

Ship of Shame

Gender and Nation in Narratives of the 1981 Soviet Submarine Crisis in Sweden

❖ Cecilia Åse

On the evening of 27 October 1981, a Soviet submarine, *U-137*, ran aground and was stranded on a rock in a restricted military area near a naval base in Karlskrona, in the southeastern part of Sweden. The boat was discovered the next morning by a local fisherman, who alerted the authorities. Until 6 November, when the submarine was restored to a Soviet fleet waiting beyond the limits of Sweden's territorial waters, it remained an object of marked military attention and intense diplomatic negotiations. Media coverage of the incident was extensive and made headline news in Sweden and around the world.

From Sweden's perspective, the submarine was a security threat and a flagrant breach of the country's territorial sovereignty. After the delayed discovery of the boat, the Swedish military acted resolutely. Heavily armed troops filled the islands surrounding the submarine, numerous military vessels took positions nearby, and marine helicopters and air force planes circled the area. However, as the diplomatic negotiations became protracted, the sense of shock and disbelief diminished, and concern over national prestige and reputation became all the more rampant. A sense of danger returned with renewed force on the afternoon of 5 November, when Prime Minister Thorbjörn Fälldin announced with restrained emotion at a press conference that the submarine carried nuclear weapons.¹ This declaration was sensational news and made the violation of Swedish territory appear all the more serious.

In the decade following the *U-137* episode, the Swedish military was involved in numerous other submarine searches, evicting what were ostensibly foreign submarines from Swedish waters and dropping sink bombs. Although

1. *Rapport*, Sveriges Television, TV 2, 5 November 1981, in National Library of Sweden, Swedish Media Database. A recording of the press conference is available online at <http://www.oppetarkiv.se/video/1952556/>. The author has translated all quotations from source material.

the military authorities failed to identify these alleged trespassers, the belief at the time was that the underwater activities could be attributed only to the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact countries.² A Swedish government commission in 2001 eventually confirmed that of the thousands of suspicious incidents previously reported, only a handful could be substantiated.³ Recently, researchers have claimed that several of the violations might be attributable to the underwater activities of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).⁴ There is no agreement among scholars regarding whether *U-137* was lost or actually intended to enter Swedish territory. However, concern about intrusive submarines, whether actual or imaginary, continues to be an important feature of the Swedish Cold War experience.

The Intrusion

The *U-137* crisis was an unforeseen and highly publicized incident that took place during a period of heightened Cold War hostility. Sweden's territorial sovereignty was breached, and the Swedish armed forces' ability to protect the country was called into question. Threatening and unexpected events challenge individuals on personal, societal, and national levels. National crises give rise to reformulated societal identities and collective self-images. This article examines Swedish media narratives from the *U-137* incident and proposes gender and nation as key concepts for understanding the crisis in its Cold War context. How did gender and nation influence narratives about the *U-137* submarine crisis?

Feminist theory and poststructuralist approaches to the nation intersect in the *U-137* analysis. In feminist theory, gender is a central element of social relationships based on perceived differences between the sexes and is a primary way of signifying relationships of power.⁵ Gender is manifested

2. Fredrik Bynander, "The Rise and Fall of the Submarine Threat: Threat Politics and Submarine Intrusions in Sweden, 1980–2002," Ph.D. Diss., Uppsala University, 2003, p. 4; and Gunnar Åselius, "Konspiration eller panikreaktion? Sverige och ubåtskränkningarna under 1980-talet," *Historisk tidskrift*, Vol. 129, No. 4 (2009), p. 653.

3. SOU 2001:85, *Perspektiv på u-båtsfrågan* (Stockholm: Ministry of Defense, 2001), p. 334.

4. Wilhelm Agrell, *Fred och fruktan: Sveriges säkerhetspolitiska historia 1918–2000* (Lund: Historiska Media, 2000), p. 229; Mikael Holmström, *Den dolda alliansen: Sveriges hemliga NATO-förbindelser* (Stockholm: Atlantis, 2011), pp. 21, 242–246; Vasilij Besedin, *Inifrån U 137: Min egen berättelse* (Karlskrona, Sweden: Albinsson & Sjöbergs Bokförlag, 2009), p. 48; and Joakim Lindhé and Per Anders Rudelius, "Ubåt 137 på grund," Sveriges Television, SVT 2, 26 October 2006, in National Library of Sweden, Swedish Media Database.

5. Joan W. Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 91, No. 5 (December 1986), pp. 1053–1075.

in political discourse and societal representations and is particularly salient in the construction of meaning in relation to femininity, masculinity, (hetero)sexuality, and human bodies.⁶ A poststructuralist take on national identity views the nation as a constructed and historically contingent identity—an “imagined community,” in Benedict Anderson’s famous phrase.⁷ Following Anderson, a broad field of research interrogates the constitution of the nation through representations of a nationally shared geographical territory and history as well as national sentiments and community.⁸ This theoretical framework, unlike realist theory, sees national security and sovereignty not as self-explanatory but as the result of processes of collective meaning production and interpretation.

Political and cultural representations that carry strong national connotations also involve gender. “All nations depend on powerful constructions of gender,” writes Anne McClintock in accordance with feminist scholarship on the nation and nationalism.⁹ The nation’s history and future are associated with biological descent and lineage through the gendered family, and women’s bodies in particular are a national concern. The image of the nation as a family also collapses familial relations into national unity and loyalty.¹⁰ The language of sons and daughters sharing a national home proposes a strong bond among individuals who do not personally know one another but who still feel mutual loyalty. National territory itself is also gendered and sexualized. Men and masculinity are historically associated with the defense and protection

6. See, for example, Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990); Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of “Sex”* (New York: Routledge, 1993); Raewyn Connell, *Masculinities* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); Michael Kimmel, *Manhood in America: A Cultural History* (New York: Free Press, 1996); Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990); and Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (London: Routledge, 1995).

7. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

8. See, for example, Homi K. Bhabha, “DissemiNation: Time, Narrative and the Margins of the Modern Nation,” in *Nation and Narration* (London: Routledge, 1990), pp. 291–322; Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism* (London: Sage, 1995); and Lene Hansen, *Security as Practice: Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War* (London: Routledge, 2006).

9. McClintock, *Imperial Leather*, p. 353.

10. See, for example, Cecilia Åse, “Monarchical Manoeuvres: Gender, Nation and the Boundary Problem in Post-War Swedish Constitutional Development,” *NORA Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (2013), pp. 172–186; Tamar Mayer, ed., *Gender Ironies of Nationalism: Sexing the Nation* (London: Routledge, 2000); McClintock, *Imperial Leather*; Ann Towns, Erika Karlsson, and Joshua Eyre, “The Equality Conundrum: Gender and Nation in the Ideology of the Swedish Democrats,” *Party Politics*, Vol. 20, No. 2 (2014), pp. 237–247; and Nira Yuval-Davis, *Gender and Nation* (London: Sage, 1997).

of the nation, whereas women and femininity are boundary markers and embody national territory.¹¹ The gendering of protector-protected relations institute gender-nation representations as essential to national security issues and military norms and ideals.

In this study, a gender-nation analysis of the *U-137* incident establishes how gendered and nationalized meanings and images organized interpretations and limited the possibilities and rationales for specific actions. A vital feature of the submarine crisis was the strong emotional aspect. The event triggered national humiliation for both the Swedish and the Soviet national communities. Gendered depictions of military incapacity and the attribution of a lack of masculinity to both the Soviet intruders and the Swedish national protectors conveyed national humiliation. The Swedish territory, as an imagined feminine body, supported these narratives. This observation supports historian Frank Costigliola's assertion that during the Cold War gendered images of the sexualized body and metaphors of physical strength and weakness frequently conveyed emotion.¹² Body imagery connects to corporeal experiences and personal fears and fantasies. Consequently, an analysis of body imagery and gender-nation appropriations of the human body makes it possible to account for the emotional engagement triggered by the submarine crisis.

Previous studies of the “whiskey on the rocks” incident, as it is often called, have relied largely on rationalist underpinnings. This study is the first to approach the crisis from a feminist and poststructuralist perspective. The most prominent research literature interrogates the event from the perspective of crisis management or focuses on how the incident relates to foreign policy strategy in the bipolar international system of the Cold War. The voluminous literature on crisis management covers the decision-making processes and leadership styles related to *U-137*. Studies have pinpointed institutional

11. See, for example, Maud Eduards, *Kroppspolitik: Om moder Svea och andra kvinnor* (Stockholm: Atlas, 2007), ch. 2; Cynthia Enloe, *The Morning After: Sexual Politics at the End of the Cold War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), chs. 2–3; Joan B. Landes, *Visualizing the Nation: Gender, Representation, and Revolution in Eighteenth Century France* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001); George L. Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990); and Ruth Seifert, “The Second Front: The Logic of Sexual Violence in Wars,” *Women's Studies International Forum*, Vol. 19, No. 1–2 (January–April 1996), pp. 35–43.

12. Frank Costigliola, “The Nuclear Family: Tropes of Gender and Pathology in the Western Alliance,” *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (1997), pp. 163–183; and Frank Costigliola, “‘Unceasing Pressure for Penetration’: Gender, Pathology, and Emotion in George Kennan’s Formation of the Cold War,” *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 83, No. 4 (March 1997), pp. 1309–1339.

as well as leadership and cognitive factors.¹³ In a comprehensive study, Fredrik Bynander accounts for *U-137* as well as the subsequent submarine threats of the 1980s and 1990s. He focuses on leadership and decision-making and uses quantitative methods to discuss threat perceptions in the media.¹⁴ The *U-137* incident has also been cited as a test case for studying crisis situations that involve a pronounced discrepancy in military capability, a so-called asymmetrical crisis.¹⁵ From the perspective of military strategy and doctrine, the grounded submarine is discussed in the context of Soviet strategic goals in the Baltic. Wilhelm Agrell addresses this issue systematically.¹⁶ In a 1986 analysis, he states that the *U-137* crisis was the first occasion since World War II that actually tested Swedish defense doctrine and military assumptions.¹⁷ The incident's effect on Swedish military strategy has also been discussed.¹⁸

The gender-nation nexus of the *U-137* crisis was the national military ideal of a protective and fundamentally defensive neutral soldier and the foreign policy doctrine of nonalignment. The stranded submarine threatened the Swedish armed forces' status as protectors of the national territory. This article demonstrates how the neutral soldier was initially challenged and how, through narratives that reinstated masculine and military prestige, the military ideal was restored. The submarine incident also revealed how neutrality involved a gender dilemma that concerned military masculinity. On the one hand, the neutrality doctrine dictated that Sweden should strive to convey the impression of extensive military force to deter foreign intrusion or attack. On the other hand, this strategy increased the risk that the armed forces' military capacity and capability would be such that they could not live up to this impression. The doctrine of armed neutrality placed the Swedish military in a potentially dishonorable position, lacking the military muscle that it encouraged others to expect.

13. Eric R. Stern, "The U-137 Incident: A Study in Swedish Crisis Management," Stockholm University, 1990; Pär Daléus, "Politisk ledarskapsstil: Om interaktionen mellan personlighet och institutioner i utövänt av det svenska statsministerämbetet," Ph.D. Diss., Stockholm University, 2012; and Karin Lindgren, "Vad styr ledaren? Om beslutsfattare och policyförändring i säkerhetspolitiska kriser," Ph.D. Diss., Uppsala University, 2003.

14. Bynander, "The Rise and Fall of the Submarine Threat."

15. Eric R. Stern and Bengt Sundelius, "Managing Asymmetrical Crisis: Sweden, the USSR, and U-137," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 36, No. 2 (June 1992), pp. 213–239.

16. Wilhelm Agrell, "Soviet Baltic Strategy and the Swedish Submarine Crisis," *Cooperation and Conflict*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (November 1983), pp. 269–281.

17. Wilhelm Agrell, *Bakom ubåtskrisen: Militär verksamhet, krigsplanläggning och diplomati i Östersjöområdet* (Stockholm: Liber, 1986), p. 10.

18. Bynander, "The Rise and Fall of the Submarine Threat," pp. 113–118.

National Identity, Neutrality, and the Ideal of the Neutral Soldier

The *U-137* crisis contested important features of Swedish national identity, which during the Cold War rested on the strong welfare state associated with the concept of the *folkhem* (“people’s home”) and on the foreign policy of nonalignment and armed neutrality.¹⁹ Doctrinal Swedish foreign policy stipulated that the country remain unaligned in peacetime so that it could remain neutral in the event of war. Mandatory male conscription gendered conceptions of citizenship and associated the political sphere and the duty to bear arms with men.²⁰ Women remained associated with the private and reproductive spheres of the *folkhem*. The two facets of national identity strongly evoked protection and security: the welfare state promised the individual social and economic security throughout the life course, and the military forces guaranteed the nation’s security in a threatening world order.

The conspicuous role of foreign policy doctrine in Swedish national identity arose in the postwar years, writes historian Bo Stråth: “The caption of neutrality could restore Swedish importance and self-esteem which had diminished in the bad conscience of not having done enough for neighboring countries during the war years.”²¹ Neutrality was a central component of Social Democratic ideology and hegemony throughout the Cold War. The Social Democratic vision of neutrality was anti-isolationist and included an active international role that promoted détente and Third World solidarity, and Sweden actively engaged in disarmament, arms control, and Third World aid.²² Consensus between the political parties on foreign policy was an issue of

19. Important contributions to this large body of research include Kurt Almqvist and Kaj Glans, eds., *Den svenska framgångssagan?* (Stockholm: Bokförlaget Fisher, 2001); Marie Cronqvist, “Survival in the Welfare Cocoon: The Culture of Civil Defense in Cold War Sweden,” in Annette Vowinkel, Marcus M. Payk, and Thomas Lindenberger, eds., *Cold War Cultures: Perspectives on Eastern and Western European Societies* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012); Arne Ruth, “The Second New Nation: The Mythology of Modern Sweden,” *Daedalus: Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, Vol. 113, No. 2 (1984), pp. 53–96; and Jacob Westberg, “Den nationella drömträdgården: Den stora berättelsen om den egna nationen i svensk och brittisk Europadebatt,” Ph.D. Diss., Stockholm University, 2003.

20. Annica Kronsell, *Gender, Sex and the Postnational Defense: Militarism and Peacekeeping* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), ch. 1; Erika Svedberg and Annica Kronsell, “Plikten att försvara Sverige: Maskulinitet, femininitet och värnplikt,” *Tidskrift för politisk filosofi*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (2002), pp. 18–38; and Johanna Overud, “I beredskap med fru Lojal: Behovet av kvinnlig arbetskraft i Sverige under andra världskriget,” Ph.D. Diss., Stockholm University, 2005.

21. Bo Stråth, “Neutralitet som självförståelse,” in Almqvist and Glans, eds., *Den svenska framgångssagan?* p. 195.

22. Christine Agius, *The Social Construction of Swedish Neutrality: Challenges to Swedish Identity and Sovereignty* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2006); Laura C. Ferreira-Pereira, “Swedish

national security insofar as consensus strengthened the credibility of the doctrine of nonalignment abroad. Commentators stress that an overwhelming majority of citizens supported neutrality. Almost everyone was committed to this foreign policy dogma.²³ Accordingly, Swedish neutrality was not only a security policy in the strict sense; it was a collective undertaking and a key feature of national identity, “the hub around which Swedish politics was built.”²⁴

The Swedish neutrality doctrine rested firmly on armed neutrality. Writing in 1989, political scientist Bengt Sundelius noted that Swedish governments traditionally relied on the classic means of security; namely, armed force.²⁵ Armed neutrality was closely related to an ethos of national self-defense throughout the Cold War, Johanna Rainio-Niemi argues.²⁶ Defensive military capability and the ability to protect the national territory from foreign intrusion were paramount in Sweden. Although it was obvious that the country could not withstand a full-scale military attack from a belligerent superpower, the idea was to have enough military capability to give the impression that the costs would be greater than the geostrategic gains of such an attack. This thinking connects to what Efraim Karsh has defined as the negative component of neutrality. For a neutral state, a defensive negative strategy serves to “indicate to the potential aggressor the high direct cost of violating the neutrality.”²⁷ Consistent with Karsh’s view of negative neutrality, military expenditure in Sweden was high—considerably higher per capita than in most NATO countries.²⁸

Outside Sweden, however, neutrality was regarded with suspicion in the bipolar order of the Cold War. With the argument that neutral states avoided the costs of war while hoping to benefit from its outcome, neutrality was even deemed immoral. Neutrality did not fit easily with the idea of an anarchic

Military Neutrality in the Post-Cold War: ‘Old Habits Die Hard,’” *Perspectives on European Politics and Society*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (2008), pp. 463–489; and Mikael af Malmborg, *Neutrality and State-Building in Sweden* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 160–164.

23. Bynander, “The Rise and Fall of the Submarine Threat,” p. 110; and Bengt Sundelius, “Committing Neutrality in an Antagonistic World,” in Bengt Sundelius, ed., *The Committed Neutral: Sweden’s Foreign Policy* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1989), p. 12.

24. Mikael af Malmborg, “Europas krig och fredens försvenskning,” in Almqvist and Glans, eds., *Den svenska framgångssagan?* p. 164.

25. Bengt Sundelius, “Sweden: Secure Neutrality,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 512 (1990), pp. 116–124.

26. Johanna Rainio-Niemi, *The Ideological Cold War: The Politics of Neutrality in Austria and Finland* (London: Routledge, 2014).

27. Efraim Karsh, *Neutrality and Small States* (London: Routledge, 1988), p. 63.

28. Wilhelm Agrell, *Fredens illusioner: Det svenska nationella försvarets nedgång och fall 1988–2009* (Stockholm: Atlantis, 2010), p. 45.

international system, mainly because neutrals rejected war and refused to partake in military alliances. In the classic international relations textbook *Politics among Nations*, Hans J. Morgenthau argued that neutral states owe their independence to the balance of power, to the preponderance of one power, or to their geostrategic unattractiveness.²⁹ Neutrality was the choice of weak and isolationist countries. Christine Agius notes that the neutral position can be feminized. She quotes a description that equates Swiss neutrality with “a virgin who earns her living in a bordello but wants to remain chaste.”³⁰

Feminist international relations theory highlights the gendering of military doctrines and national security strategies. Lauren Wilcox writes that offensive strategies manifest strong masculine ideals, whereas defensive strategies are less masculine because they cannot “require soldiers to display the heroism associated with courage, strength, honor, and manhood.”³¹ This gendered logic favors offensive strategies. Wilcox draws examples from the First World War, in which ideals of masculinity and honorable soldiering affected the use of airplanes in military activities. The dropping of bombs was deemed unchivalrous and unmanly, whereas pilots who engaged in attacks against enemy planes epitomized masculine and military ideals. This example illustrates how a military strategy or decision is delegitimized by “the wimp factor.”³²

In Sweden, the male duty to protect the national home and the doctrine of nonalignment were linked during the Cold War. In the last two decades of the Cold War, defense and security policies centered on the idea of an all-encompassing *folkförsvar* (people’s defense), which required a large army trained to fight a protracted battle across Swedish territory. Military historian Gunnar Åselius emphasizes that endurance was preferred over initial strength (“quantity before quality”) and that the post-mobilization armed forces numbered 850,000 as late as the 1980s.³³ This large conscription army was ideologically buttressed by the idea that, in a democracy, protecting the country should be based on the active participation of male citizens. Swedish political scientists Erika Svedberg and Annica Kronsell emphasize that given

29. Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 4th ed. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1960), p. 176.

30. Agius, *The Social Construction of Swedish Neutrality*, p. 4.

31. Lauren Wilcox, “Gendering the Cult of the Offensive,” *Security Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (Winter 2009), p. 222.

32. Carol Cohn, “War, Wimps, and Women: Talking Gender and Thinking War,” in Miriam G. Cooke and Angela Wollacott, eds., *Gendering War Talk* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), pp. 227–246.

33. Gunnar Åselius, “Swedish Strategic Culture after 1945,” *Cooperation and Conflict*, Vol. 40, No. 1 (March 2005), pp. 25–44.

the country's geopolitical position and vast territory, credible neutrality was possible only by means of conscription. In turn, upholding such a large army was dependent on norms that depicted the protection of the nation as a masculine duty. This duty was ingrained in thousands of young men who underwent military training.³⁴

Although it was the armed forces' unconditional and *masculine* obligation to protect national Swedish territory, the pronounced defensive military posture was potentially unmanly or even feminine. The national Swedish ideal of a neutral soldier incorporated this gender ambivalence. Kronsell underlines that the neutral soldier took a passive stance toward external military action; his duty was to protect his nation, not to wage war in its name. Nonetheless, physical strength and endurance as well as military capability were essential features of the neutral soldier.³⁵ In relation to the *U-137* crisis, the Swedish military had obviously failed to protect the country from foreign intrusion, which challenged the military capability of the neutral soldier.

Analysis of Media Discourses

An analysis of media representations and narratives of dramatic events can shed light on the framing and reframing of social identities and subjectivities. Heather Nunn has noted that vivid and emotionally charged media representations and images create a space for detailing the intricate relationships among gender categories, national identities, political power, and military violence. Media representations, she writes, are “powerful cultural forms through which subjects can construct the field of meanings associated with political and national life.”³⁶ Recent research specifically addresses the role of emotions in constructing social and gender identities. Significant contributions theorize emotions not as the property of the individual but as collective and discursively conveyed representations.³⁷ Emotions reify social structures and collectivities, such as gender and nation, and become important in the constitution of power

34. Svedberg and Kronsell, *Plikten att försvara Sverige*, pp. 24–25.

35. Kronsell, *Gender, Sex and the Postnational Defense*, pp. 24–32.

36. Heather Nunn, *Thatcher, Politics and Fantasy: The Political Culture of Gender and Nation* (London: Lawrence & Wishart: 2002), p. 13.

37. See Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004); Sara Ahmed, *The Promise of Happiness* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010); Catarina Kinnvall, “Trauma and the Politics of Fear: Europe at the Crossroads,” in Nicolas Demertzis, ed., *Emotions in Politics: The Affect Dimension in Political Tension* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013); and Donileen R. Loseke, “Examining Emotion as Discourse: Emotion Codes and Presidential Speeches Justifying War,” *The Sociological Quarterly*, Vol. 50, No. 3 (Summer 2009), pp. 497–524.

relations. Through the effect of a history of articulations, emotions are associated with and can stick to specific words and representations, argues cultural theorist Sara Ahmed.³⁸ Moreover, Costigliola's analysis of U.S. Cold War foreign policy and discourse indicates that emotions and emotive language are especially important when considering the Cold War period.³⁹

This article uses what Carol Bacchi calls an "analysis of discourses" methodology and identifies the "ways issues are given a particular meaning within a social setting." A general focus is on identifying the "institutionally supported and culturally influenced conceptual and interpretative schemas" that influence how an issue or an event is delimited and defined.⁴⁰ A systematic examination of the *U-137* media material identifies interpretative frames and figures of speech. Because satire, irony, and humor can indicate underlying and repressed emotions, such representations are targeted, as are representations and metaphors connected to sexuality and the human body. References to corporeal experiences and sexualized wording and images convey shame and embarrassment.

The analysis of the submarine crisis engages with audiovisual and written media discourse. The empirical material consists of two major Swedish newspapers (*Dagens Nyheter* and *Aftonbladet*) and footage and transcripts from the most widely viewed evening television news program, *Rapport*, which was broadcast on the public service channel. The materials from these influential domestic media sources capture the dominant narratives of the submarine crisis presented in Sweden at the time. The materials studied span the period from the day the submarine became stranded, 27 October, to two days after its expulsion from Swedish territory, 8 November 1981. Secondary material, including biographies of and interviews with important individual actors, such as Swedish and Soviet naval officers, journalists, and politicians, are consulted to demonstrate the ways in which media narratives privilege a certain discourse or specific representation. However, the analysis addresses the narratives that portrayed the event as it occurred.

Ship of Shame

The media reporting from the first and second days of the submarine incident consistently described the occurrence as astounding and almost unbelievable.

38. Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, pp. 88–94.

39. Costigliola, "The Nuclear Family"; and Costigliola, "'Unceasing Pressure for Penetration.'"

40. Carol Bacchi, "Discourse, Discourse Everywhere: Subject 'Agency' in Feminist Discourse Methodology," *NORA Nordic Journal of Women's Studies*, Vol. 13, No. 3 (December 2005), pp. 198–209.

The evening news from 28 October 1981 opened with aerial footage of the stranded submarine. The news narrative laid out the scene: “The Russian submarine has practically run up on land. A fisherman discovered it in the morning. No one can give an answer as to how or why this has happened; it is a mystery.”⁴¹ *Dagens Nyheter* expressed astonishment at what had happened: “A Russian submarine slides straight into the heart of the Swedish naval defense constructions and is stranded on a rock on a military route that cuts right through a military defense area.” The paper noted that the roaring engines of the submarine kept “half the inhabitants” of the archipelago awake but that everyone believed it was the Swedish Navy making the noise. “The only people who are totally ignorant of what is going on is precisely the Swedish Navy,” the paper added.⁴²

The violation of the territorial border was the focus of the initial media narratives. The successful Soviet penetration of the border and the insidious manner in which it occurred resulted in disgrace for the Swedish military and possible collective national embarrassment. This fear of national humiliation was explicit in an interview with a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff: “How could the Soviet submarine penetrate so deep into a military area without being exposed? Are they laughing at us abroad because they are so much better? And how come the submarine could be stuck for so long without being discovered?”⁴³ Newspaper cartoons also engaged with the theme of national embarrassment. One cartoon depicted a lewd, peeping Leonid Brezhnev surprising a naked, bathing Moder Svea (a motherly female figure symbolizing the Swedish nation). The drawing portrayed her getting out of the bathtub and hurriedly covering herself with a towel decorated with a pattern of Swedish crowns.⁴⁴

A salient feature in the initial media narratives was skepticism regarding the capabilities of the Swedish armed forces. On the evening news of 29 October, the minister of defense, who was on a visit to Norway, was ridiculed for spending time inspecting the Norwegian military’s dog training facilities while a national security crisis was occurring at home. In the same news broadcast, a

41. *Rapport*, Sveriges Television, TV 2, 28 October 1981, in National Library of Sweden, Swedish Media Database.

42. “På grund 35 meter från land,” *Dagens Nyheter* (Stockholm), 29 October 1981, p. 5.

43. Interview with Bertil Lagerwall, transcribed in *Dagens Nyheter* (Stockholm), 30 October 1981, p. 9.

44. Anders Andersö, “På bar gärning,” *Svenska Dagbladet* (Stockholm), 30 October 1981, p. 2. On cartoons during the submarine crisis, see also Anna Lundberg and Emma Rosengren, “På grund i ett jämställt Sverige? Komik, ryssrädsla och genus runt U137,” in Andreas Linderöth, ed., *Det dolda hotel: 12 forskare om ubåtar* (Karlskrona, Sweden: Marinmuseum, 2014), pp. 154–173.

reporter questioned the deployment of paratroopers with camouflage-painted faces close to the submarine. The newsreel also showed military footage of marine forces training to board a foreign vessel. The voice-over indicated that the troops were far from competent: “It was certainly made clear that Sweden hasn’t been at war for two hundred years.”⁴⁵ The subtext was that the grounded submarine had exposed the Swedish military’s and the neutral soldiers’ lack of competence and capability. It was embarrassing—and to some extent, comical—that the military did not have the ability to protect the nation from foreign intrusion.

Astonishment and embarrassment were prominent emotions in these media narratives. The reason for the embarrassment was the Swedish military’s alleged incompetence, manifested in the stranded submarine itself, placed primarily on its rock. A strong connection between the military, “the people’s defense,” and the national community accounted for the strength of this emotion. The armed forces’ prestige was of national concern because it was soldiers’ masculine duty to protect the national home. Embarrassment confirmed this gendered logic of protection.

The role of irony and jest in the initial narratives is less straightforward. In Cold War military contexts, Carol Cohn notes, euphemisms and naïve or childish language downplayed manhood and military potency by portraying military competition as, for example, boyish mischief.⁴⁶ One understanding of the irony in *U-137* narratives is that it functioned on par with euphemism and provided a means to engage with, and presumably lessen, a fear of profound national and military disgrace. The neutral soldier had obviously failed to fulfill his duty to protect the nation from foreign intrusion. Jokes and irony made the Swedish military’s sudden downfall easier for the national community to handle, but it did not open up possibilities to question or challenge issues of military masculinity or prestige. As in the cartoon with Moder Svea surprised in her bath, humor also engaged with the incident’s sexual connotations, equating the Soviet leader to a peeping Tom and the Swedish territory to a woman covering her nakedness. The drawing represents national territory as feminine and humorously reiterates the idea that protection of that territory is a male duty that relies on heterosexual desire for—and access to—women’s bodies.

45. *Rapport*, Sveriges Television, TV 2, 29 October 1981, in National Library of Sweden, Swedish Media Database.

46. Carol Cohn, “Sex and Death in the Rational World of Defense Intellectuals,” *Signs*, Vol. 12, No. 4 (Summer 1987), p. 695.

Although the submarine initially placed the Swedish military in a pathetic position, the media narratives ascribed a much more significant humiliation to the Soviet Union, characterizing its conduct—sneaking into a foreign country’s territory—as wrong and unmanly. The submarine had been spying or “snooping” around Swedish shores.⁴⁷ Moreover, Soviet officials could not deny the shameful activity because the *U-137* crisis caught them in the act. Photographs of the boat disgraced the Soviet Navy, and the submarine was described as a “ship of shame.”⁴⁸ Media narratives also ascribed a flawed masculinity and a lack of manly and military stamina to the members of the *U-137* crew. Supposedly, they consisted of bleak, tired, and depressed soldiers who occasionally waved their Kalashnikovs around. The caption for a picture of an anonymous soldier on the deck of the submarine read, “He guards the submarine. The hammer and sickle droop on the *U-137* submarine, helpless and grounded in the Swedish archipelago. A Soviet marine has the watch—tired and dismayed just like the 56 others on board.”⁴⁹ The submarine’s captain was “the most low-spirited man of this century.”⁵⁰ The soldiers were said to “stubbornly” blame the gyrocompass for their present predicament instead of admitting to their actual mission: espionage.⁵¹

Gendered representations and attributions of unmanly conduct clearly and persuasively affirmed Soviet embarrassment and disgrace. This affirmation included the use of a derogatory and objectifying Swedish word for Soviet/Russian national identity: *Ryssen*. The word *njet* was also printed in Russian in Swedish news texts, signaling impudence and ignorance. For example, in response to the Soviet ambassador’s demand that the Soviet fleet be allowed to tow away the submarine, *Dagens Nyheter* noted, “Our answer was a distinct *njet*.”⁵² The subtext was that, despite its status as a superpower, the Soviet Union appeared pathetic as its submarine sat in plain view of the entire world. On the evening news of 29 October, the well-known Swedish television commentator Olle Stenholm provided the following interpretation of the situation: “Sweden is taking a test, a hard test, just now in our willingness to preserve our integrity and protect ourselves against violations. The Soviets

47. “Snokandet runt svenska kuster,” *Aftonbladet* (Stockholm), 29 October 1981, p. 2.

48. “Skräll kring ubåten,” *Dagens Nyheter* (Stockholm), 6 November 1981, p. 2.

49. The photograph appears in *Aftonbladet* (Stockholm), 29 October 1981, p. 7.

50. “På grund 35 meter från land.”

51. Mats Lundegård, “Elva dagar då Sverige höll andan,” *Dagens Nyheter* (Stockholm), 8 November 1981, p. 6.

52. “Regeringen: Bestämt nej till rysk bärning,” *Dagens Nyheter* (Stockholm), 29 October 1981, p. 6.

have been caught with their pants unbuttoned, and the issue is now how far a superpower can go in order to comply with the demands of a small state.”⁵³

As a nation, the Soviet Union was compromised; it was caught with unbuttoned trousers or, to quote another Swedish expression used in the media material, exposed with “a bare rump.”⁵⁴ Media discourse relied on a phenomenon that Carol Cohn has called the “unitary masculine actor problem.” In national security discourse, states are imagined and talked about as unitary masculine subjects.⁵⁵ This discourse triggers emotional responses and evokes male competitive identity. In *U-137* narratives, the Soviet Union figured as a masculine actor, and corporeal and gendered interpretative frames were used to humiliate “him.”

Projecting a negative or threatening masculinity onto enemy countries is standard in nationalist war discourse.⁵⁶ Enemy men are sexually insatiable or seen as eunuchs lacking virility. In the submarine crisis, depictions of allegedly unmanly military behavior and involvement in uncivil acts promoted Soviet national disgrace. More surprising, perhaps, than the use of masculinity in these narratives is the use of other corporeal metaphors. Soviet embarrassment was reinforced with reference to experiences that are recognized as shameful and embarrassing: nakedness, a bare rump, slow comprehension. Gendered and corporeal representations conceptualized the submarine crisis and gave it meaning.

Winning the Reputation Game

The display of military strength was a strong feature of the *U-137* narratives after the initial stunned surprise had subsided. Representatives from the marine forces in Karlskrona described how the inlet to Gåsefjärden had been blocked, and they emphasized that helicopter units were constantly at sea, watching over the area and patrolling the territorial border. “We show strength at the location,” the marine commander said in a television interview on 29 October. Exhibiting military ability was in line with Swedish armed neutrality. As Karsh suggests, the desire to appear militarily strong and competent in the eyes of a potential foreign belligerent is a consequence of the armed neutral and nonaligned position as such. Demonstrating resolution and military strength to

53. *Rapport*, Sveriges Television, TV 2, 29 October 1981.

54. Rolf Svensson, “Spion-ubåten/dag 10,” *Aftonbladet* (Stockholm), 6 November 1981, p. 13.

55. Cohn, “Wars, Wimps, and Women,” pp. 239–241.

56. Klaus Theweleit, *Mansfantasier* (Stockholm: Brutus Östlings Bokförlag Symposion, 1995).

the world became paramount because the credibility of neutrality depended on respect from others, especially the superpowers. In this context, the grounded submarine compromised not only the Soviet Union but also Swedish armed neutrality. If the authorities allowed the Soviet fleet to enter Swedish waters to collect the submarine, the credibility of the doctrine of nonalignment would have been damaged and the foundations of Swedish foreign policy jeopardized. “Hold the border!” Prime Minister Fälldin recalls telling the commander-in-chief of the armed forces when asked over the telephone how the military was to respond to what were believed to be Soviet naval vessels about to cross the territorial border. In fact, as discovered some twenty minutes later, these vessels were merchant ships from West Germany heading north.⁵⁷ Under the circumstances, however, the failure to hold the border endangered international confidence in Swedish foreign policy.

After a strong Swedish military presence was established, the *U-137* crisis focused mainly on national reputation rather than a military threat. The situation soon became deadlocked after the Swedish government demanded to examine the boat and interrogate the captain before releasing the submarine. The captain of the submarine, Petr Gushin, refused to leave the boat and agreed to an interview only after seven days.⁵⁸ From the Swedish perspective, the demand to interrogate the submarine captain was unavoidable because, as *Aftonbladet* stated in an editorial, it concerned “the foundation of the credibility of the Swedish policy of nonalignment.”⁵⁹

The diplomatic negotiations and Gushin’s refusal to leave his boat involved national reputation, prestige, and foreign trust in nonalignment. The interpretative frame at work here indicated that other foreign governments would not trust Sweden if the country let military humiliation go unnoticed. Because military retaliation against the Soviet Union was out of the question, national reputation became a venue for revenge. A Soviet apology became Sweden’s victory in the “reputation game.”⁶⁰ *Aftonbladet* described the diplomatic negotiations as a sports match (*Rysskampen*) and stated that Sweden “saved face” with the captain’s agreement to be questioned.⁶¹ After Gushin’s interview, the journey back to the submarine involved a short walk on the

57. Thorbjörn Fälldin interviewed in Joakim Lindhé and Per Anders Rudelius, “U 137 på grund.”

58. *Rapport*, 2 November 1981.

59. “Avspänningen och den ryska ubåten,” *Aftonbladet* (Stockholm), 1 November 1981, p. 2.

60. Bo G. Andersson, “Sverige tillåts bärga ubåten,” *Dagens Nyheter* (Stockholm), 30 October 1981, p. 8.

61. Robert Hartman, Staffan Heimersson and Håkan Jonsson, “Sista akten i dramat,” *Aftonbladet* (Stockholm), 2 November 1981, p. 6.

tarmac up to a helicopter in clear view of journalists and photographers. This was a moment of profound—or even total—degradation. “His most bitter day,” noted the paper on its front page. Next to a picture of Gushin in uniform, the caption read, “On exhibit to the world press.”⁶² Media narratives mocked his physical appearance: he wore a cap that was too large for him, and his scarf was dazzlingly white and “surprisingly clean.” *Aftonbladet* further underlined his humiliation: “Over the whole world, the picture was spread of the man with the thin black mustache, and in many places it was published as the portrait of a criminal. The humiliation was terrific.”⁶³

National Swedish pride and self-assurance at this stage were bolstered by disparagement of the Soviet submarine crew. Winning the reputation game was essential to reinstate confidence in Swedish foreign policy. Significantly, the Swedish media also published information about how the handling of the submarine situation was viewed in countries such as France, the United Kingdom, and the United States, foreign countries that trusted in Sweden’s neutrality. For example, *The Daily Mail* in the UK evaluated Swedish policy and performance in harshly gendered terms: “It feels fine to see the red bull bend down when faced with the bold Swedish neutrality. The Swedes know that neutrality without a strong military is like chastity without clothes, an invitation to step right in without knocking.”⁶⁴ This quotation illustrates the need for the armed neutral to appear strong in the eyes of a potential enemy. If a country gives the impression of having insufficient military strength, an attack or territorial violation will be more likely.

The Swedish military appeared aware of the symbolic impact of various actions and outcomes. For example, Marine commander Jean Carlos Danckwardt emphasized that the submarine was not to use its own engines when leaving Swedish territory; it was to undergo the humiliation of being towed by the Swedish Navy.⁶⁵ The reputation game was not a superficial contest concerned with how the Swedish armed forces fared in comparison with the Soviet Union; instead, it involved international confidence in the doctrine of nonalignment.

Irony and humor also surfaced in connection with Swedish attempts to rebuild trust in armed neutrality. Ridicule and ironic statements addressed the military’s failure to live up to a forceful and firm exterior. Narratives

62. “Hans bittraste dag,” *Aftonbladet* (Stockholm), 3 November 1981, p. 1.

63. Ebba von Essen, “En rysk kapten på svensk mark,” *Aftonbladet* (Stockholm), 3 November 1981, p. 8.

64. *Rapport*, Sveriges Television, TV 2, 30 October 1981.

65. Staffan Heimersson, “Klart för avgång,” *Aftonbladet* (Stockholm), 5 November 1981, p. 7.

mocked the troops with camouflage-painted faces guarding the submarine: “Do they think they will scare the Russians away?”⁶⁶ The military build-up was depicted as something that “delights” the navy and “warms the heart” of a true naval officer.⁶⁷ The show of military force was likewise addressed ironically in statements such as “the military made a great spread” and in comments that Swedish naval vessels circling the submarine constituted “a charade.”⁶⁸ These narratives exposed the military’s strength and muscle as a matter of outward show or appearance. From the perspective of military masculinity, an armed force that cannot actually exert the strength it supposedly possesses comes to be seen as impotent. Ironic comments offered a possibility to address and defuse this disparity between outward appearance and actual military capability. As the submarine crisis continued to develop, however, the elements of irony and hoax in the media narratives diminished.

National Heroes

As the submarine crisis neared its end, the media narratives manufactured Swedish military heroes and reinstated the neutral soldier ideal. As national pride was reestablished and victory in the reputation game drew closer, treating the individual Soviet soldiers with courtesy could confirm Swedish righteousness and moral standing. The press depicted Gushin’s excursion to Swedish turf in detail: “A historical event, something that the whole world had waited for. For Captain Gushin it was almost a shocking change of circumstances. For the better. He was met with correct courtesy. He was invited to sit at a table that was laid in the mess hall. He enjoyed the army’s sturdy cabbage pudding with an appetite and lingonberry jam and light beer as well.”⁶⁹ The account continued, describing in more detail the bodily conduct and appearance of the two Soviet nationals and the manner in which their bodies were treated and cared for aboard the Swedish torpedo boat. After the interview, Gushin and his navigation officer were escorted to their own ship. *Aftonbladet* concluded that this movement was one “from warmth and comfort, to new hardships and a very uncertain future on board the *U-137*.”⁷⁰

66. *Rapport*, Sveriges Television, TV 2, 29 October 1981.

67. Ebba von Essen, “Sista natten mot gänget,” *Aftonbladet* (Stockholm), 2 November 1981.

68. Staffan Heimersson, “Kriget ombord på ubåten,” *Aftonbladet* (Stockholm), 1 November 1981, p. 8; and Jarl Ingvar Andersson, “PR-jippo av marinen,” *Dagens Nyheter* (Stockholm), 2 November 1981, p. 5.

69. Von Essen, “En rysk kapten på svensk mark,” p. 8.

70. *Ibid.*

This narrative relied on a nation-as-body trope through which national territory was represented as body/corporeality. Bodies were marked by the nation, and the nation was manifested as a human body. The bodies of the two Soviet officers *were* the Soviet Union, and as these bodies entered the premises of the Swedish military, their corporeality affirmed Swedish morality. On Swedish territory, their bodies ate traditional Swedish food and partook of Swedish comfort. Importantly, in this interpretative frame, the corporeality of bodies and the physical need for necessities such as food and warmth fed into the narratives that reestablished the Swedish national reputation.

The nation-as-body trope also underscored representations of national agency. Two leading Swedish figures in the submarine incident, Captain Karl Andersson and Marine Commander Danckwardt, became national heroes during and after the final days of the crisis. The disclosure that the submarine carried nuclear weapons, which was made public on the afternoon of 6 November, emphasized the Soviet military threat, and this helped to boost the prestige of the Swedish armed forces. The obvious military danger facilitated the construction of Swedish military heroes. After the submarine was expelled from Swedish waters, *Aftonbladet* ran a special feature: “Ten Days That Shook Sweden.” The coverage included the following characterization of Danckwardt:

They [the Swedish troops] are under the command of Jean Carlos Danckwardt, head of the garrison and of the Blekinge coast artillery.

He descends from a very old family of soldiers, but appears somehow to be the perfect representative of the modern, sober Swedish warrior. He has two years until retirement, has served in many regiments and was secretary of the Defense Committee 1966–67, and there he got to know Alva Myrdal, whom he admires. He is not in conflict with Social Democracy and disarmament.⁷¹

This excerpt demonstrates nationalized historical time and biological genealogy and defuses potential ideological conflicts between the military and proponents of disarmament. As a national hero, Danckwardt symbolized a unified Swedish nation. The disparity between his and Andersson’s social class further strengthened representations of national unity. Andersson’s genealogical patrimony was essentially maritime: he was the son of a sailor and was constantly characterized as unpretentious and down-to-earth.⁷² The

71. Sven Melander, “I gryningen låg den där: U 137,” *Aftonbladet* (Stockholm), 6 November 1981, p. 4.

72. Sven Melander, “Ubåt 137 fyller tankarna—och dyker mot Sverige,” *Aftonbladet* (Stockholm), 6 November 1981, p. 3.

difference in social status emphasized that the Swedish nation—and the *folkhem*—superseded class differentiation.

As national heroes, both Danckwardt and Andersson were positive military figures and true representatives of the neutral soldier ideal. Irony and jest are absent in the coverage of these two men, which suggests that the media narratives constructed them as embodiments of a collective and manly national ideal. Such an interpretation accounts for the minute attention focused on Andersson in particular, including details of his daily life, his living conditions, his wife and children, and various aspects of his corporeality. These descriptions (re)established sympathetic and popular participation in the life of an individual wedded to the national community. These national heroes were homelike and not exaggeratedly macho, and they were associated with various conceptions of Swedish history. Their personal characteristics dovetailed with Swedish national identity, characterized by a focus on the home and the familial through the *folkhem* concept and the neutral soldier ideal of a defensive and protective national warrior.

Conclusion

A media analysis in relation to the gender-nation nexus of the U-137 incident brings out the ideal of the neutral soldier and Sweden's doctrine of armed neutrality. The stranded submarine embarrassed the Swedish military and signaled a crisis for the ideal of the neutral soldier, who had failed to deliver the strong masculinity and national protection invested in him and his position. Protection was so forcefully associated with masculinity that the failure to protect became a specifically masculine shortcoming. Consequently, a display of values associated with masculinity, such as physical strength and the capability to use military force and violence, appeared necessary to reinstate the neutral soldier.

However, the distinct defensive role of the Swedish military ruled out offensive military action and retaliation, which would have been the most masculine answer to the embarrassing predicament of the Swedish military. The ideal of the neutral soldier, which combined the masculine duty to protect the nation with absolute repudiation of offensive military actions, was problematic from the perspective of redeeming masculinity. Initially, the neutral soldier was reinstated not primarily through depictions of Swedish military honor or masculine courage but largely through narratives that ferociously debased the Soviet Union through gendered and corporeal representations and images. Although masculinity largely remained at the center of meaning

production, the aim was to disgrace the foreign intruders as unmanly rather than to excel in Swedish masculine courage, military heroism, and honor. National military heroes were created only after Soviet debasement had been established, and the heroes' hero-masculinity was well in tune with Swedish national identity and the neutral soldier ideal.

The *U-137* media narratives also exposed a gendered logic that was integral to the Swedish Cold War-era foreign policy doctrine of nonalignment and armed neutrality. National military strength supported nonalignment. In line with the argument made by Karsh, the logic of the neutral strategy demanded that the considerable size of the Swedish military forces were intended to deter foreign intrusion or attack. The military costs for a belligerent would be so large that attack or intrusion into Swedish territory would be seen as not worth the cost. Agrell summarizes the political appeal of this strand of thinking: "There was something very attractive in the idea that a sound defense policy would lead to the defense forces never being used."⁷³ Thus, establishing foreign powers' confidence in the nonalignment policy and in the capability of the armed forces (so that they would not have to be used) was acutely important. This approach generated concern in Stockholm about how Sweden appeared in the eyes of other countries—concern that risked undermining the masculinity of the armed forces. Attentiveness to others' perceptions of oneself is conventionally associated with femininity and effeminacy in Western culture.⁷⁴ When transferred to security policy, this means that Sweden's pronounced defensive position was feminized—not in the sense that it was necessarily connected to a lack of military force or the wimp factor but in the sense that the doctrine of nonalignment gave foreign powers the leeway to judge how militarily strong Sweden was. Feminization related not only to the defensive strategy as such but also to the transferal of the judgment of capability to foreign powers. Figuratively speaking, Sweden's military capability was decided in the eyes of foreign others, especially the superpowers.

In this regard, Swedish neutrality posed a gender dilemma. Although the impression of extensive military capability strengthened foreign powers' trust in nonalignment and could deter foreign intrusions (because potential belligerents would find the military costs too large), it also increased the risk of potential military humiliation. If the armed forces were unable to deliver the military force and capability that other countries had come to expect, this could compromise the Swedish military as well as the doctrine of nonalignment.

73. Agrell, *Bakom ubåtskrisen*, p. 217.

74. Efrat Tse'lon, *The Masque of Femininity: The Presentation of Woman in Everyday Life* (London: Sage Publication, 1995), p. 13.

Joane Nagel notes that everyday masculinity accords well with nationalism, particularly its militaristic side.⁷⁵ In relation to Swedish neutrality, the crux is that manliness demands the ability to provide what one has led others to believe one has. The fact that *U-137* was able to penetrate so far into Swedish territory without the slightest hindrance signaled that the Swedish military could not live up to the impression of military steadfastness that the country was striving to convey. The situation was potentially emasculating. This gender dilemma of Swedish neutrality illustrates how profoundly gendered national foreign policy doctrine and military strategies were during the Cold War.

In the context of the Cold War, to reassert territorial sovereignty was simultaneously to reassert gendered protection with men as protectors and women as protected. In the *U-137* crisis, national territory was not explicitly gendered female, except perhaps in the case of the Swedish nation, symbolized as *Moder Svea*. Nevertheless, sexualized body imagery was part of the crisis narrative. The emotive language of *U-137* supported associations between gender and emotion that are common in national security and military contexts. The links between masculinity and honor as well as between femininity and shame are a case in point. Narratives associated with the “ship of shame” demonstrate the extent to which gender and nation influenced Cold War crisis discourse and suggests that national security, military capability, and foreign policy crisis are impossible to dissociate from gender, body, and emotion.

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75. Joane Nagel, “Masculinity and Nationalism: Gender and Sexuality in the Making of Nations,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (March 1998), pp. 242–269.