

**Women and Leadership in Peacekeeping Operations:  
a Swedish Approach**

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## Abstract

Even after the introduction of the UNSCR 1325 and subsequent resolutions, women's leadership in the context of the WPS Agenda remains very low, despite the clear stance of the UN towards a support of an increased participation of women in peace and security processes. The aim of this thesis is to specifically address women's leadership in the Swedish Armed Forces (SAF) in the framework of peacekeeping operations, looking at the way the gender perspective is applied in the SAF through the introduction of the Handbok Gender, adopted in 2016. Since the focus of this research is on women, the theoretical perspective utilised as reference point is feminism and specifically a feminist constructivist approach with an institutional focus. Mixed research methods have been applied in order to collect the data, while the main centre of attention of this project has been a critical discourse analysis of the mentioned gender policy. Sweden has been chosen as case study because of the relevance of its singular feminist policies (Wallström's statement that Sweden is pursuing a feminist foreign policy is a clear example), nevertheless the conclusions appear to be quite contradictory because even in a country which officially identifies as feminist women's leadership in peacekeeping operations is very low.

**Keywords:** Women's leadership, Swedish Armed Forces, WPS Agenda, UNSCR 1325, Feminism, Peacekeeping operations

**Word Count: 16495**

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*“Peacekeeping is too important to be undertaken by soldiers, but soldiers are the only ones who can do it.” (Dag Hammarskjöld, Swede, Nobel Peace Prize winner and second secretary-general of the UN)<sup>1</sup>*

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 The puzzle

Despite the adoption of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325<sup>2</sup> in 2000, introducing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda (WPS), which “prioritizes the area of increasing women’s leadership and participation in Peace and Security and Humanitarian Response” (UN Women, 2014, p.1), women’s leadership is still very low in the context (Karim and Beardsley, 2017, p.2; Kronsell, 2012).

Numerous UN reports show that the participation of women in peace and security processes is directly connected to their operational effectiveness (UN Women 2012, 2014, 2015) and that the participation of women in peacekeeping is a critical component of the mission success (UN Women, 2016, p.2).

Moreover, different academic researches support the importance of a greater female presence in the WPS framework: indeed women are perceived as less threatening and more accessible to the local population than men (Penttinen, 2012), an increase in their presence is connected with an increase in operational effectiveness (mainly in information gathering, operational

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<sup>1</sup> As reported in Karim and Beardsley, 2017, p.41

<sup>2</sup> From now on: UNSCR 1325.

credibility and enhanced force protection; Dharmapuri, 2011; Bratosin D’Almeida et al., 2017; Egnell, et al., 2014).

## 1.2 Aim and Research Question

The UNSCR 1325 is the first normative document to explicitly recognize the importance of a gender perspective in peace operations and military affairs and it states clearly that the Security Council: “urges the Secretary-General to seek to expand the role and contribution of women in United Nations field-based operations [and] Expresses its willingness to incorporate a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations” (UNSCR 1325, 2000).

Even if “gender” does not equal women (Kinsella, 2017), this thesis will follow the configuration of the UNSCR 1325 and utilise the same “womanist”<sup>3</sup> focus that characterises the mentioned resolution: in a context which is specifically male-dominated, as the one of the armed forces, it is quite necessary to investigate a gender which is so clearly underrepresented and still little examined. Indeed, the aim of this paper is to investigate women’s leadership in the Swedish Armed Forces<sup>4</sup> in the context of peacekeeping operations as related to the gender perspective adopted by the SAF.

The gender perspective in the context of the SAF will be examined looking at the specific policy on gender mainstreaming adopted on the 1st of September 2016, which makes explicit reference to the UNSCR 1325: the Handbok Gender.

Taking into account these premises, the research question which will be analysed is:

*-How is women’s leadership in peacekeeping operations understood in the SAF’s gender policy?*

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<sup>3</sup> While there are different interpretations behind the theory called Womanism (see for example Alice Walker or Chikwenye Okonjo Ogunyemi) this thesis makes reference to the term to indicate simply an approach that focuses on women.

<sup>4</sup> From now on SAF.

### 1.3 Structure of this Thesis

The research question will be analysed in the Scandinavian context, considering that the Nordic countries have a strong involvement in peacekeeping and crises management and, simultaneously, in gender equality efforts; as a matter of fact, gender and equality issues are heavily present on the national political agenda and there have been different efforts to try to implement the policies in many societal sectors (Kronsell and Svedberg, 2012, p.8).

Indeed, the example of Sweden appears very interesting because the country has strong feminist policies which have been highlighted by the Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström, who in October 2014 stated that Sweden is pursuing a feminist foreign policy.

Thus, this specific country has been considered for its critical utility (Halperin and Heath, 2017) in order to observe how feminist theories seem to have failed, quite paradoxically, in a country where feminist policies appear to be quite strong and implemented but women's leadership in the SAF and in the context of peacekeeping operations is still very low.

After an examination of the existing literature on women's leadership, with a specific focus on the context of the military and peacekeeping operations, the theoretical framework based on feminism will be illustrated. As Kinsella (2017) and Tong (2016) highlight, feminism is intellectually and politically committed to women, moreover feminist theorizing deals with the social construction around sex difference and considers gender to be a main organizing principle of social relation, therefore, this paper will move within this area using a feminist constructivist approach (Kronsell, 2012; Kronsell and Svedberg, 2012).

The method section will rely on an exploratory design based on a single country case study, Sweden, and on a collection of data that will make use of a critical discourse analysis of the above-mentioned policy, the Handbok Gender, and comparing it with official statistics on the

number of Swedish military women involved in peacekeeping operations and their rank. Moreover, the study will make use of a background interview.

The analytical section will seek to furnish an answer to the research question. Eventually, the conclusion will summarise the main findings attempting at the same time to provide recommendations for future research.

Considering that the reference framework of this research is the UN system and particularly the WPS Agenda, whose core is constituted by peacekeeping operations, the study is relevant to the academic field of global politics. Indeed, as Karim and Beardsley report (2017, p.12) while traditional peacekeeping missions focused on observation, “multidimensional peacekeeping missions are characterized by complex military, police and civilian components that play a role not only in monitoring and enforcing peace agreements but also in peace- and state-building efforts that help reconstruct vital political and security institutions”; at the same time it addresses the challenges faced by the societal change which occurred in the armed forces through the inclusion of women (Klenke, 2011).

## 2. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

This section will look at the previous literature in the study of leadership in order to specifically address female leadership and then look at it in the context of the military and particularly of peacekeeping operations<sup>5</sup>. It will conclude by outlining the theoretical framework of this research.

### 2.1 Women's leadership

It is first of all important to observe that while there is plenty of research that addresses leadership (Klenke, 2011), there is a shortage of specific theoretical analysis of women as leaders, indeed the field is dominated by an empirical or observational point of view and particularly there is a lack of feminist scholarship on the topic (Vetter, 2010). Even if this can appear as a contradiction, this phenomenon seems to be connected to the very nature of feminism: indeed, public life has been dominated by men and as a result feminism has taken a deeply ambivalent stance toward power and leadership (Vetter, 2010).

In her deep analysis of the topic of leadership, and particularly women in leadership, Klenke (2011, p.4) observes that new theories have moved the emphasis from the focus on leaders to follower-centered perspectives. Particularly, these new approaches, no more leader-centric, are necessary to accommodate new organizational structures and specifically team-based organizations. She also underlines how “in contemporary organizations which are flatter and less hierarchical compared to traditional bureaucratic organizations, women leaders are often consensus builder, conciliators and collaborators; they are transformational leaders<sup>6</sup>” (Klenke, 2010, p.10).

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<sup>5</sup> From now on PKOs

<sup>6</sup> Klenke (2017, p.10) describes transformational leaders as leaders who are motivational and flexible in their leadership style, they transcend their self-interests for the good of the group or organization.

The main contribution in the understanding of women's leadership derives though from the new emphasis on the concept of context, since context may influence the effectiveness of different leadership approaches. It is, moreover, fundamental to consider that women's lives are particularly contextualized because of the complex combination of personal, professional, and community involvements and responsibilities they are part of (Klenke, 2011).

Indeed, Klenke (2011, p.16) observes that "a context is increasingly uncongenial for women leaders if it is male dominated, if the woman is a token or solo, if the task is masculine stereotypic, and if hierarchy and power are stressed over egalitarianism and influence". Based on these findings, Klenke (2011) reports that gender-incongruent leaders such as female military officers may struggle in a particular manner to obtain the necessary authority to fulfil the task-relevant goals.

While Klenke's study is very accurate and particularly significant for its recognition of the relevance of the specific context in understanding leadership, which she observes through several empirical examples analysed mainly by means of a comparative and historical research, it lacks any structured theoretical basis. Indeed, she recognizes the relevance of gender in the topic of women in leadership but her reflection on it is quite limited, since she describes it as "a social dynamic rather than a role" (Klenke, 2017, p.21) but then she identifies it as culture without any deeper consideration.

On the other hand, Vetter (2010) conducted a major effort in the construction of a theoretical foundation for the study of women's leadership, particularly trying to link feminist thought to the topic of leadership. In fact, she examines different feminist scholars, through an historical research on the political thought, trying to outline their conceptualization of leadership, and specifically female leadership, from their respective theories of power, authority and representation. Particularly interesting is her insight into the branch of care-focused feminism.

Vetter (2010) shows how scholars linked to this conception of feminism tried to apply what they defined as "feminine" virtues, such as compassion and caring, which are considered connected to the female experiences of childbearing and childrearing, to political life. For instance, Tronto (1993, as cited in Vetter, 2010) develops an ethics of care which is based on

feminism and women's morality. The academic argues that care is not just a private virtue associated with the family but can be applied to political life and the public sphere. This ethics of care is composed of different elements such as attentiveness to the needs of others; responsibility (as a set of obligations and duties created by various contexts); competence (in terms of delivering desirable ends and results) and responsiveness on the part of those who receive care.

Vetter (2010) considers that Young's theory of representation, based on the thought of Foucault, can be associated to the more recent concept of transformational leadership which requires a balance between serving as a role model and empowering followers according to values such as trust, confidence and creativity. The scholar underlines how transformational leadership is thence connected with feminist principles of inclusion, collaboration, diversity and empowerment.

While Vetter's effort must be praised as the first to try to develop feminist theories of leadership out of many and different school of thoughts, it still lacks any coherent and exhaustive understanding of the concept, which is not due to the author's insufficient analysis, but to the absence of it in the feminist paradigm. Nevertheless, despite the necessity for feminism to start approaching explicitly the topic of leadership, this school of thought has the strong potential to give a better comprehension of the dynamic relations between gender and leadership.

## 2.2 Women's leadership in the army

In her investigation of women as leaders in the military, conducted mainly through an historical research and a discourse analysis of policies in the US military, Stiehm (2010, p.106) points out how the first step in training for leadership involves "followership" so that the new recruits learn the value of teamwork. She also highlights how among the crucial requirements for leaders are interpersonal skills and counselling, leading by example, communication and hearing what subordinates believe and feel. At the same time, though, she acknowledges that

the military is a very hierarchical institution and that “nothing democratic about the military is democratic” (Stiehm, 2010, p.110).

Particularly important is her connection with the feminist thought when she recognizes that, although there is a substantial feminist body of literature on the ethics of care, it does not reference military leadership. As a matter of fact, the ideal leader, as described in the US Army is required to show empathy, which includes not only the capacity to identify with another’s feelings but “the desire to care for and take care of Soldiers and others” (Army Leadership, 2006, as cited in Stiehm, 2010, p.106). Indeed, the army’s emphasis on caring is directly connected to the military value of cohesion similarly to the way feminism emphasizes women’s interconnectedness (Stiehm, 2010).

Even if her study is very detailed and offers important causes for reflection on the possible relevance of feminist thought in the area of military leadership, the theory development of her research is almost non-existent, indeed, she has a very marked observational point of view; moreover, her focus is almost exclusively on the US military.

Another important study on the military as context for women’s leadership has been carried out by Klenke (2011 and 2017), who utilised mainly an historical and a comparative research. Underlying the importance of the particular context, she affirms that the military as an organization has primarily been designed for combat, thus, in order to reach its mission it has to rely on leaders and considering its specificity it has developed a set of unique leadership requirements which include influencing people by offering purpose, direction, motivation while acting in order to achieve the organization’s mission.

Particularly, Klenke (2017) stresses as well how the military is a hierarchical organization characterized by a unique culture which is now challenged by new circumstances and roles. Indeed, the military is experiencing relevant changes: military leaders have to face the new challenges brought by the combination of civilian, military and multinational operations such as peacekeeping and humanitarian efforts. The scholar argues that the defining term for the present military is transformation (Klenke, 2017, p.338).

Considering specifically women's leadership in the military she stresses how the central role will be played by the issue of combat which is now opening to women, regardless of many criticisms, and where the predominant leadership style is the transformational one, which Klenke (2017) shows to be more likely to be found in female than in male leaders. Considering that warfare is becoming more technology driven, even ground combat is less dependent on physical strength and more demanding of human abilities such as consensus-based decision making, interpersonal skills in negotiations and leading organic structures, features that women bring to military leadership according to Klenke (2011).

Klenke's (2011; 2017) investigation of women's leadership is really accurate and supported by many data, at the same time though there is, too, a strong focus on the US army, which is utilised as the taken-for-granted paradigm in the reflection on female leadership and there is a quite strong lack of theoretical support in an analysis which is mainly empirical.

### 2.3 Women's leadership in PKOs

It is important to consider how so far there is a lack of studies which address specifically women's leadership in the context of PKOs. Indeed, as seen in this chapter, not only there is a shortage of specific theoretical analysis of women as leaders, but also when it is possible to find specific research on the topic, supported by a theoretical reflection, this can address the world of the military but forgets to consider specifically the field of international operations and, specifically, PKOs. Despite their increasing relevance in warfare, as observed above.

Particularly important, though, is the research conducted by Kronsell (2012) on militarism and peacekeeping through the case studies of Sweden and the EU and the collection edited by Kronsell and Svedberg (2012) on violence, military and peacekeeping practices.

Kronsell studies the context of peacekeeping as core of the new post-national defense addressing exactly the case of the SAF. Indeed, she underlines how the Swedish military not only results to be gender aware (because of the systematic approach to gender and the

UNSCR1325) but is also a clear example of a post-national cosmopolitan military. In fact, she makes reference to the normative political theory of cosmopolitanism<sup>7</sup>, underlying that, while militarism<sup>8</sup> values hierarchy and obedience to authority, the cosmopolitan military shows respect to democratic values and the rule of law, characteristics which she observes in the SAF.

Studying specifically the presence of women in peacekeeping, Kronsell (2012), Eduards (2012) and Penttinen (2012) underline how the most important challenge for the post-national defense is to increase the number of women among the military staff and peacekeepers, since women's presence in the military institutions remains very low and the few women present have difficulty in identifying themselves with and becoming a part of the organization. As a matter of fact and because of their thin presence, the low number of female peacekeepers is pushed into specific tasks related to them being women rather than to their capacity as soldiers or peacekeepers.

Kronsell (2012) then highlights the challenges brought by the specific context of PKOs where clashes between different value systems are more likely to occur, indeed the views of the different nationalities within multinational peacekeeping forces can be very different, and one of the priority task for a cosmopolitan military is to understand how to cooperate with military personnel and civilians with divergent values and views. Considering specifically women in peacekeeping Kronsell (2012), Eduards (2012) and Penttinen (2012) recognize how they are considered to bring legitimacy to the peacekeeping mission, but also how the qualities and skills associated with the feminine can risk degenerating into essentialism<sup>9</sup> (see also the study of Valenius, 2007) and gender traditionalism. At the same time, Kronsell (2012) underlines how values such as caring and empathy, stereotypically associated with women and seen as

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<sup>7</sup> Kronsell (2012, p.70) describes this theory for its stress on the common values and bonds among humans regardless of borders and territories, with a central respect for human rights. Particularly, cosmopolitanism is post-national because of its respect for humans across national boundaries and the emphasis put on their common destiny.

<sup>8</sup> Kronsell (2012, p.29): belief that hierarchy, obedience and the use of force are particularly effective in a dangerous world.

<sup>9</sup> Critical feminist authors (like Young) developed a deep critic of the liberal feminist understanding of gender, introducing the issue of 'gender essentialism' (according to which there are certain universal and innate features of gender) and highlighting how women's experiences are not the same all over the world but are strongly influenced by the background they are part of.

barrier to women's participation in the military are considered to make them effective as peacekeepers.

In order to elaborate their analysis, the scholars use much empirical material, mainly official documents from relevant institutions (examined through critical discourse analysis) and many interviews, on-site observations and field studies to sustain the findings.

While their research lacks a focus on women's leadership, since the focus of their study is the construction of gender and sex in the cosmopolitan military, it is very stimulating for the theoretical choices made. They commit their research to a feminist constructivist approach, with an institutional perspective which seems to be particularly relevant in the study of the military institutions, indeed Kronsell (2012, p.9) underlines how institutions matter: organizational rules, norms and features influence actors and become an integral part of the construction of subjectivity, interest and meaning in political life.

Another important study, which analyses the specific context of PKOs, has been carried out by Karim and Beardsley (2017). Exploring the topic of women, peace and security in post-conflict states, through the case study of UNMIL in Liberia, the two scholars introduced the concept of equal opportunity peacekeeping<sup>10</sup>. Underlying how the UNSCR 1325 requires PKOs to integrate a gendered perspective and include women in decision making roles in all aspects of the peacekeeping and peace-building processes, they reveal how there is still a poor understanding of the potential of both these statements. Karim and Beardsley (2017, p.3) affirm how gender power imbalances between the sexes and among genders place restrictions on the participation of women in peacekeeping missions, both in terms of the proportions of women and how women are employed relatively to men.

They analyse how institutions, among which they consider PKOs, and define as “an established set of rules, practices and/or customs which provide the primary structures for social order” (Karim and Beardsley, 2017, p.28), especially in the security sector, are gendered, and this characterize them not equally but through imbalances, indeed, while certain masculinities have

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<sup>10</sup> by which they refer to “equal opportunities for the more marginalized identities and characteristics associated with nondominant forms of masculinity to be valued” (Karim and Beardsley, 2017, p.4).

power, femininities and other masculinities do not. Particularly, the two authors underline how PKOs are mainly composed of military and police personnel, namely members of specific institutions which are accorded the authority to use force, so the institutional gender hierarchies they are part of transfer also to the peacekeeping missions. Even if at the same time they recognize how PKOs present more multidimensional roles which include peace- and state-building and are characterised by a lesser “warrior purpose”.

Although also here the focus is mainly on gender through a feminist perspective, rather than on the topic of leadership, the two scholars direct their analysis as well towards a feminist institutionalism (Karim and Beardsley, 2017, p.56). Indeed, they see institutional change as possible, driven by gendered processes from within and by actors with the possibility of actual agency in the transformation.

At the same time though their approach is empirically positivist, indeed they identify and test for the expected manifestations of gender power imbalances in and through PKOs using a combination of evidence from quantitative measures, qualitative interviews, focus groups and surveys. While the choice for a positivist perspective is interesting because it differs from the other critical approaches to studying the role of gender in international relations, it can lack a deeper theoretical reflection in the analysis of the data.

## 2.4 Summary

Taking into account the previous literature review and the aim of this thesis, it is possible to observe how the core theme of leadership, in its gendered configuration as women’s leadership, needs to be studied in relation to the other core concept of gender and the specific power relations that it constructs in a specific context, observed in this case looking at the SAF institution. Thus, considering that feminism presents a specific gender sensitivity, not necessarily present in other constructivist or critical theoretical approaches (Kronsell and Svedberg, 2012, p.1-2), this paper will be based on a feminist constructivist approach, considering that constructivism focuses on the influence of culture, abstract ideas and historical

potentials in the understanding of global politics and in international relations. Being aware of this theoretical choice, it is necessary to clarify the ontological and epistemological stance of this research: it employs an ontology based on historical realism<sup>11</sup> and a subjectivist epistemology since it is addressed at understanding women's leadership in the SAF context from a feminist perspective which is mainly based on a critical paradigm<sup>12</sup>, defined by Scotland (2012, p.13) as aimed at addressing “issues of social justice and marginalism” while the “emancipatory function of knowledge is embraced” (Scotland, 2012, p.13). Indeed, feminism not only is “fundamentally rooted in an analysis of the global subordination of women” but it is “dedicated to its elimination” (Kinsella, 2017, p.191).

In the broad field of feminism this thesis will rely on critical feminism, an approach developed through the criticism on the neutral standpoint of liberal feminism, which presents a lack of awareness of the risks of gender essentialism and a simplistic vision of power as a positive social good which can be successfully redistributed without a fundamental societal change in the social dynamics and hierarchies (Kinsella, 2017). Indeed, considering that the UNSCR 1325 is an important example of how feminist activism has influenced the global security agenda, Kronsell (2012, p.146) affirms how feminists can no longer position themselves above or outside questions of militarism and defense, since women “can no longer represent peaceful and beautiful souls but must take responsibility for global relations in the field of war economy, militarism, and defense”.

Considering the context of this research, particularly important will be the institutional focus: as Kronsell and Svedberg (2012, p.3-4) report, constructivist perspectives see institutions and norms as an integral part in the construction of identities and meanings, and not only norms are embedded in institutions and have implications for practice but also are constructed and enacted when individuals engage with them (for example while doing peacekeeping or military exercises). This specific focus will help understanding the role played by the SAF's institution,

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<sup>11</sup> According to Scotland (2012, p.13): “Historical realism is the view that reality has been shaped by social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, and gender values.”

<sup>12</sup> Scotland (2012, p.9; p.13): “Different theoretical perspectives of critical inquiry include: Marxism, queer theory and feminism”. But see also Halperin and Heath (2017, p.27): “There also emerged a set of approaches associated with ‘interpretivism’, including constructivism, feminism, post-modernism”.

taking into account that security, military and defense institutions have carried out their activities based on a norm of heterosexual masculinity (Kronsell, 2012).

## 3.Method

This section aims to explain the choice and use of a specific methodology, methods and sources for conducting the research.

### 3.1 Research Design

A research design is defined by Yin (2014, p.28) as the logical sequence that connects the empirical data to the initial research questions and to the conclusions of the study and, particularly, this thesis utilises an exploratory case design since there is no previous research addressing the Handbok Gender. At the same time though, there is enough research related to military women in the Swedish armed forces and even PKOs in which Sweden has been involved to make some preliminary statements. Yin (2014, p.39) warns that some theory development as part of the design phase is highly desirable prior to the conduct of any data collection even in an exploratory case study. The scholar highlights how the articulation of a theory will help to strengthen a research design.

Indeed, a single-case design, like the one this thesis relies on, can be chosen for five different rationales according to Yin (2014): the case study of Sweden has been chosen for its critical utility in exploring the apparent deviation of this single case from what expectations based on feminism would suggest.

Particularly, a holistic design (Yin, 2014) has been favoured in defining the unit of analysis since the object of the study is the SAF gender policy as represented by the Handbok Gender, examined in its entirety, in order to understand which interpretation of women's leadership, in the context of analysis, it offers.

## 3.2 Data-gathering strategies

Considering the complementarity of case study and statistical research, Yin (2014, p.22), indeed, states that “case study research can readily complement the use of other quantitative and statistical methods”, this case study makes use of statistics and critical discourse analysis in its analysis and an informal interview for its background.

### 3.2.1 Critical discourse analysis

Based on these considerations, the main focus of this project is a critical discourse analysis of the textual information contained in the whole Handbok Gender which is made up of three different parts: Handbok Gender 1:1-Teoretiska grunder och ledarskap; Handbok Gender 1:2 - Genomförande and Handbok Gender 1:3 - Typscenarier.

Considering the literature review and theory section, as well as the aim of this work, a discourse analysis fits properly the design of this research since it is an interpretive and constructivist form of analysis (Halperin and Heath, 2017, p. 336). Indeed, it is based on the assumption that people act on the basis of specific beliefs or ideologies, which are the structure itself of the political world and which are socially and discursively constructed.

Evolving from post-structuralism, and mainly from the thought of Foucault, critical discourse analysis (CDA) is aimed as well at analysing the discourse but is characterized by taking into account also the relevance of pre-existing social structures and power relationships. Particularly, discourse is considered as the process of social interaction of which text is just a part (Fairclough, 1989, as in Titscher et al., 2000), it exposes connections between language, power and ideology (Fairclough, as in Halperin and Heath, 2017, p.338) as related to a specific context<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>13</sup> Particularly a discursive event is shaped by situations, institutions and social structures, but it also shapes them (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997, as in Titscher et al, 2000, p.147).

Indeed, the meaning of a discourse can be understood only in relation to the broader context it is part of and interpretations are dynamic, namely open to new contexts and information; at the same time discourses are not only connected to a particular culture, ideology or history, but also intertextually to other discourses (Wodak, 1996, as cited in Titscher et al., 2000).

This stress on the importance of the context, in conducting a textual analysis, recalls clearly the study of Klenke (2011; 2017) on women's leadership, which needs to be contextualised in order to be understood, at the same time a wide range of feminist scholarship (see particularly Kronsell, 2012 and Kronsell and Svedberg, 2012, but see also Sheperd's, 2008, study of the constitutive effects of language in the formation of gender in the UNSCR 1325) makes use of CDA, specifically because of its dedication to investigate the social structures the discourse is placed in and the power relationships inherent to it, which is quite relevant for the feminist research. Indeed, Titscher et al. (2000, p.147) underline how CDA sees itself as "politically involved research with an emancipatory requirement: it seeks to have an effect on social practice and social relationships".

Specifically, the hypothesis which is tested through the CDA is the association between the discourse on women's leadership in the SAF's gender policy and the context of PKOs, as indicated by the research question.

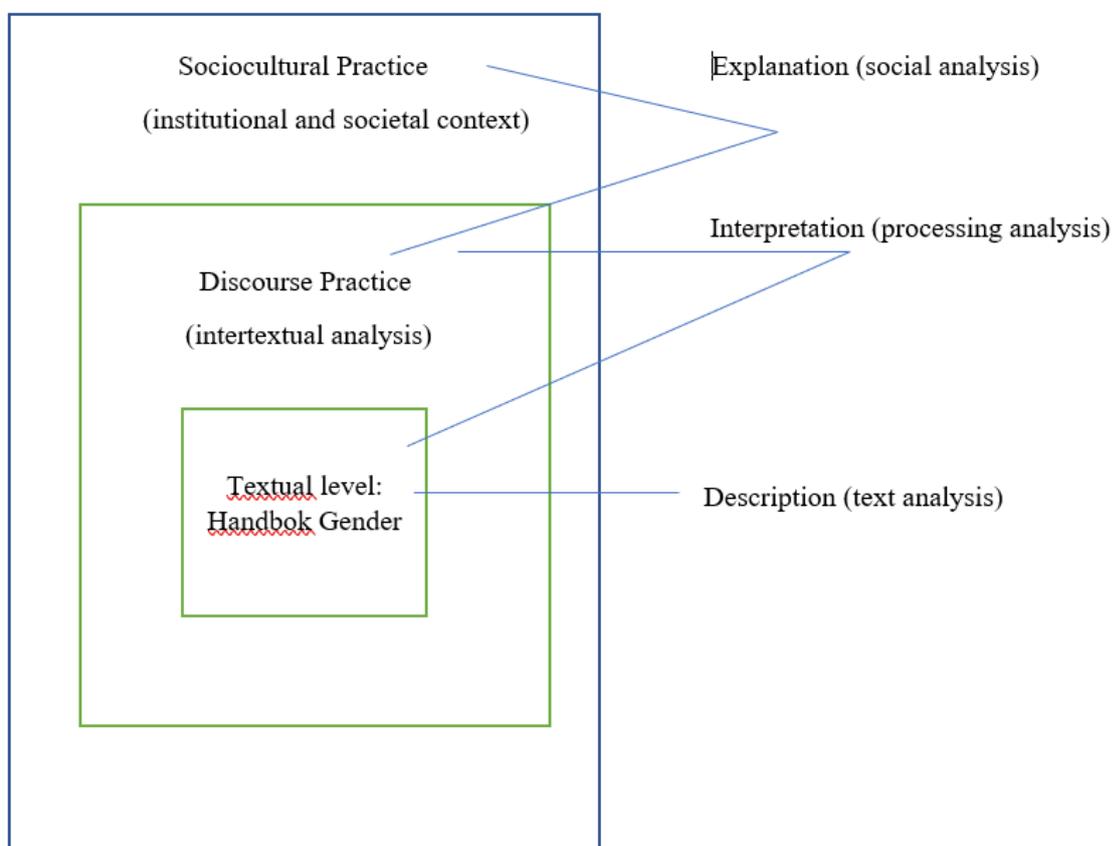
Considering CDA in the form developed by Fairclough, as outlined by Titscher et al. (2000, p.148-154) and the time frame that goes from the legislation that allowed women into the military profession (SOU 1977:26) to the Swedish general elections on the 9<sup>th</sup> of September 2018, the discursive event has been examined in these terms: for what regards the textual level, the content and the form of the Hanbok Gender have been considered. The level of discursive practice, which is the link between text and social practice, has been constructed through an intertextual analysis, in order to observe how discourses blend together (Titscher et al., 2000, p.150). Different statements from the government and other subjects, as well as policies, relevant in the broader context of analysis, have been considered.

Finally, the sociocultural practice has been constructed looking specifically at the social and institutional context of this research, indeed, considering the institutional focus of this study, the analysis stressed its attention to the norms embedded in the SAF institution.

The analysis has then been carried out according to the three components of description, interpretation and explanation looking at the way the core criteria emerged from the literature review, specifically the construction of the core themes of gender, power relations and leadership, as mutually intertwined, in the context specified above, were depicted in the text.

The whole process is illustrated in the table below.

Table 1: Text and context in CDA about women’s leadership in PKOs in the SAF’s gender policy



### 3.2.2 Statistics

The findings of the CDA have then been compared with descriptive statistics (Halperin and Heath, 2017, p.364) concerning the number of PKOs and the female personnel the SAF employed in PKOs in order to observe through quantitative evidence which is the status of women's leadership in the SAF's PKOs.

Supporting the qualitative analysis conducted through the CDA by the use of quantitative data can help better understanding the findings of this research and fill a gap in the feminist scholarship which is almost exclusively oriented towards critical approaches, as observed in the literature review (Karim and Beardsley, 2017, p.5).

In collecting statistical data, the notion of “positional leaders”, that is people who occupy positions of power that are recognized and rewarded in observable ways (AAUW, 2016), has been utilised. Indeed, the term leadership has been defined through the analysis of how many leader roles are occupied by women in PKOs. In the context of the SAF, have been considered as leadership positions the ranks included in the list of Professional Officers (Yrkesofficerare), namely this list of ranks (as harmonised with the NATO codes in the SAF from 2008 and effective from 2009) in the category OF (Officer Ranks): OF-9; OF-8; OF-7; OF-6; OF-5; OF-4; OF-3; OF-2; OF-1 and OF-1, but also the Other Ranks (Specialistofficerare): OR-9; OR-8; OR-7; OR-6.

Finally, considering that after 1995 Sweden has shifted its attention to non-UN Operations, increasing in particular its role in the context of the NATO (Heldt, 2012) PKOs have been considered as the sum of UN-led operations and Non-UN led operations (more information about the concept of PKOs in the SAF annual reports are contained in the appendix since the concept has been defined differently by the Swedish military institution throughout the time range considered).

Specifically, the timeframe examined in the collection of statistical data spans from the introduction of the UNSCR 1325 to the adoption of the Handbok Gender in 2016 and from this last time period to April 2018 that is the last moment for which data have been provided.

The statistics have been obtained thanks to the official annual reports published by the SAF and available on the SAF website<sup>14</sup> and information given by authorised representatives in the SAF. These descriptive statistics will be displayed through tables in the analysis.

### 3.2.3 Interview

In order to understand the specific context in which this research is grounded, an informal interview has been collected and recorded through both the use of audio and notes. This interview constitutes initial background research which leads the rest of the analysis.

This unstructured interviewing (Bernard, 2006, p.227 and 463-593) made use of a conversation-situation interview, in an individual face-to-face context, and was held with a subject who has been selected because retained properly representative: Captain Ann-Charlotte Lyman, Second Secretary and Assistant Military Advisor specialised in Protection of Civilians, Gender and Personnel Issues.

For what regards this informal interview, there are different bias to take into account, like the dependence from what people tell or the 'interview effect' (Halperin and Heath, 2017, p.290). At the same time, the bias connected to this interview do not need to be overestimated, since this interview supports the understanding of the context.

The ethical concerns have been taken into account in the process that brings to the collection of the required data, in particular in the acquisition of information on women's leadership regarding third parties.

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<sup>14</sup> Available at: <https://www.forsvarsmakten.se/sv/om-myndigheten/dokument/arsredovisningar/> [Accessed 27 July 2018]

### 3.3 Limitations of this study

A clear and common accepted definition of leadership is very difficult to acquire (Northouse, 2015). The concept of gender as well is quite vague and blurred since its understanding is dependent on the chosen theoretical frame of reference and the specific context, as reported also by the SAF<sup>15</sup>.

Considering that this specific case study has been chosen because it appears to be a deviant case, which does not fit expectations from existing theory, concerns about external validity seem to be quite irrelevant. Nevertheless, even this type of case study is prone to analytic generalization (Yin, 2014) since, trying to understand why the case seems to diverge from the theory, it develops existing theory (Halperin and Heath, 2017).

Looking at the main analysis, a particular problem to deal with has been the translation of the considered policy into English. Indeed, the Handbok Gender has not been translated into English so far because of difficulties related to the translation of key concepts, the concept of gender itself will probably be substituted by the concept of ‘gender equality’ and, consequently, the Handbok Gender renamed Gender Equality in Military Operations (Weström, 2018<sup>16</sup>).

The same issue has been faced in elaborating the statistics employed to sustain the analysis, indeed the reports have been published by the SAF only in Swedish. Moreover, the data are available only from 2001, while the UN resolution 1325 has been adopted on the 30<sup>th</sup> of October 2000 and the definition itself of peacekeeping operation has changed throughout the time in the documents considered.

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<sup>15</sup> “We generally separate “Gender in Military Operations” where gender perspective is a military capacity, from gender concerning equality, equal opportunity etc.” (Gustafsson, Public Affairs Officer at the Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations-NCGM, May 2018). Information given to the author through electronic correspondence.

<sup>16</sup> “The Handbook on Gender Equality in Military Operations should be ready at latest in October 2018” (Weström, Gender Advisor to Chief of Joint Operations, May 2017). All this information has been given to the author through electronic correspondence.

Finally, the main criticism of CDA is that it is an ideological interpretation, rather than an analysis, driven by prior judgments (as Schegloff, mentioned in Titscher et al., 2000, p.163), therefore it is necessary that CDA is intelligible in its interpretations and explanations (plausibility) and has explanatory coherence (credibility), lastly it needs to be practically relevant (fruitfulness) (Halperin and Heath, 2017, p. 344; Titscher et al., 2000, p.164).

## 4. Background

Looking expressly at the SAF institution, in an informal interview conducted by the author of this thesis on the 24<sup>th</sup> of May 2018 at the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations, with Captain Ann-Charlotte Lyman, Military Advisor specialised in Gender Issues, what emerged was mainly the lack of preparation in the SAF about the specific exigences and necessities of women: even if women were allowed to enter the armed forces already in 1981, specific underwear for female soldiers was introduced only in 2012.

Similarly, Captain Lyman, who in 2012-2013 had her first experience as a gender advisor on the field, reported that during her first mission in Kosovo (2002-2003) she never heard the word gender or any reference to the UNSCR 1325. Although the SAF are improving their approach to their female components, the obstacles are still many for what regards increasing women's leadership. The major reason for a lack of it, it is the fact that women do not remain enough time in the armed forces, mainly because they do not receive enough support and lack female role models and network.

Captain Lyman also underlined how Female Engagement Teams (FEM), like the ones experimented in Afghanistan, are less effective than mixed teams and can easily become a burden. The role of the gender advisor is to implement the gender perspective in order to increase the operational effectiveness and security, so recognising that, for instance, the different perspectives of men and women on a mission can increase the capability to collect information. In her opinion, thus, it would be better to talk of engagement teams, avoiding to put the word 'female' aside as a different category that will not be considered consequently as part of the whole.

## 5. Analysis

### 5.1 Critical Discourse Analysis

Focusing on what emerged from the background interview, this part will look specifically inside the SAF institution. Indeed, as considered also in the theoretical framework, reflecting on the complex relation between feminism and militarism, Valenius (2007, p.520) points out: “Is the military ‘too important’ in society and should it, therefore, be abolished, as feminist anti-militarists argue, or is it ‘too important to be ignored’?” (see also Kronsell, 2012).

The Handbok Gender<sup>17</sup> is composed of three different parts: Handbok Gender 1:1- Teoretiska grunder och ledarskap; Handbok Gender 1:2 – Genomförande and Handbok Gender 1.3 – Typscenarier. The first part concerns the theoretical foundations of the manual and the notion of leadership and particularly describes the meaning of the UNSCR 1325 in terms of military purposes (HG, 1:1, 2016, p.14). The second part deals with the implementation of the gender perspective into daily activities, hence it is meant to provide practical advice and support, and the third part contains specific pragmatic scenarios to use mainly in training and exercises.

As emerged from the previous literature review, to understand women’s leadership in the SAF, it is necessary to observe it in relation to the construction of gender, which is the main focus of the HG, and the power relations that develop in a specific institution.

Analysing how **gender** is constructed in the manual, it is important to consider that while sex is defined simply as the biological identification as a male or female human being (HG, 1:1, 2016, p.17), the definition of gender adopted is:

“socially and culturally constructed conceptions about what it means to be male or female: thus, a notion which is retained dependent on contingent social, cultural and historical contexts and considered to determine the position and value of men and women in society” (HG,1:1, 2016, p.15).

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<sup>17</sup> From now on HG.

This definition shows a clear constructivist frame of reference and brings attention to the necessity of considering the understanding of gender as related to a specific context, at the same time though there is no consideration of the power dynamics and gender hierarchies that feminism is committed to analyse (Kronsell and Svedberg, 2012). Particularly, the critical feminist approach interprets gender as a social understanding of biological differences influenced by the power embodied in the practices, identities and institutions which determine it (Kinsella, 2017). Indeed, Kronsell and Svedberg underline how “the making of gender is always part and parcel of what has been called patriarchy, the gender-power system or gender order” (2012, p.1).

The term gender analysis is described as the

observation of the reciprocal impact, in a military context (thus, not only on one’s own military organization, but also on the allies’ and the enemy’s one) of the relationships between men and women and their position in society (HG, 1:1, 2016, p.15)

The idea of integrating a gender perspective is finally identified with the requirement of

“basing the SAF organization and activities on an analysis of the respective condition of men, women, girls and boys and their access to power, influence and resources as to become aware of how these categories are affected and potentially damaged by different decisions” (HG, 1:1, 2016, p.16).

In fact, the term gender in the HG includes men, women, boys and girls and similarly every reference to the civilian population includes as well these four groups (HG, 1:1, 2016, p. 10).

This last definition is fundamental in the whole structure of the HG: indeed, the purpose of the HG is the integration of a gender perspective in the different SAF activities (HG, 1:1, 2016, p.5) in the frame of reference constituted by the UNSCR 1325 (whose main purpose is, again, the integration of a gender perspective into PKOs<sup>18</sup>).

Particularly important is also the explicit reference to the term power (“makt”, HG, 1:1, 2016, p.16), which, as observed above, is at the basis of the feminist analysis, at the same time, though, there is no theoretical consideration about the implications of concepts as power or

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<sup>18</sup> See also HG (1:1, 2016, p.9): the aim of the HG is to strengthen the implementation of a gender perspective and UNSCR 1325.

influence or the position in society of men and women and an instrumental perspective is quite evident: the HG (1:1,2016, p.7) affirms that a continuous gender analysis makes the Armed Forces' operations deliver a better result. Moreover, it (HG,1:1, 2016, p. 11) stresses that the gender perspective is an analytical tool to visualize gender differences in relation to the SAF's operations.

The other main themes are those of *equality* ("jämställdhet", HG, 1:1, 2016, p.16), defined as the idea that women and men should have the same opportunities, rights and obligations in life and all areas of societies, and "the practical inclusion of an equality perspective" ("jämställdhetsintegrering", HG, 1:1, 2016, p.16), into all political contexts, areas of activity and all stages of decision-making, planning and execution of activities. This concept is defined by the English term *gender mainstreaming* ("På engelska används begreppet gender mainstreaming", HG, 1:1, 2016, p.16).

Particularly, Karim and Beardsley (2017, p.24) report that the UN defined the concept of gender mainstreaming as follows:

"Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in any area and at all levels. [...] The ultimate goal of mainstreaming is to achieve gender equality".

The HG's and the UN's understanding of gender mainstreaming are quite consistent.

The concept of equality in the HG is however not only represented by the term *jämställdhet* but also by the term *jämlikhet*, which can also be translated as parity and refers to the idea of fair relationships among all individuals and groups in society, assuming that all people have equal value regardless of sex, skin colour, national or ethnic origin, linguistic or religious affiliation, disability, sexual orientation, age or other circumstances pertaining to the individual as a person (HG, 1:1, 2016, p.17).

In this perspective, the HG (1:1, 2016, p.12) declares that equality between men and women is central to the gender perspective. Moreover, HG (1:1, 2016, p.11) declares that equality within the SAF is a question of credibility which can help increasing both men's and women's interest in a military career. This proposition again reflects the strong instrumental viewpoint of a

manual which is designed to have purpose mainly at the tactical level, in education, management, planning, implementation and follow-up of military operations.

The understanding of gender and equality emerging from the HG is essentially a liberal construction and thus in line with the core perspective of the whole UN system. Specifically, for what regards the HG, its whole theoretical structure is based on liberal values, whose nucleus is the idea that all citizens are juridically equal and possess certain basic rights (Dunne, 2017, p.117). On the international scene, liberalism, unlike realism, which regards the ‘international’ as an anarchic realm, seeks to project values of order, liberty, justice and toleration into international relations and it is at the basis of the UN Framework (Dunne, 2017, p. 118), frame of reference of the HG itself.

It is necessary, at this point, to consider how this configuration, which leads the manual, needs to be read in connection with the particular **context** of Sweden. As clearly stated in the official Swedish government webpage:

“Sweden has the first feminist government in the world. This means that gender equality is central to the Government’s priorities – in decision-making and resource allocation. A feminist government ensures that a gender equality perspective is brought into policy-making on a broad front, both nationally and internationally”.<sup>19</sup>

“Equality between women and men is a fundamental aim of Swedish foreign policy. Ensuring that women and girls can enjoy their fundamental human rights is both an obligation within the framework of our international commitments, and a prerequisite for reaching Sweden’s broader foreign policy goals on peace, and security and sustainable development”.<sup>20</sup>

Indeed, in 2014 the back then and current Minister for Foreign Affairs, Margot Wallström<sup>21</sup>, officially declared that Sweden is pursuing a feminist foreign policy and in the last Statement

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<sup>19</sup> Available at: <https://www.government.se/government-policy/a-feminist-government/> [Accessed 27 July 2018]

<sup>20</sup> Available at: < <https://www.government.se/government-policy/feminist-foreign-policy/> > [Accessed 27 July 2018]

<sup>21</sup> Who, furthermore, previously served as the first UN Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict from 2010 to 2012

of Government Policy on Foreign Affairs, pronounced on the 14<sup>th</sup> of February 2018, Wallström stated that:

“we are pursuing a feminist foreign policy – with full force, around the world” (Wallström, 2018, p.5).

Particularly important is the Handbook on Sweden’s feminist foreign policy (2018, p.25), published on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of August 2018 by the Government, as a resource in working with gender equality and to describe the first four years of a feminist foreign policy: while, similarly to the approach of HG, it states that:

“The mandate and work of international peace initiatives must take into consideration the needs and perspectives of men, women, boys and girls in order to succeed”,

it focuses only on women, following the womanist focus of the WPS Agenda.

As we can observe, the Government’s official conception of feminism is in line as well with the UN system and the WPS Agenda liberal interpretation of feminism which has been criticized for its ‘add women-and-stir’<sup>22</sup> approach. Particularly relevant are the considerations of Karim and Beardsley (2017, p.55) about the UN’s model of pushing for women’s empowerment: they clearly affirm how, in spite of the rhetoric about transformational change, the approach utilised is a liberal feminist approach which ignores the diversity of women (Tong, 2016, points out that the main criticism to liberal feminism is that it has been constructed on the view of white, middle-class, heterosexual women rather than addressing other women’s experiences) and the structural foundations of subordination (such as capitalism, class systems, international power differentials).

Similarly, despite the highly publicized engagement in a feminist foreign policy, there is a lack of deeper theoretical analysis, as what emerges is the idea that the strong underrepresentation of women in political participation and lack of influence in all areas of society can be fixed by “Increasing the proportion of women in the world’s parliaments and in leading positions” since

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<sup>22</sup> See Dharmapuri (2011, p. 65) who introduced the concept, which is considered at the basis of the UN liberal understanding of the WPS Agenda, and warned that “the tendency to “just add women and stir” combined with limited cultural sensitivity and a lack of knowledge about the roles women play in conflicts are certain to cause more harm than good”.

“Changes occur where power exists” (Handbook Sweden’s feminist foreign policy, 2018, p.26).

Moreover, the peculiarity of the Swedish government self-identification as a feminist government has to be connected to the specific Swedish reality, as Kinsella (2017, p.201) reports: “Sweden’s relatively weak stature internationally allows it to proclaim a feminist foreign policy without any real risks, and it has yet to engage in any complicated issues of multilateral foreign policy (such as the conflict in Ukraine) under a feminist foreign policy”.

The complex and, at least from some views also contradictory, relationship between military defence and the concept of a feminist foreign policy has been underlined by the Swedish scholar Bjereld, professor of Political Science at the University of Gothenburg, who stressed the rhetorical problem of investment in military defence and the foreign policy’s mission of the current government. He argued:

“One option is to insist that military defense and feminism represent two branches of the same tree: that citizens’ security is guaranteed by having a strong military and that the feminist agenda is guaranteed through diplomacy, aid, and other arsenals beyond defense,(...) Is that credible or not? Well, credibility is like beauty — it’s in the eye of the beholder” (Bjereld, 2014 as cited in Rothschild, 2014)

Indeed, it is necessary to be aware that, as clearly stated:

“the only competence of the SAF is to be able to carry out an armed conflict” (HG, 1:1, 2016, p.11)<sup>23</sup>.

Considering thus the specificity of the military and the **power relations** that develop within, it is important to recognize the main norms characterising the military institutions: *the emergence of a gendered protection norm, the pursuit of militarized cohesion and the idealization of a warrior identity*. These norms create the respective masculinities of the warrior masculinity, the protective masculinity and the militarized masculinity. On the other hand, they represent women according to the specific models of the peacemakers (which brings to the exclusion and discrimination of women, specifically in the range of activities they can participate, mainly linked to their stereotypical role of nurturers and caregivers), of victims to be protected (which

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<sup>23</sup> see also Klenke, 2011

brings to the relegation of women to safe spaces and this strongly interferes with their possibility of occupying leadership roles) and of objects to be dominated (which brings to violence against women) (Karim and Beardsley, 2017, p.30 ss.).

Nevertheless, it is necessary to consider the specificity of the SAF institution, which Kronsell (2012) identified as a post-national military: in December 2004, Former Defence Minister Leni Björklund affirmed that the vision for the new defence was to “reflect contemporary society” and thus the military organization “must reflect our multicultural society that has as its objective the equality between men and women” (Björklund, as in Kronsell, 2012, p.63). This vision was sanctioned in the governmental bill of the same year (Proposition 2004/05:5, para. 7.5.14<sup>24</sup>) and became later part of what is called ‘*new values for the defense*’.

As Kronsell explains (2012, p.64-67), the first point to be identified was the “*respect for the rule of law argument*”, namely that the legislation and regulation relevant for a democratic society should be applied also within the military organization (especially societal laws against harassment and discrimination and protecting human rights). Stiehm (2010), as well, stresses that even if, the military is undeniably an organization relying on command and discipline, civilians should be aware that it is at the service of an elected, democratic, civilian government. Indeed, the SAF subordination to the government’s laws is marked throughout the whole manual, even when HG marks that “the only competence of the SAF is to be able to carry out an armed conflict” (HG, 1:1, 2016, p.11), it underlines: “in accordance with Sweden’s legislation”.

It is, therefore, particularly important to consider which is the *legal framework* of the SAF institution: the HG clearly states that the SAF’s effort in the integration of a gender perspective within its organization is based on international law, mainly International Humanitarian Law (IHL) as well as national law (HG, 1:1, 2016, p. 13).

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<sup>24</sup> Available at: < <https://www.regeringen.se/contentassets/6a2fe3ec956f4f65983e507614adec32/proposition-2004055---vart-framtida-forsvar> > [Accessed 2 October 2018]

Among the international documents, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), adopted in 1979 by the United Nations General Assembly, and the UNSCR 1325 and subsequent resolutions<sup>25</sup>, with the respective Swedish national action plans<sup>26</sup> for their implementation, are explicitly mentioned.

For what concerns the national sources, HG stresses how equality between men and women is a right protected by the Swedish Constitution, that the law prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex and that equality between women and men is a priority issue for the parliament and the government (HG, 1:1, 2016, p.22). Looking at the context of the SAF, the reference point can be considered the legislation that allowed women into the military profession (SOU 1977:26<sup>27</sup>). Moreover, the Swedish Government Resolution 1266 of 2007<sup>28</sup> is specifically considered in the HG (1:1, 2016, p.13), since it requires the Armed Forces “[...] to act in accordance with the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008) on women, peace and security.”

The particular commitment of the SAF to the UNSCR 1325 can be recognized also by its participation in 2012 in the establishment of the Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations whose declared aim is to promote the “implementation of...1325 on Women, Peace and Security” (Bergman Rosamond and Kronsell, 2017, p.175). The commitment of Sweden is also clear in the words uttered by the Ambassador Irina Schoulgin Nyoni, Deputy Permanent Representative of Sweden to the UN, at the United Nations Security Council Briefing on Peacekeeping Operations, on the 21<sup>st</sup> of December 2017:

“we need to better integrate a gender perspective and protection of civilians in peacekeeping operations [...] it is important to stress the need to fulfil all obligations according to resolution 1325” (Nyoni, 2017).

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<sup>25</sup> UNSCRs 1820, 1888, 1889, 1960, 2106, 2122, 2242 and 2272 are mentioned (HG, 1:1, 2016, p.20-21)

<sup>26</sup> Sweden adopted a first plan for the period 2006-2008, a second one for the period 2009-2012 and a third one for the period 2016-2020. Available at: < <https://www.peacewomen.org/nap-sweden> > [Accessed 2 October 2018]

<sup>27</sup> Available at: < <https://lagen.nu/sou/1977:26> > [Accessed 8 October 2018]

<sup>28</sup> Available at: < <http://rkrattsbaser.gov.se/sfst?bet=2007:1266> > [Accessed 1 October 2018]

The other two values to be recognized, as part of the new values for the defence, were the “*representation argument*” according to which the military should reflect the population that it must defend (particularly because in a democratic society this is required to have the support of the population and to appear as an attractive employer) and, lastly, the “*diversity argument*”, concerned with the resources that are lost if not all the groups in society are included in the SAF institution. Even if, as Kronsell (2012, p.64-65) reports, in the equality strategies approved by the SAF, there are no target quotas for women, the scholar stresses how the ideal quota is to reach a percentage of 50 percent women and 50 percent men as it would represent realistically the outer society. It is therefore possible to observe how there is a continuous tension between a uniformity argument, underlined by all the politically influenced documents which, in a liberal approach, state that women and men are similar and thus should have equal access to the military, and a “diversity argument”<sup>29</sup> (Kronsell, 2012, p.66) which highlights the different characteristics and skills that women can bring to the military organization.

For instance, Olof Skoog, present Permanent Representative of Sweden to the United Nations, and President of the United Nations Security Council for the month of January 2017, reported at a lecture he held on the 18<sup>th</sup> of April 2018, at the University of Lund<sup>30</sup>, that when he first heard of Wallström’s dedication of the Country to a feminist foreign policy was surprised. Then he understood the important implications of this declaration in the light of the WPS Agenda, especially how much is fundamental to focus on gender differences as a source of strength. These “Instrumental Justifications for Increasing Women’s Representation” (Karim and Breadsley, 2017, p.44), “have been quite potent in convincing military officials to take active measures to increase the number of women in security forces and change standards, such as combat exclusion” (Karim and Breadsley, 2017, p.54) and are particularly strong in the military institution in the perspective of the connection between gender and tactical or operational

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<sup>29</sup> In relation to this, it is important to consider that: “an overemphasis on differences between women and men as the basis for gender reforms places the onus of the mission’s success on the women, who are likely to remain the minority sex” (Karim and Beardsley, 2017, p. 51).

<sup>30</sup>Lecture organised on the 18<sup>th</sup> of April 2018 in collaboration between Lund Association of Foreign Affairs and the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, entitled: “Sweden in the Security Council – Does it Matter?”

effectiveness (Karim and Beardsley, 2017; Egnell, 2014) but risk degenerating into a simplistic gender essentialist view (Kronsell, 2012).

The aforementioned contradictory alternation in the SAF's vision, between a "uniformity" and a "diversity argument", was particularly central also in Captain Lyman's words during her interview. She supported female ratio balancing (Karim and Beardsley, 2017) as connected to the idea that different gender perspectives can increase the operational effectiveness, thus supporting the "diversity argument", but then tended towards a quite liberal perspective illustrated by the empirical example she gave about FEM which instead calls for a "uniformity argument" where girls are asked to be just "one of the boys" (Kronsell and Svedberg, 2012).

At the same time, regardless of this post-national, cosmopolitan, gender aware and gender equal (Kronsell, 2012; Karim and Beardsley, 2017; Eduards, 2012) identity that the SAF are constructing for their institution and trying to spread, there are "many problems of institutional inertia and embedded norms affecting prospects and attempts at institutional change" (Kronsell, 2012, p. 64-65). Indeed, as observed also in the previous literature review, the military has usually been considered as a conservative institution, as Stiehm (2010, p.110) points out: "Cohesion is important and this has made the military slow to incorporate new kinds of soldiers" and Captain Lyman stressed as well how during her first mission, even if the UNSCR 1325 had already been adopted, she never heard the word gender or any reference to the resolution.

Moreover, looking expressly at the SAF, Eduards (2012) shows how the various strategies adopted so far, like equality plans to combat gender discrimination and plans to implement UNSCR 1325, have become a form of marketization of the Swedish military at home and abroad as gender aware and gender equal, so it can be considered part of a specific way of representing Sweden to the rest of the world.

For instance, the second part of the manual, which explicitly deals with the implementation of HG (1:2, 2016, p.26) concludes its section on the SAF international contributions reminding how the Swedish units can also help to raise awareness within the multilateral organizations about the meaning of integrating a gender perspective, for instance by developing appropriate

report formats, but mainly being a role model. Indeed, the part three of the HG, that lists different scenarios and practical solutions to use in educational context and practice, reports an interesting example called “firewood patrols” (HG, 1:3, 2016, p. 20). In this scene, the manual declares how the Swedish unit has to stand as a good example, acting responsibly and respectfully towards the civilian population. It also suggests reminding that Sweden, as a UN member state and as a partner country to the NATO, has no tolerance for violations of humanitarian law and human rights (HG, 1:3, 2016, p.21). Considering, though, how Eduards (2012) underlines the great expectations that are put on Swedish women as soldiers and officers in missions abroad as they should not only help create a better world but also represent a country which has made the concept of gender-equality in the army its strong point, it is important to notice how the manual does not make any explicit reference to a specific role of women in this pursuit.

At the same time, though, for what regards the specific interpretation in the SAF of the UNSCR 1325 *principle of conflict prevention*, the HG puts a specific stress on women: it underlines how it is about women’s right to participate in processes aimed at peace and, specifically, PKOs. Moreover, the principle of conflict prevention means to consider how women can play a prominent role in the stabilizations of the operations and in the security sector reform (which is about a society where the security sector, including the police, the military and the judicial system, respect human rights and are under democratic control; HG, 1:1, 2016, p.27). It is possible to observe here the connection of the instrumental approach to the “diversity argument”. As Kronsell (2012) stresses, the female presence is perceived as giving renewed legitimacy to PKOs, women are viewed as resources because they are able to talk to and engage with local women. Thereby, the mission can be more effective and provide a more complete security to all because female peacekeepers are able to gather intelligence which can be out of reach for men. The HG, indeed, affirms that utilising a gender analysis in this context can help to understand local conflict management mechanisms, where women can have a prominent role in the prevention of new local conflicts (HG, 1:1, 2016).

The risk of gender essentialism is again pressing: Valenius (2007, p.520) underlines that the UN liberal-feminist ‘add women and stir’ approach essentializes women’s experiences: in a

simplistic way it ignores differences between women and does not address the gendered power structures to which women are added. Similarly, Sheperd and Kirby highlight how what is important about female peacekeepers is not only how many they are but mainly where they are sent and which kind of activities they are in charge of, indeed "focusing only on participation targets without addressing the concrete dynamics of gendered power helps to reinforce essentialist ideas about women's pacific nature or their capacities for consensual problem-solving" (2016, p.375).

Considering though the peculiarity of PKOs, Karim and Breadsley (2017, p.44) report how Kronsell (2012) has argued that peacekeeping and peace-building missions are core elements of the new "post-national defense": they do not require the same kind of combat mentality and unit cohesion necessary to fight in a traditional war, since they have "a lesser warrior purpose than that to which national militaries have been socialized to perform" according to the "idealization of a warrior identity" norm. Indeed, the two scholars affirm that the skills and model of masculinity needed to win a war may be counterproductive in the context of peacekeeping, where the role of combat is minimum and soldiers are required to prove ability to collaborate with people from different countries and mediate with the local population.

While, the HG states that the military forces do not handle peace processes, since this happens at the political and strategical level, it reminds that they implement parts of the peace agreements and take part into PKOs, whose importance is progressively increasing since the nature of warfare is becoming more and more connected with multinational operations, such as peacekeeping and humanitarian efforts (Klenke, 2011). Indeed, HG (1:1, 2016, p.27) reports that conflicts are multidimensional (that is composed of regional, national and local dimensions which influence each other) and, considering that the military troops can affect the dynamics of the local community, it is essential to be aware that the chosen strategies and tactics can deepen local conflicts or create new ones, instead of leading towards peace in the area concerned. In relation to this, the Swedish defence bill of 2005 (Prop 2004/05:5<sup>31</sup>) recognizes

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<sup>31</sup> Available at: < <https://www.regeringen.se/contentassets/6a2fe3ec956f4f65983e507614adec32/proposition-2004055---vart-framtida-forsvar> > [Accessed 17 October 2018]

that the gender approach may improve the relationship between peacekeeping units and the local population.

Moreover, Kronsell (2012; p. 110) underlines how the low representation of women in international missions is problematic not only because the UNSCR 1325 calls for an increased participation of women among peacekeeping forces at all levels but also for an engagement of local women in peacekeeping processes and the second goal cannot be fully reached if the first is missing. The low presence of women can be attributed to different factors, such as the lack of a women's network, inadequate family policies and facilities (the structure of the institutions does not work to favour women, but they have to "fit into this male-dominant occupation", Karim and Beardsley, 2017, p.183). Interestingly, since, as observed above, Sweden appears to be a deviant case<sup>32</sup>, Karim and Beardsley (2017, p.4) found out that contributing countries to PKOs are unlikely to deploy women when they do not have strong records of gender equality.

Acknowledging this deficit, in 2015, Wallström, in collaboration with the Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA), the Swedish agency for peace, security and development, organised a meeting on women's role in peace processes and the FBA, stressing how women are still excluded from peace processes and thus the lack of women's leadership in this sector, declared that it prioritized the importance of women's leadership from the beginning and particularly in its strict collaboration with the SAF (FBA, 2018).

Analysing at this point the construction of the notion of **leadership**, which is the core of this specific research, the HG starts declaring that leadership in the SAF is based on legislation, recruitment needs and intervention needs; specific conditions that are met through three different perspectives: *the rights perspective, the human resources management perspective and the operation empowerment perspective* (HG, 1:1, 2016, p. 23).

The first perspective deals with the respect for human rights and Sweden's gender equality policy goals, it is thus directly linked to the normative framework analysed so far, and is

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<sup>32</sup> Nevertheless, the Swedish system allows to join PKOs also subjects that have not served in the military but are required to participate in a specific preparatory course (Valenius, 2007, p.518) and this could help in increasing the participation of women.

described as based on everyone's right to influence, participate and have power in society. There is no further examination, though, even in this case, of the many implications of terms such as influence and power.

The second perspective, in the analysis of leadership, is concerned with the concept of ability building (HG, 1:1, 2016, p.23) in the Armed Forces. Specifically, this concept refers to the goal of widening the recruitment base in order to include more women, create conditions for women and men to work and develop within all core areas and levels and turn the SAF into a more attractive employer, lastly, the third perspective refers to the necessity of recruiting the most competent individuals in the SAF. These last two perspective are explicitly driven by the aforementioned instrumental approach of the manual.

While the HG declares that its goal is to create conditions for both women and men to develop within the organization, thus considering equally both genders, in a liberal vision, when it comes to recruitment needs it addresses explicitly only women. Indeed, while the overall conceptualization of leadership is gender neutral, the HG explicitly affirms that the armed forces work in order to increase the number of women employed as soldiers, sailors and officers, at all levels and in all contexts (HG, 1:1, 2016, p.13). The necessity for an increase in the presence of women in the SAF has been stressed also by Captain Lyman during the interview she granted, since the gender advisor clearly connected the lack of women's leadership in the military institution to the fact that women do not have enough female role models to look at or a female network to support them.

Even if the policy asserts that the SAF base their recruitment system on competence and abilities, regardless of sex, nevertheless they apply a form of positive discrimination (HG, 1:1, 2016, p.34). This concept means that an employer can prioritize the choice for candidates belonging to an underrepresented sex, even though there are other applicants with equal qualifications. There are, however, specific requirements in applying this criterion: specifically, that the merit differences cannot be too wide, that the underrepresented sex cannot be benefited automatically and that the positive discrimination is possible only in accordance to sex. Moreover, the creation of quotas, that is to reserve some places to men or women, is not permitted by the Swedish legislation.

Again, the HG, clearly shows the liberal angle by which it is moved: actually, while liberalism requires as little state intervention in the private sphere as possible, for what concerns the public sphere, so called welfare or egalitarian liberals believe that the state should intervene in order to address economic disparities. As well, considering the concept of affirmative action policy, egalitarian liberal feminists believe that, in order to reach an equal social and economic status between men and women, not only feminist action should work to remove discriminatory laws and policies, but also resorts to preferential treatment policies. Since these measures are considered as temporary, they are not seen as reverse discrimination (Tong and Botts, 2017, p.29).

This focus on women is not contradictory though, even if there seems to be a conflict between the two statements “do not discriminate according to gender” but “hire more people according to gender”, the goal is to reach a female ratio balancing which is congruous with a liberal vision (indeed, the HG resorts to the UN liberal-feminist ‘add women and stir’ approach) and the ubiquitous instrumental approach which drives the whole manual.

Even the understanding of the principle of participation, one of the core pillars of the UNSCR 1325, is primarily based on the idea of increasing the number of women among the military personnel, and specifically considered are officer positions, thus leadership roles (HG, 1:1, 2016, p. 25), since this will also contribute to ability building in the military organization.

Indeed, it is important to observe that the SAF presents a singular understanding of the *principle of participation* as introduced in the resolution UNSCR 1325. The principle of participation, in the HG liberal perspective, is defined as equality (jämsällldhet) within the SAF organization and activity. At the same time the focus shifts on women, since HG adds that women have the right to participate in the Armed Forces operations on the same terms as men. Moreover, considering that the Armed Forces (specifically the SAF in this context) are *male dominated organizations* (“mansdominerade verksamheter”, HG, 1:1, 2016, p.26), the HG puts special emphasis on the principle of participation, or better women’s participation, while remarking the role that women can have as intermediaries between the military operation and the civilian population.

This proclaimed focus on the principle of participation is, thus, different than the focus of the UNSCR 1325 which has been put on the principle of protection rather than participation (Sheperd and Kirby, 2016) and this approach has caused many criticisms to the language of the WPS Agenda as constitutive of a specific configuration of the idea of woman, which can be considered related to the aforementioned gendered protection norm and thus characterizing the military. Valenius (2007, p.520) underlines as well that the UNSCR 1325 treats women mainly as victims and peacemakers, which “not only does this mean that men as victims are left out, but it also means that women are not seen as agents who are able to improve their own prospects.”

The most important consideration is therefore, that even if the part 1:1 of the HG specifically deals with the theoretical foundations of the so far analysed gender policy, there is a strong lack of theoretical reflection. This can be due to the nature itself of a handbook, which is supposed to give instruction or guidance and work as a reference book in a particular field listing brief facts on a subject. Indeed, the purpose of the HG is explicitly identified in giving support in integrating a gender perspective primarily at the tactical level and give concrete tools (HG, 1:1, 2016, p.5) and, as seen so far, the whole manual is distinguished by an instrumental approach. Alongside, the SAF are quite characterized by a pragmatism, which can be justified by its specific competence.

At the same time, though, this kind of methodology impedes any in-depth understanding of the respective conditions of men and women and their access to power, influence and resources as to become aware of how these categories are affected and potentially damaged by different decisions (HG, 1:1, 2016, p.16), which, as seen above, is the definition itself, as expressed in the HG, of integrating a gender perspective, that is exactly the purpose of the HG. Indeed, as Kronsell (2012, p.92) claims, “it is not necessarily the number of women present in the peacekeeping forces or in the military that is the key to gender awareness but rather the systematic work with gender strategies from the leadership level”.

Apart from this specific focus on women which has been linked to the practical necessity of including more women in the military institution, the comprehensive description of the leader is not characterized by any particular consideration of gender. While the UNSCR 1325

specifically addresses only women and girls, in the three fields of participation, conflict prevention and protection, and, indeed, is part of what is called the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, this clear womanist focus of the UNSCR 1325 is absent in the SAF's gender policy that appears to be quite gender-neutral.

Thus, in spite of the consideration, as seen above, that military institutions have carried out their activities based on a norm of heterosexual masculinity (Kronsell, 2012) and that the military and leadership are both inseparable and historically male-dominated contexts (Kronsell and Svedberg, 2012; Klenke, 2017; HG, 1:1, 2016, p.26), the HG is not characterized by an explicit 'male-as-the norm' approach. Interestingly, though, Tong (2016), reports how the major criticism of feminism to the liberal thought is that the rational, free and autonomous self, embraced by liberals, is not sex neutral but is a "male" self, implicitly considered as the norm. The main problem with this liberal, and at least apparently neutral, conception of gender has been clearly expressed by Eduards (2012, p. 55) considering that the SAF "constructs itself as a gender-neutral organization by talking of women and men or persons regardless of sex as if existing problems would be the same for all". This way women and men are seen as uniform, simple categories without an explicit relationship and gender is made trivial since there is no discussion about power relations, conflicting interests or change in gender hierarchies. Indeed, every time the HG addresses women and men, it does it by means of the linking term 'and'.

While the HG stresses that also civil servants, soldiers and sailors have the responsibility to contribute to an increased sex balance and equality (HG, 1:1, 2016, p. 31) within the Armed Forces, the main responsibility is put on managers, officers and specialist officers. The manager's leadership is central and affects the subordinates' attitudes and behaviour. Leaders are considered to have a specific responsibility to respond to their comrades in an inclusive and non-discriminatory manner and to contribute to a good working environment for both men and women. This way they can also increase the Armed Forces' attractiveness as an employer.

The textbook reports how a prerequisite for a successful integration of a gender perspective in all the operations is that this concept is firmly implanted in the leader, who has to show clearly the commitment to equality and participation, especially when decisions are made, through his/her vision and attitude. Within the SAF, leaders have different tools in their work towards

equality, the main means are identified as: “chefskap och ledarskap” (HG, 1:1, 2016, p.32) and they can be translated as *managership and leadership*.

Managership is characterized by actions based on the authority which derives from command. Thus, it comprehends the right and obligation for the members of the military personnel to command other military personnel, while following Swedish legislation and international law on non-discrimination and gender equality, and to promote and achieve equality goals. Leadership is described as being composed of actions that influence without having their legitimacy in the command, rather it includes notions as collaboration, talks, agreements and social presence (HG, 1:1, 2016, p.32).

The whole description of leadership as depicted in the manual can be easily linked to the values expressed by care focused feminism, which is directed at the study of what has been defined an ethics of care, as opposed to the ethics of justice, and considered as better at describing women’s method of moral reasoning. This ethics is about particular relations and describes the effect, or subjective experience, on people with whom there are concrete connections, and not on the humankind in general, considering that they exist together in a “nested set of reciprocal relations and obligations” (Tong, 2016, p.169).

Considering that the military’s unique culture is characterized by affective ties between military leaders and their subordinates (Klenke, 2017, p.316), this approach can be particularly relevant in the military institution distinguished by the importance of teamwork, which includes helping and taking care of others, and the value of cohesion (Stiehm, 2010). Moreover Kronsell (2012, p.147) argues that “a feminist international security ethic based on the ethics of care and emphatic cooperation could be a way to guide the postnational defense”, particularly when sensitivity to the local context is necessary, as for what regards PKOs<sup>33</sup>, and Stiehm (2010) highlights as well the strong connection between the ethics of care and the ideal emphatic military leader.

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<sup>33</sup> Indeed, the scholar (Kronsell, 2012, p.87) underlines that in global security relations, Tronto reports a shift from a ‘right to intervene’ to ‘the responsibility to protect’, which can be considered as a move from a rights-based logic to an ethics of care.

The SAF promotes the development of a leadership style which is represented by exemplary acts (consisting of attitudes showing humanitarian values and high standards of ethics, morality and loyalty, as well as the capability to be a role model and take responsibility), care for the other person and being inspiring (HG, 1:1, 2016, p.32). The leadership model pursued is meant to inspire participation and engagement in the subordinates, who will feel mutually committed to take responsibility and work to integrate a gender perspective. Indeed, the leader is depicted as in an active dialogue with the subordinates regarding equality, a notion that, as observed, recurs throughout the whole HG, and which has to be emphasized as central for the whole unit.

This focus on followers is in line with the new follower-centered perspectives in the study of leadership (Klenke, 2017, p.5) and the global approach in the military (Stiehm, 2010). In order for the leader to make an equal assessment of the individuals' participation to the group and their single performance, the policy suggests the use of some reference criteria like knowledge, experience, skills, initiative, responsibility and caring for others. Specifically, this last task is connected with some clear questions:

does the employee show care and consideration of the other employees in the group? Does he/she manifest empathy for his/her fellow human beings? Does he/she take responsibility for the other people's well-being? (HG, 1:1, 2016, p.36).

This leadership style can, moreover, be associated with the recent model of transformational leadership, characterised by specific components such as charisma, inspirational motivation and individual consideration as observed in the previous literature review (Vetter, 2010; Klenke, 2017), and which is thought to describe principally the leadership style of women (Klenke, 2017).

Lastly, the HG (1:1, 2016, p.33) highlights how this conceptualization of leadership is built on the respect for everyone's equal value, integrity and rights, regardless of his or her sex (as foundation for the integration of a gender perspective), according to a liberal perspective.

## 5.2: Statistics

It is useful, at this point, to look at some statistical data in order to draw the conclusions of this analysis.

For what regards the number of PKOs Sweden has been involved into in the period considered by the WPS Agenda, it is important to consider that there are no data available on the official website about the year 2000, when the UN Resolution was adopted (on the 30th of October 2000), thus the first information available will make reference to the year 2001, indeed the 30th of March 2000 the Swedish Parliament decided to reform the organization of the SAF, starting from the 1st of July.

Looking at the official reports compiled for the Swedish government by the SAF at the end of every year, it is possible to create a table of the PKOs Sweden has been involved into since the adoption of the UNSCR 1325.

Table 1: PKOs Sweden has participated in: <sup>34</sup>

YEAR	NUMBER OF PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS
2001	16
2002	15
2003	11
2004	15
2006	13
2007	14
2008	17
2009	13
2010	10
2011	12
2012	9
2013	9
2014	10
2015	8
2016	7
2017	8

In order to better understand the status of leadership in the SAF, it can be useful also to observe the data pertaining to the numbers of male and female officers in the SAF. As we can notice, the percentage of female officers has increased throughout the time frame, reaching an amount more than double at the end of the period considered (3.2% in 2001 and 7% in 2017).

At the same time though, the percentage shows a clear and significant gender imbalance (as asserted in the SAF's core values<sup>35</sup>, which are instead based on the concept of gender-equality, see Eduards, 2012).

<sup>34</sup> Source: annual reports from the Swedish Defence Forces, available at: < <https://www.forsvarsmakten.se/sv/om-myndigheten/dokument/arsredovisningar/> > [Accessed 19 October 2018] More information will be given in the Appendix.

<sup>35</sup> Available at: < <https://www.forsvarsmakten.se/en/about/vision/core-values/> > [Accessed 19 October 2018]

Even if since 1989 there are no gender restrictions in the SAF on access to military professions and women are allowed to serve in all parts of the military and in all positions, including combat (Lindquist, 2004), their representation in the SAF is relatively low and quite far away from the UN target by 2014 that “women comprise at least 30 per cent of senior positions (P5 or higher) in United Nations entities operating in conflict and post-conflict situations” and the UN target by 2020 that “women comprise at least 40 per cent of senior positions (P5 or higher) in United Nations entities operating in conflict and post-conflict situations” (UN, 2011).

Table 2: Male and female officers in the SAF<sup>36</sup>

Year	Officers (O)		FO/O
	Male officers (MO)	Female officers (FO)	
2001	10959	299	3.2%
2002	10541	333	3.6%
2003	10348	374	3.9%
2004	10491	397	4.4%
2005	10076	400	4.4%
2006	9624	450	4.5%
2007	9232	444	4.6%
2008	8914	439	4.7%
2009	9225	484	5.0%
2010	9252	500	5.1%
2011	9183	507	5.2%
2012	9029	511	5.3%
2013	9177	539	5.7%
2014	8599	549	6%
2015	8601	550	6%
2016	8486	639	7%
2017	8155	614	7%

The gender imbalance becomes much higher and impressive looking at the personnel employed by the SAF in PKOs and particularly at the comparison between male and female officers in

<sup>36</sup> Source: annual reports from the Swedish Defence Forces, available at:  
< <https://www.forsvarsmakten.se/sv/om-myndigheten/dokument/arsredovisningar/>>

EU/UN missions. Indeed, as Sheperd and Kirby stress (2016), it is important to consider not only the number of female peacekeepers but, even more, their role.

Table 3: SAF personnel in PKOs and EU/UN missions<sup>37</sup>

Year	Personnel in Peacekeeping operations	EU/UN missions	
		Male officers	Female officers
2001	58		
2002	45		
2003	46		
2004	51		
2005	55		
2006	45		
2007	49		
2008	51		
2009	min.44-max.46		
2010	33		
2011	min.40-max.55	58	0
2012	min. 47-max.50	28	1
2013	min. 35-max.40	51	2
2014	33	56	1
2015	26	65	1
2016	26	31	0
2017	25	55	1

At the same time, it is necessary to consider the different outcomes that can derive by choosing another context of reference. Indeed, as explained in more detail in the appendix, the conceptualization of peacekeeping operation in the SAF annual reports has varied throughout

<sup>37</sup> Source: annual reports from the Swedish Defence Forces, available at:  
< <https://www.forsvarsmakten.se/sv/om-myndigheten/dokument/arsredovisningar/>>

the time period considered since the category of international efforts is quite broad and can comprehend many missions which can be considered even partly as PKOs.

For instance, the SAF answered with the data displayed in the following table when requested about information on the year 2018, for which obviously the annual report has not been published yet. Specifically, the question was about how many members of the Swedish armed forces employed on missions abroad, among the 479<sup>38</sup> listed on the official website, were women and which kind of rank they occupied.

Table 4: Number of women the SAF had in international operations in April 2018:<sup>39</sup>

Number of women	Operation	Swedish Rank	English Rank
1	MINUSMA	Överstelöjtnant	Lieutenant Colonel
1	MINUSMA	Major	Major
1	UNMOGIP	Major	Major
3	MIUSMA	Kapten	Captain
1	KFOR	Löjtnant	Lieutenant
1	IRAQ	Löjtnant	Lieutenant
2	MINUSMA	Fanjunkare	First Sergeant
11	MINUSMA	Förste sergeant	Sergeant First Class
1	EUTM Mali	Förste sergeant	Sergeant First Class
1	EI	Förste sergeant	Sergeant First Class
1	IRAQ	Förste sergeant	Sergeant First Class
4	MINUSMA	Sergeant	Sergeant
1	RSM	Sergeant	Sergeant
1	IRAQ	Korpral	Corporal
3	MINUSMA	Vicekorpral	Lance Corporal
3	MINUSMA	Menig 1:a klassen	Private First Class
4	MINUSMA	Menig	Private
2	RSM	Civil	Civilian
7	MINUSMA	Civil	Civilian
<b>TOTAL</b>			
49			

<sup>38</sup> Data available at: < <https://www.forsvarsmakten.se/en/activities/current-international-missions2/> > as at May 2018

<sup>39</sup> Source: Information given by Corporal Adam Palm, Joint Operation Staff J1 Personnel on behalf of the SAF; 09-05-2018

As it is possible to see in the previous table, the total amount of women in this background is much higher than in the ones considered before, at the same time though that number refers to a total amount of 479, which makes the percentage of women in missions abroad just above 10% of the total. Moreover, the officers within the total amount of women is 25, almost half of the previous considered amount.

## 6. Conclusions

This final section will answer the initial research question, considering the data analysed so far and the theoretical framework which sets the guidelines for their interpretation.

The analysis of leadership in the HG reveals that there is no specific gender characterisation of it as a woman-focused approach. Leadership in the SAF is described in quite gender-neutral terms clearly based on liberalism and its affection for terms such as equality, equal opportunities, absence of discrimination, parity of opportunities. Terms which recur throughout the whole text of the HG.

The model of leadership described is inspired by values which are strongly connected to the trend in leadership studies towards theories that move from the figure of the leader, as a solo character, to new follower-centred perspectives (Klenke, 2011). Indeed, the focus in the HG understanding of leadership is on empathy, care and cooperation in the relationship with the followers, skills and competencies traditionally considered as feminine and now particularly necessary for peace-building tasks (Kronsell and Svedberg, 2012). This approach, common to many other military organizations, is particularly close to the main values of care-focused feminism and the recent configuration of transformational leadership based on the idea of the leader as role-model for the followers (Vetter, 2010). As observed above, warfare is increasingly changing and adapting to the current reality where different human abilities such as consensus-based decision making and interpersonal skills in negotiations are more and more required (Klenke, 2011).

The main absent, though, in a handbook about gender is exactly gender and thus its two main categories: women and men. Indeed, after having analysed the content of the Handbok Gender, it is possible to observe how there is no theoretical analysis of this concept.

Despite in this liberal approach, which tries to consider equally all the different categories comprehended (that is men, women, boys and girls), there is some kind of focus on women, this seems to be justified by exclusively instrumental and functional reasons (mainly to increase

the number of women in the SAF in order to improve its effectiveness, thus for practical advantages, Karim and Beardsley, 2017). Even when some less pragmatic motivations for the inclusion of more women appear in the HG, for example related to the idea of representing the outer society, they are not supported by any theoretical argument.

As Eduards (2012, p.62) reports clearly in her denunciation of the way gender is (not even) constructed in the SAF, stressing that: “men are not even addressed by the SAF (...) silence is here an implicit norm”, not only the category women is just instrumentally employed, but the category men is always linked to the category women and never object of any specific mention, least of all analysis.

The answer this research will give to the initial question is therefore that there is not an explicit reflection in the HG on women’s leadership. The only understanding of it appears to be that of a practical resource for the SAF which needs to be increased for the advantage of the whole organization and the reaching of its mission. Indeed, it will bring a gender perspective, the female gender perspective, which currently lacks or is gravely inadequate in the SAF.

Even if the HG highlights that the principle of women’s participation is central in the SAF’s interpretation of the UNSCR 1325, looking specifically at the context of the WPS Agenda, this study acknowledges how women’s leadership in the SAF is still quite low, although increasing, and this is particularly true in the reality of PKOs, where the requirements set so far in the WPS Framework are not met.

It is actually a cause for reflection to observe how a country like Sweden, which is specifically engaged in presenting itself and its military on the global scene as a feminist reality, is, almost paradoxically, quite far away from the desired goals.

At the same time, though, the context of the military is quite different and characterised by a strong masculine culture (even hyper-masculine; see Kirby, 2017, p.277) not only in Sweden, where at least the SAF have started a relatively long-term work to introduce a gender-perspective in the organization and attract more women, but everywhere in the world.

Within this context, international operations and peacekeeping ones in the specific, are characterized by features (mainly related to security exigences and roles of stereotypes and prejudices) which bring even more challenges to an increase in women's leadership (Karim and Breadsley, 2017) and need to be further studied in future research.

At the same time, though, Kronsell (2012, p.108-109) explicitly asks if “to encourage societal and institutional change and promote the transition to a humane system of governance is also a task of a cosmopolitan military”, which the SAF seem to be.

A deeper reflection on gender, and specifically on women within the institution, is thus required from the SAF since this thesis has highlighted the inadequacy of this instrumental approach in a context, PKOs, that is increasingly relevant in the field of global politics, and which is slowly but gradually being transformed also by the strong societal impact brought by the appearance of women on the scene. Indeed, the absence of a specific analysis of the construction of gender, and therefore of “where are the women?” (Kinsella, 2017, p.192), risks collapsing into stereotypes (prevailing stereotype: female leaders take care and male leaders take charge, Klenke, 2011, p.24) and gender essentialism (the easy identification of women with caring and empathy, Kronsell and Svedberg, 2012, p.13).

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## 8. Appendix

### 8.1 The concept of peacekeeping operations in the SAF annual reports

The concept of peacekeeping operation, utilised in the making of the tables presented in the Analysis section of this research, is based on different conceptualizations contained in the annual reports from the SAF to the Swedish government, which can be found in the SAF website<sup>40</sup>. It is important to observe that already in 2001, first year for which data are available, there is a distinction between verksamhetsgren fredsfrämjande verksamhet (Activities for Peace Promotion) and verksamhetsgren internationella insatser (Activities in International Efforts) and specifically divided into two groups. In conformity with the text of the report, the efforts considered as peacekeeping operations have been those described at the heading 5:7 (SAF, 2001, annex 3, p.1).

This division continues until the 2005 when the internationella insatser (international efforts) are grouped into two different categories accordingly to two different headings of the instructions given from the Swedish government to the SAF. The efforts considered as peacekeeping operations have been the ones comprehended in the first group, which is heading 5:2 (SAF, 2005, annex 4, p.19).

In 2007 there is the first official recapitulatory table on the genomförda missioner (insatser) (implemented missions (efforts); SAF, 2007, annex 4, p.3). From this report on, this kind of chart will be used as reference in the calculation of peacekeeping operations. Indeed this specific table is reported in the various reports under the heading verksamhetsgrenen : Fredsfrämjande insatser (operations: efforts in peace promotion); (see for instance SAF, 2007, p.29).

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<sup>40</sup> Particularly at: < <https://www.forsvarsmakten.se/sv/om-myndigheten/dokument/arsredovisningar/>> [Accessed 19 October 2018]

Finally, for what regards the statistics about the number of women in the SAF involved in peacekeeping operations, from 2011 there is a specific chart about the Personal i internationell tjänstgöring (Personnel in international service) which under the heading Mission Enskilda (Mission Individual) collects the information about the number of male and female professional officers (yrkesofficerare) in EU/Un-missions (see for example SAF, 2011, annex 2, p.23). This data has been utilised as well in the creation of the tables in the Analysis.

At the same time, though, in 2017 there is no more the specific heading 'enskild insatser' in the equivalent chart (SAF, 2017, annex 1, p.3), so the corresponding calculation on the amount of female and male professional officers has been made taking into account the international efforts listed in the chart about the efforts in peace promotion (SAF, 2017, p. 19-21).