ATTEMPTING TO SERVE WITH PRIDE AND DIGNITY

A Discourse Analysis Exploring Swedish Peacekeepers' Pre-Mission Education on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

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ABSTRACT

The United Nations peacekeeping operations is a unique global partnership to maintain international peace and security. However, several reports in the last three decades show allegations of peacekeeper soldiers sexually exploiting and abusing the civilians of host nations. While research have investigated these misconducts and how to prevent future cases, there are still questions about the preventative measures. Thus, this thesis examines and investigates peacekeeper soldiers' pre-mission education about sexual exploitation and abuse, through critical discourse analysis and a theoretical framework of critical military theory and ideas of Foucault. To investigate this, the project uses the Swedish Armed Forces as a case study to interview Swedish soldiers about their perceptions. This data is reinforced by the United Nations' educational material.

The study finds that the United Nations' pre-mission education construct –through power, knowledge, and discourse– specific interpretations of soldiers, victims, and civilians in the peacekeeping context that affects soldiers' work. The education also provides a standard practice of how to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse in United Nations' peacekeeping operations. However, Swedish soldiers believe there is minor complications in how this education is presented to soldiers in troop-contributing countries that have previous knowledge of gender, sexual exploitation, and misconducts.

Keywords: Swedish Armed Forces, Case Study, Peacekeeping, Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, Discourse analysis.

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ABBREVIATIONS

CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CMT	Critical Military Theory
DP(K)O	Department of Peace Operations
IntUtbE	Internationella Utbildningsenheten (International Educational Unit)
ITS	Integrated Training Service
MONUSCO	United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
SAF	Swedish Armed Forces
SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
TCC	Troop-Contributing Country
UN	United Nations

1. INTRODUCTION

> Ideas don't gain primacy and become "normal" at the snap of the fingers. It takes time and many steps – most of them hardly visible, many of them seemingly trivial – for "national security" to become militarized, for soldiers to become the chief of protectors, for a woman to become a "military wife", for an abuser to become merely a lone "bad apple", for men to become ashamed of any suggestion that they are "feminine". […].

> When gendered militarization becomes globalized, it works its way through ideas on the wings of institutions and organizations. This means that in order for us to track the many paths by which militarization travels, we need to stay deeply interested in the personal and the local and the national, while we also widen our lens to watch how those militarizing ideas, organizations, and processes move across territorial borders. (Enloe, 2007, p. 163)

As presented above by Enloe, there is a need for questioning how norms and stereotypes in our world become accepted. Because it is a layered process that affects social society, communities, and individuals. For instance, how have (peacekeeper) soldiers become those who protect others (those who cannot protect themselves) in precarious situations of conflict and peace, and how are these multinational protectors' misconducts treated in an international work environment?

Since the late 1940s, the United Nations (hereafter the UN) have been an international organizer of military peacekeeping missions with troop contributing countries (henceforth TCCs) as the main source of personnel. These missions have throughout the years become global and normalized, leading to having conducted over 70 operations across the world (United Nations Peacekeeping, n.d.a, n.d.b). However, the personnel deployed to work in these missions have sometimes failed their duty as protectors of restoring or keeping tentative peace. Instead of protecting civilians, soldiers have committed acts of violence against them, such as sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. This have been reported in plenty of missions, dating back to allegations being first taken seriously by global media, researchers, and

international organizations in the 1990s (see for example Freedman, 2018; Harrington, 2022; Higate, 2007a; Higate and Henry, 2004a; Perisic, 2020; Westendorf, 2020).

The reports have led to questions of the necessity of international operations and scrutiny from several nations, non-governmental organizations, and researchers (see for example Amnesty International, 2015; Code Blue Campaign, n.d.; United Nations News, 2022; Westendorf, 2020; Wheeler, 2020). Through researchers' collected stories, opinions, and quantitative data on sexual exploitation and abuse (hereafter SEA) –a term pertaining to personnel exploiting and abusing members of the host nations' civilian population– this type of research became established in the field of military theory, gender studies, and global studies.

The following in-depth definitions by a document intended to complement UN commanders' training before peacekeeping missions called the "Military Aide Mémoire" on UN's measures against SEA (United Nations, 2017) will show the thesis interpretation of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, and SEA:

> **Sexual abuse:** Sexual abuse is the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions. All sexual activity with a child (under 18 years of age) is considered as sexual abuse.

> **Sexual exploitation:** Sexual exploitation is any actual or attempted abuse of position of vulnerability, differential power or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. This includes acts such as transactional sex, solicitation of transactional sex, and exploitative relationships.

> **Sexual Exploitation and Abuse:** A breach of the provisions of ST/SGB/2003/132 (Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse), or the same provisions, as adopted for military, police and other UN personnel. (United Nations, 2017, p. 8).

Because sexual exploitation and abuse in peacekeeping operations correlate to discourses on femininity-masculinity, perpetrator-victim, and protector-protected,

it can, as previously explained, be researched in the field of global studies and gender studies. Global studies, an innovative and interdisciplinary field on *global* knowledge, have combined several disciplines (such as anthropology, political economy, and cultural studies) and their theoretical aspects to produce new knowledge in the global field (Nederveen Pieterse, 2013, p. 505). The aim of global studies is to recenter social sciences, and its analytical tools, to view society as within global dynamics rather than just national and regional (Nederveen Pieterse, 2013, p. 506). Therefore, the focus on peacekeeping missions have connected the global to the local, while the multinational aspect lead to global relations between states with the goal of cherishing democracy, security, welfare, and more (Scholte, 2003, p. 29). Similarly, gender studies have been interconnected with global studies for its focus on (gender) identities, global politics, and intersectionality. The field provided research on knowledge and power through a focus of gender lens, while having presented gender itself as a kind of power in social society since it contributes to populations and individuals' identities with its social norms (Runyan, 2018; Scholte, 2003). By sending peacekeepers from different nations to other nations in the international goal of establishing or keeping tentative peace intact, several different geographical markers and sociocultural factors to help end other nations' conflicts are interconnected. This connection leads to the ideas made by the institutions and organization at play to become actual structures or influencers of local, national, and personal identities. Feminist research of gender studies can thus fit into this field of global studies, since it provides an advantage to research on globality, militaries and identity.

To approach the UN's pre-mission education for peacekeeper soldiers in a way that allows for a reasonable sample in accordance with this thesis, the Swedish Armed Forces (SAF) will be used as a case study. Sweden have participated with civilian and military personnel in peacekeeping operations for over 60 years, due to the Swedish parliament and governmental interest to be involved in the global effort for universal peace and human rights (Försvarets Radioanstalt, n.d.; Försvarsmakten, 2020a, 2023a; Svenska FN-förbundet, 2014; Swedish Armed

Forces, 2018). The SAF sent their first Swedish battalion under UN-flag in 1956 and have since then been highly involved with conflicts outside of their territory. While current numbers show a decrease of Swedish civilian and military personnel in peacekeeping missions, the SAF have been involved with personnel in operations in host nations such as Mali, Kongo-Kinshasa, and South Sudan over the past five years (Försvarsmakten, 2023b, 2020b, 2020c). Based on this situation, there is personnel in the SAF that currently possess valuable experience and reflections of their pre-mission education. Additionally, experience of previous education can be considered since the SAF have a long tradition of participating in peacekeeping operations. They also maintain a center, the Swedish Armed Forces International Centre, for qualitative training and education of Swedish and international military peacekeeping personnel in UN and NATO operations (Swedish Armed Forces, 2018).

Therefore, this thesis intends to critically analyze how the topic of sexual exploitation and abuse built into the current pre-mission education for the Swedish military, and how it is taught to and perceived by their peacekeeper soldiers.

1.1 AIM & RESEARCH QUESTION

My aim is to investigate UN's preventative commitments through education, to contribute the developing field of knowledge regarding militarized peacekeeping, SEA, and education. As previously explained, while there exists studies on UN's pre-mission training and educational material, it has been put aside for explorations of tools for reporting and accountability. Therefore, the purpose for the thesis is to critically investigate how peacekeepers' education ahead of their missions is structured regarding *sexual exploitation and abuse* (SEA). It will thus assess what the personnel deems to be of value within the peacekeeping pre-mission education. Examples of this is covering existing assumptions and discussions about personnel misconducts of SEA, the pre-mission education's current strengths and weaknesses, as well as potential obstacles to prevent further misconducts. The aspiration is to present a few recommendations to advance the educational material and further the knowledge on how to tackle personnel misconducts in an effective way.

The core research question of this thesis is *'How is pre-mission education on sexual exploitation taught and perceived by personnel in the Swedish Armed Forces, and how are these understandings translated into practice?'* The core question is followed by two sub-questions. These are: '*How is personnel misconduct portrayed in pre-mission education?*' and '*How can this education be reshaped in order to be more effective in practice?*'.

1.2 CONTENTS

This paragraph will present the thesis' structure. The upcoming section is the background of the research problem, covering information on the UN's history of peacekeeping missions and the structure of Swedish pre-mission education. After this comes the literature review, before being followed by the chapter on the thesis' theoretical framework. This covers fundamental aspects of Foucault, critical military theory in a feminist perspective, and the concept of militarized masculinity. The next chapter presents the projects' research design, methods, and materials. Here, I delve into my reflexivity and subjectivity. The succeeding section analyzes the data through critical discourse analysis, followed by a discussion which reflects on the analysis. Last section concludes the project, answers the research questions, and introduce potential future research.

2. BACKGROUND

The UN has a rich history of peacekeeping missions. Starting in 1948, the Security Council authorized deploying UN military observers –including Swedish ones– to monitor the Armistice Agreement between Israel and neighboring Arab nations in the Middle East (Swedish Armed Forces, 2018; United Nations Peacekeeping, n.d.a). Subsequently these types of missions. which generally include observational tasks, have continually evolved. While it started as a way of "dealing with inter-state conflict", such as the *United Nations Operations in the Congo*, missions have also been mandated to handle intra-state conflicts and civil wars (Ibid.). Thus, UN's peacekeeping movement have followed the works of 'new wars', a term coined by Kaldor (2013, p. 72) in which a 'new' type of warfare is explained. Here is emphasis on globalization, global dislocation, and global consciousness of responsibility.

These new wars have mostly moved away from inter-state conflict, focusing on intra-state disagreements tied to identity and/or economic aspects.

As time have passed, the UN's peacekeeping missions have become increasingly contested due to a number of reported personnel misconducts (see the examples of Besheer, 2016; Code Blue Campaign, n.d.; Department for Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance, 2023; unsea.net, n.d.; Wheeler, 2020). UN's General Assembly adopted a resolution in 2003 because of a report by the UN Office of Internal Oversight Services. The report investigated aid workers sexual exploitation of refugees in West Africa. The General Assembly's resolution highlighted the importance of preventative measures and rapid responses to allegations, leading to the *Secretary-General's Bulletin on Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse* (United Nations Secretary-General, 2003). In 2005, the 'Zeid Report' issued a comprehensive strategy with recommendations how to reform the member states and UN Secretariat's work to eliminate SEA and misconducts in peacekeeping operations (*A comprehensive strategy to eliminate future sexual exploitation and abuse in United Nations peacekeeping operations*, 2005; Department for Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance, n.d.).

Since this report, the work against SEA in peacekeeping missions have focused on structural changes of prevention, handling, and supporting victims. Examples of these initiatives are the expansion of training, establishing a vetting process for prior misconducts, and pushing member states/TCCs to effectively handle perpetrators of SEA through financial, administrative, and criminal accountability (Department for Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance, n.d.; *Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse*, 2016; *Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse*, 2015).

These efforts and publicized outrages against misconducts have led to attention in the media and academic world. Reports all over the world have called on the UN for preemptive measures. Therefore, for instance, the Secretary-General established a trust fund to pursue help for UN personnel SEA victims by aiding community

outreach. The Security Council also adopted a resolution concerning TCC's responsibilities to investigate allegations of SEA and hold both military and police personnel accountable for their actions (Department for Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance, n.d.; *Security Council resolution 2272 (2016) [on sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations peacekeepers]*, 2016).

Research on SEA in peacekeeping missions have been steadily rising (see Higate, 2007a, p. 101; Murphy, 2006, p. 531) and reports highlight precarious situations for civilians in already conflictual circumstances (Burke, 2014; Higate and Henry, 2004b; Murphy, 2006; Odello, 2010; Odello and Burke, 2016). This academic interest led to granting the 2018-2021 research project 'Sexual Violence Along the War and Peace Continuum', by Swati Parashar and her co-investigators Maria Stern and Maria Eriksson Baaz, almost 6,000,000 SEK in research funds from the Swedish Research Council (Swecris, n.d.). The aim of the project was to explore the continuum and non-continuum of sexual violence between war and peace, with original empirical data from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and India. This implies the current interest in questions on sexual violence such as sexual exploitation and shows how the field is still not explored enough.

The Department of Peace Operations (henceforth DPO) currently cares for the UN's peace operations. Officially established in 1992, the DPO assist UN's member states and the Secretary-General "in their efforts to maintain international peace and security" (United Nations Peacekeeping, n.d.c). Three main offices provide aid by the DPO: the Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions; Office of Military Affairs; and the Policy, Evaluation and Training Division. The latter administer policies, doctrines, and evaluations to help guide the standardized training through the center of Integrated Training Service (ITS) (Ibid.). ITS develops training material, standards, and policies (UN Peacekeeping Training, n.d.). They also collaborate with member states to ensure that TCC's pre-mission education is based on the standards of the UN and is given prior to deployment (United Nations Peacekeeping Resource Hub, 2023a). The ITS is thus the main body responsible for development of pre-deployment peacekeeping training through the General

Assembly Resolution A/RES/49/37 (1995). This resolution highlights the member states' responsibility to deliver training developed by ITS to their own uniformed personnel. ITS' standardized education is based on the Core Pre-deployment Training Materials, provided to TCCs (United Nations Peacekeeping Resource Hub, 2023b). Core Pre-deployment Training Materials contain basic principles, guidelines, and policies of peacekeeping for UN personnel. It includes 'cross-cutting' themes such as conduct, discipline, SEA, protection of civilians, gender mainstreaming, conflict-related sexual violence, and more.

When focusing on the Swedish system for pre-mission education, the international operations starts at an individual level in soldiers' home-units. There the soldiers receive some education for international missions, focused on their upcoming position. This education is in different Swedish military units, or in other countries, depending on what the individuals' position in the mission is. To end the education, the *Internationella Utbildningsenheten* (the Swedish International Educational unit, IntUtbE for short) in Stockholm provide education and training on mission- and unit-specific aspects such as the Code of Conduct and the Zero Tolerance policy on SEA (Försvarsmakten, 2022a). The training is in total six months and tailored to the specific mission – and the individual – at hand.

This thesis interest lies in a brief part of personnel education: the two-weeks course at IntUtbE, located beside the Swedish Armed Forces International Centre. This center provides individual multinational management ('stab' in Swedish) education (Försvarsmakten, 2019).

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

My research is built around the nexus of education on gender related issues, military power, and the sexual abuse and exploitation among peacekeepers. These parts are situated within literature focused on critical military theory and feminist research - specifically concerning critique against how peacekeeping personnel have chosen to exert their power against civilians in sexual, physical, and economic aspects. Therefore, this forthcoming section will give an overview of literature relevant to

the topics of education on gender issues, military power, and peacekeepers' SEA misconducts.

3.1 MILITARY POWER IN PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS

Military institutions in the modern nation state inhabit a specific role of handling certain acts of securitization. Thus, there is a need for exploring the act of militarization, where everyday life can become militarized to securitize societies and individuals. This idea of militarization is highlighted by feminist theorist Enloe (2007, 2000). Her work breaks down the experiences and lives of women in relation to the militarized machine through feminist exploration of globalized, political, ideological, social, institutional, and economical contexts. Her work makes a case in point on how the process of militarization gradually changes individuals to "be controlled" or "to depend" on militaristic ideas in their everyday life – something that civilian populations of peacekeeping missions also are affected by (Enloe, 2000, pp. xiv–xv, 3). Through Enloe's grasp of the intersecting themes of masculinity, nationalism, and globalization we are led to a critical conclusion of militarization transforming people, things, and ideas such as femininity/masculinity. It additionally shows how power and knowledge can twist humans into performing dehumanizing acts against those perceived as opponents, such as the alarming case of the Abu Ghraib prison. In this case, (military) personnel took advantage of their ability and agency to torture and abuse prisoners. Enloe (2007, pp. 95, 101) connects this with a globalized chain of ideas (specifically American) concerning feminization and "a few bad apples". These "few bad apples" are the idea of peacekeeper soldiers having a few exceptions in their barrel, where some who act out of line do not make up the entire unit or peacekeeping operation. However, these "bad apples" might just spoil the entire missions' goals by violating the trust of the host nations' civilians.

Militarization is a common theme in research on gender-related questions within military institutions. Whitworth (2004) critiques peace operations' work and contradictions during the 2000s, highlighting contextual problems of using soldiers' bodies as tools for appearance. Bodies that usually are supposedly seen to be active

–by patrolling, protecting civilians, and going out into combat– are put into missions where their tasks are controlled by slow organization and planning. This can be seen as a discrepancy toward soldiers who are seen as 'warriors' who use their bodies to protect others since they are now waiting for orders, that might arrive days after combat is finished, from higher-ups. This feeling of helplessness has garnered a want from international institutions that organize military missions to militarize their peacekeeping operations further, as a response to handle brutal intra-state conflicts. Whitworth pinpoints this as a worry for feminist academics, as it will lead to a further militarized society (2004, pp. 184–185). Another dilemma of facilitating militarized peacekeeping strategies is the added insecurity to people who "through exclusionary practices of militarism and armed intervention become targets of sexual abuse and racist violence" (2004, p. 186). Current peacekeeping interventions cannot provide the promises they are pledging to keep, leading to research such as this project wanting to keep progressing forward into better practices. Consequently, as presented by Higate and Henry (2004a), research on how male peacekeepers construct and enact their masculinity of the expense of local women's security shows the need for keeping a deeper understanding of contextual aspects (such as gender relations and security) within peace operations.

This idea of contradictions in what makes the peacekeeping soldier *a soldier* has been studied by researchers such as Duncanson (2009). She presents evidence of both hegemonic and alternative militarized masculinities –focusing on what is seen as masculine, feminine, and accepted in contexts of handling conflicts or keeping peace– through her research on autobiographical accounts. This challenge of current norms in militarism and peacekeeper identities has continually been an important factor in later research. Duncanson further analyzes the identities of peacekeepers in her book from 2013, exploring the experiences of British soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan, and tries to answer the question if peacekeepers can ever become 'agents of peace' (2013, p. 1). Similarly to confronting identities in peacekeeping, research presented by Bergman Rosamond and Kronsell (2022, 2018) delves into perceived agency, cosmopolitanism and experiences of soldiers.

Their research from 2018 focus on Swedish and Danish female peacekeepers in Afghanistan, highlighting which tasks are seen as more acceptable for women through gendered, and racialized, logics in the process of dialogic peacekeeping. These tasks female peacekeepers are responsible of involve establishing contact and dialogue with local Afghan women in an effort to promote gender equality in Afghanistan (Bergman Rosamond and Kronsell, 2018, p. 173). It is also a way of assessing security risks of the tasks at hand. Thus, the normative hierarchy of the gendered binary of the protector/protected is challenged through female peacekeepers (now-appointed protectors) conducting dialogue with local women (people being protected) (Ibid.).

Additional research further complicating the matter of given power for peacekeepers is presented by Autesserre (2014a). Her research shows decentralized actions of peacekeepers, how a nation state's autonomy to govern over civilians is set aside when welcoming in international interveners and the limitations of peacekeeping. Yet she identifies the hope of melding globalized and localized forces to access a new way into longstanding peace. Similar research is presented in her book *Peaceland* (2014b), and it can be connected into mediatization of militarized concepts relating to Enloe's work. An example of this is Åhäll (2016), who connects people's everyday lives and special events with the militarization of societies. These chosen actions, such as Remembrance Week in the United Kingdom, provides their Armed Forces with authority, confidence, and acceptance from society; a necessity for gaining legitimacy. A comparable example in Sweden is the SAF's visitation days to military units, military flight shows, and competitions such as the military skiing world championship, which made its 55th year in late March 2023 (Försvarsmakten, 2023c).

Gray (2022) also maps the connections between the Global South/ North and which nation state's peacekeeping forces are receiving most scrutiny by researchers. This shows concern of knowledge production in a field, akin to other areas of interest for theoretical discipline, that regards Western work as the most sensible and suitable for international goals (2022, p. 12). Similarly, Whitworth highlights how

missions are based on Western values and 'liberal democratic market ideology' (2004, p. 18). Thus, the current field of military power seems to be shifting and questioning long-standing traditions, in the same fashion as other disciplines investigating critical theoretical frameworks.

3.2 EDUCATION AND POLICIES ON GENDER-RELATED ISSUES

Research on soldiers' education on gender-related issues concerns a few different important aspects: gendered norms/stereotypes, cultural practicing differences, as well as awareness and accountability training. These elements are interconnected and will be presented continually in this section.

When feminist research questions education and policies on gender-related issues, a big focus has been on cultural politics of internationalized war, peace, and security. For example, Whitworth (2004) explored UN's labeling of policies, work, and principles to show how the UN's concept of gender is used as a tool to solve problems. The training is based on gender mainstreaming, resolutions, and a Code of Conduct, with educational material outlining issues of SEA. Additionally, UN has established both gender units and gender advisors for missions (2004, p. 119).

The main frame of reference for UN's pre-mission education is the 2000s Security Council Resolution 1325. This resolution recognized differential impacts of armed conflict on women and men, noted the importance of including women in processes against conflicts, and acknowledged the need for gender-sensitive training efforts. The resolution is present in plenty of research on peacekeepers' misconducts and the framework of the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda (such as Avello Martinez, 2020; Engle, 2014; Murphy, 2006; Myrttinen, 2019; Simić, 2010).

Burke (2014, pp. 70, 72) presented the Security Council Resolution 1820, which focused on how peacekeepers ought to tackle sexual violence against women and girls by assisting the establishment of secure environments for civilians. Her research focused on the failing of UN and TCCs to both prevent SEA and hold perpetrators accountable. One of Burke's solutions to pressure states into taking more effective action would be to use human rights mechanisms to shame states

into complying with universal human rights. However, as she herself pointed out, parts of what is seen as SEA by the UN is not illegal under international law or can appear as consensual relationships – which have further complicated the situation. Engle (2014, pp. 27, 33, 38) also provided a chapter of breaking down dilemmas in UN's policies surrounding sexual violence and how the policies can portray dated ideas of 'loss of honor' and victimization. This concept of contestation is carried into research focused on prevention, protection, and reformation of the accountability framework (Freedman, 2018).

Some research (such as Harrington, 2022; Holvikivi, 2021; Kovatch, 2016) have also pointed out the need for reforming more than the accountability framework. Kovatch presented recommendations to tailoring the training preventing SEA per the TCC, with an outline of the Code of Conduct and sanctions against offenders. She argued that the UN should be bolstering the material depending on gender statistics surrounding the TCC's from respected international reports (2016, p. 173). Her analysis of the case studies "United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo" and "United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo" (MONUSCO) revealed struggles in leaving the training on gender issues to TCCs that might not share the same view on equality. Additionally, the works of Holvikivi and Harrington delved into training mandates and reports calling for further focus on consistency of training at local and national levels (2022; 2021).

However, there are more organizations working with peacekeeping missions, with one example being the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Some research focused on this organization are within the same theme of gender in the military and how this affects local populations. For example, Hurley (2018) provided an idea of how pre-existing gender relations can be challenged through employees working full-time on gender issues in the military institution NATO. He presented how male employees (re)negotiates their constructed identities through empathy and reflexive moments of discomfort by existing in a female-dominated space focusing on gender issues (Hurley, 2018, pp. 87–88). However, this data is not

generalizable due to its limited number of sources. Similarly, another project researched the perceptions of Gender Advisors in NATO missions, yet with a larger pool of informants (Bastick and Duncanson, 2018). This project focused on the Advisors' experiences, goals, setbacks, and accomplishments. Bastick and Duncanson collected material for eight years, between 2009-2016, through semi-structured interviews and a workshop (2018, p. 12). Their research showed perspectives of personnel continually working with gender, and pushed for the hope of Advisors accomplishing greater change in militaries for more than the absence of violence (negative peace) (Bastick and Duncanson, 2018, p. 32).

Finally, Comstock (2022) produced the first assessment of the first years of UNs, non-binding, soft law Voluntary Compact of Preventing and Addressing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse from 2017. It is a legal mean of holding UN personnel accountable, looks for harsher punishment of SEA, and has since December 2021 105 signed Member States (United Nations, n.d.). To conclude Comstock (2022, p. 22) argues that a TCC signature for the non-binding Voluntary Compact increases the probability of post-abuse measures yet does not significantly reduce the abuse itself.

3.3 SEA MISCONDUCTS BY PEACEKEEPERS

Many researchers discuss male peacekeepers perpetrating crimes against female civilians (for example Enloe, 2007, 2000; Higate, 2007b; Higate and Henry, 2004b; Whitworth, 2004). These studies highlight perceived gender norms of global, national, and local societies with civilians being synonymous with victims, and even prostitutes and 'bushwives' in some situations. One of the key theoretical frameworks of research on these types of misconducts is critical military theory, such as the discussion of SEA by UN peacekeepers becoming violations of trust between peacekeepers and civilians (Burke, 2014) and presenting the variations of reported SEA across missions in a statistical study (Nordås and Rustad, 2013). Thus, interconnecting disciplines and theoretical frameworks have allowed for a broad field of research. The following is therefore a sample of research on SEA misconducts of UN peacekeepers.

Alexandra (2011) summarized research of gendered components in international relations around the 2000s, specifically of SEA by peacekeeper soldiers in UN's peace operations. She deemed that there is a missing part within the scholarship since none of the analyses of SEA have "systematically analyzed" the operation of influence of privilege at multiple levels within the peacekeeping process. She argued that there is a need to delve into the macro, meso, and micro levels: the military institutional, peacekeeping operational, and individual (Alexandra, 2011, pp. 369, 371). This would allow for a conceptualization of privilege and show how gender and power are interconnected at several levels. This connection between gender and power will also affect the production of knowledge, which will affect how the soldiers are taught to serve the civilian population in the best way possible.

There is additional research (see for example Burke, 2014; Kovitz, 2021; Odello and Burke, 2016) of the sexual exploitations and abuses peacekeeper soldiers have been accused of, where the failure of taking effective actions against the allegations have continually been a big issue. Similarly, analyses of gender and norms are of high value: asking questions of how 'mission cultures' might lead to inherited perceptions of sexual abuse and exploitation (Kovatch, 2016) and reflecting on the consequences of SEA around gender imbalances and human security (Duncanson, 2009, p. 24; Karim and Beardsley, 2017). At the same time, SEA only makes up around 13 percent of "all credible allegations of peacekeeper misconduct" which lead to researchers such as Horne et al. (2020) to delve further into other misconducts of UN peacekeeping operations and (peacekeeper) soldiers.

Another theme surrounding soldiers sexually exploiting civilians concern 'peacekeeper babies', as soldiers abandon civilian women they have had intercourse with or have raped and end up pregnant from this encounter. These babies usually experience disadvantages and discrimination throughout their lives, even if they are entitled to support if they have been born out of SEA by a UN peacekeeper (Bartels et al., 2021; Lee and Bartels, 2020). Scholarship have shown great struggles in gaining support from the UN, which in many cases do not provide enough for handling the, for instance, emotional strife of abandonment and social stigma

(Svoboda, 2023; Wagner et al., 2022). This is a complicated field, connecting precarious (economic, social) conflict and post-conflict situations to younger generations in a way that lead to potential challenges regarding their (local, national, and global) social identity (Lee and Bartels, 2020, p. 6).

At last, the Swedish Centre for Studies of Armed Forces and Society have published books on Swedish soldiers' experiences in the field of international missions. While these do not cover SEA or peacekeeper babies in the same amount as previously presented research have done, they do reference a few soldiers' reflections of 'bushwives' (a definition of local women that peacekeeper soldiers take as their wives during their missions, who might be "transferred" as a bush wife to the next deployed unit), exploitation of civilian women, and gender-based training against sexual harassment (Liljegren, 2007; Tillberg, 2011).

4. THEORY

Foucault's ideas of discourse and production of power provide the central theoretical framework for this thesis. His interpretations shed light on the integrations of language, military institutions, and discourse. This thesis also borrows elements from critical military theory (CMT). These borrowed elements are based on Enloe's (2015, 2004, 2000) work. She presents CMT through a feminist lens of 'skeptical curiosity'. Importantly, Enloe's work is connected to the idea on knowledge of power acting within a globalized world where the "personal is in fact international" (Runyan, 2018, p. 53). Similarly to Foucault's work, CMT is concerned with social productions of binaries, perceived 'objective reality', and the importance of "symbolic ordering, language, and discursive practices" (Runyan, 2018, p. 32). An additional section is focused on militarized masculinity, equipping the thesis with knowledge of how the military is intertwined with certain 'masculine' social attributes.

Feminist research oftentimes focuses on social identity markers through the concept of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989) –which provides an interconnected understanding of gender and race/ethnicity, displaying a complex system of

inequality and discrimination– making it meaningful to consider in this project. While intersectionality does contribute to studies by challenging discriminatory social norms and stereotypes, particularly for black women in the United States of America, this thesis instead concentrates on binaries and knowledge of power. It delves into gendered language that affects actions, perceptions, and the loss/gain of power for militarized people. Thus, even if intersectionality is not actively present in the thesis, many reflections around the concept can be found between the lines. The following sections provide more information on Foucault's work, Enloe's interpretation of CMT, and militarized masculinity.

4.1 FOUCAULT: INSTITUTIONS, POWER, AND KNOWLEDGE

The French postmodernist philosopher Michel Foucault is known for his conceptualization of power and knowledge. His work explores complex ways of how power, institutions, and knowledge are interconnected in society. While he has presented many influential ideas, the focus for this project is on his work on institutional systems, hegemony, and power in *Discipline and Punish* from 1975. However, the frame of reference in this project will be a Swedish translation of Foucault's book published in 2017 and an American translation from 2012. Following will be a presentation on his ideas that provide the central analytical framework for this thesis.

First, 'institutions' are not neutral sites of social functions. As Foucault observes, institutions –such as prisons, schools, and the military– are societal, disciplinary, sites of power. These systems' main object and target is the body, based on its forces, utilities, docility, distribution and submission of power (Foucault, 2017, p. 55, 2012, pp. 34, 148). The body being the main object of control has led to rules being exercised, institutionalized, and reinforced against it. Thus, institutions constantly create, maintain, and negotiate power relations between different human bodies. This creation of maintaining and holding power relations over other bodies produces the work of discipline and its "subjected practiced bodies, *'docile'* bodies" (Foucault, 2012, p. 150 [emphasis added]). When specifically focusing on military discipline, Foucault paints a picture of military institutions enabling armies

to exist as a disciplined unit with great respect to authority and regulations (2012, p. 236). The body thus becomes a machine of power, disciplined through a line of different institutions who politically invest in an object they hope to follow the norms and rules of a hegemonic society.

Second, 'power' is what structures social relations and society (Foucault, 2017, 2012). It is the mode of control, used within institutions who become sites of knowledge and discipline to create what society deems to be well-adapted humans. Thus, gaining or using power to shape social reality becomes a goal for institutions and people to affect hegemonic discourses and their perceptions. 'Resistance' then becomes an important element when humans (body and soul) struggle against power relations. It can lead to an opposing discourse or challenge to institutions' power. Interestingly, when focusing on military institutions, Foucault demonstrates the careful planning in silent control and exerted power to subjugate and avoid resistance (Foucault, 2017, p. 217). It can then be seen in architecture, surveillance, and normalized sanctions if someone oversteps the rules – similarly to what the UN has put in place regarding misconducts of SEA.

Third, 'knowledge' is produced by power. Foucault argues that this should be openly admitted since power and knowledge candidly "imply" each other. For instance, he exemplifies it as there being "… no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations" (Foucault, 2012, p. 37). Since the relation between power and knowledge is intimately intertwined, 'knowledge' becomes a modality of the power in who decides on what will be taught in education and disciplinary institutes. Foucault manages to open the discussion on how the coalition between education, and in this case, the military leads to social control based on knowledge and power.

In conclusion, when all these aspects are connected, Foucault's work provides a framework on discourse which is a structure built upon power hierarchies, knowledge production, and language (Scholte, 2003, p. 132). Discourse, to be

exact, is a social system contingent on history, practices, and interactions between people. It produces knowledge and meaning through a process where humans' moments of social practice (social interactions) articulates with other non-discursive moments, leading to new discourses on social relations, social identities, or social structures (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 2007, p. 38). Thus, it provides meaning and context for objects or subjects humans speak of through the effects or descriptive words the objects/subjects are portrayed with. Social control and influence from language is what matters in discourse, and it is also what affect institutions and their work in the world. Thus, Foucault's framework allows access to beneficial tools for scrutinizing and criticizing the education provided to people (i.e., peacekeeper soldiers) who hold power through economic, social, and physical means in conflictual situations.

4.2 FEMINIST CRITICAL MILITARY THEORY

Feminist-inspired critical military theory (CMT) is situated within critical military studies, an interdisciplinary field of research. Critical military studies aims to raise "questions about, and seeks to challenge, military power" and accordingly take nothing about military institutions for granted (Basham and Bulmer, 2017, p. 59; "Critical Military Studies," n.d.). It encompasses scholarship on critical aspects of military power, institutions, security, and operations (Kovitz, 2021; Woodward, 2014, p. 51). Thus, the framework of CMT is in line with what has been previously presented on the Foucauldian thought: power, knowledge, discourse, and resistance.

Similarly, to Foucault's demonstration of the body's importance, a big part of CMT is to gain knowledge of war through those with bodily participation. An argument for this is due to it providing "a specific kind of knowledge that those not present in war cannot share" (Caddick, 2021, p. 155). Therefore, a large amount of scholars aim their attention to military embodied experiences (for example Bergman Rosamond and Kronsell, 2022; Bulmer and Jackson, 2016; Dyvik and Greenwood, 2016; Holmes, 2019). This scholarship tends to focus on the narratives, emotions, and experiences of people by generating material through qualitative methods. Examples of research in the framework of CMT include an exploration of intimate

and gendered practices through social media in the United Kingdom Armed Forces (Adey et al., 2016), along with analyzing narratives surrounding American and Israeli female combat soldiers' military service (Daphna-Tekoah et al., 2021).

CMT is neither a "static or precise field of inquiry", which is the reason this project will borrow from this theoretical framework (Basham et al., 2015, p. 1). It is an idea of approaching military power as questioning and interest in engaging with a "skeptical curiosity" of military problematization – i.e. military discourse (Basham et al., 2015; Enloe, 2015). It also allows for an inclusion of feminist research, since this type of work within studies of international relations, peace and security has allowed for a hopeful approach in gaining knowledge and education of the military machinery (Sjoberg, 2013; Woodward, 2014).

The theory effectively involves the complexity of social life and "political contestation", in which the contexts of global-local, international-national, masculinity-femininity, economics, culture, and so much more can be included (Higate and Henry, 2004b; Woodward, 2014, p. 51). It can also aim to shed light onto theoretical blind spots of possibilities, such as in the case of Rech et al. (2015). They argue that, for example, the approach of geography can help contextualize and further evolve critical military studies into something that allows for abstract understandings and engagement that potentially helps provide "collaboration and knowledge exchange" (2015, p. 56).

However, peacekeepers are not born – they are made through previous experiences, education, and work. Likeminded to what Whitworth (2004, p. 3) argues in her preface, a part of this making of a soldier is through the "celebration and reinforcement of some of the most aggressive, and most insecure, elements of masculinity: those that promote violence, misogyny, homophobia, and racism". This means that, through a gendered and feminist lens, we can see how personnel have been taught that these elements are a way in which you can express to act as a soldier (see also Khalid, 2015). It also leads to foreign, non-military, peacebuilders assuming that their "external action can make a difference" since international

organizations working for peace are built upon the idea of a bureaucratic outsider knowing the best way of providing peace to conflict zones as they have state-centric democratic peace in their own countries (Autesserre, 2021, p. 111). Something that is continually accepted within the complexities of social life and political contestations. This does affect how peacekeeping operations have looked like. Yet there is hope through research to engage in a way where collaboration and knowledge exchange lead to something better.

Using the lens of feminist work in CMT is crucial for this thesis, as it allows for gaining situated knowledge within everyday life through researchers' exploration of 'ordinary' people's lives. These experiences are also divided by several different social identity axes, such as gender, age, ethnicity and occupation (Sjoberg, 2013, p. 176). Moreover, when it comes down to these intersectional aspects, which can give or take away power from the person in the current social world, they are necessary to take into consideration (Khalid, 2015, p. 635). They allow to understand how militaries are "inescapably gendered social phenomena characterized by gendered logics and gendered roles" in which we need to understand the everyday, ordinary, life of people (Gray, 2022, p. 10).

Another important aspect when studying peacekeepers' education is the concept of security and global securitization, since peacekeeping personnel are viewed to have power and knowledge about how to protect –and provide security to– the people in nations with conflict, i.e. host nations (Autesserre, 2016, p. 33; Burke, 2014; Engle, 2014). Sovereign nation states also use peacekeeping missions as an opportunity to build repertoire as protectors of global security and global governance (Fung, 2019). To do so, nation states provide personnel and/or monetary resources from their country's economic budget to organizations, such as UN, to become a part of the bringers of peace. These resources are usually taken from societies' social welfare systems which can potentially deconstruct social safety nets and allow for a patriarchal, militarized view on how to protect states to be established in society (Runyan, 2018, p. 85). This militarized masculinity in the military can additionally lead to domestic violence, rape, prostitution, structural violence of dislocation,

poverty, and disease (Ibid.). Consequently, it shakes the potential safety and structure of those who are affected which usually is the civilian populations while being mostly seen as the consequences of national, and global, security. Those who then are impacted experience vulnerability and marginalization rather than receiving an ontological and physical sense of security from those who are supposed to bring peace. Trying to provide 'absolute security' to a host nation will therefore, potentially, lead to a production of violence since the concept can only be achieved through absolute eradication of all threats; regardless if they are real or imagined/ontological (Runyan, 2018, p. 87). It follows that it cannot be ever achieved since the concept of security is subjective and will lead to securitization of things that might lead to insecurity of others.

4.3 MILITARIZED MASCULINITY

The concept of masculinity – a subjective collection of attributes, behaviors and roles associated with the male gender (Connell, 1987) - is an integral part of research on military, due to the fact that a vast majority in military institutions are men. Thus, gender imbalance is prevalent in peacekeeping missions. Examples of disproportion is in MONUSCO and "United Nations Mission in South Sudan". As of 31st December 2022, 12 119 male personnel and 816 female personnel were stationed through MONUSCO, while the mission in South Sudan deployed 12 302 male troopers and 896 female troopers (United Nations Peacekeeping, n.d.d). This section will therefore define the thesis' understanding of 'masculinity' within the context of peacekeeping.

Butler (2006, pp. 9–10) explains that there is a split between *gender* and *sex* in the idea of identity. Here, gender is a cultural construct whereas sex can be a gendered category established within gender. Akin to de Beauvoir's argument of *becoming* a woman rather than being born as one (de Beauvoir, 1973, in Butler, 2006, p. 11), this thesis will build upon the idea of gender as a construct. This argument of *becoming rather than being born* can also be applied to the transition from a boy to a man, as the idea is people being shaped into their gender rather than having one automatically. The shaping and perception of gender (relations and identities) is

based on people's practices in society's institutions, social constructs, and hegemonic discourses (Butler, 2006, pp. 12, 24; Connell, 1987, p. 120).

Similarly, Connell (2005, p. 68, 1987, pp. 120, 183) argues, the ideas of femininity and masculinity are constructed and practiced in societies institutions, leading to essentializing gender and sex (see also Enloe, 2000, p. 15). It compartmentalizes the different ideas of masculinity/femininity into a hierarchical order of gender – unifying experiences, sex, gender, and desire of people to a larger picture of relating to what is the opposite of the Self: the "Other" (Butler, 2006, pp. 24, 30). As current society is "codified by men", the hierarchical order perpetuates the idea of a binary of gender, with man/masculine/superior and woman/feminine/inferior being the only options (de Beauvoir, 1989, p. 717). These options are also the most common practices in social institutions where, for example, people are visibly divided by sex through arming men and disarming women (Connell, 1987, p. 126). Notably, major nation states' diplomatic, colonial, and military policies are based on a masculinity of "toughness and force" (Ibid.). The gender structuring in a state is thus a way of using an apparatus of regulation, soft domination, and dominant discourse. Similar ideas of institutions come from Foucault, which will further be explored in the theoretical section.

Masculinity is not a coherent, generalizable, concept of behaviors yet it contains assumptions on how a masculine person ought to behave and act (Connell, 2005, p. 67). The definition of masculinity is taken out of cultural standpoints and strategies, which means that this thesis defines it as an identity marker focused on power, violence, and warfare (Connell, 2005, p. 69; Duncanson, 2009, p. 65; Hurley, 2018, p. 73). The reasoning is due to the way military institutions mentally and physically break down their soldiers to rebuild them into *soldiers* – militarized hierarchical individuals who become a unit who respect governmental power and has access to weapons and brutality. However, based on which country the soldiers are from and their previous ideas of masculinity, their militarized masculinity tells a story of complex motivation to commit violence in certain contexts (Henry, 2017, p. 188). It can be seen as just one single identity, or a range of identities, yet the concept of

militarized masculinity gives opportunity to critically assesses how people's identities are constructed through societal institutions.

In conclusion, this thesis views militarized masculinity as a concept of gendering a certain group of people to act as emotionless and weaponized individuals loyal to governmental institutions. Institutions who prescribes 'the best soldier' as a masculine person ready to handle and carry out legitimate violent acts, use weapons and work within a hierarchical system – which is thought to provide security to societies (Hurley, 2018; Tickner, 2019, p. 20; Wadham, 2017, p. 241; Whitworth, 2004, pp. 151–153).

5. METHODS & MATERIAL

This chapter outlines the project's research design. The design is geared around qualitative methods, focusing on obtaining lived experiences and perceptions of Swedish soldiers' education. In this chapter I first discuss the research design, then material collection and analytical methods. Last included is a methodological section.

5.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

I have built my research puzzle around my 2 sub-questions. These questions are '*How is personnel misconduct portrayed in pre-mission education?*' and '*How can this education be reshaped in order to be more effective in practice?*'. The motivation behind this choice is that UN's peacekeeping missions are highly globalized, internationalized, and complex. UN employs international personnel, prepares them for their role and then sends them into other Nations who struggle with conflict. Therefore, what these employees are taught before missions' matter as it will impact how they act and treat, for example, host Nations' populations.

To investigate UN's peacekeeping training and education in a manner that will allow for in-depth exploration of the education, I concluded that performing a case study would be the best option. Especially as the education is taught by the TCCs which will affect the way the material is presented for the soldiers and can allow for better scrutiny to identify challenges in the implementation of educational

material (Widner et al., 2022, p. 1). In this chapter, I will lay out and discuss my research design, my chosen case study, and how I have conducted my research.

The design is based on a research puzzle pursuing knowledge of process and experience, focused on several aspects of the social world. The puzzle is pieced together with critical theory which provides an approach of viewing life as "determined through social and historical processes and power relations" (Mason, 2017, p. 8). It sheds light on people's experiences, institutions, and the power-knowledge construction of discourse. My interest to investigate the ebb and flow of social, gendered, life in the field of military and peacekeeping education allows for a puzzle that is complex and influenced by a feminist lens.

First, based on the location and sources of the research, focusing on the SAF as a case study made much sense. A case study allowed the research to become narrow and provided structure of the data sources and data generating methods, which in this thesis were interviews and documentary text analysis (Mason, 2017, p. 25). Since the project aims for knowledge and experience from the peacekeepers themselves, using interviews allowed for data from the soldiers' own insight. By combining this with documents from the UN, the generated data showed both personal and more formal information on how the pre-mission education was structured. Moreover, beside my own access of SAF as a Swedish citizen, it helped to focus on a TCC that has an interest in research and a considerable history of peacekeeping missions. The SAF has been involved in about 120 finished missions, motivating it with explanations of wanting to "actively contribute to peacekeeping missions" and lower the amount of "worry and conflicts outside our borders" (Försvarsmakten, 2022b, 2020a). Along with their hefty experience of missions, generating data through interviewing SAF's soldiers and accessing their documents on pre-mission education yielded plenty of data on peacekeepers' experiences and knowledge of the research puzzle's topic.

To find interviewees, I got in contact with personnel from the SAF by mail to access gatekeepers within military management. These gatekeepers either referred me to

new gatekeepers or sent my inquiry to potential participants, similar to 'snowball-sampling' (Mason, 2017, p. 78). Those who decided to respond or send me a message were then asked to attend a semi-structured topic-centered interview. This sample is not indicative of a representational sampling, rather it focuses on a part of some soldiers' view on their education. I conducted 9 telephone/online interviews, with a total of 551 minutes of audio. These were then transcribed in the program NVIVO. However, as the material felt lacking, additional material was sourced as documents from the UN, provided by a pre-mission educator in Sweden, to present a baseline of what the planned education for military personnel is supposed to include. These documents were a lesson plan on the specific lesson of SEA and two booklets which provide extra lectures on the topic of SEA and misconducts. These documents provided over 110 pages of text to the analysis.

To analyze my data, I used critical discourse analysis (henceforth CDA). All the material was organized in the research and computer program NVIVO, which I used to code and highlight specific themes of beliefs, values, and experiences. It allowed for reflection, management of data, and provided structure into a work in progress (Mason, 2017).

5.2 INTERVIEWS AND DOCUMENTS

A total of nine Swedish soldiers, one woman and eight men (which can be indicative of the current gender balance of soldiers in the SAF), were all interviewed alone for about 45-90 minutes each in Swedish (See more information of the interviews in Appendix 1). All nine interviews were structured around the participants' own experiences of pre-deployment education, recorded on a safe device, and later transcribed through NVIVO. The key themes focused on the education on gender-related issues, military peacekeeping power, and SEA conducted by personnel (See interview guide in Appendix 2). Since interviewing is a popular method for qualitative research due to it providing interesting accounts of lived experiences, especially of groups traditionally excluded from internationally 'legitimate' processes of knowledge production (DeVault and Gross, 2012, p. 209; Linabary and Hamel, 2017, p. 98). Although my chosen study group is (at least in Sweden)

seen as a legitimate, valuable group, I believe that their voices have not been heard in this specific light. Especially considering their worth and influence in society, their education will affect others regardless of how much information was covered in the pre-mission education.

Considering the interest feminist research has in acknowledging political aspects of discourses and the gendering of "man, the state, and war" in which women's and others' lives are affected, choosing peacekeepers as the sample group makes a lot of sense (Sjoberg, 2011, p. 111). Something to consider is the amount of opportunity to gain access to a lot of peacekeepers in the sample site, since the SAF has continually focused on restructuring their organization toward protection of national interests due to the increased security threats landscape in Europe (Försvarsmakten, 2022c). Another aspect is that about 57 000 people are employed in the SAF, whereas currently only 327 Swedish people are deployed in international missions (Försvarsmakten, 2023d, 2022b). Thus, the pool of respondents is not as big as some other TCC's may be where potential sample sites could be larger. However, the thesis has managed to gain as many respondents as possible within the chosen timeframe.

The benefit of interviews is that they offer the possibility to gain legitimate data on how respondents feel about their education. Yet to achieve this, the interviewees need to feel appreciated and welcome to tell their experiences and opinions. I made sure to follow their lead in how they wanted the interview to be held –mostly online on Zoom or by a telephone call– and let them decide what the interview focused on within the theme of pre-mission education. All interviewees were provided with information on privacy, anonymization, and confidentiality to be able to state informed consent. For example, I explained before and after the interviews what will happen with their interviews after recording, how they can refrain from participating, and a line of contact if needed. I also asked if it was okay to record the interviews on an offline device. As the sample group is rather small, I have chosen to either use pseudonyms or the respondent's own choice of name. I am neither presenting specific markers of their professions in their peacekeeping units.

When I decided to collect documents, I was presented with an opportunity to speak to a source within the IntUtbE. This person provided me with valuable information and reflections of the peacekeeping field as well as UN documents that concern the education given to Swedish military personnel. The documents are therefore a secondary type of data, contributing text on what the UN perceives to be important knowledge for peacekeepers. While there are only three documents in total used for the analysis, they still provide a great general summary of the lessons by UN. Thus, the different data can be compared and allows for reflections on how the UN exercises its power to present and construct a discourse surrounding peacekeepers, civilians, and SEA.

5.3 DATA ANALYSIS

I used CDA to analyze the interview transcripts and textual documents. This was done through NVIVO, which I used to code and highlight important themes connected to the research questions. Presented below is a short explanation of CDA and NVIVO.

CDA provides a complex framework of a three-dimensional model that separates discourse into different stages that can be carried out in several different ways (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 2007, pp. 59–60). The first dimension focuses on the text and the linguistic characteristics within. It delves into analysis of the core material, specifically what it constructs regarding discourse and social life. The second dimension is broader as it concerns the discursive practices of the text. For instance, this means analyzing how the text is both produced and consumed, its intertextual chain of how it can be perceived within several meanings at the same time. The last dimension focuses on social practice: how the text comes together with discursive practice in a larger social plane. This can for example focus on the hybridity and globalization of discursive practices (2007, p. 83). In conclusion, CDA focuses on how characteristics of "the economic, social, and cultural changes of late modernity" can exist as discourses and lead to realizations of the current organized reality is constructed of the social use of language (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 2007, pp. 4–5).

This framework of three dimensions can be used in different ways, such as analyzing all parts of text, discursive practices, and social practice or slim it down into smaller analytical tools. An example Chouliaraki and Fairclough presents a condensed version is for "pedagogical purposes, in relation to 'critical language awareness' in education" (2007, p. 59). Therefore, this thesis uses CDA in a condensed version, focusing on the discursive material (interviews and documents) and exploring its uses of language and linguistic characteristics such as grammar, wording, and metaphors (2007, pp. 37, 61–62).

I will use NVIVO, a software for organizing, coding, and analyzing qualitative data, to structure and provide clarity in the material. As the amount of material is vast, it will help simplify the work for analyzing complex data. The program also allows for an overview in what ought to be prioritized and can help summarize similar data for specific themes.

5.4 METHODOLOGY

The research puzzle is based on my previous research and interests of exploring how the military affects society. The Swedish government reinstated compulsory military service for men and women in 2017, when I was 18 and in high school. There, I had a realization of how society did not seem to be as peaceful and secure as earlier. The reinstatement focused on the changed security environment in Europe, as Swedish conscription has since 2009 been dormant in peace times. This grabbed my attention enough to ask questions. Why do societies have militaries? What do militaries do? How come militaries become institutionalized? The questions turned into reflections of feminist research when I completed my bachelor's in gender studies. This gave way for more questions about the military, allowing me to elaborate about additional concepts such as masculinity, femininity, gender, and much more.

My reflections led to investigating myself as a Swedish, white academic who have only lived in a peaceful and military-neutral country. At the same time, feminist researchers certainly have *perceptions* of military institutions: They are sexist,

discriminatory, possess a part of the monopoly on violence, and nationalist. All in all, being institutions that have time and time again posed as threats to people who they are supposed to protect. However, as I have continued the path of exploring with curiosity, I realize the complex fields it works in. I recognize that my research has contributed to discourses regarding the Swedish military. But I also believe that my critical curiosity and reluctance to leave this field alone has given me a great opportunity in trying to question the militarized institutions in Sweden – I am allowed to connect, ask questions, and reflect in a way that only an outsider can do while still having enough knowledge of the field. Because it is a tricky field, with its own set of structures, positions, and language for their expertise. Military personnel are people who have put a lot of work into becoming trained for stressful situations in a flawed system that will continue for, likely, a rather long time.

When it comes to the ethical considerations of this project, a big part concerned the individuals, communities and environments affected by this research as well as avoiding research misconducts. Thus, the three phrases leading this process around ethics was: 'protect others', 'minimize harm', and 'increase the sum of good ethical behaviour' (Israel, 2015, p. 2). As the participants are either seen as elite and/or experts in their field, much focus do not have to be on their protection. However, at the same time there is a necessity in advocating for protection regardless of their non-vulnerable status. Thus, I have focused on giving informed consent, given information and opportunity to volunteer and withdraw their consent as well as provide confidentiality (Israel, 2015, pp. 80, 83, 102). Other reflections or insecurities of not keeping people's confidentiality have been taken care of through discussing with my supervisor or contacting the specific person for clarification on what to share in the thesis.

Naturally, there have been some limitations to this study. I believe that if I had the opportunity for it, this research could turn into a dissertation regarding the complex identity of becoming and being a peacekeeping soldier. However, as this project lacks the time, money, or opportunity for field studies, gaining more material through additional single interviews with both educators and those educated, as well

as fieldwork, has not been viable. Including a bigger pool of data would have led to greater opportunities in pinpointing how the Swedish peacekeepers perceive their work and training before missions. It might have even led to gaining better knowledge on how the education ought to be improved to not just be a way of covering mandatory ideas of being a UN peacekeeper. Because the training needs more data and findings if it wants to push for change in the questions of handling SEA misconducts. However, this is not the case and will limit what I as the researcher will present as findings and propose solutions to.

6. ANALYSIS

This section consists of three parts, all focused on the framework of pre-mission education and how it is both taught and perceived. The first section delves into the material of interviews and analyzes the respondents' answers. This part is structured around three parts of the interviewees' perceptions and storytelling: their pre-mission education, Swedish progressiveness in terms of gender and knowledge of militarized operationalization, as well as their ideas of changes and/or transformations in the educational material. Section two concerns the pre-mission text material produced by the UN, focusing on the discourses UN – and thus the SAF – construct. This section thus focuses on the structure of the presented education, its language, and depiction of affected parties such as the active soldiers, the affected local civilians, and the soldiers' highest employer, the UN.

6.1 INTERVIEWS

My conducted interviews have been coded in sections based on the research questions. Thus, the defining codes for the analysis focus on how the education has been structured, what is said during the education, how misconduct and SEA is portrayed during the education, as well as what the interviewees liked, disliked, and wanted to change.

All interviewees have gone through Swedish basic military training (called 'värnplikt' or 'militär grundutbildning' in Swedish) and have completed between 1 to 6 international peacekeeping missions. Everyone has done at least one of these

missions under UN-flag, with them being a part of a military unit with other soldiers. However, some interviewees have also completed missions alone. Many of the interviewees have been in Mali in the last couple of years, but some have also completed missions in countries such as Kosovo and Afghanistan. About three interviewees started their military career in the 1990s, three begun in the 2000s and three went into the military in the 2010s. Lastly, about six interviewees have had positions within management ('stab' in Swedish) and three have received special training to have positions in the international mission focused on Gender, such as an Advisor or Focal Point. The interviewees will be presented throughout the analysis.

6.1.1 GENDER AND 'GENUS' – PERCEPTIONS OF THE MILITARY

When asking the interviewees to explain the structure of their pre-mission education, they all disclose that the training usually lasts for 6 months where they receive several types of education. The soldiers go through different packages of education in these months, all of which are dependent on the mission, the unit, and the individual's tasks. Examples of the packages' themes are medical training, combat, collaborative work, weapons/vehicles, as well as both training packages "Counter Improvised Explosive Devices" and "Survival, Evasion, Resistance, Extraction". Most interviewees presented an overview of the education in general terms, and presented the fact that a lot of the soldiers' education was from fellow Swedish soldiers who had conducted previous missions in the same host nation. All interviewees pointed out that some parts, such as training with weapons, were more practical than others.

The specific weeks focused on education around SEA, misconducts, and gender that the interviewees talked about were around 2 weeks of education in IntUtbE. These weeks, mostly called 'UN-weeks' by the interviewees, took place usually later in the six months of education and was an obligatory general course structured around lectures for the entire unit. Thus, the main presentation of the educational material was by PowerPoint lectures, with examples and reflections from previous

missions. Senior reserve officer Lucas, who also have a career in the Swedish school system, speculated how the course –which gives the soldiers a diploma that officials can ask to later see in the field– does not demand anything but a signature and attendance. He likened it to soldiers pre-mission education on pistols, where if a soldier after having gone through the training could not hit the target would be questioned if they had learned anything that they were supposed to know. Additionally, a few interviewees noted that the course in these weeks was in some parts Swedish, some parts English. Those interviewed who pointed this out also raised the question of problems with translations and miscommunication. An example of this was how younger generations of soldiers – who were usually more involved in the Swedish political debates and discourses concerning gender – could become confused about the definitions of gender provided by these lectures.

Joel, a 30-something officer working with, for instance, in-house management, explained the contents in the UN-weeks as a package of basic explanations concerning, for example, 'genus' (a Swedish term usually focused on the social constructions and processes of gender), resolution 1325, SEA, and more. Joel have received more education on gender in military operations than the general Swedish soldier, and he highlighted both his own and other Swedish soldiers' struggles around discerning UN's conceptualization of gender. In his interview, he dissected the differences between what the UN defines to be 'gender' and what Swedish political discourse focus on when talking about 'genus'. An illustrative example used by specialist and liaison officer ('sambandschef' in Swedish) Noah concerned the UN being supposed to be appealing to a lot of different nations, their cultures, and concepts surrounding gender. Thus, the education on gender is simplified. The focus is on binary groups of men/boys and women/girls to stay neutral, managing to get most Member States on board with what gender means and what it might do in operations.

This structure of gender and age as ideas in UN's peacekeeping forces also came up in interviews with Oliver and Hugo. They both talked about the inclusion of female soldiers to help the UN and SAF to get a better view of the civilian

population's perceptions of different situations. Seasoned educator and officer Hugo pinpointed the value in bringing female soldiers to reach women and children who will be affected by the mission. Agreeingly, Oliver - who have led pre-mission education on soft values for Swedish soldiers in his Mali mission – also highlighted the need for a diverse team to 'reach' more than 50% of the population. As he put it: by including perspectives from the women in the local population, the operation becomes optimized and will "not only affect men".

While they don't go into details, almost all the male interviewees mention the gender imbalance in SAF and peacekeeping units. Interestingly, when the youngest soldier Agnes was asked about having potential discussions surrounding biological sex in the pre-mission course, she focused on differences between nation states' rules in their camps. As she remembered, the education focused mostly on relations between soldiers and she disclosed Sweden's choice for mixed sex sleeping quarters, making sure to "sköta [romantiska relationer mellan soldater] snyggt" (a Swedish saying to handle something, in this case romantic relations in-between soldiers, with discretion), and to respect other nations rules on romance. This is not something usually seen in camps from other nations, as other interviewees commented on it being something that sets Sweden apart from other nations who are more "keen to avoid potential sexual harassment in another way". Furthermore, Agnes brought up the Zero Tolerance policy that the UN has in place concerning SEA and clarified that it also is deter soldiers who might be interested in pursuing a romantic or sexual relation with civilians since "we are in a position of power".

Additionally, those interviewed that had been deployed on more than one mission were asked to reflect on differences between the missions. The hope was to find out if there have been any changes about gender, female soldiers, or misconduct by soldiers.

Current reserve officer Carl, the interviewee with the most conducted missions, clarified that he believed the early 2000s pre-mission education "really bad, if I am being completely honest". In his interview, he described the education as lacking

for units and that discussions on gender could be perceived as 'mined land' since it could be controversial. However, he argued that it changed over time, where mission-specific education now is 'top-class'. Carl also shows appreciation to the younger officers, who he explained are "damn good" and rather natural at, for example, checking older soldiers. To exemplify, Carl recalled a situation where an older officer said something inappropriate in Carl's last mission. Immediately after the older officer spoke, younger officers took an active stance against what was declared and clarified that it is not okay to say. Carl became taken aback by the quick corrections and explained that if a similar situation happened when he was younger, the reaction would have only been a scoff and over-look it by muttering that the older officer was being a, in Carl's own words, "gubbe" (old man in Swedish, here in the context of being old-fashioned and inconsiderate).

While the other seasoned interviewees did not exactly exemplify specific situations, platoon and company commander William did reflect on the differences in quality and professionalism regarding older and younger soldiers. William have been to Mali on two missions and explained how his first mission was mostly with older soldiers who "lived their entire lives through missions". He contrasted these soldiers to current, younger soldiers who are assigned by the SAF with their regiment units to go abroad. William highlights that the younger soldiers have usually worked with each other at least 2-3 years in contrast to older generations, who were usually hastily put together into peacekeeping forces. He additionally clarified that Sweden have done improvements to employ soldiers focused on quality, knowledge, and long-term employment. An example of why soldiers currently are professional, according to William, regard their education on laws of war, rules of engagement, collaboration in the unit and more. However, he still acknowledged the possibility of having 'idiots' in the workplace – "the same way all organizations or establishments do".

All interviewees said that they do not know any Swedish peacekeeper who have perpetrated SEA onto civilians. Some of them speculated about older generations, those who currently are sixty to seventy years old, as they have heard of soldiers in

individual missions having frequented, for example, brothels. However, these interviewees stressed on these being practices that have died out with the generations and that does not currently happen in the SAF. When asked if this might be because of a culture of silence, Agnes reflected on how she perceived her unit to be focused on communication and rather concluded together that misconducts such as buying sex is "under all kritik" (meaning it is beneath contempt to purchase sexual services since it is not legal in Sweden or accepted by the UN). She argued that pre-mission education and its discussions provides soldiers with awareness, which may reduce the risk of future misconducts. Additionally, she explained that 'sooner or later' in these missions, the acts of people shine through to show who they are. Thus, hopefully, those who are selected for deployment have already shown their abilities not to commit misconducts before departing.

At last, when being asked about the lecturers, some interviewees were harsher than others. Joel stated rather crassly that the pre-mission education is packaged to be "held in English anywhere, by anyone who has a body temperature of 37,5°C". He continued to explain that the education they were given was not tailored to the SAF, which was not surprising given the amount of people who must be on board with the training. However, Joel described how the education then felt like a regurgitation of ideas and reflections that Swedish soldiers already knew, such as not to sexually assault civilians or trade money/food/shelter for sex. He also questioned the choices of some of the older educators who had a hard time going off script to answer questions, since he sees the opportunity to make the education interesting and "actually informative" through simple adjustments. Similarly, Noah talked about the frustration on being presented with "obvious things" for Swedish soldiers that they later realized might not be as given for other nations. Thus, he acknowledged the compromise with the education since, as he explained, the UN must cover a lot in a very condensed amount of time.

Equally interesting was Agnes reflection regarding those who had a part as an educator in her UN-weeks. When talking about training package titled "Survival, Evasion, Resistance, Extraction", she stated that one of the instructor's might not

have been the "best fit" for the discussion on soldiers being kidnapped. Her reasoning focused on an instructor focusing on the wrong things, such as "a bit of boasting" of his own previous missions and having a hard time specifying concepts in a way that made sense to the Swedish soldiers. Thus came a discussion on kidnapped soldiers being assaulted solely because they were captured and attractive –which led to some kidnapped people going to extreme lengths to be seen as gross and impossible to assault– rather than as a way of exercising power and control over the kidnapped. However, at the same time, most interviewees focused on explaining the education as 'a great preparation', "good education, generally speaking", and that "some parts [of the education] are really good".

6.1.2 THE 'PROGRESSIVE' SWEDES

"As a Swedish educated officer, the first eight hours [of the general education] is not something that you really need. [...]. Because the bar is so low, you get it, it's because you explain the very, very, very basics." - Joel, officer.

A big aspect of the research question is *how* pre-mission education is perceived by the personnel, and how the education portrays misconducts. While a lot of the questions that were answered by the interviewees covered these topics, it was mostly through examples and reflections on their Swedish nationality and identified concepts of being a nation state pushing forward for equality, human rights, and progression as presented in the quote above. Thus, the interviews focused on Swedes and their values both in general and within the SAF. The examples following are focused on Swedes perceiving themselves as highly educated on both gender issues and military actions, having a set list of core values/norms (such as rules of engagement), and having upper management who care about peacekeepers' actions.

When most interviewees were asked about why they were deployed into their missions, they talked about personal reasons as of why they wanted to go abroad. Most interviewees were interested in pursuing their position in a 'real' environment

as in Sweden they have only *prepared* and *practiced* for serious situations, to have the opportunity to make a difference in the world, and to grow in their professional military role. For instance, Liam, who have done 3 missions since he began his military career in 1999, compared being a part of peacekeeping missions to being an ambassador for Sweden as they are representing the SAF. All interviewees presented peacekeeping missions as a mostly positive thing, even if UN missions were slow to act. The main hope was of protecting local populations from threats – even if it is for just "a few more hours" to keep away enemies from the villages they're patrolling at that specific time. Many described being a peacekeeper as a "stressful role", with the inability of coming off the clock or processing sudden situations properly since it is a 24-hour job, and having to manage cultural clashes that must rather be lived through to understand them.

Second, as described by Carl who have done the most missions, the perception of Swedish officers is that they have "such an incredibly high lowest level". He means that soldiers from Sweden are very knowledgeable in their profession and hold each other to a high standard, leading them to have established great expectations on the bare minimum for working as an officer. Thus, the interviewees construct a discourse of the progressive, educated, Swedish soldier who will be disappointed if the education on SEA focuses on what they perceive to be 'normal Swedish values and norms'. For example, interviewees explained Swedish normal values as of having a social safety net, getting "good" education, and believing in human rights. Much of the reflections come in comparison to other nations' cultures and beliefs, such as talking about other peacekeeper soldiers who are serving to earn money they can send back home to their families. As previously presented, this is usually not the argument Swedish soldiers present as of why they want, or agree, to be deployed into UN missions. Another aspect that distinguishes Swedish soldiers from 'others' (other nations' soldiers) comes in their ethos of progressive education, which has been discussed in the previous section.

And the final aspect, the pre-mission education had a part about delving into awareness of the host nation's culture. Here, most interviewees discussed

respecting and following customs of the nation as a way of avoiding embarrassment or misstep in already fragile or unsure situations. Examples of this were never being alone in the same room as a civilian, rather soldiers tried to include so-called 'civilian pillars' that were civil UN personnel focused on the local population, and in some cases avoiding shaking hands or looking at women in the cultures where this is frowned upon. Lucas, who during his mission was in a unit that completed over 70 days in "the field", explained the focus on paying their respects to the dead, regardless of if the deceased were on the UN's or the enemy's side and following a ban on drinking alcohol in Muslim countries. He also painted a picture of the host nation being barren, miserable, and difficult specifically in the countryside where the UN soldiers usually did not frequent for longer periods of time. Similarly, other interviewees talked about having to find the good in 'only' keeping enemies away from villages for a day or a few hours. Here they focused on how villages might not get attacked when peacekeeper soldiers were there, to just the day after peacekeepers left become invaded and looted by the enemy or others who are not on the same side as the UN. This also proved to be dependent on the village's connections to either the UN or the enemy, as gaining cooperation and knowledge about the conflict from the civilians depended on where their loyalties lied or if they felt safe (safe from being kidnapped/tortured or have their life taken) enough to provide information.

6.1.3 EDUCATION: THE DISCLAIMER AND POSSIBLE TRANSFORMATION

This section focuses on the interviewees' reflections on how the education should change or grow to be designed better for Swedish soldiers and their perception of how the UN uses the pre-mission education as a way of absolving their own liability to soldiers' committed misconducts.

While all interviewees had their issues or questions about how the UN has structured their obligatory education, one person took it further in his interview. Joel, who had previously reflected on the message of the lectures, argued that the lectures lead to a feeling of being told what to do in a way that feels ill-suited for

the receiver. He clarified that it is because of the pre-mission material UN provided simply focus on telling soldiers on what to not do, such as engage in SEA with civilians, and what will happen if soldiers' do commit misconducts anyway, without following through properly on site with the soldiers. Rather, soldiers are given a card as big as a bank card that is a reminder of the ten rules regarding zero tolerance for SEA. One of the rules that Joel discusses is the first rule: "Sex with individuals under 18 is forbidden". All rules can be perceived as obvious according to Joel, especially as they already are covered in Swedish law. He feels that this is something that may have to be presented to some personnel in the UN, but it does not apply to Swedish soldiers. Instead, it can be felt as a thing to tick off a to-do list just because it must be presented. A sentiment he shared was of another soldier who joked with him about being in a situation where a soldier gets a scandalous offer and immediately looks at his card of the ten rules to be reminded that he cannot nor should accept the offer. This sentiment shows what Joel perceives to be an absurd situation, where the UN expects soldiers 'to do the right thing' simply because of their physical reminders of the Zero Tolerance policy.

Yet when being asked of how to change the education to be more valuable for Swedish soldiers, many reflect on adding on more information than to taking it away. Examples of this was adding on examples of Swedish misconducts, including more tests to show if soldiers have learned anything, and letting intelligence analysts provide more information on the host nation. Thus, most solutions focus on getting more education or taking it to a higher level where the operationalization of gender in the military is explained properly to avoid confusion from the Swedish political discourse on 'genus'. However, one interviewee wanted to simplify the education as a way of making sure that other skills can be prioritized better such as learning to put on a tourniquet as effectively as possible. He argued that since most of the lectures on SEA contain basic information, simply explaining shortly what is not allowed and then asking if anyone has any problems with it is enough.

6.2 UN DOCUMENTS

The UN official document on the lesson concerning SEA from 2017 and booklets on SEA from 2018 both show the main structure of a lecture peacekeeper soldiers are supposed to attend and how subjects such as soldiers and civilians are constructed to be identified. To present the material and demonstrate my analysis, the structure will be as following: first, the document's own structure on the education will be displayed to show what the training entails in practice. The second section will present the materials' chosen language and portrayals of UN soldiers and the host nations population.

6.2.1 THE EDUCATION ON PAPER

The aim of the lesson plan for all UN soldiers, according to the module 3 lesson 3.4 on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, is to "explain to UN peacekeeping personnel the UN standards prohibiting sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA)". To do so, the structure of the lesson is as follows: introduction, learning activity, a presentation on the duty to "Protect and Serve", a presentation on UN's Zero Tolerance policy of SEA, a definition of SEA, a presentation of the uniformed standards on SEA, another learning activity, a summary on what individual peacekeeping personnel can do, a learning evaluation, and lastly three optional learning activities. This is recommended to be a one-hour lesson, with about 1-2 minutes per slide. The slides, which are mostly simple with blue or green text on a white background, amount to a total of 28 pages. To further describe the document and structure, the next section will discuss the different parts more in depth.

The introduction of the lesson focuses on presenting the topic, its relevance, expected learning outcomes and an overview of the following hour. These slides do not have much text on them, are very to the point and use shortened acronyms for some words such as UN, SEA and DPKO (another acronym for Department of Peacekeeping Operations). Concerning the first learning activity, the personnel in the lecture are supposed to watch the film "To Serve with Pride". This film is about 24 minutes and 30 seconds, and while the video is not watchable through the link

in the lesson plan it can still be found on YouTube and on UN's own website. The purpose is to have the film introduce SEA and the Zero Tolerance Policy before discussing a few discussion points for five minutes. The discussion points are: "how do UN personnel 'abuse' power and trust?", "what are the consequences of sexploitation and abuse for victims?", "how does it affect the image of the UN?", and "what does 'zero tolerance' mean?". Coincidentally, the subsequent three slides focus on the same thing presented in the learning activity. In the learning activity, the emphasis is on the duty to protect and serve, zero tolerance on SEA and defining what SEA is.

As these introductory slides come to an end, slide 4 displays a few key words that are to be considered and interpreted. These are 'vulnerable', 'differential power', 'abuse of trust', and 'beneficiaries of assistance'. Afterwards, a slide differentiating SEA and sexual harassment as well as stating uniformed standards on SEA and its prohibited acts is shown. Accompanying this slide is another learning activity using scenarios on the guidelines and prohibitions on SEA. The activity has two different time options, with either a quick 10 minutes of group work and discussion or a 45 minutes walk-through of work in small groups and a longer presentation of reports on the scenarios. The activity is followed with a slide on the DPO/DPKO's approach to SEA which is a developed approach "to respond to SEA" with three steps that are "relevant measures in addressing all types of misconduct". These steps are prevention, enforcement, and remedial action, which all have got their own following slide.

The next slides talk about what individual peacekeepers "can do", with focus on individual responsibility, leadership, and accountability. At last, the lecture gives a summary of what has been presented through the hour and what the UN expects peacekeeping personnel to take accountability for. To sum it all up, an evaluation on the lecture is done with focus on pre- and post-assessment. The evaluation concerns different types of questions, such as sentence completion, narrative, and true-false questions. Everything is expected to be done by an educator who follows the material and the guidelines given to them by the UN.

6.2.2 THE PORTRAYAL OF UN SOLDIERS AND CIVILIANS

The booklets on the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse are very clear and succinct in terms of their language. As the booklets are courses in themselves, supposed to either be sent out via mail or given in person to those preparing for deployment, the aim is that the material should be used to guide the opinion and/or actions of peacekeeping personnel. Usually, the booklets are mandatory for managers and commanders, but they state that others also are allowed to take the booklet courses.

Starting with the overlying themes of the booklets, they paint a picture of UN personnel as those who bring peace and security to "some of the most challenging places around the world". The UN is described to be "the ray of hope", with people trusting and expecting them to "help and protect them". Thus, the UN has immediately positioned themselves as protectors of influential status by actively referring to words of positive and high value. Additionally, through explaining that "the overwhelming majority" of UN employees strive to work with "honor, pride, and integrity", the booklets create an idea of UN personnel being defenders of human rights in a time where these aspirations are impossible to realize. On the other hand, however, the booklets tell the story of a "few bad apples" –akin to previous research on who the perpetrators are– where "sadly, at times, the UN personnel have violated the trust placed in them by the most vulnerable in society". Immediately the presentation of the UN shifts into something they perceive should be grieved for, where people who are protectors turn around and violate those they are meant to protect.

Violations against the "vulnerable in society" are to be frowned upon, as the booklets explain that the UN have "a zero-tolerance policy for such behavior" and that there is "no impunity" for the personnel that commits an offence of this kind. Thus, the booklets explain how UN has worked to establish several measures as a way of combatting SEA, all of which are "having an impact". The booklets give examples of the measures yet raises the UN's worry of SEA acts continuing to happen by the personnel. Here the booklets and thus the UN take a stance against it

with explaining that "for the UN, one incident of sexual exploitation and abuse is one too many". The booklets also present the main consequences of committing acts of SEA, which are the following: "their personal life will suffer", "they may be prosecuted" and "their safety and health may be at risk". These consequences are exemplified as financial loss, being barred from future UN service, administrative sanctions by the person's own nation, and termination of their UN contract. Here, the booklets clarified that "the privileges and immunities to enable them [UN peacekeeper soldiers] to perform their work-related functions" will be waived in case of misconducts.

Another big part of the booklets explains that "acts of sexual exploitation and abuse can damage the image and credibility […]" of both the UN and its peacekeeping missions. Additionally, the booklet discloses that committing SEA "in turn undermines the ability of the UN to implement its mandate and do its work effectively" and can overshadow the "important" work that the UN missions do. An example of this is that SEA offences divert "management time and resources away from mandate implementation". Additionally, human trafficking, women 'forced' to work in the commercial sex industry, and the damage SEA does to donor support are all important points that are brought up. Another interesting statement that the booklets assert is that they believe that rape of children is "the worst form of abuse". Thus, the UN has put different types of SEA in a hierarchical system of what is deemed to be the worst or the least bad form of exploitation/abuse. This choice to categorize acts of SEA can however, potentially, be an idea that is not productive since victims of SEA do not focus on the fact that their experience could have been worse or better. The focus might rather be on the fact that they have been subject to an act of physical or emotional violence.

Continuing with the booklets' construction of the civilians, the focus is on words and explanations such as 'vulnerable', being 'forced to sell sex to survive', and that SEA "harms victims' minds and bodies and violates their dignity". Thus, the booklets argue that SEA harms victims physically, psychologically/emotionally, and socially. They also list different types of ways in which SEA potentially leads

to added shame, guilt, injuries, and loss of support from the community. One example of this concerns the conceived children from SEA, whom may "face life-long disadvantage and discrimination". The booklets additionally discuss different examples and situations in which personnel may commit SEA, regardless of if they intend to conduct an offence or not. The host nations are seen as having a high rate of unemployment, with many families struggling to survive, which may lead to peacekeeping personnel feeling bad as they retain both money and positions of power. Despite this, the booklets press on the fact that similar situations lead to power differentials and power imbalances between UN personnel and "vulnerable people in the community" that should not be abused or taken advantage of. Examples of why there is a ban of UN personnel engaging in abusive or exploitative romantic/sexual relations with civilians from the host nation are also presented several times in the booklets. They do specify that the UN does not ban intercourse between consenting adults, which in this case is specified to be people over the age of 18. If you are under that limit you are perceived by the UN to be a child.

Lastly, the booklets explain the necessity of reporting potential situations of SEA and how to do so. Examples focus on what to report, e.g., who was involved, what happened, where it happened, and when, in addition to encouraging soldiers to report as soon as something happens. Soldiers are supposed to, in good faith, either report it to the UN management, the Office of Internal Oversight Services or through the UN chain of command. Reports can be made anonymous, and the booklets end with examples on both when and what to report. If a report is true, TCCs are responsible to investigate their own personnel and will present a decision. This is later made public in an annual report on SEA by UN personnel.

To end on a summarizing point, the construction of civilians and UN peacekeeping personnel in this context are straight-forward. The booklets present clear prohibitions and explain the different points with focus on both different nations' potential laws and the UN's own expectation of what is to be obliged by soldiers. While the booklets do have a somewhat loaded language, many parts are neutral and stated as facts.

7. DISCUSSION

As the analysis presents, the UN's pre-mission education is filled with constructions of ideas and reflections on the identities of soldiers and civilians. When looking at the interviewees and their linguistic patterns for explaining their own role, they have a few aspects to their identities as soldiers. These aspects are deciding factors of how they operate, as the first one is of the fact that they are usually working in the SAF. Thus, since the interviewees are Swedish, they interact with others through what they perceive to be socially and culturally correct in Swedish society. This can become challenging, as some of the respondents described, since what they usually observe or recognize to be standard behavior can be challenged by expressions or manners that are not *their own* accepted and established practices. In addition to the shift in identifying social norms and becoming hypervigilant in their own actions, most interviewees perceived their work as a soldier to be of high value and conducted with great professionality. For example, Carl, Liam, and Lucas disclosed the standard of the results by Swedish soldiers is high, ambitious, and constantly evolving. While this expectation might lead to great outcomes in the missions, it might not appear as a surprise that Swedish soldiers then want more out of their pre-mission education. Despite that revising knowledge is important to not lose what you previously learned, the situation of being told widely accepted, self-explanatory, information have made certain interviewees frustrated. Particularly when what you sit through does not cover more than basic aspects that your country's political discussions have provided years ago and have moved on from.

At the same time, the Swedish soldiers are not only basing their identity off being Swedish, but they also have a conceptualization of being (peacekeeper) soldiers. However, this is not something that is explicitly discussed by the interviews, as the focus is on what they have learned and perceived of their pre-mission education. The construct of a peacekeeper soldier is thus concentrated on following specific orders from higher-ups, which is mostly decided by what the mission entailed and the established goals for the unit.

When examining the text material of the UN documents, the constructed ideas of soldiers' power and knowledge are shown in plain sight. The booklets and lesson plan construct the civilian population and potential victims to be hopeless, desperate for gaining power and other resources from, for example, peacekeeper soldiers. These courses disclose that it is not the civilians or victims' fault that they became victims, even if they do not know how to handle their struggles in another way. This is in direct contrast to the construction of the peacekeeping personnel, the soldiers, and their opportunity of knowledge and power. Soldiers are portrayed to have economic, political, and social advantages, allowing opportunity for living comfortably at the missions' campus or in their own country. The textual analysis organizes an attempt of constructing narratives of the good, yet sometime bad, protector and its misfortunate, silenced, victim where all responsibility lies on the UN personnel.

Therefore, the construction and portrayal of misconduct in the pre-mission education is focused on taking advantage of less fortunate people, and how malpractice mean complications to gain support for both the mission and the UN. The interviewees disclosed reflections on how perpetrating sexual exploitation and abuse is unthinkable, especially since it is ingrained in their own societal norms and core values. The choice of stepping over the line to sexually exploit or abuse civilians' hurts, of course, the international perception of the UN, but most importantly the interviewees point out that it also hurts the international perception of Sweden and its population. Since the analyzed documents are more general, these focus on how perpetration of sexual assault, exploitation, or abuse have led to consequences for the UN. Thus, the solution is on stripping the perpetrators of their current and future positions within UN missions. The booklets also disclose that TCCs will impose administrative sanctions, however, as can be seen by the interviews, this will be largely dependent on the country the soldier comes from and what their laws and regulations surrounding SEA looks like.

Likewise, the overall perception of the pre-mission education is that it is enough information for a Swedish soldier in general, even if many of them would like

further information or a better structure of what is introduced in the lectures. This is perceived to be because the Swedish soldiers are already knowledgeable in the field of SEA and are familiar with the idea of exploiting and abusing others sexually is not permitted. There seems to be speculations from the interviewees that the education is lacking for TCCs that have, for example, legalized prostitution, do not implement governmental work with gender equality, or have political discourses surrounding gender/sex and masculinity/femininity. Thus, Swedish soldiers seem to be relatively happy with the educational material even if they would like minor changes. Examples of these changes would be to make it more appropriate for a Swedish audience such as providing a better introduction to the UN's operationalization of gender in peacekeeping missions, giving examples of misconducts in Swedish units, and the UN enquiring for more proof for having completed the mandatory pre-mission education. At the same time, interviewees that have done a few missions confirm that the pre-mission education have positively evolved throughout the last twenty years and seem to continue doing so.

8. CONCLUSIONS

In this section, I answer the research questions and summarize the results of the analysis. It is important to note that a critical discourse analysis focuses on a specific discourse in a specific time and space. Thus, this thesis will not present a generalizable conclusion to all future pre-mission educations as I have distinctly investigated the perceptions of Swedish peacekeepers in 2023. Some of them have finished their missions a few months back, and some have been back in Sweden for much longer. Regardless, I have interviewed and documented 9 individuals' impressions and thoughts from their experiences, which still presents a simple part of a larger picture. The main research question was the following: '*How is pre-mission education on sexual exploitation taught and perceived by personnel in the Swedish Armed Forces, and how are these understandings translated into practice?*'. Following this are the sub-questions: '*How is personnel misconduct portrayed in pre-mission education?*' and '*How can this education be reshaped in order to be more effective in practice?*'.

To answer the first question, the pre-mission education is well thought out to be taught to people who might have no to little knowledge of SEA and misconducts. Soldiers are constructed by the pre-mission education to be the ones who hold power and knowledge in missions. Thus, they are not victims of conflict, they are not starving, they are not impoverished, and they are not 'stranded' in a conflict-torn society. Rather, soldiers are –in the Swedish case– highly educated, they have chosen to work in an international peacekeeping mission, they are paid, and after about 6 months they will leave the host nation. However, civilians and victims of SEA are the opposite where they do not hold power nor knowledge, rather, they are unfortunate enough to not be able to leave and must exist in a conflict without pay. When focusing on misconducts and SEA, all responsibility lies on the soldiers to avoid breaking a rule that the UN have established.

As the analysis presented, Swedish (peacekeeper) soldiers perceived the pre-mission education on SEA and misconducts to be fundamental information that they have already covered through Swedish cultural expectations and their 'värnplikt' (the basic military training in Sweden). The education is therefore seen as a repetition. However, some respondents have felt like the UN only have done the bare minimum for something that is important to provide soldiers knowledge on, or at least should be conducted in a manner fitting for the TCCs. Since the education UN provides does not regard the cultural differences of its TCCs, it is taught in a way that might assume that the TCCs soldiers are oblivious to the UNs Code of Conduct, Rules of Engagement and more.

There also exist a disconnect of what the data has shown and what the last sub-question wants an answer to. As previously presented, the Swedish soldiers perceive the pre-mission education to, in general, be acceptable even if they would like a more effective or in-depth structure. This means that this thesis cannot currently present any specific ideas on how to reshape or transform the pre-mission education into becoming more effective. However, based on the interviewees' reflections, certain changes could potentially help alleviate some frustrations from the soldiers' side. Examples of changes presented by the respondents were:

restructuring the first day of the UN-weeks to be tailored of defining gender in a military context and a comparison of this definition to Swedish political discourse and the concept 'genus', including examples of Swedish soldiers' misconducts, and scale down the education to be more forthright of what is acceptable or unacceptable behavior. Thus, there does exist certain possibilities for a more effective pre-mission education, but it concerns minor adjustments that could be easily fixed by the educators within the SAF rather than by the UN.

In conclusion, this project provided research in an interesting, timely, field where actions of others will affect people who are putting their trust in international people with power. Investigating the appearance and structure of pre-mission education in both the SAF and UN have presented knowledge on how institutions and militaries work with constructing identities and concepts through their presented language. The project dove into reflections and experiences of Swedish soldiers, with focus on how peacekeeping missions are actively constructing interpretations of security, peacekeeper soldiers, civilians, and victims of SEA. It is no doubt the pre-mission education will continue constructing norms and stereotypes, especially due to its multinational nature of culture.

8.1 FUTURE RESEARCH

While this research has shown some Swedish peacekeeper soldiers' reflections on their pre-mission education, there is a possibility of further research. For instance, using other case studies (exchanging the SAF with other nations' armed forces) would allow for other discourses surrounding TCCs to be explored, or including other Scandinavian/Nordic militaries in a timely comparative analysis would open the research to overarching culturally specific conceptions about gender or UN peacekeeping missions. On the other hand, something that kept coming back up in my research was to switch the situation around. By studying the experiences host nation populations have of UN missions and their peacekeeper soldiers, data could show a new perspective of the situation with sexual exploitation and abuse by those who are perhaps affected the most. Additional aspects of interest could be the perception of *who* is saved, *who* is the savior and *who* is the antagonist.

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APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEWS

Interview 1: Officer and gender advisor with five completed peacekeeping missions, normally trains future officers (cadets) and new soldiers ('värnpliktiga'). 'Fika' meeting, 25th of March 2023.

Interview 2: Liaison officer with one completed peacekeeping mission. Telephone call, 29th of March 2023.

Interview 3: Officer with five completed peacekeeping missions, have for example been a platoon commander in one mission and a company commander in another one. Telephone call, 31st of March 2023.

Interview 4: Current reserve officer and past professional officer with six completed peacekeeping missions. Telephone call, 31st of March 2023.

Interview 5: Platoon soldier with one completed peacekeeping mission. Zoom meeting, 3rd of April 2023.

Interview 6: Senior (reserve) officer, with one completed peacekeeping mission. Telephone call, 4th of April 2023.

Interview 7: Officer and Gender advisor, with two completed peacekeeping missions. Zoom meeting, 4th of April 2023.

Interview 8: Offer Management with three completed missions, who have for example worked with security intelligence and was a management commander ('stabschef') in one mission. Telephone call, 5th of April 2023.

Interview 9: Combat commander ('stridsledare') and Gender Focal Point, with one completed mission. Telephone call, 5th of April 2023.

APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW GUIDE

Introductory questions:

- Hade du kunnat berätta om din tid på Försvarsmakten?
    - Vad motiverade dig till att arbeta inom militären med fredsbevarande insatser?
    - Trivs du med din roll?
    - Om du skulle beskriva fältet av fredsbevarande insatser i tre ord, vilka hade du valt då? Varför?
- Hur skulle du beskriva arbetskulturen på Försvarsmakten?
    - Vad har varit dina upplevelser kring intern utbildning?
- Innan vi går vidare med större frågor, vad var din första tanke när du fick veta att intervjun skulle handla om utbildningen kring sexuella övergrepp och tjänstefel?

Main questions

Theme 1 – Education on gender-related issues.

- Vad för pre-missionsutbildning har du genomfört? *För vilka insatser?*
    - Be dem berätta mera: Vad hade du för förväntningar på utbildningen? Levde utbildningen upp till dem? **Hur var utbildningen upplagd?**
- I Sverige är ju tanken att myndigheter arbetar med jämställdhetsintegrering så jämställdhetsmål och arbetet mot diskriminering ska ske under det vardagliga arbetet. Tycker du att den utbildning som du fått är i linje med jämställdhetsintegrering? Hur/varför?
- Hur såg pre-missionsutbildningsmomenten ut kring diskriminering och kön*?*
    - Be dem berätta mera: Fanns det något som du hade velat att de skulle prata mer om? Kan du förtydliga X?
- Fanns det något i utbildningen som du saknade?

Theme 2 – Military power.

- Har ni fokuserat på tjänstefel under utbildningen? Vad var fokuset?
    - Be dem berätta mera: Fanns det något som förvånade dig?
- Har ni pratat om kulturella värderingar och den civila befolkningens förtroende till fredsbevarande personal?
    - På vilket sätt diskuterade ni behovet av civilas förtroende?
    - Vad skulle du säga är de två viktigaste punkterna för att skaffa och behålla civilas förtroende? Varför?
    - Vad skulle du säga är de största svårigheterna i att behålla civilas förtroende för er insats? På vilket sätt kan förtroendet missbrukas?
    - *Om jag säger ordet tystnadskultur, utifrån kontexten av din utbildning och ditt arbete, vad är det första du tänker på då? Varför?*
- Om du tänker på din utbildning, har ni någon gång pratat om kulturella skillnader eller rasism? Kompetenser?
    - Be dem berätta mera: Kan du förklara X? Kan du beskriva Y mera? Hur menar du med beskrivningen Z?
    - Om det tas upp går det att diskutera vithet/västerländskhet.

Theme 3 – Sexual exploitation and abuse conducted by peacekeepers.

- Har SEA/sexuella övergrepp och våld varit del av utbildningen? Hur då?
    - Vad för typ av diskussioner var det?
    - Vilka begrepp användes?
    - Hur upplevde du att presentationen var?
    - Anser du att ni hade tillräckligt med tid för ämnet? Vad är tillräckligt med tid?
- Vad för åsikter har du om utbildningen? Bra/dålig/definiera!
    - Vad betydde sexuella övergrepp och våld i fredsbevarande missioner för dig då? Vad betyder det för dig nu?
- Hade ni en diskussion om kvinnliga och manliga soldater?

Finishing questions:

- Om vi fokuserar på hela utbildningen, fanns det något som påverkade dig extra eller som du tyckte var irrelevant? Finns det något som du hade velat ha mer utbildning kring?

- Är det något som jag har missat fråga om som du skulle vilja berätta om eller som du hade velat prata mer om?

- Finns det något som du tycker är speciellt viktigt för mig att tänka på eller som jag borde fokusera på kring pre-missionsutbildningen?

- Hur har du upplevt intervjun?