Abstract: Contemporary discourse on sexual violence in armed conflicts represents a powerful source for legitimization of highly controversial military interventions. Recent outburst of gender-responsive security studies calls for enhanced protection of women and girls from widespread and systematic sexualised violence. Yet, military operations reproduce the Western masculine hegemony rather than providing inclusive and apolitical assistance to victims of sexual assaults. The article aims to critically assess discourse on sexual violence in two cases of military interventions initiated under the rubric of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P), namely Libya and Mali. Both cases indicate a set of discursive strategies exercised by Western political representatives, NGOs and even more expressively by the media to legitimize military campaigns. Typically, sexualised violence is presented as a weapon of war, used by one of the conflicting parties without an adequate response of the state. This is followed by urgent calls for international action, willingly carried out by Western powers. The simplified narrative of civilized protectors vs. savage aggressors must be challenged as it exploits the problem of sexualised violence in order to legitimize politically motivated actions.

Keywords
Feminism; Military Intervention; Libya; Discourse Analysis; Sexual Violence; Responsibility to Protect (R2P)