

The Feminist Imagination – Europe and Beyond



Gendered Wars, Gendered Memories

Feminist Conversations on War, Genocide and Political Violence

Edited by Ayşe Gül Altınay
and Andrea Pető

GENDERED WARS, GENDERED MEMORIES

The twentieth century has been a century of wars, genocides and violent political conflict; a century of militarization and massive destruction. It has simultaneously been a century of feminist creativity and struggle worldwide, witnessing fundamental changes in the conceptions and everyday practices of gender and sexuality. What are some of the connections between these two seemingly disparate characteristics of the past century? And how do collective memories figure into these connections? Exploring the ways in which wars and their memories are gendered, this book contributes to the feminist search for new words and new methods in understanding the intricacies of war and memory.

From the Italian and Spanish Civil Wars to military regimes in Turkey and Greece, from the Armenian genocide and the Holocaust to the wars in Abkhazia, East Asia, Iraq, Afghanistan, former Yugoslavia, Israel and Palestine, the chapters in this book address a rare selection of contexts and geographies from a wide range of disciplinary perspectives.

In recent years, feminist scholarship has fundamentally changed the ways in which pasts, particularly violent pasts, have been conceptualized and narrated. Discussing the participation of women in war, sexual violence in times of conflict, the use of visual and dramatic representations in memory research, and the creative challenges to research and writing posed by feminist scholarship, *Gendered Wars, Gendered Memories* will appeal to scholars working at the intersection of military/war, memory, and gender studies, seeking to chart this emerging territory with ‘feminist curiosity’.

Ayşe Gül Altınay is Associate Professor of Cultural Anthropology in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at Sabancı University and author of *The Myth of the Military-Nation* and co-author of *The Grandchildren: The Hidden Legacy of ‘Lost’ Armenians in Turkey*.

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The Feminist Imagination – Europe and Beyond

Series Editors: Kathy Davis, Vrije University, Amsterdam, The Netherlands and
Mary Evans, London School of Economics, UK

With a specific focus on the notion of ‘cultural translation’ and ‘travelling theory’, this series operates on the assumption that ideas are shaped by the contexts in which they emerge, as well as by the ways that they ‘travel’ across borders and are received and re-articulated in new contexts. In demonstrating the complexity of the differences (and similarities) in feminist thought throughout Europe and between Europe and other parts of the world, the books in this series highlight the ways in which intellectual and political traditions, often read as homogeneous, are more often heterogeneous. It therefore provides a forum for the latest work that engages with the European experience, illuminating the various exchanges (from the USA as well as Europe) that have informed European feminism. The series thus allows for an international discussion about the history and imaginary of Europe from perspectives within and outside Europe, examining not only Europe’s colonial legacy, but also the various forms of ‘cultural imperialism’ that have shaped societies outside Europe. Considering aspects of Europe ‘abroad’ as well as Europe ‘at home’, this series is committed to publishing work that reveals the central and continued importance of the genealogy of feminist ideas to feminism and all those interested in questions of gender.

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War, Genocide and Political Violence

Edited by

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Between 2011 and 2014, the CEU-Sabancı University Joint Academic Initiative provided a solid framework to turn these conversations into a multi-faceted project that involved developing a syllabus together, co-teaching a graduate course, conducting collaborative research, and organizing two conferences in 2012, one in Istanbul, the other in Budapest. It was with great excitement that we participated in a third conference on the same topic in 2013, independently organized by Bürge Abiral, İrem Az, Doğu Durgun, Marhabo Saparova, Sertaç Kaya Şen, and Ezgi Şeref, who had taken the course the year before.

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Cynthia Enloe, not only opened the Istanbul conference with a stimulating set of critical questions, starting with her title “Which Wartime Women are Remembered in Post-Wartime and Which Forgotten? And Why Should Feminists Care?,” but also awarded this volume with an inspiring and generous Foreword. The authors who have contributed articles and thoughtful commentaries to this book were tremendously responsive and supportive throughout the long editing and production process, making our job not only easier but also joyful. It was a privilege to work with such a creative and collegial community of feminist thinkers and writers.

The series *The Feminist Imagination—Europe and Beyond* has been a precious home for the book. We were very fortunate to receive the invaluable editorial support and contributions of Kathy Davis and Mary Evans at every step of the way, and the extremely professional, and at the same time friendly, support of the editorial and production team led by Neil Jordan. The language editing of the volume was done with great care and punctuality by Andrew Gane. Artist Endang Lestari not only gave permission for the use of her impressive work in Marjaana Jauhola’s chapter, but also allowed us to modify one for the cover of the book. Regina Mühlhäuser kindly agreed to contribute to the book with a previously published chapter and secured the copyrights for the reprinting.

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Foreword

Cynthia Enloe

The rich and provocative book that you are about to read (and that I have just finished reading in manuscript) comes out of five years of thinking and rethinking, meetings in Istanbul and Budapest, and consuming several gallons of dark coffee. In the process, Ayşe Gül Altınay and Andrea Pető have become a team, a team that has turned a diverse group of scholars into an intellectual feminist community. With this book, all of us now are invited to join their lively and crucial conversation.

What Ayşe Gül Altınay, Andrea Pető and their contributors are asking us to do is to invest fresh thought in the gendered politics of gendered silences. That is, they are asking us each to join them in seriously interrogating a double-pronged puzzle. The first prong: Who gains what sorts of power from fostering (or coercing) whose silences about what? And the second prong: Under what conditions is patriarchy rolled back (an inch, occasionally a mile) when which women decide to publicly record which wartime memories?

By posing this complicated (that is, realistic) double-pronged challenge, they are guiding us toward a collective investigation that eschews simplistic dichotomies. As each of the grittily engaging case studies and commentaries here reveals, the histories of women's experiences during and after wars are not divided between just tellings and silences. Instead, those histories are woven out into a fabric of selective tellings, accurate and inaccurate interpretations of those tellings, forgettings, misrememberings, and exploitations of stories told and stories buried.

Feminists have been pioneers in exploring silences. They have shown how, in country after country, women's silences have been made into one of the pillars of sustainable patriarchy. Women of countless cultures for generation upon generation have been told by their culture's elite men, by their fathers, by their husbands, by their older brothers, and, yes, by their mothers and grandmothers to think first of their status as a "respectable woman." The guardians of feminized respectability repeatedly tell girls and women that their status as "respectable" is their sole source of security. Yet they also are told that their status as a "respectable woman" is always fragile, forever teetering. Thus, "for their own good," they must assign priority to maintaining that feminized respectability. To protect that wobbly status, a woman must cultivate silences about anything that others—the bestowers of respectability—deem "shameful." And because the patriarchal territory of feminized shame is so vast, in practice the careful girl or woman will need to keep silent about myriad experiences.

In wartime, when societies are in upheaval, when new coping strategies must be devised daily, when community safety nets are being routinely shredded, the feminized status of “respectable woman” can be excruciatingly hard to maintain. Thus, for many girls and women during wartime and in the months and years of post-wartime, silence can seem to be the only failsafe strategy.

Nonetheless, as Altınay and Pető also make clear right from the start, both exploring silences and, along the way, breaking silences are risky enterprises.

“Never forget!” This has been one of the most common rallying cries from those urging us to prepare our minds, our economies, and our political relationships for the next war. Feminists do not nurture forgetfulness. But they—we—also have become acutely aware of the ways in which selective remembering has privileged militarized forms of masculinity, while it also has coopted militarized forms of femininity.

With this risk clearly in mind, Ayşe Gül Altınay and Andrea Pető have encouraged their contributors to devise explicitly feminist approaches to their investigations of women’s memories of, and silences about the wars that they have directly experienced. Consequently, the researchers who have contributed these fascinating accounts all have written with a consciousness of—and are committed to making us aware of—how militarism can insinuate itself into the keeping of, as well as the breaking of women’s silences about war.

This is a brave book.

Introduction

Uncomfortable Connections: Gender, Memory, War

Ayşe Gül Altınay and Andrea Pető¹

The twentieth century has been a century of wars, genocides and violent political conflict; a century of militarization and massive destruction. It has simultaneously been a century of feminist creativity and struggle worldwide, witnessing fundamental changes in the conceptions and everyday practices of gender and sexuality. What are some of the connections between these two seemingly disparate characteristics of the past century? And how do collective memories figure into these connections?

For Virginia Woolf, who wrote *Three Guineas* in the aftermath of the first great war of the century, with the second approaching, the connections were quite clear. Not only did Woolf claim that the position of the “educated man’s sister” was different in “the home of freedom” than that of her brother and she questioned his claim to “patriotism;”² but went further to suggest that women had and should have “no country.” For her, women could best help men prevent war “not by repeating your words and following your methods but by finding new words and creating new methods.”³ An essential medium for Woolf herself in her search for new words and new methods was, of course, literature—yet, this was a literature where critical engagement with memory and history remained central. “History is too much about wars; biography too much about great men,”⁴ she exclaimed, and in her diverse body of writing, Woolf practiced new methods for simultaneously challenging the ways in which women had been written out of human history, and for constructing alternative narratives to encourage, inspire and empower women. She wrote endlessly about both the genius of as well as the cruel (patriarchal) limits faced by women whose remembrance and recognition as historical subjects, she claimed, could potentially change all women’s lives. For instance, as much as she admired Shakespeare, she was curious about Shakespeare’s sister and why she

1 We would like to express our gratitude to Arlene Avakian, Ayşe Öncü, Cynthia Cockburn, Kathy Davis, Mary Evans, and Orna Sasson-Levy for their insightful comments on an earlier version of this introduction.

2 Virginia Woolf, *Three Guineas* (San Diego: Harvest, 1938), 9.

3 Ibid., 143.

4 Ibid., 107.

had died without ever writing a word. *A Room of One's Own* provided possible answers, pointing towards a hopeful future:

[Shakespeare's sister] lives in you and me, and in many other women who are not here tonight, for they are washing up the dishes and putting the children to bed. But she lives; for great poets do not die; they are continuing presences; they need only the opportunity to walk among us in the flesh. This opportunity, as I think, it is now coming within your power to give her.⁵

Where do we stand three quarters of a century after Virginia Woolf drew our attention to the intricate connections between gender, memory and war? How far have we come from histories being “too much about wars; and biography too much about great men?” Does Shakespeare's sister now have “the opportunity to walk among us in the flesh?” How about Buddha's sister, Aristotle's sister, Mevlana's sister? Where do we see the new words and new methods that can offer alternatives to the patriarchal politics of memory, of the present, and of war? Where does academia stand in recognizing Woolf's theorizing of gender, memory, and war?

Building upon Virginia Woolf's “feminist curiosity,”⁶ and inspired by contemporary feminist theorists such as Cynthia Enloe who have added new questions to hers, this book offers a diversity of cases and perspectives from different parts of the world that explore the uncomfortable connections between gender, memory and war. As uncomfortable as these connections were when Woolf explored them in between the two great wars, in the footsteps of scores of other women before her (Zabel Yesayan, Jane Adams, Emma Goldman to name just a few), they continue to cause unease, and even fury. Or they are met with silent resistance. Many of the chapters in this book analyze precisely the ongoing discomfort in the gendered narratives of war and militarism, or the silent resistance to them, not only in contemporary political debates, but in academic inquiry as well. The chapters are written from a wide range of disciplinary perspectives and address a rare selection of contexts and geographies. From oral history to archival research to literary analysis, they draw from various research methodologies and introduce new sources.

In what follows, we first share the story of this book, situating it in the intersecting fields of gender studies, memory studies and war/militarism studies starting with a personal story of how we came to edit this volume. We then discuss the possible contributions of the book through three cross-cutting themes: (un)silencing, intersectionality and “situated knowledges.”⁷ While analyzing silence and the efforts “to unsilence” has a lot to do with the search for “new words,”

5 Ibid., 112.

6 Cynthia Enloe, *The Curious Feminist: Searching for Women in a New Age of Empire* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).

7 Donna J. Haraway, “Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective,” in Donna J. Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (New York: Routledge, 1991), 183–201.

intersectionality and “situated knowledges” are themselves new words that mark creative possibilities for new methods. Altogether, we aim to identify and make modest contributions to the feminist search for new words and new methods in understanding the intricacies of war and memory.

Uncomfortable Histories, Unexpected Connections: The Book

As a way of looking back on personal histories that led to this book and into the future simultaneously, we would like to share two striking instances that impressed on us, the editors of this volume, the politics of memory and the complicated politics of feminist unsilencing projects. When Andrea Pető started to put together a “citation list” for a university report, she was astonished to see that an article she had written on rapes committed by the Red Army in Hungary around 1944–1945 was her most cited article by far (both the original Hungarian, as well as its translated versions in German and English).⁸ It was especially stunning that most of the citations of this article on “sexual violence” were in journals of history, and not of gender studies. With this feminist memory work, unsilencing a particular case of sexual violence faced by Hungarian women during the Second World War, Andrea Pető had become one of the most quoted historians by conservative and right wing academics and journalists, especially during the month of February, which marks Budapest’s liberation in 1945, and the month of April, when the war in Hungary ended in 1945.

Responses to the same article from the transnational gender studies community were mixed. For instance, when Andrea Pető discussed the troubling connections between different narrative frames regarding the sexual violence committed by Red Army soldiers during a gender studies summer school in Ukraine in 2004, her talk was followed by an uncomfortable silence. The silence was ultimately broken by a participant who enthusiastically shared her family story, focusing on the stories of her grandfathers who had fought and suffered during the Second World War fighting against Nazism. The silence and the story that followed, which despite being off-message received enthusiastic applause from the women’s rights activists and academics in the audience, constituted yet another reminder of the complicated nature of feminist unsilencing projects.

In post-1989 East Europe, there has been a diverse “market” (academic and political) for stories of brutality by the Red Army. The increasing circulation of stories of women who saw or heard other women raped have contributed to the formation of national martyrology. However, some of the women who had experienced sexual violence, such as Jewish women who were greeting the Red Army as liberators but were also raped by them, continued their silence sometimes

8 Andrea Pető, “Memory and the Narrative of Rape in Budapest and Vienna,” in *Life after Death: Approaches to a Cultural and Social History of Europe during the 1940s and 1950s*, eds. Dirk Schumann and Richard Bessel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 129–149.

in order not to participate in the invalidation of the Red Army's role in the ending of the war. Silence for them was a form of resistance to the existing politics of memory. This story also underlines that often uneasy coalitions underlie new memory work. Feminist memory work is faced with the challenge of understanding the different layers of silencing (often self-silencing) and the politics of unsilencing, a challenge that can sometimes raise serious ethical questions (see Attarian, Chapter 13).

Another striking moment of such awareness was our first encounter with each other at a gender studies workshop in Azerbaijan more than a decade ago. When Ayşe Gül Altınay gave a talk on the recent development of feminist historiography in Turkey, mentioning the "discovery" of the Ottoman women's movement that included Kurdish and Armenian feminist activists, alongside those who identified as Turkish and Muslim, there was uproar in the audience.⁹ The conveners called for an immediate break to the workshop and asked her to stop her discussion of Ottoman Armenian feminists and move on to another topic. With Andrea Pető's helpful interventions, the group of gender studies academics in the room calmed down and the workshop was able to resume. Stunned by the aggressive response to a brief mention of Armenian feminists from a century ago in another state (as Azerbaijan had never become a part of the Ottoman Empire), Altınay realized how little she had reflected on the unexpected connections and disjunctures between the politics of memory in different sites. She had notably missed the "attentiveness to the border-transcending dimensions of remembering and forgetting" that Astrid Erll calls for in her discussion of "transcultural memory."¹⁰ In 2001, when this meeting was taking place, the naming of the "events of 1915" as "the Armenian genocide" among gender studies scholars in Turkey could have constituted serious debate, but the recognition of Ottoman Armenian feminists was becoming common place. At that point, Altınay herself was not using the term "genocide" and not yet working on its contested memories. Yet, for the Azeri gender studies scholars, who had recently experienced the war between Azerbaijan and Armenia over the contested Karabagh province, any mention of Armenians (even Armenian feminists from a century ago) was regarded as "offensive."

These two moments in our own personal histories as feminist scholars working on contested memories highlight the significance of context and positionality, as well as the dynamic nature of memory as "transcultural" and "multidirectional." In the words of Astrid Erll, "memory fundamentally means movement: traffic between individual and collective levels of remembering, circulation among social, medial, and semantic dimensions."¹¹ Michael Rothberg's concept of "multidirectional memory" forces us to reflect also on the traffic between different memory cultures and politics.¹² How

9 See Ayşe Gül Altınay, "Centennial Challenges: Denationalizing and Gendering Histories of War and Genocide," *European Journal of Women's Studies* 21 (2014): 307–312.

10 Astrid Erll, "Travelling Memory," *Parallax, Special Issue: "Transcultural Memory"* 17 (2011): 15.

11 Ibid., 15

12 Michael Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization* (Redwood City: Stanford University Press, 2009).

do collective memories of war, genocide, colonialism, slavery, military interventions, and gendered violence interact with one another? How do concepts and politics of memory travel between seemingly disparate sites? And what are the implications of such travel for feminist memory politics at each site? These are some of the questions that remain open for future research in this field. Yet another open question is how to integrate the growing field of sexuality studies and queer theory into feminist memory work.¹³ We hope that we will soon be witnessing new research exploring these questions, expanding our understanding of sources, silences and the interconnectedness of the seemingly disparate struggles of memory worldwide.

In the course of our joint research project *Gendered Memories of War and Political Violence*¹⁴ that has culminated into this book, we organized international conferences in Istanbul and Budapest. In each case, we were overwhelmed by the number, quality and diversity of the applications, and had the hard task of “rejecting” the majority of them due to limited space. This unprecedented interest signals two developments: First, it points to the growing scholarship and interest in the particular intersection of militarism/war, memory, and gender studies. Second, it signals the lack of opportunities for scholars researching this intersection to come together, present, share, and debate their work. We envision this book, which has resulted from such an interaction, to also be a facilitator for the future development of this emerging field. In the next section, we discuss gendered knowledge production and silencing in the emerging feminist scholarship.

Gendered Politics of Knowledge Production on War and Memory

In recent years, feminist scholarship has fundamentally changed the ways in which pasts, particularly violent pasts, have been conceptualized and narrated.¹⁵ Critical feminist historiographies have challenged “war stories” as we know them, and the growing field of feminist memory studies has alerted us to the ways in which the past shapes the present, and all of “us” in the present, in multiple and deeply gendered ways.

13 For instance, see Dilara Çalışkan’s discussion of “queer postmemory” in “Queer Mothers and Daughters: The Role of Queer Kinship in the Everyday Lives of Trans Sex Worker Women in Istanbul” (Unpublished MA Thesis, Sabancı University, Istanbul, 2014).

14 The joint research and teaching project was supported by the CEU-Sabancı University Joint Academic Initiative and included the development of a course syllabus to be taught at Central European University and Sabancı University, two international conferences, faculty exchange and graduate student exchange for conferences. See <http://myweb.sabanciuniv.edu/genderconf/> for the programs of the conferences, including a third young researchers conference in Istanbul, organized independently by a group of graduate students who had taken the course “Gendered Memories of War and Political Violence.”

15 See reflections on the feminist legacies and interventions in the centennial of the First World War in Ayşe Gül Altınay and Andrea Pető, eds., “Feminist Questions at the Centennial of the First World War Open Forum,” *European Journal of Women’s Studies* 4 (2014): 293–312.

This book comes out of and aims to contribute to three interdisciplinary research fields: gender studies, memory studies, and war/militarism studies. Although there has been growing interaction between these fields in recent years, the particular intersection between war/militarism, gender, and memory that we explore in this book is yet to be developed theoretically and methodologically.

Let us first start by unpacking war/militarism studies and their interaction with memory and gender studies. War studies and militarism studies do not necessarily overlap. The English-speaking war studies field—even when coupled with “peace” and named “war and peace studies”—typically centers around concepts such as security, conflict, (dis)armament and terrorism, and allies closely with international relations, political science, and military history. In the well-established war/peace studies departments in major universities on both sides of the Atlantic, only rarely does one encounter the terms “militarism” or “militarization,” except in the context of Japanese or German militarism earlier in the century or militarization of the Eastern Bloc during the Cold War. Hence, the term “militarism” already signals a critical departure from the hegemonic field of war studies, drawing attention to the continuum between war and peace, as well as between the military and civilian realms. Scholars that critically analyze militarist discourses and processes of militarization emphasize the shaping of what is referred to as “civilian life” by practices, institutions, and values that relate to the military. Perhaps not surprisingly, this critical departure often includes a critical feminist lens that also draws on the centrality of gender in the militarization of society in all its realms.

Since the 1980s, the field of war/militarism studies has faced significant challenges posed by pioneering works by feminist scholars such as Betty Reardon and Cynthia Enloe, who have convincingly argued for the need to understand the role of femininities and masculinities in processes of militarization and war-making.¹⁶ Drawing attention to the mutual shaping between gender ideologies, militarism and nationalism, feminist scholarship has had far-reaching impact on a number of disciplines, such as political science, international relations, political economy, law, anthropology, sociology, and gender studies, as well as on the non-governmental organizations (NGO) and United Nations communities worldwide. The adoption of the landmark UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women and peace has perhaps been the most visible and substantial example of this impact.¹⁷

Yet, when one reviews the major works in this growing field of critical war/militarism studies from a feminist perspective, rarely does one see substantial

16 Cynthia Enloe, *Does Khaki Become You? The Militarization of Women's Lives* (London: Pluto Press, 1983); Betty Reardon, *Sexism and the War System* (New York: Columbia University, Teachers College Press, 1985); Cynthia Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).

17 Feminist interventions in international law not only resulted in the acknowledgment of sexual violence as a war crime but also included other measures, such as the inclusion of women's groups in peace and post-conflict processes (see Parts I and III in this volume.)

engagement with memory studies. In other words, feminist analyses of war and militarism are yet to take seriously the ways in which gendered memories and memorializations of past wars shape contemporary lives and politics, as well as the ongoing processes of militarization. A striking example of this lack of engagement with memory studies is that a title search in the prestigious *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, which has come out of the need to gender war, militarism and international studies, reveals that only one article with “memory” in its title, and two others marked with the keyword “memory,” have been published in the journal between 1999 and 2014. Similarly, the major collections of feminist war and militarism scholarship in recent years, mention memory only casually.¹⁸

In turn, major texts in collective memory studies rarely engage gender, let alone the growing literature on gender and war/militarism. Despite the fact that almost 25 years have passed since the English publication of Frigga Haug and her colleagues’ pioneering feminist theorizing of memory in *Female Sexualization: A Collective Work of Memory* (*Sexualisierung: Frauenformen*) and more than a decade since Selma Leydesdorff, Luisa Passerini and Paul Thompson’s influential volume *Gender and Memory*, major memory studies collections scarcely mention gender if they do at all.¹⁹ An exceptional effort to overcome the gender-blindness that continues to shape this field is the reader *Memory: Histories, Theories, Debates* edited by Susannah Radstone and Bill Schwarz, that has two chapters that offer inspiring gender analyses, yet in the remaining 28 chapters of the reader, the term gender (and hence, gender analysis) is almost non-existent. Among the major journals in the field, *History & Memory* has published no article with the term “gender” or “women/men” in its title, between its first issue in 1996 till 2014 (only five with “women” or “feminism” among subject terms) and *Memory Studies* has published only one article with “gender” in the title between 2008, when the journal started coming out, and 2014 (with four others having “women” either in the title or among the keywords). The good news is that, beyond these readers and journals where gender is hardly visible, there is a growing body of separate

18 For instance, the term “memory” does not appear more than three times in the following prominent collections of contemporary feminist scholarship on war and militarism: Carol Cohn, ed., *Women and Wars* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013); Kathleen Kuehnast, Chantal de Jonge Oudraat, and Helga Hernes, eds., *Women and War: Power and Protection in the 21st Century* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2011); Fionnuala Ní Aoláin, Dina Francesca Haynes, and Naomi Cahn, eds., *On the Frontlines: Gender, War, and Post-Conflict Process* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Laura Sjoberg and Sandra Via, eds., *Gender, War and Militarism: Feminist Perspectives* (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger Security International, 2010).

19 For example see, Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning, eds., *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2008); Jeffrey K. Olick, Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi and Daniel Levy, eds., *The Collective Memory Reader* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Alexander Laban Hinton, Thomas La Pointe and Douglas Irvin-Erickson, eds., *Hidden Genocides: Power, Knowledge, Memory* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2014).

feminist literature on gender and memory, part of it focusing on war/militarism, that has also inspired this volume.

Lynne Hanley's pioneering *Writing War: Fiction, Gender, and Memory*; Joanna Bourke's unsettling analysis of how men remember "killing" and other wartime experiences; Marianne Hirsch's innovative feminist theorizing of memory and post-memory in connection with the Holocaust and beyond; the growing body of literature on gendered aspects of the Holocaust, its memory and memorialization; Selma Leydesdorff's research on gender and memory in relation to the war in former-Yugoslavia; Veena Das's insightful theorization of the gendered memories of the partition in South Asia; feminist analyses of the memories of war and state violence in the Middle East by Nadjé Al-Ali and others; the impressive body of memory work on the sexual slavery of women, known as the "Comfort Women," in Asia during the Second World War; Susan Jeffords and Marita Sturken's analyses of the influential medium of popular culture and film in the making of the collective memory of war; Macarena Gomez-Barris's feminist analysis of state violence and cultural memory in Chile; and Diana Taylor's innovative discussion of performance, cultural memory, trauma and state violence in the Americas constitute some of the reference points that have inspired new research and thinking on gender, memory and war.²⁰

20 Some of the pioneering work in this field include: Renate Bridenthal, Atina Grossmann and Marion Kaplan, eds., *When Biology Became Destiny: Women in Weimar and Nazi Germany* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1984); Susan Jeffords, *The Remasculinization of America: Gender and the Vietnam War* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989); Lynne Hanley, *Writing War: Fiction, Gender, Memory* (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1991); Marita Sturken, *Tangled Memories: The Vietnam War, the AIDS Epidemic, and the Politics of Remembering* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997); Dalia Ofer and Lenore J. Weitzman, eds., *Women in the Holocaust* (Binghamton, NY: Vail Ballou Press, 1998); Joanna Bourke, *An Intimate History of Killing: Face-to-Face Killing in 20th Century Warfare* (New York: Basic Books, 1999); Ronit Lentin, *Israel and the Daughters of the Shoah: Reoccupying the Territories of Silence* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2001); Anna Reading, *The Social Inheritance of the Holocaust: Gender, Culture, and Memory* (London: Palgrave, 2002); Yoshimi Yoshiaki, *Comfort Women: Sexual Slavery in the Japanese Military during World War II*, trans. Suzanne O'Brien (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002); Marianne Hirsch and Valerie Smith, eds., "Gender and Cultural Memory," Special Issue of *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 28 (2002); Diana Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003); Nadjé Sadig Al-Ali, *Iraqi Women: Untold Stories from 1948 to the Present* (London: Zed Books, 2007); Rosemary Sayigh, "Women's Nakba Stories: Between Being and Knowing," in *Nakba: Palestine, 1948, and the Claims of Memory*, eds. Ahmad H. Sa'di and Lila Abu-Lughod (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 135–158; Veena Das, *Life and Words: Violence and Descent into the Ordinary* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007); Macarena Gomez-Barris, *Where Memory Dwells: Culture and State Violence in Chile* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009); Janet Liebman Jacobs, *Memorializing the Holocaust: Gender, Genocide and Collective Memory* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2011); Selma Leydesdorff, *Surviving the Bosnian Genocide: The Women of Srebrenica Speak*, trans. Kay

Within gender studies, a dynamic and diverse research field, the main challenge has been to address differences among women, especially in their relationship with power and violence. Women perpetrators and soldiers, for instance, have only recently become subjects of critical inquiry and scholars engaged in this field demonstrate how much scholarly inquiry is embedded in contemporary political debates (see Part II and Part III of this volume). Moreover, one can see a tendency for the feminist literature on war and militarism to remain isolated from the growing body of literature on gender, bodies and sexualities.

Unsilencing, Intersectionality, Situated Knowledges

Virginia Woolf has not been alone in her cry against the great silencing of women in collective memories and histories. Feminist scholarship has historically been, among other things, a struggle for unsilencing—as well as a struggle for theorizing the intimate connections between silencing (from history and memory) and ongoing marginalization. Yet, as can be said of Woolf's frequent conceptualization of “woman” in the singular, the efforts to “unsilence” women as historical subjects have themselves hardly been innocent of silencing and marginalization (of women and other subjugated groups). As Catherine Lutz succinctly puts it, “feminist margins have their own margins.”²¹ How can we understand the multiple layers of silencing in memories of wars? What do we choose to “unsilence” through our political and academic interventions? Who are the “subjects” who are remembered, rehistoricized, rethought in feminist memory work? Which women are remembered, which women continue to remain absent from our imagination, research and writing? What, in other words, are the politics of our own “unsilencing” projects? And who are “we,” in the first place? Asking these questions, among others, the chapters in this book struggle with the concept of “silencing,” searching for “new words and new methods” for remembering, reminding and retheorizing the gendering of wars, of memories, and of silences themselves.

“Struggle” has multiple connotations here. One important connotation is “not taking for granted”—neither the concept of silence and the gendered politics of silencing, nor the feminist politics of unsilencing. Some of the authors in this volume are themselves engaged in such feminist politics, while not uncritically approaching “woman/women” as a unified category, nor remaining oblivious to the complicated politics of “unsilencing.” The analyses in the following chapters expand the feminist project of “unsilencing” women and the workings of gender from the histories and memories of war, often drawing on two significant

Richardson (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011); Marianne Hirsch, *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture after the Holocaust* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).

21 Catherine Lutz, “The Gender of Theory,” in *Women Writing Culture*, eds. Ruth Behar and Deborah A. Gordon (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 251.

contributions of feminist theory in recent decades: intersectionality and “situated knowledges.” It would not be possible—or even desirable—to bring together all of the authors of the volume under a single theoretical umbrella, but it is possible to argue that we share a search, in which the triple act of unsilencing, complicating the category “woman” through an intersectional lens, and reflecting on the question of positionality (and the larger question of how knowledge is produced) together constitute the key directions.

Especially since Kimberlé Crenshaw’s use of the term in her 1989 article, “intersectionality” has received unprecedented attention and adoption in feminist critique in and outside of academia.²² How should feminists conceptualize the “intersecting” structures of inequality and categories of identification among women, especially those based on class, “race,” ethnicity and sexuality? And how can we imagine a feminist movement that does not assume a universal subjecthood (woman) and privilege gender as a category of analysis exclusive from other categories?²³ These are some of the questions guiding the search for intersectional analyses, methodologies, and solidarities in the past decades. In their recent review of the productive concept of intersectionality, Cho, Crenshaw and McCall argue that “intersectionality was introduced in the late 1980s as a heuristic term to focus attention on the vexed dynamics of difference and the solidarities of sameness in the context of antidiscrimination and social movement politics.”²⁴ The term may be recent, but the thinking behind is not, and can be found in contexts other than academic feminist practice. As Ann Phoenix and Pamela Pattynama remind us, “long before the term ‘intersectionality’ was coined in 1989 by Kimberlé Crenshaw, the concept it denotes had been employed in feminist work particularly women of color on how women are simultaneously positioned as women and, for example, as black, working-class, lesbian or colonial subjects.”²⁵

Critiques of knowledge production processes have accompanied the search for feminist theories and methodologies that take intersectionality seriously. Taking intersectionality seriously requires simultaneous critical attention to context, positionality and multiple structures of inequality. The main challenge

22 Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics,” *The University of Chicago Legal Forum* 140 (1989): 139–167. Also see Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, “Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color,” *Stanford Law Review* 43:6 (1991): 1241–1299.

23 See Joan Scott, “Gender: A Useful Category of Analysis,” *American Historical Review* 91 (1986): 1053–1075. For a critical overview of the problematic uses of gender, including its ongoing association with women, see Joan Scott “Millennial Fantasies: The Future of ‘Gender’ in the 21st Century,” in *Gender: die Tücken einer Kategorie*, eds. Claudia Honegger and Caroline Arni (Zurich: Chronos, 2001), 19–38.

24 Sumi Cho, Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, and Leslie McCall, “Toward a Field of Intersectionality Studies: Theory, Applications, and Praxis,” *Signs* 38 (2013): 787.

25 Ann Phoenix and Pamela Pattynama, “Intersectionality,” *European Journal of Women’s Studies* 13 (2006): 187.

in this search has been to articulate an epistemological framework that neither essentializes, dehistoricizes, and universalizes gender differences (“woman’s point of view,” “women’s voices,” etc.), nor falls into a radical relativism where all viewpoints are considered to be equal. In the strong words of Donna Haraway, “relativism is the perfect mirror twin of totalization in the ideologies of objectivity; both deny the stakes in location, embodiment, and partial perspective, both make it impossible to see well. Relativism and totalization are both ‘god-tricks’ promising vision from everywhere and nowhere equally and fully.”²⁶ To move away from the “god-trick” of relativism and totalizing objectivism, Haraway has argued for “embodied feminist objectivity” or “positioned rationality” that regards all knowledge as being situated, all perspective as partial, and “subjugated” standpoints as promising “more adequate, sustained, objective, transforming accounts of the world.”²⁷ The quotations around the term “subjugated” signal a warning against taking its connotations for granted and against associating it with various categories of identification. “Subjugation is not grounds for an ontology,” Haraway reminds us, “it might be a visual clue.”²⁸ Her project, as is ours, is to develop critical positionings that problematize “single vision,” whether it is the disembodied, everywhere-and-nowhere-at-the-same-time vision of objectivism or the single, universalizing vision of a “woman’s perspective.”

The feminist situated knowledges to which we hope this volume will contribute are about developing “politics and epistemologies of location, positioning, and situating, where partiality and not universality is the condition of being heard.”²⁹ In what follows, we discuss the ways in which the different chapters in this volume locate gendered silences in histories and memories of war, position the various struggles of women and feminists for remembering and memorializing, and situate their own critical feminist vision in the larger politics of memory and memory work.

Silences, Sources, and the Struggles for Memory

Many of the chapters in this volume are first and foremost concerned with understanding the production of historical and mnemonic silences. Silences—especially silences in the histories and memories of wars that shape contemporary lives—are deeply gendered and deeply political, and unsilencing can be a form of radical, transformative political intervention—as our personal examples discussed above illustrate. Yet, both silences and projects of unsilencing need to be contextualized, situated, and examined through critical “feminist curious” lenses.

26 Haraway, “Situated Knowledges,” 191.

27 Ibid., 191.

28 Ibid., 193.

29 Ibid., 195.