

Power in Peacekeeping
by *Lise Morjé Howard*.

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Natasha Khan¹

Howard is an experienced scholar in the fields of international relations, civil wars, peacekeeping and conflict resolution. She has authored several works on peacekeeping such as *Learning to Keep the Peace? United Nations Multidimensional Peacekeeping in Civil Wars (2001)*, and *UN Peacekeeping in Civil Wars (2007)*. Her recent work, *Power in Peacekeeping*, takes a novel approach to explore UN Peacekeeping Operations. This book makes a case for looking at the dynamics of power in peacekeeping missions and exploring how peacekeepers wield their authority in peacekeeping missions. The author suggests that while most studies on peacekeeping document empirical accounts of the successes and failures of PKO's, it can prove beneficial to understand what kind of powers peacekeepers wield on the ground. These powers are grouped into three major categories: financial and institutional inducement, verbal persuasion, and coercion. The author further categorizes these into, persuasion in Namibia, financial inducement in southern Lebanon and coercion in the Central African Republic. Acting as part of a journalist team, the author has first-hand experience in the areas explored in the book and offers detailed accounts backed by existing research in the field of peacekeeping.

The book has been divided into five chapters, where the first chapter explains the methodology undertaken during the research, which is mainly based on a combination of interviews and ethnography. It further analyzes the role of the UN in the contemporary world and its increasing monopoly over the use of force. However, the author contends that the UN peacekeepers function as 'soldiers of peace' which profoundly complicates an understanding of their actual role. In order to provide an understanding of the role of the UN despite such complicated notions attached with its role, the author draws upon a typology of the three primary forms of power exercised by the UN by drawing upon three different cases of UN peacekeeping. The author takes a *modern constructivist* approach in exploring the notion of power in peacekeeping, and states that peacekeepers and peace kept are both social constructs where the former is dependent on the latter for existence. The book, therefore, attempts to establish cause and effect relationship and bring together ideational and material aspects of power relations.

The second chapter outlines the case of Namibia, where the United Nations Transition Group (UNTAG) 1989, accomplished its mission through persuasion. Persuasion is seen as ideational and non-material power which manifests in the daily actions of the peacekeepers. These different forms of persuasion, namely shaming, civilian outreach, symbolic displays etc., are seen to have worked together in Namibia to achieve mission success. The third chapter outlines the case of Lebanon where the

¹Natasha Khan holds a Masters degree in Peace & Conflict Studies from the Centre for International Peace & Stability (CIPS), National University of Sciences & Technology (NUST), Islamabad.
E-mail: natashakhan851@gmail.com

United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) deployed in 1948, and the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) deployed in 1978, are amongst the UN's most extended-standing missions till date. While the author traces various transformations of mandates throughout the missions' long history in the area, it is argued that these missions continue to operate through inducement, which comprises of material and institutional incentives to change behaviour. Although conflict resolution remains a distant goal, the UNTSO and UNIFIL, through the mechanism of mostly soft power have been effective at conflict management, especially in southern Lebanon.

Chapter four builds upon the case of UN involvement in the Central African Republic following the operation by the French Sangaris. The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission (MINUSCA) 2014, concentrated on development, the mitigation of lawlessness, and state-building. It was able to achieve some of these goals through the defense, surveillance and arrest as part of its strategy of coercion. While such measures were effective for a specific time period, the absence of an overarching compellent force led to a collapse in UN authority and effectiveness. Amidst this, the UN mission also compromised its legitimacy following reports of misconduct in 2015. The fifth and concluding chapter presents a summary of the findings.

Throughout the book, the author compares the examples of similar types of powers exercised in other UN missions and builds a convincing argument. The ethnographic approach undertaken in the research lends it credibility in providing an alternative form of analysis for peacekeeping missions. While most other research on UNPKO's focuses on the overall success and failure of the mandates, this research takes a different approach to study how the UN currently operates and may increase success in the future. Problems incurred in peacekeeping are highlighted alongside the various reforms aimed at addressing them. The comprehensive research makes a case for taking a more *peacekeeper* centric approach as opposed to a generic, *mandate* centric approach. It accounts for how the peacekeepers perform in relation to the peacekeeping. It offers a worthwhile read on the host of complexities and dynamics of power, which can influence a mission in such diverse settings in which UNPKO's operate.