

High integrity and feminine care: Female police officers as protectors in civilian crisis management

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The visibility of violence against women in recent conflicts has been used as grounds for arguments demanding more female personnel for peacekeeping and civilian crisis management (CCM) missions. Following the lead of Norway and Sweden, also Finland published a National Action Plan (NAP) in 2008, so as to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) Women, Peace and Security. In practice, the plan should result in the increase of the number of women on peacekeeping and CCM missions, and add a gender element into all conducted projects. This paper asks, what is being added and increased when it is women that are on demand? In particular, the paper investigates the meanings of gendered and ethnicised subjectivity in security politics in which Nordic women are seen as the solution for better crisis management in the form of operational efficiency. The study draws from in-depth interviews of Finnish policewomen, and their narratives of providing security on CCM missions. The paper argues that the dominating narratives, which essentialise women with care and empathy, are attempts to reformulate a new ideal of a security agent, who is capable of incorporating responsible and especially ethical action on the missions. However, as these qualities are being seen as feminine, the eyes are easily turned towards the ways in which female staff has thus far exemplified the position of ethical competence.

It was actually my first day on the job, and although it was late March it was surprisingly cold and it was snowing, not much, but snowing anyway. We were one Indonesian and a Jordanian, one interpreter, one Serb, and a Croat from the local police. It was about eight in the morning so we go out from the police-station and the interpreter says: "OK, so we will meet back here at 1 p.m." The internationals used to go back home when it was cold! And I said: "What? We came here to work, and we are going to walk. And no one is going home." I was the only woman there, and still at that time the same rank as them, I only became manager later on. So, they would not believe me and insisted that it was too cold and that they always stayed at home when the weather was like that, and said: "Why don't we vote on it?" And I said: "That's fine, let's vote, but one woman's vote equals a thousand and today we are going to walk!" The boys were quite bitter the whole day, but in the end I earned their respect.

The most difficult thing for me to deal with was the kidnapping of children. Having to tell about this to the parents was the most demanding thing. It is just as hard as having to deliver the news of someone's death. No one can know how hard it is until they have had to do it. Still, when confronting the parents, we do say and try to convince them that we will do everything we can, that we will negotiate and try to get their children back. It is important to say that we will do everything, although negotiating with the militia is often futile, when they will always first deny with bright eyes: "No, no, we have not taken anyone." But there was that one time. We just happened to be in the area. We just happened to be there, when I saw the kidnapping of one girl. And it was because I saw it myself that I went after her, and I just marched into this centre. I knew that the girl was there, since I knew where they took children, before moving them in the training camps that are out there in the country, and not within our area. So, it is important to get to them before they are transferred. The guard at the gate of course denied everything and told us: "There is no girl here! No child has been brought here!" But there was absolutely no use for this, since I had seen them take her, and I was not leaving without her. So, we get into an argument and the guard, a short fellow, starts yelling at me: "If you go any further I will shoot you!" At this point, my interpreter starts intervening and telling me that this may not be a good idea, that I should listen to the guard and that we really should go; it is not safe. But I tell him to tell the guard to just go ahead with it. "Tell him: Go ahead! Shoot me! Let it all out! But I have diplomatic immunity, and if he shoots me there will be a big case about it. I have been ensured access to all the places in this area and I am not leaving here without that girl!" Well, it was not exactly true about the access to all the places. We did not have access inside the camps, but it was a good argument to use, since that camp was in our area. So then his superior came at that point and we really get into it, not in a physical fight but close. They did not shoot me then, but later my interpreter said that he would not have been so trusting.

It is these little things. I brought the kids at school in Sri Lanka a telescope made in Finland. I figured that, maybe, when these kids will look at the night sky and see the moon then, maybe they will realise that, war is in fact a really stupid thing.

1 Introduction

The visibility of gender specific violence in new wars, which target especially civilian population, has been the grounds for the birth of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 Women, Peace and Security¹. The effects of war that had been ignored, or considered private or side effects of war, were now made visible². Much has to do with the ways in which the fighting in ethnic conflicts of the 1990s differed from the system of old wars between nation states³. In the new wars the warring parties are more complex, ranging from military to paramilitary groups to organised crime, and the difficulties to distinguish between civil and military, public and private forms of violence have become especially common. Therefore, although the phenomenon of sexual violence as such is not new in war situations, the scale of sexual violence in the ethnic conflicts of the 1990s has raised a demand to address this in crisis management, peacekeeping, and overall peace processes. The UNSCR 1820, for example—a follow-up for UNSCR 1325—recognises sexual violence as a weapon of war. Thus, the role of women and girls in post-conflict situation is now recognised, and their inclusion in peace processes has become a prevalent necessity. Sexual violence is not only limited to war situations, however, but the problem of prostitution alongside international peacekeeping missions has also been recognised and addressed as a security issue. The recognition of extreme and systematic sexual violence thus brought international attention to women and girls in recent wars, and was also the grounds for the UNSCR 1325, which addresses sex/gender specific violence, calling for solutions in which the role of women is fundamentally recognised. My aim in this paper is not to discuss the move from old to new wars, or to analyse particular forms of sexualised violence, but to discuss the gender-specific politics that ensued from the recognition of these new strategies of fighting. I will not, however, dwell much on the debate on the essentialisation of

women within the Resolution 1325, since the deconstruction of the Resolution is already quite well known⁴.

Although there is well founded criticism towards the Resolution for essentialising women into a single category, equalling gender to mean women, and ignoring the vulnerabilities of civilian men and boys, the Resolution 1325 is an important move towards finding new solutions for dealing with sex-specific violence in conflict and post-conflict situations. It opens a possibility to seriously begin to discuss, what these gendered forms of violence entail in terms of the ways in which peacekeeping efforts are being conducted⁵. The adoption of the Resolution in National Action Plans indicates that there is a strong political will to acknowledge sex-specific violence in recent conflicts, and to consider its consequences for post-conflict reconstruction. Yet, the downside is that the Action Plans may be just that; an aspect of political will that does not easily trickle down or transcend to the reality of the civilian or military missions. This paper deals with the gap between these two realities, and acknowledges the isolation of a third – that is, the academic world in which we analyse both the political realm of speech and plans, and the actual world of real men and women doing the work and living the life of international missions. My curiosity here involves a simple and specified task to analyse, what the politics of increasing women is about at the political level. In other words, what is it that is needed and added through the Action Plans, when they spell out the goal to increase the number of women on international missions?

The need to increase the number of women in peacekeeping and on CCM missions is based on several assumptions that seem to be taken for granted. These assumptions describe an unquestioned belief system adopted at the political level of ministries and international organisations. First, there is the idea that local women in post-conflict areas will most likely find it easier to seek help from female personnel, and to talk to women rather than men about their experiences and about the violence done

1 Skjelsbeck 2006; http://www.iwtc.org/1325_word.pdf, accessed 9.6.2008; See also <http://www.peacewomen.org/un/sc/1325.html> for the full text of the UNSCR 1325 Women, Peace and Security.

2 Skjelsbaek 2006; Höglund 2003; Rehn & Sirleaf 2002.

3 Kaldor 2004; 2006; 2007.

4 Väyrynen 2004; 2010.

5 This means NATO, UN and ESDP missions of the European Union.

to them. It is easier to approach women because they are perceived as more trustworthy, more empathetic, and less corrupt. Yet, it is also recognised that, in some societies, women are not allowed to speak with foreign men at all and, therefore, could not reach for help independently if the internationals consisted solely of men. Increasing the number of women in peacekeeping and in civilian crisis management is also legitimated by the idea that they are less likely to misbehave on the missions than men, that is, to sexually abuse local women, engage in buying sexual services, or misuse alcohol. For this reason, it is also considered that the presence of women on the missions would affect the male staff positively, and keep them in check from excessive misbehavior on the missions. Women are imagined to assume these attributes of high integrity and care, both towards the local population in the post-conflict area as well as towards their male colleagues.

The origins of these assumptions stem from the active role of feminist peace activist movements, which have been emphasising women as more peaceful than men due to women's role as mothers and caregivers. Also the politics of gender equality adopted by Sweden and Norway in relation to crisis management indicates, that increasing the number of women will result in operational efficiency⁶.

This paper stems from a curiosity toward the role assigned to women in crisis management, which lead into seeking out female police officers who had been on police, monitoring, or peacekeeping missions, and were willing to share their experiences in an interview⁷. In these interviews, the police officers were asked to reflect on the relevance of the politics of increasing women, so as to consider how the underlying assumptions related to their everyday work. The goal in these interviews was to find out how the women, who were seen as the solution, saw themselves the matter of their gender and ethnicity in reaching operational efficiency. In this research, the objective was to hear the female police officers' own opinions on whether the increased amount of women would result in more than the gender-balance, or gender-equality of the international staff; towards the higher

goal of operational efficiency and a sense of balance with the local population.

This study draws from these in-depth interviews with eleven Finnish female police officers and two civilian female personnel without police background on their experiences of providing security as "a woman". The women I interviewed had been on a number of missions in places such as Bosnia, Croatia, Kosovo, Sri Lanka, and Darfur, and on military missions in Lebanon and Golan. From these interviews emerges the hypothesis that, because empathy and care are emphasised as required qualities for personnel in crisis management operations dealing with complex and sensitive security issues – such as violence against civilian population – it is understandable that "women" are perceived as an example of such ethically competent security agents. This is because the required qualities are traditionally seen as feminine characteristics. Therefore, it is easy to focus on "women" peace-keepers, especially as they do stand out as a minority in male dominated crisis management staff, and as their actions and competence thus far has shown to be in line with the ideal. While there has been a shift in the objective of security in international operations from state-centric security to human security, also the competence of crisis management staff is shifting accordingly to include the capability of, and responsibility for providing security for civilian populations in complex security environments. However, the misperceptions here involve equalling this new action competence with qualities naturally possessed by women because of their gender. In this paper, it is shown that, in order to get things done properly, Finnish female police officers first rely on their professionalism, second their cultural background, and last on their gender.

6 This is emphasized especially by the GenderForce project in Sweden. See <http://www.genderforce.se>.

7 The female police officers interviewed for this project were sent an email request to participate in this study and share their experiences in the interviews. By autumn 2007, there had been twenty Finnish female police officers on civilian crisis management missions (since the early 1990s), of whom I was able to interview eleven. Most of the women had been on more than one mission, starting from the early nineties. Two of them also had military peacekeeping experience. In 2008, the number of Finnish women in CCM missions increased somewhat with the new EULEX mission in Kosovo, as well as the EU monitoring mission in Georgia. In May 2008, I spent 10 days in Kosovo and had the possibility to interview Finnish female officers working for the EULEX mission. I also interviewed two Finnish male officers, who were currently working for the EULEX mission, but had a military background in peacekeeping and UNMIK. During my stay in Kosovo I also met with a number of women from local women's NGOs, such as Dora Does, and One to One Kosova.

2 UNSCR 1325 Action Plans in fashion

Although eight years has passed since the Resolution 1325 was first issued by the UN Security Council, the time has finally come when the question of women is seriously being adopted at the national level of the countries that have signed the resolution. Finland published its national 1325 Action Plan in September 2008, following the lead of Sweden, Norway, Iceland, Austria, and the Netherlands – to name but a few of the countries that have their own Action Plans⁸. Gender-mainstreaming of civilian and military missions has now become an integral part of foreign politics, so much so that the President of Finland Tarja Halonen wishes to make it a Brand of Finnish Foreign policy⁹.

The objective of the National Action Plans is obviously to bring the gender element visible at all levels of crisis management, and to add more women in the outgoing staff to both conflict and post-conflict areas. This is legitimated certainly by basic gender-equality arguments, as well as arguments for operational efficiency¹⁰. The Action Plans are also a way to measure the effectiveness and implementation of the Resolution, and to show to the United Nations that the member states take it seriously at the policy level¹¹. The main concern in respect to the NAPs, which in one sense try to outshine one another, is that the issue of gender equality and the recognition of gender specific violence stays only at the level of politics, and does not seriously trickle down to the operational reality of the missions. This is indicated also by the suggestion that the mere number of Action Plans

would be a proof of the effectiveness of the Resolution. My first concern here is, whether the Action Plans can efficiently result in concrete changes in the ways in which the actual personnel in crisis management conduct their work. This concern is based on scepticism toward the willingness of institutions, such as the police or the military, to take the easily ridiculed “gender issues” seriously, and to change their conduct so that gender equality among staff becomes possible. This means a need for awareness among international staff, in missions such as EULEX, on how the actual police work is gendered; that is, a need for policemen to consider gender as an integral element of their work in tasks such as witness protection, homicide, investigation of organised crime and corruption¹².

A second concern rises from the possibilities of women to gain high level positions in crisis management, and the possibility to break open the masculinist institutions in which men keep together closely and look after each other’s interests. In the EULEX mission, for example, at the first Category level there are no Senior Staff positions held by women in either Offices of the Head of Mission, Justice, Administration, Police or Customs¹³.

A third concern rises from the previous. This has to do with the enormous gender based requirement of high integrity and feminine care that has been assigned to very few women actually working in these missions – assigned to them, because they are marked by their gender as female, and by their ethnicity as Nordic women striving for gender-equality.

The last concern that I have regarding the national 1325 Action Plans has to do with the ideology inherent in the discourse of the Plans. This is an ideology that easily equates gender with women, representing a higher number of women in peacekeeping and civilian crisis management as a solution to the numerous problems that the missions perpetrate. The idea of increasing the number of women

8 See e.g. http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/foreign_policy/human-rights/pdf/Women_PeaceSecurity-en.pdf; <http://www.bmeia.gv.at/en/foreign-ministry/foreign-policy/human-rights/women-peace-security-scr-1325.html>; http://www.peacewomen.org/un/UN1325/DutchActionPlan_article.pdf; http://www.mfa.is/media/frambod/women_peace_security.pdf; Accessed 18 June, 2008.

9 Tarja Halonen, Speech 19 September 2008, Publication seminar of the National Action Plan.

10 See especially example in the GenderForce project, http://www.genderforce.se/About_Genderforce.htm, accessed 17.6.2008.

11 The United Nations Secretary-General’s Report from 25 September 2008 on Women, Peace and Security indicates this. Report S/2008/622.

12 Personal communication with Head of Human Rights and Gender Office, Sirpa Rautio, EULEX Kosovo, 22 October 2008, Prishtina, Kosovo.

13 Report by Human Rights and Gender Office, EULEX, Prishtina, Kosovo.

in order to solve the misbehaviour of male colleagues, and to better recognise the needs of local women (and girls) sounds an awful lot like the idea of Add-Women-and-Stir from the early days of Feminist International Relations (Feminist IR) research¹⁴. Adding women in the feminist past was a way of seeing and finding where women are in international relations, and then stirring them with the usual and uncontested IR methodology – into studies recognisable as the Discipline of International Relations¹⁵. What was regarded problematic with this specific approach was that women were considered as a unified and uncontested group and, indeed, the gendered assumptions of the mainstream IR methodology were not addressed¹⁶. Yet, adding women and stirring was an important phase in feminist IR, since it opened the need to question the gendered ontology of IR discipline and to develop ways to acknowledge gender as socially constructed. Indeed, following Judith Butler, in IR theory as well gender is to be regarded as a matter of performativity.¹⁷ Individuals enact and reiterate their gender through their actions and subjectivity. Gender in a sense is an assignment which can be performed in different ways, to different degrees and, indeed, more or less successfully. This directs us to see gendered subjectivity as a matter of masculinity and femininity enacted and incorporated by different individuals. Therefore, in feminist studies as well as in IR, the idea that our biological sex determines our attitudes and behaviour in life has been dismissed. Instead, the emphasis is now on seeing how gendered subjectivity is socially constructed.

This analogy raises several questions which transform the ghost of feminist past into a living body of feminist IR today. As regards the popularity of the Action Plans in today's international politics this compels us to ask a number of questions. First: Why is it that this stance of increasing the number of women is so powerfully adopted in crisis management and peacekeeping today? In other words, why is there such an emphasis on adding and recognising women now, eight years after the original launch of the UNSCR 1325? More importantly, what is being added and recognised when it is women that are being added and recognised? Second: What is assumed, in this practice of adding and stirring women, about the gendered subjectivity of men in relation to crisis management and peacekeeping – which are the businesses involved in the managing of the Other, the undemocratic, violent and irrational, qualities that mix the gender and ethnicity of the protectors and the protected.

As regards the gendered subjectivity of men and women produced in the Action Plans the trouble is that, when empathy, peacefulness and care are understood as qualities added and increased by “women” on the missions, indirectly, “men” become produced as the binary

opposite of these qualities. That is, if it is seen that women are easier to approach, more empathetic and caring it is simultaneously implied that men, as a category, are seen as more prone to irresponsible behaviour. Certainly, this is not the objective. Indeed, this example reveals how men in crisis management are seen as an ungendered, and the meaning of their gender in their conduct of the missions is not adequately acknowledged or theorised. However, the example also shows the difficulties imbued in the politics of gender equality and gender essentialist notions.

What needs to be discerned here is the distinction between the qualities and characteristics that are masculine and feminine, and that these cannot be reduced to gendered individuals. In other words, not all women on the missions are empathetic and responsible, and not all men irresponsible and uncaring. Indeed responsibility, ethics, and the capability to recognise human subjectivity in others are qualities to be required from both men and women working in the field. This entails, however, an understanding that gender is something that cannot be escaped, in a sense that it continues to affect the ways in which one reacts and is perceived in the environment of international operations. This is supported also by the experiences of female police officers interviewed for this research.

On the basis of these interviews it seems, that what really is in demand in crisis management operations is a capacity to manage oneself before managing others. This capacity of self-management is assumed to be something which women naturally have as they are the caregivers of others. In this regard, the question really becomes interesting. Namely what, exactly, is being increased when the capacity of self-management is being increased, and what does this entail in terms of gendered subjectivity in crisis management? What kinds of positions does this assign to women and men? Jarmo Toiskallio describes the same quality in the military context as Action Competence¹⁸. This means the capacity to act in a right way in a complex and changing security environment. It is more than just correct behaviour, for one can act in a correct way according to the mandate of the mission, yet this may result in incapacity to protect civilian population in practice – as, for example, in the Srebrenica massacre¹⁹.

Here, the question of what is added when women are added reveals itself as a possibility to rethink the understanding of security, as well as the requirements of competence for crisis management professionals. This competence is more than just expertise in one's own profession²⁰. It is a matter of capacity for the right action at the right time, in cooperation with international staff as well as the local population. With these realisations, we begin to really get closer to a transformed crisis management that is capable of acknowledging the capacity of emotional

14 Murphy 1996.

15 Sylvester 1994.

16 Penttinen 2004; 2008.

17 Butler 1990; 1997.

18 Toiskallio 2004.

19 Misewski 2004.

20 Interview with Prof. Helena Ranta, Leader of the Finnish Forensic Team, March 2009.

intelligence²¹ – which is a competence belonging both the sexes. The argument presented in this paper is that emotional intelligence in crisis management situations translates to a way of working in the actual reality of the field like a professional surrender. Professional surrender means more than simply situational awareness. It means the capacity to be present “in the now” and to individually act in the right way in order to provide human security. Professional surrender is, in a way, the same as action competence, yet it emphasises the high professionalism of crisis management as a mastered skill²² to fall back upon. It is a skill that creates the confidence to act “in the now” by inherently connecting with empathy, care, and the recognition of subjectivity of the local community – even if it would mean exceeding the descriptions of the job one is assigned to.

21 Goleman 1997.

22 A mastered skill is such that one does not need to think about it, or thrive towards it and it seems to happen naturally and with ease, although it has taken years of practice. Here, I want to compare crisis management mastery to a mastered skill of ballet or chess. (See discussion in Klemola 2004)

3 Are women naturally more peaceful than men? Is it true?

The ontological assumption that women are more peaceful and empathetic than men has been contested by studies showing evidence of women's involvement as perpetrators of violence, not only in ethnic conflicts but in military interventions as well²³. However, problematising the inherent peacefulness of women is not prevalent in the Action Plans. One reason for this is that the original Resolution is titled "Women, Peace and Security", and the Action Plans are nationally adopted versions of this Resolution. Yet, there is a tendency to rename women with gender, in order to avoid the essentialisation of the category of women²⁴.

It seems that for women in peacekeeping and civilian crisis management there is a readily made script by which to live and conduct work on the missions. The position assigned in the NAPs to women is to be the solution to the numerous problems that the missions have perpetrated. This does not refer to any particular positions within the organisations which they have been assigned to, but instead a gender-based expectation of higher work ethics – simply because they are women. Embodying the position of a woman in crisis management or peacekeeping has turned into an assignment which serves the objective of operational efficiency. Whether it is violence against civilians, or misconduct of male colleagues, being the solution to such acknowledged problems places an enormous trust in the high integrity of female staff. However, according to the interviews conducted for this research, the female police officers do easily live out the script of empathy and care, which is expected of them on the basis of their gender. Thus, the trust placed on female staff is not without any grounds. With women forming a minority in peacekeeping staff, and having performed according to the ideal competence of an ethical security agent, the ideal professional is now seen to have a Nordic woman's body.

This being said, the point here is not to essentialise here what a woman is (or is not). Instead, the objective is to

recognise how a person, gendered as a woman and having a Nordic cultural background²⁵, breaks the stereotypical image and energy of the masculinist police and military institutions, and therefore stands out when policies are made to ameliorate crisis management operations. Yet, this research shows that although the emphasis is on adding women, what is demanded more specifically are the qualities of Nordic police officers, and especially female police officers. This relates to the cultural idea of Finnish women as a hard workers, yet empathetic and having especially high integrity. It is these women that do not easily fit in as the binary opposite of the masculine hero; meaning a stereotypical image of a feminine beautiful soul²⁶ to be protected²⁷, for whom breaking a fingernail is a disaster, woman who cannot and is unwilling to drive, a woman who through flirtatious behaviour delegates her tasks to male counterparts. The Nordic, or in this case the Finnish policewoman challenges such images of the female. However, as she is in between the binary opposites of the masculine protector and the passive protected, she is also not one of the guys in a team of internationals. The women interviewed mentioned their physical attributes – being tall, blond and strong – as something that also influenced the ways in which they were received by their international colleagues, or by the locals. They described their own position and that of their Nordic female colleagues as highly professional women who stand out from the male majority of the international staff. Their positions and actions highlight the meanings given to gender and ethnicity in police work, as they belong to the minority on the basis of their gender and cultural background. The women interviewed sketched the difference of female police officers in the international working environment in various terms. Women are less

23 Sjöberg 2006; Sjöberg & Gentry 2007; Carpenter 2006; Jones 2006; Zarkov 2007.

24 See e.g. the 1325 Action Plan by Iceland, http://www.mfa.is/media/frambod/women_peace_security.pdf, accessed 18.6.2008.

25 Nordic cultural background is a point of contrast to South European, African, and Asian cultures and gendered identities, and is as such a cultural contrast to the meaning of gendered subjectivity in these "Other" cultures. This contrast of cultural gender identity has come up in all the interviews.

26 Sjöberg 2006.

27 See Young (2003) for a discussion of logic of masculinist protection.

likely to get drunk on regular basis, for example, they do not necessarily look for romantic endeavours with their colleagues, and most likely will not buy sexual services from local women, or be involved sexually with the local staff²⁸. In short, the Nordic policewoman behaves well and is dedicated to do her best on the mission. As such, she is a binary opposite of not only her male colleagues on the same mission, but also of the perception of what a feminine woman can be.

28 In the interviews, the stories of the mission life of their international colleagues formed a position against which the women contrasted their own working ethic.

4 Gendered (and ethnicised) subjectivity in civilian crisis management

I had three children at the time. We went there, the whole family. I made a point that my children get acquainted with the neighbours' kids, so they would have friends. I also learned a few words of local language, so I could talk a little bit, buy vegetables and the like. We still go back there for holidays and see the people we became friends with, and send each other gifts at Christmas.

It is important that women are involved in peacekeeping, if for nothing else than setting an example. That a woman can do this, that a woman can read and write, have a job, drive a car, travel and have children at the same time.

I have noticed that, for both the colleagues in the local police and for the local women, as a woman, I am extraordinary, that as a woman I am so much more, easier to approach, to talk to.

Despite the emphasis on gender-balance and the need to increase the number of women in crisis management and peacekeeping, the fact remains that women still are a minority. This is true also about the current EULEX²⁹ mission in Kosovo, which has reached its full operational capacity well after the National Action Plans of the participating EU countries were published. Some countries, such as Sweden, make an exception and include an equal number of men and women in their outgoing staff, while some EU countries do not send out any female police officers at all.

In this sense – as they are so few in number – there is a feeling of exceptionality related to the Nordic female police officers in international crisis management. This exceptionality, according to the women interviewed, might have represented itself in a sense that they were put on a pedestal and were being very highly respected or, on the contrary, they would be treated with complete

nonchalance. Many also felt that, as women, they have to prove themselves, to work twice as hard; but even that was accepted, since it was not much different from what it was like to work in Finland. Often, our conversation would turn to the difficulties, lack of respect, belittling and harassment they had experienced when joining the Finnish Police Service as young female officers.

In the international missions, their experience, work ethics and Finnish nationality would also yield positive results. The women felt that Finnish police officers were given more responsibilities and higher positions in the organisation more easily than other nationalities. Gender, combined with high professionalism, was something the women did find working for them in their actual everyday work on the missions: “None of my Nordic (female) colleagues would use their gender for their advantage, but they would use their professionalism along with their gender to get things done properly.”

The reasons to get involved in the international missions were described also with a sense of empathy and care. A sense of purpose and personal fulfilment were gained in the possibility to assist the post-conflict countries in establishing the rule of law and in bringing stability, even if it were for a little while only: “We are not there to solve the whole conflict, but to help, to make things better, even if it would be for the short while we are there.” The motivation to participate in the international missions was genuinely about care, willingness to be involved, and assist in the process of transformation: “The reason for me to go was to be there for them, to be present and share my expertise. Our job was to unite the local police – and who would be better for the job than a Finnish policewoman?”

Similarly, learning from the international colleagues as well as forming friendships with the locals was something to be gained from in the missions, and hence considered invaluable:

What I have learned is to relax and not to worry about minor things. Maybe we Finns are sometimes even too serious.

29 EULEX is the largest Rule of Law ESDP mission in EU history, including mentoring and assistance to build Kosovo's own police, judicial and border management systems.

When I came back to police work in Finland, and someone would call to make a complaint about such things as a neighbour spreading gravel on their property, I had to take a really deep breath and think that, for this person, this issue is really important. While for me, it seemed so futile after having been dealing with much graver issues, in places where people have lost their loved ones and live with next to nothing, and still manage to go about their daily lives with dignity.

Listening to the stories gave the impression that these women do follow their hearts and are truly ready to take chances. The stories of how they got involved in particular missions, and the events that followed, seem to be filled with incredible coincidences, surprising events, situations that come up and work out in unanticipated ways. To explain the experiences of these women in their professional lives, whether in their home country or abroad, could be described as being in alignment with their passion and sense of self. It could be described by a sense of flow, a professional surrender, meaning a way of working intuitively and passionately in the present moment. It shows that they are not only experts in international crisis management, but masters. In this regard, they rely on both, their professional skills and experience as well as their intuition, so that they can act at the right moment in the right way as the opening stories indicate. Indeed, working intuitively also means a difference in attitude toward the post-conflict situation, which the women shared. The operation and the field were seen as filled with possibilities, instead as being infested with irresolvable problems. The sense of passion for the work and doing their personal best was something that was recognisable in the approach by which these women explained their work, and shared the stories of their experiences:

The way I see it, is that those areas that we go to, Kosovo or Darfur, are so full of possibilities. One just needs to see them and go for them. There is so much that we can do more than the job we are sent out to do. For example, I became involved in a project of teaching women to build energy saving ovens and to cook with them. These ovens save women's time since, before, they would cook with three stones. It takes so much wood to heat those three rocks, it is inefficient. With the stove project we could do something small, but very practical to assist the local women. I also used to go to the local university and library. There, I would borrow books and give them to my (male) colleagues to read, and say: 'Here is a book for you, read this!' So that they could read in their own language, and learn something about the local culture.

Seeing it possible to act in a right way at the right time also means that one is confident with oneself to know, intuitively, what is the exactly right action in the changing

and varying circumstances. The female police officers were examples of such confidence, for in their stories of how they conducted their work on the mission or at home they would not let others' opinions affect the things they thought were possible for them to do. Because of this attitude they lived outstanding and exciting lives. As such, they not only set an example for those others they were sent to assist³⁰ but, more importantly, for their Finnish and international colleagues as well. The example that these women give is that, by following one's own intuition and strength regardless of what anyone else thinks is possible, and by allowing oneself to feel the excitement of it, everything works out and life brings you the most incredible experiences, fantastic new connections, and friendships.

But in order to achieve this way of relying on one's professionalism and intuition at the same time, one has to give up all the prejudices and allow the others to be as they are, without demanding them to change – whether they are the culturally different colleagues at work with their “quirky” habits (in respect to Nordic habits), or the locals with culture and customs different from each of the internationals. This involves the recognition that, although in the home countries of the internationals things are done a certain way, practices cannot necessarily be taken directly to the places where the missions are being conducted. Instead, what is required is a way of doing things that respects the local community. Allowing for difference is a way of doing that decreases the resistance of the local community against the internationals. This means being willing to learn the local culture, learn at least a few words of the language and the way to greet people with respect; it means being open to new experiences and the capability to recognise the common humanity that we all share.

It was after a house search at one in the morning, when we were looking for this one murderer – we made a big commotion about it, fully armed and everything. When we were leaving, I turned to the old lady in the house and said in Albanian: “We are sorry for the disturbance we have caused.” In response, her face lit up and she smiled and gave me a big hug, as if I had done something very special for her.

There is a possible gender difference present here, as the stories about the actions and behaviour of the international male colleagues were not always flattering. In the stories on how the acts and behaviour of men and women differ in the field, there was often a distinction made in the degree of openness and tolerance towards other cultures. Not necessarily would all the women on the mission be passionate about doing their work properly so

30 In all the interviews, it came up that the professional policewoman was seen as an example for the local women in post-conflict countries; that it is possible for women to work and have a family. The women felt they could be an example in the little things – that women can also drive a car, for example – or in “bigger” things, such as the fact that women, too, can have senior positions in professional life.

as to help and assist others, but it seemed that, more often, it was the male colleagues who had rather selfish interests and were not interested in changing or developing their own identity in dialogue with others. Examples were told about male colleagues, who travel and learn about the country in which they were stationed at. Some, however, would go outside only to get the ticket for their holiday back home, or go to the refugee camp for a photograph to take home as a souvenir. Yet, for the female police officers, the passion for work might have meant embracing the mission in ways that not all colleagues were ready to do, such as living in the same tent with a colleague from Africa.

Some say that we are so different (Nordic in relation to Africans). But the way I see it, is that we are so much the same.

5 Responsibility to protect (whom and what)?

As already mentioned in the beginning, the accepted reason to increase the number of women in peacekeeping and on civilian missions is that they are better received by the local population. The relevance of this idea was addressed during the interviews but, instead of reflecting back on the mission experiences, the discussion would most often turn on the ways in which the male police officers related to their female colleagues during the missions. Therefore, the meaning of being a woman in a male dominated organisation seemed to be more important in respect to the male colleagues than the local population. Indeed, in relation to the local population, the women interviewed explained that their cultural background as Finns came before their gender as female. Finland does not have a history of a colonialist country, and is known for its neutrality and serious work ethics. These associations were seen as helpful for the women in their actual work of crisis management.

However, if the gendered subjectivity matters more in relation to male colleagues than the population at which the operation is directed, we are compelled to ask: What, exactly, is being increased when it is the number of women that is increased? What was shared by the women in the interviews was that a female colleague represents to the male colleague a person with whom one can share worries and hardships, dealing with stressful situations at work or at home. It is easier for the men to discuss with their female colleagues about difficulties in their personal life – indeed because femininity is associated with empathy and care.

The stressful atmosphere of the missions and being far from home adds to both personal and professional pressure. In the setting in which women form a minority in overall masculinist institutions, this pressure may unfold as suggestions, or outright sexual harassment. Some of the women that I interviewed had also been on military peacekeeping missions, and had experience from more intense situations than those of the civilian missions. These women felt that on the civilian missions sexual advances were slightly fewer and the pressure milder. This was because it was easier for civilian staff to form relationships with locals – which often did happen with interpreters, for example – whereas on military missions such possibilities

do not exist. The alternative, then, is often to buy commercial sexual services, which can be sought only during leaves from the military camp as such practices are prohibited during the mission.

Dealing with sexual advances during the mission takes sensitivity, and also good sense of humour, according to the interviewed police officers. They explained a number of strategies to deal with these issues; namely brushing them off as a joke, and avoiding situations in which sexual advances would occur, such as parties involving heavy drinking. Yet, one cannot completely avoid such places and situations. And it should not be necessary to avoid social gatherings just because of the likelihood of sexual advances. Here, the response to sexual passes could be a sensitive confrontation of the issue by saying, “wait a minute, what is happening here, I suppose you really miss your family” – and then the situation would turn into a discussion of what was really bothering the male colleague, and away from the sexual tension.

The issue of heavy drinking and partying came up in the interviews as an example of the difference between female and male officers in how they would spend their weekends and days off. The female police officers were not so keen on such activities, and some saw it as a threat to the security of the mission: “I always worried about what the guys would blurt out while drunk. If you drink on the mission, you better not do it with the locals. I always had a good excuse though, as I could say that I was driving and so politely decline the drinks that were offered when we met with the locals.”

In the stories on how gender matters on the mission, partying and drinking and bragging about partying and drinking, seemed to colour the everyday of their male colleagues. Certainly, this does not mean that the same was true of all the men on the missions, or that none of the women would be involved in such activities, yet it portrays the kind of culture, or life, that the internationals live on missions overseas. Moreover, it portrays the grand-narrative of the difference between motivations of male and female colleagues to go on an international crisis management mission. It seems that, for women, the mission is to make a difference, albeit small, in the world. The main motivation for

the interviewed women was sharing their expertise, doing everything one can in improving the stability of a conflict or a post-conflict situation – and in return learn about a new culture and make new friends. Yet, they see that the majority of men were more interested in an adventure, and the tax free car.

On the other hand, the mission was referred to as a different world; a world in which different rules apply, an aquarium, or even as an isolated island. This refers to the life of the internationals, a place they together form in another place, in opposition to that place where they are stationed and the place that is home. It seems that things that cannot be done at home are allowed and accepted as normality in this separate and isolated world of the mission (place upon a place). In such a place, drinking, promiscuity, and sexual affairs – whether commercial or otherwise – are accepted as part of the normal mission life.

The local population and culture form a point of contrast against which the mission life as an isolated place is formed. The locals are seen as different and often difficult to understand. In the discourses there certainly are jokes about the laziness and lack of initiative of the locals, in respect to the projects that the internationals are trying to carry through. It is as if the internationals are there to implement projects regardless of how they will be received, and whether they will have the desired effect.

Yet, the women interviewed recognised that the gap between the life lead by the internationals on the missions and the life of the locals is so great that achieving the goals of the mission – such as ending corruption – is often nearly impossible. In a sense, this recognition is about seeing the inherent paradox between achieving goals of the mission and the ways in which the missions are currently being carried out. The female police officers expressed an understanding toward their local colleagues for taking bribes, as the salaries paid might not even cover the basic living expenses, especially if the person had a large family to support. When the salaries paid to the local police or border guard are extremely low, and not even a tenth of the salaries of the internationals, male or female – who in addition are there for a short time and can then leave back home (with their new car) – who could blame them for taking bribes? In such a situation, the female police officers felt that, if one would seriously want to end corruption, it is not enough to just tell the local colleagues to not take any bribes – especially because there were no consequences that would follow.

It seems then that, in places such as Kosovo, the internationals have in a sense created a world of their own, in which they create the reason for their own existence as well as the demand for their mission (for without it, the party would be over and the high level, prestigious positions would be gone). As such, the life that has been created – which is the life of the internationals living in and creating a place upon a place – is very much a gendered creation. It represents a masculinist and colonialist culture, and the locals in Kosovo

give this way of life a Western man's face³¹. The resentment for this masculinist culture creates a demand for change. Indeed, in Kosovo it is seen that female police officers, and a military operation instead of a civilian one³², will break this place upon a place which the international CCM missions UNMIK and EULEX have created³³.

In this respect it does seem that, politically, it would be a wise move to send out from the Nordic countries individuals that are gendered as women. For they are, on the basis of their female body, given a better chance to work as civilian crisis management staff, as physically they do not represent the male majority. Women being seen as more responsible for their actions and more interested in promoting change and human security in post-conflict situations, they break the colonialist image with their gendered physical presence as well as their Nordic cultural background. Indeed, in terms of the response to their presence by the local community, the fact that Finland does not have a past as a colonial ruler seems to work especially in the favour of female police officers. But the need for adding women may be far more practical than that. Women are simply perceived as more righteous and responsible, that is, as less likely to share the masculinist culture of drinking and sexual exploitation.

Indeed, for this reason, there is an additional task assigned to women as their number is increased on the missions, and that is the task of taking care of and looking after their partying colleagues. This may be a heavy burden to bear. Keeping colleagues on the right track is extra work that is assigned to women on the basis of their gender. This position of empathy and care is something that all the interviewed women at some point had had to deal with. In such moments, situations or events, gendered identities concretise and expectations become negotiated, even though this kind of work the female police officers hardly had set out to have when leaving for the mission. As one of them said, "isn't a woman always a mother also?" But then – as has been mentioned above – for many, such situations were already familiar from the workplace in the home country.

Yet, one should bear in mind that care and empathy are not qualities solely reserved to women, or reducible to female gender. Seeing only women as capable of care and empathy silences and rules out the ways in which men share and enact these same qualities and goals. Here, the most important aspect to be emphasised is professionalism, and also the kind of willingness to work hard that is associated with the Finnish work ethics. The female police officers had also had other projects that exceeded their job description, such as organising the collection of used footballs to be given

31 See also Väyrynen 2008.

32 On several occasions when talking with local people in Kosovo, when asking what would happen if all the internationals would leave, the response was: "We want to keep KFOR, the rest can go." It seemed that the trust in EULEX to be more efficient than UNMIK was not very strong in the beginning May 2008. KFOR on the other hand was seen as an essential protection.

33 E.g. in Interview, 29 May 2008, Prizren, Kosovo. Dora Dores, Kosovo.

to youngsters or clothes to refugee camps, even a telescope as in the opening story. These projects were carried out with their male colleagues, who were also willing to do more than the job description demanded. These extra projects exceeded the limits of the narrow conception of security, and indeed showed how the principles of human security are being implemented in the everyday life of the missions, even before human security has become a guiding principle of civilian crisis management. "It is a matter of emotional intelligence and not gender." In other words, it is a matter of action competence, a quality that is not reserved only for women on the mission, albeit they thus far have been exemplifying it in their work in the international context.

The women interviewed for this project showed such action competence in their efforts to go beyond the limits of their job to protect, knowing the right action intuitively and by keeping the goal to help the local population in mind. This aspect was also seen as the most rewarding part of the job, the moment when one is able to help at least one person, one situation, or one negotiation. And this is something they could do by being aligned with the present moment. In these moments and events, skills that would go beyond the normal duties were needed, as well as willingness to be present, to be in the moment. In a sense, it is again a matter of willingness to put oneself on the line for the others, who indeed are recognised as sharing the same humanity, being the same as I. It gives back a sense of exhilaration, to exceed the limits of what is thought of as possible to achieve in a particular job, or in a particular mission. Yet, these women have their high level of professionalism and experience to fall back upon, which enables them to count on themselves, align with the demands of the present moment, and achieve success in the nearly impossible situations where someone else might have already given up.

6 Conclusions: adding women, a politics of hope?

So, to answer the question: What exactly is sought after when it is the increase of number of women that is in demand in civilian crisis management? The argument here is that what is in demand is a capacity of managing oneself before managing others. It is indeed about responsibility, high professionalism combined with empathy and care, the recognition of subjectivity in others – meaning both the international colleagues and the local populations. It could be seen as action competence, emotional intelligence, or the capability of professional surrender in the now of the crisis management – in the mission's present, whatever that present moment might be. Indeed, it is a matter of management, self-discipline and mastery, of both police work and the concept of human security.

This means that the motivation to go on a mission should be a personal desire to expand and share knowledge, learn from the local culture and adjust to the changing environment. Indeed, the question of gender balance is, rather, a question of internal balance. It is a matter of diligence and sensitivity. In other words, before one is able to bring peace and stability to a post-conflict area one needs to be in balance her/himself, in a personal and subjective gender balance. This, indeed, would also increase the operational efficiency of the missions.

As such, the politics of increasing the number of women is a politics of hope. For it is hoped that female police officers or military peace-keepers are more likely to embody and live this subjective gender balance, and hence operate from the positions of empathy and care in respect to their colleagues and the local population. Hoping as a form of politics is not a strong form of politics. Hoping is without agency and, as such, it is weak. When one hopes that a desired outcome would happen, one gives up one's own power to affect the results of the actions taken. Hoping is passive and leaves outcomes to be determined by circumstances that are also seen as unfolding without decision making or individual action. It takes power to keep power relations in place³⁴ and in the case of politics of hope, the power keeping the power relations of the operation in place remains invisible. One

seems to simply (passively) hope, that the people sent on the missions will act the way they are supposed to do, and hence fulfil the demands expected from them.

Certainly, the politics of hope is not without any grounds at all. Indeed, this hoping is based on the experience of the past, which shows that dedicated, professional and hard working women seek to go out on the missions and are willing to put themselves on the line. Yet, the weakness relies in the fact that responsibility, dedication, empathy, and care cannot be reduced simply to gendered subjectivity, in this case to policewomen. As studies and numerous examples show, also women are capable of violence, exploitation and misbehaviour. Women are still a minority in the police and military and, as such, an oddity who has to work twice as hard to earn the respect. She is also under more close scrutiny of her behaviour. Women in the police or in the military cannot use the phrase "boys will be boys and men have their needs" to legitimate heavy drinking, or buying sexual services. In regard to women in the police and the military, this phrase just does not make sense. Yet, it is not her female body that prevents her from such activities; but it is her female body that makes her stand out in case of misconduct on the mission.

Therefore, the first remedy for the weak politics of hope is the deconstruction of essentialism of the male gender, and hence the meaning of "life on the mission" in masculinist institutions. This means a deconstruction of the stereotypical image of men as driven by sexual aggression, seeking to go on the mission for adventure, new car or the prestigious position, and other benefits that the international mission brings. Politically, the endorsement of this stereotype creates as its binary opposite the position of the Nordic female police officer as responsible, caring, and righteous. Neither of these stereotypes being reducible to gender, politics based on the balancing of these stereotypes by simply increasing more of the other is untenable.

It seems that the increase of women is a corrective measure to the misbehaviour and problems that have arisen from the so called "mission life". Hoping that men behave better when women are around puts an enormous responsibility on women on the missions, especially as there

are so few of them. Despite the politics of increasing the number of women in crisis management, and regardless of the number of countries which have published 1325 Action Plans, the number of women selected to crisis management operations still remains very low, with some countries not selecting women at all. Also in this regard, the politics of hope is not very effective.

The position of professional surrender and action competence need not be qualities embodied by women in crisis management. It may be embodied by individuals gendered as men as well, both internationals and locals. What is required is a transformation of the possibilities of gendered and cultural subjectivity, so that there are other ways to enact masculinist subjectivity of the international than the disrespectful, exploitative form now so familiar from peacekeeping and civilian missions.

In this respect, subjective gender balance is required and needed in order to truly reach for operational efficiency. Indeed, one could argue that the politics of 1325 Action Plans is not Add-Women-and-Stir, but Add-Women-and-Hope. The argument here is not against adding women, quite the opposite. The argument is for the capacity of self-reflexivity and responsibility of the actual men and women working as security providers in the missions. The call is for capacity of managing oneself before managing others, meaning a capacity of self-inquiry into one's own beliefs regarding one's needs, desires, and addictions. The call is also for an understanding of how these beliefs are constructed in the lived experiences of one's own gendered and cultural subjectivity in the context of civilian crisis management missions.

This is what is necessary, if indeed there remains the desire to increase the number of women – for otherwise the task of high integrity and feminine care may be just too much for the actual women on the missions to bear.

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