was no longer serving in the military. He constructed accounts of himself

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<sup>691</sup> Carson, "Pre-deployment 'gender' training and the lack thereof for Australian peacekeepers", p. 288

as having military identities in the present in that he still maintained strong emotional bonds with other soldiers who went through and overcame the war situation together during deployment.<sup>692</sup>

With a strong role identity as a soldier, P5's role identity as a peacekeeper was also reinforced in the mission by continuing to treat and take care of severely injured people. He described the mission environment as 'general hospital' and 'the theater of war'. The experience of becoming a witness to the horror of war on the frontline not only changed his attitude towards life but also provided an opportunity to think critically about the UN's approach to peacekeeping. Although deployment in South Sudan was the toughest period in his life and he felt an intense fear of death for the first time, P5 truly appreciated what he learned and experienced in peacekeeping. However, devastating consequences of war still made him feel very sorry for and sad about the victims of war. He said,

We [the Korean troops] had many interactions with the Nepalese troops as they were stationed beside us. We had a lot of fun together before the war. When the war was going on, the fragments of mortar were lodged in the hips of one Nepalese soldier. He had surgery by the Korean medical team and fortunately he recovered well. Our troops had used to visit the local orphanage and town to provide medical service too before the war. I still remember how innocent and beautiful the children I met were. But I met them again in the hospital in our base during the war. Some of them lost their arms and a few children had their internal organs ruptured because of the gunshot wound to the abdomen. I still feel so sorry and sad. (P5)

He also talked about the local people's attitude towards the Korean troops,

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<sup>692</sup> Hale, "The Role of Practice in the Development of Military Masculinities", p. 719

The local people didn't seem hostile to UN peacekeepers but the clear thing was they were especially in favor of the Korean troops. This was not because the Korean troops were the UN soldiers, but because the Korean troops treated the injured and fed them very well and tried to protect refugees too. (P5)

Through the war experience, P5 found out that peacekeeping activities for restoring destroyed lives of ordinary people were very important. This experience also made him think about how he could better build security and peace for the people who suffered from conflicts, if he worked for a humanitarian aid organization in the future.

The experiences of P2 and P7 showed how soldiers perceived their roles and peacekeeping missions in different ways according to the operational environment. According to Ruffa, the perceived threat level of the mission and how the concept of the enemy is constructed create the operational environment.<sup>693</sup> P2, who served as a medical officer in Afghanistan and the Philippines, had very different experiences in each deployment. The Korean troops' high threat perception in Afghanistan affected how the mission was carried out. P2 said,

We had to keep alert all the time because of Korea's special relationship with the US. When the US was attacked by the Taliban we were attacked too. There were not always those attacks but whenever we left the base, we were always fully armed and used helicopters and armored vehicles only. I couldn't help but become quite nervous and anxious outside the base. (P2)

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<sup>693</sup> Ruffa, Chiara (2014), "What Peacekeepers Think and Do: An Exploratory Study of French, Ghanaian, Italian, and South Korean Armies in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon", *Armed Forces & Society*, Vol. 40, No. 2, p. 210

P2's role was confined to healthcare of the Korean soldiers, so he had only a few chances to see the local people. In such a volatile environment in Afghanistan, P2 perceived the mission as more like traditional military combat operation. On the contrary, the mission in the Philippines covered much more humanitarian assistance and disaster relief because the Korean troops were sent to support recovery efforts in the Philippines, which had been hit by severe typhoons.<sup>694</sup> P2's motivation for the mission in Philippines, the second deployment for him, was that he had wanted to contribute more to reconstructing the damaged country and people by using his professional expertise in a different mission context. While mostly having to stay at the base in Afghanistan, in Philippines, P2 visited many local towns to provide medical services to local people. However, the active performance of his role as a peacekeeper did not lessen his military identity, although the operational environment in the Philippines was non-conflict area with a low risk of battle, which was the biggest difference from the one in Afghanistan. That he wore the military uniform with the national flag during the mission kept reminding him that he was deployed as "a representative of Korea". P2's strong military identity was also reflected in his view on the expansion of Korean troops' participation in PKO-related, multi-national exercises. Mentioning

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<sup>694</sup> Republic of Korea Ministry of National Defense (2016), *Defense White Paper 2016*, ROK Ministry of National Defense, p. 176, available at [https://www.mnd.go.kr/user/mnd/upload/pblicitn/PBLICTNEBOOK\\_201705180310163890.pdf](https://www.mnd.go.kr/user/mnd/upload/pblicitn/PBLICTNEBOOK_201705180310163890.pdf) [accessed: 14 November 2021]

the need to take into account various factors such as national interest, allocated budget, and continued military confrontation with North Korea, he disagreed with the idea that humanitarianism should be the basis of the dispatch of the Korean troops because it was not the purpose and core function of the military. This appeared to be contradictory to his motivation for the mission in the Philippines. P2 said,

There are many NGOs that perform humanitarian activities and soldiers are not always needed for that kind of missions. There must be the right cause, which is in line with the unique purpose of the military. If deployed soldiers were killed or injured during justifiable military operations, they would be honored. However, there would be many problems domestically and internationally if those happened without justification for the mission. (P2)

P2 did not mention that overseas dispatch of troops could be justified only by participation in combat activities. However, he still appeared to conceptualize soldiers' roles mainly as warriors despite the multidimensional nature of the current military operations and different expectations of soldiers. In this respect, P2 thought that tasks that did not involve fighting including peacekeeping should come in second place.

P7 served in Lebanon as a medical officer who specialized in veterinary medicine. Among all participants, he had the most opportunities to work with foreign troops and to interact with the host population. Through this frequent contact, unlike other participants, he was able to carefully observe the host population's attitudes towards Korean peacekeepers and to question the effectiveness of the mission. P7 said,



The Korean troops' CMO [civil-military operations] could be seen as investment to win the hearts and minds of local people. We provided material stuff they needed and that was why they didn't say "leave our country" to us. There were two sides to every coin. They said "thank you for supporting us" but they knew we stayed there temporarily and we kept both sides, Lebanon and Israel, in check, not only their [Lebanese] side. So, they were ambivalent towards the presence of Korean peacekeepers. Anyway, local people could get what they wanted from us while we were stationed. I think this is the negative aspect of CMO. It was not us who took the lead in planning and implementing civil operations, but the local people. (P7)

P7 did not see the trust and respect the Korean troops earned from local people by engaging in CMO as genuine since whether local people could gain material things from peacekeeping troops was local people's main concern. He appeared to make a distinction between contributing countries as 'donors' and the host population as 'recipients'. In this regard, he was critical of the recipient-centered approach the Korean troops utilized in peacekeeping, which did not allow the donor country to take the initiative.

A relatively safe operational environment affected P7's perception of peacekeeping in a significant way. The Korean base was in a secure location overlooking the entire area of operation<sup>695</sup> and there were no serious security incidents during his deployment. According to him, in peacekeeping, where peacekeepers are ordered not to intervene in ongoing conflicts and the use of weapons has to be kept to an absolute minimum,<sup>696</sup> peacekeeping troops did not do

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<sup>695</sup> Ruffa, "What Peacekeepers Think and Do: An Exploratory Study of French, Ghanaian, Italian, and South Korean Armies in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon", p. 209

<sup>696</sup> Tobin, "Occupational stress and UN peacekeepers", p. 206

much but each contributing country used peacekeeping as military diplomacy in order to promote national interest. He stated that 'how each country exerts influence and leaves a good impression on other countries and the host population actually matters in peacekeeping'. That is, P7 understood peacekeeping as one field to build up national capacities to become a global actor, rather than a commitment to promoting human security. He agreed with the need to expand the Korean troops' participation in peacekeeping in terms of national interest,

We [the Korean military] need to participate in more overseas missions. In Lebanon, the main countries leading the mission such as Italy, Spain, and France not only won a central position but also promoted economic interest by gaining a share of the construction projects and providing a wide range of munitions. Korea hasn't gained much national interest despite our considerable financial contribution to the UN. We can gain more power in the international society by participating in more peacekeeping missions actively. (P7)

The case of P4, P8, and P14 who all served in Lebanon showed that their different roles and ranks played an important role in seeing peacekeeping from different perspectives. All three of them stressed that deployment was a great opportunity to experience cultural diversity, but differed in how they perceived the mission in Lebanon. P4's role was to collect and analyze data about security threats to the Korean troops and the peacekeeping country, and he mostly stayed in the military base. While describing his role very briefly, he mentioned more about the causes of his psychological stress during deployment. He felt like "being locked in the base", which resulted in feeling of boredom and isolation. Despite this psychological stress, however, P4 was very proud that Korea could help other countries. He emphasized how good he had felt when

giving help to others. Although he had very limited chances to interact with the host population because of his role, he referred to the moment of interaction with some local people as a good memory during deployment. He did not note how peacekeeping would impact on the ordinary people's lives directly but he suggested 'a loving heart' as the most important quality for serving as peacekeepers. This showed that P4 valued genuine interaction and empathy in peacekeeping, which could enhance prospects for peace and security.

P8, as a military legal officer, handled a variety of legal issues in the mission including rendering legal advice and opinions on interpreting the UN's specific mandate and rules of engagement, budget allocation, inspection and evaluation of the Korean troops' operations, particularly CMO, and conducting prosecution of soldiers charged with misconduct during deployment. Contrary to other medical officers, P8 defined his primary role identity in the legal profession, not in the military. As a legal officer, he had many chances to interact with diverse people in peacekeeping by attending public events organized by the Lebanese government or the UN and a seminar for discussing legal issues with other troops' legal officers. As a part of the military diplomacy, sometimes, he attended formal dinners with personnel of foreign troops or local actors. P8 felt satisfied with his role and saw peacekeeping as a good field to develop his career.

At the same time, apart from his personal satisfaction, P8 pointed out a problem in the Korean troops' approach to peacekeeping, which extremely limited individual soldiers' movement. He compared the norms and rules of the Korean troops to those of other foreign troops and suggested implicitly the need to change the Korean military's regulations during deployment,

The Korean military's rules to control individual soldiers during deployment were much more rigid than those of other troops, which was the distinct characteristics of the Korean military. While most foreign troops consisted of volunteer professional soldiers, who were allowed to have more freedom, the Korean military was based on the conscripted soldiers, who were seen to be managed and controlled by the professional soldiers. Wherever we were deployed and whatever we did during deployment, the safety of our own soldiers was always the first priority. (P8)

On the one hand, P8 understood why the Korean troops displayed high force protection and imposed strict rules on their soldiers but on the other hand, he found it quite 'unnatural' in the peacekeeping context. He explained why it was unnatural, giving an example of one Italian soldier who got married with a local woman,

Most soldiers in the Italian troops were professional soldiers and allowed to get out of and in the base freely after working hours, which was never possible in our troops. When I met a Mayor of Tyre [the region of the Korean troops' deployment] with other commanders in our troops, he asked us "why do Korean soldiers never interact with locals, just staying inside the base?" He really didn't get that culture. There was one case of marriage between a local woman and an Italian soldier back then. Actually, that's very natural, isn't it? I'm sure this thing has never happened in the Korean military until now and won't happen. (P8)

All professional soldiers who took responsibility for managing and disciplining enlisted soldiers endorsed the need for strict rules that restricted soldiers' individual behaviors and movement.

Given this, P8's statement above was very notable. He thought that severely restricting soldiers' interaction with local people did not correspond to 'how peacekeeping should be' nor improve the effectiveness of the mission.

P14's main role was driving vans for transportation, which provided him with more chances to leave the base and meet new people. He also conducted patrolling in an area of the Korean troops' operation and assisted the agents of CMO in implementing their activities. Due to his role, he did not feel bored or isolated during deployment and was able to think critically about the effect of peacekeeping. P14's view of peacekeeping appeared to be consistent with that of P7, who pointed out the ambivalent attitudes of Lebanese people towards Korean peacekeepers. However, P14 saw peacekeeping from the standpoint of the host population, not of the Korean government or Korean troops. He said,

I felt good about contributing to helping others in need. However, I couldn't help but ask this question, "are all these activities really helpful to this country and people?" We [Korea] spend a lot of money doing this kind of operations, peacekeeping or development aid, and want to show what we are doing to the international society. But the thing is to what extent this operation is effective for reconstructing countries destroyed by conflicts and making people's lives better. I'm not sure whether teaching *Taekwondo* (one of the Korean traditional martial arts) and computer to the local people really helped for their better lives in a long-term. (P14)

While P7, as a high-ranking officer who had stronger military identities, related successful military operations directly to the national power and interest, P14, as an enlisted soldier, put himself in the local people's shoes. He was aware that teaching *Taekwondo* was to overcome cultural and ethnic differences as a tool to get closer to the local people and computer classes were to equip

local people with basic technologies to improve their earning capacity.<sup>697</sup> However, he did not see these civil operations as a long-lasting means to transform the people's lives, stating that peacekeeping should not be 'fool's gold'. In addition, P14 questioned the effect of the presence of foreign armed forces in peacekeeping on the host population,

Local people were more friendly to the Korean troops because we provided necessary materials and good services. However, I had a doubt about the impact of a temporary stay of military troops on the ordinary people's lives. Could it contribute to building and maintaining real peace there? I'm not sure of it. (P14)

According to P14, although there were no UN troops engaging in ongoing conflicts or combat activities in Lebanon, the presence of military troops itself could cause tension among the local residents or give an impression of being an occupying force. P14 did not deny the need of soldiers for peacekeeping operations but stressed that peacekeeping troops should have a good understanding of local people's needs and how to help them. Peacekeeping should be basically for the host population and their improved lives, not for participating countries' interest. Given that in Duncanson's work, most British soldiers serving in Afghanistan were ignorant of the broader picture and did not acknowledge the close linkage between the issue of extreme poverty

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<sup>697</sup> Hong, "South Korean Approaches to Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding: Lessons Learned and Challenges Ahead", p. 30

in Afghanistan and foreign intervention,<sup>698</sup> P14's host population-centric view of peacekeeping was very important.

The case of P3 and P10, who served as security guards for the commander of the Korean troops in Iraq during the same period, showed that two factors affected the way in which soldiers made sense of the mission they participated in: how soldiers perceived the military service; and what soldiers actually did in the mission. Despite the same role and the same mission environment, their memories of and interpretations about the mission were very different. Throughout the whole interview, while P10 saw the military service as a helpful means to become an independent, mature man, which led him to have positive attitude towards peacekeeping, P3 carried a strong sense of unfairness about the conscription, which led him to maintain a cynical view of the deployment as well. P3 said,

For six months in Iraq, I served as a security guard only for one month and the rest of the time was spent doing small work. I mean we [dispatched soldiers] had to build encampment most of the time. I'd say this was our main job. We joked like this, "we came here for this bunch of boring and meaningless work, which seems never-ending". Honestly because of my distrust of the Korean military I had expected that deployment would be pretty similar to the military service in Korea and it turned out to be worse. Deployment was full of digging in the ground and building something on it. We mostly stayed inside our base so there was no chance to interact with local people. Only when our commander went out, we could go out and look around the town. It was such a big privilege though. (P3)

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<sup>698</sup> Duncanson, *Forces for Good? Military Masculinities and Peacebuilding in Afghanistan and Iraq*, p. 111

P10 also mentioned the labor for building encampment but there was no feeling assigned to it, unlike P3's description of that work as 'small', 'boring', and 'meaningless'. In addition to their roles, when asked about the memorable moments during deployment, while P10 made a statement about feeling happy and proud by helping others, P3 tended to focus on the unpleasant incidents happening to him. Overall, while P10 mostly talked about the positive impact of deployment such as learning new culture and broadening his horizon, P3's statement did not include the details which were specific to his role or mission itself. Rather, he focused more on the problems or absurdity existing in the Korean military and explained how these reemerged in the deployment.

Despite a big difference in their attitudes, the notable thing was both of them saw the mission in Iraq as peacekeeping. They thought that the invasion of Iraq by the US had no moral and legal justification, and thus, they were not truly sympathetic with the decision to send troops to this unjust war. However, they believed that what they actually did in Iraq was for peace and reconstruction. Even though P3 saw the deployment primarily as escape from the service in Korea and did not have the will to contribute to world peace when applying for deployment, he acknowledged the considerable contribution of the Korean troops to the stabilization and reconstruction of the war-torn society,

Our government focused only on reconstruction efforts without sending combat troops. It was a right decision. I believe that our job considerably contributed to enhancing life quality of local residents in Iraqi Irbil. (P3)



P10 explained how his view on the mission in Iraq had changed before and after deployment,

Considering that the US acted like the world's policeman with hidden intentions, the war against Iraq was completely unjustifiable. As the one who took part in that war, I was blamed by some people around me. However, what I thought during deployment was our troops were there for maintaining peace, not for fighting. It was not a just war but all activities done by the Korean troops, such as educating local people on specialized techniques covering vehicle maintenance, constructing hospitals and schools, and providing medical support, apparently contributed to building peace in Iraq. (P10)

P3 and P10 identified their roles as peacekeepers although the mission in Iraq was not regarded as traditional UNPK and even soldiers themselves were opposed to the war before deployment. This showed that the actual practice of soldiers in the operation was constitutive to how soldiers interpreted their roles.<sup>699</sup>

Another participant P13 served in Iraq as well but his experience was very different from that of P3 and P10 in that deployment enabled him to gain a deeper understanding of the brutality and ugliness of war and its impact on human behavior. As an electrical engineer, he established communications satellites on the field, which needed professional expertise and skills. Unlike other soldiers whose movements and interactions with foreign people were strictly restricted during deployment, P13 had many chances to travel around the cities in Iraq and to meet diverse

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<sup>699</sup> Kaspersen, Iselin Silja (2021), "New societies, new soldiers? A soldier typology", *Small Wars & Insurgences*, Vol. 32, No. 1, p. 8

people for his work and frequently visited the US base and interacted with the US soldiers. With his unique role, being exposed to serious security threats, despite the declaration of the end of the Iraqi war, played a significant role in forming his perception of the mission. Unlike P3 and P10 who saw themselves as participating in peacekeeping activities, P13 was so overwhelmed by the devastating consequences of war that he rarely found the attributes of peacekeeping. For this reason, his reflection was mostly about the war, not peace. He said,

Some of the US pilots I met showed off how many people seen as enemies they killed. On one hand, all those brutal activities and violence exerted by soldiers were absolutely wrong, but on the other hand, they were understandable in that those came out from the extreme fear of death. There were constant attacks on the US military. "If we don't kill them first, they will kill us". This was their [US soldiers'] mindset. (P13)

He also talked about one important episode that affected his perception of local people considerably,

When some of the officers in our troops including me were invited by one tribal chief for dinner, I got an impression that people were very kind and nice. They treated us very well. However, my feeling about local people changed dramatically since I faced a dangerous situation. When our convoy vehicle stopped at the border between Iraq and Kuwait for security check, some children suddenly appeared and stole some pieces of equipment on our vehicle. We [Korean soldiers] got off and chased them. When we found the children in their hideout, they pointed a gun at us. Since this happened, I started perceiving ordinary Iraqi people as enemies. (P13)

He saw himself perceive and react to local people in the same way the US soldiers did after those things happened and from this, he could confirm that war completely destroyed humanity and devastated people's lives, regardless of whether they were perpetrators or victims.

P1, P9, P11, and P12, performed more security-related kinds of tasks that were similar to conventional military functions. Except for P9, who took part in CMO only once, the other three professional soldiers had no experience of CMO. The nature of their military roles appeared to be similar but their deployment experience and the perception of it were different according to the specificities of each mission and the extent to which participants identified themselves with military personnel.

P1 and P12 served as military observers in India/Pakistan and Western Sahara, respectively. According to Korea's Defense White Paper, military observers 'monitor armistice violation and conduct diverse missions including patrols, investigations, reporting, as well as mediation under the control of each mission headquarter'.<sup>700</sup> What P1 and P12 explained about their role was almost the same as this description. However, the specificities of their missions including the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic made a big difference in their lived experiences, although they were of a similar age, early 30s, serving in the same branch, the Air Force, and had a similar military career.

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<sup>700</sup> Republic of Korea Ministry of National Defense, *Defense White Paper 2016*, p. 173

P1 served in Pakistan first and then moved to India for the rest of his duty. His role in the two countries was basically observing the border zones between India and Pakistan, patrolling, and investigating the case of violations of the ceasefire agreement. However, each country's attitudes and requirements towards the UN peacekeeping were very different and this affected the way he implemented his duty and experienced the peacekeeping as a whole. In Pakistan, P1 went out almost every day for observation and met local civilians to get the information related to security threats. In India, he had to limit his main duty to reporting every hour the location of Pakistan's patrol vehicles around the checkpoint to the UN headquarters. For this reason, his reflection was mostly about the mission in Pakistan. One dangerous incident in Pakistan, a confrontation with a group of pro-independence activists for Kashmir, served as a momentum for him to think about peacekeepers' roles. These activists demanded that the UN soldiers including P1 to come to one of their colleagues, who was considered dead. However, according to the UN mandate, UN soldiers could not move or take any action without the information and intelligence gathered by the UN. Keeping insisting that the UN soldiers should come with them, they said "what job are you doing here as UN soldiers? Just observation!". To sort out this situation, Pakistani soldiers and police came and tried dispersing this group, using force and tear gas. This incident almost turned into an armed conflict and some people got injured. Elaborating on this, P1 felt powerlessness because of the lack of ability to influence the situation and to protect himself. The statement of the activists that the UN soldiers did nothing but observation appeared to fuel this feeling. P1 did not mean that the UN soldiers should have been able to

use military means to alter the situation but being put into a passive position that needed help from local soldiers was very disappointing. This was consistent with what Tobin suggested as psychological stress that could be experienced by peacekeepers, namely powerlessness and humiliation.<sup>701</sup> However, P1 was very against the violence exerted by the Pakistani soldiers and police against that group of men. He thought that the situation could have been sorted out in a peaceful way and using force was wrong. It appeared that P1 tried to maintain a peacekeeping ethos embodying impartiality, minimum use of force, mutual respect, and empathy<sup>702</sup> even though he experienced role strain between soldiering and peacekeeping.

Witnessing constant conflicts and their destructive impact on local residents in Pakistan also contributed to forming P1's perception of his role and the mission. He described the situation in Pakistan as 'real war' because he saw many dead bodies and people who got injured or lost their family and house, which was not experienced in India. Unlike other UN soldiers who expressed emotional distress, P1 felt okay and was not disturbed by the horror of war. He attributed this to his sense of self as a 'soldierly soldier', characterized not only by a strong willingness and moral conscience to protect the lives of others but also by a physical and emotional control and denial of weakness and vulnerability. He was there to perform a challenging, difficult duty, not an easy one anybody could do. By making peacekeeping masculine, P1 was able to make sure

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<sup>701</sup> Tobin, "Occupational stress and UN peacekeepers", p. 206

<sup>702</sup> Broesder et al, "Can Soldiers Combine Swords and Ploughshares? The Construction of the Warrior-Peacekeeper Role Identity Survey (WPRIS)", p. 524

his individual masculinity was not questioned.<sup>703</sup> In this vein, he perceived the mission as an extension of the traditional military operations that needed expertise in managing violence and often required soldiers to live under harsh conditions,<sup>704</sup> rather than the more peacekeeping-like activities.

However, a new perspective about conflict and resolution P1 gained through the mission was very notable. He was able to think about the relationship between South and North Korea critically by experiencing other states' conflict indirectly. He explained his changed view on the approach to the Korean conflict,

As a South Korean soldier, I was quite biased against North Korea before deployment. However, looking at the conflict between Pakistan and India as an observer, I realized that I had been just like people in each country blaming each other uncritically. I had condemned the North by defining them as an enemy to beat and conquer by force. But thanks to the peacekeeping, I was able to change this view. If I put myself in other's shoes, regardless of ideology or religion, I could have a better understanding of others and accept them. This is what I learned from the mission. (P1)

P1 also emphasized the military's role in maintaining peace,

Military exists for defending the nation and protecting its people. For doing this, military can fight against the enemy using force. However, deterring war and keeping peace are also an important duty of the military. For establishing peace, we really need to shift our perspective rather than sticking to binary thinking like us/them, or friend/enemy. (P1)

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<sup>703</sup> Ibid., p. 91

<sup>704</sup> Ben-ari, E. and Elron, E. (2001), "Blue Helmets and White Armor: Multi-nationalism and Multi-culturalism among UN Peacekeeping Forces", *City & Society*, Vol. XIII, No. 21, p. 278

In his narrative, P1 often placed a value on masculine traits as the basis for ideal soldiers but he saw peacekeeping as an important duty of soldiers as well. In addition, given that the prioritization of national defense in Korean society is always presumed to be stable,<sup>705</sup> questioning the definition of enemy and recognizing the idea of ideology or culture as internally contested could be seen as a significantly profound impact of peacekeeping on P1's militarized masculinities.

Contrary to P1, P12 had many restrictions in performing his duty as a military observer in Western Sahara for 14 months due to the Covid-19 pandemic. His duty included ceasefire monitoring, visiting Moroccan military units regularly to see if they followed the UN mandates well, and meeting military officers serving in different regions to gather security information. He also served as an air liaison officer, who was in charge of scheduling flights for logistic support, and supplying materials when emergency occurred. However, after the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic, P12 was unable to conduct his job robustly due to strict restrictions on travel. In addition, difficulties coping with a situation that differed from his expectations, and having to stay mostly in the desert, also contributed to limiting his experience of peacekeeping, which had a significant impact the way he perceived and felt about peacekeeping. P12 said,

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<sup>705</sup> Kwon, "Gender, Feminism and Masculinity in Anti-Militarism: Focusing on the Conscientious Objection Movement in South Korea", p. 218

The major problem during deployment was isolation, boredom and disappointment. Where I stayed and worked was desert area. There was nothing around so I didn't go out even when I was allowed to do. I heard that there were many soldiers who got depression or alcohol problem in the mission in Western Sahara. One of my colleagues got serious depression during deployment and had to request repatriation. The Covid-19 made the situation much worse. Without it, we could have used leave for self-care but in the pandemic situation, everything was restricted. There was no proper psychological care provided for soldiers. The only way to ease the stress for me was having a chat with other Korean soldiers and complaining together. (P12)

P12 stated several times that the unexpected Covid situation affected his perception of deployment much more than the duty itself. He had expected to have more diverse experiences including performing different tasks and learning about different cultures but it did not happen. Even when the lockdown restrictions were eased, he could not travel due to the Korean military's regulations. He felt very disappointed throughout the operation. As a result, he perceived peacekeeping in Western Sahara as a much more challenging operation than the service in Korea, although he saw it as a good opportunity to broaden his perspective. He said,

By belonging to the UN force and working with other UN members' militaries, I learned the way of interplay between the UN and the different national contingents. It was a good experience for me who had been serving only in Korea. However, I wouldn't recommend deployment to people whose motivation would be just earning good money or having a new life experience. The situation I faced was very tough and I had to live under harsh conditions including weather, food and poor infrastructure. Soldiers considering deployment really need to be prepared well. (P12)



The case of P1 and P12 showed that the unique characteristics of peacekeeping environment substantially affected how soldiers made sense of their peacekeeping experiences. While P1 saw peacekeeping as a useful tool to make him more competent at his professional skills without any negative effect, P12 was quite disappointed in that his expectation was not met. However, both of them implied that peacekeeping was very challenging and difficult, and therefore, well-prepared competent soldiers would need to be deployed.

P11, who served in Afghanistan as a liaison officer, appeared to have the most contradictory experiences and perceptions of peacekeeping among all participants. He mostly worked with the US soldiers in the military base, and was able to leave the base with the UN soldiers only when they went out for operations. The interesting thing was his elaboration on the deployment was mainly about combat-related activities conducted by the US military, not his own role or Korean troops' tasks. He put a value on his deployment in that he was able to experience combat indirectly and to know more about the US military, the most powerful military on the planet,

The biggest difference between service in Korea and Afghanistan was I had to stay armed all the time in Afghanistan. Even when I went to bed, I put firearms and ammunitions right next to me, which wasn't allowed in Korea. I had to stay alert and hold tension all the time but it wasn't scary or much stressful. Rather I liked it because it made me feel like I'm a real soldier who is fighting. In Korea, soldiers arm themselves only during the training. Deployment period was short but I was able to maintain combat readiness, although I didn't engage in real combat. I felt pretty good about it. (P11)

In line with his perception of the mission in Afghanistan, P11 tended to see all types of overseas dispatch including UNPK and MNF PKO as an opportunity to have indirect experiences of combat,

which could improve the Korean military's strength. In terms of this, he assented to expanding the Korean military's participation in international peacekeeping operations. While explaining different views on the expansion of PKO participation, he kept stressing his position and role as a military man,

The Korean military has revolved around the training without the chance to put it into practice. If we got more overseas dispatches, it would help our military improve its capability. Still, the majority of the military personnel don't have the deployment experience so they don't know what real combat would be like. As a soldier who had the experience of combat in Afghanistan, it was indirect though, it's a shame that our military really doesn't know well about combat. (P11)

P11's statements showed that his military identity was reinforced through deployment and this was reflected in his perception of peacekeeping in general. He was aware of a central part of the justifications of sending the Korean troops to the operation in Afghanistan, supporting stabilization and reconstruction activities for ordinary Afghans. However, throughout the interview, he rarely mentioned the humanitarian aspect of the mission such as helping others in need or restoring people's lives in a war-torn country, which was commonly mentioned by other participants. This did not mean that P11 feminized or disparaged the people and practices of peace but apparently, he valorized combat and its associated hardware, skills and attitudes. To sum up, the valorization of combat was a dominant theme in his narrative.

P9, who served as an interpreter officer in the counter piracy operations off the coast of Somalia, was very proud that he had participated in this mission but very cautious about telling

operational activities as he thought that it might expose the military's confidential information. For this reason, he explained his role very briefly, translation for the military operation with foreign troops, and avoided stating details. He also appeared to avoid describing how he felt during deployment, which might show his weakness or vulnerability. He explained how vulnerable many Somalis were in their national security situation and briefly mentioned his feelings about that. However, he kept stressing that he had tried to exclude emotions on duty because he was deployed as a military member, not as a humanitarian civilian,

There were many security threats and illegal criminal activities occurring in the Somali waters. As a result, some people were attacked and got injured but they were not protected by their government. We rescued these people and civilian ships that were under threat from pirates and took care of them. I felt sorry and kind of sympathy for them. However, when I performed my task as a soldier, I tried to exclude my emotions. (P9)

He still appeared to believe that remaining unemotional under any circumstances should be central for military professionalism.

P9 also distinguished his mission from traditional peacekeeping operations. In his understanding, peacekeeping would involve more humanitarian activities and interactions with the host population, and less use of force in less challenging environment. He not only emphasized that the *Cheonghae Unit* (Somali Sea escort task group of South Korea's Navy) was the most valorous unit in the Korean military but also considered anti-piracy operations as much more challenging and difficult than conventional peacekeeping missions. Like P11's case, there was no explicit disparagement of peace-related people or activities but there existed a perception

about which things were more appropriate to do for soldierly soldiers and a clear division between military and civilian work. In terms of this, P9's engagement in active military activities enhanced his feeling of pride. For him, fighting righteous fights as soldiers was one of the most honorable experiences men could have. The way he made sense of the operation also contributed to his improved self-conceptualization as a more competent and mature, and stronger man. From all of these, it could be said that the anti-piracy mission not only reinforced P9's militarized masculinities during deployment but still contributed to his maintaining military identities, even though he was no longer employed in the armed forces.

Participants' narratives showed that various factors, including military roles, areas of deployment, specificities of mission environment, and the extent to which participants identified with military personnel, impacted on how they made sense of peacekeeping. As shown in previous studies on soldiers' attitudes towards peacekeeping, all participants accepted the basic norms of peacekeeping and believed it to be an appropriate military mission.<sup>706</sup> To varying degrees, participants considered peacekeeping to be a much more challenging activity than the military service in Korea since peacekeeping forces were tasked with carrying out their assignments in proximity to danger and violence.<sup>707</sup> To implement peacekeeping tasks successfully, the same kind of soldierly attributes such as courage, ability to live under harsh

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<sup>706</sup> Broesder et al, "Can Soldiers Combine Swords and Ploughshares? The Construction of the Warrior-Peacekeeper Role Identity Survey (WPRIS)", p. 520

<sup>707</sup> Ben-ari and Elron, "Blue Helmets and White Armor: Multi-nationalism and Multi-culturalism among UN Peacekeeping Forces", p. 278

conditions, emotional control, and self-discipline were seen as important qualities. In this respect, most participants were proud of partaking in peacekeeping and believed that their military professionalism and self-conceptualization were improved through peacekeeping. As Duncanson notes, this could be read as the masculinization of peacekeeping and inconsistent with the gendered dichotomy of masculine war/feminized peace that feminist skeptics have advocated as a crucial reason for not using soldiers as agents of peace.<sup>708</sup>

However, the masculinization of peacekeeping did not mean that soldiers valorized peacekeeping only because they were involved in quite volatile and dangerous missions like war. There was a variation in the extent to which participants focused on the humanitarian aspect of peacekeeping. Participants who were exposed to more security threats during deployment tended to point out the importance of peacekeeping for the restoration of peace and the security of ordinary people. On the contrary, participants who were deployed in relatively safe areas tended to see peacekeeping as a political or diplomatic strategy for promoting national interest, rather than a dedication to world peace. Despite the difference, the important thing was most participants felt fulfilled and good about what they did as peacekeepers, 'helping people in need', regardless of their personal views on peacekeeping.

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<sup>708</sup> Duncanson, *Forces for Good? Military Masculinities and Peacebuilding in Afghanistan and Iraq*, p. 89

Stressing the humanitarian aspect of peacekeeping and masculinizing peacekeeping could both be seen as attempts to challenge traditional militarized masculinities by the participants as a consequence of their experiences in peacekeeping. This reconstructing of militarized masculinities often occurred as a consequence of perceiving and experiencing the host population. Regarding female peacekeepers, however, participants' preconceived ideas about gender roles tended to be reproduced. Therefore, the next two sections address how participants' militarized masculinities were reinforced or challenged through their interactions with and perceptions of female peacekeepers and their roles first and then how they constructed the host population.

#### **5.3.4. Perceptions of Female Peacekeepers**

Although all participants served together with female peacekeepers during deployment, there were not many statements made about them and their roles. Participants briefly mentioned their impressions about female peacekeepers when asked about them. However, this showed that most participants' perceptions of female peacekeepers were based on gender stereotypes, which have persisted in the military culture and have been reproduced in peacekeeping.<sup>709</sup> A shared assumption was that women are better able to reach civilian populations, thus making the peacekeeping force more approachable to women and children in the host society, and

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<sup>709</sup> Jenne, N. and Bisshopp, F. U. (2021), "Female Peacekeepers: UNSC Resolution 1325 and the Persistence of Gender Stereotypes in the Chilean Armed Forces", *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 28, No. 1, p. 153

promoting communication and reconciliation better than male personnel.<sup>710</sup> Several studies on female peacekeepers reveal that the major justification of women's increased representation in peacekeeping is improved operational effectiveness, not the inclusion of women as an end in itself.<sup>711</sup> Most participants' perceptions of female peacekeepers appeared to conform to this.

P1's experience with female peacekeepers appeared to conform to the stereotypical assumptions of feminine qualities. He felt a strong need of the presence of female peacekeepers in Pakistan because they made a unique contribution to the mission. He explained,

Female peacekeepers' roles were necessary to perform our tasks successfully. In Pakistan, where women were prohibited from speaking to men, only female members could access local women or areas that were closed to men, and obtain information about security risks, or specific needs of women affected by the conflict. I was convinced that female peacekeepers should be there for a successful mission. (P1)

Other participants' experience was very similar to that of P1 in that female soldiers' assigned roles were usually limited to humanitarian activities, out-reach activities and social events, screening women at checkpoints, and administrative tasks. According to P7, the percentage of

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<sup>710</sup> Fadillah, Y. et al (2020), "The Role of Indonesia's Female Peacekeepers in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations to Promote Gender Equality", *Jurnal Pertahanan*, Vol. 6, No. 2, p. 125; Karim, Sabrina (2017), "Reevaluating Peacekeeping Effectiveness: Does Gender Neutrality Inhibit Progress?", *International Interactions*, Vol. 43, No. 5, p. 825; Jenne and Bisshopp, "Female Peacekeepers: UNSC Resolution 1325 and the Persistence of Gender Stereotypes in the Chilean Armed Forces", p. 138

<sup>711</sup> Biskupski-Mujanovic, Sandra (2019), "Smart peacekeeping: Deploying Canadian women for a better peace?", *International Journal: Canada's Journal of Global Policy Analysis*, Vol. 74, No. 3, p. 406

Korean female soldiers accounted for 5 percent of the total deployed soldiers in the mission in Lebanon and all of them performed either administrative or medical tasks. None of them conducted patrolling and observation along the border zones. P8 also stated that the main role of female soldiers was interaction with the local community including translation and providing medical services to local people. Only one female member took part in demining with male colleagues. According to P12, in the mission in Western Sahara, there were many female soldiers from different countries including Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Nepal, Egypt, Ireland, France, and Jordan but female members tended to work at Headquarters, creating documents or doing administrative work. All these participants appeared to embrace the basic assumption underlying the gendered division of labor in peacekeeping.

This was also observed by P5 who viewed his female counterparts as respected and valued colleagues. During deployment, he built a strong bond with all other soldiers because they had to endure dangers and hardships together in the high-stress field environment in South Sudan. Despite this, P5 appeared to believe that the role of assisting victims of gender-based violence and providing security and comfort for them would be more suitable for women soldiers,

During the war, many local women were raped by armed forces and came to our troops' hospital. Besides, many people were being exposed to sexual disease but remained untreated because their country couldn't provide proper medical service. Female medical officers were mainly in charge of dealing with these local people. (P5)



The interesting thing was that even P6, who was the most aware of the importance of understanding gender in peacekeeping as a gender trainer, did not make any comment on female peacekeepers and their roles. P6 was aware that Resolution 1325 stressed the need to increase the number of women in all sectors eligible for mission work including the military<sup>712</sup> and the UN document regarding gender training also addressed the issue of gender equality in the workplace in UN missions.<sup>713</sup> Despite this, P6's indifference for the gendered culture of peacekeeping showed that gender was seen as a means to understand women in the host community who suffered from and were victimized by conflicts. Therefore, the concept of gender was not employed to understand female peacekeepers who seemed to occupy positions of privilege, compared to those women in need of help.

However, participants' views on the privileged position of female peacekeepers did not suggest that they were seen as militarily capable as men. Regarding this, Henry notes that "although women can be 'trained' like traditional male soldiers, there are still aspects of their gender 'character' that cannot be 'erased' for the purpose of militarized duty".<sup>714</sup> This was reflected in P11's comment on the gendered protection norm. P11, who served in the military for the longest

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<sup>712</sup> Henry, Marsha (2012), "Peacexploitation? Interrogating Labor Hierarchies and Global Sisterhood Among Indian and Uruguayan Female Peacekeepers?", *Globalizations*, Vol. 9, No. 1, p. 16

<sup>713</sup> Lyytikäinen, *Gender Training for Peacekeepers: Preliminary Overview of United Nations Peace Support Operations*, p. 12

<sup>714</sup> Henry, "Peacexploitation? Interrogating Labor Hierarchies and Global Sisterhood Among Indian and Uruguayan Female Peacekeepers?", pp. 24-25

time among all participants, was strongly against deploying women soldiers to any area with high conflict intensity or assigning risky roles to women soldiers. He said,

There were no female soldiers who carried out patrolling or guard duty during deployment. Their basic tasks were screening and dealing with local women at the hospital in our base. The Korean military hasn't deployed female military personnel to mission environments associated with higher levels of risk. If they were taken captive by rebels or any armed forces during operation, it would cause serious damage to the reputation of our country and military. Male soldiers could be held captive as well but how people feel about it is totally different. People must be much more shocked at women's case and be resentful of incompetent Korean military that couldn't protect its soldiers. (P11)

He also talked about innate gender differences that made female soldiers less competent,

Currently, women can participate in a wide range of military jobs because there is no real combat at the moment. Women start their military service from non-commissioned or commissioned officers, not enlisted soldiers. This means that women soldiers don't have to work by themselves. They work with other male subordinates so they can perform any tasks successfully. However, if real combat occurred, situations would become very harsh for women soldiers. (P11)

These statements revealed not only P11's gendered views about women's versus men's appropriate roles that justified the gendered division of labor in peacekeeping but also gender stereotypes underlying the decision of Korea to deploy women. P11 appeared to imply that men were better equipped to handle the security environments in the more dangerous missions while

women lacked the proper abilities to engage effectively in combat.<sup>715</sup> Therefore, in dangerous situations, men should be protectors of women. P11's view was also in line with that of the most national armies. According to Karim and Beardsley, because most countries' populations hold conflicting views about women's participation in combat and negative opinions about sending women to conflict zones, if female peacekeepers were killed or injured, they would receive disproportionate attention in the media and TCCs would have to face backlash.<sup>716</sup> This was exactly what P11 pointed out. In conclusion, given P11's views on peacekeeping as a useful tool to improve the military's combat capability, and on female peacekeepers, he appeared to embody the strongest warrior ethos and traditional gender roles.

P3 and P13 appeared to be the most hostile against female peacekeepers, depicting their roles and contribution to the missions in belittling ways. There was one female officer in the mission in Iraq and P3 saw her role as 'pacifying force' that reduced aggressiveness and hypermasculinity existing among male soldiers, which was traditionally associated with women's role in the military.<sup>717</sup> P3 said,

I don't remember exactly what her occupation was. She was neither a team leader nor even the life of the party in our troops. She didn't partake in strenuous physical activities. I guess she did some administrative work. It seemed like almost all soldiers didn't recognize her presence. Now that I was asked that question [role of female soldiers], I'm really wondering why

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<sup>715</sup> Karim, Sabrina and Beardsley, Kyle (2013), "Female Peacekeepers and Gender Balancing: Token Gestures or Informed Policymaking?", *International Interactions*, Vol. 39, No. 4, p. 483

<sup>716</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 469

<sup>717</sup> Jenne and Bisshopp, "Female Peacekeepers: UNSC Resolution 1325 and the Persistence of Gender Stereotypes in the Chilean Armed Forces", p. 139

she was there since her role didn't seem to be necessary for the mission.  
(P3)

He continued,

She was very welcomed by all soldiers when she was on watch in the evening because she was such an easygoing person. She and soldiers were also in a similar age group, which enabled us to communicate with each other well. If there had been a male officer, he would have been harsh on and much more aggressive towards soldiers and there would have been bullying as well. (P3)

These statements not only showed P3's essentialized image of women but also soldiers' institutionalized aggression towards female members such as denigrating attitudes and misogynic jokes. The comparison of a hyper-masculine male officer with a gentle, docile, and nonthreatening female officer showed P3's binary conception of gender well. P3 did not explicitly express a high level of aggression or hostility towards the female officer but there was a clear differentiation and denigration of women. As noted in the study by Koeszegi et al, P3 perceived female members as 'others' who did not comply with masculine standards, such as endurance of severe physical and psychological stress, and did not share a common struggle through excessive monitoring and regulation.<sup>718</sup> In addition, P3 tended to trivialize and objectify military women as they could not achieve parity with their male colleagues as far as bodily competence but could serve as the peaceful and friendly face in peacekeeping. Regarding women's position

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<sup>718</sup> Koeszegi et al., "The War against the Female Soldier? The Effects of Masculine Culture on Workplace Aggression", p. 230

in the military, Titunik argues that women are not necessarily viewed as “the other” and there is a more subtle and complex position that military women occupy.<sup>719</sup> In the case of P3, however, the female officer seemed to be perceived to be the status of civilians, rather than soldiers by P3 and other soldiers in the Korean troops.<sup>720</sup>

P13 more explicitly trivialized and demeaned women soldiers’ role and contribution to the mission, connoting misogynies deeply embedded in his perception of gender. As in the case of P3, P13 described the presence of women soldiers as ‘the life of the party’. He found women soldiers much less risk-seeking and professional than men but unfairly privileged in the military. He problematized both female members’ unsoldierly attitudes and behaviors in peacekeeping and policy initiatives and legislation of the contemporary Korean military that are undeservedly preferential to women. However, he did not take account into the fact that the institution in which women were being integrated into – the Korean military - was masculine in nature because it was composed of mainly male personnel and dominated by a masculine culture.<sup>721</sup> Consequently, he did not appear to be aware of the challenges related to male dominance that female peacekeepers faced in peacekeeping missions.

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<sup>719</sup> Titunik, Regina F. (2000), “The First Wave: Gender Integration and Military Culture”, *Armed Forces & Society*, Vol. 26, No. 2, p. 247

<sup>720</sup> Jenne and Bisshopp, “Female Peacekeepers: UNSC Resolution 1325 and the Persistence of Gender Stereotypes in the Chilean Armed Forces”, p. 140

<sup>721</sup> Karim, “Reevaluating Peacekeeping Effectiveness: Does Gender Neutrality Inhibit Progress?”, p. 827

Female peacekeepers in P13's description were quite unqualified soldiers in that 'they did not carry as heavy loads of equipment as men did during the operation and even wore makeup without carrying guns in the battlefield'. This perception of women appeared to resonate with the discourse on *Doenjang-nyeo*, a 'derogatory term in Korea that refers to young women who live sumptuously and enjoy lavish lifestyle such as carrying designer handbags and having expensive meals'.<sup>722</sup> The discourse on *Doenjang-nyeo* is based on the stereotypical attributes of women such as being crazy about shopping, fussy communication style, and expecting men to spend money on them and be overly nice to them.<sup>723</sup> According to Lee and Park, the main reason for Korean men's denunciation of *Doenjang-nyeo* is, despite the dramatic increase in the economic and social status of women, men still have to fulfill more obligations than women and endure women who are selfish enough to think that men should sacrifice for women.<sup>724</sup> These malicious descriptions and accusations associated with *Doenjang-nyeo* emerged in the P13's narrative about Korean female soldiers,

They [female soldiers] were physically and psychologically weak and not as militarily capable as men, which could undermine group cohesion and military performance, but they did not feel sorry or guilty about their lack of competence. To make matters worse, they were concerned with their appearance during operations, enjoying gender disparity as an advantage.  
(P13)

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<sup>722</sup> Lee, Claire Shinhea and Park, Ji Hoon (2012), "'We need a committee for men's rights': reactions of male and female viewers to reverse gender discrimination in Korean comedy", *Asian Journal of Communication*, Vol. 22, No. 4, p. 363

<sup>723</sup> Ibid., p. 358

<sup>724</sup> Ibid., p. 365

As noted in the findings of previous studies on gendered culture in peacekeeping operations, P13 viewed women as less professional than their male counterparts. Not only did P13 appear to perceive women as autonomous, empowered subjects no longer constrained by gender inequality or power imbalances<sup>725</sup> but he also considered the new gender relations to be unfair, leading to reverse gender discrimination. That is, whereas women have achieved gender equality, men suffer from the new gender dynamics in Korea. This perception appeared to promote his hostility and resentment towards female members and a sense of victimhood.

Regarding female peacekeepers' roles, P13's view mostly corresponded to the findings of previous studies that have tackled the topic of female peacekeepers and peacekeeping effectiveness. P13 often relegated women's role to feminine tasks<sup>726</sup> that were not necessarily associated with traditional military tasks, and trivialized women's contribution to the mission as they implemented ancillary tasks, not a core function that involved more risks. However, his statement about women's role and contribution did not include stereotypical feminine attributes that have been believed to make women more effective peacekeepers than men. Policymakers have argued that female peacekeepers ensure a more compassionate or empathetic response to victims of sexual assault and with more female peacekeepers PKOs are better able to protect

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<sup>725</sup> Lee and Park, "We need a committee for men's rights': reactions of male and female viewers to reverse gender discrimination in Korean comedy", p. 355

<sup>726</sup> Karim, "Reevaluating Peacekeeping Effectiveness: Does Gender Neutrality Inhibit Progress?", p. 828

citizens, especially women and children, because women are less intimidating or provocative than men.<sup>727</sup> While this was a common view among many participants on female peacekeepers as mentioned above, P13 maintained a cynical view of women's role and contribution,

Most women soldiers were nurses. That role needed femininity so it was more suited to women than men probably. Other than this role, however, no task needed femininity. The Korean military was so understanding that they didn't assign any demanding work to women. The women's only task in the mission was to conduct body searches for local women while men conducted many tasks associated with more risks like patrolling and guarding convoys. The life of military women seems much easier than that of men. (P13)

This statement showed his lack of awareness that peacekeepers including himself could bring their own internalized gender norms and assumptions to peacekeeping missions<sup>728</sup> and that masculinist military culture in peacekeeping could limit the ability of female soldiers to perform on equal terms as their male colleagues.<sup>729</sup> The assumption that women are a vulnerable sex with a weaker physical and psychological condition appeared to prevent P13 from evaluating women's role with a more nuanced perspective, reinforcing his view that women were not suitable for military operations including peacekeeping. There are many examples from other studies on female peacekeepers who were unable to implement a wider variety of tasks,

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<sup>727</sup> Ibid., p. 826

<sup>728</sup> Kovatch, "Sexual exploitation and abuse in UN peacekeeping missions: A case study of MONUC and MONUSCO", p. 165

<sup>729</sup> Jenne and Bisshopp, "Female Peacekeepers: UNSC Resolution 1325 and the Persistence of Gender Stereotypes in the Chilean Armed Forces", p. 145



particularly those that involved going into the field due to the gendered protection norm. However, P13 did not know about this. For example, the main role of Rwandan female military peacekeepers was educating and empowering local women and engaging with perceived vulnerable groups for certain projects.<sup>730</sup> Female peacekeepers of the Chilean military participating in the UN's stabilization mission in Haiti also reported that the protection norm prevented them from carrying out their tasks as men did.<sup>731</sup> By overlooking stereotypical gender norms embedded in himself and peacekeeping, P13 criticized individual women soldiers for their limited roles and contribution in peacekeeping.

The following statement from P13 also exposed his biased perception of female peacekeepers, which was not only inconsistent with his assumption about women but also empirically problematic,

In the US military base in Kuwait, men and women stayed together in the same barracks. There was no sex segregation. Those women soldiers were not treated differently because they were just soldiers, regardless of sex. Compared to this, the Korean military seems too considerate of women soldiers. There's high pressure from the government that the current military needs to increase the number of female personnel but considering military effectiveness, it's not a good decision. Even if only one female soldier exists, female-only facilities should be built. (P13)

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<sup>730</sup> Holmes, "Situating Agency, Embodied Practices and Norm Implementation in Peacekeeping Training", p. 70

<sup>731</sup> Jenne and Bisshopp, "Female Peacekeepers: UNSC Resolution 1325 and the Persistence of Gender Stereotypes in the Chilean Armed Forces", p. 147

As noted above, for P13, the dichotomy between ideas of masculinity and femininity as embedded in biology served as a justification to assign different roles to men and women in the military. However, in this statement, P13 appeared to adopt a gender-neutral approach, which suggests that "men's and women's contributions to mission effectiveness and men's and women's experiences are the same".<sup>732</sup> Regarding the way the military treats its servicemembers, P13 thought that the primary thing to be considered was 'all of them are the same soldiers', who share a common military identity, regardless of gender identity, whereas gender was a salient factor in differentiating roles. In this respect, for P13, it was unfair that the military granted female personnel rights and benefits such as a quota system for women and building women-only spaces, although their duties and responsibilities were not the same as those of men. However, given that women were not always regarded as equals by P13, it appeared to be contradictory to criticize women for not doing what men did.

Besides, by selectively using a gender-neutral approach, P13 also overlooked specific experiences of female soldiers and the difficulties they faced. As Karim points out, because security forces are male-dominated institutions, a gender-neutral approach more accurately describes the experiences of male soldiers.<sup>733</sup> P13's account of the US military, 'there was no sex segregation', was inaccurate in that female minorities in national armies still frequently suffer

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<sup>732</sup> Karim, "Reevaluating Peacekeeping Effectiveness: Does Gender Neutrality Inhibit Progress?", p. 823

<sup>733</sup> Ibid.

from strong role pressure and boundary drawing activities of the majority like isolation, misogynic behavior and sexual harassment.<sup>734</sup> For instance, some of the US women soldiers serving in Iraq or Afghanistan reported that harassment and the resulting fear of assault significantly increased during deployment because there were not only US military men but also allied forces, foreign and US contractors, and local civilians, many of whom had previously been socialized into US military culture or some other masculinist culture.<sup>735</sup> In addition to the case of US soldiers, regarding the gendered camp life in peacekeeping, Swedish female peacekeepers in Kosovo showed ambivalence about gender-segregated camp life. The positive side was that male peacekeepers could not try to get into the women's accommodation but the negative effect was that segregation isolated the very few women who were there even more and made them 'forbidden fruit' and curiosities.<sup>736</sup> Therefore, P13's perception of gender equality in the military appeared to be biased since it reflected the experiences of men, which were rendered as objective and universal, and largely excluded those of women. In conclusion, the failure to acknowledge the institutional power and privilege of men in the military led P13 to have the biased perception that women were undeservedly privileged at the expense of men.

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<sup>734</sup> Koeszegi et al., "The War against the Female Soldier? The Effects of Masculine Culture on Workplace Aggression", p. 231

<sup>735</sup> Weitz, "Vulnerable Warriors: Military Women, Military Culture, and Fear of Rape", p 169

<sup>736</sup> Valenius, Johanna (2007), "A Few Kind Women: Gender Essentialism ad Nordic Peacekeeping Operations", *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 14, No. 4, p. 517

Regarding female peacekeepers, the dominant theme across all participants was justification of a gendered division of labor in peacekeeping. This was based on two factors: a unique contribution to peacekeeping made by female peacekeepers; and the gendered protection norm. From this, it could be said that overall, involvement in peacekeeping operations did not challenge participants' established gender norms. As pointed out in the pre-deployment gender training, there was often an unawareness of the masculine nature of the peacekeeping context including behaviors of peacekeepers themselves, and as a result, female peacekeepers who were not assimilated into masculine military culture tended to be considered as incapable and unfit. Contrary to this, participants' reflections on the host population revolved around similarities and empathy, rather than distinctions of difference. The next section examines a variety of ways in which participants constructed the host population through peacekeeping.

### **5.3.5. Construction of the Host Population**

As the Korean troops had a strong interest in keeping their military safe,<sup>737</sup> except only for a few high-ranking officers and soldiers who served in medical units, most participants had very limited opportunities to interact with the host population during deployment. For this reason, there were not many comments on local people. However, observations of the host society, participation in CMO, and even a brief encounter with local people during operations all had a profound impact on the way in which participants constructed the host population. Particularly,

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<sup>737</sup> Ruffa, "What Peacekeepers Think and Do: An Exploratory Study of French, Ghanaian, Italian, and South Korean Armies in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon", p. 209, 211

direct or indirect experiences of war and its devastating consequences provided participants with the opportunity for the display of characteristics more traditionally associated with the feminine than with the masculine. Morgan suggests that these include “open and physical displays of mutual concern and care, a willingness to show fear and pain, and a contempt for the abstractions to do with patriotism and fighting for democracy or the cause that may be promulgated far from the actual field of battle”. According to Morgan, sometimes, strong antiwar sentiments come from full-time soldiers as well.<sup>738</sup> In line with this, in varying degrees, participants expressed diverse emotions while talking about the host population and their lives in war-ridden societies. While participants, sometimes, constructed the host population as Other through relations of difference and distanced themselves from the host population, there were many instances of showing sympathy for human suffering and deconstructing Self/Other binaries through relations of similarities.

One of the prevalent themes regarding the host population was how participants’ stereotypical views of Islam, which resulted from the exposure to the negative and distorted representation of Islam and Muslims in the media, changed through peacekeeping. That is, most participants did not have actual encounters with Muslims before deployment, and thus, their perception of Islam was constructed mostly through the media and news, not through direct experiences.<sup>739</sup>

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<sup>738</sup> Morgan, “Theater of War: Combat, the Military, and Masculinities”, p. 177

<sup>739</sup> Koo, Gi Yeon (2018), “Islamophobia and the Politics of Representation of Islam in Korea”, *Journal of Korean Religions*, Vol. 9, No. 1, p. 162

Some scholars suggest that although Korea has had a different relationship with the Islamic world than other states, particularly those in the West, where there has been a long history of interaction with Islamic culture, negative images and a certain fear of Islam and Muslims among Koreans have been gathering force.<sup>740</sup> A number of studies on Islam within Korea after the 9/11 terrorist attacks show that Koreans associate Islam with religious fanaticism, brutality, and violence. They also consider Muslims backward, war- and terror-ridden, as well as sexist.<sup>741</sup> The report published by the National Human Rights Commission of Korea also highlighted that Muslims were perceived as a potential "terrorist group".<sup>742</sup> However, given that Islamophobic sentiment in the US and Europe have formed over the course of actual events associated with Islam and Muslims, Islamophobic sentiment in Korea can be seen as an "imaginary fear", prejudices formed without any circumstantial factors.<sup>743</sup>

In line with this, most soldiers deployed in the Islamic world stated that they had vague fears of Muslims before deployment. However, actual encounters and interaction with the host population made soldiers aware of their ignorance or prejudices, and consequently, their view of Islam changed. P12 said,

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<sup>740</sup> Eum, IkRan (2017), "Korea's response to Islam and Islamophobia: Focusing on veiled Muslim women's experiences", *Korea Observer*, Vol. 48, No. 4, p. 828; Koo, "Islamophobia and the Politics of Representation of Islam in Korea", p. 161

<sup>741</sup> Eum, "Korea's response to Islam and Islamophobia: Focusing on veiled Muslim women's experiences", p. 836

<sup>742</sup> Koo, "Islamophobia and the Politics of Representation of Islam in Korea", p. 162

<sup>743</sup> Ibid., pp. 184-185

I was completely unfamiliar with Islam before deployment. In media or films, Islam was portrayed as a religion of terrorists, extremists, or fundamentalists. I also had those stereotypical images of Islam. However, what I found in the field was most ordinary people were kind, gentle, and peaceful and barely got involved in violent or illegal activities. They were much nicer than I had expected. (P12)

Although P12 did not have the chance to build close relations with local people and mentioned impressions about them very briefly, this statement showed the potential for constructing “open views” of Islam through peacekeeping, which was suggested in a research report published by Runnymede Trust, a human rights organization based in Britain. Open views see Islam as diverse, interdependent with other faiths and cultures, distinctively different but not deficient, and an actual partner in the solution of shared problems.<sup>744</sup> It cannot be said that P12’s stereotypical view of Islam was completely challenged and replaced with more inclusive and open views but it is still important that not only did his awareness of Islam increase but positive images were also created through actual encounters with the host population.

P10’s reflection on Iraqi Kurdistan entailed more details about relationships which were built up over the course of his duty and feelings about local people,

I was very worried about deployment to Iraq at first because I didn’t know well about the Middle East and only what I heard about Iraq on the media was war. I was not there for travel, but for military duty, so I was afraid. But

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<sup>744</sup> Runnymede Trust (1997), *Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All*, London: Runnymede Trust, p. 5, available at [https://assets-global.website-files.com/61488f992b58e687f1108c7c/617bfd6cf1456219c2c4bc5c\\_islamophobia.pdf](https://assets-global.website-files.com/61488f992b58e687f1108c7c/617bfd6cf1456219c2c4bc5c_islamophobia.pdf) [accessed: 15 February 2022]

I realized that local people were not much different from us [Koreans] and their concerns for living a life were pretty similar to ours. People were very welcoming and friendly to the Korean troops. Some of local translators and their families visited our base and we all cooked together and had nice meal. It was such a good experience. Local people were very generous and not scary at all, which was totally different from my expectations. (P10)

P10 stated that some mission-specific factors including the moderate threat level, relatively stable political and economic situations, and relations with the US in the deployed region affected attitudes of local people towards the Korean troops. As other soldiers mentioned, it may have been true that the host population was friendly to peacekeepers because peacekeepers provided reconstruction work and humanitarian aid the host country needed. However, P10's description of relationships with ordinary Iraqis in Kurdistan appeared to be based on equality and respect rather than on the position of donor/recipient. P10's statement above was very similar to some reflections in Beattie's narratives about Afghans analyzed by Duncanson. Duncanson points out that Beattie's conclusion, "they [Afghans] were actually not much different from me", is a clear disruption of radical Othering.<sup>745</sup> Besides, while having dinner with an Afghan commander and one of his lieutenants, Beattie discovered common bonds and themes between them, which resonate with all human beings, and realized that these common bonds bring people together, despite all differences between them.<sup>746</sup> In the same vein, P10 found out that ordinary Iraqis were not much different from him and they shared similar life concerns with him. He stressed

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<sup>745</sup> Duncanson, *Forces for Good? Military Masculinities and Peacebuilding in Afghanistan and Iraq*, p. 129

<sup>746</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 130



again that having direct experiences of local people and culture enabled him to gain a new perspective about Islam,

Due to the influence of media, most Koreans still presume Muslims or Middle East to be first and foremost terrorists. But what I experienced was, regardless of religion, we shared so many things in our lives as human beings. Any kind of terrorist activities shouldn't be accepted but all Muslims or Middle Easterners are not terrorists. This is what I learned from deployment. I want to travel to Middle East countries when I can. My view changed a lot thanks to deployment. (P10)

P10's reflection showed that the very process of interacting with the host population helped disrupt the binary idea of Self/Other and challenged the feminist skeptics who contend that peacekeeper masculinities 'tend to be constructed in relation to both the feminized and/or racialized civilian Others or the hypermasculinity of racialized belligerent others'.<sup>747</sup>

P1's experiences revealed a more complex and contradictory way in which the host population was constructed. He was very impressed about the difference between his expectations and local people's real life. P1 said,

Arriving at the airport in Pakistan, I saw Pakistani men with strange beards wearing traditional Islamic clothing, which was exactly the same as what I watched on the media. Honestly, I was afraid of them at first. However, I found out that local people were very nice and innocent while staying there. Their religion banned them from committing crimes and because of this, more than 90% of whole population didn't seem to get involved in illegal activities. For example, there was no case reported for theft, robbery, burglar, and rape during my duty. Their religious beliefs seemed to make

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<sup>747</sup> Ibid., p. 103

them more ethical. So, I got an impression that Pakistan was a safe country.  
(P1)

This statement showed disruption to the discourse of Muslims as “dangerous foreigners, terrorists, and threats to public safety”.<sup>748</sup> However, as Duncanson notes, this form of disruption accompanied contradictions and dynamism in P1’s construction of Self/Other.<sup>749</sup> P1 considered strong religious beliefs as a positive factor for enhancing the morality of ordinary Pakistanis, but at the same time, he saw them as an indicator that showed how underdeveloped and uncivilized the Pakistani society remained. By comparing India and Pakistan, P1 emphasized this backwardness,

There was a big cultural, religious difference between India and Pakistan. In Pakistan, religion seemed to dominate all aspects of people’s lives. The Pakistanis strictly abided by religious law including five daily prayers a day. But there seemed like cultural denigration of women deeply in that society. On the contrary, in India, even Muslim women drank and didn’t wear hijabs. Indian Muslims seemed to be more liberated from religious law and secularized. When I moved from Pakistan to India, I thought India was much more developed and civilized while Pakistan lagged behind around 20 or 30 years. (P1)

Although P1 found the Pakistanis with whom he came into contact kind, well-mannered, and truthful, he attributed Pakistan’s less developed and less modernized status including gender inequality to Islam’s domination over the whole country. He appeared to assume Islam not to

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<sup>748</sup> Duncanson, *Forces for Good? Military Masculinities and Peacebuilding in Afghanistan and Iraq*, p. 42

<sup>749</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 108

be harmonious with other religions and secular values such as individualism and freedom.<sup>750</sup>

While some of the myths that see Islam as violent, aggressive, threatening, and supportive of terrorism were challenged through actual encounters, other stereotypical views of Islam were left unchallenged. Particularly, P1 perceived that Islamic culture would condone gender oppression and segregation, which was symbolized in the women's veil.<sup>751</sup> In effect, in most of the non-Islamic world, Muslim women's veils have been regarded as a symbol of oppression to make women invisible, anonymous and voiceless – the very basis of Islamic society.<sup>752</sup> However, diverse perspectives have emerged from basic discussions of the meanings of veiling in the contemporary Muslim world and one of them is that reducing the diverse situations and attitudes of millions of Muslim women to a single item of clothing should be avoided.<sup>753</sup> Not surprisingly, this view of veiling was completely unfamiliar to P1 and he still believed covering or veiling to be imposed on every Muslim woman. For this reason, he was very surprised at some Indian Muslim women who behaved in the similar way as men did, even without the veil. Eger, who examined gender equality at work in Islam, also argues that although most Arab countries have not introduced secular laws of personal status to replace the laws based on Islam, the application

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<sup>750</sup> Amin, Husnul and Afzal, Farah (2015), "Construction of Muslims as a Security Threat, Peace Preventers and as Terrorists in the Western Media: The Discourse Analysis of Leading Articles in the *Time* and the *Newsweek* (2010-2011)", *Hamdard Islamicus*, Vol. 38, No. 3, p. 64

<sup>751</sup> Eum, "Korea's response to Islam and Islamophobia: Focusing on veiled Muslim women's experiences", p. 838

<sup>752</sup> Runnymede Trust, *Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All*, p. 30

<sup>753</sup> Abu-Lughod, Lila (2002), "Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others", *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 104, No. 3, p. 786

of employment law is guided by individual judges' interpretation of the Sharia. That is, legal gender differences are applied and interpreted differently in local customs and management practices.<sup>754</sup> Despite this diverse reality in Islam, P1 held the assumption that the teachings of Islam are against the rights, dignity, and respect of women, seeing the case of Indian Muslim women as an exception. However, the important thing was by interacting with Muslims in two different countries and seeing a variation in the extent to which Islam as a religion affected people's lives, P1 was able to learn that Islam could be diverse and progressive with internal differences, rather than being monolithic, static and unresponsive to new realities.<sup>755</sup>

Reflections of P2 and P7 were also noteworthy in that they gained a deeper understanding of the complex nature of conflicts and felt sympathy for the host population. P2 did not have the chance to talk to local people but through self-research and observation in the field, he was able to look at the insecurities and hardships of life in Afghanistan from historical and political perspectives, going beyond the cultural, religious one. P2 said,

I wanted to experience and understand Afghanistan in a broader perspective so I read many books about Afghanistan while preparing for deployment. I learned that Afghanistan was such a great country with their own rich history. Due to its geographical position, Afghanistan sat at the heart of Central Asia, known as "The Silk Road" and could be a land of great wealth and intellectual achievement. However, there were several invasions by foreign countries including the Soviets. Despite the constant war, Afghanistan hasn't been fully occupied. Considering this history, the

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<sup>754</sup> Eger, Claudia (2021), "Equality and Gender at Work in Islam: The Case of the Berber Population of the High Atlas Mountains", *Business Ethics Quarterly*, Vol. 31, No. 2, pp. 213-214

<sup>755</sup> Runnymede Trust, *Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All*, p. 5,

Afghans would be very proud of their nation. But obviously it was not a happy country. In this regard, I sympathized with people there. (P2)

Given that the global South cultures are easily stereotyped as barbaric and uncivilized in need of a civilizing mission, with the history and politics of Afghanistan erased,<sup>756</sup> it was very significant that P2 gained a non-stereotypical view of Afghanistan. Therefore, P2's awareness that he lacked unbiased information about Afghanistan and his attempts to fill this gap could be seen as a challenge to the assumption of superior "us" versus inferior "other". The more important thing was these attempts enabled him to understand the complex set of geopolitical, economic and social factors that resulted from the long history of Afghanistan that involved the legacy of colonialism and military intervention. However, as other scholars point out, P2 did not mention explicitly how the global interconnections affected the causation of poverty, human rights abuse and prevalent violence in Afghanistan. For example, the various parties locked in struggle were consolidated in the process of the Cold War by proxy wars fought on Afghan soil. Different political factions were financed and armed by various countries with their own political agenda.<sup>757</sup> However, the historical and political context that led to the current predicament were usually not covered on the media.<sup>758</sup> Therefore, it was difficult for P2 to fully grasp the complex dynamics of

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<sup>756</sup> Russo, Ann (2006), "The Feminist Majority Foundation's Campaign to Stop Gender Apartheid: The Intersections of Feminism and Imperialism in the United States", *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, Vol. 8, No. 4, pp. 558-559

<sup>757</sup> Kandiyoti, Deniz (2007), "Between the Hammer and the Anvil: post-conflict reconstruction, Islam and women's rights", *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 28, No. 3, p. 509

<sup>758</sup> Russo, "The Feminist Majority Foundation's Campaign to Stop Gender Apartheid: The Intersections of Feminism and Imperialism in the United States" p. 561

protracted conflict in Afghanistan yet he did not construct Afghanistan as a backward country troubled through its association with Islam and terrorism. On the contrary, P2 found out that Afghanistan was a strong country that endured many hardships. He also found Afghanistan currently unhappy to reside in but did not straightforwardly attribute this unhappiness to the Islamic nature of the society or inherent violence or barbarism. In addition, he felt sympathy for the living conditions of ordinary Afghans. That is, instead of turning to simplistic explanations that privilege the role of Islam or local culture,<sup>759</sup> by focusing on historical and geopolitical aspects, P2 got a better contextual understanding of the situation in Afghanistan. The case of P2 was suggestive of the potential for critically interrogating the ideas about difference between peacekeepers and the host population, which are usually based on the assumption of superiority, advancement and civilization of international personnel.<sup>760</sup>

P7, who frequently contacted local people from diverse cultural, religious backgrounds, also understood the complicated nature of ongoing conflict in Lebanon between different parties by adopting political and historical perspectives. He problematized decontextualized and yet vivid images of violent Muslims which the media used to represent,

What people have heard about Islam is only conflict. Due to this, I also stereotyped images of Muslims before deployment. I expected that they would be aggressive, threatening and hostile towards us [peacekeeping

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<sup>759</sup> Kandiyoti, "Between the Hammer and the Anvil: post-conflict reconstruction, Islam and women's rights", p. 510

<sup>760</sup> Russo, "The Feminist Majority Foundation's Campaign to Stop Gender Apartheid: The Intersections of Feminism and Imperialism in the United States" p. 560

forces]. But when I had conversations with local people and experienced their culture, I learned that there was a reason behind their every behavior. Due to political and historical reasons, many Lebanese people couldn't help but become hostile towards Israel. Being aggressive or hostile was not the inherent disposition of the Muslims. The interesting thing was people had different views according to their social position and religious background. Some people complained about Hezbollah and some local intellectuals complained about the government's aggressive way to cope with conflicts with Israel. I was able to see the diversity and complexity of this country.  
(P7)

By taking historical and political context into account and not by characterizing the Islamic nature of the society as the direct reason for the state of affairs in Lebanon, P7 was able to see how divergent groups within the local population interacted with one another and their respective interests, and perspectives. His reflection that "being aggressive or hostile was not the inherent disposition of the Muslims" showed a clear disruption of stereotyping others. The notable thing was, as Duncanson notes, P7's role as a medical officer, which ensured many opportunities to meet local people and build relations, appeared to play a significant role in achieving this disruption and broadening his perspective.<sup>761</sup>

The following reflection of P7 was also very important because it showed the potential for shaping the identity of cosmopolitan soldier through peacekeeping, who represents in person the citizens of the new emerging global community rather than the particularistic interests of

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<sup>761</sup> Duncanson, *Forces for Good? Military Masculinities and Peacebuilding in Afghanistan and Iraq*, p. 130

the nation-state.<sup>762</sup> According to Elliott and Cheeseman, who explore the proposition that militaries can, or should, be used to defend the moral community of humankind as well as to defend territorially bounded political communities,<sup>763</sup> the cosmopolitan soldier suggests a potentially profound shift concerning what it means to be a soldier, that is, the creation of a new kind of soldier whose loyalties are to cosmopolitan ideals in place of patriotism.<sup>764</sup> P7 did not deny the importance of the traditional military functions of defense, deterrence and attack for the safety and wellbeing of the nation and its people<sup>765</sup> but he found a cosmopolitan ethos of service and the military's role for protection of civilians from violent conflict very important. P7 clearly expressed his ethical concern for vulnerable non-citizens, and the role that soldiers could play in acting on such concerns,

Contrary to many foreign militaries that value and participate in PKOs, the Korean military's and public stance on the dispatch of our troops to stop conflicts beyond borders is still very skeptical. "Why do we risk our soldiers' lives to defend distant strangers?" This may be the popular perception in Korea. I think many Western countries have pursued national interests by intervening in conflicts in the Middle East or Africa, but at the same time, moral responsibility for others seems to play an important role in making decisions for involvement in PKOs. I'd say this is chivalry. Even if we get some damages on our side, we need to expand PKO participation for saving

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<sup>762</sup> Kaldor, Mary et al. (2000), "Conclusion by the authors" in Mary Kaldor (ed), *Global Insecurity*, London: Pinter, p. 185

<sup>763</sup> Elliott, Lorraine and Cheeseman, Graeme (2004), "Introduction" in Lorraine Elliot and Graeme Cheeseman (eds), *Forces for Good: Cosmopolitan Militaries in the Twenty-first Century*, Manchester University Press, p. 1

<sup>764</sup> Ibid., p. 5

<sup>765</sup> Haltiner Karl and Kümmel, Gerhard (2009), "The Hybrid Soldier: Identity Changes in the Military" in Gerhard Kümmel et al. (eds), *Armed Forces, Soldiers and Civil-Military Relations: Essays in Honour of Jürgen Kuhlmann*, Springer Science & Business Media, p. 78



the lives of victims of conflict and for defending human rights and justice. For this, if needed, sending combat troops should be considered too. Moral sentiment that encourages us to help weak and oppressed people suffering injustice would have a great impact on the construction of ideal masculinities. (P7)

P7's emphasis on taking up the responsibility for protecting others was notable because it could be seen as the destabilization of Self/Other dichotomy based on geographical or cultural locations, national or ethnic or gendered boundaries.<sup>766</sup> These disrupted boundaries can create new avenues for transborder empathy and the extension of moral community.<sup>767</sup> According to Gilmore, who has developed a link between cosmopolitan international theories and the operational practices of military forces,<sup>768</sup> the everyday encounter with people who may traditionally have been regarded as the Other makes soldiers question how fundamentally different they are from the Other<sup>769</sup> and helps soldiers to understand common experiences of life and shared vulnerabilities with that Other.<sup>770</sup> However, there is also the possibility of the construction of a highly exclusionary moral dichotomy between liberal/cosmopolitan Self and non-liberal/non-cosmopolitan Other through non-traditional military operations.<sup>771</sup> It could lead

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<sup>766</sup> Held, David (2011), "Cosmopolitanism, Democracy and the Global Other" in Maria Rovisco and Magdalena Nowicka (eds), *The Ashgate Research Companion to Cosmopolitanism*, Ashgate, p. 164

<sup>767</sup> Gilmore, *The Cosmopolitan Military: Armed Forces and Human Security in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, p. 41

<sup>768</sup> Ibid., p. 209

<sup>769</sup> Ibid., p. 15

<sup>770</sup> Ibid, p. 201

<sup>771</sup> Ibid., p. 73

to a more aggressive and militarized approach with enemy-centric warfighting ethos, which risks drawing peacekeeping towards an 'aggressive peace' in place of conflict resolution, or a new form of 'imperial policing'.<sup>772</sup> Despite this, it should not be overlooked that P7's reflection centered on his concern for the wellbeing of the Other, not on the destruction of a morally intolerable enemy. Furthermore, P7 associated widening the scope of moral concern beyond state boundaries with developing qualities for 'ideal' masculinities. He understood developing one's own sense of morality and sacrificing oneself for the sake of people far away as chivalric virtues that soldiers should preserve. As Duncanson claims, if these chivalric virtues, which are seen as positive qualities in traditional militarized masculinities, were combined with traditionally feminized qualities such as caring, patience and empathy, soldier identities better suited to conflict resolution could be constructed.<sup>773</sup>

Contrary to the participants whose view on the host population was constructed in a positive way, some participants' reflections included disparaging of host countries or their people. As P6, P8, and P14 barely had direct interactions with the host population, their perceptions of local people were constructed mostly through distant observation or the stories from other personnel who actively performed civil activities. P8 and P14 got similar impressions about ordinary Lebanese: powerless and dependent. In their narratives, the host population was deprived of

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<sup>772</sup> Ibid., p. 142

<sup>773</sup> Duncanson, "Forces for Good?: Narratives of Military Masculinity in Peacekeeping Operations", p. 77

agency and ability to make a positive difference in their own lives. This appeared to resonate with what Orford analyzes about narratives of the people in target states for humanitarian intervention. According to Orford, in the intervention narratives, the agency of ordinary people of target states is rendered invisible while it is held only by the international community. The images of powerless and helpless people of conflicted countries enable the conversion of ordinary lives into a set of problems to be solved.<sup>774</sup> International intervention is given as a ready solution as the people of target states lack power, agency or authority.<sup>775</sup> In a similar vein, P8 said,

Lebanese people seemed a bit powerless and quite dependent on the international aid. They also seemed to want to receive material support as much as possible from deployed peacekeepers or international organizations, rather than trying to overcome difficulties with their visions of the future by themselves. (P8)

P14 had a similar view on local people,

The local society seemed very underdeveloped with a wide gap between the rich and the poor. I wasn't sure if those people would be able to make progress by themselves. They also seemed a bit lazy, not energetic but innocent. I didn't find anything that could drive development. (P14)

Reflections of P8 and P14 did not imply that only international agents including themselves were able to shape the peoples of target states, as saviors, bringing them order, human rights,

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<sup>774</sup> Orford, "Muscular Humanitarianism: Reading the Narratives of the New Interventionism", p. 698

<sup>775</sup> Ibid., p. 697

democracy and stability, as found in the colonial discourse.<sup>776</sup> However, their portrayal of the host country and its people showed their lack of understanding of the reality of the complex causes of hardships in Lebanon. Rather than looking at how prolonged conflict and international intervention affected the insecurities of ordinary lives, they appeared to see the powerlessness of local people as an expression of natural tendencies of the society. In this way, the current state of host country was attributable to its own mistakes or faults.

P6's reflection showed a more complex mix of disparaging of and sympathizing for ordinary South Sudanese. He said,

I had only indirect experiences with local people. This is what I heard frequently from the personnel in charge of CMO. There were three stages of conversation when local people talked to peacekeepers. On the first stage, they [local people] said, "hi, bro" in such a friendly way. On the second stage, when they found nice stuff from peacekeepers, they asked peacekeepers. "Is that yours?". On the last stage, they asked again. "Can you give it to me?" This happened every time civil operation was conducted, which made our soldiers feel a bit reluctant to meet local people. This showed that people heavily relied on the international aid. They seemed to be passive and to take receiving help from others for granted. I had to question to what extent our activities could contribute to self-reliance of these people. (P6)

He added,

There were some typical phenomena we usually see from the society in the initial stage of development such as corruption, a wide gap between the rich and the poor, and gender inequality. It seemed similar to a Korean society in the 60s, when our country was extremely poor. Given prevalent poverty in South Sudan, I was quite surprised that most kids of the politicians were studying abroad. On the contrary, most ordinary kids did

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<sup>776</sup> Ibid., p. 695

their business on the street as there were almost no proper bathroom facilities. I felt bad about this stark inequality and sympathy for ordinary people. (P6)

While P6 felt sympathy for the living conditions and vulnerability of most ordinary South Sudanese, his perception was also based on the assumption that local people are powerless, suffering, abused, or helpless victims.<sup>777</sup> In his narrative, the host country and its people were constructed as being hopelessly mired in poverty and underdevelopment and incapable of change for the better,<sup>778</sup> which is the familiar image of the Third World in the dominant discourse of development.<sup>779</sup> However, it cannot be asserted that P6 identified with the “white male hero”, who is defined in opposition to characters who lack his potency and authority, as a result of sexual and racial differentiation.<sup>780</sup> Orford claims that intervention narratives draw on the image of white masculinity as though, aggressive, decisive,<sup>781</sup> militaristic, competitive, irresponsible and brutal<sup>782</sup> and this heroic self is defined in and through the white male body and against the racially marked male body.<sup>783</sup> This construction of Self/Other leads to removing the space to consider the effects of the hero’s actions on the human targets of intervention or to treat the

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<sup>777</sup> Ibid, p. 697

<sup>778</sup> Lee, “India, Korea’s ‘Orient’ – Sings of Reproduced Orientalism”, P. 184

<sup>779</sup> Orford, “Muscular Humanitarianism: Reading the Narratives of the New Interventionism”, p. 697

<sup>780</sup> Ibid., p. 688

<sup>781</sup> Ibid., p. 692

<sup>782</sup> Ibid., p. 702

<sup>783</sup> Ibid., p. 696

targets of intervention as having legitimate agency.<sup>784</sup> However, P6's comment, 'it [local society] seemed similar to Korean society in the 60s', had significant implications for the way he constituted Self/Other. After the Korean War in the 1950s, Korea was utterly devastated politically, economically and socially. Not only did the war destroy most of the infrastructure and production facilities, but it also decimated the state's capacity to govern.<sup>785</sup> P6 did not mention this painful experience of Korea but finding similarities between the two countries showed that he did not consider local people, as the second passive character, radically different from or inferior to international peacekeepers. Therefore, it cannot be said that P6 identified with white male heroes as a benevolent patriarch, who is opposite to a powerless recipient population, even if international personnel including P6 are a privileged class over the local people in peacekeeping.<sup>786</sup> Furthermore, as Duncanson points out, asserting that all masculinities collapse into white masculinity is at odds with widely accepted understandings of the complexity of masculinity construction, where the role of individual agency in the construction of gender identities and the subversive potential of subordinate masculinities are increasingly emphasized.<sup>787</sup>

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<sup>784</sup> Ibid., p. 702

<sup>785</sup> Howe, Brendan (2017) "Korea's Role for Peacebuilding and Development in Asia", *Asian Journal of Peacebuilding*, Vol. 5, No. 2, p. 248

<sup>786</sup> Kaldor, Mary (1999), *New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era*, Polity Press, p. 130

<sup>787</sup> Duncanson, *Forces for Good? Military Masculinities and Peacebuilding in Afghanistan and Iraq*, p. 48

Whether they had actual encounters with locals played a significant role in constructing participants' perceptions of the host population. To a certain extent, participants who had more direct interactions with locals were more likely to construct the host population through relations of empathy, similarity, respect and equality. On the contrary, some participants who barely interacted with the host population described local people as powerless, passive, and dependent, which are usually associated with attributes of the people in target states of humanitarian intervention. However, the important thing was participants' narratives did not always inevitably rely on radical othering. As Duncanson finds in British soldiers' narratives, there was a more complex story than one of stereotyping and disparaging in Korean soldiers' narratives as well.<sup>788</sup> Although many participants did not have a chance to build up relationships with local people, witnessing destructive consequences of conflict made them feel sympathy for the hardships of ordinary people's lives, which could be seen as an important precursor to dismantling the Self/Other binary.<sup>789</sup>

## **Conclusion**

The overarching purpose of the interviews with fourteen Korean men who had experiences of deployment to peacekeeping operations was to examine the impact of peacekeeping on their militarized masculinities. The result of these interviews showed that participation in peacekeeping missions led to a change, adaptation and modification of participants' masculinities in varying

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<sup>788</sup> Ibid., p. 131

<sup>789</sup> Ibid., p. 114

degrees. This did not mean that deployment to peacekeeping led to redefinition of military identities for every single soldier. However, as Haltiner and Kümmel note, soldierly identities cannot be fixed once and for all, but are subject to dynamic processes of change.<sup>790</sup> In line with this, participants underwent something of a transformation through experiencing conflicts in a direct or indirect way and interacting with local people, and this resulted in creating complexity in their constructions of militarized masculinities.<sup>791</sup>

There were both positive potential for and limitations of the construction of alternative militarized masculinities through peacekeeping. Many participants felt proud of helping others in situations of conflict and came to value the humanitarian aspect of peacekeeping. Particularly, participants who were exposed to serious security threats during deployment placed a strong emphasis on the efforts to restore and improve local residents' quality of life through peacekeeping activities. The instances where soldiers became aware of their own stereotypes of the host population and discovered common bonds with them were also very significant in constructing alternative militarized masculinities. This showed the potential for disrupting radical Othering and building relations through understanding, empathy, respect and equality, not through hierarchy or demonization. However, involvement in peacekeeping did not fully challenge the dominant gender norms traditional militarized masculinities rely on. Most

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<sup>790</sup> Haltiner and Kümmel, "The Hybrid Soldier: Identity Changes in the Military, p. 80

<sup>791</sup> Duncanson, *Forces for Good? Military Masculinities and Peacebuilding in Afghanistan and Iraq*, p. 161



participants maintained stereotypical views of female peacekeepers and justified the gendered division of labor in peacekeeping. They also considered gender as a soft issue in peacekeeping, equating it with women. This led participants to gain limited understandings of the gendered culture of peacekeeping as well as of the gendered aspect of conflicts and its impact on the host population. As previous studies on gendered culture in peacekeeping suggest, this result confirmed that it would be very difficult to achieve a radical challenge to hegemonic patterns of gender relations through peacekeeping.<sup>792</sup>

In order to delve more deeply into the question of whether engagement in peacekeeping has the potential to construct alternative militarized masculinities, a comparison with the 'control' group of Korean soldiers who had no involvement in peacekeeping can provide further insights. Therefore, based on the results of the two rounds of interviews, the next chapter offers a comparative analysis leading to conclusions about the impact of peacekeeping on soldiers' militarized masculinities.

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<sup>792</sup> Carreiras, "Gendered Culture in Peacekeeping Operations", p. 483