Emotion matters

Today, participation in Peace Support Operations abroad is one of the main tasks for the Swedish Armed Forces. Nevertheless, the emotional costs associated with these engagements have not been subject to any detailed research, especially not when it comes to service in what is militarily described as low-intensity conflict areas – the main focus of this thesis.

From an emotion sociological perspective and interviews with soldiers before, during and after their deployments (mainly to Liberia and Kosovo during 2006-2007) one central argument put forward in this thesis states that the emotional demands therein are considerable.

Furthermore, the thesis questions a prevalent view, which states that the successful soldier is someone with emotional control, in the sense that he ‘lacks’ feeling towards what he/she is doing. Rather, Weibull argues, the soldiers’ emotion management work is what it takes to get the job done when choosing, modeling, managing, and displaying the ‘right’ emotional expression. Moreover, the thesis emphasizes that emotion management demands are not restricted to the tour of service. Returning home often involves feeling both cognitively and emotionally disoriented, even if the mission has been militarily quite uneventful.
Emotion matters
Emotion management in Swedish Peace Support Operations

Louise Weibull
Acknowledgements

Firstly, I am deeply thankful to my thesis advisors: Jan Karlsson at Karlstad University and Eva Haldén at the Swedish National Defence College (SNDC). Jan has been with me from the very beginning and made this journey a rock-steady experience with his ever firm engagement, stimulating critique and pedagogic style. Eva joined in 2010, and has been a splendid source of critical advice and warm collegial support.

Among my colleagues at SNDC, I am also indebted to Bo Talerud, Erik Hedlund and Anders Berggren for their encouragement in the critical phase of starting up. During a later phase of this project, I especially want to thank Franz Kernic, head of the sociology group at the SNDC, for the financial support that facilitated the writing of the final stages of the thesis, and also for encouragement in a number of other ways. I extend this thanks to Jan Hallenberg, head of the political science section at SNDC, who helped me find the space to focus on writing at the very end.

I would also like to thank Dan Öberg, Michael Gustafson, Magnus Granberg and Malin Persson for bringing stimulating discussions, humour and thesis-distance to our lunchtime conversations. Moreover, I thank my colleagues at SNDC Karlstad. Especially Susanne Hede has been supportive from the beginning as an inspiring colleague and friend.

Further, I am grateful to Eyal Ben-Ari at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, who generously reflected upon and inspired my work at an early stage. I additionally benefited from the period when I was fortunate to have been a visiting scholar of the Human Resources Management department (HRM) of Strathclyde University, Glasgow. A special thanks to Dora Scholarios at HRM.

I have also appreciated contact with the PhD-student group at the department of Working Life Science in Karlstad, where the yearly PhD-students congregation has particularly been a vivid source of inspiration and fine group to socialize with after hours. Special thanks to Kjersti Lien-Holte for introducing me to Norwegian customs and to Jan Moren for brightening up my life with Dylan quotes and a close friendship. A very special thanks to my PhD-colleague Line Holth for making this time at least two standard deviations better, and for sharing both hardships and highs with me over the past years.

Outside of academia – and it would be impossible to mention all of you dear friends – I especially thank the members of the ‘iron gang’, Mia Lehndal, Hanne Fjelde and Anders Heggestad (who I am also indebted to for the cover of this thesis), as well as members of my band ‘Don’t be a stranger’, who have contributed with important distractions over the years. Warm thanks to Liv Widell and my sister, Christina Weibull. I thank my father for
always supporting me and for the numerous writing-retreats at your country house. My mother once told me that Academia could be a stimulating place. Apart from introducing me to this idea, you have always stood by me with inspirational talks, sushi-take-away and dimensions of support that are hard to put in words.

During the last two years of this project I have had a partner who has supported me in innumerous ways in finishing the writing of this thesis. Thank you Thomas – for this I am forever grateful. I am also thankful for the outstanding service offered by the staff at the Anna Lindh Library.

Last but not least, my most sincere gratitude is directed to the soldiers and officers who so generously have given of their time, knowledge and patience. I hope you will recognize the character of your work in the image here painted. My special thanks also go to David Jacobson, John Karlsson, Joakim Lempiäinen, Johan Tideskog, Karin Skelton, Mattias Wandler, Steve Henly and Ingrida Leimanis.

Louise Weibull

Stockholm, November 2012
To my mother
List of essays

*Essay I*
Weibull, L. (2011) La gestion des émotions dans les opérations en faveur de la paix, in *L’Année Sociologique*. (For the original version of this article, see appendix I. Essay I in the thesis is an English version, Emotion management in military Peace Support Operations)

*Essay II*

*Essay III*

*Essay IV*

* Second author.

** First author.
1. INTRODUCTION ................................................................. 8
   Emotion management demands in low-intensity conflict areas - an overlooked area .......... 10
2. EMOTIONS IN THEORY AND IN MISSIONS ABROAD .................... 14
   Towards a sociology of emotions ........................................... 14
   Emotion management and the four essays ................................ 17
   Emotions and military sociology .......................................... 20
   Emotion management demands in Peace Support Operations .......... 21
3. EMOTION DEMANDS BOTH OVERLOOKED AND UNDERESTIMATED .... 26
   Emotion management skills are taken for granted .......................... 27
   Emotions can be stored and ‘let out’ ....................................... 28
   Emotions are irrational and an obstacle to operational effectiveness .......... 29
   Soldiers’ espoused values are geared towards combat skills ............ 31
   Concluding remarks and a summary of the thesis’ contributions .......... 32
4. RESEARCH DESIGN .................................................................. 34
   Scope and demarcations ......................................................... 34
   Research questions .................................................................. 35
   The sample ............................................................................. 35
   Methods .................................................................................. 37
   Ethical considerations ............................................................. 40
   Conducting emotion research .................................................. 40
   Interpretation, coding and generalization ...................................... 43
5. THE FOUR ESSAYS IN SUMMARY ............................................ 47
   Essay I - Emotion management in military Peace Support Operations ........ 49
   Essay II - Swedish-Irish cooperation in Liberia ........................... 52
   Essay III - ‘Don’t fight the blue elephant’ .................................... 55
   Essay IV - Post-deployment disorientation .................................... 58
6. CONCLUDING REMARKS .......................................................... 61
   Implications ........................................................................... 61
   Svensk sammanfattning .......................................................... 62
   References .............................................................................. 66
   Essay I .................................................................................... 75
   Essay II ................................................................................... 96
   Essay III .................................................................................. 112
   Essay IV .................................................................................. 136
   Appendix I ............................................................................... 161
1. INTRODUCTION

In a highly personal account, *Brödre i blodet,* ('Blood brothers') (2011), second lieutenant Emil Johansen, officer in the Norwegian army, tells of his memories from serving in Afghanistan. One passage illustrates how, after an enemy encounter, he plays a song on the vehicle loudspeakers, and notes how the love ballad successfully calms down a group of combat soldiers high on adrenaline and testosterone (p. 152). While most of us probably would not expect soldiers to cool off from a highly stressful event to the sound of Mariah Carey, this situation reminds us of one of this thesis' central points, namely that if we underestimate the role of emotions in military work, our attention is obscured from the range of incidents where emotions, by necessity, need to be managed, and from the ways soldiers use to manage them.

Along this line of argument, the aim of this thesis is to broaden and re-appraise the current view on emotions in Peace Support Operations (PSO), by applying a sociological lens and an emotion management perspective (Hochschild, 1979, 1983; Bolton, 2000a, 2005; Bolton & Boyd, 2003) to soldiers’ work and living conditions abroad. Thus, we see instances requiring soldiers to maintain poise and adapt their emotional expressions to match what is appropriate in various situations emerging as both abundant and multifaceted. This has not been fully recognized, either as an immediate demand in operational theatres or as an emotional cost with possible long term consequences. One likely reason is that many of the espoused values held within the Swedish Armed Forces are connected to connotations of ‘real’ military tasks, i.e. combat (Dunivin, 1994; Winslow, 2000). The more missions abroad involve warlike encounters, the more concern for the emotional load on soldiers, and especially for those suffering from PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder). However natural this is, it still means that the emotional load on the majority of soldiers will largely remain unnoticed and receive much less attention.

Thus, one contribution of this thesis, pointing to the extensive demands for emotion management even in low-intensity conflict areas (here Kosovo and Liberia), is to fill an existing knowledge gap concerning missions abroad in general. This is based on the assumption that to grasp the full extent of the emotional load in today’s conflict ‘hot spots’, attention must also be paid to these less dramatic emotional demands that certainly exist regardless of mission area. Starting from an emotion sociology perspective also means adopting a broader focus than more clinical approaches as to the possible sources behind emotional demands in international missions, as this perspective lays heavy emphasis on organizational and environmental influences.

---

1 Peace Support Operations (PSO) is an umbrella term for different sorts of operations encompassing peacemaking, peacekeeping, peace enforcement, peace-building, conflict prevention and state building. In the proceedings, this term will be used to signify both low and high-intensity conflict areas. The first case specifically concerns Kosovo and Liberia whilst the second refers to Afghanistan.
By investigating the demands for emotion management in missions abroad, the study contributes to two academic fields, that of military sociology and emotion sociology. Whilst military sociology has thus far not considered the management of emotions in the sense discussed here, a new empirical field, peace support operations, is introduced in emotion sociology research, with the application of this discipline’s central concepts. The findings of this thesis can thus be seen as the result of bringing together two disciplines with important but different insights into the area under study. However, even if the study presents a dual contribution herein, the main objective of the thesis is to promote wider attention to the emotional demands made on soldiers deployed abroad amongst military authorities and practitioners.

Today, participation in multinational operations abroad is one of the main tasks for the Swedish Armed Forces (SAF). It is therefore essential that our knowledge of the work conditions in these operations is continuously deepened and updated, not least with regard to the emotional costs associated with these engagements. Connected to this is the conviction that such emotional demands are especially relevant in the military context. In no other work situation is managing or neglecting to manage emotions as consequential and challenging for both personal safety and task accomplishment, and in no other work situation are the emotional costs associated with the tasks more extreme. The fact that the responsibility for dealing with this often lies with the most junior soldiers, many of whom have no former mission experience, only emphasises the above.

Against this background, with a main focus on low-intensity conflict areas, the two aims central to this thesis are: to highlight the external demands for emotion management as inherent in soldiers’ work, and to illustrate how the soldiers manage these demands.

The remainder of this introductory chapter presents the research area and its assumed contributions in more detail. Two main arguments are put forward. The first states that the emotional load on soldiers serving in low-intensity conflict areas has chiefly remained unnoticed by both military authorities and in previous literature. The second argument, further emphasized here, is that insights from studies conducted in these types of operational theatres, i.e. operations that today are both rare and comparatively below ‘the radar’ of both the media and the research community, can fill a knowledge gap with relevance beyond these mission contexts.

---

2 One of the few systematic qualitative studies on emotions and military work has been conducted by the Israeli anthropologist, Eyal Ben-Ari (1998). His ethnography, Mastering soldiers, is a longitudinal study of soldiering work in the Israeli Defence Forces. Unlike the Swedish soldiers under study here, these soldiers have served under a draft and operated in war-like situations.
Emotion management demands in low-intensity conflict areas - an overlooked area

The Swedish Armed Forces have considerable experience of participation in different missions abroad. Over the last 50 years they have been involved in 120 international missions in some 60 countries, and more than 100 000 Swedish men and women have served. However, from the beginning of the 1990s, the nature of these operations has changed dramatically from participants principally acting as observers of events and monitoring signed peace agreements to their potentially using force in order to ‘protect, help, and save’ primarily the civilian population. Nevertheless, although the SAF has long-term experience of international engagements, having been trained mainly for invasion and national territorial defence, the impact on soldiers from ‘Military operations other than war’ (MOOTW) has been underestimated. One reason behind this, that will be further discussed below, is that even if most European defence forces are involved in PSO, war-fighting is still the defining activity of military organizations (see also Dunivin, 1994; Winslow, 2000; Ydén, 2005).

With Swedish troops’ presence in increasingly intense and warlike operations such as those in Afghanistan, a closer follow up of veterans’ health and well-being has been initiated by the Ministry of Defence and many measures are now under implementation in cooperation with the rest of the Nordic countries. The findings of this study underline the importance of this and also indicate in agreement with Schok (2009) that it is high time to look beyond the worst-case impacts of international operations such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Military operations abroad have also other emotional consequences, which, regardless of their rating on a stress-scale, may impact the individual soldier’s future well-being for a long time.

To date, Swedish troops appear to have been able to uphold a good international reputation and there has been, in comparison with many other countries, little loss of life. This may be one reason for Sweden being relatively slow to initiate research in the field of international operations, a criticism that some researchers made as early as in the 1960s, and that was repeatedly referred to in the following thirty years (Andersson, 2001, p. 86). The result is that the main bulk of studies on Swedish troops’ experiences abroad have been presented during the last ten to fifteen years (Johansson, 1997, 2001; Andersson, 2001; Wallenius, 2001; Blomgren & Johansson, 2004; Michel, 2005; Blomgren, 2006; Tillberg et al., 2008; Nilsson, 2011; Isberg & Tillberg, 2011; Granberg, forthcoming).

---

4 An often quoted Swiss officer, General Däniker, was the first to suggest these as the core values for the professional role in Peace Support Operations.
5 See Försvarsdepartementet (Ministry of Defence), National Public Inquiries (SOU), SOU 2008:91, 2 October 2008
6 See Försvarsdepartementet (Ministry of Defence), Report, 21 September 2011
Even if this literature does contribute to a better understanding of Swedish missions abroad, it is, compared to this study, most often focused on other aspects of the service (leadership, individual resources, cognitive learning), and mainly takes its point of departure from disciplines such as psychology and educational science. While the emotional side of international service is in no way missing herein, the demands for emotion management stemming from formal and informal ‘feeling rules’ have not been illuminated in any detail.

Nevertheless, in soldiers’ diaries emotions are highly evident. The passage below is taken from the diary of a Swedish squad leader who reflected over what actually happened during the Bosnian war when his seriously undermanned unit was tasked over the course of three demanding weeks to defend what had previously been a hospital, but which was nothing more than a bombed-out shell of a building inhabited by some patients and a couple of nurses:

> With dulled senses and cynical through lack of sleep, the working conditions and the constant threat from the outside, we gradually became zombies experiencing almost no emotion. This wasn’t always very aesthetic, or ethically pleasing to the eye, but it was an unconscious first line of defence, protecting us from our surroundings, and perhaps above all from ourselves.


Indeed, few would deny that international missions involve a certain amount of emotional burdening on participants, and there is rich international evidence (Schok et al., 2009; Forbes et al., 2011; Hosek et al., 2011) that participating in war and high-intensity missions like those in Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan may cause severe psychological problems for many soldiers. Studies in the USA have shown that about 5% of American soldiers fill the criteria for PTSD, and when a diagnosis of depression is included, the proportion goes up to almost 20% (Tanielian & Jaycox, 2008). While soldiers serving in peace support operations do not experience as many life-threatening events as war veterans, scholars now claim that these operations have their own, specific stressors (Schok, 2009), often summarized as lack of control (see also Britt & Adler, 2003). This implies that even if soldiers serving in PSO are less often in mortal danger, they may be exposed to other highly stressful instances like humiliations and the risk of occasional sudden attacks. Mandates and policies also highly circumscribe their work situation, something that may also involve standing by and witnessing civilians’ suffering without having a right to intervene. Kunda’s (2006) comment that the organizational self in certain work contexts is ‘an active and artful construction, a performance, a tightrope walk, a balancing act of organizational reality claims’ (p. 216) seems highly accurate for PSO.
One main theme in this thesis is that the distinction between high and low-intensity conflict areas is not applicable when dealing with emotion management demands. This argument does not imply that these demands are seen as identical irrespective of mission area, but the presumption is that they differ more in degree than in kind. The traditional focus on worst-case scenarios and PTSD is not enough to grasp the whole range of emotion management demands that emanate from the specific character of PSO (see also Schok, 2009).

As mentioned above, this thesis mainly refers to service in two so-called low-intensity mission areas, Kosovo and Liberia. The engagement in Kosovo has successively been reduced from approximately 800 soldiers in the first contingent in 1999 to currently around 70 soldiers serving in the 25th contingent, and in the case of Liberia, all Swedish troops have been withdrawn since 2006.

Nevertheless, the previously mentioned demands for emotion management focused in this study are also likely to prevail in high-intensity conflict areas, even if naturally more frequent and pronounced in some positions than in others. Arguably, overriding problems from these theatres must involve taking care of the most severe consequences of stress and worst-case scenarios. Findings from low-intensity conflict areas could nevertheless assist to widen the perspective so that attention will also be given to the less dramatic emotion management demands that certainly exist regardless of mission context. This proposition is made with reference to what Danermark et al. (2002) call a theoretical generalization, meaning that if fundamental and constituent properties are inherent in the structure of a certain phenomenon, there is also high expectancy for similar empirical findings.

Examples of common traits that motivate a theoretical generalization of a similar emotional load in both low- and high-intensity conflict areas are, for instance, that emotion management is something that is mainly required in contacts with other people, usually involving face-to-face contact. In low-intensity theatres, where the work-situation is often described as ‘constabulary’ (i.e. police-like in nature), it is generally assumed that soldiers recurrently deal directly with ‘human nature’ to a much higher degree than in high-intensity theatres (see also Van Maanen & Kunda, 1989, p. 52). Today, the largest deployment of Swedish soldiers is in Afghanistan, where the soldiers frequently engage with different kinds of civilian and military actors at many levels. This means that similar demands for emotion management regulation prevail here, the main difference being that this context offers a much more pressing security situation. Another generic aspect of

Brian Selmeski (2007) gives some examples of possible encounters in theatres: comrades (one’s own unit), sister services, allies, adversaries (who may take the form of conventional forces or unconventional forces (e.g. guerrillas/special operations forces)) or irregular forces (e.g.
missions abroad that underlines why these demands are present regardless of conflict area, is that since both place and course of events can change very suddenly, you are in the business of the unexpected and hardly ever know for certain what to anticipate. That this type of situation requires both creativity and extensive emotion management skills goes without saying.

All in all, the point made here is that external demands for emotion management are constituent properties inherent in every PSO. Findings from low-intensity conflict areas can therefore have relevance beyond these empirical fields. The objective of this thesis to investigate and highlight the thus far highly underestimated emotion management requirements in low-intensity peace support operations is therefore well motivated.

The thesis comprises six chapters. The first is the above introduction where I have argued that emotion management demands in low-intensity mission areas have chiefly remained unnoticed and that central aspects of these demands have relevance irrespective of mission context. The second chapter introduces the thesis’ central theoretical concepts and motivates their relevance for the research area under study. Chapter three focuses on the possible reasons behind the Swedish Armed Forces’ scant interest in emotion management requirements, while chapter four describes the research design. Chapter five is an introduction to and a summary of the four essays. The sixth and last chapter summarizes the study’s conclusions in relation to the thesis’ main aims and briefly outlines some of its implications. This chapter ends with a summary of the thesis in Swedish.

paramilitaries/terrorists); non-combatants, including civilians of all ideological persuasions often in challenging circumstances (ranging from sympathisers and formerly empowered groups to refugees/displaced peoples and national minorities); international organisations or IOs (United Nations, regional organisations, Red Cross, etc.); non-governmental organisations (NGOs such as Doctors Without Borders, Care); and/or non-military government actors (especially diplomats and developmentalists – 3D or integrated security solutions) (p. 13f).
2. EMOTIONS IN THEORY AND IN MISSIONS ABROAD

The main aim of the chapter is to briefly present the theoretical abode of this thesis, emotion sociology, and some of its main concepts: emotion, emotion management and feeling rules and further, to present more closely the choice behind the theoretical points of departure. Another aim is to show that being ignorant of demands for emotion management and the ways soldiers adjust to and handle these multifaceted requirements also means a knowledge gap concerning one of the distinctive features of today’s missions abroad. The chapter ends with some reflections on the fact that the soldiers under study also seemed quite willing to manage their emotions in accordance with organizational objectives.

Towards a sociology of emotions

‘Emotions are the stuff of life and for people without emotions there is no reason to live’ states the Norwegian sociologist Jon Elster (1999, p. 403). Nevertheless, his compatriot, philosopher Arne Naess commented that same year that emotions as a subject held an alarmingly weak position within universities and colleges (Dahlgren & Starrin, 2004, p. 9). Although concern for emotion was present in early sociology (see for instance Cooley, 1902), the study of emotions from a sociological perspective did not emerge as a distinctive subfield until the 1970s (Fineman, 2000; Shilling, 2002; Turner & Stets, 2006). However, from the middle of this decade something of a renaissance for emotion sociology began, at least in the USA. This was also the time when Arlie Russell Hochschild (1979, 1983), repeatedly referred to herein, published her seminal analyses of emotion management regulation in both private and professional life.

Even if the development differed in different countries, the situation changed not much more than ten years after Arne Naess’s pessimistic remark, and in the wake of an ‘emotional turn’ (Kløres, 2009) within many academic fields, emotion studies are no longer an overlooked dimension. Its development within organizational theory is a good illustration of this trend, whereby previous focus on rationality and cognition has been completed with emotion perspectives. Bolton & Boyd (2003) conclude that emotions have now ceased to be an unimportant by-product of organizational life, and have become increasingly recognized as a vital and necessary part of an organization.

Management literature has been especially optimistic about how successful emotion management regulation can be used in leadership and how charismatic leaders can
motivate their followers to embark on the goals and values of the organization.\textsuperscript{8} The manipulative force behind this has also lead to criticism from many scholars (see for example Alvesson, 2002; Bolton, 2005; Kunda, 2006). The central ideas behind the concepts emotion, feeling rules, and emotion management and their application in this thesis, will now be more closely described.

\textit{Emotion, emotion management and feeling rules}

That emotions have an impact on our behavioural response to situational cues is a widespread notion. Wharton (2009) suggests that although sociological interest in emotion takes a variety of forms, a fundamental concern is to understand how emotions are regulated by culture and social structure and how emotional regulation affects individuals, groups, and organizations (p. 148). Emotion in this dissertation refers to 'ineffable feelings of the self-referential sort that index or signal our current involvements and evaluations. It is what an actor experiences or, at least, claims to experience in regard to the performances he or she brings off in the social world' (Van Maanen & Kunda, 1989, p. 53). The accuracy of this definition here stems from its emphasis of emotions as something from which our current involvements can be inferred, at the same time as it stresses that these involvements are presented to us in social situations. This definition can also be said to border on Hochschild's (1983) view, where feeling and emotion are seen as something like a sixth sense from which we discover our own viewpoint of the world. In the same vein, Archer (2000) sees emotions as important 'commentaries on human concerns'.

The concept of rules has frequently been used to analyse organisational life. From bureaucratic rules to 'social regulative rules' there is the recognition that rules are not hard 'social facts' but are the result of continual interpretation and negotiation which produces an ever-shifting framework for action (Bolton, 2005). The term 'feeling rules' is used to talk about how emotions are conducted. Feeling rules are those socially shared norms that influence how we act, feel or try to feel in a given social situation. When people shape and manage their feelings, it is consequently done within certain constraints. These ideas emerged notably in writings by Emile Durkheim (1858-1917), but are even more central to Erving Goffman (1922-1982), a pioneer within emotion sociology.\textsuperscript{9} The central assumptions behind feeling rules state that people in all human interaction adjust to norms (feeling rules) regarding emotional expressivity and that these rules are firmly

\textsuperscript{8} Bass’s writings on transformational leadership especially stress the emotional element (see for instance Bass & Riggio, 2006).

\textsuperscript{9} Goffman (1963) sees the rules pertaining to this area of conduct as situational properties. Codes derived therefrom are to be distinguished from other moral codes regulating other aspects of life (even if these sometimes apply at the same time as the situational code); for example, codes of honor, regulating relationships; codes of law, regulating economic and political matters; and codes of ethics, regulating professional life (p. 24).
embedded in the societal context, something that underlines how they often differ according to culture, gender and social class. From this follows that the appropriateness of a feeling is not something that could be inferred by examining the feeling in itself, but only in comparison with the implicit rules that frame our social interaction. Since these rules are mainly tacit knowledge, they are essentially presented to us by the reaction from our surroundings when a rule is broken. In our working life, Bolton (2005) comments that even if feeling rules are only one dimension of organisational life combined with policies, hierarchies, contracts, divisions of labour and status positions, feeling rules will have an impact on all these other dimensions. Moreover, feeling rules may be negotiated and changed and new feeling rules created, but feeling rules also stand over and above organisational actors informing and shaping the emotional life of an organisation.

If feeling rules establish a sense of entitlement or obligation and provide a guide to the outlook of our emotional exchanges, emotion management is the adjustment we make when we ‘actively try to change a pre-existing emotional state’ (Hochschild, 1983, p. 229). Even if it is widely acknowledged that corporate norms regulate human behaviour in professional life (Kanter, 1977; Jackall, 1988; Van Maanen & Kunda, 1989; Kunda, 2006), Hochschild takes this notion one step further and introduces the term ‘emotional labour’ to describe emotion management with a ‘profit motive slipped under it’ (1983, p. 119). With departure in studies in the service sector, she highlights how emotional expressions aimed at making favourable impression on clients often mean that personal feelings need to be used instrumentally.

In essence, emotion management ‘work’ means adjusting either a facial or bodily emotional expression or changing emotions ‘within’. One important difference in this perspective, compared to, for instance, stress management theories, is that emotion management concerns adjustment of feelings in a broader span, from interpretation of the situation and control of spontaneous emotions to holding back emotions and also changing one’s own emotions as well as the emotions of others (Hochschild, 1979, 1983). For her and most scholars within this field, employees have few direct ways of dodging the organizationally prescribed feeling rules, and adapting accordingly amounts to considerable emotion work for the individual. However, Sharon Bolton (2005), another scholar repeatedly referred to here, asserts that professionals such as lawyers and doctors usually avoid the emotional costs coupled to frequent emotion management by distancing themselves from too much engagement in their clients. A more detailed discussion on

---

10 For the individual, this means that every social encounter contains an element of risk, but the social order of interaction is there to minimize the risk and to make sure that the treatment of others is done with ‘ritual care’ (Goffman, 1967, p. 39; Bolton, 2005).

11 The use of the word ‘work’ to describe the management of emotion underlines that it is something that is actively done to feelings.
Hochschild’s and Bolton’s respective emotion management theories will now be presented.12

Emotion management and the four essays

The aim of this section is to give a background to the theoretical framework chosen for essays I, III & IV, while in essay II, the emotion management demands reside in the subtext.

Amy Wharton (2009) concludes in an overview that the central concept in Hochschild’s influential work, The managed heart (1983), ‘emotional labour’, has inspired an outpouring of research and made spectacular impact on sociological understanding of workers and jobs in a wide range of organizations. Two major streams of research are outlined for this classic term in the emotion sociology field. The first includes studies of interactive work. The research here focuses more directly on emotions and their management by workers, where the concept ‘emotional labour’ is seen as a vehicle for the understanding of the organization, structure and social relations of, predominantly, service jobs. The other approach is instead focused on the individuals’ efforts to express and regulate emotions and the consequences of these efforts.

Although this thesis contains elements of both these applications described by Wharton (2009),13 instead of Hochschild’s (1983) emotional labour theory, the development of this theory made by Bolton (2005) was mainly chosen for analyzing the incessant requirements for emotion management during service abroad. As will be seen, elements of Hochschild’s emotion management theory as a more general concept are applied in essay IV, while the analysis in essay I, the essay that most fully outlines the thesis’ main arguments, refers to Bolton’s (2005) development of Hochschild’s theory, first presented in Bolton (2000a) and Bolton & Boyd (2003). A typology that is further described in Bolton’s Emotion management in the workplace (2005) has been a great inspiration for this thesis’ analysis.

Bolton and Boyd (2003) suggest that instead of Hochschild’s view that one concept (i.e. emotional labour) captures all emotion management demands at work, organizational actors are able to draw on different sets of feeling rules according to context and their

---

12 None of these scholars see adjustments to institutionalized feeling rules as a potential expression of a sincere emotion (i.e. a real emotion, spontaneous or managed, not an empty expression). For a further discussion on emotion and authenticity in their respective works, see Salmela & Mayer (2009, p. 135-140).

13 Essay I, and to some extent essay II, bears affinity with the first category of interactive work studies, whilst essay III and IV focus on the consequences of these demands and organizational members’ efforts and emotion management work.
individual motivations to do so, for reasons such as legitimacy, conformity, instrumentality and/or empathy (p. 295). This is the main argument for why the typology further developed by Bolton is especially well suited to reflect distinctive facets of Swedish soldiers’ service in PSO, as it offers a more multifaceted framework outlining both organizational, professional, and social feeling rules’ impact on the employee’s motivation, professional identity, and performance. This comment will now be developed somewhat more closely.

As previously mentioned, Hochschild’s emotional labour concept has been popular among researchers studying a wide range of occupational groups (even if Hochschild herself claims that her theory is meant to be applicable to service workers in the private sector). On the other hand, Bolton’s (2005) typology also applies to professional groups within both public and private sectors. Moreover, her writings include examples of how professional and semi-professional groups in organizations may handle emotional demands in a different way than workers in the service sector.

Further, Hochschild’s (1983) thesis on the uniformly negative impact of emotion management for individuals is a point that has come to be questioned. Bolton (2000b, 2005) sees this view as too one-sided and negative and asserts that voluntary subjection to emotion management can also occur, as well as a personal desire to ‘do good’, i.e. when people voluntarily engage in supportive relationships at the work place, something that may also be a source of professional satisfaction for the employee14 (2000b, p. 581). This point is especially relevant here since the group under study consists of voluntary, highly motivated soldiers, whose narratives give evidence of personal satisfaction in ‘doing good’, which is frequently integral to their motivation for serving abroad.

Moreover, Bolton’s criticism involves Hochschild’s division of the emotion management performed in the private sphere (‘emotion work’), and that performed within the realms of paid labour,15 a division that neglects the fact that actors also bring their ‘private’ selves into the work place and consequently also engage in emotion management in relation to colleagues (Bolton, 2005). Even if Hochschild mentions the possibility of ‘emotion management as a gift’, her focus is not on ways in which people at work engage with others emotionally that are not directly tied into the formal job requirements16 (Bolton, 2005). Considering that living conditions for soldiers abroad often means 2-4 of them

---

14 With reference to, among others, Bolton & Boyd (2003), this point is somewhat lax in Hochschild (2009), where she too recognizes that emotional labourers can take pride in doing this work well (p. 114).
15 Hochschild goes on to reinforce this view in her later work (1990, p. 118).
16 In an invited commentary in International Journal of Work Organisation and Emotion (2009), she somewhat clarifies her point with regard to this division. Hochschild here takes the example of the truck driver that may feel friendly toward fellow drivers and hear out his boss’s bad family news, or the plumber who relates to customers and co-workers in a way that requires minimal relational skills. The important difference is that relating to others in these occupations is seldom the centerpiece of the job description (p. 119).
share accommodation in containers only big enough for the beds, and that borders between work and free time are most fluid in this context, the division made in Hochschild's emotional labour theory must be looked upon as less applicable in this context. It goes without saying that requirements for social adjustment to colleagues on missions abroad are quite extreme compared to most other jobs, where there are more distinct work-free zones for privacy and recreation.

Another point of special interest for this thesis and the context of the expeditionary service is stressed by Bolton & Boyd (2003) and Bolton (2005), namely that previous research has had a tendency to overlook possible conflict or contradiction between different emotion demands within the same organization. The presence of this aspect of emotion management demands in peace support operations will be illustrated in the essays below.

That the employer has the privilege of applying his interpretation of events is another central aspect of Hochschild’s definition of emotional labour. It is the employer who decides the appropriate emotional expression and who also checks that instructions are followed. In the case of the military operations described here, however, commanders can hardly prescribe any of this in advance, and the leadership doctrine of mission command (MC) is partly applied to compensate for this. Mission command means that the commanders state objectives and guidelines for execution and follow up the results, but give relative freedom in terms of actual execution, something that places greater responsibility on how tasks are dealt with at lower hierarchical command.

In summary, the section above has aimed to give a more detailed description of the theoretical frameworks chosen for this thesis and to describe the reasons for why Bolton’s emotion management theory can be seen to be very relevant to the context under study, and even more so than the more influential emotional labour theory developed by Hochschild (1983).17 The application of emotion sociology’s central theoretical concepts in military sociology and the context of peace support operations will now be discussed.

---

17 For an example of a scholar writing in defence of Bolton’s comprehensive critique of Hochschild’s emotional labour concept, see Brook (2009).
Emotions and military sociology

Generally speaking, emotions have not been a central focus in military sociology, and the main theoretical concepts of this thesis, feeling rules and emotion management, even less so. One contributing reason may be that military practice has received scant focus within military sociology (Ydén, 2008, p. 31). Nevertheless, some studies indirectly address emotions in writings on military leadership, discipline, cohesion, morale and esprit de corps. Eyal Ben-Ari (1998) notes that members of military organizations are open to cultural management of feelings and sentiments on two levels. Obviously, feelings are managed and monitored in a manner that will allow soldiers to perform and achieve military tasks (essentially to accomplish combinations of destruction, domination and defence), but the regulation of emotionality is also carried out in so far as it is administered in the process. Accordingly, on one level, feelings are mobilized toward the achievement of tasks (that is, in motivating soldiers); at another level they are regulated within the tasks themselves (p. 108).

One example of an indirect study of collective emotion management in the Swedish Armed Forces is military sociologist Klas Borell’s (2004) dissertation, Disciplinära strategier (Disciplinary strategies). Borell argues that the SAF have induced soldiers to enhance operational effectiveness through two different disciplinary strategies. The first, a classic chain of command, is called a mechanical disciplinary strategy advocating conformity of collective action, whilst the other, an organic disciplinary strategy is based on the ideals of Mission Command (MC) and the self-monitored group (see also Janowitz, 1965, p. 41-48). Another example is Goffman’s (1961b) writings on total institutions, views that have been frequently adapted by military sociologists when defining military life and its means of socialization and where control and discipline of soldiers’ mental, emotional and physical dispositions are key issues. However, the emotional organization outlined in the following is different from Goffman’s original ideas, since it consists of highly motivated volunteers operating abroad.

Operations abroad are inherently characterized by a high degree of unpredictability and the planning of actions in these is often synonymous with ‘organizing doubt’ (Kramer, 2004). The operations are also often spread out geographically, often requiring soldiers to face difficult dilemmas and make their own adequate decisions. Even if formal rules and regulations may still be bountiful and conformity and attention to detail may be praised, preparing for the unknown means that the traditional, mechanical control and chain of

---

18 All credit to Eyal Ben-Ari for this comment.
19 The combat situation is naturally also a situation characterized by unpredictability. For further comments on this topic, see for example Janowitz (1965, p. 42); Abrahamsen (2008, p. 151).
20 It should be noted, however, that although MC stresses the importance of initiative, it places a firm top-down fence around the self-organizing activities that are considered to be acceptable (Kramer, 2004, p. 213).
command must by necessity be transformed into the more organic, value-oriented leadership doctrine, Mission Command (Borell, 2004), used today in all the Swedish Armed Forces’ educational programmes, both at home and abroad. The Swedish military sociologist who most thoroughly answers to the purpose of outlining distinctive features of emotional expressions in both war and peace support operations is Bengt Abrahamsson (2008), whose ideas are reflected below.

Emotion management demands in Peace Support Operations

Military organizations are perhaps not the first thing one would associate with emotions. What you see in parades and ceremonies is most often a disciplined, rigid group of people, with solemn neutral faces and in conforming dress. Most often, emotional control and discipline are also portrayed in popular culture as some of the hallmarks of the military organization. On the battlefield, however, the situation is very different, with strong and unbridled emotions such as courage, fright, horror, rage, and fury seen as natural characteristics of the battle (Abrahamsson, 2008). In peace support operations the proposed emotional expressions are often quite the opposite. Showing strong emotions in these contexts may be both counterproductive and highly inappropriate, the ultimate reasons behind these deployments being quite different from most angles, i.e. object, aim, methods, and means. You have no specific enemy to fight – rather there are competing groups and former warring factions (FWF) that must be prevented from creating instability or anarchy. Fundamentally, your position as a third party should be upheld, implying that you stay impartial to avoid being accused of favouring any of the conflicting parties. The use of or threat of using force must be kept to a minimum, as must uncontrolled emotions which can cause uneasiness and hostility among those whose ‘hearts and minds’ you try to win. ‘Angry soldiers are poor peacekeepers’ (Abrahamsson, 2008, p. 149).

As an operational soldier in a PSO context, there are consequently many tacit feeling rules to adhere to. You must be able to adjust your facial and bodily expression of emotions in a way that serves the military task and the situation at hand. For example, you should not display fear when patrolling a village by foot, even if you know that the identification of friend or foe is very difficult. Neither should you display apprehension or weakness in front of a possible aggressor, nor openly venture your personal wishes, for instance, to give support to civilians in need. What you are supposed to do is to stay firm, fair and friendly or in other ways behave in a manner that may also change other people’s feelings in a positive direction for the task. It goes without saying that this often involves considerable emotion management work.
The most important formal rules are likely those that regulate when to use force and against whom (i.e. Rules of Engagement, ROE). These rules are usually very detailed, even if there are often changes over the course of a tour. When it comes to individual conduct, however, what you have are essentially general recommendations. Foreseeing and regulating in any detail the correct behaviour in most situations is of course impossible, so these important decisions must be more or less improvised by the soldiers themselves. One scenario illustrates how creativity and a considerable amount of emotion management helped a group of Swedish soldiers to get out of a precarious situation in the Balkans. The Swedes, who were serving with the Swedish peacekeeping force in Bosnia, were stopped at a temporary checkpoint set up by Bosniak soldiers. When about 20 other soldiers belonging to an elite ‘Muslim’ unit arrived, the situation became tense. What the Swedes did, with the help of their interpreter, was to offer coffee and buns, explaining that this was what you did when meeting neighbours back home. At first the soldiers were bewildered, but after some hesitation the offer was accepted, the weather and other generalities were discussed and eventually the Swedes were able to turn back (Tillberg et al., 2008, p. 81f).

This encounter highlights how a range of displays and emotion management acts may be required when managing emotions in order to successfully manipulate other people’s feelings. This tallies with a central theme in Goffman’s writings, suggesting that social interaction implies that people, like actors on a stage, play different roles and that the greater the complexity involved in an encounter, the larger the repertoire of roles required to manage the situation. Taking the theatre scene as a reference point and metaphor, Goffman sees people as social actors who are highly flexible and capable of moral commitment, and whose activities take place within multiple and layered frameworks of action (Goffman, 1967; Bolton, 2005).

Tom Blix (2007) who has interviewed Norwegian soldiers about their expectations and experiences of service in Afghanistan, found Goffman’s (1961a) role theory very useful. However, socialization to the different roles as soldier, squad member, and professional often has historical roots whereby soldiers have undergone a long socialization process through which they acquire ‘the social knowledge and skills necessary to assume an organizational role’ (Arkin & Dobrofsky, 1978, p. 157). Nonetheless, this soldier role does not always meet the demands and challenges of a foreign, ambiguous, and uncertain theatre. Blix argues that the Defence Forces have a serious responsibility as the providers of role development for young men who find themselves in an environment of power where arms and violence are the tools of the trade (p. 8). Previous research also tells us that re-learning and downplaying of the warrior identification is difficult for some groups of soldiers and also undesirable for others (Miller, 1997; Tripodi, 2001, 2003; Sion, 2006).
According to Janowitz (1965), the goal of military authority, in ideal terms, is to create stable and purposeful involvement at each level in the hierarchy of ranks (p. 44). The next section briefly discusses possible reasons for Swedish soldiers’ willingness to adjust to both formal and informal feeling rules, also to a point of self-imposed normative control (Taylor & Bain, 1999; Raz, 2002; Kunda, 2006). Importantly though, even if there are many possible reasons for these voluntary adjustments, this certainly does not mean that the emotion management work coupled to the fulfilment of these demands is negligible.

Emotion management and normative control

At the time of the data collection, the Swedish Armed Forces had not yet transformed into a professional force, which is why the mission units mainly consisted of highly motivated former conscripts, the majority of whom were civilians who had volunteered for six months of service abroad. The interviews reflect an amalgam of motives, in which a combination of humanitarian and self-realization motives dominate. With this in mind, it is interesting to reflect upon the Swedish soldiers’ use of the word ‘baccis’ during international operations. In soldier lingo, the term generally applies to situations and ‘cushy’ tasks that can be defined as non-important and ‘nicer than necessary’, and leading to small benefits in general. One soldier deployed to Kosovo expressed his idea of a ‘baccis trip’ in the following way:

I really don’t know (where it comes from), but it is very common down there, baccis. It’s when you potter and hang around without doing anything special really. You might go and shop at another camp, and it has nothing to do with your service.

On expeditionary service, baccis is consequently used as a sort of gentle insult, ensuring that an appropriate status-division is recognized between ‘real’ and ‘non’ work. Bolton (2005) suggests that the closest group you work with is the most effective in signalling emotion management demands, as is the group of people with whom you spend most of your time. In an organization, the very existence of an informal term such as ‘baccis’ indicates the strength of the work ethos in itself, signalling the tacit feeling rule that you should always perform your best. The use of such terminology can also be seen as a form

---

21 For further writings on normative control in today’s missions abroad, see Nørgaard & Holsting (2006).
22 From the 1st of July 2010 Sweden entered a new human resource management system with contracted soldiers.
23 The original Arabic term ‘Bakshis’, refers to “a relatively small amount of money given for service rendered” (http://www.thefreedictionary.com/bakshis), and the phrase has been circulating in the expeditionary force since the 1950s (Agrell, 2000).
of social control and an internal regulator, guaranteeing an acceptable level of performance without the need to report violation of standards. However, the most important thing here is that use of the term ‘baccis’ illustrates how soldiers are not only willing to submit themselves to the organisational and professional feeling rules (Bolton, 2005) at hand, but also to breach social feeling rules to correct and regulate other people’s performances. Moreover, it illustrates that the borders between formal and informal feeling rules are sometimes more illusionary than actual. For the Swedish soldiers, the fact that they often mentioned other nations’ more relaxed attitude to work performance as a source of frustration with these countries is further discussed in essay II.

The above shows some resemblance to Willis’s (1977, see also Collinson, 1992) portrayal of how the central culture among young male factory workers revolved around gaining informal control over the work process. Moreover, it also reflects observations made by Ben-Ari (1998), who asserts that the military does not just train men or dispose them to think and act in a certain manner once they are civilians. To be successful, ideologies must appeal to and activate pre-existing cultural understandings that are themselves compelling (p. 117). Willis’s study revealed how the character of tedious and low-skilled factory work was re-framed into male heroic confrontations with (hard) tasks, with the aim of shifting the focus away from the fact that you had to submit to such tasks to the strength it took to endure them (p. 150). Hard physical labour was further connected to a socially superior masculinity while the symbolic value of intellectual work was bound to a socially inferior femininity (p. 149). That service in an expeditionary force similarly invokes wider

---

24A complementary emotion sociological perspective that may explain soldiers’ wish to serve abroad is Randall Collins’ (1981, 2004) theory on emotions, power, and status, focusing on how social interaction in micro-situations can be described as interactional ritual chains, in which emotions are highly constitutive. Emotional energy is produced by every experience of successfully negotiating a membership ritual and the more powerful the group within which one successfully negotiates ritual solidarity, the greater the emotional confidence one receives from it. Moreover, the interaction in itself serves as a machine for intensifying emotion and for generating new emotional tones and solidarities (1981, p. 1001). Collins’ concept ‘emotional energy’ bears affinity with the Hebrew concept of ‘gibush’, a well-recognized pillar of military cohesion in the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) (Ben-Ari, 1998). The gibush metaphor, translated as ‘crystallization’, implies that the internal strength and solidarity of both the individual and the group flow from the unifying sense of belonging, of being securely together ‘in place’, whereas the social ideal of gibush involves an emphasis on joint endeavours, on cooperation and shared sentiments, on solidarity and a sense of togetherness (p. 98). For further reading on the topic of emotions, power, and status, see also Kemper (1978). Central to Kemper’s integrated relational model is the notion that the dimensions power and status are either in abundance or deficit in any relationship, and that social interaction should be understood in this light. The model moreover connects specific physiological processes to certain experiences of power and status and is described by Barbalet (2002) as ‘a beautiful way of linking biology and sociology in an entirely non-reductive way’ (p. 3).
cultural understandings about manhood can be inferred from the fact that constructions of masculinity are often mentioned as highly constitutive of army culture (see Herbert, 1998; Winslow, 2000; Winslow & Dunn, 2002).

In the above it has been suggested that the strong normative feature of peace support operations, a self-organizing leadership doctrine, Mission Command, and connections made between hard work and constructions of masculinity likely contribute to Swedish soldiers’ willingness to manage their emotions in accordance with organizational objectives. Another influential factor might be the recruitment situation per se, where great numbers of soldiers compete for available slots in contingents to be deployed abroad. Nevertheless, even if soldiers quite willingly submit themselves to normative control (Kunda, 2006), this does not mean that submissiveness applies to every aspect of the service. Bolton (2005) stresses how the notion of ‘rules’ should not make us assume the existence of rule-bound behaviour, a point that will be further illustrated in the essays. A humorous discourse of anonymous workplace signs also reflects that soldiers have various complaints and concerns during their service abroad (see essay III).
This chapter discusses why even though emotion management demands are a recurrent facet of soldiers’ work in peace support operations, they are not noticed as such by the Swedish Armed Forces.

Elster (1999) claims that cultural influence on our view on emotions is mainly shown in three ways: I) in the labelling of emotions, II) in the evaluation of emotions, and III) in the determination of those behaviours that tend to trigger specific emotions (p. 412). This schematic understanding may be used as a background to the fact that while all human interaction involves some form of ‘feeling work’ (Hochschild, 1979, 1983) this is most often a disregarded fact. The aim of this chapter is to illustrate some central notions that can be said to have characterized the Swedish Armed Forces’ reasoning in terms of demands for emotion management abroad. The presentation also highlights the relatively low status that has been and still is ascribed to the role of the peacekeeper in many countries. After many years of socialization that combat is the military’s core task, it follows quite naturally that soldiers mainly identify themselves with the ‘warrior’. Even if the latter is not very pronounced among the Swedish soldiers under study (see also Hedlund, 2011), a similar tendency, sometimes expressed ironically, can be observed here too (see essay III).

Four reasons are here suggested as the main contributors to the scant interest from military authorities in emotion management requirements during peace support operations, and especially those in low-intensity conflict areas. The first reason is that soldiers’ emotion management skills have been taken for granted. The second reason is coupled with the prevalent view that emotions can easily be taken care of, a view that is here labelled ‘hydraulic’. This means that even if emotions are generated on one occasion, they can be locked up and let out somewhere else (i.e. in debriefing sessions or in after-action reviews). The third reason is the view of emotions as irrational and the very opposite of sense, a notion that has gained credence in the military world, and is strongly linked to the presumed demands on soldiers in combat and conventional war. The fourth and last suggested reason why management of the broad range of feelings precipitated during service abroad has remained unnoticed has to do with the soldiers themselves. Since soldiers’ espoused values have been geared towards combat skills, this group is little inclined to initiate a feedback loop to headquarters where a more accurate image of the character of the demands for emotion management in theatre is presented.

Before describing the above propositions in more detail, at least one overarching development that has influenced all these aspects should be mentioned.
The paradigmatic shift of military tasks from defending Sweden in Sweden to international engagements has been a slow turn that has also had consequences for soldiers’ training before deployments abroad (see also Ydén & Hasselblad, 2010). In his forthcoming dissertation, Granberg describes how missions abroad were long regarded as being on the very periphery of the hegemonic machinery set on defending Swedish territory despite the fact that commissions abroad at the time yearly engaged more than 3,000 individuals. Consequently, until the end of the 1990s, regularly employed staffs’ participation in these missions was mainly regarded as a deviation and temporary excursion from core activities organized around the training of conscripts in combat skills and the defence of Swedish territory. In a similar vein, recognition was not given career wise to officers who did serve abroad (Ydén, 2005, p. 92). The internal downplaying of the importance of international missions has had the result that the Swedish Armed Forces have not developed any professionalization process around the only real military experience that has been available (Ibid, p. 92). This in turn contributed to overlooking and delaying the analysis of the new tasks abroad and the demands connected to them. (For a comprehensive account of the reform from territorial defence to operational readiness see Haldén, 2007).

One further illustration of the difference today and only ten years ago can be found when comparing the Swedish Armed Forces’ Military strategic doctrine from 2002 and 2011 respectively. It is striking how the objective in the first doctrine is to act in situations that can predominantly be classified as conventional warfare, while in the latter this has been modified to also include operational abilities on the opposite side of the spectrum, i.e. peace-building, conflict prevention and state building. How the conditions above might have influenced the underestimation of the emotional load in today’s missions abroad will be outlined in more detail below.

Emotion management skills are taken for granted

A widespread expectation in Sweden is that recruitment can solve almost everything. Through successful recruitment it would be possible to find soldiers with natural aptitude and skills to also master extensive demands for emotion management. The magnitude of these demands is reflected in a keynote speech made by Brigadier General Karl Engelbrektsson, Force Commander of the soon-to-be Nordic Battle Group of 2008, at the Annual National Conference Folk och Försvar (Society and Defence) in 2007. The ideal soldier is described as a ‘woolly jumper softie and mother-in-law’s dream who can switch to handling weapons and killing in a matter of seconds’ (my translation). Engelbrektsson

---

25 Military strategic doctrines state the military’s objectives and specify the means and methods that will be used to achieve these goals.
is well aware that the fulfilment of these demands must also be focused upon in training and that the problem is how. Yet any awareness of this in the pre-deployment training for the soldiers under study here was not identified. The rhetoric of assumed competences amongst Swedish soldiers can also be found on SAF's homepage in statements conveying the sentiment that the organization ‘trusts’ young men and women to have an ‘inner moral compass’ to meet the challenges in theatre, for instance in encounters with traumatized civilians.26 Arguably, trusting a person’s ability to manage a job is at the same time part-abdication from the responsibility to follow up whether the presumed match is working or not, and at whose expense.

Emotions can be stored and ‘let out’

The Swedish Armed Forces’ view on emotion management demands can also be described as a hydraulic model of behaviour. This view suggests that feelings evolve in certain (stressful) situations, after which they can be stored and vented in other contexts (i.e. debriefing and after-action reviews). Putting aside very mechanical thinking in handling emotional difficulties, there seems to be no scientific evidence that debriefing will function in the promised ways. British researchers (see Thomas et al., 2006) comment that this is one reason why the British Army, for example, has ceased this practice.27 However, the purpose here is not to specifically judge the utility of these methods, as this has been done elsewhere (see Michel, 2005, p. 14-17, for a review).

We can only conclude that from a military point of view it is important that soldiers’ feelings are vented immediately in theatre, to prevent them from being an obstacle to operational performance. On return to Sweden, similar debriefing sessions take place twice, firstly, as part of the immediate home-coming program and then at the compulsory reunion six-months later. Most of these sessions are conducted on squad level and the discussion chairman is often a civilian who lacks personal experience of service abroad. Moreover, apart from the problem involved in letting feelings out in formalized settings, the group situation may hamper soldiers’ inclinations to express themselves. In theatre, concerns about the impact on future peer assessment, as well as group norms can interfere. Essay III in this thesis illustrates, for example, that there certainly are emotions, also of quite a serious character, that are not easily expressed in group sessions, but concealed in humorous messages and complaints and spread through anonymous channels. One central difference between the hydraulic perspective and the anonymous

26 http://www.forsvarsmyndigheten.se/sv/Om-Forsvarsmyndigheten/uppgift
27 For a detailed account on the British Army’s present approach; Trauma Risk Management (TRiM), see Greenberg et al. (2008).
release of emotions as described in essay III, is that the latter involves more of an irregular and gradual release and is a spontaneous activity initiated by soldiers, while the debriefing sessions are part of standing procedures and hence governed by command.

The importance attributed to the hydraulic view also stands in contrast with bearing ideas put forward in this thesis from another perspective. Whilst in the first case, the soldiers’ release of feelings is seen as unconducive to work and something that must be removed, the alternative perspective presented in this thesis states that emotion management demands stem from the immediate social and professional situational requirements and hence cannot be negotiated away. Since emotions are part of all human interaction they can never by their nature be subversive to the objectives of military operations, a point that is also connected to the next reason to be presented.

Emotions are irrational and an obstacle to operational effectiveness

Long before Jane Austen (1811) created agony for Elinor and her sisters in her famous novel, Sense and sensibility, the dichotomy between these concepts had been firmly established. Different époques have favoured one before the other. During the Enlightenment, reason was seen as superior, whilst feelings were heralded during the Romantic period. The legacy of a distinction between emotion and sense is also often mentioned as one of the reasons for why emotions have traditionally been given the stepmother treatment in the social sciences (Hochschild, 1983; Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995; Fineman, 2000; Barbalet, 2001; Dahlgren & Starrin, 2004; Bolton, 2005), and likewise in a military context. Moreover, since masculinity and femininity are the cultural creations of a gender hierarchy linked to one another in a relationship of complementarity and opposition (Delphy, 2002, p. 56), the negative view of emotions in the context under study here is in all likelihood reinforced by the connection traditionally made between women and characteristics such as irrationality, subjectivity and chaos (Lutz, 2007, p. 20).

Hochschild (1983) summons two common barriers into any serious inquiry on the matter of feelings. The first is the practice among social scientists of ignoring it or subsuming it under other categories, and the second is the acceptance of several ideas about emotion that confuse any discussion of it. One example of the latter is the strong connection between emotion and irrationality here discussed. Hochschild comments that a man who feels fear at the sight of a rattlesnake moving toward him may run to safety and hence act rationally. Were he not afraid, he might not run, which, in the absence of other forms of protection, would be irrational (p. 214). From this example we can conclude that emotions can never be accused of propelling irrational behaviour per se.28

28 For a discussion of how emotions are in fact ‘rational’, see Sayer (2011).
Few commanders would contest that emotions have effects on operational effectiveness but the impact has mostly been seen as negative (Janis, 1949; Ben-Ari, 1998; Horn, 2004). Even if Abrahamsson (2008), as mentioned previously, describes the venting of strong emotions as a characteristic of conventional wars, emotions have for the most part been regarded as a disruptive and irrational factor. The main reason is likely that when soldiers experience fear and horror, it can lead to passiveness and in the worst case, paralysis or other irrational behaviours that cannot be foreseen in the tactical planning (Horn, 2004). Because emotions may impede the performance of military tasks, they must be overcome, channelled and above all controlled. When the Israeli researcher Eyal Ben-Ari (1998) talks about passiveness without paralysis, he claims that this is in fact what we often mean by emotion control in combat (p. 45), something that also indirectly explains the strong figurative link made in the military context between emotional control, rationality and survival.

Ben-Ari refers to interviews with soldiers who had either served during Israel’s invasion of Lebanon or participated in post-invasion military operations in the southern part of that country. A platoon commander explains how he successively wiped away his emotions during one of these battles:

During the first time there was a feeling between dread and tautness for combat, for the ‘real thing’. But the minute it happens, you become an automaton, and it expresses itself in the cancellation of emotions….During the skirmishes you are a soldier and that’s it. It’s amazing….There’s nothing emotional about the situation. You shoot, even without thinking about self defence. It is a natural mechanism that works like an electric switch….During the activity (skirmish) one of my soldiers got killed. I looked at him and continued to attack. It didn’t do anything to me – no emotional reaction. I acted properly and continued to shoot. On the one hand, it’s completely irrational; and, on the other hand, it’s absolutely rational...

(Ben-Ari, 1998, p. 64)

Above, emotion control, in the sense of being unaffected by emotion, is figuratively linked to the ugly duties in war (i.e. to fight down the enemy), the likely reason why soldiers are inclined to interpret the behaviour of killing as rational when set in a war context vacuumed of emotion. The quotation is in line with Bolton’s (2005) description of how classic writers within organization theory (for example Weber, Taylor and Fayol) saw the organizational actor as an unfeeling automaton, who blindly behaves according to corporate regulations within the formal organization. If emotions are mentioned at all, they are supposed to be ‘excluded’, ‘controlled’, ‘subordinated’ and, at all costs, ‘avoided’.

29 See also Holmes (1985) and Katz’s (1990) work on military drill that reveal how emotions are regarded as obstacles to military performance due to connotations of a lack of emotional control with uncontrolled behavior.
It is easy to agree with Bolton’s comment that such a narrow view, which so devoutly believes in its ability to control all aspects of organizational life, also makes it impossible to understand anything but the formal aspect of organizational life (p. 18f). When dominating images like these are superimposed on soldiers’ work, emotion control becomes the only act, a view that differs from that taken here of a range of emotion management demands in missions abroad.

Soldiers’ espoused values are geared towards combat skills

As previously described, the Swedish Armed Forces kept for long time a modus operandi geared towards conventional war and territorial defence. Combat skills were consequently at the core of conscripts’ training and mindset. Granberg (forthcoming), having investigated the character of Swedish soldiers’ preparations for missions abroad, comments that these from the 1990s and onwards, have been orientated towards combat skills. These were also assumed to be required among the Swedish units deployed to the Balkans (Henricsson, 1998; Karlsson, 2004). The underlying cause was the assumption that if you can manage the worst (i.e. combat) you can manage the rest (i.e. peacekeeping). An often quoted remark from former U.N. Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld can be seen as underlining something of the same: ‘Peace keeping is not a job for a soldier, but only a soldier can do it’. Peacekeeping is also often described as an inherently ambiguous process (Segal, Segal & Eyre, 1992; Britt, 1998; Winslow, 2000). There is a long and ongoing debate in the literature on peace support operations with regard to this dilemma, and preparations for these operations have often been criticized for having many gaps (Bleumink et al., 2003) or for being blatantly misleading (Sion, 2006).

The contingents under study in this thesis are no exceptions to the above. Even if these units were deployed to conflict areas with low threat levels, the soldiers’ preparations were predominantly geared towards combat skills. This was also something that most soldiers seemed to have no objections to. One reason was of course that they were actually positioned in an area that was potentially violent and unsafe and where a cautious attitude based on ‘you never know’ had to be adopted. Another might be that combat equals status, connected to a system of differentiation (Zugbach, 1988), where power and prestige are unevenly distributed amongst the arms, and technical and support arms are in a subordinate position to the battlefield arms. As a result, more prestige devolves upon

---

30 The implementation of soft knowledge can also meet with resistance, especially in units in which members strongly identify themselves as warriors, usually most characteristic for all voluntary forces (AVF) (Tripodi, 2003).

31 According to Janowitz (1965), the military exhibits extreme status sensitivity, a concern that can be traced not only to the hierarchical organizations of the armed forces but also to the relatively low
members of units seen as more central to the job of soldiering (p. 171). The soldiers’ appreciation, at least in theory, for TIC (troops in contact), is moreover often described as the only way you can actually test your skills. The point here is that soldiers generally do not mind combat training and would perhaps sometimes like their commission to be more challenging than it actually is (see also Sion, 2006). As a consequence, this can make them less inclined to express demands generated from other sources than combat-like events, no matter how strong.

In summary, the above presentation has outlined some possible reasons for why the management of emotion demands have so far been both overlooked and underestimated by Swedish military authorities and consequently also hidden from insight by the soldiers themselves. The presentation suggests that the Swedish Armed Forces and the military at large have often viewed emotions either as something that soldiers can easily manage and that can be ‘vented’, or as something irrational that soldiers preferably should prevent themselves from being overcome by in connection with combat or other traumas. A development that has likely influenced the soldiers’ notions of these demands is that the pre-deployment training connected to missions abroad has predominantly been oriented towards combat skills. Even if the latter is still needed as a last resort, even in peace support missions, the argument put forward here is that if ‘troops in contact’ are to remain the main focus, this will block important knowledge about other sources of emotion demands on missions abroad and the management of these by the soldiers.

Concluding remarks and a summary of the thesis’ contributions

Alvesson & Empson (2008) urge scholars to have the ambition to say something of larger relevance than their own data (see also Alvesson & Kärreman, 2011). All scholars should ask themselves if their work has any merit in terms of innovation or simply regards social behaviour from a new aspect that they render a new name. In a narrow sense, the basic findings of this study reveal nothing new. Organizations have always been sites where people engage with their emotions. What is exceptional is that in the contingents studied here, where social interaction is key, there is very little talk about emotions and their management.

prestige of the organization in the eyes of civilians, and that conditions the conception that the military profession holds of itself (p. 39-40).

⇒ In a similar vein, Ydén (2008) comments that there is an absence of discourse within the Swedish Armed Forces about the subject of death and killing (p. 77, 136) and that the prospect of casualties is not discussed at any length in military program-based training (2005, p. 77), also with reference to an article in Officerstidningen 2006/6 and reports of a major receiving internal criticism for trying to include awareness of these facets of war in the officers’ training.

32
There are two connected observations in this thesis that contribute to the military practice. The first proposes that both emotion demands and emotional costs are inherent facets of mission life irrespective of mission area. From this follows that a distinction between high- and low-intensity conflict areas is not applicable when dealing with emotion management demands. Secondly, the thesis challenges well-established notions of the character of the emotion management requirements. Instead of seeing emotions as something that should preferably be controlled, avoided and/or otherwise disposed of, continuous emotion management work is viewed here as a prerequisite and at the core of soldiers’ work and living experience abroad. Hence, in contrast to a view stating that the successful soldier is someone with control in the sense that he ‘lacks’ feeling towards what he is doing, this thesis argues that soldiers’ emotion work when choosing, modelling, managing, and displaying the ‘right’ emotional expression is what it takes to get the job done.

As previously mentioned in the introduction, the thesis’ scholarly contributions are of essentially two kinds. Firstly, a more comprehensive perspective on emotion management demands is presented to the military sociological literature, and secondly, since there has been no previous analysis of military missions in the emotion sociological literature it introduces a new empirical field to this discipline.
4. RESEARCH DESIGN

In this section, I outline how the data collection and research design has enabled me to address the research questions and come to the conclusions presented.

As has been made clear, the main objective of this thesis is to highlight how external demands for emotion management are reflected in soldiers' experiences and perceptions of service abroad. The approach used to address this question is a qualitative one. Following Van Maanen (1983), the term ‘qualitative’ is often used as an umbrella term covering an array of interpretative techniques which seek to describe, decode, translate or otherwise try to catch the meaning, not the frequency, of certain more or less naturally occurring phenomena in the social world (p. 9). Lindlof & Taylor (2002) describe that ethnographers will basically turn to any method that will help them to achieve success. The comment is a valid description of the multi-method design used for the data collection in this thesis, including repeated interviews, photographs, image/text-analysis and observation.

In the sense that I have observed, described, interpreted and explained something within the frame of a new context (Danemark, et al, 2002, p. 90f), this process can, as a whole, be described as abductive and a re-contextualisation. The actual work process has also been highly iterative in nature, with a steady pendulum between theory and data. Bryman's (2004) notion that a research process often can be described as containing both deductive and inductive tendencies is also an applicable description here, even if the procedures differ in outlook for the four essays. The deductive element in the procedure can be said to dominate, with the exception of essay IV, which is comparatively more inductive in kind.

Scope and demarcations

Research on emotions in the military field have generally been conducted within a framework of psychology, but then often hidden under concepts such as affect, emotional intelligence and leadership. In Hochschild's (1983) view, social psychologists believe that to ‘avoid discussing feeling in order to focus ever more intently and narrowly on cognition, increases the scientific character of their work’ (p. 211). Whether this is true or not cannot be assessed here. It is sufficient to note that, while recognizing the importance of psychological research within fields like stress, coping and resilience, the analysis made here starts from another end, using sociological perspectives to examine possible sources behind the emotional load on deployed soldiers.
Rather than focus on the soldiers' personality and individual make-up, this thesis focuses on factors that are external to the individual, such as organizational rules, work-task requirements and 'social traffic rules of interaction' (Goffman, 1961a; 1967, p. 45, 91) that demand their emotion management regulation. Even if it is almost impossible to firmly uphold these dividing lines as individuals are different and their differences may interfere with the way the organizational and social impacts are portrayed, the search for a complementary image is of great importance. So rather than advocating that this perspective is freed from individual influence, the main argument from a sociological perspective on soldiers' emotional load is that such a perspective is almost non-existent in Swedish research. The main exception is Bengt Abrahamsson (2008) who is also repeatedly referred to in this text.

Research questions

The two main research questions that have guided this thesis are the following:

- What are the external demands for emotion management in so called low-intensity peace support operations?
- How do the soldiers manage these demands?

It is thereby understood that the aim of the thesis is twofold. Firstly, it aims to highlight how emotion management is inherent in soldiers' work and constantly put to use in PSO. The central argument here states that feeling rules emanate from organizational, operational and social conditions and that the PSO structure, like in most other organizations, is also an arena of mixed and sometimes conflicting emotions. The second aim of the thesis relates to how the soldiers manage these demands. More specifically, the objective here is to illustrate that soldiers handling these requirements chiefly require 'emotional juggling and synthesizing' (Goffman, 1961a, p. 39).

The sample

The commission from the Swedish Armed Forces33 was to examine soldiers' perception of their pre-deployment training with regard to 'social-cultural factors' and to provide recommendations on how this preparation could be improved.34 Units to be deployed to

---

33 The empirical research was conducted within the framework of two different research projects financed by the SAF. However only Essay II was specifically written for one of these projects.
34 This study was mainly conducted with a colleague, Erik Hedlund, at the Swedish National Defence College. (See also footnote 39).
Kosovo and Liberia were chosen for the data collection, and a group of 24 soldiers volunteered for the interviews. The soldiers, who were all male infantry soldiers aged between 21 and 36, were interviewed three times: during pre-deployment training, about five months into the deployment and six months after their return to Sweden. Roughly a quarter had served on one or more previous missions. Each interview lasted between 45 and 90 minutes and was recorded and transcribed in detail. In addition to this, numerous informal conversations took place when visiting the camps for the second round of interviews. Five additional interviews with Swedish soldiers and two group interviews with six locally employed Liberians were also conducted at Camp Clara in Liberia. The aim of this was to somewhat compensate for the lack of interviews with female service members and civilians in the selected sample.

Our initial project-plan also contained interviews with soldiers deployed to Afghanistan and to undertake the second round of interviews at the Swedish camp Northern Lights. Due to security measures however, this request was not granted by the Headquarters. The two semi-structured interviews with officers serving in Afghanistan presented as part of the sample in essay I and III, were instead conducted within another research-project on support to military families (Weibull, 2009). These interviews followed the same structure (before, during and after service) as those of the main informants deployed to Kosovo and Liberia. The question of interest was the informants’ description of their work situation in theatre. Moreover, another group of soldiers who had previously served in Afghanistan have been valuable sources of information in the work with essay III, which describes and compares humorous discourses in low- and high-intensity conflict areas.

A contingent deployed abroad involves many positions and participants with different backgrounds, competences and expectations. Among the main group of informants participating in this study, two different groups can schematically be mentioned. One group consisted of men aged between 23-28. Some were recruited on the grounds of having good marks and assessments from their national service, others for having a civilian work competence that was in demand. None of these soldiers had previously lived outside Sweden and few had prior experience from longer travels. Back home, they usually lived in smaller towns or municipalities and common occupations included mechanic, guard, truck driver, concrete caster etc., several having completed extensive

---

1 Twelve of the informants were deployed to Liberia and twelve to Kosovo.
2 One was a regular officer, one was an officer in the reserves, and the others were former conscripts who had passed a two-month preparatory course.
3 These interviews were conducted during ‘leave’ periods in Sweden.
4 These soldiers mainly worked at a garrison in the south of Sweden where I was engaged in another research project (Berggren et al., 2011). Two other soldiers studied at the Swedish National Defence College.
vocational training programs. With regard to the occupations that waited for them on return, these were often considered quite tedious and boring. In other words, serving in the expeditionary unit represented a welcomed break with routine and temporary adventure. While serving abroad, these soldiers usually held positions as infantry soldiers, signallers or as mechanics within the maintenance units. In the other group, which included both former conscripts and officers, the average age was a little higher – between 24-36. Soldiers served as squad or platoon leaders or held higher ranked specialist positions. Many of these soldiers had either finished or started university studies within different disciplines. One had a Masters in political science whilst others had attended university courses in topics related to peace and conflict studies, East European studies or anthropology. Quite often, time spent abroad was seen as a sabbatical from present educational plans rather than a break from an ordinary work situation. Compared with the previous group, these soldiers had a more cosmopolitan orientation, could well see themselves working abroad and looked upon the service as a good qualification to put on their CVs. Employed methods, interviews, image/text analysis and observation will be described in more detail in the next section, followed by a discussion of the study’s ethical considerations.

Methods

The interviews

The interviews were semi-structured respondent interviews that were conducted separately with the main informants. According to Lindlof & Taylor (2002, p. 178f), respondent interviews are those in which a researcher asks the interviewees about their own experiences. The questionnaires allowed for follow-up questions. In the first round of interviews taking place in the last week of the pre-deployment training, the areas of investigation covered background factors and the soldiers’ general expectations of the service and their own role in this. These interviews also included specific questions on the content of the pre-deployment training and the soldiers’ notions of the ‘ideal peacekeeper’ and their knowledge and perceptions of their military co-partners. In the second round of interviews conducted in theatre, the focus was first and foremost on what the soldiers did ‘at work’, their image of mission life at large, and how they perceived contacts with various parties in theatre: ex-combatants, civilians, co-operating military units, and local...
employees. In line with one of the aims behind visiting the camps, we also asked how their experiences of demands for skills and knowledge could be implemented in the pre-deployment training, both generally and especially with regard to socio-cultural factors. Questions on Swedish soldiers’ work-ethos and peacekeeping skills were added, along with their reflections on the approaching post-deployment period.

In the last round of interviews conducted six months after their return to Sweden, the soldiers were asked similar questions about how their experiences could be used for future training, their impressions of contacts with various parties and mission life in general. Moreover, this round included questions on the soldiers’ feelings and adjustments made in connection with returning home.

Observations and interviews as ‘blitz fieldwork’

The visits made to Kosovo and Liberia can be described as blitz fieldwork (Gellner & Hirsch, 2001) rather than a traditional ethnographic study. The main reason was that our access to the field was restricted to the military desk-officer’s estimation of the time needed for conducting the interviews. Altogether we spent two weeks in Liberia and Kosovo, respectively. During the visits to the camps, and apart from conducting the interviews, we participated in soldiers’ daily activities, i.e. took part in meetings, patrols, briefings and engaged in conversations with regard to ‘everything that was going on’.

The emotion management perspective on soldiers’ work caught my attention in what can only be described as a process. As early as during the first round of interviews conducted before deployment it was revealed that the cooperation between Swedish and Irish units in Liberia was not without its complications. The connection made between a strained cross-cultural military cooperation and an emotion sociological perspective did not seem to be distant, as one of this discipline’s central concepts, feeling rules, are tacit rules deeply embedded in societal and cultural contexts and that influence our notions of ‘the other’. The excerpt below from a book produced by the British War Office, aimed at preemptively bridging possible strains between British and French troops during World War II, also reveal that these types of tensions are no novelty:

---

40 The person being point of contact for the respective theatres.
The French are our friends. The Germans are our enemies and the enemies of France. Remember that the Germans individually often behaved well in France. We have to behave better. (…). Don’t criticize the French Army’s defeat of 1940. Many Frenchmen are convinced that they had a fine but insufficiently equipped army, not very well led. Many others are themselves critical of the French Army of 1940, but they, too, will resent their own criticism coming from a foreigner. Don’t get into arguments about religion or politics. If a Frenchman raises one of the points which have strained Anglo-French relations since 1940, drop the matter. There are two sides of every question, but you don’t want to take either.

*Instructions for British service men in France* (1944, p. 43f)

When visiting the camp sites, during the second round of interviews, the emotion management aspects of overseas service gradually became a parallel focal interest. Apart from the strained military cross-cultural cooperation, I started to see the contours of a work organization where a large set of both informal and formal feeling rules permeated both living and working conditions. Yet, although I was learning more about the emotional dimensions of the special circumstances that adds up to ‘mission life’, these visits did not make room for conducting more structured observation studies of soldiers’ emotion management practices. My interest was awakened, but the analysis was only started. What these weeks offered, in addition to the more formal interview sessions, was above all an opportunity to observe everyday military life in action and, even if naturally to a very limited extent, get a feeling for its ‘real’ conditions. These observations were noted in field diaries and as digital voice-memos.

At the camp we usually slept in containers, as did the others, with the exception of a few nights in Liberia, when we slept in a tent. During one of the weeks in Liberia, we were also joined by a Dutch colleague, Joseph Soeters, co-writer of essay II.

*Image and text analysis*

A number of work-place signs manufactured by Swedish soldiers and put up at Swedish military compounds in Kosovo, Liberia and Afghanistan are the focus of a special analysis. Their placement, outlook and messages are described and illustrated in essay III.
Ethical considerations

As study participants were selected for us by the Army Tactical Command,\(^4\) the ‘voluntary’ nature of their participation might be a truth with modification. In a hierarchical organization like the military, people can interpret almost everything as an order, which is why voluntary participation should always be questioned. There are naturally many possible reasons for people consenting to be interviewed, for example, they may want relief from more tedious work tasks, and the insecurities of the informed consent in this context need to be emphasised. One of the soldiers also asked if participation was compulsory and after being reassured to the contrary, he chose to participate. Other soldiers made the same choice, once we had stressed the voluntary aspect and thoroughly explained general ethical guidelines. The fact that our research was financed by the Swedish Armed Forces likely also influenced soldiers’ willingness to participate.

Conducting emotion research

Conducting research with an emotion-sociological lens not just in the military world, but in general, deserves some further comment. Firstly, we must consider Fineman's (2003) caution that our feelings are often ambiguous or ambivalent and impossible to identify with any degree of clarity. Another complicating factor when studying a group of mainly male, young soldiers is the previously described traditional coupling of emotions with irrationality and femininity (Lutz, 2007, p. 20). Moreover, if we accept the psychoanalytical reality, this informs us that we often do not know what feelings are impelling us, partly because they are unconscious and partly because we build elaborate defences so that we do not have to acknowledge them (Fineman, 2003, p. 53).

In Mastering soldiers, and with regard to his own research, Ben-Ari (1998) reflects that some knowledge is more habitual and easily put into words than other. Put slightly differently, some knowledge is under continuous and voluntary control, while other knowledge is less available for introspection and articulation (p. 141). The accuracy of this comment in the context studied here is wide in the sense that even if soldiers constantly engage in emotion management acts, they do not reflect upon it. Asking them straightforward questions on the topic would have been akin to having them confirm the existence of a completely new way of looking at their work. To avoid this manufactured effect, and the risk of forcing my observations on to theirs, I have instead focused on the situational cues

\(^4\) This meant that we were able to indicate the categories of people we wanted to interview but had no influence on individual interviewee selection.
in their narratives that indicate vast demands for emotion management in the rule-bound and constraining nature of mission life at large, the content of their work tasks, their views on encounters and the behaviours of others etc. Two exceptions, when specific questions were asked about soldiers’ emotion management, were in connection with their homecoming and in follow-up questions if the soldiers themselves did touch upon incidents highlighting these demands.

Further, another indirect research method of emotion management employed in this thesis is an analysis of a collection of unofficial workplace signs put up by soldiers at Swedish military compounds in Kosovo, Liberia and Afghanistan (see essay III).

**Both closeness and distance in contacts**

The fact that I do not have a military background has likely been both an advantage and an obstacle. My (at the time) six-year experience of working as a researcher at the Swedish National Defence College gave me both direct and indirect knowledge of the field, but compared to colleagues who were former regular officers, my knowledge was naturally less detailed. Helpful to me, nonetheless, was my year of fieldwork experience with the Swedish Police anti-terrorist unit (Weibull, 2002). Differences apart, these uniformed professions have many common traits and for my own understanding of the prerequisites of soldiers’ work, especially in Kosovo, the importance of this prior experience could not be underestimated. It may also have worked to my advantage in terms of soldiers’ acceptance of me, as this police unit is highly regarded in SAF, even though this fact may not have actually been remembered from our conversations and my self-presentation.

Many researchers have found it hard to get study access to the military field. Brazilian military anthropologist, Celso Castro (2010) comments that he and his research colleagues are often subjected to classification as either ‘friends’ or ‘enemies’ of the military, a classification likely generated from the ideal combat situation in which there must be no doubt regarding the classification of the person with whom one interacts. Compared to these researchers’ experience, I was probably seen neither as friend nor foe. This is not to say that there was no ambition on both sides to maintain balance between distance and closeness, and that our interaction was not surrounded by certain expectations from both sides.

During my time at the camps, my conscious strategy was to always mark my belonging to the civilian world. How much the soldiers actually reflected upon my origin might be a relevant question, but cannot be answered here. From my former studies and contacts with military personnel, however, one could make something like a qualified guess.
Due to the character of the researched area, having our study commissioned by the Armed Forces was a prerequisite for our access to the field. However, it would be an overstatement to suggest that soldiers regarded all visitors approved by Headquarters as welcome and legitimate. Especially in Kosovo, soldiers often complained about the numbers of various dignitaries, from high-ranking officers to media actors and politicians who came visiting, and internally referred to this as ‘war tourism’. That Camp Victoria in Kosovo was used more or less as a team-building destination for project groups at Headquarters was another widespread criticism. In our case, and apart from having official authorization, it might have been an advantage that we worked at the Swedish National Defence College, and thereby could be held separate from the stereotypical views military personnel often ascribe researchers from civilian academies. It was obvious though, that the time frames were far too limited to ascertain our social status in relation to the experiences described by Castro (2010).

By the time of our first meeting in Sweden during the last week of the pre-deployment training, none of us had been to Liberia (with the exception of two soldiers who had done a reconnaissance tour one week before). Some soldiers had previously done tours of service in Kosovo, but the majority of us did not know what to expect in theatre, and we shared a fragmentary image of the circumstances in Liberia and Kosovo. Arriving in theatre a few months later, however, we received a different reception, the soldiers teaching us willingly and explaining in detail how everything worked: rules, regulations and providing useful insights on mission life and the camp. Some seemed to think it was actually quite nice to exchange a few words and engage in more intimate discussions over and above that expected by polite social norms. Seeing each other again made a big difference and our visits and interviews might also in some cases have served as a welcome break from boredom and routine. For some, almost anything seemed to be more interesting than vegetating in idleness. Besides the interviews, we also passed time together over lunches, evening teas, in the mess or simply when waiting for something to happen.

Serving on international missions as a civilian means going ‘out together and home alone’. The last interview conducted back in Sweden revealed that many missed their military comrades and adjustment to civilian life had not been entirely smooth for everyone. This meeting also meant that we could share our impressions of Liberia and Kosovo, although ours were naturally much shallower. Nevertheless, knowing that we had been in the field may have helped the soldiers feel confident about answering even quite sensitive questions. Questions about expeditionary service, the theatre and homecoming were also easier for us to ask once the whole span of activity had passed and transition had been made from civilian to soldier and back again, all within the course of a

---

* The units mainly consisted of former conscripts, the majority of whom were civilians who had volunteered for six months of service.
year (see also Hannerz, 2001). The measures taken in the analysis of the four essays will be further described below.

Interpretation, coding and generalization

Chronologically, essay II was written first and refers to a case study depicting the cooperation between Swedish and Irish troops in a Quick Reaction Force in Liberia. This essay primarily focuses on the soldiers’ need for adjustment in contacts with cooperating military units – an aspect that presents itself as a flagrant example of emotion management demands. (This study’s placement as number two in the thesis’ disposition is based on the assumption that it is more convenient for the reader to start with an essay that outlines the aims and theoretical perspectives concurrent with the thesis as a whole).

The analysis in essay II was conducted in line with what Alvesson & Sköldberg (1994) would call a classic data-construction of data, where pluralism and diversity in the interpretations are taken into account, but where the researcher more or less takes the reality presented in the informants’ narratives for ‘what it is’ (p. 333). This procedure differs in character from the work with essays I, III and IV, that can be said to correspond with what Alvesson & Sköldberg (1994) call interpretation. The main difference is that the researcher here analyzes data on an aggregate level, something that also implies searching for a radically different image of reality and considering whether certain interpretations are allowed to dominate or are conspicuously absent. As previously mentioned, the result of this process was to draw my attention to the emotion management aspects of soldiers’ work, hitherto absent in former literature, and to apply an emotion sociological perspective to the remaining essays.

In the analysis of essay I, there are deductive tendencies in so far as Bolton’s (2005) typology was applied to the soldiers’ narratives. The essay that most clearly illustrates how the research process contained traits of both inductive and deductive tendencies is essay III on ‘applied’ workplace humour and anonymous outlets of emotion management demands. The idea of studying the informal side of PSO from the perspective of humour came to me when I noticed the signs put up on public display at Camp Clara in Liberia and Camp Victoria in Kosovo, but was then somehow forgotten. During my work with

---

43 The third and last object-level of interpretation in Alvesson & Sköldberg’s (1994) disposition over modes of data analysis is called the critical interpretation. The researcher here engages in even more profound reflections over dominating aspects of the interpretations made. This may, for instance, involve considering how and if the establishment of potential forms of authority can be problematized, besides being open to other representations, interpretations and conclusions (p. 333). In my analysis this level is however not found relevant.
essay II, I then wrote this memo with no special intention apart from the fact that it seemed important for a general understanding of subterranean military life:

The parodic image you sometimes get of the operational soldiers (‘the totally empty thousand yard stare’) and jokes about operational soldiers leaving their brains at the main supply in exchange for their gear are communicated by the mechanics, who serve their vehicles. Between these groups there seems to be a not uncomplicated relation of dependency that comes through in conversations about the other units. Similar statements were found in the survey with Eva – I guess it’s a universal. The mechanics wrote, “As usual, the soldiers think that we are on some kind of vacation”. However, there are obvious differences that may be part of the background behind these statements, since the mechanics have a relatively peaceful and quiet work situation with regulated working hours, while the soldiers can be out on long-range patrols for 14 days. Of course there is always something left to do at the camp, but the operators experience more features of Spartan jungle life, bad food, early risings and less comfort (humid tents).

Reading this about a year later I was reminded of the signs signalling boosting and status-enhancement that I had photographed in the camps. After doing some reading on humorous literature I went through my photographs again and started to scan interviews and field notes for segments that had the humour discourse in focus (i.e. display of work ethos and ‘professionalism’, protest and banter between units, status negotiations etc.). I also made inquiries of similar message postings at camps in Afghanistan and initiated informal conversations with soldiers who had previously served in Afghanistan whilst participating in another research project, focusing on a company in the Nordic Battle Group (see Berggren et al., 2011).

Finally, in essay IV on PDD, we see the deductive character as least prominent. The focus here is the soldiers’ thoughts and feelings related to their return to Sweden. Questions concerning this were asked on two occasions, in relation to expectations in interview no 2, and in relation to experience in interview no 3, six months after returning home. How the soldiers expressed themselves regarding the homecoming and different forms of unfamiliarity related to this, as well as when comparing mission life with life at home, is here summarized in the term Post-Deployment Disorientation.

The coding process for one of these dimensions of PDD will now be described in more detail. As illustrated below, an open-coding process (Miles & Huberman, 1994) was employed.

Memo writing is a system of note-taking of either empirical or theoretical kind. The idea is that the writer should feel free and uncensored in the early stages of the research process, making notes of a broad kind to be analysed later (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).
The coding process – one example

Codes can be described as linkages between the data and the categories posited by the researcher (Danermark, et al. 2002; Lindlof & Taylor, 2002). A common beginning of formal analysis, when the analyst performs coding before knowing what the final categories will be, is called ‘open coding’ (Miles & Huberman, 1994), often described as a creative act (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002). In addition to their role as aids to category formation, codes can also have a more mechanical role as tools for sorting, retrieving, linking and displaying data. However, most often, only coded text will be used in the full analysis mode, a circumstance that makes the authors liken codes to markers of the islands, archipelagos and other land masses of meaningful data from the surrounding sea of raw, uncoded data (p. 216). It is hard to mention open coding without commenting on the processes used in Grounded Theory, GT (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Although my initial analysis has been made in a manner similar to the one used in GT, I have stuck to more contextualization of codes, which is not intended in a grounded theory approach.

The coding process for one of the dimensions of PDD, Personal growth, can roughly be described in the following way: Personal growth consisted of two categories. Examples of open codes that made up one of these categories, personal development, were: ‘challenge’, ‘growth’, ‘self-confidence’ and ‘know yourself’. To illustrate, the excerpt below was coded both as ‘know yourself’ and ‘self-confidence’.

And personally – yes – I’ve learned a lot – about myself, about how I work in groups and other really useful stuff, particularly if I’m going to stay in the military as a leader. Then a lot has happened purely on the social side at home. I feel that I’m more secure as a person – I mean, I know that I’ve gained greater personal insight in a way that has given me a better picture of who I am and who I want to be. And it’s given me more self-confidence – so I feel I’ve gained quite a lot from the mission in quite a few areas.

For my further analysis, I have been inspired by Danermark et al. (2002), who propose that the object in science is not primarily to find empirical regularities, but structures and mechanisms in which we can find the foundation for the fairly stable and lasting (but not unchangeable) character of nature as well as of social reality (p. 89). Based on these researchers’ views of a theoretical (transfactual) generalization, I have in essay IV argued that my general concept of PDD could be expected whenever people return from a work situation with similar premises.

Danermark et al. (2002) explain the two different meanings of generalization in the following way: either we regard it in the sense of a generally occurring empirical phenomenon (as is often the case within GT, with its broad, grounded approach) or we look upon generalization in the sense of fundamental/constituent properties and structures. For instance, the universal concept of ‘women’ as an empirical category
includes all people of a specific gender, whilst ‘the elderly’ refers to all people who have reached a certain age (p. 78). With regard to the central concept of essay IV, PDD, the empirical sample is limited and it cannot be argued that the dimensions of Post-Deployment Disorientation addressed here generally occur in PSO or even in those characterized as low-intensity conflicts. However, with departure from a theoretical generalization, it can be argued that in circumstances similar to the situations described in the essay, there will also be a tendency for development of PDD.
5. THE FOUR ESSAYS IN SUMMARY

This section is a closer presentation of the four essays, that in more detail outlines this study's main argument, i.e. that the emotion management aspect is ever present in soldiers' work, and furthermore accompanies soldiers on return. In table 1, the purpose, method and main results of each paper are outlined in an overview. Here, the essays' various empirical and theoretical engagements are also schematically presented in order to help the sorting of their respective similarities and differences.
### Table 1. Overview of the four essays

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Method and mission area</th>
<th>Main result (key words)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Essay I</strong></td>
<td>To investigate the various demands for emotion management in peace support operations by an analysis of organisational, professional and social feeling rules</td>
<td>External sources for emotion management demands</td>
<td>Interview Liberia (12) Kosovo (12) Afghanistan (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Essay II</strong></td>
<td>To analyze the cooperation between Swedish and Irish troops in a Quick Reaction Force</td>
<td>Social and cultural military interoperability</td>
<td>Interview Liberia (12 + (5)) (In sum; 17 Swedish soldiers, 12 Irish soldiers and 6 locally employed Liberians).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Essay III</strong></td>
<td>To compare analytically humorous discourses of workplace signs found in two types of military contexts; high- and low-intensity conflict areas</td>
<td>Anonymous workplace signs’ humour and message</td>
<td>Image and text analysis Interview Liberia (12) Kosovo (12) Afghanistan (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Essay IV</strong></td>
<td>To introduce the concept of Post-deployment disorientation (PDD) on return from peace support operations that were, from a military perspective, uneventful conflict areas</td>
<td>Expressions of change and unfamiliarity</td>
<td>Interview Liberia (12) Kosovo (12)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Essay I - Emotion management in military Peace Support Operations

Background

The essay’s focus is the emotional demands on soldiers serving in military peace support operations, demands that are hard-edged in several aspects compared with work in most civilian organizations. Compared to previous research in the field often outgoing from a psychological perspective and focusing, for example, on individuals’ capacity for managing stress and control of emotions, the main focus here is to problematize the external demands on soldiers, i.e. what participation in missions abroad ‘asks’ of them in terms of emotion management and adaptation.

Aim

The essay aims to investigate the multifaceted demands for emotion management in PSO. With departure in emotion sociology, data has been analyzed with reference to a typology on workplace emotion elaborated by Bolton (2005). The typology focuses on the presence of organizational, professional and social feeling rules in organizations and offers a multifaceted framework, highlighting how these rules influence employees’ motivation, professional identity and performance.

Method

The empirical material referred to here is a qualitative interview study conducted by the author and a research colleague in 2006/2007. The data were collected through semi-structured, individual interviews and, to a limited extent, participant observation in the mission areas of Liberia and Kosovo. The informants are mainly a group of 26 individuals who were interviewed three times: during pre-deployment training, about five months into the deployment, and six months after their return home. Data analysis has been conducted using open coding, in line with Miles and Huberman (1994).

---

45 This essay was first published in the French journal L'Année sociologique 2011 and titled ‘La gestion des émotions dans les opérations en faveur de la paix’.

46 Twelve of the informants were deployed to Liberia, twelve to Kosovo and two to Afghanistan. The last group participated in a project on family support to military families (Weibull, 2009).
Results

Even if work in peace support operations is more complex, dangerous and ‘tight’ in time in relation to most occupations referred to by Bolton (2005), her exemplifications of the various sources of feeling rules and their consequences for different organizational groups and positions offer many parallels to service in the expeditionary force. The service entails the adoption of a number of rigorous organizational and professional feeling rules formulated on different levels nationally and internationally that put great demands on personal appearance during work and off duty. Not only must the soldiers be able to manage their emotions in a range of situations that are hard to foresee, their feeling displays need to cover a wider span, where instant changes between displays may also be required. All in all, the essay illustrates how international missions are settings where both control and management of emotions in specific directions are expected, demanded and employed.

The essay also describes how operational service is circumscribed by a large number of strict rules for behaviour that have an inherent dubiousness to them, but that should still be encompassed within realms of the device, ‘firm, fair and friendly’. Within this spectrum, soldiers serving in PSO should be able to communicate that they are serious without using violence, manage to neutralize aggression, create confidence in the possibility of offering protection, adhere to rules of engagement and be able to negotiate themselves out of difficult situations. It does not seem too presumptuous to suggest that emotion management is even more pronounced in these types of operations than in civilian life, since here such emotion management may save your life.

Importantly, this essay also shows that the demands for emotion management involve social interaction with both Swedish and international colleagues, coupled with the presence of social feeling rules. Cohesion is also very actively sought after, and much time is devoted to its development during the military pre-deployment training. Goldthorpe et al. (1969) suggest that a sense of comradeship appears to be more prevalent in sectors involving considerable physical risk (for example the mining industry) due to the nature of the work. However, although bonding with the closest peer-group is part of the organizational imperative, the downside of these feeling rules is seldom articulated. In this context, the bond with peers is also dubious. While you are very close to your comrades, you are also formally assessed by them, something that might have an impact on how much you want to share your inner feelings.

---

47 With the possible exception of the police. With regard to emotion management in police work, Jackall (2000) comments that patrolling the streets requires attributes and habits of mind completely different from those instituted and valued in the bureaucratized system. In his view, only long experience teaches police (though some officers never master the skills) how to read the streets (…), and how and when to act decisively, with force if necessary (p. 231).

48 For writings on bullying and violence at work, see for instance Bolton (2005) and Fineman (2003).

49 See also Bloch (2002) on emotion management in relation to peers in academia.
Moreover, social feeling rules are involved in relations with the local civilians. Tasks like information gathering (common amongst operators) demands that, like in most social encounters (Goffman, 1967), you bring something to the table yourself, that you are able to come across as reliable, i.e. able to create an emotional state of trust within the other party. However, even if being friendly is more or less a given, you should never be personal, and always remain on your guard. There may be glimpses of genuine meetings with the civilian population but there are also many obstacles, not least for security reasons.

Contribution

The essay’s most important contribution is that it sheds a more comprehensive light on the multifaceted emotional demands on soldiers serving in military peace support operations. The fact that soldiers recurrently engage in a wide span of emotion management acts is seen as a constitutive property of the PSO structure, and highly central to ‘getting the job done’. Moreover, the application of Bolton’s (2005) typology highlights how not only a wide range of emotional displays need to be regulated in theatre, but also that these requirements sometimes involve conflicting organizational, professional and social feeling rules.
Essay II - Swedish-Irish cooperation in Liberia

Background

The Brazilian anthropologist, Celso Castro (2010), suggests that the military institution possesses a high degree of cosmopolitanism through which military men from different countries may share many elements that are common to their profession (see also Ben-Ari & Elron, 2001). This essay does not dispute the existence of such elements, but its focus on the bi-national cooperation between Swedish and Irish troops in Liberia reflects how social, cultural and structural differences may bring serious friction to the cooperation and that these tensions easily magnify over time. Despite the fact that the Quick Reaction Force, to which both contingents belonged, had received much praise for its efforts, cooperation and integration had been far from perfect and not without complications. Cultural frictions had already emerged by the time the first Swedish contingent arrived years before and the road that separated the two contingents’ part of the camp had also become a social barrier (Sjöblom, 2005). Smooth international military cooperation is also said to be quite uncommon. Soeters et al. (2008), claims how, in these constellations, it is difficult enough to reach even the minimum level of efficiency required for international cooperation, let alone exceed it (p. 199). In effect, it is not unusual for such conflicts to result in both parties seeking minimal contact with each other and dividing patrols and other duties which were originally intended for sharing (see also Soeters & Manigart, 2008).

Aim

The aim of the essay was to analyse this case of military cooperation in order to improve Swedish soldiers’ pre-deployment training in terms of sociocultural factors. More specifically, it also illustrates how perceptions of the Irish developed and spread within the Swedish contingent before and during the mission, and how these perceptions were formed over time. The essay also briefly sketches how the Swedes were regarded by the Irish and locally employed Liberians.

Method

The empirical material referred to here is a qualitative interview study conducted by the author and two research colleagues in 2006/2007. The data was collected through semi-structured, individual interviews and, to a limited extent, participant observation in the mission area. The main informants were twelve soldiers, who were interviewed three times: firstly during pre-deployment training, secondly five months into the deployment and finally, six months after their return home. On our first visit to Camp Clara, five additional Swedish soldiers were interviewed and during our second visit, twelve Irish personnel and six local employees were interviewed. All in all, 35 interviews were conducted. The respondents were men and women between 21 and 45 years of age.

Results

Before even setting foot on Liberian soil, many Swedish soldiers had formed a fairly negative image of what signified Irish troops, information basically gleaned from previously deployed units and an unofficial Swedish internet forum during the pre-deployment training. In general, the Irish were thought of as having a sloppy attitude towards work, but more seriously they were rumoured to be drinkers and troublemakers who also slipped away from camp to visit prostitutes, something that was strictly forbidden. Once established at the camp and when interviewed the second time, the Swedish soldiers’ perceptions of the Irish basically remained unchanged, although new areas of friction were added during the six months that the units shared camp. Most of these perceptions were negative. A positive exception was that, although the Swedes saw the Irish soldiers as people who might otherwise be unemployed or in prison, they could still regard them as very competent professional soldiers. Moreover, Irish soldiers were considered to be very sociable and easy to get along with, despite also being seen as disorderly and overly enjoying drinking. One conclusion is that these contradictory views indicate that Swedish perceptions of the Irish were partly based on prejudice and stereotypical opinions.

Another set of inquiries concerned the locally employed Liberians’ view of Swedish and Irish troops as employers. The result was in favour of the Irish, who were considered more sociable and flexible. Since the Irish did not care too much about rules, they had better contact with the locally employed Liberians. Unlike the Swedes, the Irish would, for example, give away money and sweets to children and adults who gathered at the camp gate and they would regularly allow locally employed civilians to take food from the camp, without the gate pass required by the rules and regulations. The Irish did not see themselves as rule-breakers in the true sense of the word; they felt that certain actions, which were contrary to rules and regulations, showed a conscious, positive flexibility and
empathy. In a group interview, the locally employed civilians disappointingly commented on the Swedes’ lack of sympathy and flexibility.

In essence, the Swedes’ perceptions of the Irish before the mission remained more or less unchanged after six months of sharing a compound. The reasons for this may be structural and cultural differences as exemplified above, but also a general lack of meeting places, which meant that the Swedes and the Irish had no real opportunity to deepen their knowledge and understanding of each other.

Contribution

This case study operates within a well-researched field, where it merely confirms previous recommendations (vom Hagen et al., 2003, 2006; Soeters et al., 2008), stressing for instance that preparation for joint operations needs to be preceded by a constructive dialogue between partner nations about both operational and ethical issues. By the time of the study, the Swedish Armed Forces had not implemented a functioning, formalized procedure for a continuous follow-up of lessons learned from previous missions, although noticeable domains of friction were present at Camp Clara. The essay closes by raising the question of how cooperation between Swedes and personnel from a country where the cultural, social, and educational differences are even greater would work.

When applying an emotion management perspective (Bolton, 2005) to these encounters, it may be stated that the Swedish soldiers were upset because they felt that the Irish did not adhere to organizational or professional feeling rules. Although mostly engaging in parallel tasks, the Swedes were provoked by what they thought was low morale in Irish units, who seemed genuinely disinterested in ‘taking that extra step’, that the Swedes would willingly take. The Irish soldiers’ lack of enthusiasm for ‘rising to the occasion’ might be explained by structural differences, something that some Swedish soldiers also reflected upon. While Swedes volunteer for international service in competition with hundreds of other applicants and want to get as much as possible out of their six months abroad, Irish soldiers are professionals and regularly obliged to deploy during both longer and shorter tours of service. However, the most serious friction between the two nations was that Swedes considered the Irish to be far too flexible with regard to rules and regulations, and especially in regard to ethics. It goes without saying that experiencing these differences more or less on a daily basis and simultaneously trying to stick to expected codes of conduct requires considerable emotion management. Such demands here led to an active avoidance of confrontation.
Essay III - ‘Don’t fight the blue elephant’

Background

Humour is a complex facet of human behaviour. It was during a fieldtrip to Camp Clara in Liberia that the first author noticed how soldiers in the expeditionary force were engaged in jest that manifested itself in anonymous workplace signs and posters put up on public display. Significantly, the signs communicated something different to the ordinary ‘I hate Mondays/love Fridays’ ethos you often find in many workplaces, in the sense that the messages implied paying tribute to a discourse where ‘work is taken seriously’. It was also obvious that these messages belonged to what Mulkay (1988) terms ‘applied humour’, i.e. humour with an intentional message meant for more than entertainment. In a rigorously ordered hierarchical organization like the military, these presumably innocent free spaces for expression are especially important, as joking practices can target quite serious organizational matters that often cannot be expressed in other ways.

Aim

The essay’s aim is an analytical comparison of humorous discourses found on workplace signs in two military contexts: high- and low-intensity conflict areas respectively. The analytical focus is on workplace signs manufactured by the military grassroots, i.e. operational soldiers and support units. Moreover, the jocular culture in focus illustrates the existence of a humorous discourse that outlives each individual’s six months of service, targeting organizational ideals and practices communicated by both the UN and the Swedish Armed Forces.

Method

The data primarily consists of a collection of anonymous workplace signs put up by Swedish soldiers during peace support operations in Liberia (Camp Clara), Kosovo (Camp Victoria) and Afghanistan (The Provincial Office of Sheberghan) between 2006 and 2010. In Liberia and Kosovo, these signs were noticed during visits; in Afghanistan, they refer to soldiers’ personal photos. Data also refers to findings of a longitudinal interview-study, where 26 soldiers were interviewed three times: during pre-deployment

---

training, about five months into the deployment (in total six months), and six months after their return to Sweden. Twelve of the informants were deployed to Liberia, twelve to Kosovo, and two to Afghanistan. Three were officers while the others were former conscripts who had volunteered for international service. The research questions did not focus specifically on humour, centring more broadly on experiences of the theatre and of contacts with various parties. In addition, a number of informal conversations with soldiers and officers who have served abroad have constituted important sources of information. One such talk was recorded, otherwise, notes were hand-written. However, informal conversations with soldiers and officers deployed to Afghanistan contained questions about signs and humour.

Results

The findings suggest that humorous exchanges on missions abroad are omnipresent and at the core of the military practice. In a context as challenging as these theatres, humour serves as a space for release from various stresses. Moreover, the article compares signs found in two types of military contexts (high- and low-intensity conflict areas), and the findings show that differences in the nature of operations i.e. threat level and duties, are reflected in the messages’ content. Further, humorous exchanges during overseas missions are seen as something that provides the scope for relieving various stresses arising from disillusion, and from being subordinated to rules, policies and designed roles, but also where barbed ideas inappropriate for ‘serious’ communication are vented (Fine, 1988). In more detail, it is argued that since the missions in Liberia and Kosovo were conducted where the threat level of military activities was comparatively low, the humorous discourse came to revolve around idealized identities and status negotiations (see Gabriel, 1995). This can also be interpreted as a search for confirmation that your work is necessary, important, and appreciated by others. Another conclusion is that the humour exchanges in both Liberia and Kosovo are ways for personnel in maintenance positions to re-frame low-status work and display self-promotion in a socially acceptable manner. While the humour discourse still resides within the frames of the established norms and feeling rules, it comes forward as a moderately successful dignity-shaping strategy.

In comparison, the mission in Afghanistan had a very different premise and was operating in a near war-like situation. This, it is argued, is also reflected in the humorous discourse and the more acute need for letting off steam as ‘emotional survival’. Likewise, it is suggested that the oppositional tone displayed in the messages targeting the Headquarters’ way of handling things is a direct consequence of the pressed situation on the ground. Compared to the signs in Liberia and Kosovo, the ‘butt’ (Davies, 1998) of which were mostly horizontal (i.e. peers on the same hierarchical level), the sign in Afghanistan that
proclaims a ‘core-value free zone, ban on feminazism, gay lobby and political correctness without permission’ has two butts – one in the military hierarchy and one in the patriarchal gender hierarchy.

Many studies have indicated that the integration of women into the Swedish military has been very slow (Sundevall, 2011) both compared to civilian working life and other defence forces, and previous research has also revealed a high frequency of sexual harassment (Berggren, 2002). With regard to the sign advocating a ‘core-value free zone’, we can merely conclude that the interpretation of its message has different possibilities. Either, it is an example of sexism and a continuing macho culture, here concealed under the cover of anonymity. Alternatively, it is a way of making a humorous comment about the much discussed core-values program, and the authorities’ way of rubbing in of what ‘everyone already knows’.

All in all, the essay concludes that it would be too presumptuous to argue that a number of signs put up in military camps offer substantial relief from the various discomforts exemplified in the essay. However, these messages have likely strengthened cohesion amongst units, something that indirectly may have made them better equipped to deal with realities like unfulfilled expectations, boredom and delusion. It has previously been suggested that soldiers who are allowed to complain and criticize the conditions of their service may also thereby gain a feeling of control over their lives (see for example Ben-Ari and Sion, 2005, p. 659 and Mulkay, 1988 on humour generally). In accordance with the terminology used by Bolton (2005), humour has one more important function with regard to the managing of emotions in organizations, namely that it widens the space for ‘being human’. Whether or not this can also include the possible signs of prejudices towards women and homosexuals found in Afghanistan is however questioned.

**Contribution**

We have not been able to find any prior analysis of workplace signs. The essay illustrates that the use of this comparatively unorthodox approach to investigate emotion management demands in missions abroad adds value compared to other methods. One reason is that messages put on posters and signs with anonymity as a shield may reflect conditions that are of a sensitive nature and should supposedly not be spontaneously raised in an interview. Moreover, even if ethnographies often stress the importance of humour in military work, research that specifically focuses on humour in the military context is unusual, and even more so the approach taken here of analyzing humorous exchanges in two different kinds of military contexts; high- and low-intensity conflict areas.
Essay IV - Post-deployment disorientation

Background

It is well known that exposure to threats and, in a worst-case scenario, to the risk of serious injury or loss of life, is extremely stressful for the individual (see Janis, 1949; Horn, 2004; Van den Berg & Soeters, 2009). Moreover, the fact that symptoms like Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) can be found in the wake of service, especially after service in high-intensity operations, is also widely acknowledged by military authorities and the research community alike (Cozza, 2005; Michel, 2005). However, little qualitative research has been conducted to understand how soldiers who have served in low-intensity missions orient themselves on return to civilian life after being symbolically transported from the familiar to the unfamiliar world of the operational theatre during the course of a year.

Eyal Ben-Ari (1998) poses questions regarding how the rather constant and systematic cultivation of emotional attitudes that takes place within the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) affects individuals’ civilian lives after completed military service. His argument states that the power of the Israeli military lies not solely in that they are preparing soldiers for combat but, importantly, in that they inculcate in men certain emotional stances to the world that might migrate to individuals’ civilian lives (p. 108-111). Although the Swedish soldiers under study have by no means been subjected to either training or combat experiences comparable to soldiers in IDF, and the emotional remains discussed here are of a both positive and negative kind, the findings touch the very core of Ben-Ari’s argument. Even here the soldiers’ narratives give rich examples of how experiences made in the military world serve as emotional reference points also on return to civilian life.

Aim

The aim of the essay is to introduce the concept of Post-deployment disorientation (PDD), which illustrates how, for many soldiers, adjustment to life as a civilian on return from service in low-intensity conflict areas, is a process that requires extensive emotion management. This is achieved by applying Hochschild’s (1979, 1983) emotion management theory to soldiers’ narratives, highlighting demands for emotion management in both societal and personal interfaces on return. PDD is introduced in order to grasp these expressions of unfamiliarity and the concept also aims to distinguish the area under study from more clinical stress syndromes (i.e. PTSD). Importantly

---

52 The essay, Post-Deployment Disorientation: The emotional remains of uneventful peace support operations was published in Res militaris (European Journal of Military Studies).
53 The length of service for conscripts in IDF is three years.
however, PDD should not be understood as a diagnosis but as a suggestion for a term reserved for a more everyday sense of disorientation that the majority of Swedish soldiers serving abroad likely are confronted with on return, even if their service has militarily been quite uneventful.

Method

The empirical material referred to here is a qualitative interview study conducted by the author and a research colleague in 2006/2007. The data was collected through semi-structured, individual interviews and, to a limited extent, participant observation in the mission areas. The informants were mainly a group of 24 individuals who were interviewed three times: during pre-deployment training, about five months into the deployment, and six months after their return home.

Results

The essay illustrates that participation even in quite uneventful missions abroad can cast far-reaching emotional shadows on the soldiers’ return home, causing them to feel both cognitively and emotionally changed and disorientated. The findings challenge the official understanding that these types of conflict areas produce little if any emotional ‘remains’.

PDD is seen as constituting three main dimensions. First, there are emotional remains stemming from a reality check when encountering conditions outside former frames of reference, in this context referring first and foremost to the civilians’ situation in the mission areas. The second dimension behind PDD summarizes notions of expeditionary service abroad as a greenhouse for personal growth. While this naturally implies something positive, it may also lead to social disorientation on return in that you no longer share the same outlook as your friends. Some soldiers also re-furnish their circle of friends towards their military pals – the only ones who really understand. The third dimension of disorientation portrayed here refers to the impression of having lived in a pocket in time, where the amalgam of both intense operations and more tedious work tasks has also made room for self-reflection. Notions in this dimension were organized around quite vague metaphors, such as mission time having special qualities and that time spent abroad counted for more than its nominative value. The central differences between this dimension and personal growth, is that whilst the latter refer to feelings of a personal development in relation to others, the former refers to feelings of a disorientating time-lapse, where time has either stood still back home or in the conflict area.
Contribution

The essay contributes to the literature on peace support operations with a complementary view of what it means, in emotional terms, to return from service in low-intensity conflict areas. A new theoretical concept, PDD, is coined and introduced to stress the difference between the disorientation under study and more clinical psychological stress syndromes. In essence, it is argued that PDD often invokes new outlooks on life as well as affecting navigation in the social world. Moreover, it is argued that although the general view among soldiers is that service abroad is a unique, rewarding and cherished experience, we need to further recognize that this is an accomplishment that also has other transformative properties.
6. CONCLUDING REMARKS

In conventional war, emotional control is often regarded as the paramount emotion management demand. The main argument of this thesis is that for peace support operations, this is too narrow a conclusion. These missions differ considerably in character, where emotional control is only one facet of a wide range of emotion management acts. Even if this thesis deals mainly with two low-intensity conflict areas, the assumption is that the multi-faceted emotional demands found here are as common in high-intensity conflict areas, differing in strength and degree rather than in kind. Certain ‘emotional remains’ also accompany soldiers on return to Sweden, regardless of whether or not their tour of service, in military terms, was quite uneventful.

When summarizing the results presented above in relation to the main aim of the thesis, two overall propositions have been made. The first implies that insight into the presence and character of feeling rules and emotion management in the expeditionary service is seen as one of the main pillars, perhaps the most central one, for an understanding of the emotional load on soldiers, regardless of which labels are attached to the respective mission area.

With regard to the second aim that focuses on how soldiers manage these demands, the findings illustrate that although these requirements can be characterized as both multi-faceted and a constant, the study broadly confirms accounts of the multi-talented emotional actor described by Bolton (2005), who is quite capable of handling contradiction while negotiating feeling rules. According to Bolton, a magnitude of emotional investment is the reason why organizational actors are mostly capable of acting out everything from a sincere appearance to sincere role-playing. In a mission context, these propositions however imply that such investments are made with both effort and substantial emotional costs.

Implications

One of this thesis’ strengths is that it provides rich empirical support for the argument made that considerable emotion management is connected to service in low-intensity conflict areas, and it presents reasons for why these demands have relevance also beyond these contexts. Among its limitations are that only certain facets of the service have been discussed in detail, and that a perspective that addresses the impact on the soldiers’ total situation is missing. Additionally, although the study has a longitudinal perspective, the
last round of interviews was conducted six months after the soldiers’ homecoming. It would naturally have been interesting to conduct a more long-term follow up. Moreover, due to the composition of the sample, it has not been possible to discuss gender constructions in the military and that female soldiers likely experience a different and even more pronounced emotional load.

Looking ahead, several fields can be outlined for further research into the demands on soldiers for emotion management: firstly, the findings point to the importance of developing a more refined conceptualization of the emotional load than has been possible to investigate here. Another important field for further examination is the way in which soldiers cope with emotion management demands, for instance, by creating an emotive distance towards too much emotional involvement, as illustrated in essay IV. Last but not least, it is important to examine whether a perceived sense of meaningfulness in relation to one’s work has any significance (see Schok, 2009), a factor that has only been granted a cursory look in this thesis.

Svensk sammanfattning

Över 100 000 svenskar har sedan andra världskrigets slut deltagit i militära uppdrag utomlands. Efterhand har dessa uppdrag blivit allt mer krävande för deltagarna, från att i huvudsak ha inneburit att observera skeenden i olika konfliktområden till att aktivt ingripa i pågående konflikter, i syfte att stabilisera situationen och inte minst skydda civilbefolkningen. Mycket har också gjorts vad gäller att materiellt, utbildnings- och rekryteringsmässigt anpassa det svenska försvaret till de nya uppgifterna. Vad som inte uppmärksammat lika mycket är att deltagande i vad som sammanfattningsvis brukar benämnas fredsfrämjande operationer, innebär ett ’arbete’ också på det känslomässiga planet. Än mindre har detta uppmärksammat om operationerna utförts i ett militärt sett ’lägintensivt’ och relativt händelsefattigt konfliktområde.

Att deltagande i krig och krigslignande situationer kan medföra utveckling av allvarliga psykiska störningar som t.ex. post-traumatisk stress (PTSD) är både väl känt och uppmärksammats. Flera forskare (se t.ex. Schok, 2009) hävdar dock att det ensidiga fokus som traditionellt funnits på denna typ av känslomässiga effekter inte är tillräckligt och att fredsfrämjande missioner har tillkommande påfrestningar, om än ofta med mindre allvarliga konsekvenser. Att åse civilbefolkningens lidande samtidigt som man saknar mandat att ingripa kan här tjäna som exempel. Utöver att hantera egna känslor måste man också kunna hantera och indirekt styra andra människors känslor som t.ex. att dämpa aggressivitet eller oro hos civilbefolkningen. Till detta kan läggas att kunna verka i möten och kontakter med en mängd olika, och inte alltid välvilliga, parter i missionsområdet,
samt vara ett socialt stöd inom den egna enheten inför och efter svåra uppgifter och upplevelser.

Vad gäller s.k. lågintensiva missioner antas dock ovanstående krav närmast per definition vara både mindre frekventa och utpräglade, och därmed också något som soldaterna med lätthet klarar att hantera. De forskningsfrågor som väglett denna avhandling har mot denna bakgrund formulerats på följande sätt:

- Vilka krav på emotionsstyrning finns i s.k. lågintensiva fredsfrämjande operationer?
- Hur klarar soldaterna att hantera dessa krav?

Teoretiska inspirationskällor har främst varit ett antal emotionssociologiskt oriterade forskare som studerat krav på känslostyrning (emotion management) i det civila arbetslivet. En av dessa är den amerikanska sociologen Arlie Russell Hochschild, vars numera klassiska teorier kring ’emotional labour’ inom serviceyrken utvecklades under 80-talet. Ån mer centralt i avhandlingen är dock den vidareutveckling av Hochschilds tankegångar som gjorts av den engelska sociologen Sharon Bolton och som tillsammans med Carol Boyd (2003) utvecklat en typologi över krav på känslostyrning i organisationer och beskrivit dess konsekvenser för anställdas engagemang, motivation och inställning till arbetet. Inte minst intressant är deras resonemang kring hur professionella grupper som t.ex. läkare och advokater medveten skapar en distans till sina klienter för att undvika alltför starkt känslofattigt engagemang, något som det också finns exempel på bland deltagarna i denna studie. Tilläggas kan att både Hochschild och Bolton inspirerats av Erving Goffmans rollteori. Hans arbeten genomsyras av det grundläggande mänskliga dilemma att vilja vara ’oss själva’ inom den sociala ordningens normativa begränsningar.

andra nationers militära enheter. Dessa erfarenheter var sedan tänka att ingå i den framtida missionsutbildningen.

Mängden information från intervjuer av denna längd och omfattning möjliggör inte sällan en analys utifrån flera teoretiska perspektiv. Även om den rapport som följde på studien (essä II) inte alls nämner företeelser som känslor och emotionsstyrning, vilka utgör centrala begrepp i av handlingen, så är detta likväl väl exemplifierat i de svenska soldaternas bild av samverkan med irlandsk trupp i Liberia. För att travestera emotionssociologen Erving Goffman (1961a) skulle man då kunna säga att det som gjorts till huvudfokus i denna avhandling är i relation till det ursprungliga syftet med intervjuerna att finna i 'sprickorna' (p. 320).

Resultaten visar tydligt att tjänstgöring i utlandsstyrkan innefattar långt fler krav än kognitiv förmåga och teknisk och professionell skicklighet. Man måste också kunna behärskta alla de känslor som följer av att man befinner sig i ett främmande land och under starkt reglerade och ofta riskfyllda förhållanden. Ett övergripande argument i av handlingen är att förmågan att uppvisa 'rätt' känslouttryck och därmed förändra både egna och andras känslor i mötet med exempelvis riskfyllda situationer, fattigdom och en lågande lokalbefolkning är något som mer eller mindre förväntas av soldaten. Resultaten visar dock att speciellt kraven på snabba växlingar mellan olika känslouttryck upplevs som svårt och sägs vara något som vissa aldrig lär sig. Andra kan oroa sig av att det för evigt förlopa kontakten med genuina känslor som empati mm. En slutsats som dras i denna avhandling är således att många soldater kan uppleva ansenlig känslomässig påstående även under relativt lugna och väl inarbetade missioner men att indelningen i låg- respektive högintensiva missioner och de antaganden kring stress och belastning som förknippas med dessa, gjort att uppmärksamheten på de emotionella kraven i sk. låg-intensiva missioner eftersatts.

Att kraven på emotionsstyrning i den militära kontext som här beskrivs vida överstiger motsvarande krav inom civila yrkesgrupper behöver knappast sägas. En stor skillnad jämfört med civila förhållanden är också att regler för uppträdande inte kan specificeras för alla de situationer som kan uppträda, utan mycket märke överlämnas till soldaternas egen bedömning, initiativ och uppfinningsriktedom. Det gäller också att kunna välja vilket känslouttryck som är det mest lämpliga i en viss situation och var betoning skall ligga.

Svaret på frågan hur soldaterna hanterar alla de institutionella, professionella och sociala krav och normer som följer med tjänstgöringen exemplifieras på många ställen i av handlingen. Generellt sett förefaller man ha klarat av anpassningen relativt bra, där det faktum att det finns en vilja att anpassa sig, att göra ett bra jobb och att 'göra skillnad' sannolikt haft en positiv inverkan. Detta undantar dock inte att flera sade sig tvivla på nytan med den egna insatsen och missionen som sådan. I essä II beskrivs också hur samverkan med irlandsk trャrkor i Liberia påverkades negativt av både omfattande
ryktesspridning och skilda värderingar, påfrestningar som löstes genom att man begränsade samverkan till ett minimum.

Alla irritationsmoment och påfrestningar lämpar sig dock inte att öppet tala om, utan uttrycks då på andra sätt. I essä III analyseras innehållet i de anonyma, humoristiskt präglade kommentarer som återfanns på anslag i arbetslokaler och på gemensamma platser. Det dessa reflekterade var olika gruppers missnöje med t.ex. arbetsuppgifter, statusskillnader och allmänt sett en frustration över upplevda missförhållanden inom både FN och Försvarsmakten. I likhet med många beskrivningar från fabriksgolvet erbjuder den militära kontexten således stora möjligheter till en ’profanisering’ av arbetet, där beskrivningar av gravallvarlig verksamhet emellanåt får en dragning åt galghumor.

Sist men inte minst beskrivs i essä IV att upplevelserna under missionens gång för många påverkar känslolägen och förhållningssätt även efter hemkomsten, påfrestningar som här sammanfattas i begreppet Post-Deployment Disorientation (PDD), (ung. Missionsrelaterad disorientering). För vissa innebär detta att man aktivt söker återanpassa sig till vänner och familj och samhället i stort medan andra väljer att bryta med delar av vänkretsen vars värderingar och intressen man inte längre delar. Även om missionstiden av de allra flesta omtalas i positiva termer så är det helt klart att denna också har sitt pris både under och efter avslutad tjänstgöring.

Den rekommendation till Försvarsmakten som sammanfattningsvis följer av resultaten i denna avhandling är att initiera en mer allsidig forskning kring emotionella krav under utlandsmissioner och dess konsekvenser. Denna bör då inkludera även andra grupper, som exempelvis kvinnor, stabspersonal och högre befäl. Mer insikter bör också eftersträvas vad gäller hemkommande soldaters situation, vilket stöd dessa kan tänkas behöva på både kort och lång sikt och oavsett vilken typ av mission man deltagit i.
References


Miscellaneous


www.forsvarsmakten.se/sv/Internationella-insatser/Avslutadetutsatser (accessed September 26, 2011)

http://www.forsvarsmakten.se/sv/Om-Forsvarsmakten/uppdrag (accessed September 26, 2011)


Officerstidningen, 2006/6.

Emotion matters

Today, participation in Peace Support Operations abroad is one of the main tasks for the Swedish Armed Forces. Nevertheless, the emotional costs associated with these engagements have not been subject to any detailed research, especially not when it comes to service in what is militarily described as low-intensity conflict areas – the main focus of this thesis.

From an emotion sociological perspective and interviews with soldiers before, during and after their deployments (mainly to Liberia and Kosovo during 2006-2007) one central argument put forward in this thesis states that the emotional demands therein are considerable.

Furthermore, the thesis questions a prevalent view, which states that the successful soldier is someone with emotional control, in the sense that he 'lacks' feeling towards what he/she is doing. Rather, Weibull argues, the soldiers' emotion management work is what it takes to get the job done when choosing, modeling, managing, and displaying the 'right' emotional expression. Moreover, the thesis emphasizes that emotion management demands are not restricted to the tour of service. Returning home often involves feeling both cognitively and emotionally disorientated, even if the mission has been militarily quite uneventful.

Emotion management in Swedish Peace Support Operations

Louise Weibull