

## **Peace research from a feminist and bottom-up perspective<sup>1</sup>**

Úrsula Oswald Spring, *Centre for Regional Multidisciplinary Research* at the *National Autonomous University of Mexico* (CRIM-UNAM); uoswald@gmail.com

### **1) What is your approach to studying peace and peacebuilding and how does it compare with what your regard are the main alternative approaches?**

The concept of a ‘sustainable-engendered peace’ refers to the structural factors related to long-term violence, deeply embedded in the patriarchal system and characterized by authoritarianism, exclusion, discrimination, exploitation and violence. This dominant social structure affects values such as equity, equality and justice, and often even threatens the survival of individuals and social groups. This dominant system has also concentrated on the wealth provided by the earth, which is being owned or controlled by a small group of oligarchs who own or manage multinational enterprises and thus influence governments to respect and implement their interests.

The sources of threats have been consolidated over thousands of years by patriarchal institutions, controls of religious bodies, through self-identified beliefs and social representations, and totalitarian exercises of power. They have also affected natural resources, climate and ecosystem services. The concept of a sustainable-engendered peace attempts to reach an understanding of the deeply anchored links between patriarchy and the war system (Reardon 1980) that are related to the physical, social and cultural threats of the dominant values and behavior in the Anthropocene. It further explores the potential for a concept of holistic and cosmopolitan peace that can challenge the root causes of violence and destruction, and promotes the goal of just and equal power structures for human beings and nature from a bottom-up perspective of the people, and especially of women and girls.

For thousands of years, patriarchy has developed a complex system of power, exploitation and control, where the economy, politics, wars, culture, religious beliefs, identity, and psychosocial roots have been adapted to historical and regional differences. The dominant factors of this system are authoritarianism, control, violence, exclusion, discrimination, exploitation, and the concentration of wealth. The reference object refers to all people with no power or limited access to power at the global and local level, such as women, the indigenous peoples, youth, the elderly, the unemployed, the poor, and the vulnerable.

The values at risk are established gender relations (Lagarde 1990; Lamas 1996), deeply rooted in the dominant social representations of gender (Jodelet 1991; Serrano 2010), which are manipulated by an oligarchy (Stiglitz 2010; Yiamouyiannis 2013) and reinforced by religious fundamentalism, hierarchical churches (Gutiérrez 2013), and schools (Gramsci 1975, 1998). This social structure affects values such as equity, equality, solidarity, justice (Truong et al. 2014), cultural identity (Serrano 2014), and often even the survival of individuals and social groups (Oswald 1994). The sources of threats have been consolidated over thousands of years by patriarchal institutions (Folbre 2006), religious controls (Jasper 2013), and the totalitarian exercise of power (Held 2004).

Patriarchy must be understood historically as being imposed on women through violence (via conquest, spoliation, rape, and femicide), discrimination (by laws and rules), subordination (through economic and sexual control), hierarchy (by the notion of *pater familias*, today represented by the global oligarchy), inequality (in education, income, leisure and political power), through exclusion (patrilineal and patrilocal inheritance and exclusive globalization), and through social representations (constructed self-discipline and internalization of gender roles).

Faced with these deeply-rooted global threats, the questions are: how may the widened concept of a 'sustainable-engendered peace' provide a deeper understanding and new conceptual tools so that alternatives may be proposed for a transition to sustainable development? How may a sustainable-engendered peace cope with and overcome the present economic and power structure and the global threats to the survival to humankind and planet Earth in the era of the Anthropocene?

A sustained peacebuilding process needs to address these root causes of social and physical conflict and discrimination. The present system of unequal access to natural and social resources has aggravated the structural imbalance (Stiglitz 2007). The World Bank (2014) has indicated that the very richest became wealthier during and after the financial crises of 2008, while among the majority of the world population many lost their well-being, jobs and income. On the other hand, a 'destructive globalization' (Woodward 2000) is increasing the cleavage between poor and rich in North and South (Howell 2007). Globalization means the international integration of raw materials, products, services, finances, and knowledge through a free-market system, trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights (TRIPs), protection by patents, and commercial or non-commercial barriers (Serrano 2011, 2016) that bring disadvantages for the poorer countries and the system of patents. The South had to open its borders and its trade; simultaneously, the industrialized countries have imposed increasing controls, subsidies and limits on their economic and human interchanges. Militarized borders (Schomerus/de Vries 2014), the brain drain (Tigau 2012), and a *business-as-usual* and the neo-liberal system has widened the gap not only between industrialized and developing countries, but also between social classes within the industrialized countries. Ideologically, it has strengthened a global world view of consumerism, fashion, trademarks, violence and fake modernity, where cultural diversity is subsumed into the monopolized market system with a single goal: to create a unique system of dominance or a hegemony controlled by transnational enterprises and supported by the remaining superpower.

During these thousands of years of evolution, patriarchy also adapted to regional and social differences, even though its basic roots continue to be violence, discrimination, domination, exploitation, and oppression in household and society, in short, a system of waging war in order to maintain the dominant power relationships. Its vertical structure integrated cultural and ritual elements into its system of rule in Mesopotamia, China, Meso-America, the Roman Empire, and later in the European conquest of America, Asia, and Africa. It replaced the traditional legal forms of social coexistence and imposed worldwide a single system of rule controlled by the Bretton Woods institutions: the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization and by the so-called 'Washington Consensus'.

Within these patriarchal social representations and exercises of power, empires, feudalism, conquest, monarchies, mercantilism, capitalism, and socialism emerged as a global basis for the

current neo-liberal globalization controlled to a large extent by corporate enterprises, based on occidental international laws, and military control by the US. In the mid-twentieth century a postmodern globalization emerged that is largely influenced and controlled by neo-liberal multinational oligarchies, authoritarian governments and hierarchical structured and exclusive religions. The global interests of a transnational oligarchy (Lander 2011), supported by hegemonic governments, represent the present patriarchal system, where warfare, the corporate economy and political power determine the present neo-liberal process of globalization.

With this historical construction of gender differentiation of male-ness and women-ness (Mies 1986), together with the glass ceiling for women, patriarchy spread from within the family structure upwards to the level of the kingdom, e.g. in the Greek democracy, the Roman Empire, in feudalism, mercantilism and capitalism (Reardon/Snauwaert 2015a, 2015b). Undoubtedly, during the last millennia the evolution and consolidation of patriarchy has changed and became regionally differentiated. Nevertheless, there are some dominant common factors: the ideological control mechanisms around the world have both socio-biological and social constructivist explanations. While the first uses genetics and biology to explain male control, the second focuses on socially constructed gender roles, which have changed over time, could change further, and must be abolished in order to allow the creation of an engendered security and peace.

Anthropologists have suggested that most hunters and gatherers and early agricultural societies were egalitarian and cooperative between genders (Hughes/Hughes 2001). Following social and technological innovations (irrigation, cities, and technology), social stratification, fatherhood, and sexual control over women and girls became dominant (Kraemer 1991). In economic terms, Hartmann (1976) locates the interrelationship between patriarchy and female sub-ordination at the material level, where the control of women's labor, in both the private and public spheres, is in the hands of men. Usually, job segregation by gender means that "economic class differences and patriarchal social control are maintained. Job segregation and the wage differentials tend to keep women connected to and partially dependent on men, so that even though we have a high divorce rate, the practice of marriage is perpetuated" (Hartmann 1976: 147) and therefore also is the concept of reproduction.

Edholm, Harris and Young (1972) distinguish three forms of the concept of reproduction: 1. social reproduction that includes the reproduction of the total conditions of production; 2. the reproduction of the labor force, and 3. the biological reproduction. This distinction helps to combat the Marxist emphasis on the importance of the economy for reproduction, and to understand that patriarchy goes far beyond the rise of capitalism. Various feminists have defined the evolution of this dominant social system, which can be found globally in different temporal and spatial frameworks, as patriarchy. It is "the power of the fathers: a familial-social, ideological, political system in which men—by force, direct pressure, or through ritual, tradition, law and language, customs, etiquette, education, and the division of labor, determine what part women shall or shall not play, and in which the female is subsumed under the male?" (Benett 2006: 55).

**2) What other approaches do you think also explains the extent of peace and the effectiveness of various options to building peace. In what ways are the alternative approaches complimentary and in what ways are they incompatible with your approach**

The approach of Galtung and its positive, structural and cultural peace approach, whenever structural peace has not focused sufficiently on the essential 'gender apartheid' of the global corporate economy. This system includes various forms of violence against women that have become corporately organized. Frequently human trafficking, sweatshops and the arms trade are branches of the same corporation. However, all this money obtained illegally from organized crime, tax evasion, unequal terms of trade, and so on is laundered in the same corporate global financial system. 'Structural peace' means equity in economic terms, well-being in social interactions, and equality and lack of discrimination at the personal, family, social, regional and international levels.

Senghaas (1997) proposed five conditions among nations to achieve a lasting peace: positive interdependence, symmetry of interdependence, homology, and entropy, together with common softly-regulating institutions that are able to promote a 'civilisatory hexagon'. Peacekeeping and its supervision can be considered a civilising project. His civilisatory hexagon consists of six elements: the disarmament of citizens, the rule of law, democratic participation, social justice, a culture of constructive conflict, and interdependencies and control of emotions (Senghaas 1997; 2013). Nevertheless also in this approach a critical gender approach is missing to deal with the long-term structural discrimination and violence based on gender roles and their acquired social representations.

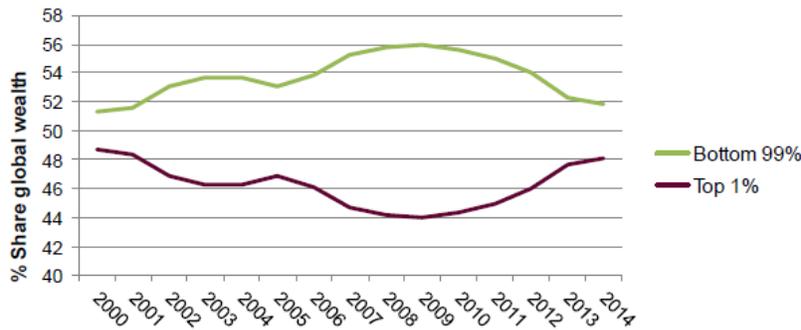
The third approach is related to sustainable peace where there is the problem of the territorial ownership of resources (often located in the South), and the necessity of negotiating prices that are just and not only promote the conservation of existing resources but also lead to integrated development for everyone. As the deterioration of prices in natural resources has shown, the paradigm of sustainable development is a benchmark but not a reality in the present system of production (Lelé 1991; The Great Debate Schools Programme 2011). When the ongoing processes of development between 1980 and 2005 are compared, there is no sustainability: resource intensity was reduced by twenty-five per cent, population increased by forty per cent, extraction of raw material increased by fifty per cent, and global *gross domestic product* (GDP) augmented by as much as 125 per cent (SERI 2010). Our ecological footprint in 2014 was equivalent to the depletion of 1.5 planets (WWF 2014), even though we have only one that has favorable conditions for human life. In the distant past, the fossil record shows that for every thousand mammals, only one became extinct. The current extinction rate is a thousand times greater than the fossil record, and the future is expected to be still ten times more destructive than the present one (MA 2005). During the last six decades of the Anthropocene through multinational enterprises, about nine million km<sup>2</sup> of soil (an area roughly the size of China) were moderately degraded and three million km<sup>2</sup> were severely degraded, losing their original biological function. A healthy soil is a basic precondition for living organisms (FAO 2012).

Most feminist theories try to explain women's subordination by analyzing the intersections between sexism, racism, heterosexism, and ethnic and class oppression, while Marxist feminists include economic domination. Ecofeminists believe that similar power relationships between dominance, greed, exploitation, and violence (D'Eaubonne 1974; Mies 1986; Warren 1997) cause environmental destruction. Other approaches envision the possibility of overcoming such subordination through both individual and collective resistance, and through empowerment.

Allen (1998, 1999, 2008, 2011), Hartsock (1983, 1996), and Young (1992) have analyzed the concept of power as a central element in understanding this subordination and in discovering the limits to and potential for a sustainable-engendered peace and worldview.

A fourth way to achieve greater peace is to combat unequal access to natural, socioeconomic, political, and cultural resources. Oxfam (2016) reports that social inequality has increased and created a world, where 1% of the top rich get 48% of global wealth, while 99% must share 52%. Within these 52% almost all is owned by the richest 20%, remaining just 5.5% for the 80% of world population. Only 62 people own as much wealth as half of the world population (Figure 1). Also in this approach it is necessary to insist that these 62 people are dominant patriarchs owning and controlling multinational enterprises and global financial corporations where speculation and induced economic crises are new ways to appropriate successfully the surplus from the rest of society.

**Figure 1:** Share of the top 1% and the global 99%. **Source:** Oxfam 2016, based on Credit Swiss data available 2000-2014.



**3) What are the obstacles to achieving peace and preventing war? Is it feasible, desirable and/or necessary, or conversely dangerous, too difficult and unwise to promote a "positive peace" that seeks to provide the solutions to the causes of conflict, as well as build institutions protecting human rights, providing transitional justice mechanisms, builds states and nations, etc.?**

The concept of a ‘culture of peace’ includes a diverse set of values, traditions, behaviors, attitudes and ways of life with respect to life on earth and for human beings (UNESCO 2002). Conflicts between human beings, communities and states should be managed through conflict resolution, where discriminative social representations and violence are ended through negotiation that can lead to win-win conditions for all those involved. In this positive sense, a ‘culture of peace’ should promote peacebuilding education (Reardon/Snauwaert 2015a, 2015b) in order to deepen the dialogue and increase the cooperation among races, genders and ages. The existence of two concepts, peace and culture, has also created tensions. Groff and Smoker (1995) insisted that the wider understanding of culture must include symbols, rituals, heroes and values, but the crucial issue of an integrated culture of peace is related to shared values, including relationships with others, with nature, and with God. A culture of peace has a visible and a hidden dimension of culture, both of which influence the peacebuilding process.

UNESCO became the “Focal Point for the International Year for the Culture of Peace (UN Resolution E/1997/47) and lead agency for the Decade (UN Resolution A/55/47)”.<sup>3</sup> Despite all these efforts, no peace dividend was realized at the end of the cold war. Instead, exclusive globalization, greed for natural resources, exploitation of the labor force (ILO 2014), violence (Mies 1986) and injustice (Truong/Gasper/Handmaker et al. 2014; Fraser 1994) have prevented such a ‘culture of peace’. While a culture of peace has been embraced by some civil society organizations, it is poorly understood in terms of acknowledging the deep psychosocial roots in patriarchy of the culture of violence and the war system. The UN Charter lays claim to a commitment to equality between men and women, but the basic document on the *Conference of Parties* (COP) Declaration lacks gender awareness. It is precisely the term “respect for” instead of “acting towards” that permits continued resistance to specific policies for achieving that equality on the basis of culture.

A crucial pitfall is the understanding of power. There are four different approaches to analyzing power relations. The first relates to the exercise of ‘power-to’ in the traditional way of Thomas Hobbes, who understood the concept as power-to “obtain some future apparent good” (Hobbes 1985 [1641]: 150). Max Weber added ‘power-over’: “the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance...” (Weber 1978: 53). Michel Foucault developed this approach in his analysis of institutions of control. He affirmed that “if we speak of the structures or the mechanisms of power, it is only insofar as we suppose that certain persons exercise power over others” (Foucault 1983: 217). It was Hannah Arendt who understood power as “the human ability not just to act but to act in concert” (Arendt 1970: 44). In her view, power is the capacity to act, although she states that “power springs up between men when they act together and vanishes the moment they disperse” (Arendt 1958: 200). Lukes also defined power also as a possibility when he affirms that power “is a potentiality, not an actuality—indeed a potentiality that may never be actualized” (Lukes 2005: 69). The fourth way of understanding power is as a systemic conception where power is seen as “the ways in which given social systems confer differentials of dispositional power on agents, thus structuring their possibilities for action” (Haugaard 2010: 425), and precisely this type of power is able to promote an engendered-sustainable peace. This systemic conception highlights the ways in which “historical, political, economic, cultural, and social forces enable some individuals to exercise power over others, or inculcate certain abilities and dispositions in some actors but not in others” (Allen 2001: 3). The systemic approach goes back to Weber’s understanding as ‘power-over’. Feminists are interested in understanding the gender-based relationships of domination and subordination, and how women could empower, and then how such relations could be generalized in the whole of society. From a liberal feminist approach, power is understood as a resource oriented towards a positive social good (‘power-to’). Okin found that in the distribution “between husbands and wives of such critical social goods as work (paid and unpaid), power, prestige, self-esteem, opportunities for self-development, and both physical and economic security, we find socially constructed inequalities between them, right down the list” (Okin 1989: 136). This approach is underlain by a broader social, cultural, institutional and structural context in which power relations are organized.

In the case of historical materialism, feminists have criticized Marxism because of its lack of understanding of gender. Young (1990: 21) went behind the dual systems theory: women’s oppression arises from two distinct and relatively autonomous systems. “The system of male domination, most often called ‘patriarchy’, produces the specific gender oppression of women;

the system of the mode of production and class relations produces the class oppression and work alienation of most women". She proposed an authentic feminist historical materialism in which she identified five types of oppression: economic exploitation, socio-economic marginalization, lack of power or autonomy over one's work, cultural imperialism, and systematic violence (Young 1992: 183–193).

Butler notes that subjection is a paradoxical form of power. It has an element of domination and subordination. She wrote: "if, following Foucault, we understand power as forming the subject as well as providing the very condition of its existence and the trajectory of its desire, then power is not simply what we oppose but also, in a strong sense, what we depend on for our existence and what we harbor and preserve in the beings that we are" (Butler 1997: 2). Fraser (1989) insisted that the normative notions (autonomy, legitimacy, sovereignty) are themselves effects of modern power, and Hartsock (1990) claimed that the deeper analysis of power can be performed only from the standpoint of the dominated, exploited and subordinated.

#### **4) What have been the major pitfalls by external actors in promoting peace?**

Rather, a 'culture of war' has prevailed, a culture that was intensified during 2014 during the centennial of the start of World War I, the seventy-fifth anniversary of the German attack on Poland that resulted in World War II, the twenty-fifth anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, the war in Syria, and the terrorist attacks from ISIS in the Middle East and abroad. These events triggered some peaceful changes: the reunification of Europe and other parts of the world, such as South East Asia, and a peaceful expansion of both the *European Union* (EU) and of the *Association of Southeast Asian Nations* (ASEAN), involving former opponents in a bipolar world as new partners.

Feminists (Reardon/Snauwaert 2015a, 2015b; Hartsock 1983, 1996; Young 1992) have analyzed patriarchal structures and found that the social structure is male-dominated; for example, the most powerful roles in all sectors of society are held by men and the least valued by women (Lagarde 1990). A second hypothesis is that powerful men control the social structure because they consider that they are the only ones able to exert functions of control, and therefore women need male control, supervision, and protection. The control functions are often reinforced by violence, discrimination and exclusion. This division of labor and power has produced social values and male and female roles and social norms, later internalized by social representation. Males generally work outside, are providers, and perform economic and political activities: they are the *homo sapiens*, while the work of women is devalued and 'made invisible'. Women are traditionally confined to the interior of their houses in order to care for the family, and they take on the role of being-for-others as *homo domesticus*. Benett (2006: 54) argued that "Patriarchy might be everywhere, but it is not everywhere the same, and therefore patriarchy, in all its immense variety, is something we need to understand, analyse, and explain". It is precisely this variety and diversity which allows the present androgenic world to be overcome in different cultural contexts where power is exercised through control, oppression and the exploitation of nature and human beings. In order to deepen the understanding of the concept of an 'engendered peace', a paradigm without violence, control and destruction, it is crucial to understand the origin and process of consolidation of patriarchy, as well as the inherent power structure within which patriarchy developed and was consolidated.

From an analytical feminist viewpoint, Cudd (2006: 21–23) understood oppression as “an objective social phenomenon”. She mentioned four conditions: 1) the group condition, which states that individuals are subjected to unjust treatment because of their (ascribed) membership; 2) the harm condition, where individuals are systematically and unfairly harmed due to such membership; 3) the unjustified coercion condition of the harms; and 4) the privilege condition, which states that such coercive, group-based harms count as oppression only when there exist other social groups who derive a reciprocal privilege or benefit from that unjust harm.

These feminists understand power not as ‘power-over’ but as ‘power-to’. On the other hand, Wartenberg (1990) argues that this transformative power is a type of ‘power-over’, but one distinct from domination because it permits the empowerment of those over whom power is exercised. Miller insisted that women’s perspectives on power take a different approach: “there is enormous validity in women’s not wanting to use power as it is presently conceived and used. Rather, women may want to be powerful in ways that simultaneously enhance, rather than diminish, the power of others” (Miller 1992: 247–248). Therefore, for Hoagland, “power-from-within” is “the power of ability, of choice and engagement. It is creative; and hence it is an affecting and transforming power but not a controlling power” (Hoagland 1988: 118). Hartssock (1983: 226) argued that male power relations established over thousands of years “should allow us to understand why the masculine community constructed ... power, as domination, repression, and death, and why women’s accounts of power differ in specific and systematic ways from those put forward by men ... such a standpoint might allow us to put forward an understanding of power that points in more liberatory directions”. Years before, Hannah Arendt had rejected the command–obedience model of power and had insisted on “the human ability not just to act but to act in concert” (Arendt 1970: 44). Her understanding of power brings together individual empowerment with a focus on community or collective empowerment, which is also the key to the understanding of resistance by all oppressed groups, including indigenous peoples, racial groups, and minorities. The question that remains for the creation of a sustainable-engendered peace is then, how can this transforming power be used to overcome patriarchy, the war system, and human and environmental destruction?

On the social side, the *information technology* (IT) revolution after World War II gave women a new hope that they might empower and overcome the patriarchal structures. Many women and also men thought that the integration of the three revolutions (agricultural, industrial and IT) would allow women and socially vulnerable people to get rid of backward, feudal and patriarchal relationships. However, what actually happened was that the structures of dominance were consolidated as the neo-liberal patriarchy and a process of housewifization was consolidated (Mies 1986).

Thus, to achieve a sustainable peace Betty Reardon (2015: 74) listed four basic transformations needed to overcome patriarchy, militarism and injustice: 1. The general adoption of a feminist, holistic, gender-equal perspective. 2. A fundamental change in worldview, which includes the widespread inclusion of feminist values in all levels of society, including the public domain and government. 3. Shifting the concept of security from national security to human security, and a cosmopolitan ethic. 4. A widespread increase in self-awareness among the population.

Combining this with Young’s proposal we may include in the concept of a sustainable-engendered peace the reduction of economic exploitation, global policies to overcome socio-

economic marginalization, training for increased power or autonomy over one's own work, the eradication of cultural imperialism, and the eradication of systematic violence. Ecofeminists also draw attention to the relationship between patriarchy and the plundering of natural resources: "there are important connections between how one treats women, people of color, and the underclass on one hand and how one treats the nonhuman natural environment on the other" (Warren 1997: XI). An engendered peace requires the healing of the environment through a massive reduction in fossil energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, a full recycling of all materials, and a systematic restoration of all ecosystems and renewable natural resources.

It is difficult to promote an engendered peace when in recent history in any conflict—but also during so-called times of peace—women and girls have been the victims of sexual violence and torture carried out to express domination along gender lines, as well as to humiliate the male enemy. Arendt (1979) distinguishes between the space of appearance, as a space of political freedom and equality, constructed by citizens through the medium of speech and persuasion, and the space of the common world. The second is a shared and public human world with institutions, agendas, and actors, which provides a relatively stable environment for activities. Both spaces are essential for the consolidation of citizenship, and hence essential for a change in the dominant power relationships. Arendt insists that the recovery of a common and shared world will reactivate a mode of citizenship where individuals and groups can establish relationships of support, reciprocity and solidarity. It is precisely in the common space where collective ideas can emerge and group preferences are strengthened. It is in this space where gender-sensitive practices and peacebuilding can be developed.

Worldwide there is a growing concern about environmental and social deterioration, as a result of the current process of neo-liberal globalization. Most of these efforts occur in isolation, sometimes through leadership struggles. A systemic process is still lacking where first a collective thinking emerges, then a readiness to act, and later a process of judgement, which is necessary, as Hannah Arendt argued, for efficiency in the common space and for achieving goals through peaceful means. This means that first of all it is necessary to design an agenda for combating patriarchy from a clearly gender-equal perspective. This means equal salaries for equal work and making visible unpaid household work and caring activities, which are mostly carried out by women. The revalorization of household and caring activities is needed to produce a more just distribution of the unpaid workload at the household level (Parvin/Bélangier 1996). At the local level, all types of discrimination and oppression in jobs, public spaces, and the media must be made known and prosecuted by law. At the regional, national and international levels, there is the need for a rigorous assessment together with an adjustment of all legal frameworks towards gender equality, with clear guidelines for a policy of equity and equality. This includes the abolition of the military and of warfare. In the second phase, young people and the alternative media can promote a worldview where feminist values are anchored at all levels of society, including in the public domain and in government. In the third phase, there should be a shift at the national and international levels from the narrow militaristic view of security to human security (UNDP 1994) and a "widespread increase in self-awareness among the population" (Snauwaert 2015: XVI), where the environment, sustainability, and gender security (Oswald 2013) are key values.

Thousands of years of written and institutional woman-hating activities have limited the understanding of how harmonious relations between nature, humankind, and gender might be

achieved. Violence, authoritarianism, discrimination, and exclusion have not only affected the environment, but also limited democracy and gender equity, and increased risks for both men and women (Beck 2009, 2011). “The patriarchal culture of control and domination is the root of all social and ecological violence. It corrupted the original unity of man and woman and is now corrupting the unity between humanity and the human habitat” (Burton 2013). Peace and security were conceived within a male-dominated system and conceptual evolution is imbued with these patriarchal biases. For this reason, Serrano (2009) noted that security and peace must be engendered in conceptual terms to overcome the underlying prejudices. A transition to a sustainable-engendered peace requires an ethical framework and a clear strategy for change (Grin/Rotman/Schot 2010). The current method of achieving a holistic peace is seen as a step-by-step procedure through international organizations, governments, social movements, and some ethical *non-governmental organizations* (NGOs).

Women have powerful ways of enhancing rather than diminishing the power of others. This means that a sustainable-engendered peace is a ‘power-from-within’, which leads first to a preference for change and later to a commitment to action. A sustainable-engendered peace starts from a positive understanding of power, which will lead to new actions to overcome all types of oppression, including self-subjugation. The concept of a sustainable-engendered peace focuses on a process of empowerment, primarily to overcome systemic violence, economic oppression, socio-economic marginalization, a lack of autonomy in decision-making, cultural imperialism and environmental destruction. Figure 8.1 in the published version shows how the different elements of peace, such as negative, positive, sustainable, cultural, structural and engendered peace may produce feedback to and solid bases for a process of empowerment.

A radical understanding of justice will allow us to move from the narrow conception of military security to an integrated human, gender and environmental security, a HUGE security (Oswald 2009) and peace—a holistic peace—, where opportunities to care about nature and other human beings are created. Actions based on a bottom-up initiatives supported by policies of equity and mechanisms of redistribution of wealth from the top down may offer the most vulnerable people alternatives for empowerment and self-awareness. This sustainable-engendered peace paradigm includes a holistic approach that will allow us to understand that life on earth and among humans is interrelated and interdependent. From this point of view, more just and more equal power structures may enable civil society to restructure global and local societal arenas and to educate and train actors to promote the societal values of love, genuine caring for others, fairly sharing all that is available to the group; and empowerment, helping group members to achieve fulfilment, cooperation and maturity—making together for mutual fulfilment. Feminism is profoundly transformational, for it calls for fundamental changes in personal values and human relationships as well as in structures and systems (Reardon 1980: 14).

---

<sup>1</sup> All references to this essay can be found in the published version: Úrsula Oswald Spring “Development with Sustainable-Engendered Peace: A Challenge during the Anthropocene”, in: Hans Günter Brauch, Úrsula Oswald Spring, John Grin, Jürgen Scheffran (Eds.): *Sustainability Transition and Sustainable Peace Handbook*. Hexagon Series on Human and Environmental Security and Peace 10 (Cham – Heidelberg – New York – Dordrecht – London: Springer International Publishing, 2016, in press). For details see at: <<http://www.afes-press-books.de/html/hexagon.htm>>.