Helena Carreiras · Gerhard Kümmel (Eds.)

Women in the Military and in Armed Conflict

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Foreword

This collection of articles basically originates in Durban, South Africa. In late July 2006, the International Sociological Association (ISA) held its World Congress of Sociology in the beautiful landscape of Southern Africa. As usual on these occasions, the ISA's Research Committee: Armed Forces & Conflict Resolution (RC 01) organized several sessions dealing with issues of military sociology, the sociology of war and conflict resolution. One of these sessions looked at Women in the Military: National and International Perspectives and was chaired by Helena Carreiras from Portugal and Leena Parmar from India.

As this session turned out to be very interesting and substantial, we, the editors deemed it worthwhile to make these papers available to a larger audience and thus contribute to the ongoing debate about war, the armed forces and the role of women in both war, violent conflict and the military. This anthology, then, contains the revised and updated versions of the papers that have been presented in Durban plus one or the other article that has been written specifically for the purposes of this book.

Since RC 01 is operating on principles of pluralism, it will come as no surprise to the reader that the papers in this volume are by no means coherent and uniform in terms of content and interpretation. In fact, e.g.,, the authors to this book differ quite a lot in their attitudes and opinions about the inclusion of females into the armed forces. But diversity enriches debate and furthers scientific advancement. In this sense, we hope that these articles will become voices heard in the debate.

A project like this is impossible without support and help. First of all, we would like to thank the authors for contributing their time and their expertise to this book. Next, we are especially grateful to Dr. Ernst-Christoph Meier, the Director of the Bundeswehr Institute of Social Sciences (SOWI). He agreed to publish this anthology within the SOWI's book series in the VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften even though the most recent findings of the SOWI's long-term research project concerning the integration of females into the Bundeswehr were not yet available for this volume. Last, but not least, we very much appreciate the help of Cordula Röper and Edgar Naumann at the SOWI in making this book possible.

Helena Carreiras & Gerhard Kümmel Lisbon & Neuenhagen, October 2007