LUND UNIVERSITY
Faculty of Social Sciences

Ministers and Female Ministers:

Reproduction of Masculinity in Political Leadership

A Case Study of Finland

Salla Turunen

Abstract

Globally, approximately nine out of ten political leaders are men, which is a ratio that leaves women as a rare minority. This thesis examines such gender inequality in political leadership. The sphere of politics reproduces masculinity norms, which explain male privilege in political leadership. Simultaneously, these norms disadvantage women in relation to executive offices, as the legitimacy of masculinity norms correlate strongly with biological maleness. Benefitting from genealogical approach, a poststructuralist theoretical framework deconstructs essentialist notions according to which a man is neutral for a political actor and a woman is regarded as gendered. An empirical illustration of the theoretical framework is a case study of Finland. The country is continuously ranked amongst the most gender equal in the world, and the ranking includes also gender equal representation in political leadership. Yet, when scrutinizing gendered representation of Finnish ministers historically and gaining narrative insight through two ministerial interviews, a conclusion can be drawn in which the ranking rather mirrors global gender inequality in politics rather than exalts Finland's perfection in the area. In Finland, a woman still is considered as an exception to the male norm in political leadership.

Key words: gender equality, Finland, masculinity, political leadership, women in politics
Words: 19,888

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1   Introduction

We have ministers and female ministers.

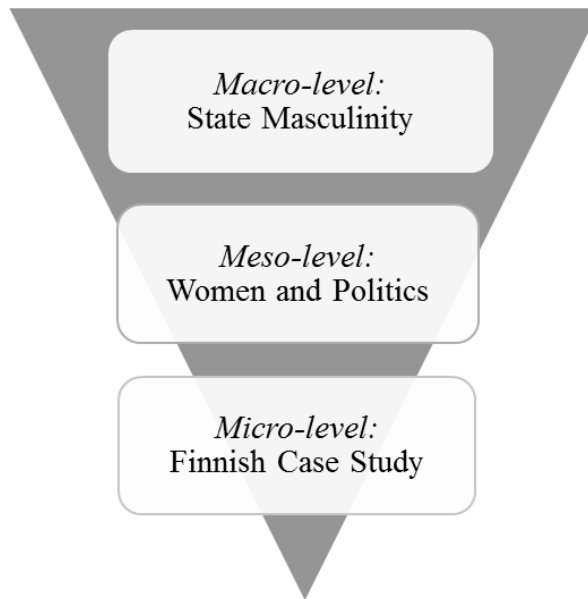   –   Annika Saarikko, the incoming Finnish Minister of Family Affairs and Social Services

Men and women are disproportionally represented in political leadership in the overrepresentation of men. From the perspective of gender equality, to answer the question why men still dominate at the top, this thesis examines the norms of perceived manhood and masculinity of the executive offices. The political leadership is leadership of the state. The state can be seen as a masculine institution and actor, where norms of masculinities are perceived as a status quo, affording men a privileged position in politics and leadership (Duerst-Lahti & Kelly 1995, Connell 2005a & 2005b, Kantola 2007).

I argue, that masculinity norms have an effect on women's participation and representation in politics, which results as unequal leadership in politics in the favor of men and to the detriment of women. The rules, the norms, and the agenda of political decision making is created by men and for men, in which women have options such as adapting to the current system, abstaining from participation, or pursuing the creation of different forms of decision making. This gendered bias in political leadership leads to the research question of this thesis: To what extent is gender inequality in political leadership reproduced through norms of masculinity, and how does this occur in the case of Finland?

The thesis is theory driven, and its theoretical framework builds upon a contestation of essentialism by using poststructuralist thought. The essentialist notions of gender and reinforcement of gender stereotypes are examined in relation to the political in three areas: state masculinity, women in politics, and a case study of Finland. These areas address critical structural, global, historical, institutional, and cultural factors to gender, all deemed necessary by Jalalzai (2013) to establish a thorough discussion of women in executive offices.

Therefore, the disposition of the thesis and its levels of analysis are as presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Thesis disposition at a glance

Prior the macro-level, in chapter two I begin the discussion by creating conceptual frameworks for two key concepts of the thesis, gender and masculinity. In chapter three I analyze state and the system of states which can be understood by the concept of masculinity. Masculinity norms define political opportunities, which are benefitting men and disadvantaging women. Therefore, in addressing such gender inequality, I continue to discuss women's relation to the political sphere in chapter four. After the theoretical framework, I discuss the Finnish empirical case study in chapters five and six. Finland is a state which, despite its high ranking in global gender equality comparisons, serves as an illustrative example of reproduction of masculinity norms in political leadership. The case study includes both a historical overview of gender divided ministerialships and two ministerial interviews, describing masculinity norms from a personal practice perspective. One of the interviews is with the incoming Minister of Family Affairs and Social Services, Annika Saarikko, and another with the current Minister of Transportation and Communications, Anne Berner.

This thesis benefits from the fields of political science, international relations, and gender studies, and can be particularly located in politics and gender scholarship. Research on a global scale has been conducted when it comes to women and politics, including notions related to masculinity. For example, female representatives on local, regional, national, and international levels, quota systems, women's parliamentary accession, women political executives, and gender equality policies have been examined (*inter alia* Phillips 1998, Bauer & Britton 2006, Dahlerup & Freidenvall in Krook & Childs ed. 2010, Murray 2010, O'Connor 2014). This thesis contributes to this contemporary academic tradition, and it can be understood as feminist political science with liaisons to political activism (Sawer 2014). Furthermore, it is consciously established as academic activism, pursuing to create change towards gender equality in political leadership.

2   Gendered Political Leadership

Womanhood attracts special attention and manhood provides an automatic network of power.

–   Annika Saarikko, the incoming Finnish Minister of Family Affairs and Social Services

The theoretical framework of the thesis is qualitative and established by using a genealogical approach. The framework consists of a contestation of essentialism by using poststructuralist thought. Whereas the usage of poststructuralist thought is exemplified in Butlerian way in section 2.2, the thought of essentialism is understood as stated by Stevens (2007) as "the attribution of some characteristics to a group of people which asserts that it is of the essence of all members of that group 'naturally' or 'inevitably' to possess it" (p. 6).

In examining gendered political leadership, three concepts are of key importance: *Gender*, *masculinity*, and *political leadership*. The first two are multifaceted and vary in ways of definition and understanding. Hence, respective frameworks require establishing how they are used throughout the thesis. A key concept of political leadership is less complex to define, however, I refer to it hereby as executive level political positions, from governmental level to the head of the state.

For gender, the framework consists of a combination of constructivist thought on nations by Yuval-Davis (2002) and poststructuralist thought by Butler (2006). The framework is complemented with Fraser's (2013) notion of the public–private -debate, as the debate is relevant also for political participation from a woman's point of view. For masculinity, plurality of the concept is vital to understand, as well as the focus on hegemonic masculinity – not all kinds of men have access to political power. As the two conceptual frameworks are created, the key concepts are referred hereafter by these definitions in this thesis.

2.1   The Genealogy of Gendered Political Leadership

A genealogical approach "attempts to show that all practices have variable meanings and reflect different forces rather than possess intrinsic meanings and point to a permanent reality" (Given ed. 2008, p. 370). Hence, the approach aims to critically question universality of an idea or a practice. In relation to gendered political leadership, multidimensionality of the approach can be used to expose

different forces and variable meanings which contest the norms of manhood and masculinity as intrinsic, essentialist, and a permanent reality for political leadership.

More precisely, genealogy is exhausted through its affirmative dimension in this research, which departs from eschewal of neutrality by focusing on transcendence. Rather than taking something as given, transcendence refers to observing combatant factors and their flux. (Given ed. 2008.) The former, eschewal of neutrality, refers in this thesis to moving away from political leadership and its perceived male status quo as a stagnant truth. The latter, transcendence, can be categorized as sexism (ibid.), as reproducing masculinity norms which affects female leadership in sexist manner. By understanding sexism as a transcending force, the linkages of masculinity, femininity, manhood, and womanhood into political leadership are seen as intertwined, multifaceted, and mutually contesting. Men with certain kind of masculinity dominate political leadership, but it is not considered as a stagnant truth, rather a sexist, possibly changing composition of political leadership.

This choice of method supports the academic activism of this thesis. By the valorization of transcendence, the "interconnectedness, heterogeneity, and creativity of the positions contesting with one another for their place in society" (Given ed. 2008, p. 372) are rendered visible. This kind of contestation can be understood by demands for gender equality, and women's contestation of men to access political executive offices. By questioning the universality of male dominance and by focusing on knowledge production of women in political leadership, possibilities of gendered changes in such leadership are created.

2.2   Social and Individual Dimensions of Gender

Yuval-Davis (2002) approaches gender from a constructivist perspective: Gender is a mode of discourse and a relation between groups. This relationality creates a social dimension for gender. Subjects of social groups are defined in relation to their sexual differences, economic positions, biological constitutions, and/or ethnic and racial collectivities. Gender relations are a fundamental part of nation-states and nationalism, where the latter is seen as a political and an identity project. In considering the differences among women, memberships in national and ethnic collectivities are at the core.

Moreover, in this kind of a structure women are seen as guardians of the national culture which is constructed within the home, as symbols of national essence (such as in iconography), and as border guards of racial differences because of women's reproductive abilities (Yuval-Davis 2002). Therefore, the female collective itself is regarded as a fundamental element of the nation, representing the essence of the nation. Despite the symbolic prominence, the former examples do not constitute women as leaders of the nation. Subsequently, the male collective is created as a social domination discourse through nationalism, which itself is a sexist and gendered mode of discourse. The gendered collectivities mean for women in particular being under the male collective, since men dominate the social structure

and are leaders of the nation. By understanding the nation and nationalism as a supra-construction, an overruling element, the categories for genders are not only defined, but also needed and presupposed to maintain the reproduction of the nation.

Whereas the former understanding of gender is useful when considering the context of states, individual level complexities are out-shadowed. To complement the social dimension, an understanding of gender as an individual level performance is beneficial. Using poststructuralist thought, Butler (2006) seeks to reframe gender away from the binary of men and women: The already existing conceptualizations and categorical ways of thinking (the binary for example) need to be deconstructed in order to diversify and deepen the understanding of gender. Its cultural interpretation of biologically based sex is problematic in many aspects.[1] Gender should be understood moreover as an act, performance, and doing. Such a deed is performed in the dimensions of sex, gender and sexuality. (Butler 2006.)

The question of gender inequalities can be addressed in the following way: In the light of acknowledging gendered oppression, Butler challenges the conceptualization of the woman. What are the genealogies of gender categories created in the oppression? By challenging the meanings of men and women the means of oppression can be challenged (Butler 2006). I see the Butlerian understanding of gender as mostly ideological, and its basic idea of deconstruction as an analytical tool. That is employed for example in defining the key concept of masculinity in the following section, in a way which it is not only related to manhood.

The two authors cannot be merged into one another seamlessly. In comparison to Yuval-Davis, locating agency differs: Whereas for Yuval-Davis the gendered agents act under the supra-construction of a nation shaped by nationalism, for Butler the agency is created in the act, rather than an *a priori* gendered agent taking action:

> "My argument is that there need not be a "doer behind the deed", but that the "doer" is variably constructed in and through the "deed" and - - "culture" and "discourse" mire the subject, but do not constitute that subject." (Butler 2006, p. 195.)

To complement the social and individual dimensions' framework for gender, I discuss Fraser's (2013) materialist notions. As the thesis' theoretical framework will show, matters of balancing public and private spheres, work and family, affect women in politics in a distinctive manner. Gender is affected by social (in)justice and neoliberal influence, as noted in the second wave feminist principles. According to the Marxist historical-materialist approach, gender is a way of distributing resources and defining opportunities. In other words, it is a symbolic system which can be refined for economic purposes. The economic is incorporated within the different aspects of social justice – recognition, distribution, and

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[1] This is an idea where queer studies originates from: The biologically based sex and its cultural interpretation is seen problematic, for example in a situation when an individual does not relate to either of the binary ends.

representation – all directly intertwined with gender. For example, misrecognition is a question of social status, and social status for women more often than men implicates submissiveness. This is also reflected in labor divisions where gendered outcomes can be observed, such as women as primary caregivers. (Fraser 2013.)

I see that Fraser can be criticized for lack of global applicability. For example, her models of universal breadwinner, caregiver parity, and universal caregiver do not seem to be applicable for the so-called "developing" and the "developed" worlds simultaneously, hence she over-expands the possibilities of the implied ideal state, as similar to that of the Nordic welfare countries. But Fraser's understanding of gender inequality is beneficial in the framework particularly for its materialist notions that are political in that they seek social change. Gender inequality is a social construction, and therefore can be challenged and changed by active measures. Hence, to understand gender as a social construction (rather than an unchangeable physiological and biological trait) enables change. The rules, norms, habits, attitudes, discourses, perceptions, and associations are based on collective, social agreements (as for Yuval-Davis) and individual level repetition (as for Butler), and through consciousness, dialogue, and at times even reinforcement, these social agreements can be changed.

As discovered, this thesis makes use of various schools of thought on gender, but emphasizes particularly poststructuralist thought. Yet, for the means of analysis it is meaningful to discuss men and women as dominant social groups of gender, applying adjectives of male and female to these groups respectively. The research interest of this thesis lies in cis-men and cis-women, both of which are terms for an individual who relates to the biological sex assigned to them at birth and its respective gender identity. Despite this research interest, the analysis carries out an intersectional understanding of the complexities of the groups of men and women, and recognizes that gender vividly manifests between and beyond the two binary oppositions. Similarly, the minority representation varying from gender, sexuality, ethnicity, race, ability/disability, and age among others are necessary, justified, and enriching for analyzing political leadership. But the *raison d'être* of this research lies in majority representation: Although women are underrepresented in the political sphere, women as a social group are not a minority in relation to men.

2.3 Plurality of Masculinity

When considering gender inequality, the current gender order privileges men as a group over women as a group. Up to 90 percent of international political leaders are men. The gender pay gap differentiates women with a lower income compared to that of men, and one out of three women suffer from gender based violence in their lifetime, most commonly the perpetrator being a male partner or family member. (Connell 2005b, World Health Organization 2013, World Economic Forum 2016.) In such a setting the question of interest groups differs according to genders:

"A gender order where men dominate women cannot avoid constituting men as an interest group concerned with defense, and women as an interest group concerned with change" (Connell 2005a).

Both men and women as social groups are constituted of various intersectional determinants, as discussed previously. The cultural, social, political, and historical contexts differentiate women amongst women, and men amongst men. Therefore, the fundamental question is what kinds of men in particular gain the patriarchal profit of being able to dominate, and here is where the concept of masculinity plays a central role.

Masculinity as a term is commonly used in the research fields of men & masculinity studies, gender studies, anthropology, sociology, and ethnography. In political science the term is relatively uncommon, but the notions of citizenship, gender and its inequalities, war and conflict, state, governance, and leadership all have elements that can be associated with masculinity. The concept of masculinity includes intertwined notions of power, having the ability to produce social privilege, creating legitimacy, and uneven distributions of wealth and well-being (Halberstam 1998).

Masculinity has been frequently associated with men and manhood, whereas femininity is associated with women and womanhood, and the interdependency of masculinity and femininity is a prerequisite – one could not exist without the other (Connell 2005a). Masculinities are neither stable nor consistent, rather they are mobile and under transitions as in poststructuralist understanding of "doing of masculinity" (Hockey 2011, p. 2), or in other words, "socially constructed configurations of gender practice" (Connell 2005b, p. 1805). These configurations are formed in the context of the social, wherein lies a preoccupation with proving gender to others (Coston and Kimmel 2012). Furthermore, a concept which describes such masculine interplay is *masculinity politics*, in which masculinity and masculine gender are made a principal theme in social interaction, and men's positioning in gender relations with it (Connell 2005a). Masculinity politics play a pivotal role in the political sphere as it is constructed masculine, suitable for men of a particular kind.

To discover what kind of masculinity in particular manifests in relation to political power and what is focused on in this thesis, the discussion entails an understanding of plurality of masculinity. When discussing masculinity, it is important to understand the concept as plural rather than a ubiquitous masculinity – such an approach acknowledges multiple different ways of being a man. Several kinds of masculinities exist, of which Haywood and Mac an Ghaill (2003) give examples such as *compensatory masculinities*; a realist philosophical framework where masculinity is considered in allusion to capitalist relations of production, *dissident masculinities*; troubling ways of being a male regarding the masculinity projection by the state or the media, *hyper-masculinity*; extreme performances of the masculine, *paternal masculinity*; regarding fatherhood and becoming a man through fathering, and *protest masculinity*, being a man in a way which observes a conventional male behavior in an exaggerated manner.

Connell (2005a) sees relations among different kinds of masculinities as having characteristics of hegemony, subordination, complicity, and marginalization. In considering the power relations of the masculinities and the dominant type, a notion of privilege arises and an argument that "privilege is not monolithic" (Coston and Kimmel 2012, p. 109). In understanding the group of privileged men who dominate, Connell uses Gramsci's (1971) concept and understanding of hegemony in creation of a term *hegemonic masculinity*, defined as

> "the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women" (Connell 2005a, p. 77).

In order for hegemonic masculinity to be powerful, a correspondence of institutional power and cultural ideal needs to be established (Connell 2005a). Coston and Kimmel (2012) refer to this interdependency as that "the ideal male is supposed to be not only wealthy, but also in a position of power over others." (p. 98). These specific notions of hegemonic masculinity are directly applicable to political power. As practice showcases in the Global North, the stereotype of a white, middle-aged, heterosexual male politician fits seamlessly to them, having attributes which signify social privilege. Therefore, the hegemonic masculinity is the kind of masculinity this thesis focuses on, and a term of *masculinity norms* is used to describe the social configurations, rules, and practices between hegemonic masculinity and male premise in politics.

An interesting power relation is, that rather than men having dominated women, the masculine has dominated the feminine (Connell 2005a). Therefore, by adjusting to and meeting the demands of masculinity politics a woman is met with an opportunity to access political power. In female political leaders' relations to masculinity politics, an association of masculinity being strictly related only to men and male bodies needs to be contested by poststructuralist disembodiment, or as by Butlerian deconstruction. Haywood and Mac an Ghaill (2003) refer to this as an analytical dissonance – it involves "simultaneously collapsing the homogeneity of social majorities and minorities and (con)fusing distinct and incompatible categories" (ibid. p. 116).

By understanding that masculinities exist also in women and femininities in men, a new perspective for political analysis in leadership is unfastened. In supporting the arguments of disembodiment and female masculinity, Halberstam (1998) argues that female masculinity has been an integral part of the creation of modern masculinity. Although, contestations of its social legitimacy has been raised: Smith (1996) acknowledges also female subjects making claims for masculinity, but argues that in terms of "political power, it still makes a difference when masculinity coincides with biological maleness" (ibid. p. 4). Halberstam critiques such a claim by its lack of understanding of the plural nature of masculinities – not all masculinities added to biological maleness bring about power. This critique is also relevant in this thesis: When referring to men in relation

to political leadership, it is not the entire pool of men that is at stake, but rather the ones that possess the kind of hegemonic masculinity which creates privilege in political leadership.

Whereas Smith can be criticized for his broadness, Halberstam herself can be criticized for only focusing on certain kinds of female masculinities. Whereas Halberstam acknowledges that the taxonomy she creates in "Female Masculinity" (1998) does not "catalog the entirety of female masculinities" (p. 46), her perception on female masculinity mainly focuses on tomboys, androgynies, queers, lesbians, and butches, leaving out the masculinities that may manifest in a heterosexual cis-woman's identity, behavior, and norms.[2]

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[2] This approach would be relevant for future studies on female political leaders to study the manifestation of masculinity norms within them, which is a research interest that is not enabled by the scope of this thesis, but discussed partly in Duerst-Lahti & Kelly (1995) and Murray (2010).

3   Masculinity of the State

Our culture and many of the societal structures originate very far from the history, starting from whether our image of god is male or female.

–   Anne Berner, the Finnish Minister of Transportation and Communications

Gender as a determinant influences political systems and global governance, which entails essentialist notions of men/masculinity and women/femininity within and between states. I argue that state masculinity exists, and its essentialism can be understood to stem from historical and religious influences which shape the gender order of today. This notion I label as a historico–religious gender order: Male dominance in politics has not appeared in a vacuum, but originates retrospectively. In the discussion of the historico–religious gender order my geographical focus narrows down from the system of states into economically advanced modern states, which are mostly located in the Global North. Most of these are also influenced by the religion of Christianity. Such scaled down focus also applies to the Finnish case study presented later on in the thesis.

3.1   Why, What, and Where:
Rationale, Acknowledgement, and Location

State masculinity is not taken for granted in academia. As part of feminist political science, Kantola (2006) points out that "it is possible to argue that feminist state theory is 'nowhere'" (p. 15). If gendered notions of the state are discussed, masculinity may not be a key concept, and can be overridden by rivalry of ways in understanding, such as the constructivist tradition used in Towns (2010) showcases. Then, if the norms of masculinity within a state are at the core of the discussion, it may have varying labels such as "patriarchy and the state" (Bryson 2003, p. 196).

Although there are gendered differences between the states (*inter alia* Peterson 1992, Kantola 2006, Al-Rasheed 2013), cross-cutting factors of gender in the global system exist, and they are examined in the field of international relations with an increasing tendency. Gender within the state structure is overarching and translucent: What the state does, what it consists of, and whose interests it primarily serves are characterized by the perceived male status quo – a masculine point of departure. In light of which I argue, that state masculinity does exist and is of relevance to be employed in political analysis.

State functions, such as the continuous re-creation of the nation and the maintenance of sovereignty (including its policies of violence), are gendered (Yuval-Davis 2002, Kantola 2007, Fraser & Hutchings 2014). As an example of the former and as discussed in the gender key concept framework, women are constructed as biological reproducers of the nation. This construction has political implications for reproductive policies and legislation, leading to biopolitics and state control over women's bodies (Yuval-Davis 2002, Harcourt 2009). As an example of the latter, and in relation to historical materialism, warfare has a gendered division of labor, where the means of violence are in the hands of men – from men as foot soldiers to male generals and political leaders (Giddens 1985, Hutchings 2008). Overall, the social construction and legitimization of the gender order manifests through nationalist discourses, which are heavily sexualized and gendered, legitimizing male domination over women (Steans 2013).

The state consists of citizens, and as a concept citizenship is deeply gendered in men and manhood (Yuval-Davis 2002, Lister 2003, Steans and Pettman in Shepherd ed. 2010, Steans 2013). Whereas citizenship is a precondition for participating in public politics, and as public politics have historically been mostly occupied by men, masculinity and manhood have shaped the concept of citizenship and politics to be ideal for men. In other words, I claim that the citizen as a precondition for state related agency, such as political participation and action, is *a priori* male.

Citizenship within society has gendered norms which are historically rooted. The feminist critique of the gendered division of social life in public and private spheres is contested, yet provides an understanding of how men have traditionally been the majority of the former and women of the latter (*inter alia* Phillips 1998, Yuval-Davis 2002, Fraser 2013). Women's reproductive role in the continuation of the human race with her bodily abilities of carrying, birthing, and breastfeeding have relegated the woman to care work of the home, separating her from the public sphere (Hoogensen & Solheim 2006). Citizenship as universalized masculinity norms is eluded to the fact that women's citizenship has been historically mediated through men (Steans in Shepherd ed. 2010). Subsequently, the concept itself has many gendered stereotypes: The citizen is viewed as abstract, dispassionate, rational, and capable in political decision making, and the citizen is not emotional, subject to desire or passion, domestic, nor mundane (Stevens 2007). The former attributes are taken to be essentialist attributes of men and the latter of women, enacting in exclusions of favoring men as citizens and political actors, and shunning women (Lister 2003, Roseneil 2013).

Whose interests the state primarily serves depends on what and who the state represents. The state is characterized by institutionalized gender discrimination, for example, in considering the political leadership. Heads of the states are personified representations of the state, and as only seven percent of them are female,[3] the state represents mainly men. Also, political institutions such as the presidency and the government can be considered as state representations. Gender is present in these institutions too, "replete with stereotypes regarding the traits and

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[3] Figure from 2013 by Jalalzai, consisting presidents and prime ministers globally.

competencies necessary to carry out relevant duties" (Jalalzai 2013, p. 88). These gender stereotypes emerge from the norms that state institutions and structures such as law are made by men to serve and protect their interest (Bryson 2003). Furthermore, these stereotypes advantage men in the political executive offices whilst disadvantaging women.

Continuing from the state level to the international level as in system of states, Hooper (2012) interestingly argues that international relations reflect the world of men as international affairs, as institutional practices, are symbolized and embodied in men. The author continues, that for the same reason international relations also make men in such symbolization and embodiment. Therefore, masculinity norms operate as a two-way influential relation: As men interact and personify international affairs, international relations are composed of men, and create the need for male input. Such an idea is in accordance with poststructuralist thought and is Butlerian: the doer is defined by the deed, and the deed does not exist without the doer.

With such notion raised, a question of female input in the male dominated structure arises. Can masculine international relations, international affairs, and the state be transformed towards gender equality by including more women in the realm? The question is large and I continue to answer it throughout the thesis. Its answer can be considered as two-fold: Repudiation or investigation of the possibilities. As for the former and according to radical feminism, the system which is created by men is inherently male, hence does not allow female interference because of its point of departure. As Bryson (2003) writes:

> "- - women gain power only by playing according to male rules which are stacked against them and which require them to assimilate to the male norms they are supposed to be attacking, apparent legal gains can disguise or legitimate women's oppression by providing a formal equality which again requires them to conform to rules that have been established by men, and welfare benefits may depend upon an intrusive regulation or investigation of women's domestic circumstances." (p. 196.)

Then, as for the investigation of the possibilities, another way of approaching the question above is acknowledging masculinity norms, yet emphasizing the possibilities of change in dynamics within the system. When acknowledging that international politics are systematically gendered, the approaches that include gender in international relations expose how gender "reconfigures fundamental categories and disciplinary 'givens'" (Peterson 1992, p. 17) – also the Butlerian approach in examining the genealogies of the oppression. This idea is contemporarily noted and illustrated by Towns (2010): The international society of states, gender, and furthermore the status of women is a standard, which places the states under the homogenizing force of norms in the rivalry for better ranking within the global governance system. As I will argue in the case study of this thesis, what the actual practices are behind such gender equality ranking is another matter than the ranking itself, yet the social hierarchies are a source of change as the reinterpretation of prior norms can be transformative.

As an example of this, Towns discusses the suffrage movement as a worldwide phenomenon. The first wave of transnational suffragist's content and scope were a response to preceding international norms, in which women were excluded from political participation. By the means of reinterpretation, the standard governing of affected states was changed. Furthermore, I see that the suffrage movement is one of the examples of how women (in assistance of likeminded men) have made prominent changes within male designed and maintained system. This kind of action can bear long-term consequences – considering the suffrage movement, New Zealand was the only country in the world granting women the right to vote in 1893, and in 2017 the Vatican is the only country that has not permitted such right. In considering the exclusion of women in the Vatican particularly, the state is an example of how historical and religious matters can influence the political sphere.

3.2 The Historico–Religious Gender Order

As inequality does not manifest in a vacuum, to trace the origin of gender as a labelling characteristic within societies and its history is of importance to discuss. Although women as a group are more broadly educated than men as a group after the early modern times, in most of the economically advanced modern states they are educated in a culture which has modelled a world inherited from Christianity (Freeman, Bourque & Shelton 2001). Christianity, as other religions respectively, have notably impacted societies and cultures on gendering practices and gendering order (Thatcher 2011). The religious influence can be understood by using Foucauldian terms of discursive power within spatial *epistémè*, constructing the worldview and frames for what is possible to express (ibid, Foucault 1990). These historical and discursive constructs of what is it to be a man and a woman affect still through essentialism.

The religious essentialism is based on ancient ideals, including notions such as men possessing moral austerity and hardness, and women being, for example, characterized by softness. These religious models are originally established on Greek and Roman ideals, in which the citizens of these collectivities perceived the two nations as greater than others, and in which superiority of the masculine and admiration of the male body existed. (Thatcher 2011.) Swancutt (in Moore & Anderson ed. 2003) discusses that the idealization of the male body and the masculine placed as secondary any deviance from the ideal – including femininity and female bodies.

The ideal, a Greek or a Roman man, was to embody "physical and political strength, rationality, spirituality, superiority, activity, dryness, and penetration". Then women, not as directly oppositional but rather deviating from the ideal, were thought to embody the negative qualities, such as "physical and political weakness, irrationality, fleshliness, inferiority, passivity, wetness, and being penetrated". (Ibid. p. 198.) The superiority of maleness and the perceived suitability of man for

politics and the public sphere shaped ancient societies in their gender practices and gender order in an essentialist way.

A drastic change can be noted by connecting the biologically biased history of gender to the discussion of biological sex and gender differences of today's academia. Questions of whether a relation between biological differences and gender order exists, and how it may be like, remains highly debated. The complexity of these questions is prominent as they overlap differing disciplines and schools of thoughts on the human being, materiality of the body, and the biological affect. Such range of approaches was lacking in the Greek and Roman ideals, which is an explanatory reason for the supremacy of biological reasoning in antique history, a single approach which highly colored understanding at the time.

The different approaches may also clash within one discipline. To give an example of this, I briefly discuss feminist academic approaches. A feminist point of departure can acknowledge the existence of biological differences, but rejects abusive biologisms such as racism, homophobia, and sexism, which furthermore does not place feminists necessarily as anti-biology *per se* (Ahmed 2008). The lively feminist debate over new materialism[4] scrutinizes the matter of what kind of ontology or epistemology can be attached to materialism and how it ties to the social (*inter alia* ibid, Dolphijn & van der Tuin 2012, Bruining 2016, and Barad 2003 on discursivity and social constructivism). For some scholars writing in feminist literature, biology is strongly emphasized and they also critique feminist academia for its understanding of the body as performative rather than organic (Wilson 2004). Additionally, either–or -approaches of the biological affect are complemented with merging different aspects descriptively and dependently together, such as cultural theory, science, biology, psychology, and language (Papoulias & Callard 2010).

Biological grounds and social constructs of gender and gender order remain deliberate and rightfully so, but a notion of value is important to bring forth. Even with the complex debate over the matter, rationalization of gender solely based on biology does not stand under closer scrutiny. Thatcher (2011) discusses:

> "How men and women think about their relations with each other should not be based on biology, and when appeals to biology are made, the inferences drawn are likely to be misleading. These claims help us to see that culture borrows from nature, often illegitimately. Of course there are biological differences between men and women. Problems arise when actual or alleged biological differences entail assumptions about degrees of greater or less in the interpersonal realms of value, dignity, worth, greater capacities of intellect, soul or spirit, or greater entitlements to the exercise of power and control, and so on." (p. 18.)

Bearing this in mind, the historico–religious background for gender order does not justify gender inequality, as the female sex is not biologically of inferior value compared to the male sex. Therefore, whereas the two sexes are of equal value, gender inequality in its essentialism remains paradoxical.

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[4] A concept resulting as a materialist response to the linguistic turn of the postmodern and poststructural world.

3.3 Essentialism & Politics

As Stevens (2007) discusses, essentialism is at the core of political science: "The concept of what is 'natural' to people, of what constitutes 'human nature', is fundamental to political scientists' thinking about both how people actually behave and how they ought to behave" (p. 5). When making statements and creating generalizations of the individuals in economically advanced modern states of the Global North, one should be cautious of what kind of universalization is being made of 'people' – often they turn out to be only about men (ibid).

The norms of men arises from the notion of men/masculinity being the social norm, almost anything, "not an identity, not a particularizing quality, because it is everything. Therefore, men/masculinity is no gender because it is all genders" (Haywood and Mac an Ghaill 2003, p. 103). Simultaneously, a woman is signified by gender and is particularized, not being born as one but rather becoming a woman within the society (Haywood and Mac an Ghaill 2003, Beauvoir 1997). The difference of men being generalized and women being particularized sets the gender relations in competing notions of masculinity, pursuing to reduce women to womanhood in an essentialist way (Hoogensen & Solheim 2006).

As discussed previously regarding the essentialist gendered notions within and between the states, the political sphere is essentially male. A variety of supporting claims for it can be raised: Gendered differences in proportional political representation of men and women vary from one country to another, but the global average is 23 percent female and 77 percent male in representation when considering national parliaments (World Bank 2016). When looking at political leadership, the world leaders are men where "a female in the top leadership position of a country is an extremely rare creature" (Stevens 2007, p. 80). It is a notion which is supported by the fact that almost nine out of ten international political leaders are men (Connell 2005b). From a human rights based and a democratic point of view, women populating approximately half of the world are inherently entitled to half of the representation. Yet, in a world where women collectively own only one percent of the world's assets (Hoogensen & Solheim 2006), such an ideal is still far out of reach.

The gendered essentialism woven into the fabric of politics by male dominance and overrepresentation has accumulated feminist scholarly critique. According to its extreme, the inevitable compromise in the current structure will never be able to address women's interests and therefore adequately represent women – hence a "wholly new conception of politics will be necessary" (Bourque in Freeman, Bourque & Shelton ed. 2001, p. 106). Whereas the matter of women's interests is addressed in the next chapter, the stance of declining the opportunities for change in the current system can be considered antagonist, anarchist, and revolutionary. Less of an extreme end is to investigate the possible change within the given norms.

4   Women as Political Actors

Women don't merely want to be a part of gender equality. They want to be making decisions from their own premises, own ways of thinking, and own value systems.

    –   Anne Berner, the Finnish Minister of Transportation and Communications

Gender equality has an ontologically intrinsic value in the sphere of politics, but gender inequality remains stark. Women have entered traditional male occupations and are the majority of university graduates on a global scale, yet politics remain a terrain in which there is still far to go (Paxton & Huges 2007). I argue that politics is particularly rooted in masculinity, hence favoring men, for the reason that it holds supremacy over other social institutions, such as family and education (Martin 2004). Women as political actors compared to men are in an unfavorable position, despite their potential to contribute to heterogenetic political decision making.

4.1   Women's Interests

The question of women's interests – a particular gendered set of experiences, perspectives, and needs varying from that of men – can be placed under ontological and epistemological scrutiny. Phillips (1998) argues that women's interests do exist and they are political realism: In heterogenetic societies manifests multifacetedly several interests which possibly oppose one another. Some of these would be considered as women's interests, which arise from female experiences in societies.

       For example, they arise from gendered division of labor and the disproportionate responsibility in care work (Ehrenreich & Russell Hochschild ed. 2003, Fraser 2013), from the crosscutting socioeconomic differences compared to that of men (United Nations 2015, World Bank 2013), and from the differing biopolitics which influence gendered bodies of women differently compared to men (Harcourt 2009). Phillips continues that the argument for women's interests descends into three ontological assumptions: That women have separate interests as women, that they cannot be sufficiently represented by men as they lack female experiences, and that only the selection of women as political representatives guarantee that women's interests are addressed.

       A problematization of women's interests is in identity politics: They may ignore and conflate intragroup differences. Intersectionality of identity politics occur on structural, political, and representational levels, where socially constructed inequalities, dominant discourses, cultures, and collective identities collide.

(Crenshaw 1991.) In other words, a ubiquitous women's interest does not exist, furthermore it should be considered as plural and situational. Women are collectively positioned in relation to men as a collective, but intragroup differences may problematize the primality of such a relation. These differences raise a recognition that inequalities exist outside the gender binary, and that the relations within the group of women are meaningful too.

The sociology of knowledge is therefore important – how the knowledge of the manifold of women's interests is created. To avoid the bias of favoring knowledge creation of only women with certain attributes, or characterizing and reducing women into narrow frames (such as "hyper-liberated Western women" or "excessively repressed Islamic women" [Hoogensen & Solheim 2006, p. 35]), a more holistic approach is needed. Hill Collins (2012) refers to "intellectual work from outside-within social locations" where "elite knowledge (social theories developed from within centers of power, such as whiteness, maleness, heterosexism, class privilege, or citizenship)" is contested with the knowledge created by the oppressed groups, offering a power conscious, "distinctive oppositional knowledge" (p. 68-69). Therefore, the hegemony of structural domination of Western political and discursive suppression gets challenged, and women and their interests are understood better in their heterogeneity rather than as a stable category of analysis (Mohanty 1988).

As seen, despite the plurality of women's interests, they can be ontologically recognized and epistemologically established. When these interests exist, the question of who in the societal decision making should bring forth such interests. Here the matter of interest swiftly turns into a matter of representation. Women's interests are complex, and men are excluded as representatives because of their lack of relevant female experience. However, it could be questioned whether a woman is able to successfully represent women's interests in their complexity either. Furthermore, is a female politician capable of representing women's interests in a male dominated structure?

4.2 Women's Political Representation

In considering these questions, three perspectives on female representation of women can be raised. First, the politician herself determines whether she has the interest to represent women to begin with. Second, the politician may not be able to act for women even if she wants to. And lastly, and in relation to the heterogeneity of the social group labelled as women, "female politicians of a particular race, ethnicity, class, or caste may not desire to or be able to act" for all different kinds of women. (Paxton & Huges 2007, p. 12.) As the last notion was discussed in relation to the sociology of knowledge, I shall focus on the two former perspectives – in particular, what influences the representational interest and frames the possibilities for female participation.

The two perspectives may be treated separately, but they can also overlap: Depending on a situation, a female politician may or may not be willing and/or able

to represent women's interests, and the extent of the possible representation is also contextual. To begin with, masculinity norms lead to men's interests being treated as gender neutral. Subsequently, women and women's issues are being gendered, which reflect possibilities for political action and furthermore policy making. Childs (2002) gives an illustrative example of this in the context of female members of parliament (MPs) in the Labour Party of the United Kingdom. An association of a female politician to women's rights associations or women's issues has a labelling effect, which may restrict the politician's ability to act in the wide spectrum of political issues and/or limit career progression. Stepping outside the normativity of masculinity has a cost: "The most common perception is that women who seek to act for women act only for women. - - If an MP desires promotion, she cannot afford to be regarded as acting for women too often or too forcefully." (ibid. p. 151.)

In other words, these insights describe the masculine norms of the political sphere, where 'the deviance' of women and women's issues are not a concern of men or of people, but only of women. This sets an unequal representational conflict, where women as political actors are expected to advance men's interests alongside their own, whereas men are not accounted for advancing women's interests at any stage. Therefore, the representation of women is reduced next to the representation of men, wherein the male concerns and perspectives are located at the point of departure, within the neutrality, the majority, and consequently have a greater chance to be efficiently addressed.

It is also important to note the non-minority setting: Both women and men constitute roughly half of the populations. Male interests stem similarly from men's gendered experiences within society, as do women's interests in their respective experiences. When the same diversity of interests' origins applies regarding intragroup intersections, the overall 'amount' of men's and women's interests can be considered to be the same. Hence, in the masculine construction of politics, men's interests can be seen to weigh more than women's in this case as men's interests are better represented. This leads to a question of what influence the representational existence of women may then have, and how many women are needed to enable change.

A critical mass theory has been deployed regarding the overrepresentation of men and underrepresentation of women. The idea originates from Kanter (1993),[5] who distinguishes different kinds of representative groups based on the percentage of women present. Importantly, the critical mass is one of the preceding ideas behind gender based quota and parity systems. The theory's groups range from zero representation to skewed groups of up to 15 percent, and from titled groups of 35 percent to balanced groups of 50 percent. The categorization gives an idea of what the role of women is within these groups. Some argue that in skewed groups women are tokens, feeling compelled to conform into masculine norms and suffer from stereotyping (Paxton & Huges 2007). Others see that precisely because of the labelled abnormality, the female voice stands out and gets recognized in a more distinctive way (Crowley 2004). Yet, a critical mass is considered when the

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[5] Rosabeth Moss Kanter focused in large American corporations of 1970s (first edition of the referred publication from 1977), and the idea got extended to political representation by Drude Dahlerup (1988).

representation of women is around 30 percent – at that stage they are taken seriously as a legislative minority, "becoming strong enough to influence the culture of the [entire] group, and alliances between minority group members become a possibility" (Dahlerup, 1988, p. 280, Paxton & Huges 2007).

The idea of critical mass has also been rejected by some scholars, critiquing the concept for the lack of nuanced understanding of female representation in numbers, for the lack of observing beneficial passages of legislation to women as a group, and for the mass not coherently correlating within differing contexts. The critical mass is perceived as vague if women composing the group have no desire to represent women's interests, or the context of decision making does not permit women's issues to be addressed. (Childs & Krook 2006 & 2008.)

The critique roots itself in claims for qualitative gender equality, not only quantitative. Quantifiable understanding of gender equality is not enough if the substance is not included. Whether engaging with the idea of critical mass or any kind of quota or parity, an important question is, can women make a difference in politics? To recognize politicians as gendered actors, and having gendered consequences of their actions, can be challenging with multiple factors affecting contextual decision making. Scholarly debates on the topic range vastly, as gender is not the only variable in the question matter. Amongst others, political systems, party politics, and political positioning in the left–right political spectrum play a central role, which makes it difficult to say whether women themselves bring or have the potential to bring something different and new to the table (Freeman, Bourque & Shelton ed. 2001, Hoogensen & Solheim 2006, Paxton & Hughes 2007).

Yet, many studies argue for gendered differences between male and female legislators. The tendency, willingness, and ability for change based on womanhood is contextual, but patterns for overall female political representative behavior can be drawn. Generally considering, women prioritize differing political issues, including increased vigilance on women's issues and espousal of feminist ideals, female legislators tend toward the political left, women as politicians defy party political system and vote against the party line more often than men as politicians, and women consult and report back to civil society forums more often than men (Phillips 1998, Paxton & Hughes 2007, Stevens 2007, McEvoy 2016). These gendered differences suggest a female ability to create change and to engage in political leadership which can have differing results in which gender plays a role.

An example of this is the Swedish Feminist Foreign Policy. On one hand it matters what kind of a person is initiating the policy making – for example what their political interests and party liaisons are, and spatial contextualization of policy making possibilities. Gender is not a sole explanation in political decision making, as Sweden has previously had both women and men as Ministers of Foreign Affairs, which have not initiated to visibly include feminism in foreign policy. But on the other hand and in the light of female legislative behavior patterns, having a woman behind the Feminist Foreign Policy is supported theoretically. It is a political act which is unlikely to be expected from men. As such, gender impacts in what kind of policy is employed.

4.3 Female Political Leadership

The political sphere can be claimed to strengthen sex roles, where socialization of women and men condition gendered individuals into appropriate roles of behavior (Haywood and Mac an Ghaill 2003). Politics in modern societies can include both men and women, but mostly in differing ways, and importantly, they do not contest the division of care work or labor in the private sphere. Whereas the responsibilities of women outside the home have significantly increased, inside the home the responsibilities have not (Bourque in Freeman, Bourque & Shelton ed. 2001, Fraser 2013). This leads into a situation in which women work long days outside and inside the home, whereas men's responsibilities have for the most part remained the same.

This sexual division of labor constrains women's political opportunities, where women can be said to lack the required time, money, family and institutional support to successfully compete with men for political positions (ibid, Hoogensen & Solheim 2006). Other masculine spheres support male candidates in politics differently and, perhaps more profoundly, compared to the support available for female candidates. This is vivid particularly in political leadership: Whereas the organizations supporting women's issues can offer social support for women in politics, they have little required funding to offer for carrying out costly campaigns. Meanwhile, energy corporations and defense contractors have numerous financial support to give for male candidates. (Hoogensen & Solheim 2006.) Also, the experience, sustainable capacity, and continuous creation of collaborative relationships of the 'old boy network' benefit men and disadvantage women (Conway in Freeman, Bourque & Shelton ed. 2001, p. xix).

Inequalities in politics are reflected also in the composition of executive institutions, such as national governments. According to Jalalzai (2013) "– women seldom rise to power, and when they do, in comparison with men they occupy weaker posts with less concentrated authority" (p. 56). The stereotype of female softness merging as early as the ancient Greek and Roman ideals is still visible in cabinet positions. Globally considering, when national governments have both men and women in their cabinet positions, the division of the ministerial portfolios is characterized by gendered traits. "Softer", thus less prestigious areas of governance such as health, education, women's issues, and family are commonly run by female ministers. In contrast, the "hard" and most prestigious cabinet positions such as defense, home and foreign affairs, and finance are most commonly in the hands of men. (Paxton & Huges 2007, Escobar-Lemmon & Taylor-Robinson 2009, Murray 2010, Jalalzai 2013.)[6]

The connections to Greco-Roman tradition continue: Political leaders as representatives of their gender are expected to behave in correlating, characterized ways (Paxton & Huges 2007). This means, that women are expected to behave according to female stereotypes, and men respectively alike. Female stereotypes are

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[6] There are also ministries which can be classified as gender-neutral, such as environment, sports, justice, tourism, and planning and development, where the ministers in offices vary in gender (Escobar-Lemmon & Taylor-Robinson 2009, Jalalzai 2013).

described as likeable, helpful, polite, gentle, and nurturing, closely associated with essentialised and biological womanhood. Then, male stereotypes suggest men to be dominant, aggressive, independent, competitive, and assertive – the same traits that are associated with an effective leader. (ibid, Paxton & Huges 2007.) As voters stereotypically associate positive executive office traits with men, masculinity is then correlated with being regarded as competent and credible (Murray 2010).

Media's role in strengthening the stereotyping is ruthless. Media treatment is notoriously negative for women leaders, where women are assessed based on appearance, the private sphere matters, and women's shortcomings and failures are tackled more visibly than that of men. Women also get less policy media coverage compared to their male colleagues. (Conway in Freeman, Bourque & Shelton ed. 2001, Stevens 2007, Murray 2010, Jalalzai 2013.)

All the matters discussed signal vigorously towards masculinity norms of political leadership. To further examine masculine norms, I discuss a large-number comparative analysis on women executives conducted by Jalalzai (2013). Her analysis is unique in politics and gender scholarship on political executive offices as it focuses on a breadth of the women executives globally, covering a time period of 50 years and focusing on 63 female leaders internationally. A large proportion of what has been contributed to the knowledge of the phenomenon within academia is based on qualitative research of individual cases and hence a collection of narratives can be drawn (Murray 2010, Jalalzai 2013). Whereas Jalalzai emphasizes for the need for further research and explanation on regional variation of women's leadership, and has a limited focus on solely presidents and prime ministers, her findings contribute to the argument of masculinity norms in political leadership as a whole.

Some scholars argue that women, on a general level, lack the necessary education and training to carry out successful elections, based on reasons related to woman's positioning in unequal societies (Hoogensen & Solheim 2006). This would subsequently prevent women from gaining the experience hence the expertise within the political hierarchy which is deemed, in most of the cases, necessary in order to rise to power. Jalalzai's findings of the executive ladder do not directly conflict with such an argument, but the findings discover a following notion of gender inequality which is unexplainable based on merit.

Whilst the larger pool of eligible candidates with relevant experience of legislative or lower-level executive seats does raise the odds of female political leadership, there is an undeniable advantage of manhood in the highest offices. Despite regional differences, almost all of those women who have risen as political executives have achieved graduate level degrees as their educational background and possess impressively high levels of political experience (nine years or more). These attributes are consistent with male executives' backgrounds, therefore, the argument of lacking necessary education and training in individual cases does not seem fitting.

Regarding the relevancy of the political experience and exposing the masculine norms of political leadership, the "soft" or feminine portfolios of the government are perceived as secondary compared to the "hard" or masculine portfolios. The latter are considered as a platform for gaining credibility in the

executive ladder. It is less likely that the women ministers in the feminine ministries gain executive offices, however the women who have served in the masculine ministries obtain the relevant experience. In addition, to replenish the argument of masculine supremacy, it is not expected of a male executive officer to have experience from a feminine ministry in order to be perceived as competent.

Yet importantly, when Jalalzai looked at the women and men in executive offices with experience in masculine portfolios, no statistical significance of differences in experience was found. Therefore, women's political and educational credentials cannot be taken as explanatory for the lack of female leadership – the example individuals with sufficient credentials exist. As Jalalzai summarizes:

"- - the gendered nature of the executive office still typically promotes men instead of women. Despite their impressive educational backgrounds, professional experience, and associations with politically active families, women remain underrepresented at the highest levels of power everywhere. Men continue to dominate prime ministerships and presidencies and gain stronger positions; we cannot explain this discrepancy by citing women's lack of preparation." (p. 93.)

When women that have the relative experience are not gaining the political leadership positions, the persisting gender inequality is moreover structural than grounded on lack of performance. This structure brings us back to the arguments of state masculinity and gendered institutional discrimination. The state with its functions, aims, and representation reproduces masculine norms in political leadership, which as suitable for men and to the detriment of women. As the theoretical framework has reached a full circle in its argumentation, from state masculinity to female political leadership, I continue to the empirical example of the theoretical framework, namely the case study of Finland.

5   Case Study Methodology

Because you are a public figure, you must endure threats too.

–   Anne Berner, the Finnish Minister of Transportation and Communications

This thesis is a theoretical explanation of reproduction of masculinity in political leadership, and the case study of Finland provides an example of this. The Finnish case benefits from both quantitative and qualitative means of analysis. A division between the methods of inquiry is, that whereas quantitative is referred to as basic level statistical data gathering, the analysis benefits mainly from qualitative methods. The case study gains adaptability through two ministerial interviews which provide individual narratives of female political leaders, allowing reflection on the current practice against the theoretical claims. This imbalance between the methods of inquiry reflects this chapter, including the ethical considerations of the study.

5.1   Ethical Considerations

Integrity standards of conducting social research such as diligence, reliability, and transparency are considered throughout this thesis. This research is written in accordance with the ethics code framework by the Swedish Research Council for Humanities and Social Sciences (CODEX 2017), as appropriate for the research that has taken place in Sweden (EU guidance note 2010). The research includes in-depth interviews[7], further meaning human subject research, where the potential risk of harming the individuals needs to be ethically assessed (CODEX 2017). I conduct such ethical assessment by following the typology used in Bryman (2001, originating from the work of Diener and Crandall 1978). It consists of four parts: harm to participants, lack of informed consent, invasion of privacy, and deception.

The interviewees are public officials working in the highest hierarchies of political decision making as ministers of the Finnish government. Identification of all possible harms in their public and private spheres was unlikely, "though that fact should not be taken to mean that there is no point in seeking to protect them" (Bryman 2001, p. 480). As the thesis follows the ethical standards of Lund

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[7] The translations from the language used during the interviewees (Finnish) into the language used in the analysis and the thesis (English) are author translations, which are subject to an external revision in case of suspected incoherency.

University (2015), by such measure it is justified that this research is considerate of the possible political, social, legal, psychological, and economic harms to participants, and actively pursues to minimize such risks.

Informed consent in participation followed the Swedish law under the Act of Ethical Review of Research Involving Humans, SFS 2003:460 (Lund University 2015, CODEX 2017). Information about the research, which is in accordance with the Act, was introduced in the initial request for research participation. The request was sent to all female ministers of the incumbent Finnish government including their assistance and secretariat staff.[8] As for possible invasion of privacy, the outreach towards the ministers and their staff was done through publicly available email addresses. The participation was volunteer based, and the level of personal information disclosed during the interview depended on the minister herself. The interviewees were not granted anonymity because of the public nature of their offices, as the study focused on their public positions. The transcribed interviews were available for the purposes of conducting the analysis, but not published in their entire format in the thesis.

The last notion of the ethical assessment is hazards of deception. Deception is defined as occurring when research is represented by the researchers as something other than what it is (Bryman 2001). As seen from the theoretical framework in relation to the interview related material presented in the appendix, an appropriate level of consistency, clarity, coherency, and reliability can be proven to have been obtained in carrying out the research.

5.2 Ministerial Interviews

As the thesis follows poststructuralist thought, a justification of interviews as a method can be debatable. From a poststructuralist perspective, interviews can be understood as "truth creating mechanisms rather than techniques to access the 'real world'" (Haywood & Mac an Ghaill 2003, p. 155). Yet, an epistemological consideration of how to access human experience concerning reproduction of masculinity norms in political leadership set interviews as a prospective method.

Considering the research interest of gender inequality, female experiences and insights were prioritized. Men are privileged in political leadership, and as Coston & Kimmel (2012) state, privilege can hardly be seen by the privileged. These factors excluded male participants.[9] A focus was set on a ministerial level for the reasons of material availability and extent. The quantitative analysis benefitted from the data available at the Government of Finland official website, extending through the 100-year-history of the country's independency. For the qualitative

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[8] For research transparency reasons, please see 9.1 Appendix A for the email requesting the research participation (Finnish-English author translation).
[9] A suggestion of expanding the research design in future research is involving male political leaders in the empirical discussion as a control group.

analysis, the current Finnish government has six female ministers out of the total of eighteen.[10] Therefore, the number of interviews which were likely to be obtained was expected to be small. The outcome was two interviews, which is representative of 33 percent of female ministers of the current Finnish government.[11]

A topic-based interview guide[12] was created as theory driven. The guide was semi-structured as it allowed "interviewers to glean the ways in which research participants view their social world and that there is flexibility in the conduct of the interviews" (Bryman 2001, p. 317). As the interviews were conducted in feminist research framework, the point of departure was the perspectives of the interviewees, their worldviews, ideas, insights, and possible experiences (ibid.), all emphasizing their voice in relation to the theoretical framework. The interviewer role was active, following the led directions of the interviewee, and creating an impetus for the discussion and provoking elaboration when appropriate (Holstein & Gubrium 1995). These dynamics in the interviewing process led not only into narrative production of the gendered political leadership, but also to the production being constructed as inherently dialogical. Therefore, to stay as close to the original interview context, the analysis of the interviews is conducted as inspired by dialogical narrative analysis (DNA).

5.3   Dialogical Narrative Analysis

Prior specifying DNA, I discuss how narrative is used in this thesis. There are various ways of understanding the concept of narrative, for which I define the usage of the term according the following:

> "Narrative may be seen as a most basic way humans have of apprehending the world: 'we grasp our lives in a narrative', and sense that 'narrative is the fundamental scheme for linking individual actions and events into interrelated aspects of an understandable composite'" (Plummer 2001, p. 185, quoting Polkinghorne 1988, and Taylor 1989), and:

> "From a poststructuralist perspective, identity is created through narratives (stories) that people tell about who they are and their shared history, and by

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[10] Comprehensive of all ministerialships of the current government, including changes in 2017: Minister of Family Affairs and Social Services changes from male to female minister, and three ministerialships were added to the government, Minister of Justice, Minister of Culture, and Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, all male.

[11] Additional interviews of female ministers of previous governments were not considered suitable in relation to the current government: The composition, dynamics, and spatial context vary from one government to another, and the current ministers are under a ministerial oath, whereas their predecessors are not any longer. The interest of focusing on the incumbent ministers was based on the possibility of gathering the latest, and therefore, the most relevant data, and also to respond to an interest of to what extent a person under the ministerial oath is willing and/or able to discuss the matter of gender inequality in politics.

[12] Please find the interview guide and forewords prior to the interview in 9.2 Appendix B.

emotive appeals to symbols of and rituals surrounding statehood and nationhood" (Steans 2013, p. 50).

Therefore, narrative is seen as the consciously reflecting, self-locating, and spatially contextualized story that the interviewee engaged herself in verbally. Her conceptualization of herself, her profession, and the surrounding social world can be understood as formulated through narration.

The semi-structured interview setting of the interviewer and the interviewee was inherently dialogical and polyphonic, where personal narratives were generated in social contexts, rather than a monologue (Tanggaard 2009). Therefore, DNA is beneficial in analyzing the content of the interviews – it draws from the work of Bakhtin which suggests that the author of the work is speaking *with* the character, not *about* the person (ibid. 1973, and 2010). DNA absorbs how multiple voices merge within a single voice: Not only the dialogue within an interview setting is between the two people present, but the stories discussed reshape past and vision future (Frank in Holstein & Gurbium ed. 2012), the latter of particular importance to the academic activism of the thesis.

DNA originally has five elements, out of which three elements are used in the analysis. They are recognition of dialogue between voices, remaining suspicious of the assumption of the interviewee's story as a monologue, and recognizing the unfinalized nature of people (ibid.). These elements I further label as *co-construction –*, *reflectivity –*, and *potential for change narratives*. Although I separate these elements into three levels for the means of the analysis, their social and intertwined complexity is not to be undermined nor disregarded.

First, co-construction narrative is the dialogue between the voices present, which in the interview setting operationalized "the interplay between the *whats* and *hows* of narrative production and its environments" (Holstein & Gubrium ed. 2012, p. 9). This level is the immediate discussion between the interviewer and the interviewee. Second, reflectivity narrative is characterized by the social of the interviewee: Among other aspects, she discusses and links, for example, her current profession and its public nature, her professional background, her private life and family, and her socially constructed worldviews and values. This level recognizes that the dialogue happens not only in the immediate interview context, but with other social dimensions of the individual too. These may or may not be tangible for outsiders to grasp for analysis. Finally, potential for change narrative focuses on the unfinalized nature of the social. As the topic of the interviews was surrounded by the value of gender equality, the interviews' purpose was not only to describe the current situation. Furthermore and in accordance with the academic activism of this research, the purpose was to seek potential ways to forward the value in the political sphere. This level can be described as visionary, extending to the social world outside the context of the interview and interviewee.

The two elements which are not used in this thesis from the original DNA are recognition of provisionally independent stories and inability to declare findings. The former refers to stories' and narrators' mutually and symbiotically defining liaison, where the narrators tell stories so the stories become alive, but also humans need stories to represent experiences. (Frank in Holstein & Gurbium ed.

2012.) Whilst I agree that stories require narrators to manifest, I object to the notion of stories' independent status: the stories become *a posteriori*. The latter argues findings as impossible and undialogical *per se*, as stories and conversations are seen as inherently endless (ibid.). Contradictorily, I see that the stories discussed at the time of the interview represent findings, conclusions, and observations of the shared conversation, but their need of contextualization is momentous. Therefore, prior to the interview analyses I next introduce the related national political context of Finland.

6   Finland – The Promised Land of Female Leadership?

When I was a special advisor in the Government of Vanhanen II [2007-2010] which was a female majority government, I think we hadn't even realized how tremendous and historical event it was.

–   Annika Saarikko, the incoming Finnish Minister of Family Affairs and Social Services

Finland ranks among the most advanced states internationally regarding gender equality, also in political comparison. Yet, by closer scrutiny the ranking can moreover be claimed to mirror global gender inequality than to exalt Finland's perfection in the area. The country is an illustrative example of reproduction of masculinity norms in political executive offices, and provides a multifaceted case study of the complexity of female gender in relation to political leadership.

6.1   Finnish Gendered Politics in Numbers

Historically, Finland was the first country in Europe and the second in the world to permit female suffrage and eligibility for office in 1906. In the following national elections of 1907, 19 women were elected to the Finnish Parliament, who were the first female members of the parliament in the world (Parliament of Finland). During the past 111 years, out of which the last 100 have marked the independence of the country,[13] gender equality in Finland has reached a level which ranks second highest in the world, after Iceland (World Economic Forum 2016). When looking at Global Gender Gap Index in the area of political empowerment, Finland also ranks second highest. More specifically, in the Index's subsection of 'women in ministerial positions', the country ranks with the highest score globally (ibid.).

These rankings can be considered as a part of *Nordic exceptionalism*, according which Nordic democracies have reached high levels of female political representation over time without the implementation of gender based quotas. This originates from a perception of equality as a value that has been considered fundamental in the Nordic societies, and that gender equality has played a role in development of the Nordics from agricultural societies into industrialized ones. (Julkunen 2010, Dahlerup 2013.)

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[13] Finland celebrates its 100th year of independence anniversary 6th of December this year (2017).

When considering Finland's position regarding gender equality in the international comparison, an illusion of gender equality in politics may arise, and I claim that it is not valid. To quantify this claim, out of the current 200 seats in the National Parliament, 85 female members have been the highest representational achievement thus far, occurring in the election in 2011 (Parliament of Finland). Out of the 74 governments Finland has had during its independence, three have had a slight female majority, and one government has had a gender balanced representation, while the rest have been male majority governments (Government of Finland a). Then, concerning the Presidency of the Republic, 94 years went by for a female president to be elected in Finland in the year 2000. President Halonen has thus far been the only female president of the country out of the 12 people who have held the position (President of Finland). These changes towards a better situation for women in politics have all occurred in the 21st century, yet these achievements have been exceptional: Finland has failed to provide stability regarding gender equality in politics, and the state leadership has consistently fallen back to male domination.

Ministers of Finland are an illustrative example of the dominance of men and the relative lack of women. When examining the 100-year-independent-history of the country with its 74 governments, the majority of ministerial appointments have been male. To be exact, out of 1,069 new ministerial appointments,[14] 921 times the person has been male, and 148 times a female.[15] By percentage, men have had 86.1 percent and women have had 13.9 percent of the new ministerial appointments. These figures are influenced by the fact that for most of the 20th century, ministerialships remained a 'men only' –area. Yet, such a notion reveals historical, social, and political constructions of what the 'prototype' of a Finnish minister has been, and these constructions impact the ministerialships from a gendered perspective still today.

In considering all ministerial appointments, Table 1. illustrates the compositions of the Finnish governments by gender division since independence in 1917.

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[14] The term refers to an appointment in which a person is for the first time appointed to a ministerial position in which she or he has not served before.

[15] Please see 9.3 Appendix C for a full graph.

Table 1. Representation of women and men as ministers in Finnish governments by percentage in 1917-2017
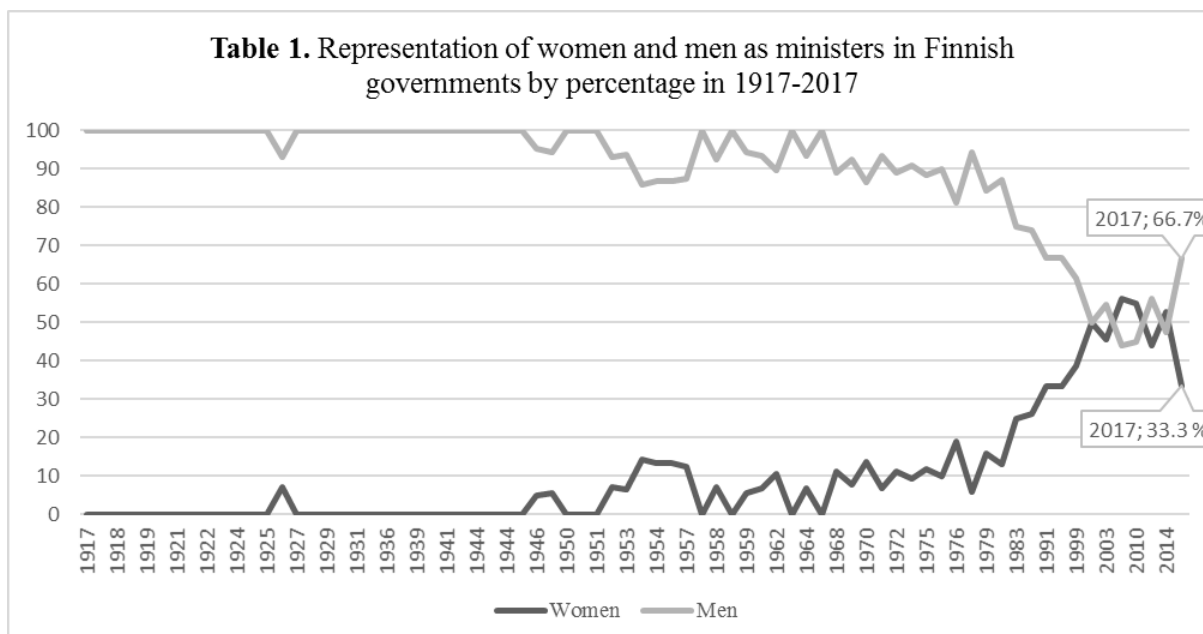

Table by the author, datasource Government of Finland a, ministerial changes of 2017 added.

The first time a woman was appointed as a minister was in the 14th government in 1926, after which the second was in the 31st in 1946. The timely gap in between reflects the unsteady progress of female representation in the government. The unsteadiness is also highlighted by the fact, that proportionally considering, women got increasing representation only from the 63rd government onwards, timewise located in the 1980s. The progression towards gender equality has not been linear as it has had backlashes. For example, the incumbent 74th government has proportionally the same ratio gender wise than the 66th government in 1995, more than two decades ago.

There are several possible reasons why the current backlash has happened: A rise of a populist right-wing party *Perussuomalaiset*, True Finns, to the government, a party which has had conservative and even misogynist outlooks on gender equality (Nieminen 2013), measurements for dealing with national public debt have heavily emphasized economic discourse in Finnish politics, a discourse which favors masculinity norms and stereotypical male leadership, and a lack of sufficient political will of the incumbent Prime Minister for gender equal appointments.

The Prime Minister of Finland has a central role in the government formation. In the Finnish political system, the Prime Minister proposes the division of the rest of the ministerialships, which then gets formally approved by the President (Government of Finland b). Then, when looking at how the position of the Prime Minister and other high-prestige portfolios (Krook & O'Brien 2012) are acquired, the Finnish political system can be seen as favoring male access. The system follows an unwritten notion that party leaders of the biggest governmental political parties traditionally occupy such portfolios. This includes the Prime Minister, who is the party leader of the winning party in parliamentary elections. When the biggest Finnish political parties vote, for the most part, for men as their

party leaders over women, the Prime Ministers consistently become male.[16] The theoretical framework in chapter four exposes a variety of perspectives of why men are chosen as party leaders, and how women are disadvantaged by their gender to begin with. For example, such as the voters, also including intraparty voting, associate stereotypical political executive traits to men and not to women.

Gender is not the only possible determinant in government formation: As Finnish governments are coalition governments, the Prime Minister also assesses other factors in the composition, such as party representation and regional representation. But from a gender perspective, in the Finnish national context the tendency has been that a male Prime Minister chooses a male majority government, with only two exceptions of the governments of 70th and 73rd in 2007 and 2014. The other two times, when gender representation has either been in balance or the government has had a female majority, have been the two times that a woman has been the Prime Minister of Finland, namely the governments of 68th and 71st, 2003 and 2010 respectively (Government of Finland a).

As discussed in relation to critical mass theory in section 4.2, the question of gender equality in politics is not a matter of mere quantifiable representation of genders, but also of related substance. The data drawn from 9.3 Appendix C shows gendered tendencies in Finland between different ministerial areas,[17] with a timely contextualization of late 20th and further 21st century, as during this time period female ministers have been appointed regularly alongside male ministers. These gendered ways of dividing ministerial portfolios correlate with patterns discussed by Escobar-Lemmon & Taylor-Robinson (2009) and Jalalzai (2013). Finnish ministers of interior, foreign affairs, finance, business/trade, industry, defense, and justice *inter alia* have been mostly men. Women have had a share in the areas of health, communications,[18] social services, and education.

In other words, when scrutinizing the ministerial dividend of high-prestige portfolios (Krook & O'Brien 2012), they are all heavily gendered in favor of men. It took 87 years for a woman to access one of them.[19] To summarize, Finnish political leadership is constructed by men and for men, and to reproduce masculinity norms with occasional female exceptions. The reinforcement of masculinity can said to be especially vivid in the Finnish case. This is for the reason that, following the notions of Jalalzai (2013), gender inequality amongst the executives cannot be understood by the lack of education or relative experience of Finnish women, as the country is highly progressive in both areas when comparing globally (World Economic Forum 2016). Furthermore, if women and men have equal societal opportunities, a paradox of men dominating politics can be understood by exceptionally strong masculinity norms.

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[16] Out of the three government parties of the incumbent government, only one party has had female party leaders, more precisely twice, both of which have held a position of the Prime Minister.

[17] A specific title of a ministerial post might have changed over time, has been abolished/created, or the post has expanded or narrowed depending on the composition of the government. Therefore, to cover differing thematic areas of the portfolios I refer to them here as ministerial areas.

[18] A relatively new ministerial area, first time implemented during the 67th government in 2000.

[19] Elisabeth Rehn as a Minister of Defense for the first time in the 64th government in 1990.

6.2   Why Men in Finland?

Two things arise from the previous section in relation to Finnish political leadership: First, a man is more likely to be a minister than a woman. Second, a male minister has a notably better chance for a high-prestige portfolio than a female minister. In examining these findings of reproduction of masculinity norms, I next briefly contextualize the theoretical framework with contemporary Finnish research on gender inequalities in the political sphere of Finland.

Research on politics and gender is available in the national context of Finland, yet it somewhat rarely addresses the issue of masculinity. Out of the lacuna, Nieminen (2013) has argued that male politicians benefit of masculinity and its ideals in Finnish political system as it is established on homosocial relationships between men. Furthermore, Finnish political dynamics can only be understood by its gender perspective. For Nieminen, the homosocial relationships re-occur during male politicians' race for popular vote in a Machiavellian way, where they pursue to gain support from various kinds of men by finding commonalities. Then, male networking (ranging from cross-party-line tendencies to male government officials and to male political reporters in the media) cannot be undermined. Also, Finnish society as a control society has manifestations such as a compulsory military service for men which play a role in the masculine construction. (Ibid.)

Other related studies of Finnish politics also verify masculinity norms. Railo (2011) examined 30 years of portraits of Finnish politicians in a popular Finnish women's magazine *Anna*, claiming a notion that the articles link masculinity and societal influence. Examples of this are the seemingly effortless descriptions of male politicians' rise to power compared to the depicted sacrifices of female politicians. Then for Niemi (2014), the Finnish political sphere's nature is constructed as masculine: More men than women have been leaders on various ladders of the hierarchy, which has decreased women's possibilities of qualifying for the highest executive offices. Also, the masculinity of a political actor is exposed by a notion that a woman is considered competent when she successfully manifests male characteristics. For example, a compliment of 'a good guy' is given from male colleagues to female ones, which suggests that success is combined with masculinity and manliness even in the case of women (ibid. p. 122-123).

Herlin and Kalliokoski (2011) explain in a think tank publication that the rise of a female executive in Finland is seen as particularly based on gender – the *first female* party secretary, –speaker of the parliament, and so forth. Such a claim accentuates the hegemonic position of men, which is continued with the following: "The praxis has shown a careful scrutiny of the first female practitioner, but after her term it can be said the target of gender equality has been achieved, and the permission to return to old, familiar practices is acquired" (author translation, ibid. p. 6).

From the voters' perspective, it is important to take notice that both men and women are affected by masculinity norms, not stereotypically only men. Nieminen (2013) notes that since 1987 women have been the majority of the voters in parliamentary elections. Against the gendered political history of Finland, this

means that not only men, but also women tend to vote for male candidates more often than female candidates, as men as a group have been more successful in the elections compared to women as a group.

6.3   Voices of Practice

After the contextualization of masculinity norms in Finnish politics, I next discuss the empirical material gathered through interviews. The two ministerial interviews are one of a kind for an academic interest in reproduction of masculinity norms in political leadership. Yet, other interview material exists in the Finnish national context in which gendered aspects of political leadership have been discussed. Therefore, although the two interviews are academically of their own kind, they are a part of a sequel of interviews in which the Finnish political premise in men and manhood is addressed. Altogether these interviews are illustrative of the gendered political representation in which women bring forth their experiences of inequality in politics as voices of practice.

For example, a journalist and a writer Talvitie (2013) has interviewed 32 Finnish women in politics considering their careers and the interplay of gender within it. These women include *inter alia* the first and thus far the only female President of Finland Tarja Halonen, the two female Prime Ministers Finland has had, Anneli Jätteenmäki and Mari Kiviniemi, and the first female Minister of Defense of Finland Elisabeth Rehn, who simultaneously was the first female minister of defense in the world. According to Talvitie, they have all encountered gender stereotyping and gendered expectations in relation to their public offices. These I briefly introduce as illustrations of the interviews conducted about gender in the political sphere.

Halonen has broken several glass ceilings of Finnish politics, such as the first woman in the Presidency and in the posts of Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of Justice. Next to her political career she has also been a single mother for her daughter. Talvitie discusses that Halonen was encountered with double standards as a politician and as a mother during her ministerial time in foreign affairs. An example was given: Whereas Halonen was obligated to leave a business trip in Paris because of preparations for her daughter's baccalaureate celebration, a male colleague of hers could not understand the reason why. Halonen posed him a question of 'how did you organize your child's equivalent celebration?', and the male colleague answered 'with my wife', in which Halonen thought 'precisely'.

Jätteenmäki was the first female leader in one of the biggest Finnish political parties, and her government was the first Finnish government with gender equal representation of the ministers. Talvitie writes, that whereas the decision of gender equal representation was important for Jätteenmäki, she comments the decision by notifying that 'at the same time I probably fired myself'. Leaving the topic there, she continues that she will discuss the dynamics behind the equality decision later in her memoirs. Amongst other gender references, she notifies age for women. For her, women receive support as young women in politics, but as

their independent will and opinions increase with age, the support disappears. Jätteenmäki has noticed that 'excellency' is sometimes not enough, hence she is a supporter of gender based quotas both in Finland as well as on a European level as a current Member of the European Parliament.

Then, Talvitie discusses that the former Prime Minister Kiviniemi has been complemented as 'speaking like a man' (as adducing masculinity norms of the political sphere). Simultaneously she has been gendered many times by physical means, such as references to her body in relation to her profession has been raised. For example, a Finnish business leader commented that instead of being a Prime Minister (*pääministeri* in Finnish, directly translated as '*head* minister'), she could be 'an *entire body* minister' (*kokovartaloministeri* in Finnish) as referring to the physical appearance of Kiviniemi.

As for the former Minister of Defense Rehn, Talvitie writes that Rehn recalls her selection for the post as political tactics. When her predecessor had the opportunity to change his ministerialship for education, the men in the political party of Rehn decided to choose her as a replacement for the remaining nine months of the post 'as she could do no harm in such a short time and we would gain lots of benefits out of it'. In the end, Rehn succeeded in her post and managed to continue as the Minister of Defense also in the following government for the next four years.

As discussed, these interviews shed light to an area of narrative inquiry in which the two ministerial interviews of this thesis are a part of. The interviews are displayed separately in the analysis, as I selected to highlight that each narrators' perspective comes from their particular experience and background, hence are not to be seen as directly comparable to one another. I consider such an analytical style choice giving space for each individual, and enabling to stay as close to the original interview context as possible. As the interview discussions developed to varying topics in both cases, the narrative analyses of the ministerial interviews are also created as two separate analyses, hence I am not mechanically seeking for the same thematic narratives. Before the analyses, I briefly describe the interviewees and the setting of the interviews.

One of the interviewee was Annika Saarikko, a second term member of the parliament and the incoming Minister of Family Affairs and Social Services, who will acquire the position during the summer of 2017. Aged 33 years and a Master in Philosophy by educational background, Saarikko represents the incumbent Prime Minister party *Keskusta*, the Centre Party, in which she has been involved since young age – from youth organizations to the Vice Chair of the party from 2010 to 2016 (Annika Saarikko's website). The other interviewee was the Minister of Transportation and Communications Anne Berner. She is a first term member of the parliament, and also represents the Centre Party. Berner is 53 years old, has a Master Degree in Economics, and she has a professional background in entrepreneurship as the head of the family business *Vallila Interior*, a Finnish home textile company (Anne Berner's website).

The former interview was in a conference room at *Pikkuparlamentti*, a substitute facility for the Parliament as the Parliament House is under renovations. The latter interview took place at the minister's office at the Ministry of Transportation and Communication. Both locations are in Helsinki, Finland.

Saarikko's interview took 35 minutes and Berner's 60 minutes, which also correlates with the amount of data gathered. Having approached all six female ministers of the incumbent government, which represent three different political parties, it is unexplainable yet interesting that the two participants who agreed for the interview represent the same party.[20]

By implementing the adapted DNA to the interviews as discussed in section 5.3, I remain self-reflective of the shared discussion constituting the gathered data. By doing so, I recognize in a poststructuralist sense that the shared insights and thoughts were contextual and produced for the purpose of the thesis interviews. My positioning as the interviewer, as a young female political scientist doing research on gender equality in politics, has influenced the interview setting, as the identity of an interviewer of another kind would similarly influence in a differing way. Also, whereas I can analyze the content in a scientific frame, the hidden motives for various reactions and statements by the ministers remain intangible for any other than the individual herself.

6.4　　Interview with Annika Saarikko, the Incoming Minister of Family Affairs and Social Services

According to Saarikko, Finland does well in international comparison between the countries in gender equality, and her point of departure is also shown in World Economic Forum (2016). When turning the gaze within the country, her approach is contradictory as she brought forth long-term inequality issues such as the pay gap between men and women and intimate partner violence. She also raised newer issues of boys lagging behind girls in PISA-results, and lone-living, middle-aged men as the toughest cases of welfare income support. This I categorize as a reflectivity narrative: Saarikko was speaking in a political sense, giving out examples of her own area of expertise, social affairs, in which she explained to have focused on as "a sum of many coincidences".

As for co-construction narrative and considering her expertise, I asked whether she sees any linkages – contradictory or cohesive – of herself being a young female as a minister and the ministerial area of family affairs and social services. Against the theoretical framework of the thesis, she acknowledged her professional specialization and ministerial appointment to reinforce gendered divisions in Finnish ministerialships, yet answered defensively regarding the professionalism of the area:

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[20] It is to be noted that the timing of the scheduled interviews was particular as national municipality elections took place the same week (week 14 in 2017) – an opportunity for the interviews for the following week was presented to the potential participants in the initial outreach, yet not deployed.

I am aware that I made a typical choice for a woman in this sense. But at the same time I want to defend it. By saying I chose an area which typically interests women, one does, in a way, undermine the area. As if the area would be in a manner of speaking weaker because women have been traditionally interested in it. That includes a kind of faulted way of thinking in which something that interests women would be of less value. So [instead of] regenerating and repeating this stereotype, furthermore I want to support the political credibility of it, despite many women having wanted to focus on it.

Saarikko made – unconsciously or consciously – a connection between women and femininity possessing less political credibility than men and masculinity in Finnish politics. By reacting to a question that combines dimensions of age, gender, and gendered politics in a defensive way revealed and reaffirmed the theoretical notions of the male (and middle-aged) norms in politics of Finland. A woman is the gendered exception compared to the neutrality of a man, which includes possible women's interests and related areas of specialization. The co-constructed narrative of defending the political credibility of the feminine ministerial area continued, which turned into a narrative of potential for change:

It is enough to look at the state budget and how much money is used for social and health services – political ambitions don't exist anywhere else as prominently as in the Sote-reform.[21] First handedly from the welfare state perspective and its responsibilities, I can't come up with anything that would be more important. So, I don't certainly want to undermine the portfolio's significance, and I see this question outset as 'so then, because you are a young woman you became a family minister'. I think it's a damn important portfolio.

Renegotiating the terms of what is valued in political decision makes a call for change. By questioning the current structures and scrutinizing the perceived value of a given ministerial area challenges the understanding of why the gendered norms are placed as they are in Finnish politics. Another potential for change narrative was also in the acknowledgement of the current terminology being used. According to Saarikko, Finland has "ministers and female ministers":

It is rare to hear a term 'female parliamentarian', as if a parliamentarian doesn't need the prefix. But as a minister it arises more lightly. It may also result from the reinforcement and amount of power, and the outright rarity still nowadays.

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[21] *Sote* is a Finnish abbreviation for a major social and healthcare reform (in Finnish: *Sosiaali- ja terveydenhuollon uudistus*), which is actuated by the incumbent government and which will constitute as a notable part of Saarikko's ministerial portfolio.

This notion is in line with chapter four: The higher the level of political representation is, the heavier reproduction of masculinity gets. Considering the concept of power, Saarikko acknowledged that "there is formal power and hidden power". The existence of hidden power means that Finnish political decision making is partly characterized by it. The thematic of hidden power is at the core of equality issues in the political system according to Saarikko, for which she pursues to listen to "experienced female politicians and their experiences", and she tries "to learn to see how I could be there where hidden power is used, or be the one who uses such power". Her answer can be understood as male politicians having better access to hidden power, which is backed by Nieminen's (2013) notions on male networking tendencies amongst others.

Discussing the matter of power further, I co-constructively inquired Saarikko's views on the benefits of masculinity or femininity in politics. She responded as both determinants having benefits, but in various of ways:

> *Maybe there is, that with masculinity one can reach more automatic power as well as networks of power, and with femininity – meaning, simply by being a woman – certain special attention, for example particularly publicity. Everybody in this house[22] knows that if one appears in women's magazines it isn't necessarily a sign of one ending up using power or hidden power, for some it's even on the contrary. I surprised even myself by saying this, meaning, that I realized something myself too when I put it like that. Womanhood attracts special attention and manhood provides an automatic network of power.*

The last sentence describes how gender is at play in Finnish politics, and it also verifies masculinity norms in political leadership – masculinity is a privilege as confirmative of the status quo of power in state leadership. The state of Finland serves merely as an example of such state masculinity as discussed in chapter three.

When asking Saarikko's views on the value which equal representation of women and men in the Government of Finland can have, she considered the question as the most substantive one. Whereas she did not see women having a certain special characteristic (an example of emotionality was given), she emphasized not to miss out on half of the nation's potential. Yet, one criteria Saarikko did mention on the importance of women's representation: For herself, it was important to see women in prominent positions in politics as role models.

> *[Women in prominent political positions previously] have certainly prompted young women to get involved in societal decision making, or furthermore they have strengthened women's national self-esteem, if such a thing can be claimed to exist. It is important that women and girls have role models. For me, one way to achieve a Finnish society that is equal and fundamentally healthy is to hold different kinds of people responsible, including minorities based on skin color or sexual orientation, for example.*

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[22] The interview took place at the Parliament.

> *To have such people in public responsibility breaks glass-ceilings which [then] can strengthen the self-esteem of the social group, such as other women's self-esteem and the ability to think that I can do anything.*

The potential for change narrative lies in the role model argument, also discussed by Phillips (1998). Young generations depict their range of opportunities under the influence of the worldview painted by older generations. Hence, women in politics currently will have an influence on women in politics in the future. Yet analytically, men as a group not only dominate in Finnish politics and its leadership positions, but are also advantaged in reproducing male dominance in the future, following the current example – the elements of hegemony can be noted as by Gramsci (1971). To progress gender equality in politics in the future in such a masculine structure, the need for female role models compared to male role models is more significant as young men already have many political role models to look up to.

Saarikko's rise to the ministerial portfolio is a rare case[23] in Finnish political history: When the incumbent government was formulated, the Prime Minister Sipilä divided the four-year-term of the Minister of Family Affairs and Social Services up front into two sets of two years, out of which Saarikko received the latter half.[24] Prior to Sipilä's decision Saarikko had expressed that "my wish for him was, that should he consider me to a post, he could take into consideration that my son was half-a-year old at the time of the government formation". According to her, she got mostly positive feedback on the "value-based choice" she made, but the feedback was also diversified.

> *I got some feedback that a real feminist approach in political decision making requires a woman to accept any power that may be reachable for her. Here I want to underline that ministerial positions are not taken, they are given. I'm not here to allege that everything would have been achievable if I just would have wanted. This was Minister Sipilä's proposal and it was done, and my personal wish likely influenced it to some extent. My view on gender equality progress in politics also is, that someday a man could say the same thing that I said, and it would be perceived as good and normal. To me, that one makes a decision like this to place family first, is as valuable of a choice as to seize opportunities when they are present.*

The proponing and opposing feedback Saarikko received reveals numerous of things: One on hand, she is going through a relatively unknown combination of work-life balance regarding political leadership, which suggest possibilities for flexibility and change in Finnish political leadership. She herself also sets a new kind of a role model for women in political executive offices, where having a child and focusing on family is doable concomitant with a career in high level politics, a

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[23] A similar choice has been made once before by Prime Minister Lipponen in his second government (1999-2003), in which the Minister of Health and Social Services Eva Biaudet seceded from her post for two years due to a pregnancy.

[24] For the first half and the incumbent Minister of Family Affairs and Social Services during the time of the thesis writing was Juha Rehula, a Finnish middle-aged man.

notion which dissolves into the second wave feminist aspirations of Fraser (2013). On the other hand, dynamics between the male Prime Minister and gender in ministerial portfolios are visible. Whereas Saarikko described herself being "forever grateful" for Prime Minister Sipilä for his decision, the situation of Saarikko's access to the portfolio after two years' waiting time is a rarity in Finland. This suggests that previous Prime Ministers have not decided as favorably for female candidates with small children. The Prime Ministers' impact on gender equality progress in Finnish political leadership is notable, and when they have been mostly men, they have been in a position of gatekeepers in gender equality development (Connell 2005b).

Regarding the feminist critique Saarikko received, the field of political leadership is perceived as excessively male from a certain Finnish feminist point of view, according to which women are requested to step in for influence. Such feminism cannot be labelled as radical feminism, as it acknowledges chances for change in the current system (see sections 3.1 and 3.2). For that feminism – as there are several different kinds of feminisms – the decision of prioritizing family instead of possible ministerial opportunity was seen as a diversion of the female collective. Questions of work-life balance of gendered political leadership fall mostly for Finnish women, as similar family matters have not been brought forth by men in the Finnish context. Therefore, it can be concluded that the pressure to combine family and a career in politics is of a higher stake for women than for men, which may correlate with the number of women accessing political leadership in Finland. Hence, state masculinity does not only operate in the public, but also in the private sphere.

6.5   Interview with Anne Berner, the Minister of Transportation and Communications

For Berner, the Finns can be content about many aspects of gender equality, such as the early voting rights for women and equity before law. She sees the national gender equality progression as established on common efforts for the country's independence and autarky, both in which men and women have participated to build (see section 6.1 and the concept of Nordic exceptionalism). Considering gender inequality, she itemized three aspects in particular: Facts and figures such as the pay gap, women's experience of gender inequality, and women's volition before gender equality. As a part of reflective narrative, Berner linked the last aspect to political participation:

> *In considering recent years, I see that the matter in question isn't necessarily about gender equality possibilities, rather about women's volition to participate in politics and political activity. The volition might be influenced further by vigorous change or development of the political climate into a direction which especially from a woman's point of view – I*

don't want to separate women's and men's values here – but let's say that often a woman's point of view originates from a differing world, perhaps. Solely biologically and historically speaking, it may be that it is harder for women to accept political climate's certain hardening, darkening, unscrupulousness, lack of dialogue, and solving matters by confrontation. Many women have withdrawn saying "I don't want this in my life nor my environment". And perhaps women more lightly consider the political experience through their family – what it brings to the home as a mother.

Hence for Berner, one explanatory reason for the lack of women in politics is that the political climate does not appeal to women in its current form, based on historical and biological factors as she sees them. Excluding the matter of biological factors, the theoretical framework supports these notions: State and its politics is constructed for men by masculinity norms, forming a setting which discourages, disadvantages, and disinterests women (see chapters three and four).

Also according to Berner, private life such as family can weigh more for women whereas public life may weigh for men. Considering work-life balances, Berner herself is an interesting example. As a mother of now three adult sons, she has had a successful career in a family-owned private business. During her time as the CEO of the company, the business developed from a turnover of ~3,4 million euros[25] and of ten employees into a business with a turnover of 40 million euros and 140 employees. (Anne Berner's website.) Considering women's participation in politics from a private life point of view, Berner said the following by employing reflective narrative:

I speculate here, but it may be that conditions at home are in such a way that a woman supports a man more easily in applying this kind of a windy and unscrupulous public office, compared to that men may not be as supportive. There might be these kinds of dynamics too. I have had an extremely lucky situation in that my husband has always been of the opinion of "go for it", but not everyone is.

The emotional labor of women in supporting their families and spouses can therefore be advancing men's accession to political leadership. Masculinity can be seen dominating femininity as established in section 2.2. Furthermore, a related concept is *emphasized femininity*, a kind of femininity which supports patriarchal structures (Connell & Messerschmidt 2005). It is displayed in Berner's reflection of women's greater tendency to support men than the other way around. This creates a situation where women support reproduction of masculinity norms in politics themselves, enabling better possibilities for a male collective for political participation and leadership. Simultaneously, such acts possibly sacrifice and damage the possibilities of a female collective. In relation to the gatekeeper phenomenon (Connell 2005b), the lack of support from the male collective to the female collective uplifts men to political leadership at the cost of women. Berner

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[25] Given as in 20 millions of then Finnish currency *markka*.

herself embodies that the executive officer potential is located in a gender neutral way in an individual, and the support her spouse has given suggests a potential for gender neutrality in that private life role too.

The thematic of difference is present in Berner's answers. She acknowledged diversity between men and women, and diversity within men and women. This correlated with her understanding of gender equality, which she defined often through negation, such as "gender equality is not about fading [gendered differences such as instincts in risk-taking and protection], but equalizing them from different angles", and "gender equality is not about a man finding a woman within and a woman finding a man within".

> *Gender equality doesn't have to come through similarity, we can be equal precisely through difference. - - In politics we haven't had the discussion that equality is diversity. Or, that equality is about encountering manifold of worth. - - I have a feeling that we lose women to some extent from politics. Maybe resulting from that gender equality is not about accepting difference, but that in order to succeed, everyone has to play by the same rules, the same conditions, and the same ways.*

Politics structured by masculine norms has an influence in women's participation, which Berner itemized above – the rules and conditions are from men to men. In such a setting women's rules and norms are the exception, deviation, and rivalry, as discussed in chapter four. Furthermore, the lack of neutrality steers women away from political participation.

> *Women don't merely want to be a part of gender equality. They want to be making decisions from their own premises, own ways of thinking, and own value systems. And maybe they are more uncompromising in that. And when one is uncompromising or doesn't find one's own place or role in all that [politics], then one may experience that it can be found better or more easily from another community or context.*

Also, a dimension of women's interests as discussed in section 4.1 can be extracted here: Women possess interests that can vary from those of men. Women may have the opportunity to participate, but they lack the will as they do not resonate with the masculine sphere of politics as representational of men's interests. Women do not associate with political decision making, and therefore, abstain from participation. The phenomenon can be voluntary or involuntary – Berner mentioned that "the price [for political participation] might be too high".

Considering such a price of participation in Finnish national politics, as a part of a co-construction narrative I reacted to Berner's lead. When inquiring on her views of the effects of male dominated political history of Finland to the current state of gendered political leadership, she acknowledged that the past has an influence, "yet there is more to it":

I might be a bit amiss to talk about this, because the past two years[26] have been a harsh experience. I have to be extra careful with myself all the time that I can separate personal experience and to analytically think what part of the experience is the surroundings, customs, culture, heredity, or premise.

From a gender perspective, the contestation Berner has experienced can be explained as a gendered abnormality within gendered norms. Or alternatively, as challenging the masculine hegemony.

When I asked her a question "what kind of a person is a Finnish politician?", bearing in mind her previous profession as an entrepreneur, Berner answered the question first laughing "not apparently an entrepreneur", and then continued:

Apparently not an independent person nor an independent thinker. She/he[27] is not just a person who wants to do the right thing, but a person who does the right thing for her/his party. And to win. And if one doesn't fit into the image or description of a politician, there is a need for removing that person from the post. I'm not sure is this dependent on being a man or a woman… But it is easier to target a woman in various ways to accomplish such an aim.

Links between the empirical data and the theoretical framework can be drawn here on women's differing behavior in politics compared to that of men, such as voting against the party line (see section 4.2). When asking Berner to specify in what ways a woman is targeted differently than a man, she declined to answer based on "reasons of security" and "not publicity". The matter of security in relation to gendered political leadership appeared more than once:

As this is a gender neutral sector [the ministerial area of transportation and communications], the target group, the stakeholders are quite masculine – meaning in transportation easily. And if one doesn't get their way through, it is common place that threats can be made quite freely. And threatening a woman is always much more personal.

The matter of psychological violence such as threat making is an extreme example of possible negative consequences in political participation. As read from Berner's answer, her experience is that a woman can be threatened in more personal way than a man. Therefore, the matter of willingness to seek high political posts and to maintain the posts is shaken by security threats in Finland to some extent, which have gendered formations. The discussion of gendered violence led into discussions on warfare and international relations, which Berner drew back to national politics:

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[26] The time period Berner has started in Finnish national politics and has been a minister.
[27] In the original context a Finnish gender neutral pronoun *hän* was used.

The same is implemented in politics nowadays. And that – maybe as you just mentioned – might get to a point which is not so clear always, meaning that the price to be paid is no longer acceptable. If society doesn't do anything about it, then as a woman one considers finding an environment in which something is done about it, to a frame of reference which would never accept such a thing. But in this frame of reference it must be tolerated. - - Because you are a public figure, you must endure threats too.

If the price for political participation is too high a stake, it is more reasonable and safer not to participate. As any kind of violence has gendered dimensions, threats of violence have too, meaning, that women's political participation is threatened in another way than that of men's. The frame of reference is the political sphere which is established on masculinity norms. Hence, deviations of these norms may increase the hazard of threats, in which women and femininity, as not representative of norms, may be exposed to.

When a notion of gender based violence in the political sphere is openly discussed, a possibility for transformation is created. The Finnish society can have a kind of transformative potency, as the transformative power of voters influence political leadership:

I'd say that alongside gender equality within politics, one should, in a way, also consider what society wants. What kind of a gender equal political decision maker it wants? And representative of who, departing from which premises, and how the nation itself influences the system at the moment.

As established before, the matter of gender equality is not solely quantitative, but also qualitative. Berner discussed that the quantifiable understanding of equality is "not the point", confirming also the critique on critical mass theory (section 4.2). When asking Berner what role, if any, gender had in the division of the incumbent government's portfolios, she answered reflectively which led into a narrative of potential for change:

It necessarily matters, as our way of thinking is mostly that gender equality is quantifiable. Because we think that gender equality is quantifiable, we say that we are a gender equal party if we have as many female ministers as male ministers. But of course, I personally think that gender equality is realized truly, when opportunities and premises generate know-how and substance through difference. Then it's real and then we are gender equal. As long as we conduct women's equality reports, interviews, or research like these, we are not equal. So the basic setting slants, and as much as all-female panels are done, that's not the point. The point is that we shouldn't have to do panels based on gender. That it wouldn't be an interesting topic, but a self-clarity which departs from the fact that everyone has an opportunity to cultivate valuable substance in relation to the post through differing standpoints, history, experience, and know-how backgrounds.

When Berner started to participate in gender equality studies of leadership in "the 90s or the 21st century", she recalled thinking then that "haven't these discussions been had already?", referring especially to the quantifiable understanding of gender equality. Such a comment reflects a certain sedentary experience, in which the Finnish societal discussion of gender equality in leadership possesses a repetitive character. The question is, how to move on from it?

As this thesis is written in academic activism, there is a special interest in potential for change narratives in both interviews, with Saarikko and Berner respectively. In the effort to provoke the discussion onwards – which enables progression for gender equality in Finnish political leadership – the interviewees' potential for change narratives overlap in one aspect: Both interviewees suggest changes in terminology. Berner addressed the matter directly and recognizes its transformative power: "The development of the discussion requires changes in terminology. Then, because of the changes in terminology, we wouldn't be satisfied only with quantifiable achievement". The idea of renewing the definition is brought forth also by Saarikko – the terminology originates from male premise which reveals the existence of masculine hegemony. By acknowledging masculinity norms in politics and by addressing what they mean in relation to female political leadership and women's political participation in general, the increased level of understanding creates room for new frames of political leadership, which enable tangible, positive change in gender equality progress in Finnish politics.

7   The Change

With all due respect, we can't endlessly do these kinds of gender equality studies, the discussion has to proceed. Horizontally or vertically, but to a some kind of direction.

– Anne Berner, the Finnish Minister of Transportation and Communications

In relation to ministers, the objective of gender equality in politics shouldn't be that we have 100 percent of women as representatives in the government. The objective should be, that we stop using the prefix of "female" for ministers.

– Annika Saarikko, the incoming Finnish Minister of Family Affairs and Social Services

This thesis is a part of politics and gender scholarship, a study of politics at an advanced level. Therein written as academic activism, the thesis has a political aim according to which the exposure of masculinity norms in political leadership challenges non-gendered assumptions regarding the executive offices.

I argued for the following key notions in the poststructural theoretical framework in this thesis: Men are overrepresented in politics as gender biased structural, historical, institutional, global, and cultural factors have affected how gendered societies have developed over time and how masculinity norms are reproduced still today; Essentialist gendered notions, such as biological differences between men and women, are not valid reasoning for gender inequality as they do not signify lesser human value; Heterogenetic societies inherently include women's interests which are best represented by women themselves; Although there is an intrinsic value of gender equality in politics, gender inequality in the political sphere is a global fact; All the phenomena mentioned occurs under a structural gender bias of state masculinity, in which the state is constructed from men to men, while simultaneously requiring male input for maintaining masculine normativity, pushing women aside.

The case study of Finland is illustrative of the theoretical framework. Academically, the case study is a rarity in the Finnish national context, and it significantly contributes to Nordic regional understandings of masculinity in politics. Its findings discussed in relation to the quantitative and qualitative analyses also have a wider significance for understanding masculinity in politics at the executive level around the world. The research frame can be expanded for peer

evaluation of other countries, starting from the Nordic region. The study makes a core conceptual contribution to research on gender equality: Understanding masculinity in politics is pivotal to understanding gender in politics.

By rendering visible masculinity norms and their impact on terminology, there emerges a possibility for reflection between what is gender bias in political leadership and where it stems from. Gendered differences and their influence on politics needs to be acknowledged and equally valued in order to actualize the full potential of equal political representation. In the current male dominated structure political decision making is of lower quality than it could or should be without women's full participation (Hoogensen & Solheim 2006). Stevens (2007) summarizes equal representation in a way which suits gender, and in a greater sense, intersectionality: "- - the point is the importance of attaching equal social value to, and ensuring equal political and economic participation by, people with many sorts of identity" (p. 9).

This kind of gendered appreciation for diversity permits a deconstruction of state level masculinity, which also deconstructs the masculinity of the system of states. Gender equality in politics from national to international levels is achieved by sufficient knowledge creation of gender inequality, which challenges normativity, incites changes in definitions and terminology, and attracts new possibilities for practice and action. Furthermore, these measurements create room for conceived and testified change towards gender equality amongst political leaders for improved gender equal decision making in the future, benefitting all genders and nations. The ultimate aim of this thesis can be summarized as self-destructive: The end goal of it is, that the knowledge created in research such as this leads to gender neutrality. In other words, it leads into a situation in which studies of gender inequality are no longer interesting for research as gender inequality has seized to exist.

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9 Appendix

9.1 Appendix A

A general layout of the email request of the participation in the research, send to the incumbent female ministers including their assistance and secretariat staff 24th January 2017.

Subject field: A gender equality study of Finnish political leadership

Dear [minister's full name] and the assistance and secretariat staff,

I approach you with a request for an interview regarding a gender equality study of Finnish political leadership. Finnish political leadership has been strongly characterized by men through the 100-year-history of Finland, which shapes the composition of governments still today. The male dominance at the center of Finnish decision making has created masculinity demands concerning ministerial work, and I examine these demands in Finnish female political leaders. By scrutinizing such experience, more information can be obtained of the gendered bias, in which men are the majority in ministerial positions, and therefore, possibilities towards more equal and gender neutral decision making are created. My aim is to interview all the female ministers of the incumbent government, regarding your perception of masculinity and the norms of manhood in the admittance of a ministerial portfolio and the successful performance of the post. The interviews are in Finnish, it is of one-time, and the time requested is 90 minutes. I will come to Finland to conduct the interviews during the weeks of 14 and 15, hence I hereby approach you to inquire about your interest in participation and a possibly suitable time and place.

About the study & the researcher

This study is a preliminary study for a doctoral thesis on masculinity demands in Finnish political leadership, which is conducted at the Department of Political Science and International Relations in Queen Mary University of London, Great Britain. The preliminary study is published as a master thesis at Lund University, located in Sweden. I am a Finnish social scientist with a specialization in political gender studies, which are conducted altogether at universities in Finland, France, and Sweden. My previous undergraduate degree I have acquired at the University

of Turku, in which the topic of my bachelor thesis was Women's Political Representation – A Case Study of Female Commissioners in the European Commission. I have gained experience working with gender equality from UN's women's organization UN WOMEN at the levels of Finnish National Committee and the Nordic Regional Office.

Should you have any questions or comments regarding the interview request or the interview, please don't hesitate to contact me on this email address or phone number [personal phone number].

Kindly waiting for your response,

Salla Turunen
Social Studies of Gender - Master of Science
Department of Political Science
Lunds Universitet

9.2   Appendix B

The interview guide and forewords prior the interview.

Thank you for your participation in this gender equality study of Finnish political leadership. Before starting with the questions, I would like to remind you on general notions concerning the study and this interview. This study is conducted under research ethical guidelines, and therefore, the participation in the study is voluntary, and you have the right to cease your participation at any time. As you are participating to the study, you have the right to withhold from answering any questions you might not wish to answer. The interview is semi-structured, meaning that the questions cover general topics that are theory driven, but open-ended in that the interview will take its final shape depending on our discussion. The levels of generality and personality in the answers is entirely depending on you.

Do you have any questions considering the interview or the study as a whole before we commence?

Finnish state	•According to you, what is the gender equality situation in Finland? •What kind of gender inequalities Finland is faced with?
Finnish politics	•How do you perceive Finnish politics from the point of view of gender equality? •How do you perceive Finnish political leadership from the point of view of gender equality?
Finnish history	•Throughout the 100-year-history of Finland, there has been only one female president and two female prime ministers. How do you think this is possible? •What kind of a role does the Finnish political history play in the current state of gender equality in politics? And of future's?
Finnish government	•There are 6 female ministers and 8 male ministers in the current government. What do you think of that setting? •How do you perceive the current division of ministerial portfolios? Does gender matter?
Masculinity	•How do you perceive the relation between men/manhood and ministerialship? •According to you, are men treated differently as ministers compared to women as ministers? •Would you describe politics as masculine?
Femininity	•How do you perceive the relation between women/womanhood and ministerialship? •According to you, are women treated differently as ministers compared to men as ministers? •Would you describe politics as feminine?
Media	•How would you describe the Finnish media treatment of female ministers? How about male ministers? •Does media bring forth gendered notions of your work? •If media does so, do you experience any effect of them in relation to your work?
Self-perception	•Do you have any experiences where being a female minister has been an advantage for you? •Do you have any experiences where being a female minister has been damaging for you? •Anything you would like to freely add to this interview?

9.3 Appendix C

Gender division of Ministers of Finland by title (current government's number being 74.).

Ministers by title (in alphabetical order)	Government number of the appointed title	Men	Women	Total
Chairman of the Senate	1.	1	-	1
Coordinate Minister of Finance	68. – 69.	-	1	1
Deputy Head of Department for Agriculture	1. – 2.	1	-	1
Deputy Head for Department for International Affairs	1. – 2.	1	-	1
Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs	3. – 4. 20.	2	-	2
Deputy Minister of Agriculture	4. – 9., 11. – 13., 15. – 22.	13	-	13
Deputy Minister of Defence	18.	2	-	2
Deputy Minister of Education	11.	2	-	2
Deputy Minister of Finance	3., 20.	4	-	4
Deputy Minister of Social Affairs	14., 17., 22.	2	1	3

Deputy Minister of the Interior	19., 21.	5	-	5
Deputy Minister of Transport and Public Works	20. – 22.	4	-	4
Head of Department for Agriculture	1. – 2.	1	-	1
Head of Department for Education and Ecclesiastical Affairs	1. – 2.	1	-	1
Head of Department for Foreign Affairs	2.	1	-	1
Head of Department for Internal Affairs	1. – 2.	1	-	1
Head of the Department for Justice	1. – 2.	1	-	1
Head of the Department for Military Affairs	2.	1	-	1
Head of the Department for Social Affairs	1. – 2.	1	-	1
Head of the Department for Trade and Industry	1. – 2.	1	-	1
Head of the Department for Transport and Public Works	1. – 2.	1	-	1

Head of the Financial Affairs Department	1. – 2.	1	-	1
Head of the Food Supply Department	2.	1	-	1
Member of the Senate without portfolio	2.	1	-	1
Minister at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs	25. – 33., 35., 37., 45., 47. – 48., 53. – 71.	28	3	31
Minister at the Ministry of Agriculture	23. – 26., 30. – 35., 37. – 38., 40. – 41., 44. – 47., 49. – 50.	17	1	18
Minister at the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry	60. – 64.	4	-	4
Minister at the Ministry of Defense	31.	1	-	1
Minister at the Ministry of Education	53. – 56., 58., 60. – 66.	6	6	12
Minister at the Ministry of Finance	24. – 27., 29. – 42., 44. – 67.	40	6	46
Minister at the Ministry of Justice	70. – 71.	-	1	1
Minister at the Ministry of Labor	66., 70	-	3	3

Minister at the Ministry of Social Affairs	29. – 51.	29	3	32
Minister at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health	52. – 66., 70. – 71.	15	12	27
Minister at the Ministry of Supply	24. – 32.	12	-	12
Minister at the Ministry of the Environment	65. – 70.	1	5	6
Minister at the Ministry of the Interior	27. – 33., 50. – 51., 53., 56. – 58., 60. – 64., 66., 70.	23	1	24
Minister at the Ministry of Trade and Industry	30., 32., 37., 41., 44. – 46., 48., 51., 53. – 59., 61. – 68.	26	1	27
Minister at the Ministry of Transport	64.	-	1	1
Minister at the Ministry of Transport and Public Works	24. – 26., 28. – 47., 49. – 51.	35	-	35
Minister at the Prime Minister's Office	29. – 32., 34., 40. – 41, 43., 47. – 48., 51., 53. – 64., 66. – 71.	26	7	33
Minister for European Affairs and Foreign Trade	72. – 73.	1	1	2

Minister for Foreign Affairs	3. – 74.	37	1	38
Minister for Foreign Trade and Development	68. – 71., 74.	2	3	5
Minister for International Development	72. – 73.	1	2	3
Minister of Agriculture	3. – 53.	30	-	30
Minister of Agriculture and Forestry	53. – 74.	18	1	19
Minister of Agriculture and the Environment	74.	1	-	1
Minister of Communications	70. – 71.	-	1	1
Minister of Culture and Housing	72. – 73.	-	1	1
Minister of Culture	67. – 69.	-	3	3
Minister of Culture and Sport	70. – 72., 74.	3	-	3
Minister of Defense	8. – 74.	49	2	51
Minister of Economic Affairs	70. – 74.	5	-	5
Minister of Education	8. – 72.	37	11	48

Minister of Education and Communications	72. – 73.	-	1	1
Minister of Education and Culture	74.	-	1	1
Minister of Education and Ecclesiastical Affairs	3. – 7.	3	-	3
Minister of Family Affairs and Social Services	74.	1	1	2
Minister of Finance	3. – 74.	52	1	53
Minister of Food	3. – 6.	2	-	2
Minister of Foreign Trade	67.	2	-	2
Minister of Health and Social Services	67. – 73.	1	5	6
Minister of Housing	70. – 71.	1	-	1
Minister of Housing and Communications	72.	-	2	2
Minister of Justice	3. – 74.	54	7	61
Minister of Justice and Employment	74.	1	-	1
Minister of Labor	51. – 73.	13	5	18

Minister of Local Government and Public Reforms	74.	-	1	1
Minister of Migration and European Affairs	70. – 71.	-	1	1
Minister of Public Administration and Local Government	70. – 72.	1	2	3
Minister of Regional and Municipal Affairs	67. – 69.	2	-	2
Minister of Social Affairs	3. – 51.	38	5	43
Minister of Social Affairs and Health	52. – 74.	7	17	24
Minister of Supply	22. – 32.	10	-	10
Minister of the Environment	63. – 73.	8	4	12
Minister of the Interior	3. – 74.	55	4	59
Minister of Trade and Industry	3. – 70.	55	2	57
Minister of Transport	51. – 67., 70. – 72.	20	3	23
Minister of Transport and Communications	67. – 69., 74.	2	3	5

Minister of Transport and Local Government	72. – 73.	-	2	2
Minister of Transport and Public Works	3. – 51.	39	-	39
Minister of War	3. – 7.	4	-	4
Minister without portfolio	4. – 5., 12., 14. – 15., 17., 19., 22. – 23., 29., 31. – 32.	11	1	12
Prime Minister	3. – 74.	42	2	44
Vicechairman of the Senate	2.	1	-	1
TOTAL	**74 governments**	**921 new male appointments**	**148 new female appointments**	**1,069 new ministerial appointments (combined)**

Source: Government of Finland c.

*Table by author, heteronormative assumption in categorization based on first names, which are heavily gendered in the Finnish cultural context.

**The table observes how many times men and women have accessed a new ministerial post. The same person can have represented the same ministerial title in different governments which counts only once, but if the same person has represented another ministerial title in a different government, (each) accession counts as new. For example, Urho Kekkonen held several ministerial posts, including Prime Minister (five times), Minister of Justice (four times), Minister for Foreign Affairs (two times), Minister of the Interior (two times), and Deputy Minister of the Interior (one time). His accession as a man to new ministerial posts counts as a total of five, as there are five ministerialships he has occupied. This choice is explained by the research interest of how many times a representative of one gender is raised as a new minister at a particular domain, characterizing the possible masculinity or femininity of the ministerialship. Also one practicality is, that the Prime Minister of the government may have changed between parliamentary elections, which changes the government running number too, but especially in the 21st century, most of the ministers remain in their posts in such situations

nonetheless. If counting each appointment of each minister, (as would in Urho Kekkonen's case be 14 times), the total count of ministerial appointments in the history of Finland is 1283, of which 1127 are male (87.8 %) and 156 are female (12.2 %). (Government of Finland a, ministerial changes of 2017 added, see below.)

***Four ministers out of database are added according to government changes in 2017: Minister of Family Affairs and Social Services, a change from male to female minister, and three ministerialships to the government (Minister of Justice, Minister of Culture, and Minister of Agriculture and Forestry) are added, all male.

****Minister at the Prime Minister's Office not representative as Prime Minister.

*****For an unknown reason, titles of Minister of Labor and Minister of the Interior both appear twice on the data base, the two are merged into one respectively.