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Gender and Security Sector Reform: Gendering Differently?

RAHEL KUNZ

Recent efforts to implement gender mainstreaming in the field of security sector reform have resulted in an international policy discourse on gender and security sector reform (GSSR). Critics have challenged GSSR for its focus on 'adding women' and its failure to be transformative. This article contests this assessment, demonstrating that GSSR is not only about 'adding women', but also, importantly, about 'gendering men differently' and has important albeit problematic transformative implications. Drawing on poststructuralist and postcolonial feminist theory, I propose a critical reading of GSSR policy discourse in order to analyse its built-in logics, tensions and implications. I argue that this discourse establishes a powerful 'grid of intelligibility' that draws on gendered and racialized dualisms to normalize certain forms of subjectivity while rendering invisible and marginalizing others, and contributing to reproduce certain forms of normativity and hierarchy. Revealing such processes of discursive in/exclusion and marginalized subjectivities can serve as a starting point to challenge and transform GSSR practice and identify sites of contestation.

Introduction

> There is significant demand for more resources on how to 'do' gender well.[1]

Security sector reform (SSR) is perceived as a key moment of transformation and a 'window of opportunity' for integrating gender concerns, particularly in post-conflict contexts.[2] Thus, recent efforts seek to implement gender mainstreaming in this area, prompted by long-standing activist struggles, feminist critiques and key international policy documents, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW 1979), the Beijing Declaration (1995) and UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions.[3] In this context, an international policy discourse on gender and SSR (GSSR) has emerged. This discourse is manifest in key international documents by international and non-governmental organizations. In short, it highlights the continued gender blindness of many SSR initiatives and establishes rationales and entry points in order to make such initiatives more gender-sensitive, take into account gendered security needs and prevent human rights violations. GSSR activities include efforts to integrate more women into security and oversight institutions and to mainstream gender concerns into the design, implementation and evaluation of SSR projects and responses to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).

Critics have challenged GSSR for its focus on 'adding women' and its failure to be transformative.[4] This article contests this assessment, demonstrating that GSSR is not only about 'adding women' in particularly gendered and racialized

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ways, but also, importantly, about 'gendering men differently', which has not been analysed in the literature. Analysing its built-in logics, I show that GSSR actually has transformative, albeit problematic, implications. I argue that the GSSR policy discourse establishes a powerful 'grid of intelligibility' that determines how we make sense of, and act on, the gender dimensions of SSR, and which practices become recognizable and valued and which do not.[5] Such grids give relevance to certain issues while silencing others; render certain subjectivities desirable and others invisible or marginalized.[6] Moving from highlighting what GSSR fails to do towards analysing what it does, I propose an analysis of its productive power that focuses on the ways in which it creates particular realities and particular desired ways of being in the world (i.e. subjectivities).

Drawing on poststructuralist and postcolonial feminist theory, my analysis starts with the awareness that gender is always constituted through and constitutive of race, sexuality, class and other relations of power. Such an approach allows me to highlight the ways in which GSSR discourse draws on gendered and racialized dualisms to normalize certain forms of subjectivity while rendering invisible and marginalizing others and reproducing gendered and racialized hierarchies. The overall aims of this article are to reveal the productive power of the GSSR policy discourse and to contribute to create space for further investigating the power relations involved in GSSR practice. Revealing marginalized and invisible subjectivities can also serve as a starting point to challenge and transform GSSR practice and identify sites of resistance. However, these are contingent on the particular ways in which GSSR plays out in particular contexts and an analysis of these goes beyond the scope of this article.

The article offers a critical reading[7] of key GSSR policy documents, produced by international organizations, non-governmental organizations, as well as think tanks and expert institutions, such as the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), the UN International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (UN-INSTRAW), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD DAC), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), the International Security Sector Advisory Team (ISSAT) North–South Institute, Folke Bernadotte Academy.[8] These documents provide insights into the logics and implications of GSSR policy discourse. The article is structured as follows: the next section provides a short overview of the literature and introduces the conceptual tools, section three ('Gender and SSR') outlines the GSSR discourse which is the basis for the critical reading in section four ('GSSR's desired, invisible and marginalized subjectivities').

The Normativity of GSSR

Though relatively scarce, existing academic literature on GSSR can be divided into two main strands. The first strand critiques SSR for its continued gender

blindness and highlights the shortcomings of existing GSSR initiatives.[9] Thereby, the focus has often been on the lacking or problematic implementation of such initiatives, in terms of ignoring gendered security needs and gendered exclusions. One particular critique is that GSSR has mainly focused on gender balancing, that is, 'adding women', and has not focused enough on gender, in terms of behaviours, practices and hierarchies which inform relations among men and women.[10] As Mobekk points out: 'there has been a tendency to emphasise representation and retention of women in the security sector'.[11] Instead, critics call for a move away from the focus on gender balancing to gender mainstreaming and for more 'gender sensitisation' and focus on 'changing attitudes', for example through gender training or codes of conduct, to close the gap between theory and practice.[12]

Within the second strand, scholars analyse the problematic character and broader implications of GSSR, which go beyond 'adding women'. Hudson shows how GSSR acts to deflect attention away from internal gender hierarchies within peacekeeping missions towards focusing on gendering security institutions in post-conflict societies.[13] Hudson challenges the instrumentalization of GSSR by the liberal peace project to 'enforce its norms'.[14] Gender mainstreaming is seen as instrumental in achieving the diffusion of Western liberal norms through creating widespread acceptance for, and legitimizing, these norms and thereby peacekeeping and SSR interventions. Rather than evaluating the effectiveness of GSSR initiatives or its instrumentalization, this article shifts the focus towards the in-built logic and productive power of GSSR discourse in (re)producing certain forms of normativity and hierarchy.

I draw on poststructuralist feminist literature that highlights the various ways in which gender works productively and is implicated in creating normativity.[15] This literature advocates moving away from the mainstream definition of gender – which has also been adopted in the international policy world and in GSSR[16] – that distinguishes between sex as biological and gender as socially constructed. Instead, this literature highlights how the notion of gender, once coined to decouple '(simplified) biology from (stereotyped) behaviour',[17] has been put to use in such a way as to reproduce binary hierarchies and contribute to normativity. The risk is that the binary gets reproduced and naturalized, and thinking outside binaries becomes difficult, as Butler warns: 'Thus, a restrictive discourse on gender that insists on the binary of man and woman as the exclusive way to understand the gender field performs a regulatory operation of power that naturalizes the hegemonic instance and forecloses the thinkability of its disruption'.[18] Thus, instead of adopting a definition of gender that reiterates this dominant binary, I start with a definition of gender as a norm that projects binary hierarchies onto and thereby constitutes subjects and bodies.[19] This shifts the focus from 'gender is' towards 'gender does' and allows us to analyse the 'regulatory operation of power' of this binary hierarchy and its broader implications. One dimension of this regulatory operation of power is normativity. Based on Butler, normativity can be understood as 'the mundane violence performed by certain kinds of gender ideals … pertaining to the norms that govern gender'.[20] The focus of the analysis is on the exclusionary ways in which norms create,

naturalize and legitimize particular forms of subjectivities,[21] while marginalizing others.

Yet, postcolonial feminist theory alerts us to the fact that gender does not operate independently of other forms of power, but is always constituted through and constitutive of race, sexuality, class and other relations of power.[22] Hence, studying the regulatory operation of power involves analysing the configurations of gender, race, sexuality and so on that create particular forms of normativity and reproduce hierarchies. A rich multi-disciplinary literature has analysed these configurations in the field of gender, security and peacebuilding, including studies on the construction and transformations of military masculinities, in particular in post-conflict situations;[23] governmentality studies of gender mainstreaming initiatives in the field of security and state-building;[24] as well as postcolonial feminist literature related to the liberal peacekeeping project.[25] This literature draws our attention to the myriad ways in which peacekeeping and state-building interventions work productively to normalize certain forms of gendered, sexualized and racialized behaviour. It also alerts us to the intersectional ways in which such interventions are associated with particular gendered, racialized and sexualized norms to constitute particular subjectivities, drawing on colonial archives and racialized imagery, whereby race and gender intersect in creating particular types of subjectivities that are based on the opposition to multiple 'others'.[26] Drawing on this literature, this article focuses on the productive power of the GSSR discourse in producing normativity. I analyse how gender and race intersect in this grid to constitute particular desired subjectivities, rendering invisible and marginalizing others. Some analyses of the normativity of gender have argued that normativity plays a double role as both constraining and enabling.[27] This allows us to paint a more dynamic picture of the formation of subjectivities as an inherently unstable process whereby marginalized subjectivities have the potential to disrupt desired subjectivities and to become the starting point for contestation.

Gender and SSR

The field of SSR emerged in the post-cold war era in the context of the broadening of the notion of security and the increasing merger of security and development. As defined by the United Nations, the security sector refers to 'the structures, institutions and personnel responsible for the management, provision and oversight of security in a country', including 'defence, law enforcement, corrections, intelligence services and institutions responsible for border management, customs and civil emergencies' as well as elements of the judicial sector, actors that play a role in managing the design and implementation of security and non-state actors such as customary or informal authorities and private security services.[28] SSR has been defined as the 'process of assessment, review and implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation led by national authorities that has as its goal the enhancement of effective and accountable security for the State and its peoples without discrimination and with full respect for human rights and the rule of law'.[29]

Critics claim that SSR is inefficient in achieving what it promises; state-centric regarding its definition, referent object and providers of security; ahistoric, donor-driven and generally irrelevant for people's security on the ground.[30] More fundamentally critics challenge the supposedly technical character of SSR and propose to reconceptualize it as a political project, in order to render visible its normative assumptions (regarding the state and the security sector) and its broader political implications. Indeed, even though SSR experts tend to emphasize the technical character of their work and knowledge, their work has been shown to be deeply political.[31] SSR seems to be the area where the technicalization of peace-building has been pushed furthest and where, in its extreme form, it is mainly about 'fixing' security sector institutions according to a particular template. This hides the interventionist and political character of SSR that involves designing and reforming state institutions. Reconceptualizing SSR as a political project allows us to situate it in the broader debate around the politics of the liberal peace project and to explore the role that gender mainstreaming plays in this project. Not only are meanings of gender a site of struggle (and appropriation) in SSR, colonial histories and race are also integral to this project. Some scholars have argued that SSR is contributing to the neo-colonial project of intervention.[32]

Long-standing feminist struggles, scholarly critiques regarding the neglect of women and gender in SSR, as well key international policy documents on gender, peace and security have prompted efforts to mainstream gender in this field.[33] In this context, a particular GSSR policy discourse has emerged that goes as follows: SSR oftentimes ignores women and gender issues. As a result, the different security needs of women, girls, men and boys are marginalized and effective security delivery is hampered. Furthermore, human rights violations, particularly SGBV, are committed (among others by security sector personnel), mainly against women and girls, without being properly investigated and sanctioned. Yet, so the discourse goes, SSR initiatives, particularly in post-conflict situations, actually present a key opportunity for gender transformations. As stated in the GSSR toolkit published by DCAF, OSCE/ODIHR and UN-INSTRAW: 'SSR opens a window of possibility to transform security policies, institutions and programmes, creating opportunities to integrate gender issues.'[34] A UNDP and UNIFEM publication states: 'In post-conflict contexts, there is not only a particularly strong need for GSPR (gender-sensitive police reform), but also often particularly opportune conditions for pursuing institutional change in law enforcement institutions and practices.'[35] Thus, gender issues should be integrated into SSR initiatives in order to improve local ownership, effective service delivery and oversight and accountability of the security sector.[36]

A number of entry points for integrating gender have been identified. Although different actors implement these in various ways,[37] they fall into three broad categories: firstly, under the banner of 'gender balancing',[38] GSSR advocates for the recruitment of more women into security and oversight institutions. As the OECD DAC states: 'Barriers to the participation of women in the sector should be identified and addressed. Increasing their participation,

especially at decision-making levels, will change the climate and culture of the organisation, reduce the incidence of discrimination against female police officers, and increase police responsiveness to women's security issues.'[39] Secondly, collaborating with women's (and men's) organizations is encouraged.[40] As the GSSR Toolkit states: the valuable 'capacity, expertise and access to knowledge ... can be of great benefit to security sector institutions' and will 'lead to a more effective provision of security and justice' and make the security sector more accountable and participatory.[41] Such organizations are seen as useful to document human rights violations and provide complementary security services to victims. Thirdly, gender concerns should be integrated into all elements of the SSR project cycle and into all institutions involved, through gender-responsive needs assessments; gender-responsive security policies and laws; the recruitment, retention and advancement of women in security sector institutions; gender training for security sector personnel; the promotion of women's civil society and staff organizations; and the establishment of new gender-responsive institutions such as gender focal points.[42] The UN Inter-agency SSR Task Force recommends 'organizing multidisciplinary training workshops for security institutions that include gender equality sensitization'.[43] Awareness raising campaigns and codes of conduct for security sector personnel are promoted to modernize and professionalize the security sector through changing behaviour, attitudes and institutional culture. This is expected to contribute to prevent human rights violations and to make service delivery more effective.

GSSR's Desired, Invisible and Marginalized Subjectivities

According to the GSSR discourse, if we can get more women into security sector institutions, mainstream gender sensitivity and train security personnel to become more professional and abide by codes of conduct, then security and gender equality will be enhanced and human rights violations, SGBV in particular, prevented. This narrative seems to 'make sense'. It resonates with similar feminist narratives about sexual violence and militarization that attribute these phenomena to 'gender gone wrong' and calls for 'doing gender differently', that is, encouraging men to move away from violent masculinities towards more peaceful masculinities. Yet, as feminists have repeatedly argued, such commonsense discourses are often based on problematic gendered assumptions that have far-reaching effects.[44]

I analyse this dominant GSSR discourse by examining its in-built assumptions and exploring its productive power: what forms of normativity and what types of desired, invisible and marginalized subjectivities are constituted through GSSR? Looking at the process of subjectivity creation as a heuristic device to explore the productive power of GSSR, I identify a number of desired subjectivities: the woman victim, the woman soft security provider and the woman-to-be-inserted-into-security-institutions; and the violent man to be reformed into a disciplined professional security actor. Alongside these desired subjectivities, we find an invisible subjectivity, that is, the invisible trainer, as well as a number of silenced and marginalized others, such as the woman troublemaker, the man who is sympathetic to women's struggles or the trainer-perpetrator. Yet, these

subjectivities are not fixed or stable, but shifting and contested. Marginalized subjectivities can challenge and destabilize desired subjectivities. There is a variety of possible, context-specific marginalized subjectivities, the aim here is to point to a few key examples and not to provide an exhaustive analysis.

Women Victims and 'Different' Security Providers

Within the GSSR plot, there are three main feminine characters. The first is the woman victim of SGBV committed by civilians, security forces or non-state armed actors. This subjectivity, its potentially useful strategic value (e.g. as a basis to obtain victim support funding), as well as its problematic political consequences, have been widely discussed. Feminist scholarship has called for transcending the victim/perpetrator dichotomy in order to recognize women's agency.[45] For example, the problematic implications of the normativity of the subjectivity of the 'rape victim' has received attention in recent literature. Moran shows how Liberian women NGOs decided to turn down funding from a foreign aid group that wanted to set up women's health clinics specifically for 'rape victims', out of a fear that women entering the clinic would be stigmatized and women in need of assistance who did not fit the 'rape victim' category would have to be turned down.[46]

Yet, there is still a tendency to cast women in the role of the victim/survivor. As Prügl shows in her analysis of gender training manuals in the field of security, women are portrayed 'as passive objects to whom things were done by others and to whom justice needs to be provided by legal experts who intervene', despite efforts to counter this stereotype, for example by broadening the category to include male victims.[47] Similarly, in GSSR discourse women often continue to be seen as victims. They are cast as the 'feminine other' of the masculine security sector agent who takes the role of the protector (once reformed), mobilizing old gendered protector–protected binaries.[48] Simultaneously, the woman victim is also the 'other' of the (Western or local elite, wo/man) GSSR expert. Thereby gender intersects with racialized and class codings: echoing a variation of Spivak's famous phrase 'white men are saving brown women from brown men',[49] whereby the 'white' Western wo/man gender expert takes the role of saving 'brown/local' women victims. Some local wo/men are allowed to climb the ladder of this hierarchy and accede to expert status, under the guidance of 'white' Western experts and provided they adhere to the norms and rules of GSSR (see below). Yet, this does not destabilize the hierarchy itself nor does it dismantle the protector–protected binary.

Thus, a hierarchical divide is established through the GSSR discourse that separates women victims from their (male) protectors as well as from the (Western or local elite, wo/man) gender expert, and from 'other' men who do not fit into the protector role (see below). This plays out in context-specific ways, as an analysis of soldier's narratives in the DRC shows, which finds that the seemingly perennial gendered protector–protected trope did not resonate in this particular context, where 'women were described as "weak", but they did not elicit, require, or deserve special protection from men'.[50] This suggests that appealing to the supposedly inherent masculine protector instinct in an attempt to decrease SGBV might

not work in this context and poses a fundamental challenge to the GSSR enterprise more broadly.

The second subjectivity is the woman care-giver and 'different' security provider. As seen above, GSSR initiatives encourage the involvement of women in providing complementary, 'soft', security services, such as shelters for SGBV victims or mediation services. As stated in 'A Woman's Guide to SSR', 'women can partner with the security sector to deliver integrated services. For example, women are often at the forefront of providing victims of violence services such as shelter, legal advice, and medical and psychological assistance.'[51] This casts women in the role of care-givers and draws on (often voluntary) community organizing and resources. Moreover, women's organizations are also invited to support SSR processes through the monitoring of formal security institutions, that is, to perform the role of '"watchdog" over security institutions'.[52]

At the root of such GSSR initiatives are attempts to recognize existing services provided and give voice to and include women's groups that are often excluded from security decision making.[53] Yet, in the process, women's groups are judged according to how helpful they are for the SSR endeavour and the ways in which they can get involved are normalized, as illustrated in the following extract:

> The purpose of this guide is to engage you and other women from civil society in transforming the security sector in your communities and countries. It encourages you to be part of dialogue and decision making, and to be involved in security sector reform (SSR). Ultimately, you will help to develop a security sector that is effective and accountable to the people. ... An SSR process is an opportunity for you to enter into dialogue about what security is, how institutions can better function, and who should be part of the conversation. We know you should be part of the conversation![54]

While this second subjectivity can potentially destabilize dominant definitions of security and stereotypes of security providers as referring to men and formal institutions only, there is a risk that this opening is closed through the normativity of the GSSR discourse: the agenda, the terms of the conversation and its outcome are set from the start. It is assumed that women want to, and should be, part of G/SSR. What happens to those who refuse to be part of this conversation or want to change the terms of the conversation? Adding 'soft' security providers does not fundamentally destabilize the masculine connotation of the security sector and the hierarchy between the 'real' security institutions and women's 'different' security provision. Moreover, the 'we' in the above quote recalls the racialized hierarchies that provide a setting where 'white' Western gender experts influence the agenda and provide the space for 'local' women from civil society to be part of the conversation.

The third female subjectivity in the GSSR discourse is the woman to be integrated into security sector institutions. This subjectivity draws on (strategic) essentialist assumptions about women's capacities and skills. Women are portrayed as 'natural' peace-builders, better communicators, more apt to deal with

conflict resolution, and better equipped to perform certain security tasks (such as searching women or houses). For example, in a Roundtable on 'Police and Gendarmerie Women in Peace Operations: West African Solutions to Gender Mainstreaming Challenges', it was agreed that increasing women's presence in national and international peace operations brings operational advantages (e.g. for body-searching women), and had 'lessened the levels of tension and hostility and may have reduced incidences of violence', including sexual abuse and exploitation.[55] The participants generally accepted that women bring specific skills to peace operations, and described women as 'superior listeners', 'providing calming effect', 'greater ability to gather information' and better equipped to deal with SGBV.[56] This strategy makes women's difference productive for governmental purposes.[57] Women are also assumed to have a pacifying effect on male security sector personnel, whereby the idea is to '"cure" violent masculinity by example and the generalised spread of moral feminine purity'.[58] The focus on allowing/getting women into the formal security sector as 'soft' or 'different' security providers for the sake of operational efficiency, based on essentialization of women's abilities, results in reproducing gendered differences. Thereby, the potential to challenge the gendered protector–protected dualism might be lost. Moreover, as the analysis of soldier's narratives in the DRC by Eriksson Baaz and Stern shows, this strategy might not work in particular contexts. Their study finds that female soldiers are perceived as becoming 'masculinised through entering the armed forces'.[59] As a result, 'a simple inclusion of women in the armed forces in order to render men less violent might not have the pacifying effect intended'.[60]

With this emphasis on women as either victims or as 'different' security providers there is a tendency to cast women subjects into a role that fundamentally supports SSR initiatives. This discourse seems to leave no space for women as political activists who might have a fundamentally different understanding of in/security. Women who question government action or SSR initiatives are labelled as 'troublemakers' who are either side-lined or co-opted to 'be "governed" and to help "govern" other troublemakers'.[61] This echoes racialized stereotypes of the 'angry brown woman' who is not taken seriously and sidelined or disciplined.[62]

Similarly, (ex-)combatant women do not fit into the GSSR discourse, apart from the victim subjectivity. Women ex-combatants may disrupt the 'postconflict window of opportunity' trope, given that women combatants may associate the window of opportunity with the conflict itself and not with the post-conflict GSSR intervention. In the context of Nepal, for example, the literature documents the contradictory ways in which women combatants lived their involvement in the Maoist struggle, highlighting that many women experienced their participation as empowering.[63] In Liberia, some women's organizations reject this framing of women's empowerment as linked to the post-conflict intervention and GSSR more particularly, pointing out that women in Liberia have played crucial roles during the conflict and the peace movement.[64] Thus, the woman troublemaker, but also women who do not fit the 'different' security provider subjectivity are marginalized in the GSSR grid, yet have the potential to disrupt this grid (see below).

Professional Security Sector Agents

The GSSR grid constitutes security sector personnel in particular gendered and racialized ways, through its focus on professionalizing security sector personnel as a means to increase effective security delivery and prevent human rights violations. This professionalization is to be achieved through the use of gender training and codes of conduct. Thus, for example the GSSR toolkit proposes to 'train prison staff to prevent the rape of male prisoners'.[65] The tool on defence reform states: 'Masculinities also need to be taken into account, to ensure men are supported to move from a warrior identity to a more appropriate role, and to engage men in prevention of GBV.'[66] Similarly, a UNDP/UNIFEM publication on gender-sensitive police reform states:

> For GSPR (gender-sensitive police reform) measures to be effective, they must also be internalized by society and the police themselves. This can be a particular challenge in contexts where exerting violence against women is viewed as a male social prerogative. Unchanged attitudes and mentalities results in some familiar obstacles to effective policing of abuses of women's rights, notably with regard to SGBV. ... Worse still, the police themselves may perpetrate crimes against women, ranging from sexual harassment on the streets to sexual assault in police cells. At times, police women themselves are subject to gender-based discrimination and violence from male colleagues.[67]

This focus on transforming male attitudes and mentalities and reforming masculinities was a reaction to critics who accused GSSR of not challenging violent forms of masculinity in security institutions and thereby legitimizing them.[68] This is embedded in larger attempts to reform masculinities, as initiated in the field of development where the focus on transforming masculinities emerged in the late 1990s.[69] Thus, for example, one recent contribution suggests that '(t)o construct and encourage a positive, non-violent version of masculinity, men need relevant knowledge, skills, mentoring, and peer support'.[70]

In the field of GSSR, the focus is now similarly on training and mentoring men to adopt less violent forms of masculinity, highlighting the productive power of gender mainstreaming. I interpret this as a manifestation of aiming to 'gender differently'.[71] Thereby, the problem (to which gender training and codes of conduct are seen as the solution) is seen as residing in the violent behaviour and attitudes of male security forces, as well as a lack of rules of procedure. The aim then is to 'gender differently', that is, to reform individual violent men into less violent, professional security sector personnel – based on the idea that through gender training and codes of conduct men can learn to become less violent. This discourse is based on the assumption that we can 'mainstream good gender' or 'do gender differently' by reforming violent masculinities into professional ones.

As feminists have pointed out, the idea of 'gendering differently' is embedded in the sex/gender paradox.[72] The basis is the (now mainstream) separation between sex as biological and gender as socially constructed, and therefore potentially amenable to transformation. It is assumed that trouble lies in gender (as a

learned attribute) and not in the natural essence of men and women. Thus, femininities and masculinities can be transformed, such as in the case of violent masculinities in the context of GSSR. The (violent) masculinities that man learns 'causes harm to others, but also causes harm to him' and he 'emerges as not only a perpetrator but also as a victim of gender'.[73] Through this, the violent man emerges as a subject in need of reform and the often proposed solution to this situation, as seen in the GSSR discourse, is to gender differently, for example, to produce less violent, more 'civilized' masculinities, and more active femininities.[74] Yet, this step is problematic, because, as Stern and Zalewski explain: 'Once again we slip into a focus on the sexed body as real when we meant to focus on the discursive power of gender which, as we know, also produces "sex". We glimpse the violence embedded in the move to construct and delimit man by "speaking" him.'[75] Hence, the paradox emerges because through focusing on the social construction and re-construction of masculinities and femininities, feminist scholarship 'reproduces the sexed identities and attached gendered harms it sets out to eviscerate'.[76] As a result, feminism, or in my case GSSR, is itself seen as 'complicit in violent reproductions of subjects and knowledges/practices'.[77] Through the GSSR discourse, violent men are normalized and portrayed as in need of reforming their masculinity to turn them into disciplined professional security sector actors. Moreover, this is used as the entry point for justifying the intervention of (external) gender trainers.

The forms of desired SSR masculinity are contingent on the particular security sector (e.g. police, military, border guards, etc.) as well as the context.[78] Generally speaking, these desired masculinities are associated with professionalism and discipline. Security sector agents are expected to be measured, impartial and acting according to well-defined procedural regulations. The construction of desired masculinities in the GSSR discourse intersects with racialized scripts and othering processes. Eriksson Baaz and Stern highlight this process:[79]

> The raced/sexed story complements the gendered story through its anchoring of sexgender on to specific kinds of bodies – racialized bodies that are necessarily Other. These bodies are Other because of their backward reflection of an uncivilized site, which was seemingly left behind, through, among other things, a revamping and enlightened modernization of gender. The sexgender paradox is thus seemingly smoothed over through race, insofar as certain 'backward' racialized bodies are mired in 'sex', while civilized modern bodies are free of sex and subject to different configurations of gender.[80]

In the GSSR discourse, 'civilized' security sector masculinities are established in opposition to the racialized 'barbarian' others, which take the form of the 'traditional' man in post-conflict societies, as well as the violent unreformed security sector agent. The assumption is thus that backward racialized men in post-conflict security sector institutions and societies can be reformed into modern (security sector personnel) subjects. This creates a situation where brown men are being disciplined into particular subjectivities by 'white', invisible, 'free of sex' trainers (see below), which reinforces racialized hierarchies.

Identifying the construction of these subjectivities demonstrates the fluidity and constructed hierarchical boundaries between the 'self' and the 'other'. Post-colonial literature highlights how othering processes are linked to the self in complex ways. Othering can be linked to a desire (and failure) to control the self, whereby undesired behaviour and attributes get projected onto the other, in an attempt to deflect attention away from the self. As Carver suggests: '"othering" as projection (whether as wild animals or killing machines) is exactly that; "we" in our human "essential" identity did not do those things'.[81] We can see in this othering a desire to direct attention away from the 'self' in an attempt to control the self, as reflected in GSSR subjectivities. The things that the self supposedly does not do and is not successful in controlling (e.g. human rights violations by peacekeepers or trainers) are projected onto the other who then becomes the focus of reform. Thereby, othering also serves to sustain the superiority of the self and to position the self as the subject who will guide and mentor the other, such as through gender training.

This GSSR grid makes it difficult to see marginalized subjectivities of men who are in sympathy or actively support women's struggles and gender equality, or non-combatant civilian men. In the case of Liberia, Moran shows how the 'truly forgotten men'[82] are those who did not fight and spent the entire war trying to avoid recruitment into armed factions and resisting the lure of looting and violence and who in the post-war period did not qualify for any assistance because DDR programmes targeted ex-combatants and assistance to victims was directed at women.[83] These men destabilize the protector–protected dichotomy established within GSSR normativity and could be a potential starting point for resistance and contestation.

The Invisible Trainer

Another key character in the GSSR plot is what I call the 'invisible trainer/mentor', who is essential, yet remains largely invisible in GSSR policy documents and has not received much attention in the literature either. S/he has the role of teaching backward, racialized, violent security sector personnel a different masculinity. S/he appears as non-gendered, white and 'free of sex', as opposed to the brown men in need of masculinity reform, but also as opposed to the 'other' women subjectivities described above. This is an example of the ways in which the sexgender paradox is 'seemingly smoothed over through race'.[84] Thereby, the backward security sector personnel is 'mired in "sex"' and associated with masculinity gone wrong, whereas the civilised trainer is 'free of sex'.

The trainer subjectivity is also somewhat out of reach and her/his privileged position is silenced and normalized. S/he inhabits the 'Archimedean point' or the 'hubris of point zero',[85] which creates the appearance of the invisible outside observer gaze.[86] Invisibility in this sense is imbued with a certain form of power. S/he provides space for inclusion and influences the agenda, for example when inhabiting the 'we' in 'We know you should be part of the conversation!'[87] (see above). Despite, or because of its invisibility, the trainer subject nevertheless plays a key role in GSSR. Through this subjectivity, and the othering processes it is embedded in terms of anchoring 'wrong' gender in other racialized

bodies, attention is directed towards the men-in-need-of-reform and away from those who do the reforming, that is, (international) wo/men (gender) experts and peacekeeping troops. The effects of this can be seen in the imbalance between inward and outward focus of gender mainstreaming initiatives.[88] Thereby, for example, the hard-won attention to SGBV acts committed by peacekeepers, humanitarian personnel and other foreign experts and ensuing efforts to address them risks increasingly being redirected towards security sector actors in the countries of intervention, based on the idea that 'these men' are more in need of reform.

Moreover, the subjectivity of the invisible trainer resonates with and reinforces the supposedly technical character of SSR interventions. This subjectivity shapes the seemingly neutral and technical character of the expert interventions in G/SSR and makes it harder to question the supposedly universal nature of the norms upon which these interventions are based and their political implications. With the focus on 'local' racialized men, and the notion of the invisible trainer, attention risks being directed away from internationals as potential perpetrators and it becomes difficult to perceive the trainer-perpetrator subjectivity.

Conclusion

This analysis of the productive power of gender mainstreaming shows that GSSR is not only about adding women, but more importantly and fundamentally about gendering differently such as through reforming violent masculinities. GSSR establishes a powerful 'grid of intelligibility' proposing a relatively narrow cast of desired subjectivities, based on racialized and gendered hierarchies. Thereby, it acts to draw boundaries on what ways of being and acting can legitimately be part of GSSR and what cannot, marginalizing various 'other' subjectivities and effecting closures. The reproduction of gendered and racialized binaries results in gendering differently – such as by reforming 'brown' men into professional security agents – but fails to challenge gendered normativity and oppression. The constitution of the 'other' as in need of reform attempts to secure the possibility of a disciplined, professional security sector masculinity. This legitimizes such masculinities, discredits other forms of masculinity, and upholds the promise that violence can be controlled through technical interventions. The GSSR grid also has a number of broader implications in terms of the interactions it renders desirable. Through the invisible trainer subjectivity, this grid normalizes a particular form of encounter between the (external, 'white') gender expert and the local, 'brown' trainee to be reformed. The trainer–trainee binary makes it difficult to perceive other forms of interaction, such as exchange or mutual learning. Is there a space within or beyond GSSR for alternative ways of interactions that attempt to resist the colonial impulse of reforming the 'other' through gendering differently, and would allow for 'ethical encounters'[89] or the possibility of mutual learning?

GSSR also reinforces the appearance of the technical and apolitical character of SSR, through the invisible trainer subjectivity carrying out seemingly neutral

and technical interventions, and through framing gender as technical expertise, instrumental and efficiency-enhancing. Cutting across the G/SSR discourse is an 'imperial logic of a "trickle-down" theory of expertise'.[90] Simply put, the idea is that 'locals' do not have the necessary specific knowledge (e.g. pertaining to gender) and therefore there is a need to bring in external experts (e.g. to do the gender training). This marginalizes ways of being and doing that do not conform to the expertise logic. Furthermore, it displaces security issues from the realm of politics into the realm of expertise, which risks shrinking the political space to debate in/security and reinforcing the appearance of technicality of G/SSR. Moreover, framing gender as a form of (technical) expertise disavows gender as a critical analytics for disruption and contestation.

Yet, the formation of subjectivities is an inherently unstable process whereby marginalized subjectivities have the potential to disrupt desired subjectivities and to become the starting point for contestation. Thus, for example, the marginalized subjectivity of the woman troublemaker who challenges the very definition of security underlying G/SSR destabilizes the subjectivity and authority of the (gender) expert by rendering visible the political dimensions of G/SSR interventions. Analysing these tensions and interactions between the desired, invisible and marginalized subjectivities opens up space to broaden or disrupt the G/SSR grid of intelligibility and to think differently about G/SSR activities and the liberal peace project more broadly. Further research into the context-specific forms of contestation around G/SSR could reveal the concrete potential for contestation.

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NOTES

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