



DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITARY AND SOCIAL
SCIENCES

**CHALLENGING INEVITABILITY, MASCULINITY, FEMININITY
AND POWER: LITERARY ANALYSIS FROM ARISTOPHANES'
LYSISTRATA TO THE 21ST CENTURY**

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ABSTRACT

International politics are yet dependent on certain notions pre-determining the “natural” unwinding of international relations. The maintenance of power still reliant in the narratives of gender. Matters of peace and security particularly influenced by the notions of masculinity and femininity. Areas in which the expected bodies to see are white heterosexual men. Women and transgender, matter out of place. Unexpected bodies that raise awareness on the lack of inclusivity and therefore a heavily masculinized sphere. An area lacking the benefits different voices and points of views can contribute.

Notions linked with the idea of inevitability, tethered to the thread being pulled by those in power. Socially and politically construed concepts. Malleable and therefore, far from inevitable. A conclusion reached through a literary analysis from the centuries old, revolutionary, Greek play to the 21st century. A gender curious investigation, that will unveil the falsehood behind the categorization and adjectivization of men and women as well as the reliance of those holding the flags of leadership on the acceptance and participation in the gender notions, in order to control where the wind blows.

A sphere of global politics composed by actors and thinkers, not mindless victims.

Key words: inevitability- masculinity- femininity- power- control

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INTRODUCTION

The year 2022 is a year where wars are yet present. Weapons are continuously becoming more lethal, efficient. Global politics are still trying to categorize (control) interactions and the conduction of international relations. International politics, especially in the area of security and peace, object of the present's research paper analysis, are still an *elite's men club*.

Is it surprising to see men seating at the UN's Security Council? Is it surprising to see a man elected as president? Is its surprising to see a male dominated picture of the G7, G8, G20...? No, what surprises us most is when a woman stands stark amidst the mass of men. That is what catches our attention and that is the main problem. We are not surprised by the lack of inclusivity until we are forced to see it. And even when we see them, do we stop and think about their implications and consequences? Are we aware of the male dominated voices in international politics?

I am a woman, a twenty-three-year-old women and despite, my professional education, owning a TV where I can watch the news, a computer where the pictures from the different summits are posted in various newspapers, the parties and social gathering I have been a part of, I have never stopped to actually *see*. Never have I wondered why when in matters of security a man in black always gives a speech. Never have I wondered, *where are the women*. The world, society, yet remains entrapped in the human made ideas of gender notions, defining what it means to be a man or a woman, establishing where the *body* of a man or a woman is expected, where it is *supposed to be*. Never have I truly stopped and analyzed with gender curious eyes the notions of masculinity and femininity upon which international relations, global dynamics, private domestic households, rely upon to keep the world functioning *smoothly*. A need to categorize human behavior to control the functioning of the world, the possible outcomes of human interaction.

It was not until I met Professor Bolton in New York that I started to realize I was not a mindless victim of gender narratives, but a thinker and actor of gender notions, of the adjectives offering different classifications of men and women. A simplistic *malleable* definition of what, or rather, *who* they are supposed to be. Professor Bolton encouraged me to unmask power. I specifically remember one class where he told us: "*You have more power than you realize*" To that I thought: "*Power, me? How? Where?*" Yet the phrase stayed with me as I spoke to my

roommates at home, went out with my friends and mostly, every time I read a book, article, or even poem.

I began to understand that the power he was referring to was not the one I had envisioned in my mind. The power I imagined presidents, ministers, even famous people wielded. No, I realized the way I behaved, talked, and *accepted* “reality” was a form of power. I started to pay attention to detail, to who was assigned in supermarkets in the section of shampoos, razors, tampax... it was always a woman. I even started paying attention to the way my friends (female and male) saw women and men, how they believed they had to behave in a romantic relationship. I started paying attention to life.

Therefore, as Cynthia Enloe encourages her readers, I decided to roll up my sleeves and conduct on my own a gender curious investigation. I re-read the books professor Bolton had assigned us: *Life Undercover*, *Our Man*, *Banas*, *Beaches and Bases*. I read *Lysistrata*, a centuries old Greek comedy written by Aristophanes. As I read, I became aware I was a hypocrite. I criticized *machismo*. I rolled my eyes whenever I heard or saw any men behaving like *men*, complying with the enclosed adjectives describing the different categories within the notions of masculinity. Paul N. Edwards presented the binary division between a Closed and a Green World. Two essential terms in the present research paper that will later on be explained. I realized I was living in a Closed World where I too encouraged the maintenance of the gender narratives, even fed the notions of masculinity by not fighting against the notions of femininity upon which they rely.

In matters of security and peace, where this paper will focus its gender curious eye, the bodies I expected to see were white heterosexual males. That is why I was never surprised when military conversations took part by a male dominant cabinet. Why I was never unsettled by the election of another male president. This gender curious exercise left me furious and indignant because I too had accepted myself to be “matter out of place” in certain contexts, acknowledging my body was better suited for other places. It was an upsetting, unpleasant journey as I realized I was keeping alive certain notions of masculinity and femininity.

Therefore, encouraged by Professor Bolton, I read *Lysistrata*. A comedy that allowed me to see behind the entrenched walls of the Closed World and be brave enough like Lysistrata to challenge the categorized notions of masculinity and femininity, put my body where it is not

expected and stop doing what was expected. I took a leap of faith into the Green World of Paul N. Edwards and uncovered the malleability of the idea of power and gender notions. The strength of emotions, with which women are often related and the power of vulnerabilities.

The goal of the present paper, like an onion, is composed of several layers. Yet they are all part of a single body, linked to one another. Through this research paper I want to unveil the falsehood lying at the core of the idea of *inevitability*. The idea of inevitability of certain gender notions. To break free of the adjectivization of genders (men, women, transgender). The inevitability attached to the way the world works.

I wish to unveil the power wielded by those who set the course, who enact policies (marriage, prostitution policies in military bases for example) in order to ensure the continuity not only of certain “acceptable” gender behaviors but also certain kind of relationships yet existent, particularly in the spheres of security and peace. To illustrate the fact that if those towards who the different policies are directed accept the order imposed through them by not challenging them, they become supporters.

The present research papers aims at shedding light on the benefits and unexpected surprises of inclusivity and placing one’s body where it is not supposed to be. To materialize the revolutionary change the individual, or collective, defiance of the enclosed definitions and categorizations of masculinity and femininity can have.

Therefore, in order to materialize the notions of masculinity and femininity alongside the power supporting them, the structure this gender curious paper will follow is the following: the comedy of Aristophanes, *Lysistrata*, where women present themselves as the saviors of Ancient Greece. *Banas, Beaches and Bases* of Cynthia Enloe where the question “where are the women?” will head the gender curious investigation of women in military bases. The book *Our Men* written by George Packer, presenting a man (R.Hobrooke) entrapped in a Closed World, afraid of the lack of control he feels in the presence of women who he connects with emotions. A man who had to be manly in front of other men and unveiled his weaknesses with women, who he saw far from his equals. Inclusivity never on his mind. Finally, *Life Undercover* of Amaryllis Fox, a woman who saw emotions and vulnerabilities as a strength. Unmasked power with the truth of words and after dedicating most of her young adult life to

the CIA, decided to pursue the same goal: protect and save humanity, from the inside of a Green World. Five different authors who will be put under gender curious scrutiny.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology I followed in order to write this paper does not truly go beyond the simplicity of reading and thinking. I investigated and read the books Professor Bolton had recommended me. However, as I already said, I read them as a gender curious woman searching for women in history. Where were they in the past? Where are they now? A search of women as empowered actors wielding and crafting their own “unconventional” weapons: see-through gowns, marriage, sex, an imaginative politization of their bodies and voices, their stark visibility in the homogeneous mass of men, use of emotional intelligence, etc.

The starting point of my research is the centuries old comedy *Lysistrata*. A play that taught me to look beyond the social constructs built to categorize and predict the development of international relations. A play that incited me to challenge the strength of gender notions and transplant its defiant message, women as empowered actors capable of changing the course of history, to the present. Use the presence of their bodies to understand the past and comprehend the unpleasant fact that I am a part of the constrained walls of the Closed World of Paul N. Edwards, afraid of being the “dirt” of Mary Douglas and as any other ordinary person, capable of giving a voice to the silence of weakness and presenting emotions as the strongest power of humanity. To stop being afraid of the unlimited inclusivity of the Green World and its unlimited possibilities. After all, how can we save humanity with the mind, when we are driven by emotion?

LITERARY ANALYSIS: FROM ARISTOPHANES TO THE 21ST CENTURY

1. LYSISTRATA

Aristophanes, contemporary of Thucydides, is the author of the Greek comedy *Lysistrata* (Aristophanes, 2002). A play that exemplifies how feminism and the fight for women’s right to an equal voice and administration of public affairs is far from new. In *Lysistrata*,

Aristophanes, provides a different, “out-of-the-box alternative”. Through his main character, Lysistrata, he expresses his frustration towards the constrained dominant mentality of public politics (economy, social status, warfare) as a place where women’s mind and body simply have no place. Mathew Bolton will be further on relied upon to explain the power of the body and what, he calls: “*Body Politics*” (Bolton, 2020, p.59).

The play using humor as its instrument, unveils the stigmatization society has placed upon the two sex members as a role to be followed. A stigmatization, drawing upon a series of values, cultural beliefs and as a result, social constructs. Far from inevitable or unchangeable as what has been made by men can be unmade by men. However, it would be a grand mistake to adjudicate all blame upon the male race. For, in a world inhabited by both men and women, the male-superiority narrative, would not have prevailed or even lasted as much if it had not counted with the strength of the *general* consensus. Consequently, women too have played a vital part in the male-superiority/women-inferiority discourse. A discourse, that as exemplified by Aristophanes, cannot be altered through wishful thinking or the grace of the universe, but by a physical, active, challenge of the *statu quo*.

While one may wonder how it can be done, Aristophanes provides such a scenery. *Lysistrata*, takes place during the Peloponnesian War. Lysistrata, a woman, frustrated by the endless vicious cycle of war, calls all women of ancient Greece to assemble. She expresses with passion and determination how Greece’s sake lies in their hands. How, if all the women from every Greek corner where to answer her call, united, they shall save Greece.

Yet, Cleonice, her neighbor and first attendant, expresses the line of thought believed, or rather accepted, by the majority: the helplessness of women beyond the refined lines of domestic chores, wondering what kind of plan, sensible and intelligent, could women craft?

The role of women during The Peloponnesian War, and for a long time after that, was quite simple. It could be synthetized in the following tasks: sit quietly, looking pretty, not interfering in men’s business (public sphere), satisfy sexually her partner and provide with descendants. Lysistrata however, appears frustrated by this mentality and challenges the narrow-minded stigmatization of women and their role in society accepting the *inevitable* truth: discreet beings who have no place nor opinion in public matters, as they do not concern them.

The alternative provided by Lysistrata, the *out-of-the box* solution is, to have all the women of Greece, take an oath to abstain from sex with all men, and if taken by force, they shall fight against it. A response she ensures would have its effect as Lysistrata argues, men's happiness, their enjoyment, is tied to their agreeability with women. An idea that is referred to on more than one occasion in the play.

In the spirit of community, they take an oath sealed with wine. Soon after, the Acropolis is taken by the elder women of Athens. The Acropolis is where the treasures of Athens are held. The heart of its economy and finances. Money, Lysistrata accuses to be used to fuel the endless machinery of men's war.

Therefore, Lysistrata comes up with an alternative, it shall be them, the women, the one's managing the money of the city. Suggestion that is met with the pattern displayed by the men along the play: exasperation, mock and violence. However, Lysistrata wittily replies that their capability should not be questioned as they are the one's administering the money within the walls of the private household. Money that is being misused for an end with no purpose but the endless finance of an enterprise, war. A business for which as she expresses, there is no need.

Lysistrata reflects the falsehood behind the idea of the enterprise of war as a man's business. *An elite men's club*, where women's presence has no sense; for, what knowledge can they bring towards the enterprise of war? What sage words, strategies could they offer when their place was at home, where they were to sit quietly with their feathers unruffled, pricking their fingers on the pointy end of their knitting needle?

An opinion shared by the women as well, as illustrated by Cleonice for example in the beginning when Lysistrata informs her of her resolve to do something to prevent the war: "*But what sensible or splendid act can women do? We sit around laying with our cosmetics, wearing golden clothes, posing in Cimmerian silks and slippers*" (Aristophanes, 2002, p.6).

However, now that women have the control of the Acropolis, now that they hold men's attention, Lysistrata demands the same quietness it was *expected* of her. To the Commisaries inquiry of what business do they hold solving what does not even concern them she expresses how women are as much part of the war as men. They suffer and are actors of the war complex. Their presence has merely been overlooked. For even if they did not die or thrive in the

battlefield, they are victims of the war. Scars left behind and indirectly, the primary sponsors. As, where do these men come from? Are they not the children of a mother left behind to see her son part for the idea of the necessity of war? Are they not the wives of husbands who fill the army's ranks? Or are they not left victims of the passage of time, no longer in their prime of life, fertility and beauty, whenever the men come back from the war? Their fates entwined with the notion of the *inevitability* of war.

Women have always been there. Overlooked and relegated to the quietness of their household, but nonetheless actors of the enterprise of war, fueled by their acceptance of the place bestowed by their inherited role. Unaware, as *Lysistrata* shows, of the power they hold to inflict change by placing their bodies where it is not expected, where it is not: "supposed to be" (Bolton, 2020, p.61)

However, Aristophanes, through *Lysistrata*, sheds light on another contributing element to the factor of change, the common ground found in the desires shared by men and women of different communities alike: desires. In *Lysistrata*, the word: "desires" (Aristophanes, 2002, pp. 37, 52) is used to refer to peace and sex. Common ground indeed.

In the end, men, driven by their sexual desires (men from all ancient Greece) they end up conceding to *Lysistrata*'s demands and in return for their women, they sign the peace. The play ends with a joyous chorus where glee fills once more the air as men and women are reunited. This scene reveals the truth in *Lysistrata*'s words when she first addressed the assembly of women: men and women do need each other, and not only for biological reasons.

1.1. Statu quo

Lysistrata is a window to the gender roles and the power their belief withholds. A determination of man's and woman's not only *sphere of action* but also pre-determining their behavior, appearance, and pensative minds. A narrative they are born into and determines their future.

Men,

Brutes where dialogue is overrated and the resolution towards violence is a first resort. An efficient and quick solution. The idea that only *they* can handle the managing of public affairs. Affairs that in *Lysistrata* are reduced to the administration of the economy and the funding of the war enterprise. A business, where women hold no place as Lysistrata is told by her husband: “*So there I am at home, saying nothing. Then you’d tell us of another project, even stupider than before. We’d say, “How can you carry out a scheme like that? It’s foolish.” Immediately he’d frown and say to me, “If you don’t spin your thread, you’ll get a major beating on your head. War is men’s concern”* (Aristophanes, 2002, p.35).

War is a men’s concern is found in *The Iliad*, Book VI, when Hector goes to fight leaving behind his son and wife: “*Andromache, dear wife, don’t grieve for me too deeply yet. (...) Go home, and attend to your tasks, the loom and spindle, and see the maids work hard. War is a man’s concern, the business of every man in Ilium, and mine above all”* (Homer, 2022). Once again, a paragraph charged with the heavy weight of the gender narrative determinism.

Men,

Who have to appear as men. Illustrated by the response of the Chorus of Old Men to the Women’s Chorus: “*CHORUS OF OLD MEN: Is this not getting way too insolent? I think it’s better if we paid them back. We have to fight this out. So any one who’s got balls enough to be a man take off your clothes so we men can smell the way we should—like men. We should strip. It’s not right to keep ourselves wrapped up”* (Aristophanes, 2002, p.43).

Men,

Who fear women: “*LEADER OF MEN’S CHORUS: There’s no wild animal harder to control than women, not even blazing fire. The panther itself displays more shame”* (Aristophanes, 2002, p.65).

Men,

Who are all driven by the same desires: “*ATHENIAN AMBASSADORS: What of our allies? We’ve all got hard ones. Our allies will agree this is just fine. They all are dying to get laid! SPARTAN AMBASSADOR: Ours, as well – no doubt of that”* (Aristophanes, 2002, p.74)

Men,

Who rejoice in the company of each other, Spartan/ Athenian men and women, when peace is signed.

Women,

Who hold no place in the successful management of public affairs as manifested by Calonice when Lysistrata informs her the assembly of women is necessary to save Greece: “*In women’s hands? Then it won’t be long before we done for*” (Aristophanes, 2002, p. 5). “*But what sensible or splendid act could women do?*” (Aristophanes, 2002, p.6)

Women,

Masters of the private household: “CALONICE: “*It’s not so easy for wives to get away. We’ve got to fuss about our husbands, wake up the servants, calm and wash the babies, then give them food*” (Aristophanes, 2002, p.

Women,

Devious creatures: “LYSISTRATA: *although men say we’re devious characters . . .* CALONICE [interrupting] *Because by god we are!*” (Aristophanes, 2002, p.4)

Women,

Beautiful creatures: “CALONICE: *We sit around playing with our cosmetics, wearing golden clothes, posing in Cimmerian silks and slippers*” (Aristophanes, 2002, p.6).

1.2.Lysistrata’s challenging of the statu quo:

However, Lysistrata, throughout the play displays a refusal to abide to the gender statu quo she was born into and expresses her frustration of the rest of the women's apparent blindness towards the existence of a world beyond the confines of the private household. Beyond domestic matters that have an impact on their lives, private and public: "LYSISTRATA: *But there are other things they need to do— more important issues*" (Aristophanes, 2002, p.4)

The fact that Lysistrata manages to rally behind every woman of Ancient Greece could be interpreted as her being the voice speaking the mind of many women. After all, as she expresses, even though their presence has been tethered to that within the threshold of a home, they are not unaware of public affairs. They do know what the men are deciding and how they are organizing the economy. They have their own mind and opinion as well as rebutting objections. She believes war to be unnecessary, nothing more than a business financed by money through the greed of the corrupt, searching for an excuse to exert more of the public arcades:

"LYSISTRATA:

To get your money so you couldn't keep on paying for war.

MAGISTRATE:

Is it money that's the cause of war?

LYSISTRATA:

Yes, and all the rest of the corruption. Peisander and our leading politicians need a chance to steal. That's the reason they're always stirring up disturbances. Well, let the ones who wish to do this do what they want, but from this moment on they'll get no more money.

MAGISTRATE:

What will you do?

LYSISTRATA:

You ask me that? We'll control it" (Aristophanes, 200,2 p. 32)

Lysistrata sees her sex as capable beings. In this paragraph she presents herself where she, according to those times, should not be: barricaded at the heart of the economy (Acropolis) manifesting it is now under the control of women. Something, where they have already had practice:

"MAGISTRATE

You mean you're going to manage all the money?

LYSISTRATA

You consider that so strange? Isn't it true we take care of all the household money?"

(Aristophanes, 2002, p.33)

Aristophanes through *Lysistrata* sets forward the following idea: The unexpected power of change. A change that is sought through one of the hardest things: dare see beyond the lines of the socially construed acceptable behavior and challenge its veracity.

In *Lysistrata*, Aristophanes uses comedy to rid the Athenians and Spartans of the masks through which they view, have learned to view one another. *Lysistrata* leans on the memory of the Spartans aid to the Athenians suffering under the tyrannic rule of Hippias to remind them of the past of amity they share with the Spartans they now view as their enemies (Aristophanes, 2002).

Aristophanes sheds light to even how their desires are the same. For, when *Lysistrata* brings out *Reconciliation* (Aristophanes, 2002, p.70), she uses the parts of her body to compare them to the territorial longings of the men before her. They all want the same, power. They all share the same desire, which Aristophanes illustrates through their mutual agreement to sign the peace in order to reunite with their women. A desire shared by the women as well and expressed through the joy that fill the festivities with which the act finds its closure.

In the end, as Aristophanes argues, we are all the same. Humans driven by desires, both men and women.

2. MATHEW BOLTON

Lysistrata, may not have influenced the outcome of the *Peloponnesian War*; however, it did inspire many "lystratic strikes" as referred by L.V.Anderson (Anderson, 2012). Therefore, even if the idea of the un-necessity of war, conflict, arms race, has not been yet overcome, *Lysistrata* like a muse became an inspiration.

An example is found in 2018 in the headquarters of Google where its CEO published a series of ethical principles the company would abide by in its development of AI, aware of the benefits and risks AI intelligence holds for society. This enraged workers who saw said principles as against *Project Maven*, by which Google collaborated with the US Department of

Defense. As a response, a collective of 4000 employees in April signed a petition: “demanding that Google's management cease work on Project Maven and promise to never again "build warfare technology.” (Sandoval, 2018). Many of them commenced to resign and Google, afraid of what the loss of potential would entail for its company its Cloud chief told Diane Green to inform her employees that Google would stop collaborating on AI with the military (Sandoval, 2018).

As in *Lysistrata* we have a collective action composed by people who decided to do what was not expected of them. Who refused to do what they were supposed to do: their jobs, and resigned. They did the unexpected and managed to exert change through the refusal of going along with the company's hypocritical narrative. An example that serves as proof of the power each of us hold, even if we are not chief of the military, president of a country, or second in command. Ordinary people have more power than they believe. Another example where bodies were placed where they were not expected was at Greenham Common military place where a Women's Peace Camp was set from 1981 to the year 2000.

The Greenham Common camp was inspired by the idea posed by Aristophanes were the main lesson they saw was, as collected by Mathew Bolton, an: “*imaginative politization of their bodies*” (Bolton, 2020, p.70). The determination of this women forced the men on the base and therefore, the eyes of the international community to *look* at them. Greenham Common camp encouraged further interpretations of the centuries old play (Bolton, 2020).

Nonetheless, before entering into detail of such a “*lysisratic strike*” where Rebecca Johnson's experience will be recounted through an interview with Matthew Breay Bolton, the *lysisratic* influence on Mathew Bolton will be reflected via the analysis of the 3rd Act of M. Bolton's : “*Imagining Disarmament, Enchanting International Relations*” (Bolton, 2020).

M. Bolton uses the centuries old Greek comedy to condemn and unmask the tendency to praise the dehumanization of the enterprise of war and its machinery: nuclear warfare, AI, killer robots, etc.

The 3rd Act of M. Bolton's book sheds light on the militarized masculinities engulfing the specter of security and political agenda. The patterns upon which such militarized masculinities rely on to sustain the objectivization of global politics as an unquenchable principle. A

necessity in a world where emotions are not to be trusted but rather separated from the task of securitization.

M. Bolton's 3rd Act is an *imaginative politization of his voice* to dismantle the mantra of the search for peace and the fight against gender-based violence as: "*women-like*" and a "*woman's issue*" respectively, as addressed by Jody Williams (Williams, 2014) at Pace University.

The objectivization of international relations is a threat that has loomed over the political agenda influencing decisions and creating a pattern of *unemotional statesmen* where: "*subjective judgment*" is to be avoided as it erodes the rational course foreign politics are to follow (Morgenthau, 1978, pp. 4,7.). Kenneth Waltz's theory of how a nation's pursuit of their interests unavoidably leads to the path of competition and consequently often war (K. Waltz, 1954; 1986, p. 98; 1979), is another exemplification of how deep the roots of the idea of war as an objective consequence of civilizations interaction in a world with no central authority are.

An idea and explanation of the chaotic realms of international politics linked to Thucydides' idea of the inevitability of war (Thucydides, 2014a), inevitability later on clarified by Graham Allison as the likelihood of war. Furthermore, Graham Allison's Thucydides trap (Allison, 2020), where the danger rests on the threat posed by a raising power threatening to displace the ruling power. As well as, Barry Posen's (Posen, 1993) presentation of the notion of the inevitability of war when a series of factors are met and therefore concluding the conditionality of the idea of the inevitability of war.

Thucydides, viewed by many as the father of history and the international theory of realism has presented a comfortable theory of an anarchic world where each state in the pursuit of its own national interests, alongside the lack of a central government, leads to a scenery where competition is inevitable and with it an interstate rivalry that condemns the world to an eternal cycle of conflict, competition and war, twin of rivalry.

As argued by M. Bolton, these authors choose to view the world, consequently global politics, as a Closed World. It is Paul N. Edwards (P. N. Edwards, 1996) who presents the duality of what he refers to as a: "*closed*" and a: "*green*" world. He defines a Closed World as one where the characters have their fates sealed, an inevitable destiny; whereas a Green World, is one where the possibilities are numerous, no outcome can be expected as it is a world stripped of

the idea of inevitability and drenched in the infinite possibilities that come with the unexpected (Berger, 1990).

The world *Lysistrata* envisions, Jody Williams calls for, the women in Greenham Common camp and M. Bolton are fighting for, is one where the words *supposed to be* are malleable, human made. The world is filled with colors where black and white are mere additions. Patterns, social, gender norms are only as strong and inevitable as we choose them to be. What is made by humans can be unmade by humans. This idea where what the world is, what norms we choose to abide by is always a choice is supported by Alexander Wendt (A. Wendt, 1992). Therefore, the sealed destiny of rivalry encouraged by competition against *the Other*, as sustained by Sharkey (N. Sharkey, 2012) is, in his words: “*evitable*” (N. Sharkey, 2012). Indeed, as argued by M. Bolton: “*We can constrain violence through norms of humanity and institutions favoring dialogue over fighting*” (Bolton, 2020). Alas, it is a choice we need to make.

In the midst of this Green World where anything is possible: “*unlimited possibility*” and: “*unlimited inclusivity*” (Sommerstein, 2002a, p. xxxix, emphasis in original) leads in retrospect when analyzing the Closed World of the previously mentioned authors to the question that will be later on developed posed by Cynthia Enloe: “*where are the women?*” (Enloe, 2014) Both constructivists and post-structuralists have presented and therefore given form through questions to the idea that global politics are influenced by the notion developed of what it means to be a woman (as well as transgender and man). How the construed concept of what an entire gender is to be seen as has had an impact in the conduction and articulation of global politics and the other way around. What leads to the notion and power of “*Body Politics*” presented by M. Bolton (Bolton, 2020).

M. Bolton when analyzing the reality and power underlying the concept of “*Body Politics*” draws on the already presented question of *where are the women*. A question through which the author of the book *Banas, Beaches and Bases* (Enloe, 2014) ponders on and reveals not only the importance of women in the economy and politics but also the dependency of said spheres on: “*certain kinds of relations between women and men*” (Enloe, 2014, p.133) Thus, the perseverance of *the elite’s men club* relies on the discourse of the gender narratives, the concept embedded within each gender, and the maintenance of such norms untouched by the

passage of time, muting as the world evolves but with the nucleus nexus distanced from the revolution of change.

The inclusion of women, the diversification of humanity in the realm of global politics, can have unexpected outcomes. The inclusion of diverse points of view, voices, origins, genders, can have a meaningful impact in the policymaking craftsmanship. For, as indicated by many research papers when women, greater representation in general, is present in discussions it has a positive impact on negotiations. One explanation, far from being biological, is the fact that the trail followed by negotiations and agreements steers further away from the militarist masculinities (Paffenholz, Ross, Dixon, Schluchter, & True, 2016, p. 6; Charlesworth, 2008).

In conversations (negotiations) of the sort, our focus will rely on those of military nature, those who are expected: white, homosexual, males. Even in matters that does not concern them their physical appearance, their *bodies*, have the benefit of the doubt. That is also one of the reasons of why they hold the most power to inflict change. Their presence and voices hold power, while the *bodies* of those who are not expected, whose authority and capacity is questioned (women, transgender) makes people feel uncomfortable. Their bodies are not expected. M. Bolton argues how he alongside a group of other men signed a Pledge: “not to speak on panels that include only men.” Other measures they use to raise awareness of the lack of physical presence of women in matters of international peace and security policies are:

“We agreed that when invited to participate on a panel we would ask whether women would be included, direct organizers to a copy of the Pledge and send them the names of women with appropriate expertise (manpanels.org). Out of these efforts, the Campaign eventually compiled a list of capable experts from around the world who are women (Campaign to Stop Killer Robots, 2016).” (Bolton, 2020)

Men’s body, heterosexual white men, are expected in military discussions, in the UN Security Council, women are not. Mary Douglas, presents the notion of the “*dirt*” people. He describes them as the: “*matter out of place*” (M.Douglas, 1966/2002, p.44) They are a danger to the status quo, the general consensus. The patterns and relations upon which the political and economic system have been built upon. The threat posed by those who are not expected to appear in panels that deal with matters of security. Women, often related with emotion, a danger towards the rational objectivization of the military.

In neo-realist international relations theory, there is a tendency to establish a division, and as a consequence a separation between the mind and the body. The body being the manifestation of emotions, feelings and therefore non-reliable, whereas the mind is reason. The mind is to be trusted. Matters of security, as it will be seen later on, cannot be swayed by emotion, by the body. It has to remain detached, raise above those emotions that makes us humans and with it, in a sense, our humanity. Afterall, as argued by M. Bolton, what are killer robots? They are: “*weapons capable of killing, maiming without requiring a person to pull the trigger*” (Bolton, 2020). How much human control is there over the weapon?

The centuries old profession of *killing* a person has been undergoing a long dehumanization process. From stone-crafted knives, to swords, arrows, guns, tanks, nuclear weapons... to killer robots. Killer robots do not require to feel the heat of a person’s body, see the look of fear and light leave their eyes as life slips out of them. The military specter has undergone a dehumanization process that seems to be boundless. The task rendered easier for those deploying it. The separation of mind and body simplified and manifested through the development of weapons where the act of killing can be done from afar looking at a screen instead of someone’s eyes. As expressed by Roesengren (Rosengren, 2018) this division of mind and body is transplanted into gender. Where women are associated with the body (women and LGBTQA group) and men are the mind. This visualization of gender can have a significant impact on how the body of women is seen in matters if the military associated with the mind where the body is feared and seen as a threat.

If one were to close their eyes and compel their minds to imagine someone from the military, what form does the body take? What is its gender?

As *Lysistrata* and Greenham Common camp illustrate, the appearance of the “dirt” people where they are not expected can be, in the words of M. Bolton, *revolutionary* (Bolton, 2020). As it has already been mentioned, *Lysistrata* did not have an impact on the Peloponnesian War but it did stir the consciousness of those whose brain had already been itching, leading to a chain of protest and manifestation where Greenham Common camp serves as the greatest example. As argued by M. Douglas (M. Douglas, 1966/2002), the welcoming attitude displayed by society towards those classified as “dirt” can change, as it depends on the strength those holding the flag of leadership choose them to have. A decision where ordinary’s people

resolution and determination can have an impact, can generate and impulse change. As Judith Butler said: “For politics to take place, the body must appear” (J.Butler, 2011).

For M. Bolton, *Lysistrata* offers a Green World where: “*History is thus not an unwinding of our preprogrammed nature, it is open to surprise from the spirit in the machine*” (Bolton, 2020, p.64). According to M.Bolton, *Lysistrata* shows how we can take matters into our own hands. How women, who were seen as “matter out of place” through direct collective action refused to allow the pattern of allocation of resources to go on. She demonstrated that society is indeed malleable, nothing is inevitable. M. Bolton argues *Lysistrata* sheds light on two different ways of nonviolent solutions, two unexpected ways to exert power: “*1.Non-cooperation: refusing to allow access to one’s body, withhold- ing it from where it is expected. 2. Occupation: placing one’s body where it is unexpected and using it to obstruct the normal operation of politics, the market and reli- gious and cultural rites*” (Bolton, 2020, p.65).

The very ending of *Lysistrata*, with a joyous chorus as everyone sings and dances along, Athenians, Spartans, people from other territories after *Lysistrata* reminded Athenians that in a past Spartans came to their aid in their time of need, exemplifies once again how society, social taboos are indeed malleable and subject to change. The ending of the play in a joyous chorus sheds light on the possibility and benefits of inclusivity.

One of the greatest outcomes of *Lysistrata* as mentioned *supra* is Greening Greenham Common Camp. It was a camp composed exclusively by women who united to protest against: “*the planned deployment of American nuclear cruise missiles at what was officially a Royal Air Force base*” (Bolton, 2020).

They wanted to protest against the fatalism of nuclear warfare. They refused to accept a fate where nuclear warfare and its propagation was a reality and where they had no say in it. They wanted to show that there was something they could do about something that seems as far-fetched as ordinary people intervening in military matters. M. Bolton interviewed one of the women members of the community *they* created at the outskirts of said base.

Rebecca Johnson went to Greenham Common camp where she found a space filled with imagination, a: “*comic community*” (Bolton, 2020, p.56) where women around the globe surrounded with color and festivities the closed world living entrenched the solid walls of the

military base, cutting itself off the rest of society and yet not being able to escape the Green World these women forced them to see through an imaginative politization of their bodies (Bolton, 2020, p.70): *“Cutting through the fence, women dressed as snakes and furry animals invaded the base. They wove massive spider webs from yarn, floating one over the base with helium balloons”* (Bolton, 2020, p.72).

Their unexpected presence generated turmoil as they often had to confront different displays of violence, such as harsh words and the force of the police. The presence of their bodies where it was not supposed to be created confusion. However, as they learned from Lysistrata, they responded to such actions in an innovative, unexpected way: *“the police would feel uncomfortable and less competent when faced with peaceful resistance from hundreds of cheerful, smiling, singing women, particularly as their training relates to ... aggressive crowds”* (in Harford & Hopkins, 1984, p. 31).

In *Lysistrata*, women used see-through shifts and saffron gowns as their weapons against men. In Greenham Common camp they used their peaceful welcoming smiles as a weapon against the police. A nonviolent alternative where they presented themselves in the most harmless manners to fight violence with love, joy, color, emotions, humanity, etc. Rebecca Johnson recounted M. Bolton that they used performances in order to connect with those they were protesting against: the base soldiers, police, public and reporters.

They put their bodies in the path of those carrying the missile launchers and looked them in the eye in order to force them to look back at a human putting themselves in their path as they carried a weapon capable of killing an entire civilization. They held up mirrors forcing them to stare back at their own reflection and acknowledge what they were supporting, what they were encouraging, forcing those uniformed soldiers dressed in somber clothes to look at the war enterprise they were helping sustain and understand its meaning instead of blindly follow orders. To look and understand. To be responsible (Bolton, 2020).

Greenham Common Camp encouraged the later decision of the British government to give the land back to the local people once Americans would have left the base (Enloe, 2014).

Lysistrata motivated their movement. They adopted the idea to use their bodies in an imaginative way to unsettle the world of politics and force them to stare back at the

consequences their actions entail. To remind them of their humanity and the humanity they willingly erase at the push of a button. They raise awareness and inspire. Women can have an impact, even in the military community envisioned as an *elite's men club*. An impact that can take place in a way molded by imagination where un-expectedness can be the weapon.

3. CYNTHIA ENLOE

Aristophanes through *Lysistrata* presents the fight of a women against a world where women's voice, opinion, has no impact. Their bodies relegated to the private chains of the household where they are mistress of domestic chores. However, in the *Lysistrata* of Aristophanes when Lysistrata and the women of Greece take hold of the Acropolis she presents women as the saviors of Greece, capable of undertaking such a task as they had always been part of the operational machinery from the shadows of the outcast. Unappreciated figures by both men and women. Thus Cynthia Enloe, a renowned feminist writer, refocuses the feminist lens on the following question in international politics: *Where are the women?* (Enloe, 2014)

Cynthia Enloe submerges in a search where she encourages to conduct a: "*gender curious investigation*" (Enloe, 2014, p.5). She argues, in order to make a feminist sense of international relations one must actually stop and look at women. What are their lives like? What are they thinking? To fully comprehend the mechanism engineering our world one must genuinely wonder "Where are the women?"

A gender curious investigation, as defended by Cynthia Enloe is necessary to go beyond the traditional lines defining women as: "*mindless victims*" (Enloe, 2014, p.8) instead of: "*empowered actors*" (Enloe, 2014, p.8). History is the book of the past, through which lessons are taught and events retold. Yet, the spin a teacher chooses to give the imparting historical account can have an impact and harvest an idea with greater repercussions than the mere memorization of a passage of the past.

Cynthia Enloe brings forwards the example of Pocahontas with the goal of shedding light to the essence of the question "Where are the women?". When one thinks of this female indigenous figure the tale told by Disney takes form. One where Pocahontas falls in love with her invader. One in which local woman can be swept away by the charms of the conquerors of

their land and people. Yet, Cynthia Enloe went beyond the surface of history and took an interest in Pocahontas. A Native American who saved the life of John Smith, married John Rolfe, and contributed to the colonization of America (Enloe, 2014). A stark difference from the myth told by the animated Disney character.

Or, how about the simple decision of where might one spend their vacations? Are there any politics at play when deciding to travel to Brazil instead of Egypt? Is our decision unanimous and free of governmental influence? Cynthia Enloe asserts governments marketing of their women's beauty to attract tourism. Even sexual attraction can be a victim of the games of politics where the: "*social order*" (Enloe, 2014, p.9) influences one's taste, desire and physical attraction.

Nonetheless, it would be a mistake to underestimate these women and their sculpted images as a helpless victim. For, as Cynthia Enloe puts forward:

"Women who are pushed to the far margin of any power system continue to assess and strategize even with the minimal resources they have available; sometimes they move beyond private strategizing to collective organizing. Nonetheless, acknowledging the severely restricted agency exercised by women pushed to the margins is not to deny that some international actors wield a lot more influence and garner far more rewards than do other" (Enloe, 2014, p.8).

Power takes many forms. Power, as argued by M. Bolton can be unmasked. Once it is unmasked it loses strength, it becomes visible and tangible, malleable. In order to understand how the world works, to unmask said powers, one must first explore its diverse forms. This requires attention and a gender curious investigation. For, women hold power as well in different shapes and colors. An investigation that Cynthia Enloe warns can be uncomfortable. To discover and understand how the world works, how we accept gender norms, even how the current operating systems depends on gender norms, can be unpleasant (Enloe, 2014).

Women's role in society is often related to factors such as culture, religion, tradition...as if these elements were a force out of reach, an excuse justifying the arduous process that effective equality and inclusion must bear. Yet, as Cynthia Enloe argues (Enloe, 2014), if one were to look with gender curious eyes, one may realize that everything is human made. Tradition,

cultures, religion, biological justifications, etc, they have not been determined by a force grander than ourselves but they have been molded by humans (Enloe, 2014). Humans who bear some form of power.

Cynthia Enloe goes a step further and poses another question necessary in order to understand international politics: “*Where are the men?*” (Enloe, 2014, p.28) As it has already been referred to, the *elite’s men club* is still dominant in most governments. Yet, now the focus falls upon the notion of “men” and what it means to be a man. In order to understand the connotation associated with such term it is necessary to understand that as power works beyond borders, what it means to be a man, to be manly, varies from generation to generation, from culture to culture. There are different categories associated with the notion of masculinity: rational, soft, modern, weak, strong, etc (Enloe, 2014).

A series of consequences derive from these categories, such as the association of women who act rationally, or are strong, to be incorrectly linked to said notions of masculinity. The greatest example is one presented by Cynthia Enloe: “*a common British assessment of Britain’s first and only woman prime minister: “Margaret Thatcher was the toughest man in the room.”*” (Enloe, 2014, p. 31)

The dangers this entails is to forget to view men as men, women as women, and link their characters and behaviors to a category predetermined by an assertion of a person’s character reducing one to the mere adjectives that compose the *men* and *women* category, eliminating the personality factoids that differentiate us from one another. This undermines those *men* who want to dedicate themselves to jobs categorized as: “*women’s work*” (Enloe, 2014, p.32) and women dedicated to said works or who wish to enter what can therefore be referred to as: “*men’s work*”.

In order to fight against gender notions, it is of the utmost importance to stop seeing women as mindless victims and start considering them as tangible, active thinkers with power: Servilia, who was one of the most influential women of Rome, Pocahontas who helped the English colonization of America, beautiful women posing in French colonial African postcards sent home to represent the conquered land. The list goes on. For, as it has already been insinuated, ordinary people have power. Ordinary people can have an impact. In order to understand how the world works it is important to view oneself not only as a pawn in a chess game but an actor

of international politics. As highlighted by Cynthia Enloe, this can be an uncomfortable task for, as in Greenham Common camp, when the mirror is held up forcing one to stare at its own reflection, the bliss of ignorance falls apart as we come to acknowledge ourselves as an actor, participant, and accomplice of international politics.

The social order is made by humans, far from inevitable or unchangeable. A feminist gender curious investigation is necessary in order to see the cloaked dependency of the world' engine on notions of masculinity and femininity. A necessary analysis according to Cynthia Enloe, in order to unveil the existing reliance: "*on women as feminized workers, as respectable and loyal wives, as "civilizing influences," as sex objects, as obedient daughters, as unpaid farmers, as coffee-serving campaigners, and as spending consumers and tourists*" (Enloe, 2014, p.36)

The understanding and acknowledgement of this dependency on certain notions of gender can act as an eyeopener to a world where the system upholding its mechanism is not as strong as it appeared to be once its power is unmasked and action is taken. The change, once more, can be revolutionary.

After this introduction of the importance of a gender curious investigation where the question "Where are the women?" is to lead the feminist inquiry, the analysis will befall upon what Cynthia Enloe has defined as: "*Base women*" (Enloe, 2014, p. 125)

3.1.Base Women

The United States has many military bases outside its country. A military base is defined by Cynthia Enloe as:

"a complicated microworld dependent on diverse women: (a) women who live on the base, (b) women who work on the base but go home at night, (c) women who live outside the fence but are integral to what goes on inside the fence and to what military men and women do when they leave the base for recreation, and (d) women who may live far from a base but who are in almost daily contact with men on the base via the Internet. Paying attention to all these women makes one smarter about the international politics of military bases." (Enloe, 2014, p. 126)

A military base is run by a series of policies. Policies enacted in order to ensure its viability. A series of measures established to guarantee the operations run *smoothly* (Enloe, 2014, p.173).

Operations that are dependent on the maintenance of a certain relation between base women and men and the local population. Some of which have even been enacted to ensure different women are unlikely to find common ground (prostitution policies, race policies, civilian hiring policies, etc) and therefore, a: “*common cause*” (Enloe, 2014, p. 131).

A military base runs *smoothly* when normalcy reigns. Thus, the notions of masculinity and femininity are supported by both local and base men and women. It is this stage of normalcy the inquisitive eye of a feminist finds most interesting.

In WW II a lot of heat surrounded the debate regarding how to manage the relations between British white females and male African American soldiers. Racial policies were passed in order to ensure the “social order” was not upset by their interaction. The alarm resounded at the cabinet of Winston Churchill when white British women as they dated Black American soldiers commenced the dangerous task of comparison. Action had to be taken in Britain to control the situation and reestablish the quivering “social order”. Racial policies took form through what Cynthia Enloe described as: “*official and unofficial warnings directed at local white women*” (Enloe, 2014, p. 138) Women who would date Black soldiers would be pegged as: “*loose*” (Enloe, 2014, p. 138). The borders of a military base therefore, are composed of a series of relations and policies designed to balance those interactions within the realm of *normalcy*.

Marriage policies are another important element of said bases where policies are enacted to ensure marriages adapt to *their* concept of a militarized marriage with what Cynthia Enloe refers to as: “*The Good Military Wife*” (Enloe, 2014, p. 142). A militarized marriage that would not interfere with their soldiers’ obligations and the *smooth* operations of the base.

After WWII, military wives could no longer be marginalized. This affected the normalcy of the military base as they were too many military wives whose presence and impact had to be acknowledged and “handled”. Aware of the need to keep them happy to prevent the plausible threat of military shortages provoked by an unhappy wife who could prevent the future reenlistment of her husband, they adopted a series of measures dedicated to keeping them happy (washing machines) (Enloe, 2014).

Furthermore, a military base is a place where certain types of masculinities are encouraged, even praised, and rewarded: capacity to leave aside emotions, a skilled fighter, discipline, etc. Forms associated with the notion of a “great man” a “great soldier” (Enloe, 2014).

With the end of the Cold War and the inclusion of women in the military, once more, strategies had to be adopted, policies enacted, to ensure the military remained a safe space where: “*a man can prove his manliness*” (Enloe, 2014, p. 151). The inclusion of women in the military unavoidably brought changes.

However, real change requires to take a step further than merely adopt or change the rules of an institution. It demands social acceptance. The main strength of a norm comes from the belief in the legitimacy of its content. Norms demanding respect and equality are as powerful as those wielding the myriad forms of power choose them to be. Collective action of those sharing a common cause (military women victims of sexual assault against the reigning silence in military bases) can impulse change, belief in those norms (Enloe, 2014). Their collective stance can be revolutionary to the “social order”.

An example, presented by Cynthia Enloe can be seen in the campaign organized in 2013 by women activists who condemned the sacred chain of command bringing together civilian feminists, filmmakers, women in congress, journalists, and military women. This collective action led to the recognition of the traumas and struggles endured by women who were suffering from what was called: “*military sexual trauma*” (McDonough, 2013). Together, they unmasked a veiled power and gave form to a reality occurring within the military. A trauma suffered by those women who had been raped by a male soldier. Consequently, the problem was not only given a face and name, but it also led to the establishment of special clinics (Enloe, 2014).

Another vital part of military bases is prostitution. Prostitution policies are another form of power vital for the maintenance of an operational base. Essential in order to defuse the possible clash between local men and women with military men and women (“respectable” women). These policies take various forms. In the late ninetieth century, British military officials to keep their soldiers safe, Parliament passed what was called the: “*Contagious Diseases Acts*” (Enloe, 2014, p. 157). A law that permitted the British police to submit under a vaginal exam any women suspected of being a prostitute. Once again, a collective action launched by British

feminists led a two-decade-long arduous campaign to encourage the British Parliament (an all-males cabinet) to repeal said laws (Enloe, 2014). Nonetheless, control was not intended to be lost over local women by the British military officials. The means used to maintain the *smooth normalcy* was marital policies.

Sexual slavery was a concept coined in WWII where women (the Japanese imperial army forcing Korean women into slavery) were used to keep a soldier's moral. A comfort object to ensure the continuity of offshore military bases (Enloe, 2014).

Military bases promote prostitution. This caught the attention of Filipino feminists as well as nationalists who blamed the US military base of encouraging prostitution. Male soldiers did not have to submit themselves to such examinations. The centuries old profession is an enterprise where the different actors bear responsibility in the perennial existence of the oldest profession:

“Women in prostitution, women working against the prostitution industry, men profiting from prostitution, men patronizing women in prostitution, and men who make military policies to mold prostitution to suit their militaries' needs— each of these five groups of actors lives in history. Each of them, no matter how seemingly powerless some of them are, help to reshape the local and international politics of prostitution and, thus, the ideas about and practices of masculinity as they under- pin military bases” (Enloe, 2014, p. 168).

Cynthia Enloe uses a military base in order to exemplify the number of policies enacted by officials to ensure the *smooth* operation of a base. Normalcy, silence, is the key to its success where ideas and notions through policies are used in order to establish certain kinds of relations that rely on notions of masculinity and femininity. Policies that forestall the clash with local people in order to prevent nationalist and feminists' campaigns that would threaten their stability.

Military bases are embedded with international politics where power flows in its different forms and even those who appear to be marginalized are actors and perpetrators of the said policies. It is when these figures engage in collective action and unite, when normalcy is threatened, when those holding the poles of power are forced to craft a response to appease the revolt. But alas, the international gender politics allowing the *smooth* functioning of said bases

has not yet faded. It adopts different forms when it becomes unmasked by the light poured by those who find a common cause.

Therefore, where are the women? The women are part of the international system, they are actors of the political agenda and upon their silence and complicity with *normalcy* depends the stability of the “social order”. Women are *there*, players in the games of power and therefore capable of change. Nothing is inevitable, social norms, the notions of femininity and masculinity are malleable, made by both men and women, encouraged by their silence and lack of acknowledgement of the policies and the part they play. In order to see said policies, a gender curious investigation needs to be conducted, questions such as “Where are the women?” and “Where are the men?” need to be asked. If not, aren’t we all trapped in the hypocritical cycle, as both victims and perpetrators, of the celled gender notions of masculinity and femininity?

4. OUR MAN: GEORGE PACKER

Lysistrata exposed a world with a strong scent of masculinity. *Men*, soldiers of Athens. *Men*, who respond to the drums of war when duty calls. A necessary war, as more often than not, wars are accompanied by something that serves as a justification. In *Our Man* (Packer, 2019), in the chapter titled: “*VIETNAM How Can We Lose When We’re So Sincere?*” (Packer, 2019, pp. 19-140) the justification accompanying the Vietnam war was the idea that America was fighting a just war. One where all the loss and devastation will have meant something in the end.

In the book, Vietnam is described as a place for idealists. A place where characters such as Lansdale, who understood the vitality of people’s moral, would be a perfect fit. As well as the protagonist of the book, Richard Halbrooke, who during the entirety of the book fought to believe in the necessity of the war of Vietnam. In the end, as he would confess to his friend Lake, he understood the war had already been lost and could never be won: “*We have to get out of Vietnam. The war has already spread a poison through our nation which will take years to neutralize*” (Packer, 2019, p. 139). His fragile wisdom allowed him to see the US had to leave Vietnam. It had no place, no right to be there. The first praised “righteousness”, an American construct. A *malleable* idea, an evitable war.

The chapter helps illustrate, as well as understand, the notions of masculinity imperious in the areas of peace, security, military, and the main promoter of the war of Vietnam, power. In the chapter dedicated to the author Cynthia Enloe, the question “where are the men?” was examined. Cynthia Enloe argued that global politics were still dominated by an *elite’s men club*. A world where the notion of what it means to be a man is composed by a series of categories, adjectives defining and therefore, helping identify the notions of masculinity: rational, weak, soft, modern, strong... In the chapter object of analysis, one of the fundamental extractions is the idea of weakness, of appearing weak and the silence that accompanies it. The disastrous development of the war in Vietnam was kept a secret from the public in the US. The war *had* to be won. Honor, credibility, legitimacy, *power*, were at stake.

How can we Loose When We Are So Sincere? The very tittle of the chapter is embedded in the strength of an idea made by the US, and if one where to adjust the lens, by those in power. The chapter unveils one of the characteristics of the human being, and that is the need to control everything. Control drenched in the tranquility that escapes the surprise, anxiety, and unpreparedness of the unexpected. A need to categorize life in order to control it. A need for a Closed World and fear of a Green World.

The chapter, following the footsteps of Cynthia Enloe, Mathew Bolton, and the muse of this research paper Aristophanes, will undergo a gender curious investigation. Therefore, in order to reveal the notions of masculinity unveiled by the chapter dedicated to the war in Vietnam in *Our Man* (Packer, 2019), two questions will act as driving narratives: where are the women? Where are the men?

4.1. Where are the women?

Where are the women in Richard Halbroke’s life? How does Richard Halbroke *see* women? The way men see women can be considered an essential ingredient in the notions of masculinity. The attitude displayed by R. Halbroke in relation to women, reveals the already analyzed binary division between the body and the mind. For, as he expresses there is a change in his behavior as he allowed himself to become more sensitive, vulnerable. He also established a correlation between women and bad judgment, as if they were responsible for his separation form the rationality that comes with the mind and became dominated by emotions that can only

lead to said bad judgment. Once more, *Our Man* allows us to see the transposition to gender of the mind/body- men/women binary division. Yet, R. Holbrooke did not forget to admire the mind over the body and focused his attention on a woman who he considered to be his: “*intellectual match*” (Packer, 2019, p. 86).

As he writes letters to his future bride-to-be, the analysis of the content of said letters could be interesting from a gender curious perspective. The letters display a man divided into two. Two different persons who form a single body, one dominated by rationality, a great eccentric man. A behavior that comes out easily when surrounded by other men. Yet, when he writes to her, Litty, he becomes tender, overrun by emotions. As if she represented a world where he could allow himself to feel, doubt, be confused, unsure. A world towards which he shows discomfort as he is aware of his lack of control: “*I really hate this letter (...) I am confused and distracted. (...) I should be studying now, and nothing should be allowed to distract me from that now*” (Packer, 2019, p.88). He allowed himself to be seen more clearly, free from the shackles of the constrained adjectives within the notion of masculinity. For, he did not consider women to be his equals: “*Since women were rarely his competitors, he allowed them to see him more clearly than men*” (Packer, 2019, p. 85)

The Green World / Closed World analogy appear in the mind of R. Holbrooke in in the way he sees the world and women. His first years in Vietnam are described as a: “*man’s world*” (Packer, 2019, p. 85). A Closed World indeed, where he expressed fear for the unlimited possibilities of the Green World as he sees his imagination as one of his faults: “*I am too imaginative*” (Packer, 2019, p. 89). A fear of color, imagination and the unexpected. A rejection of the seemingly unrealistic where realism is the *correct* answer, the logical path free of the dangers of impulse and emotions, sponsors of imagination.

After this gender curious analysis of his letters a series of questions may arise: Why does he have to appear to be strong with men and can be weak with women? Why does he allow women to see the emotions concealed under the surface of rationality and strength? Adjectives of the notion of masculinity. R. Holbrooke did not only associate men with the mind and women with the body, but he also manifested a unilateral preference towards the confined walls of the Closed World and a discomfort towards the unexpectedness of the Green World.

A mistrust towards women fueled by his way of behaving and categorizing both men and women. Can women really be blamed for his bad judgment, his tenderness and vulnerability? Can it really be Litty's fault that he lets himself feel when he is with her, a safe-space, and conceals those feelings when he is with men? His competitors before who he has to *confirm* his manliness, his manhood. His distraught reveals the malleability of the notions of masculinity. It unveils its fragility and as remarked by M. Bolton, Aristophanes and Cynthia Enloe, when power is unmasked, its weakness is revealed.

As in *Lysistrata*, R. Holbrooke's letters to Litty, reveal how men need women. Not only to satisfy sexual desires but also due to a genuine need of companionship: "*He also (...) would need you very much*" (Packer, 2019, p.91). Even though, R. Holbrooke saw it more as a position to be filled.

R. Holbrooke's perception of women reflect once more the reality of gender roles. The classification and simplification of both genders to a series of adjectives. An allocation made by humans. For, as illustrated with Cynthia Enloe, the substance of the notions of masculinity and femininity require their acceptance by both genders, contributing to the construction and maintenance of said roles, unchanged by time unless challenged. He, R. Holbrooke, struggling to be seen as a "great man" while portraying himself as a MAN in all its splendor, indifferent to her, Litty, and domestic chores: "*It might be a life with a guy who just can't be home on time for dinner every night (...) who does sort of unexpected things, and who sometimes just won't pay attention (...), and sometimes is just inconsiderate.*" (Packer, 2019, p.91) Litty, a woman who became his wife, and like every other American spouse: "*she had no role to play*" (Packer, 2019, p.94).

Furthermore, beyond the heavily charged notions of masculinity present in the way R. Holbrooke *sees* women, where were the women during the Vietnam war?

Where were the women when both presidencies (Kennedy and Johnson) refused to negotiate a way out of the war? Where were the women when the: "*Wise Men*" (Packer, 2019, p. 119) were called before Johnson to provide sage words based on nothing but factual briefings and their idea of the: "*domino theory*" (Packer, 2019, p. 119)? Where were the women in the Foreign Service?

If one were to read the chapter with gender curious eyes one would realize women were non-existent in the inner circle of the president who helped and briefed the president about the reality and strategies to win the Vietnam war (*win*, as retreat in defeat was never a possibility). Women were not soldiers, nor were they diplomats. In the eyes of R. Holbrooke women were mainly wives with no role to play whilst their husbands: “*work very hard and very well, and that leaves the wives spending a lot of time fighting the little trials of life in Saigon*” (Packer, 2019, p. 64)

Women seem to be barely mentioned. Nonetheless they are there, a presence in the shadow. Even though one must squint one’s eyes to see them, once they are seen they cannot be unseen. Women are actors and necessary players in the Vietnamese war. Always present. American women as the wives of diplomats, American women and wives in demonstrations for peace, women as entertainers for American soldiers in Vietnamese soil, women as essential guests in organized events, etc (Packer, 2019).

Women, even though as narrated by our male protagonist R. Holbrooke appear to have barely any decisive role in the development of the war, had their own impact on the war. Their presence could even be argued to have been vital for the endurance of the war. For, as stated in the book, escalation converted Vietnam in a large encampment of US bases and: “*industrial-scale prostitution*” (Packer, 2019, p. 102). Once again, as already presented and explained by Cynthia Enloe, prostitution and military bases go hand-in-hand. At one point in the book, it was even suggested that the war would not have lasted as long if it had not been for prostitution (Packer, 2019).

Beyond prostitution, women were vital actors of guest lists, such as the one celebrated by W. Lodge, R. Holbrooke’s superior at Vietnam who in order to distract everyone’s attention from a war that did not seem could be won, decided to throw a New Year’s Eve party where in the guests list (a political document from which it can be deduced who are considered allies and who regarded as enemies) women were essential. Amongst the selected women in Lodge’s party, were those girls who worked at the night clubs as well as the secretary of the Italian ambassador. This last invitation is particularly relevant for a gender curious analyst as it was the invitation of said woman, the secretary of the Italian ambassador, what led to the *forced* invitation of the Italian ambassador. An important fact for, as it was stated before, the guest list acted as a political document.

Finally, the chapter mainly categorizes and refers to women as wives. Wives, who R. Holbrooke regards more as companions than partners. Wives who are to adopt no role other than that of being the wife of a hard-working husband. With no function other than talking too much, gossiping, and waking up the servants.

However, the Lakes were another kind of marriage. One, resembling more a partnership than the mere companionship R. Holbrooke seemed to be demanding. In the case of the Lakes, the woman who R. Holbrooke refers to as *She Toni* (Packer, 2019) in the end takes part in peace demonstrations. An action in which she receives support from her husband. Through her experience in Vietnam at her husband's side, she formed her own opinion of the war. She was aware of the complexity of it all and concluded that America had no place in Vietnam.

In the end, she searched and found her own vocation, refusing: "*the notion that her husband's work mattered more than hers*" (Packer, 2019, p. 122). She refused the notion of the: "*good Foreign Service wife*" (Packer, 2019, p. 122) and the idea that American wives had no role to play. She became "matter out of place", rejected the notion of the Closed World defended by the US government, and rest of the men presented in the chapter, and placed her body where it was not expected, where it was not supposed to be: at the center of peace demonstrations and not by the side of her husband, gossiping, waking up the servants and relegating her life to one with no professional aspirations. She refused the idea of America as the innocent fighter for peace and went against the idea of the *inevitable war*. She decided to see beyond. She became part of the unwelcomed Green World.

4.2. Where are the men?

The Vietnam war and the problems encountered were always given a military centric solution. Lansdale was the only official who seemed to give importance to the conquest of the people's minds and hearts. Meanwhile, the rest of the military officials, the rest of the participants in the Vietnam war justified the death and devastation with a simple justification: "*War is hell*" (Packer, 2019, p.69). A seamless inevitable war where Americans went to fight as innocents: "*the fight sometimes doesn't even seem worth it, so bloody is the cost. But there is no choice, really, is there?*" (Packer, 2019, p.70). A war where even those who knew better would not

share their point of view. The right choice, if there ever is one where war is related, stumbled by bureaucracy.

The belief in the necessity of the war in Vietnam, the self-portrait as innocent saviors fighting for democracy displays a Closed World envisioned by those who acted and were acted upon, all of them actors with the ability to stop and think for themselves. There is a division within the characters presented in the chapter. On the one side, those who firmly believed: 1) there was no other way 2) the war was necessary 3) the US walking out victorious was the only possible outcome. On the other side, those whose judgment, character, experienced an evolution as the years passed and the war remained stagnant.

While the governmental refusal to resolve the unending war through negotiation was a common policy of both presidential administrations (Kennedy and Johnson), many (Rufus Philipps, the Lakes, our protagonist R. Holbrooke, the: “*Non-Group*” (Packer, 2019, p.125)) were aware of the unreality of the fact-information fed to the presidents and the dangers of the self-deception of military officials who refused to accept the *fact* that war could not be won. They were fighting a war with no enemy, a self-created war built on an idea. Defeat was not possible to the American policy of world hegemony, of the domino theory. An escalation kept from the eyes and ears of the public, let it not be known that the great US could be beaten. Why are the words strength and domination so powerful?

Those who felt doubt towards the war, searched for different alternatives. The “Non-Group”, a group composed by all men: “*became a safe space to explore alternative policies- that was how deep the lying and fear ran throughout the Johnson administration*” (Packer, 2019, p. 125). Harriman, among the “Wise Men”: “*could not get free of the demon urge to remain a player, as if withdrawal from the game would mean a rapid descent into profound deafness and then death. (...) Privately, he had growing doubts and began to search for a way out*” (Packer, 2019, p. 119). Tony Lake when he witnesses the devastation of the war, the death left in the battlefield he begins to doubt: “*he wondered if in different circumstances it could have been his face, and what that might mean. It was a question he wouldn't share with anyone, not even Toni. The question would make him seem weak, and it met strong inward resistance because to pursue it might lead to the conclusion that we were wrong to be here at all, and that was still unthinkable*” (Packer, 2019, p. 98).

Lake would end encouraging his wife to take part in peace demonstrations. He started to realize they would not win: “*There was no better war*” (Packer, 2019, p.121). In the end, Lake would read the history of Vietnam and its nationalism. Only then he saw the whole idea of the righteous war in Vietnam was: “*artificial, made in America*” (Packer, 2019, p.139). Even our male protagonist R.Holbrooke would unveil the American created necessity of the war, unmasked its power: “*Holbrooke wrote with a point of view. He focused on the Sisyphian irony of an American effort to get the Vietnamese to save their own country with American ideas, on an American schedule*” (Packer, 2019, p. 127).

The whole idealism, patriotism, belief of the necessary war of Vietnam was a scenery on which: “*fragile wisdom*” (Packer, 2019, p. 121) had been beaten by: “*foolish certainty*” (Packer, 2019, p. 121) in governmental affairs, in matters of security, peace and power. Every character, male character as it is a male dominated chapter portraying an *elite’s men club*, cannot visualize beyond the four walls of the entrenched Closed World. They all believed the US could not accept defeat. None of them questioned the wrongness of war as a mean to an end. Their doubt came from the knowledge that from what they had witnessed, war would not be won because it could not be won. America’s presence and determination not to leave unless victorious, as Lake would come to understand, was product of a self-built mantra of American hegemony.

The war in Vietnam was evitable, as Lake and R.Holbrooke came to see too far down the road. They unmasked the power of America’s righteous war as an idea created and therefore, malleable, evitable. A strong notion created by powerful people in the US became a see-through lie and a dent in the US’ foreign policy history. An example that can be used as a reference to shed light on the malleability of the notions of masculinity. Notions, that motivated the silence of the men who doubted, unwilling to show such weakness. Notions that as argued by Cynthia Enloe, encouraged and praised certain behaviors associated with masculinity: strength, discipline, rationality.

Strength, power, a refusal to show weakness, a silent search for a way out, are common foreplay in the area of international politics. Common adjectives in the compound world of the notions of masculinity. A fragile wisdom that allowed them in the end to see clearly the American made falsehood of the idea of “righteousness” but not beyond the narrow path of the Closed World.

5. LIFE UNDERCOVER: AMARYLLIS FOX

In the *Lysistrata* of Aristophanes the protagonist is an empowered female who rejects her reduction to a mindless victim. She presents herself and her gender as capable of doing the same tasks as men. A woman with a Green World mentality trapped in the monotonous cycle of the Closed World.

Life Undercover (Fox, 2019) is a book written by Amaryllis Fox, a biography of her life and lessons she learned as a CIA agent. A world she left after having a daughter and deciding to follow her own idea of how security and peace can be achieved and made long-lasting. She worked in a world of men, one of the grander *elite's men club*, and crafted her own path. Her own *modus operandi* in a world where the mind is the most trusted ally and a mask is always worn. A world of control and mistrust of *the Other*. Yet, a world relying on *the Other's* help and information. It is a world where communication lacks, agents must conceal their emotions and identities from the world, even from the rest of the agents. A place where they cannot be their *real, true self*: “*we're explicitly forbidden from saying anything that might suggest vulnerability*” (Fox, 2019, p.184).

A gender curious investigation following the lessons of Aristophanes, M. Bolton and C. Enloe, will befall the written life of the young CIA agent who became an adult in the nest of the CIA.

5.1. The Closed World of the CIA and the Green World of Amaryllis Fox

Amaryllis Fox came of age in the CIA where the separation between mind and body was stark. “*Mission trumps emotion*” (Fox, 2019, p. 162), “*The line of duty*” (Fox, 2019, p. 73) were common prayers of the CIA. An agency searching for control, converting into data behavior and aptitudes in order to optimize the efficiency of the Agency's work. A mind focused in the control of the body.

As A. Fox narrates, when she starts working for the CIA she reveals the analytical world in which she is being submerged. One where emotions, love lives, are to be kept at bay, controlled, not only by oneself but by the Agency. A. Fox had to undergo two “forced” practical marriages in order to make control for the Agency easier over the personal romantic life of its agents.

A. Fox describes the world of mistrust surrounding matters of security and peace towards two enemies of the Agency: *The Other* and emotions. Curiously enough, two essential elements in the operational network of the Agency.

The CIA and its *modus operandi* resemble the Closed World portrayed by *Our Man* and fought by Lysistrata. A world of intelligence officers relying on intelligence. One where, as in *Our Man*, silence is the unshakable companion of military and intelligence operations, particularly present in botched operations such as: “*Operation Merlin*” (Fox, 2019, 137). The vulnerability, weakness associated with mistakes an adjacent adjective in the yet male dominant international world of security and peace governed by the mind.

However, as narrated by A. Fox despite the efforts and rules imposed by the Agency, where it teaches its agents to be fearless, put on a mask and leave behind the weight of emotions, the recruitment cycle of the Agency shows emotions are an essential part for the success of the recruitment cycle composed of four steps. The first two steps can be related to the mind as they can be summarized as: “*Spotting*” (Fox, 2019, p. 107) and: “*Assessment*” (Fox, 2019, p. 107), analytical work.

Whilst the other two steps are dependent on the connection forged between two humans: “*Development is where the time and talent come in. Building a relationship with the target over weeks, months, years. Finding genuine commonality. Nurturing trust. Slowly revealing more and more of the trust about having “special access to Washington”.*” What leads to the final step and stage of the recruitment cycle, recruitment: “*the money shot.*” Where in the best of cases: “*It’s one of the most soulful, vulnerable moments two humans can share. A leap of faith to make the world a little safer, while putting their lives, their families’ lives, in each other’s care. Those are the relationships that last decades, that end wars, that prevent attacks. Those are the relationships that change history*” (Fox, 2019, p. 107). The recruitment cycle that commences as a Closed World dominated by the minds, ends taking a leap of faith and trusting the instinct that comes with emotions capable of forging a human connection where the outcomes and possibilities are numerous. The result un-expected.

At one point in the book, she meets with an arms broker named Jakab whom she proposes to her all-male team to recruit. At first her proposal is received with mockery as they expected that kind of suggestion from her. She receives the support of one of her male teammates, Pete,

and he is mocked by another of the male teammates, Neil: “*Hot for teacher, Petey?*” Neil asks. “*You’re starting to sound just like her.*” (Fox, 2019, p. 138). In the end, she makes a logical argument and her boss, with the amusement that comes with genuine curiosity, accepts her proposal. An alternative solution to the one offered by Neil:

“*A.FOX: “What is it the fortune cookies say?” I ask. “the only way to get rid of an enemy is to make him your friend”*”

“*Or kill him,*” Neil offers.” (Fox, 2019, p. 138)

She, and her recruitment alternative, have an impact on the team and natural conduction of the operations by her team. For as she recounts in her book: “*Slowly my team learns not to bring me a proposal for buying or stealing materials if it doesn’t include a plan to try turning the seller. And the more we try the two-track approach, the more successful we become. Soon, fully a quarter of the street-level dealers in the network are working with us to one degree or another, (...)*” (Fox, 2019, p. 140) Her decision had an impact. In the end it is an effective alternative. One where control is little, inclusivity and the number of possibilities high.

The book particularly focuses on her recruitment of Jakab, the arm’s broker with whom she develops and forges a friendship. She builds a relationship of trust using emotional intelligence. She connects with him through the small peeks of *realness* each of them allow the other to see. They did not connect through the rational exchange of information but presenting each other as real human beings, telling each other personal stories, memories of the past that led them to their current situation: “*Trust casts a powerful spell, cements a bond between speaker and recipient that holds us somehow, one to the other, as we wade into deeper water*” (Fox, 2019, p. 141)

The recruitment process of the CIA requires a validation system where the vulnerabilities gathered on the possible recruit are essential in order to assess the validity of the recruitment. However, the CIA uses vulnerabilities to gather what the recruit may need from the CIA in exchange of working for them. Our author however, connects vulnerabilities with: “*the desire to do something that matters*” (Fox, 2019, p. 145) Such is the case of one of their recruits, Karim, and Egyptian who despite hating them helps them because he believes in the evil of using nuclear weapons. His reason to help is an emotional one.

Our female protagonist and author narrates how she even managed to prevent a terrorist attack by connecting with the other operative as a parent. They met as foreigners and found trust as parents worried for the sake of their children. They ended the meeting as parents on purpose: *“instead of two opposing forces”* (Fox, 2019, p. 211)

Our author has always managed to see the benefits that come with the unexpected of the Green World as the most effective solution to acquire the objectives of the Agency and protect her country. However, it is not until she has a daughter that she decides it is time to set aside the mask given to her by the CIA and take a definitive leap of faith into the wildness of the Green World. She recounts how it was her daughter who taught her that while the way of the CIA, to present oneself before the enemy as scary can lead to security, only the way taught to her by her daughter: *“to fight by taking off my mask and showing my enemy that I’m human.”* (Fox, 2019, p.218) is the only path that leads to actual peace.

Peace, a goal towards which, as in *Lysistrata* the forged weapon of the women of Greece was their use of see-through shifts and saffron gowns (Aristophanes, 2002), in the case of *Life Undercover* the weapon she forges is the simple removal of her mask and let her humanity, her vulnerabilities speak the language of humans, where emotions are the common tongue.

Before she wrote this book, A.Fox was afraid of what unforeseen consequences her story might cause. One where the unspoken pattern of secrets accompanying matters of security and peace would be broken. One where she would present her *Real* self. She borrowed strength from the realness of her vulnerabilities and told her story. The consequences were truly un-expected: *“My words spread fast. Millions, then tens of millions, then a hundred million people watch. Soon I started receiving e-mails from veterans around the world (...). Each of them (...) trapped behind their curtains. (...) And each of them finally brave enough (...) to let the curtain drop to show themselves as human and free”* (Fox, 2019, p.224)

Amaryllis Fox became “matter out of place”, her words creating a: *“slowly growing web of peace”* (Fox, 2019, p.224). When she first became a CIA trainee there was a phrase etched in the walls of the Agency: *“And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free”* (Fox, 2019, p. 224). She now understood the power of those words. The power of the truth. When truth is spoken, power is unmasked, a feeling shared by the various authors reflected in the present paper.

5.2. Where are the women?

As the malleability of the idea of the mind as the most trusted and efficient ally to ensure the construed notion of control as necessary in the achievement of security and peace is presented in the previous pages, *Life Undercover* cannot escape the question posed by a gender curious analyst: “Where are the women?”

The footsteps of Cynthia Enloe are followed once more to unveil the presence of women in the *elite’s men club* of the CIA.

The desk officer of the CIA base in Virginia is a woman. She is the one who assigns the files. Color-coded files (blue and black) representing an interim hierarchy where the black folders lie at the cusp. She does not only assign the files but is aware of the whole functionality of the Virginian base. On her secrecy and professionalism, the correct and effective operation of the Agency resides. Her chief is a woman. The secretary who generates the code names for new operations is a woman.

Our protagonist is a woman who unveils a world reliant on the control and comfortable expectedness found in the Closed World in an Agency dedicated to the protection, security, of a country, the US. A yet, male dominated Agency where: “*Being a woman at the Agency is to belong to a small club*” (Fox, 2019, p.157). However, she argues said situation will not be perennial and is destined to change: “*All the machismo is destined to change. Not two decades hence, the unique skill set women bring to this world- the emotional intelligence, aptitude for multitasking, and keen intuition that make women such exceptional operatives- will propel female officers to the highest role of leadership across the organization*” (Fox, 2019, p.157).

As in *Our Man*, *Life Undercover* presents a gender selective world in international politics: security and peace. One where female representation is far from accomplished. A Closed World knee-deep in notions of masculinity and femininity yet highly dominated by the *idea* that the mind is the most trusted element upon which a human can rely. A dehumanization in an area of international politics dedicated to the protection of humanity. A Closed World where white heterosexual men are expected, and women still seem matter out of place. Fear of the

unexpected and the lack of control it entails. A world with a clear discomfort and mistrust towards the body and the emotions associated to it, where weakness and vulnerabilities are both an asset and a baggage.

However, there is a series of stark differences between *Our Man* and *Life Undercover*. There is a clear evolution in the role of women in global politics from one book to the other. For, in *Our Man* R.Holbrooke does not even begin to fathom the idea that American wives of members of the Foreign Service (and others) have, or even can have, a role to play in international politics (the political and gender game at play in the Vietnam war). It was not even a thought in his mind. Whilst in *Life Undercover*, even though she presents a world where women are highly and undoubtedly underrepresented, she presents herself as a fierce character guided by emotions and a strong asset of the CIA. Her presence in the prevention of arms trade of WMD business is often met with confusion as in her first encounter with Jakab: “*Twenty-six-year-old girls don’t often play in the arms dealing game*” (Fox, 2019, p. 134). Once more, she is “matter out of place” and as Lysistrata, she placed her body (Body politics) where it was not expected. She exceeded at her job where she constantly chose a different approach. Not being afraid of trying a different angle, one she believed to be more efficient (recruitment), as it proved to be in the end. Amaryllis Fox is far from being the women R.Holbrooke sees. The adjectives he uses in order to form the notions of femininity and therefore, masculinity.

R. Holbrooke never sees beyond the Closed World. He is too afraid of the lack of control a world with unforeseen possibilities can offer. For him, the mistake in the Vietnam war was not the use of war *in se*, it was the reason behind the war: an American construct. He saw the malleability of this idea but never thought to question the malleability and construction of the very idea of war. He blamed himself to be too imaginative and he yet could not imagine an alternative to war. He could not see the mistake in his constrained association of women to the body, to bad judgment and men to strength, silence over one’s weaknesses, the rationality of the mind. He never saw the possibilities of a Green World. Meanwhile A.Fox, while submerging herself in a world of data and analysis, governed by the rationality of the mind where emotions are to be left behind, relied her work and success on the emotional part in the mechanism of the CIA. In the two final steps of the recruitment cycle. Until she decided to see beyond the solid walls of the Agency, beat power with the truth and wrote a book with a Green World residing at its core, patiently waiting to be read, discovered and impact. The consequences, unlimited.

A. Fox in the end would travel back to places where she had operated as an agent, only in this case she travels to encourage through a program of reconciliation Shi'ite and Sunni militia members: “*Sitting beside resting weapons, I watch as men accustomed to firing at one another share tea and tears instead. (...) as they recognize each other as human. (...) Watch their children walk to school together in safety*” (Fox, 2019, p. 222) Humanization of a conflict instead of dehumanization of a battle. A Green World indeed.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the goal of the research paper was to bring forth an uncomfortable topic. The idea that the world is yet trapped in a web charged by notions of masculinity and femininity. The area of analysis centered around peace and security. Masculinity and femininity, two gender notions around which the *smooth* operation of the world yet revolves. International politics still heavily influenced by the dichotomy of men and women, mind and body, Closed and Green World, the idea of inevitability. All parts of the same body. Five different authors, have been analysed with gender curious eyes. After a thorough reading, a series of conclusion have been reached where Lysistrata acted as a muse.

Cynthia Enloe wanted to understand how does the world work. We live in the 21st century and yet are still entrapped by notions, ideas, that have *determined* the “way” of things, life, since the written recollection of the passage of time. The notions of masculinity and femininity are yet visible in the patterns followed by international politics. Certain international, national and domestic relations are even dependable on the maintenance of said gender notions. *Lysistrata* acting as a muse, inspired the content of this research paper and the visualization of a silent pact of acceptance of the gender narratives. Cynthia Enloe gave light to the shadows illustrating how it is an error to mistake women as mindless victims rather than empowered actors and thinkers. An error to not *see* them as part of the gender narratives. “Where are the women?” Women have always been there and Aristophanes through *Lysistrata* and Cynthia Enloe through *Banas, Beaches and Bases* have uncloaked their presence and made them visible. The *Base Women* of Cynthia Enloe and R. Holbrooke of George Packer, have illustrated how the

categorization and adjectivization of what it means to be a man and a woman is tethered to the unwinding of the course of action chosen to follow, used to mould the reality those in power decide to form. An element of the idea of *inevitability* and the lust for power.

Thus, the second conclusion reached circles around the notions of inevitability. As A. Wendt and N. Sharkey have argued, what the world is, is an idea. Therefore, the world is what we choose it to be. The world can be glum or full of light, submerged in war or aiding its neighbour. What the world is, how the world works, the ideas and notions upon which international politics are built is always a choice. The idea of inevitability is a choice and the fatality of the sealed fate therefore rendered moot. Aristophanes uses Lysistrata's defiance of the Peloponnesian War as a wakeup call directed to the Athenians, Spartans, and neighbouring countries of the un-necessity of war. He uses humour, wine, colour and festivities, the shared community of desires, to provide with an alternative to war. One where they all find a happy ending, signing with each other. The falsehood of the idea of inevitability is also highlighted by George Packer in *Our Man*. In the end, both R.Holbrooke and Lake, come to unveil the Vietnam war as a product of an American schedule, an American construct.

Yet, the idea of inevitability and its malleability does not travel alone. It goes hand-in-hand to power, the third and final conclusion. It is an idea created and supported by those in power. An instrument for the *smooth* operation of their design of international politics, of international relations. However, it has a weakness. Lysistrata fought power through action and words, a refusal to go along the statu quo. Mathew Bolton used Body Politics to illustrate how *the body* can raise awareness. It can encourage change when those bodies who are considered to be matter out of place put themselves where they are not expected, where they are not supposed to be. He uses the example of Greenham Common Camp to illustrate the impact Body Politics can have in global politics. Cynthia Enloe unmasked power by presenting the wide network where every actor, men or women, wields power through their own weapon. George Packer unveils the American power and A. Fox spoke her truth to power, and the truth, set her free. The impact of emotion, driver of the body, present in the reflection and tale told by each author where once power is unmasked, its fragility is revealed.

The world is still embedded in the confined walls of the Closed World. The idea of inevitability often assumed rather than questioned. Power still tilting the world to its side. Yet, as Aristophanes, Mathew Bolton, Cynthia Enloe, George Packer and Amaryllis Fox showed,

ordinary people can have an impact. They can choose to defy their humanly construed pre-determined nature, on their own or through collective action. It will likely be an unpleasant journey but the unlimited possibilities of the un-expected outcome, can be revolutionary. And so, I choose to attempt to start now presenting this research paper as my own *lysistratic strike*.

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