The patriarchy dressed in feminist clothes
- A discourse analysis of the United Nations Security Council's gendering of the concept Civilians

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Abstract

This thesis analyses key documents from the United Nations Security Council (the Council) meetings during the period of 1999 to 2001. This thesis maps out the shift in the discourses that occurred within the Council, when adopting United Nations Security Council’s resolution (UNSCR) 1325. Moreover, this thesis argues that the nodal point ‘Civilians’ has become gendered by being replaced by the concept of ‘Women’. This thesis argues that UNSC is misrepresenting female agency within the discourses, which has contributed to a gendering of the concept of civilians. Sexual violence, defined as a wartime weapon, has also been part of the construction of stereotypical gender binaries, which has constituted a representation of women as either victims or saviors within the discourses. It becomes evident that the notion of female agency as for example independent, empowered or strong has been neglected.

The discourse theory provided by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe is applied in order to map out the existing discourses within the Security Council meetings. The aim of this study is to acknowledge the importance of that women have been and still are being excluded from the ontology of war. Furthermore, when the role of women in war is described, it is in relation to constructed stereotypical gender binaries.

Key concepts: Female agency, femininity, gender binaries, hegemony, masculinity, patriarchy, sexual violence
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In memory of Maria

You will always be in my thoughts
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1 Introduction

1.1 Overview of research

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC)\(^1\) has adopted numerous resolutions and charters with the purpose to strengthen and empower women in war and conflict, as well as in peace processes. The adoption of ‘Women and Peace and Security’ resolution 1325 was a landmark for UN and was followed by several other resolutions, such as UNSCRs 1820 (2008), 1882 (2009), 1888 (2009) and 1889 (2009).\(^2\) However, despite certain progresses made by the Council, such as the recognition of female participation in international politics, there may be certain side effects to resolution 1325. This thesis will examine if there has taken place a gendering of the concept of civilians within the United Nations Security Council. The Security Council is a good example to examine for this type of study, since there is an extensive amount of research in regards to it.\(^3\) However, the Security Council is only one example, to show that it is possible to study gendered discourses.

This thesis analyzes if the discourse of sexual violence, as a wartime weapon, could have been part of a gendering of the concept of civilians. Sexual violence as a weapon of war has been practiced as long as the existence of war itself. Therefore, it could be assumed that when war ends, so do the acts of sexual violence. This is however not the case and according to empirical evidence sexual violence continues into peace processes. A common thought within the ontology of war and wartime rape is that it is a gendered phenomenon.\(^4\) To apply a gender perspective means to examine constructed gender binaries within a social phenomenon. In this specific case, I will focus on an examination on the Security Council’s representation of female agency and if it is constructed on a basis of stereotypical gender binaries. In contrast unlike a gendered discourse, a gender-neutral discourse identifies people as social groups defined on a basis of similarities and differentiations without any connections to gender. This means that with no gender in the discourse, people will not be categorized based on being a woman, girl, man or boy.\(^5\)

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\(^1\) Also referred to as 'the Council' or 'the Security Council'.


The key documents this thesis examines are transcripts from the Security Council meetings covering the years 1999 to 2001. The reason for selecting this timeframe of conducted meetings is that it is during this period that we can examine and analyze the fundamental discourse in the Council that led to the adoption of UNSCR 1325, in the year 2000. Furthermore, an examination of two central discourses within the Security Council meetings will be analyzed. These discourses include the agendas on ‘Civilians in armed conflicts’ and ‘Women and peace and security’. The aim of analyzing these discourses is to see if there has been a shift from the discourse concerning civilians, which was central in 1999, to only concerning women after adopting resolution 1325. This thesis will use a gender perspective as theoretical framework and apply Laclau and Mouffe’s discourse theory when examining the materials. By implementing a gender perspective into this thesis, it allows us to break down constructed gender norms.

1.2 Research problem and purpose

When the war in Yugoslavia had ended, the international community could no longer ignore the fact that sexual violence was a wartime crime. For the first time sexual violence was instituted as part of international humanitarian law. It therefore became internationally recognized as a systematic and organized wartime weapon and an instrument of genocide. Furthermore, it is equally important to study how female identity is portrayed in the aftermath of war, as it is to study during times of war. It is important to study identity and agency in this way because the violence of war, including wartime sexual violence, leaves behind stigmatisations within societies.\(^6\)

This thesis is a contribution to the research field of war studies, since if women’s constructed “vulnerability” is a threat to the international peace, then gender and sexual violence can be a direct basis for conflict.

The hypothesis for this thesis is that, after the Security Council’s adoption of resolution 1325, the discourse of ‘Civilians’ became gendered and the word “civilians” was replaced by “vulnerable groups” i.e. women and children. This reproduces the stereotype of women as the victims and men as the perpetrators, which neglects the perspective that both women and men can be victims as well as perpetrators.

Therefore, the puzzle in this research is: How come the concept of women is constructed as victims only after the adoption of UNSCR 1325, despite being recognized as part of the concept of civilians before the adoption of UNSCR 1325? The aim of this study is to examine if the concept of civilians has become gendered over time within the Security Council’s meetings. Furthermore, gender is

important to study in relation to war and in the context of war studies, because women have been, and in many cases still are, excluded from traditional theories of war. This portrayal of women solely as victims of war is lacking a truthful significance. Examples of this are that throughout history there have existed female war fighters, such as the Amazon corps of the Dahomey forces\(^7\), Joan of Arc, or women’s suffrage movements.\(^8\) Therefore, it could be argued that the traditional theories of war are difficult to apply, since there is a lack of perspectives. Without the perspectives of women and a gender approach, the traditional theories neglect and fail to incorporate the true essence of war studies. They therefore fail to explain war and conflict. In order to gain a true understanding of war and conflicts, all experiences need to be included. This thesis builds upon the feminist scholars, such as Judith Butler, Cynthia Enloe, Linda Åhäll and Laura Shepherd, who have started this discussion, and this thesis will further the feminist understanding of war studies, and will therefore contribute to the research field of war studies in general, and feminist war studies in particular.

1.3 Research question

The research question below covers the narrative of how the Security Council framed the concept of ‘civilians’ before and after the adoption of UNSCR 1325 in the year 2000. The question is answered within the timeframe of the years 1999 to 2001. The aim of this research is to examine how the Security Council has gendered the concept of civilians after the adoption of UNSCR 1325.

a) How is the concept of civilians portrayed within the Security Council’s meetings, and how has it changed since the adoption of UNSCR 1325?

1.4 Disposition

Chapter one in this paper presents an overview of the thesis, including the research problem, purpose and research question. Thereafter, chapter two presents the theoretical framework. The theoretical framework consists of three sub-chapters, which are 1) Gender and war studies; 2) Sexual violence as a wartime weapon; and 3) Previous research on the UN Security Council. The first sub-chapter covers the ontology of gender and war studies. This section is a description of civilians in war, as well as the notion of constructed femininities and masculinities in war and conflict. The second

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\(^7\) “The eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Dahomey Kingdom of West Africa (present-day Benin) is the only documented case of a large-scale female combat unit that functioned over a long period as part of a standing army”, description borrowed from: Goldstein, J. S. (2001) *War and gender: how gender shapes the war system and vice versa*, p. 60.

\(^8\) Ibid, p. 21-22 & 116-117.

The third chapter will include the methodological framework. This framework includes the sub-chapters 1) Methodological considerations; 2) Laclau and Mouffe’s discourse theory; 3) Material; and 4) Operationalization. The methodological considerations present various ontologies of discourse analysis. The aim of this section is to map out and argue that Laclau and Mouffe’s discourse analysis is most suited to apply for the analytical operationalization of this thesis. Therefore, in the following sub-chapter there will be a more in-depth description of Laclau and Mouffe’s discourse theory. Thereafter, the fourth chapter presents the analysis. It is in this chapter that the material is analyzed through an operationalization of combining the theoretical and methodological frameworks. This chapter is divided into three sub-chapters, which are 1) The Security Council’s human rights-oriented discourse, 2) The hegemonic shift – adopting UNSC 1325, and 3) Beyond UNSCR 1325 – a comparison of hegemonic discourses. Furthermore, chapter five covers an open discussion in regards to the topic of the thesis. Finally, chapter six offers conclusions.
2 Theoretical framework

There exists a large variety of ontological standpoints regarding gender and war studies, including the narrative of sexual violence as part of war. Therefore, this chapter aims to present the most important theories that are relevant for what is going to be examined in this thesis. These various ontological narratives are selected in order to create a greater framework for the analysis. Furthermore, this chapter is designed to cover theoretical elements such as previous research, theoretical narratives and the academic debate. These various theoretical elements are of importance to present in order to be able to provide an answer to the research questions.

2.1 Gender and war studies

2.1.1 Civilians and war

In modern times, the use of force in war and conflicts has become more centered to target civilians.\(^9\) As Rupert Smith argues, the conduct of war and conventional military force has gone through a paradigm shift. In other words, industrial war has been replaced with modern warfare. It is therefore more common to exercise use of force against civilians in war than it was before. The conduct of war has also changed from being fought in the theater of war and is more commonly fought amongst the people.\(^10\) In line with Smith’s argumentation, Mary Kaldor argues that war has gone from being ‘old wars’ to ‘new wars’. She explains that old wars were generally fought between states and in accordance to certain rules established in the Geneva and Hague conventions. An example of such a rule is to minimize civilian causalities in war. However, according to Kaldor and her new war theory, wars are no longer fought between states but rather between states and smaller mobilized groups, also called insurgencies. She claims that when states or other insurgencies fight back the consequence of counter-insurgency tactics often ends up in targeting and killing civilians. Therefore, the violence of war in modern times is in most cases directed towards civilians.\(^11\)

2.1.2 Femininity

“The stories of war – who participated in them, who is affected by them and how – are important to know. Often, these stories of war are gendered.”\(^12\) Within the narratives of war, women are in most cases portrayed as

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victims, refugees and by their experiences of sexual violence. This gendered portrayal of women indicates that they need protection and that it is in dichotomy to men as the masculine protectors or perpetrators.\(^{13}\) According to Linda Åhäll and Laura Shepherd, “feminization involves the assigning of female attributes, which are generally assumed to be subordinate to all masculinities”.\(^{14}\) It is common throughout war studies that females are ascribed with intrinsic attributes, such as non-combatants or peaceful creatures. These characteristics define the female role within war such as non-participants of war or as victims of war.\(^{15}\)

Judith Butler argues, the traditional feminist studies have focused on a more natural ‘essential’ notion of femininity. Butler contests this by breaking down the notion of sex and gender. She argues that gender is cultural constructed and does not serve as a fixation to any biological characteristics. She further argues that sex is commonly described in relation to biological characteristics. Therefore, the distinction that Butler makes between sex and gender makes gender to become a “free-floating artifice, with the consequence that men and masculine might just as easily signify a female body as a male one, and women and feminine a male body as easily as a female one”.\(^{16}\) Her theory is a contestation of the whole notion of the construction of heterosexual gender norms, which opens up the possibility for an examination of gender roles within all societal spheres.\(^{17}\) Furthermore, Cynthia Enloe argues that the military is highly influenced by masculine values, which inflict that everyone involved in war is militarized and therefore indirectly masculinized. This means that females participating in war or the military are viewed as one of the men because of an adaptation to masculinized norms. This notion that the female body can be masculinized and vice versa, changes the constructed dynamics of gendered roles within war and conflict.\(^{18}\)

Various research fields are lacking a common consensus of the concept of the human body. However, by analyzing the concept through a gender perspective you rather get a more complex process to study.\(^{19}\) Through a feminist post-structural framework, Christine Sylvester breaks down the notion of gendered sex, as well as the construction of male and female attributes linked to the physical body. She calls this ‘normed performance’. It becomes important to criticize constructed normed performances, since they exclude and reject subjectivity to everything that

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15 Ibid, p.44.
19 Sylvester, C. (2013) *War as experience: contributions from international relations and feminist analysis*, p. 73.
does not fit into its description. She further argues that the actors involved in war are normal, ordinary people that experience war in different ways. War is therefore a bodily experience, both physically and emotionally. According to Linda Åhäll, the gendered nature of war associates female identity with attributes such as a life-giving identity, peaceful or as non-combatant. It is the “ideas about female bodies and their association with a naturalized life-giving identity”. Paradoxically, men’s identity in war is associated to be a dichotomy to the female identity. In other words, men are perceived as life-takers, violent and warriors in war.

2.1.3 Masculinity and hegemonic masculinity

There are several different ontologies concerning the study of the relationship between war and masculinities. “Masculinization can be employed as a strategy to affirm superiority, however, by drawing on what are considered accepted and desirable male attributes”. An example of constructed masculinized attributes would be that males are perceived as strong, rational and aggressive. Kimberly Hutching enters a new level of analysis by distancing herself from the traditional Clausewitzian terms of war. Instead, she examines new war theory and the relation to masculinities. By framing it in this way, she concludes that if human interaction is left out from the war equation, then war loses its meaning and significance. Furthermore, she highlights that it is important to acknowledge that war changes, since it affects the link between war and masculinities. The change of war affects the concept of masculinity to become a more flexible and unfixed variable, which opens up for analysis.

Moreover, Hutching describes masculinity as subordination to other masculinities and a feminized other. In other words, there exists a hierarchical order between men and women, but also between men and other men. Therefore, it can be described as various levels of masculinities within a structure of hierarchies. This is also framed as hegemonic masculinities, a concept which researcher Raewyn Connell was the first to coin. However, the link between war and masculinity is that masculinity gives war its meaning and legitimacy through power. In the following sub-

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21 Ibid, p. 3-5.
chapter, a few relevant ontological narratives of sexual violence as a wartime weapon will be presented.

2.2 Sexual violence as a wartime weapon

The discourse of sexual violence in war has a variety of ontological narratives, but this paper will assert to a post-structural framework. Furthermore, as mentioned in the first chapter, it is important for sexual violence to be recognized as part of war studies, since women have been excluded and neglected in time and space or portrayed wrongfully in the context of war. Since, this thesis also analyze if sexual violence, as a wartime weapon, is part of a potential gendering process within the Security Council, it becomes necessary to present the ontology of sexual violence.

To begin with, the notion of an essentialist perspective is that sexual violence is viewed as a weapon that targets women in conflict-zones. Therefore, all perpetrators are men that are steered by their sexual desire and all victims are women. This approach imposes that all men are potential rapists. However, in modern times, gender studies have gone from this essentialistic notion, since gender is rather seen as something performed. Post-structuralism addresses sexual violence as something constructed instead of being something natural. Therefore, “gender relations are perceived as something we do rather than something we are”, which indicates that masculinity and femininity is not connected to sex but rather to what we construct as masculine and feminine.

Therefore, a focus on sexual violence from a post-structuralism perspective is ideal for this thesis.

To study sexual violence as part of the violence of war is important since it allows us to study gender relations and the portrayal of identities. However, the issue with wartime rape is that it in many cases is viewed as a fundamentally gendered phenomenon. This can be traced within the discourse regarding who the perpetrators and the victims are, and the stereotypical images of that the perpetrators is perceived to be men and the victims women. This perception becomes an issue since it neglects the view of the victim and the perpetrators.

Therefore, to use a post-structural perspective makes the notion of masculinity and femininity more fluid. This view

31 Sylvester, C. 2013, War as experience: contributions from international relations and feminist analysis, p. 6.
opens up the opportunity for interpretation in regards to that both men and women could be potential perpetrators, as well as victims of wartime sexual violence.\textsuperscript{33}

To acknowledge sexual violence as a tactical wartime weapon is to distinguish this weapon to be part of a larger strategical plan. According to Maria Baaz Eriksson and Maria Stern “rape as a weapon of war discourse breaks with the view of rape as a tragic but natural and inevitable outcome of war unleashed by men’s inherent sexuality, and instead casts rape as avoidable.”\textsuperscript{34} This notion of rape as a weapon of war discourse indicates that sexual violence, as a wartime weapon, can be avoided or at least prevented if it is socially coded in the right way. Moreover, Stern claims “rapists are (re)cast as rational modern subjects who can be accountable for their rational choices to implement the strategy and wield the weapon of rape”.\textsuperscript{35} This means that when the international community recognized sexual violence as a wartime weapon, the concept of rape in the context of war got a new meaning. The new definition of wartime rape indicates that there exists some form of rationality behind the strategical decision to rape, since it is a planned and organized strategy. However, according to the traditional definition of strategy, it is supposed to be “a continuation of politics by other means”.\textsuperscript{36} The challenge that arises by defining sexual violence as a strategy is that it could be used as an instrument in war and conflict but does not necessarily have to reach an end in a strategy.\textsuperscript{37}

According to Carolyn Nordstrom, the best way to understand sexual violence as a weapon, it has to be studied in the context of both war and peace. The author argues that it is only through recognition of the impact and consequences of rape in peace, that we have the ability to recognize the impact and consequences it has during war.\textsuperscript{38} However, in contrast to this argumentation, Inger Skjelsbæk argues, “What we can assume is that rape in war alters the intersectionality between gender and other political identities, and thereby situates gender as the optic through which other forms of socio-political changes are viewed and understood”.\textsuperscript{39} This indicates that there must be a notion of wartime rape as a violent relationship between the masculinized perpetrator and the feminized victim. In addition, there is a linkage between the identities of the perpetrator and victim, which implies that these identities are situated within a hierarchical power relationship. However, Skjelsbæk highlights that feminist scholars within peace and conflict studies have drawn this


\textsuperscript{35}Ibid, p.109


\textsuperscript{39}Skjelsbæk, I. (2012) The political psychology of war rape: studies from Bosnia-Herzegovina, p. 141.
conclusion one-step further, “The ways in which masculinization and feminization polarize other identities are intimately linked to the overall conflict structure, and it is this mechanism which can make rape a powerful weapon of war.” Therefore, to study sexual violence in the context of war cannot be generalized in relation to other conflicts; however, it is representative of in-depth research carried out under feminist studies. In addition, Sylvester argues that wartime rape should be viewed as a bodily and emotional experience that should be acknowledged for its existence in both war as well as in the aftermath of war.

2.3 Previous research on the UN Security Council

This sub-chapter aims to provide a more theoretical understanding of the case, selected for this study. The selected case is the Security Council. It is however only an example of a larger universe of cases, which means that the research conducted in this thesis is applicable to a variety of other social phenomena. The Security Council is good to use as an example, since there is extensive research conducted on this topic. The previous research in this field is mostly concerned with Security Council resolutions and gender. To clarify, this sub-chapter will build on a feminist perspective when describing international politics and the UN Security Council.

Enloe describes policy as being created within a masculinized international politics. She argues, as with every re-shaping of norms, we have to recognize and acknowledge that we are all part of the process of this norm construction. Therefore, we are not just acted upon by politics but we are all actors creating it. In order to do this however, there has to be a remapping of boundaries for the ‘international’ and the ‘political’. In other words, “it requires seeing how one’s own family dynamics, consumer behaviors, travel choices, relationships with others, and ways of thinking about the world actually help shape that world […] The world is something that has been – and is being – made every day.” Moreover, what makes international politics masculinized is that it is based on ideas and practices of stereotypical gender norms that include the essentialist notion of femininity and masculinity. In addition, within international politics there exists an attempt to control women by ascribing them with representations that are not always correct. Therefore, the combination of these two notions is central for the world-making process.

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41 Sylvester, C. 2013, War as experience: contributions from international relations and feminist analysis, p. 83-86.
44 Ibid, p. 35.
Chris Dolan would rather frame international politics as a patriarchal\textsuperscript{45} value system. His article ‘Has Patriarchy been Stealing the Feminist’ Clothes? Conflict-related Sexual Violence and UN Security Council Resolutions’, argues that the UN Security Council is patriarchal when framing wartime sexual violence in UNSCR 1325. He argues that the potential for a true gender analysis within the Council “was lost to a re-essentializing and patriarchal gender binary in which women were portrayed as weak (victims) and men as strong (perpetrators)”\textsuperscript{46}. The Council’s adoption of UNSCR 1325 was to an extent successful in the embodiment of feminist activism. This success was based on that the Council acknowledged and recognized the importance of female participation in international politics. However, at the same time there was a failure by the Security Council in the attempt to implement a more feministic approach when adopting UNSCR 1325. This failure was based on perpetuate patriarchal undertones within the discourse of wartime sexual violence, since they draw the conclusion that all men are perpetrators and all females are victims, attributed with an intrinsic vulnerability. The Council is therefore taking male power as given, rather than viewing it as a social construction. Consequently, the Security Council resolutions concerning women in conflict possess a discriminatory nature. This is a result of the above-mentioned female portrayal, applying only to a specific group of females, in which women are portrayed as victims ascribed to possess an essential vulnerability.\textsuperscript{47}

Laura Shepherd argues, in her article ‘Women, armed conflict and language – Gender, violence and discourse’, that language is the medium of politics. This means that before we can practice policy there is a need to first understand ‘what’ a policy means. Furthermore, she defines policy as, “Discursive practices maintain, construct and constitute, legitimize, resist and suspend truth as they (re)produce meaning, and it is these practices that we can interrogate”.\textsuperscript{48} She draws the thesis that ideas and ideals of gender, violence and security reflected in the UNSCR 1325, has a basis on ideas and ideals from the institutions drafting the resolution.\textsuperscript{49} Shepherd has already done a similar study to what this thesis aims to do. The difference however, is that she examines UN Security Council resolutions, from resolution 1325 and an eight-year period beyond 1325. This thesis on the other hand, aims

\textsuperscript{45} “[…] the concept of patriarchy, a system of interlocked oppressions and exploitations of women’s bodies, sexuality, labor and emotions. […] patriarchy is what makes men dominant and women subordinate”, definition borrowed from: Lorber, J. (2010) Gender Inequality: Feminist Theories and Politics, p. 7 & 11.


\textsuperscript{47} Ibid, p. 82-83.


\textsuperscript{49} Ibid, p. 146.
to analyze the foundational source, namely the Security Council meetings that led to the adoption of UNSCR 1325.

2.3.1 Female agency in UNSCR 1325 and beyond

Shepherd argues that unconscious ideas that people may have are being practiced into policy and therefore sometimes infiltrate policy documents. Furthermore, she claims that constructions of gender within resolution 1325 are synonymous with biological sex, which “reproduce logics of identity that characterized women as fragile, passive and in need of protection”.50 As a consequence of these constructed gender binaries the responsibility to protect falls into the hands of the actors within the political elite. Shepherd claims that the policy discourse within the Security Council, echoes of essentialist logics of gender, since a link between sex and security is evident. Resulting in that “women are ‘metaphor[s] for vulnerable/victim in war’”.51 The construction of femininities and masculinities creates the restrictions of female agency. In other words, stereotypical gender binaries diminish and neglect female agency in war and conflict.

Shepherd argues that female agency is essentially related to power and is therefore a production of the practice of power. However, agency only emerge from a particular discursive context. She identifies a possibility of change based on the fragmentation of female agency within the constituted discursivity. By identifying and addressing the fundamental issues within policy, discourse opens up for the possibility of change.52 From Shepherd’s analysis of UNSCR 1325 and beyond, she draws the conclusion that she has mapped out three possible centers within the discourse, “women as victims; women as superheroines; women as representative of (some/most/all) other women. Of course, all of these – and none of them – are ‘true’”53 These centers constitute a closure within the discourse and predict what women might be, do or want.54

51 Ibid, p. 507.
52 Ibid, p. 514.
54 Ibid, p. 516.
3 Methodology, method and material

3.1 Methodological considerations

In this sub-chapter, I will explain why Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe’s discourse theory is the most relevant for the research conducted in this thesis. To begin with, the concept of discourse is frequently used within the field of social sciences but the meaning of discourse can be used in various ways. Some scholars use discourse analysis in order to analyze a single dialogue between two individuals. Others suggest that discourse analysis is a tool to analyze the entire social system, in which discourse per se constitutes the social and political world. Laclau and Mouffe would frame this as all social phenomena can be analyzed through discursive tools, since the notion of the social is a discursive construction.\textsuperscript{55} Furthermore, Laclau and Mouffe’s discourse theory is a deconstruction of other researchers’ methodological and theoretical frameworks. The older works of Laclau builds on Foucault and Althusser’s discourse analysis and the later works are based on Derrida, Lacan and Zizek.\textsuperscript{56} It therefore becomes useful to apply Laclau and Mouffe’s discourse theory, since it is based on a theory-development and deconstructions of others theories.

Furthermore, the common framework of all discourse analysis is that it focuses on discursive relations, which is understood as a form of linguistic expression. Linguistics is a contribution to the shaping of reality but it is important to remember that it does not represent reality per se. However, by using a discursive perspective means that we do not strictly have to differentiate between ‘ideas of something’ and the external object. In other words, to use a discursive perspective unifies the way we talk about a social phenomenon with how it actually is in reality. In addition, with a discursive perspective it becomes possible to break down the distinction between idea and reality, as well as language and action. This indicates that all structures do not solely require language but also actions in order for it to gain its existence. Since the linguistic pattern sets limitations on how we act and think, it creates a linkage between discourse analysis and the study of power, as well as various types of power structures. Therefore, discourse analysis becomes a tool to study questions regarding power and identity, with a lesser focus on societal actors. The Foucauldian discourse theory has a larger focus on this notion of discourses\textsuperscript{57}, and so does

Norman Fairclough’s critical discourse theory, which addresses complex views of functionality of power relations in societies.  

Laclau and Mouffe’s discourse theory differentiates from Fairclough’s and the Foucauldian discourse theory. Laclau and Mouffe proclaim that discourse is not solely based on language but also includes the notion of practice that forms identities and social actors. This methodology is based on that discourse is applied to “emphasize the fact that every social configuration is meaningful”. Furthermore, Laclau and Mouffe’s discourse theory aims to deconstruct already existing discourses. Since the aim of this thesis is to examine a change within an already set discourse, more precisely the UN Security Council’s discourse, Laclau and Mouffe’s discourse theory appears to be the best choice to apply. Their discourse theory focuses on the possibility that two opposing discourses can enter into a conflicting position, which is framed as antagonism. Furthermore, they also focus on hegemonic analysis, which mean clashes between discourses competing to fix the meaning of signs. This thesis will focus on the hegemonic shift, or clash between discourses, within the Security Council. However, before the analysis Laclau and Mouffe’s discourse theory has to be developed further, and a deeper explanation of the selected discourse theory will take place in the next sub-chapter.

3.2 Laclau and Mouffe’s discourse theory

Before the discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe can take place, it is important to highlight that the meaning and application of discourse analysis is entrenched in the theoretical systems in which it is embedded. In other words, discourse analysis often includes a framework that functions as both theory and method. In this sub-chapter, significant conceptual definitions provided by Laclau and Mouffe will be explained, since they will be the tools for the analysis. The significant tools are 1) elements, 2) moments, 3) articulation, 4) discourse, 5) nodal points, 6) field of discursivity, and 7) hegemony. These concepts are linked to each other in the form of a cluster of nodes. This will be explained with help from the method books provided by Jørgensen and Phillips, Howarth, and Bergström and Boréus. To begin with, Laclau and Mouffe’s discourse analysis is a deconstruction of Saussure’s idea of structure, as well as the Marxist idea of ideology. Laclau and Mouffe deconstruct these two ideas into a single post-structural theory, in which “the whole social field is understood as a web of processes in which meaning is created […] The aim of discourse

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Ibid, p. 2.


analysis is to map out the processes in which we struggle about the way in which the meaning of signs is to be fixed”.

Laclau and Mouffe refer to three different signs, which they define as elements, moments and nodal points. The difference between an element and a moment is that the moment is articulated within a discourse and an element is not differentiated by any articulation, but rather by the field of discursivity. However, the conceptual definition of a moment is according to Laclau and Mouffe defined as “all signs are moments in a system and the meaning of each sign is determined by its relations to the other signs.” Therefore, the concept of moments highlights that all signs are meaningful and they are characteristically dependent on their discursive diversity and their various relations towards each other. It also advocates that discourse is understood as a fixation of meaning within a particulate sphere, where all moments are connected to each other.

Discourse is created by having several different nodes or articulations linked together in order to shape a larger unit. It is within this larger unit of discourse that we find the nodal point. The nodal point is defined as “a privileged sign around which the other signs are ordered; the other signs acquire their meaning from their relationship to the nodal point”. This indicates that a nodal point is the node with the most central value and all other nodes are connected through this most central nodal point. For example, within the discourse of politics a nodal point would be ‘democracy’ around which other meanings are crystallized.

Furthermore, the field of discursivity is, according to Laclau and Mouffe, produced through articulatory practice. Jørgensen defines the concept such as “the field of discursivity is understood as everything outside the discourse, all that the discourse excludes.” A discourse is always constructed in relation to an outside and is therefore in constant danger of being undermined. Therefore, Laclau and Mouffe constructed the concept of elements. This concept is the sign within the discourse that do not yet have a fixed meaning. However, discourses are always attempting to transform the unfixed meaning of elements into moments that have a fixed meaning. This is when the discourse establishes a closure. A closure means “a temporary stop to the fluctuations in the meaning of the signs.”

66 Ibid, p. 27.
67 Ibid, p. 27.
Therefore, it is not elements per se that create a closure, but rather elements transformed into moments. However, a closure is never definitive but rather temporary.\footnote{Jørgensen, M. W., & Phillips, L. J. (2002). Discourse analysis as theory and method, p. 28.}

3.3 Methodological restrictions

By using a discourse analysis when analyzing the materials, the research is affected in the sense that it creates a more extensive space for subjective interpretations, which allows you to be more creative but at the same time reduces the transparency and credibility of the study. However, a discourse analysis is the method most fitted for this research, since it aims to discover the discourses that are not part of an “objective reality”, but rather only gain meaning through interpretation.\footnote{Howarth, D.R. (2000) Discourse, p. 10-12.}

3.4 Material

This thesis conducts an examination of discourses within specific meetings of the UN Security Council. These meetings extend over the timeframe of the years 1999 to 2001 and cover the agendas of ‘Civilians in armed conflict’, ‘Women and Peace and Security’ and ‘Protection of civilians in armed conflict’. The purpose of examining these specific meetings is to see whether there has been a gendering of the concept of civilians after the adoption of UNSCR 1325. However, before the analysis can begin the material has to be introduced. The Security Council debate consists of conducted meetings. The transcripts for all meetings are open and can be accessed online on the UN’s webpage under the tab ‘Meeting records’.\footnote{United Nations Security Council, \url{http://www.un.org/en/sc/meetings/} (Received: 28/04-2016).}

In the year 1999, there were five meetings conducted, covering the agenda of Civilians in armed conflict. There was no conducted meeting concerning the agenda on Women and Peace and Security in 1999. In the year 2000, there was one meeting conducted with the agenda Civilians in armed conflict, and three meetings on the agenda Women and Peace and Security. In 2001, there were in total four meetings conducted by the Council. Three of these meetings covered the agenda on Protection of Civilians in armed conflict and one covered the agenda on Women and Peace and Security. The meetings consist of one president and fourteen permanent representatives in the Council. The permanent representatives were various member states to the UN. The majority of the representatives were men and the participation of female permanent representatives varies between one to a maximum of two in each meeting held in 1999 to 2001. The reason for looking...
at this specific timeline is that the discourses within these meetings lay as a foundation for how descendant adopted resolutions speak about female agency in relation to war and peace.\textsuperscript{72}

3.5 Operationalization

This thesis find assistance when examining the material by using three of Laclau and Mouffe’s conceptual definitions. They function as both a theoretical and a methodological framework, since they provide tools to help to map out the meaning of signs within discourses. Therefore, with assistance from these conceptual definitions, this research aims to map out how the definition of civilians is portrayed and how it changes within the discourses in the Security Council meetings taken place in the year 1999 to 2001. The selection of the conceptual definitions provided by Laclau and Mouffe was chosen in order to map out the hegemonic shift of discourses within the Security Council debate. More specifically, three most central signs: elements, nodal points and moments was chosen when examining the materials. These three central signs have been chosen since they are the most relevant for what this thesis aims to study. To use these conceptual definitions when examining the Security Council meetings helped to narrow down the search for central discursive practices. In other words, these signs helped to recognize that there are two central discourses with a fixed meaning within the Security Council meetings.

As presented in figure 1 below, the first hegemonic discourse is a human rights centered discourse, which was most central in the year 1999. The concept of ‘Civilians’ is the privilege sign possessing the most central value within this discourse. The moments in this discourse can be explained as ‘protection of civilians’ and ‘empowerment of people’ in order to achieve peace, since these are signs possessing diversity but at the same time a relation towards each other. This indicates that these concepts are open for interpretation, since they can have various meanings. Furthermore, the element in this discourse, which also provides a closure to the discourse, is when the Council articulates that women and children are defenseless. This creates a closure because it excludes everything else that female agency could be.

\textsuperscript{72} Shepherd L. (2011) “Sex, Security and Superhero(in)es: From 1325 to 1820 and Beyond”, p. 515.
Furthermore, as figure 2 shows below, the second hegemonic discourse within the Security Council, is characterized by patriarchal values hidden behind a veil of feminism. The nodal point within this discourse is the concept of women. This indicates that there has been a clash between the hegemonic discourses, which has affected a replacement of the nodal point of civilians into making the concept of women the most privileged sign. Furthermore, the moment in this discourse is female agency/role and its relation to other signs, such as sexual violence. The element in this second discourse makes a closure for how female agency is represented within the discourse. This closure is achieved through sexual violence and stereotypical gender binaries contributing to the portrayal of female agency as either victims or saviors. These concepts constitute a closure to the discourse because it excludes all other subjectivity that falls outside this normed performance.
The aim of analyzing these two larger units of discourses, by viewing and mapping the nodal points, moments, and elements, is to see if the concept of civilians has become gendered and changed over time.
4 Analysis

In this chapter, the analysis is divided into sub-chapters covering the Security Council’s meetings throughout the years 1999 to 2001.

4.1 The Security Council’s human rights-oriented discourse

In 1999, the first conducted Security Council meeting covering the agenda of ‘Civilians in armed conflicts’ took place on February 12. The Security Council articulates central concepts such as persons, people, humans, and so on. Victims in armed conflict are articulated in first hand as civilians and therefore the Council’s argumentation is concerning protection for all civilians. Therefore, there is a discursive consensus that war and armed conflict targets civilians. Because of this, when speaking about women and children it is in relation to being part of the larger concept of civilians. This is what Laclau and Mouffe would define as nodes connected to the more central nodal point. In this case, women are considered as a node connected to the more central nodal point, which are civilians.

“The ICRC is faced today with 20 open conflicts the world over, in many of which civilians are the first and principal target. Women, children, the elderly, the sick, refugees and internally displaced persons have been attacked in large numbers and methodically driven from their homes”

When the Security Council mentions women and girls, it is for the most part in relation to them being civilians. The citation above is a central articulated moment throughout all the meetings conducted by the Security Council in 1999. This means that the statement above is frequently repeated within the meetings and that civilians are the main targeted group of armed conflict. The Council includes women, children, elderly, sick and so on in the concept of civilians.

“[…] promoting peace and humanitarian action have set the stage for today’s discussion on protecting civilians. […] and we are grateful for the opportunity to speak to it as it relates to children and women”

In some cases, women and children are portrayed as vulnerable, but at the same time, the Council makes the direct claim that it is civilians that need to be protected. Therefore, women and girls are a node to the larger concept of civilians. This could depend on that the notion of gender within the discourse is not connected to sex (an essentialist notion) but rather to masculinities.

74 Security Council (12 Feb 1999), meeting 3977: Civilians in armed conflict, p. 2 (My emphasis in bold).
75 Ibid, p. 5 (My emphasis in bold).
and femininities. This would indicate that the discourse is to some extent gender neutral. Furthermore, the protection of civilians is a periodic topic throughout the discourse within the Council. In the first meeting conducted by the Security Council in 1999, rape is only mentioned three times.

“Every day, thousands of civilians are being raped [...] Thus, a large number of civilian victims are women and children who are frequently subjected to rape or systematic sexual exploitation.”

In the quotation above, women and children are once again defined to be part of the concept of civilians. Therefore, the Council is not specifically pointing out women and children to be the only group experiencing the acts of wartime rape. Hence, sexual violence is not yet current on the agenda within the meetings. In terms of Laclau and Mouffe’s discourse theory, the concept of wartime rape would be a temporary closure of the discourse. This indicates that sexual violence is a sign within the discourse that has not yet received a fixed meaning. The closure occurs through the discourse transforming the element into a moment that contains a fixed meaning. Therefore, because of this closure, the discourse has the possibility to exclude everything that is outside the discourse.

“The Security Council notes the deleterious impact of the proliferation of arms, in particular small arms, on the security of civilians, including refugees and other vulnerable populations.”

The second meeting held, in 1999, with the agenda of civilians in armed conflict, concerned the Security Council’s considerations of a report produced by the Secretary-general of the Security Council. In their considerations, they did not articulate women specifically as targets of armed conflict, but rather articulated refugees and other vulnerable populations as a node to the nodal point of civilians. Therefore, it can be interpreted that women are vulnerable but it is not explicitly articulated in the discourse.

“We are pleased that the report highlights the discriminatory nature of armed conflict, focusing on how men and women suffer differently. This aspect has too often been absent from analyses presented to the Council.”

77 Security Council (12 Feb 1999), meeting 3977: Civilians in armed conflict, p. 24 & 26 (My emphasis in bold).
79 Security Council (12 Feb 1999), meeting 3978: Civilians in armed conflict, p. 2 (My emphasis in bold).
80 Security Council (16 Sep 1999) meeting 4046: Civilians in armed conflict, p. 6 (My emphasis in bold).
Furthermore, the council expresses their concern of human suffering. As Sylvester argues, every bodily experience of war is experienced differently. This is something that the Council highlights in the meeting. By framing and acknowledging both men’s and women’s suffering the discourse maintains a more central approach to human rights. Suffering is, however, a concept with various meanings. According to Sylvester, suffering derives from bodily experiences. These experiences, both from men and women, give the discourse its meaning.

“Women and children have become the primary targeted victims of armed conflict because of their inability to defend themselves.”

In general, the articulated discourse within the meetings is addressing the agenda of ‘Civilians in armed conflicts’ from a human rights perspective free from an essentialist notion of gender. The only time when a clear gendered mindset becomes evident in the discourse is when the Council expresses their concern regarding women and children as being unable to defend themselves. The indication that women and children cannot defend themselves creates a closure to the discourse. The closure is based on the concept of civilians having an ambiguous meaning, and when women and children are linked to the node of defenselessness, it receives a fixed meaning. This fixed meaning could for example be that women and children are weak; it is however not explicitly articulated within the discourse. It becomes a fixation of a gendering where women are attached to what is believed to be intrinsic attributes, such as weak, emotional or peaceful. However, these “intrinsic” attributes are in fact constructed by the discourse.

“[…] the most efficient means of protecting civilians would be to prevent conflict situations and tackle their root causes, as they result in untold suffering.”

In the 1999 meetings, protection was a recurring topic. Protection is what in terms of Laclau and Mouffe would be called a moment, since it gains meaning by its relation to other signs. It is articulated by the Council that something has to be protected, and this something is civilians. Therefore, the Council articulates a discursive diversity of the relation of the concept protection and civilians. However, the concept of civilians is not defined as more than being humans, which also is a concept holding a large ambiguity. This ambiguity of the concepts, however, makes the discourse more human rights oriented since it includes all human beings. The discourse does not include stereotypical gender norms when speaking about protection of civilians.

“The objective of a culture of peace is the empowerment of people.”

81 Sylvester, C. (2013) War as experience contributions from international relations and feminist analysis, p. 3-5.
82 Security Council (16 Sep 1999) meeting 4046: Civilians in armed conflict, p. 23 (My emphasis in bold).
83 Security Council (17 Sep 1999) meeting 4046: Civilians in armed conflict, p. 10 (My emphasis in bold).
Here it is discursively articulated that empowerment of people lead to a culture of peace. In this quotation, it becomes clear that the concept of people is what in terms of Laclau and Mouffe would be defined a moment. This moment, understood as people, is connected to other moments that are all connected within the discourse. These other moments are, as shown in the citation above, culture, peace and empowerment. This is what creates the discourse fixation of meaning, which could be argued to be a more human rights centric discourse free from an essentialist notion of gender. The discourse is rather viewing gender as a cultural construction not linked to the notion of biological sex. This can be understood in terms of Butler, that masculinity and femininity does not have a fixed meaning within the human rights-oriented discourse.  

In late 1999, the concept of women began to become a central part of the discourse, since women were beginning to be looked upon as victims separately and divided from the concept of civilians. For example, the Council began to articulate the discourse of women, children and elderly separately and not in relation to or part of the concept of civilians. In the citation below, it is highlighted that with preventive measures against violations and violence towards women, children and elderly the ultimate solution is to achieve world peace. As the Council expresses in the citation, it is a cure for the disease of war and human rights abuses.

“Putting in place various mechanisms to eradicate the exploitation of women, children and the elderly has proved to be just one of the mitigating solutions. It is like a cure for a disease that has already broken out.”

The patriarchal notion of gender becomes evident within the discourse here since there is a connection that women are the ones that will bring peace into the world, but first they need to be saved. In terms of Åhäll this could be understood as that female body is taken for granted to possess intrinsic gender attributes, such as life-givers, peaceful beings or non-combatants. The discourse recognizes women as both victims and also as saviors. This affects how female agency in war, conflict and peace is looked upon. However, this is something that we will come to and examine further in the next sub-chapter.

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84 Security Council (22 Feb 1999), meeting 3980: Civilians in armed conflict, p. 12 (My emphasis in bold).
86 Security Council (22 Feb 1999), meeting 3980, Resumption: Civilians in armed conflict, p. 9 (My emphasis in bold).
In the beginning of the year 2000, the discourse previously characterized by being a more human rights-oriented discourse, transformed into a more centric discourse on women and the representation of women. However, in line with this transformation, the concept of women seemed to grow into the character of being the only victims and the only group to suffer in war. I argue that this representation of female agency made by the Council is a misrepresentation that neglects other aspects of female agency. These other aspects could for example be independent, empowered or strong.88

“As concerns women in war, the Geneva Conventions and their additional Protocols afford women, as civilians, the same general protection as men. However, these instruments recognize the necessity of offering women specific protection because of their special needs. Despite these rules, women continue to suffer and, all too often, to be the targets of violence in armed conflicts”89

The quotation above indicates that there exists an undertone of a patriarchal mindset within the discourse. This could be a result of what Enloe argues, that international politics is masculinized because the people behind the world-making is influencing the discourse with patriarchy in various ways by not reflecting over their own lives and the patriarchy existing in it.90 Furthermore, it becomes evident that in the 2000 meetings the Council has a larger need to connect the concept of protection with women, and women with sexual violence.

“[…] the dissemination of the rules of humanitarian law protecting women and the issue of sexual violence […] Further action needs to be taken to offer women and girls special protection, particularly from acts of sexual violence”91

The quotation above clearly indicates that there exists a notion (direct or indirect) of stereotypical gender binaries within the Council. Stereotypical gender binaries result in that women are portrayed as needing protection from sexual violence. This articulation is in dichotomy to the existence of a perpetrator. It becomes problematic due to how the Council portrays women in relation to crimes that are highly heteronormative. In the social construction of heteronormativity, and its reproduction in the language of the Security Council meetings, the dichotomy of men as perpetrators and women as victims becomes evident.92 In terms of Laclau

89 Security Council (19 Apr 2000) meeting 4130, Resumption: Civilians in armed conflict, p. 5 (My emphasis in bold).
91 Security Council (19 Apr 2000) meeting 4130, Resumption: Civilians in armed conflict, p. 5 & 20 (My emphasis in bold).
and Mouffe this would be an element within the discourse, since men as perpetrators are not directly articulated. Furthermore, there is also a notion that indicates that this is the rightful truth of reality, thereby giving the discourse a closure for other interpretations.\(^{93}\) This closes the interpretation of for example Skjelsbæk, who argues that sexual violence is something constructed and performed rather than something natural. Therefore, the discourse excludes the idea that sexual violence is constructed based on the notion of masculinities and femininities and not due to biological sex per se.\(^{94}\)

“[…] women bear more than their fair share of the suffering. But women, who know the price of conflict so well, are also often better equipped than men to prevent or resolve it. For generations women have served as peace educators, both in their families and in their societies.”\(^{95}\)

This quotation is taken from the first meeting held in regard to the agenda ‘Women and Peace and Security’ in 2000. Once again, women are portrayed as having intrinsic gender attributes of being peaceful. Portraying women as peacemakers may create an understanding that lays the responsibility to achieve world peace on women’s shoulders. The task to achieve world peace could be difficult to accomplish when female agency is identified solely based on the notion of being peaceful and victims of war. This type of discourse interprets gender to be the same as sex. As Shepherd argues, female agency is intrinsically related to power and is therefore a production of this practice of power.\(^{96}\) Moreover, an interpretation of this is that the Security Council defines female agencies as saviors, since they will bring peace into the world.

“In response to the increased targeting of women and other civilians that has become a shameful instrument of contemporary warfare”\(^{97}\)

Here, the articulated relationship between women and civilians indicates that women have primarily become the main representation of civilians. Therefore, the nodal point of civilians is transforming into the concept of women. The concept of women is however never defined in the Security Council’s meetings. However, they do make a distinction between male and female based on intrinsic stereotypical gender attributes, which indicate that women are what men are not and vice versa. Furthermore, within the Council’s discourse there seems to be a divergence of the views on female agency and role in war.

\(^{95}\) Security Council (24 Oct 2000) meeting 4208: Women and Peace and Security, p. 3 (My emphasis in **bold**).
\(^{97}\) Security Council (24 Oct 2000) meeting 4208: Women and Peace and Security, p. 29 (My emphasis in **bold**).
“Women are generally mentioned only as victims. To the extent that it is civilians that suffer most from conflicts, women represent a high percentage of the victims”

Women are here portrayed as victims, but at the same time, the Council criticizes its own discourse for generally mentioning women only as victims. This misrepresentation of the female role within the discourse may occur due to the existence of a normed performance. It could be that women are perceived with intrinsic attributes such as weakness and vulnerability, which then define them as victims, because gender has been associated to sex for so many decades. As Sylvester argues, the subjectivity to everything that does not fit into the description of these normed performances are excluded or rejected, such as female agency as independent, empowered or strong.

“[…], civilians increasingly represent the overwhelming majority of war victims, with women and girls targeted for the most brutal forms of attack, including rape, sexual mutilation, sexually humiliating treatment and forcible impregnation”

It is important here to acknowledge that a great number of women and girls are exposed to sexual violence in war and conflict. However, to portray women and girls as victims of sexual violence is not only to minimize their female agency but also to attribute women in general as weak and vulnerable. This is what Nordstrom would argue to be the problem with the definition of sexual violence, as a wartime weapon, since it is viewed as a fundamentally gendered phenomenon. It neglects the perception of the possibility that victims of sexual violence are not only women. Furthermore, by viewing sexual violence in war as a gendered phenomenon, this constructs stereotypical gender binaries that only women can be the victims and only men can be the perpetrators. However, the Council declares in the meetings in October 2000 that they need to move beyond the portrayal of women as victims. The Council does so by portraying the role of women in war, which can be seen in the citation below.

“Great numbers of women are not only under the constant threat of sexual violence and death, but often have to endure the loss of parents, children or husbands and are forced to assume the role of main breadwinner and carry the heavy economic burden of the survival of their families”

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In addition to the citation above, the Council also expresses that, “women have lost their lives, husbands, sons, daughters, brothers and fathers in this absurd war”. This is another sign that the Council attributes and defines female agency as that of wives, mothers and daughters. Therefore, the discourse excludes everything else that falls outside the scope of this heteronormative normed performance. The content within this closure of the discourse is only concerning a specific group of women. This is problematic because it neglects the human rights for everyone else that falls outside this scope. In the last meeting, before the Council adopted UNSCR 1325, the agenda on women as peace bringers was widely central within the discourse.

“Peace and security are the prime responsibility of this body, and women have a right to be involved, especially where we men have failed. They have proved they can do it. Let us involve them and empower them”

As Shepherd argues, agency is a useful production of practices of power. However, agency does only emerge from a particular discursive context. For the Council to express themselves as superiors over women and to have the power to empower “them” is a challenge within the discourse. It creates consequences for how international politics understand, look upon and speak about female agency. This type of discourse predicts that only another more powerful actor can constitute female agency in form of empowerment. In the quotation above the Council expresses themselves to be “we men” and that they are superiors to the female “other”. This in turn automatically links female agency to the dichotomy of powerlessness.

The issue here is that women have always had the ability to be involved within international politics. However, there has always existed a construction of minimizing the female ability of involvement, which has led to women being neglected and excluded in these matters for decades. For the Council to articulate themselves as they do – that women now have proved themselves worthy to take part in international politics, so let “us” empower “them” – is extremely degrading to all women. Especially to all the women that actually have become empowered by own initiative, regardless of what the Council may have done. The whole discourse regarding female empowerment becomes contradictory, since the Council ascribes itself

as a hegemonic masculinity. Moreover, the Council ascribes itself as superiors to other masculinities, as well as to a feminized other.\footnote{Hutchings, K. (2008; 2007) "Making Sense of Masculinity and War", p. 389-390.}

“Many studies have established that women tend to be more sincere, reliable and compassionate [...] Men may even subconsciously wish for the excitement of adventure that conflicts present. Women are more likely to shun violence more consistently. For those reasons, and more, women are likely to be more committed to resolving disputes more peacefully than men are. [...] As women are superior in caring, providing, loving and balancing in everyday life, let them also use their skills, warmth, caution and compassion to promote peace and security to this strife-stricken world.”\footnote{Security Council (25 Oct 2000) meeting 4208, Resumption: Women and Peace and Security, p. 11 (My emphasis in bold).}

The excerpt presented above, has a clear essentialist notion of gender. Firstly, the Council erases all possibility that women can be different from each other by using a heteronormative discourse when describing “her”. In other words, women are ascribed with stereotypical attributes linked to what the constructed notion of being a mother or wife implies. This heteronormative discourse is created by several different nodes being linked together in order to shape a larger unit. These nodes are found in the form of attributes such as sincere, reliable, compassionate, non-violent, caring, providing, loving, balanced, and so on. All of these nodes are connected to the nodal point of women.\footnote{Jørgensen, M. W., & Phillips, L. J. (2002). Discourse analysis as theory and method, p. 27.} This becomes problematic because it makes the concept of women representative of some/most/all women in the world.\footnote{Shepherd L. (2011) “Sex, Security and Superhero(in)es: From 1325 to 1820 and Beyond”, p. 516.} Secondly, to indicate that men subconsciously wish for the excitement that conflict brings and women not, once again constitutes a gendered performance. The discourse does not include all human beings’ experiences of war. Instead, it creates a masculinization of men and feminization of women.\footnote{Åhäll, L. & Shepherd, L.J. (2012) Gender, agency and political violence, p. 4.}

The meeting held on October 31, also the last meeting in 2000, was a short meeting where the Council gave their consensus for the adoption of UNSCR 1325.\footnote{Security Council (31 Oct 2000) meeting 4213: Women and Peace and Security, p. 1-3.} However, this meeting is of significance despite the Council not being able to articulate much in it. This is because the action to adopt the resolution constitutes a meaning based on discursive practices. In a way, it creates and recognizes female agency, as either victims or saviors.\footnote{Shepherd L. (2011) “Sex, Security and Superhero(in)es: From 1325 to 1820 and Beyond”, p. 516.}
In this sub-chapter, a comparison will be made between the two hegemonic discourses that the analysis above has been able to map out. This comparison is important to conduct in order to be able to understand how the concept of civilians have been portrayed, as well as how it has changed over time within the meetings. This comparison is analyzed in relation to the meetings conducted in the year 2001.

“It is a sad fact of life that women very often are civilians in conflict situations" In particular, we hope that special attention will be given to the protection of women, children and other vulnerable groups in armed conflict.

In the end of 1999, the human rights-oriented discourse within the Council changed to a more gender-based discourse. This change was due to the Council starting to articulate the concept of women in isolation from the nodal point of civilians. For example, when the element of women is articulated in isolation, it is thereby being fixed to the notion that women are solely victims. Furthermore, women as victims indicate that there are intrinsic attributes such as weakness or vulnerability within the female being. Since the Council consists of various countries with different nationalities and cultures, one could assume that it would have defined the concept of women differently. However, this is not the case. All the permanent representatives of the Council speak about female agency as victims in the same manner. To frame women based on the notion of this stereotypical gender binary creates a closure for the discourse. This closure then per se excludes every other subjectivity that falls outside the definition of being a victimized woman from the discourse.

“We have given special attention to the gender perspective and to protecting women against trafficking”

There is an absence of the topic of sexual violence within the meetings held in 2001. In all four meetings held in 2001, the Council only mentions sexual violence once, and that is in relation to protecting women against trafficking. Therefore, it is not discussed in the same extent as it had been during the meetings in the year 2000. It may be due to that the Security Council connects sexual violence to the issue of women, which the agenda ‘Women and Peace and Security’ in 2000, covers in a much broader sense. What the Council misses to highlight or acknowledge within the

115 Security Council (23 Apr 2001) meeting 4312, Resumption: Protection of civilians in armed conflict, p. 10 (My emphasis in bold).
116 Security Council (23 Apr 2001) meeting 4312: Protection of civilians in armed conflict, p. 6 (My emphasis in bold).
discourse concerning sexual violence is that there is a possibility that both men and women can be potential perpetrators, as well as victims of wartime rape and trafficking. By not acknowledging this perspective, the consequence is that sexual violence becomes a gendered phenomenon. To gender the concept of sexual violence directly indicates that only women can be victims and only men can be potential rapists.117 As Skjelsbæk argues, wartime rape should rather be interpreted as a power relationship between a masculinized perpetrator and a feminized victim. This does not however indicate that the masculinized perpetrator necessarily needs to be a man or the feminized victim to be a woman.118

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5 Discussion

This paper has examined how the United Nation Security Council has gendered the concept of civilians in the process of adopting the ‘Women and Peace and Security’ resolution 1325. Through an analysis consisting of the materials from the Council meetings in the year 1999 to 2001, it has become evident that there is an existing hegemonic shift of discourses within the council. The shift has gone from being a more human rights centered discourse, to concern a more gendered discourse with patriarchal values. Moreover, this second discourse has expressed itself behind a veil of feminist thoughts. However, what this thesis has aimed to do is to map out which gender constructions that have been evident in the discourses. The main objective has therefore been to demonstrate that during the process of adopting resolution 1325, the Council have had a one-dimensional understanding of women as the only group to fall under victimhood in war and conflict.

As Enloe argues, international politics is masculinized because it is based on essentialist ideas and practices of stereotypical gender binaries that people are exposed to in their everyday life, which reflects in the discursive practices of policy. Maybe the inadequate representation of female participation within the Security Council meetings have infiltrated the discourse with patriarchal values, which has resulted in that the portrayal of female agency either is as victims or saviors. This combined with the Security Council’s attempts to control the representation of women by describing them, as representative for some/most/all women in the world, is central for the world-making process. This is patriarchy, heteronormativity and a framing of stereotypical gender binaries.

Furthermore, the issue with recognizing sexual violence as something instrumental is that femininity changes within the war- and peace discourse. For example, femininity was not to the same extent acknowledged within the Security Council meetings until they framed sexual violence as a wartime weapon. The adoption of resolution 1325 also had an impact on how femininity changed over time within the discourse in the meetings. Therefore, it was only after the recognition of sexual violence as a judicial instrument that the female identity and experiences of war was taken more seriously. The discourse of sexual violence as an instrumental weapon of war is however problematic because it is linked to a gendered narrative. It becomes problematic that the Security Council frames sexual violence as a gendered phenomenon. This is problematic since

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it constructs the notion that only men can be potential perpetrators and women the only potential victims.

This chapter is also the forum for bringing up further developed questions that have appeared throughout the writing process. For instance, is it possible to study the relation of male- and female agency, if not being based on the perception of a victim/perpetrator relationship? I argue yes, because the recognition of heteronormativity as the “normal” should not be made in any circumstances. Moreover, this blindness of stereotypical gender binaries makes it difficult to study traditional war theory. The contribution that this thesis has made is to show that war studies are neglecting the conceptualization and practice of gender. This by either entirely excluding females from the ontology of war or misrepresenting female agency. It is important when studying war to take into account all sufferers experiences of war, as well as highlight that in some cases also women can be the actors behind the violence of war itself. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge the possibility that both men and women can be victims, as well as perpetrators of violence in war.
6 Conclusion

The conclusion that can be drawn out of the analysis is that female agency is not correctly represented within the discourses of the Security Council, since it is based on essentialist notions. In other words, it has become evident that the Security Council already before the adoption of UNSCR 1325, interpreted gender in relation to sex. However, this patriarchal interpretation of gender continued into the talks on the agenda of ‘Women and Peace and Security’. The analysis has provided the clear indication that the Security Council gendered the concept of civilians. However, the concept did not become gendered in response to the adoption of UNSCR 1325. The transformation of the concept began already in the 1999 meetings due to the existence of a patriarchal undertone within the discourse. However, it was not before the meetings, covering the agenda ‘Women and Peace and Security’, conducted in 2000 that it was noticeable that the concept of civilians had been replaced by the concept of women.

I have identified, with help from Laclau and Mouffe’s discourse theory, two hegemonic discourses: 1) a more human rights-oriented discourse focusing on the concept civilians, and 2) a discourse influenced by patriarchal values hidden behind a veil of feminism. What we have come to learn by examining the meetings, is that the shift between these hegemonic discourses was not sudden. It was evident within the more human rights-oriented discourse in the 1999 meetings that there were elements characterized by a patriarchal mindset. However, the majority of the 1999 discourse was mostly gender-neutral by using articulations such as civilians, peoples, protection for all civilians, as well as framing women and children as part of civilians.

By analyzing the discourse in 2000 and 2001, we can see that the hegemonic discourse of patriarchal values ended up in center during the adoption process of UNSCR 1325. It has become evident by examining the timeframe of the meetings that the more human rights-oriented discourse transformed and was replaced by a hegemonic discourse characterized by patriarchal values. This second mentioned discourse became more apparent the closer it came to the adoption of resolution 1325. Therefore, the conclusion drawn from analyzing the Security Council’s meetings is that there was a hegemonic shift of discourses. This shift depended on that there was a clash between the more human rights-oriented discourse and the patriarchal discourse.

There are clear indications within these discourses of already fixed ideals of masculinity and femininity based on an essentialist notion. Moreover, these ideals have been laid as a foundation for how female agency has been represented in the second hegemonic discourse. The ideal that
has become evident is that female agency only is described in relation to the representation of women as victims or saviors and nothing in between. This indicates that only articulating a victimized group of women in the discourse excludes all other female agencies, such as independent, empowered, or strong.
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