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The European Union as a Masculine Military Power: European Union Security and Defence Policy in 'Times of Crisis'

Marijn Hoijtink[1] and Hanna L Muehlenhoff[2]

Abstract

Against the background of a sense of crisis in the European Union and in international politics, European Union Member States have since 2016 increased their cooperation within the Common Security and Defence Policy, for example, establishing the European Defence Fund. Scholars have long pointed out that the European Union lacks the necessary 'hard' military power to influence international politics, subscribing to and constituting an image of the European Union as not masculine enough. We are critical of these accounts and develop a different argument. First, building on insights from feminist security and critical military studies, we argue that the European Union is a military power constituted by multiple masculinities. We consider the European Union to be a masculine military power, not only because it uses and aims to develop military instruments, but also because of how militarism and military masculinities permeate discourses, practices and policies within Common Security and Defence Policy and the European Union more broadly. We argue, second, that the crisis narrative allows the European Union to strengthen Common Security and Defence Policy and exhibit more aggressive military masculinities based on combat, which exist alongside entrepreneurial and protector masculinities. These developments do not indicate a clear militarisation of Common Security and Defence Policy, but, rather, an advancement and normalisation of militarism and the militarised masculinities associated with it.

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Introduction

In her foreword to the 2016 Global Strategy for the European Union, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission (HRVSP), Federica Mogherini, proclaimed that the European Union's (EU) 'wider region has become more unstable and more insecure' (EU, 2016: 3). Developments in and around Europe, such as US President Donald Trump's critique of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the so-called migration crisis at Europe's Southern borders, a supposedly resurgent Russia in the East, and questions about the EU's military capabilities after Brexit, have all created a sense of crisis that seems to challenge the EU's role as an international actor. At the same time, these 'times of crisis' have prompted a variety of new policy instruments in EU security and defence, among them the establishment of a European Defence Fund (EDF) (European Commission, 2019) and the launch of the process of Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) (European External Action Service (EEAS), 2018a). European leaders have also expressed increased support for a more assertive EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), with German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Emmanuel Macron calling for a 'real' EU army.

Some scholars have been quick to emphasise that these developments will not change the intergovernmental approach of CSDP (cf. Heisbourg, 2016). Others consider them evidence of a significant relaunch of the EU's security and defence project (cf. Howorth, 2017). Many EU studies scholars have welcomed the EU's latest efforts in defence, as these suggest that the EU is stepping up its role in international affairs at last. For example, in his foreword to a paper on PESCO, former Director of the European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS) Antonio Missiroli (2017: 5) pointed out that:

> the speed and determination with which the EU and its member states have (re)engaged on defence cooperation – well beyond the Common Security and Defence Policy proper – prove that Europeans are now becoming well aware of what it at stake in a rapidly mutating security environment.

Missiroli writes that 'for someone who has been in this business for 20 years [. . .], all this is no minor source of relief – even rejoicing'. Sven Biscop (2016: 431) stresses that against the background of mounting security challenges, the EU Global Strategy 'does not come a moment too soon'. Similarly, Hylke Dijkstra (2016: 369) finds that 'encircled by security crises, it is difficult to think of something more important than collective action with the aim of weathering the storm'. The Global Strategy 'gets the diagnosis right' (Dijkstra, 2016: 371).

As Christopher Bickerton (2010: 214) points out, the study of CSDP has been characterised by a prescriptive concern with the EU's ability to act in the world. Underpinning much of CSDP research is the question of *why* the EU fails to realise its potential in international affairs and *how* it can become a more effective or 'serious' (meaning, military) actor (cf. Allen and Smith, 1990; Hill, 1993). This prescriptive concern has influenced well-known debates in EU studies about the EU's ability to act in the absence of common military capabilities. As part of these debates, some scholars have openly critiqued, or even ridiculed, the EU's lack of 'hard' military power and its ability to influence international politics (Kagan, 2002), whereas others have emphasised the specific character of the EU as an international actor, and put forward that even without an army the EU makes a difference by means of its market power (Damro, 2012), its normative ability to 'lead by example' (Manners, 2002; Sjursen, 2006), or a combination of both (Holland, 1995).

Indeed, those scholars who have insisted on a presumably distinct 'civilian' (Duchêne, 1972) or 'normative' (Manners, 2002) identity of the EU have argued that the absence of military capabilities should be seen as a virtue rather than as a sign of weakness.

Within research on CSDP and the EU's role in international security more broadly, most authors then concur that the EU lacks effective military means and that it is a small military power at best, thereby either constituting an image of the EU as impotent and not masculine enough or subscribing to the idea that the EU is a *different* kind of power that, even if it deploys military force, is less defined by its military capacity. What has been absent from the literature, with the exception of the work of Annica Kronsell (2016a, 2016b), is an explicit engagement with how the EU exhibits military masculinities and is constituted as a *masculine* military power. To address this gap in the literature, our article asks *how militarism and military masculinities are inscribed in CSDP, particularly in the aftermath of the recent so-called times of crisis*. We focus on CSDP because, while military masculinities increasingly circulate in EU policies beyond CSDP, this is where they are found most explicitly.

Our argument is twofold. First, building on insights from feminist security and critical military studies on the relationship between war, militarism, and gender, we argue that the EU as an international security actor is constituted by multiple military masculinities. We draw on feminist work that has foregrounded the notion of 'militarism', defined by Stavrianakis and Selby (2012: 3) as 'the social and international relations of the preparation for, and conduct of, organised political violence'. This allows us to move beyond an understanding of military power as related to the (in)ability to engage in military conduct or the military capabilities international actors have or have not, towards an analysis of how military power and military masculinities are inscribed in CSDP discourse and practices. In so doing, we consider the EU to be a masculine military power, not only because it uses and aims to develop 'hard' military instruments, but also because of the ways in which militarism permeates political and social relations, discourses and practices – all of them also highly gendered – at the EU.

We argue, second, that while the current crisis narrative allows the EU to strengthen CSDP and exhibit more aggressive combat masculinities, such developments suggest continuity rather than abrupt change. What we see today is not a clear militarisation of CSDP – as if it was not already shaped by military discourses, strategies and technologies – but rather an advancement and normalisation of militarism and the militarised masculinities associated with it. We find that within CSDP more aggressive combat masculinities have come to exist alongside entrepreneurial and protector masculinity (Kronsell, 2016a, 2016b).

To study the specific form that EU militarism and military masculinities take in the context of crisis, we conduct a feminist discursive analysis of policy initiatives linked to CSDP (from the launch of the 2016 Global Strategy onwards), including the Battlegroups, PESCO, EDF, military operation Sophia and the European Peace Facility (EPF). We use official documents, speeches, reports, secondary sources, webpages, images and EU promotional material to study the production and legitimation of militarism and military masculinities within CSDP. While webpages, images and promotional material generally articulate militarism and binary constructions around masculine and feminine identities 'more clearly than official documents' (Kronsell, 2016b: 314), we contend that the ways in which these articulations are incorporated into formal and technical reports are just as important. Our argument proceeds in three steps. We first analyse academic debates on EU security and defence and call for a focus on militarism and military masculinities.

Next, we draw on feminist scholarship in International Relations (IR) to introduce the concepts of military/hegemonic masculinity and their relevance for analysing CSDP. Third, we conduct a discourse analysis of key reports, policy documents and speeches on CSDP since 2016 to study how these sources invoke a particular sense of crisis and normalise military masculinities.

Perspectives on CSDP and EU Military Power

The rapid development of European security and defence cooperation since the conception of CSDP in 2003 has gone hand in hand with a growing interest in the study of CSDP. Initially, research on CSDP has focused on explaining its emergence and the question of why Member States have, at least in principle, agreed to partly surrender a key part of their state sovereignty. For some, CSDP represents the final step in a natural process of integration predicted by neo-functionalism (cf. Smith, 2004), whereas others have offered a realist explanation, focusing on Europe's failure to respond to the Balkan wars or its motivation to balance US unipolarity, particularly in the context of the 2003 Iraq War (cf. Posen, 2006). Again others have argued that CSDP follows a more complex trajectory characterised by 'a series of haphazard, creative and combinatorial operations carried out by a small group of policymakers', or 'bricolage' (Mérand, 2012: 136).

The increasing scope of CSDP missions coupled with notable institutional developments in Brussels has given rise to a second generation of CSDP research on policy implementation. Scholars have focused on the complexity of decision-making and decision-shaping in CSDP (Howorth, 2012), the role of EU-level actors, institutions, and transnational expert communities in decision-shaping (Cross, 2011; Juncos and Reynolds, 2007), the EU's interaction with other actors in international security, NATO in particular (Hofmann, 2011), and the varied nature of operations conducted under CSDP (Gross and Juncos, 2011).

Despite the richness of the broader CSDP research agenda, we observe together with others (Bickerton, 2010; Kurowska, 2012; Mälksoo, 2016; Merlingen, 2011) that much of the literature on CSDP has been characterised by a focus on effectiveness and policy output. According to Xymena Kurowska (2012: 2), '[w]ithin CSDP, the bulk of criticism focuses on the discrepancy between European Union (EU) rhetoric and implementation, or it examines inconsistencies within the policy itself'. She finds that there is 'a certain under-representation of critical voices in the domain of CSDP', especially when compared with research on EU involvement in other security areas, such as counterterrorism (De Goede, 2008) and migration and border management (Jeandesboz, 2016; Léonard, 2010; Pallister-Wilkins, 2015). A key contribution of this literature is that it moves away from a focus on the EU's effectiveness in security, towards a study of the discursive practices that constitute and legitimise the EU's role in security in the first place. This has led to a fundamentally reflexive debate about how EU policies themselves produce insecurity and constitute an ongoing process of 'securitisation' within areas such as migration and border control (Huysmans, 2006; Neal, 2009). In addition, some scholars have pointed out how securitisation relies on and reproduces gendered and racialised discourses and practices (Stachowitsch and Sachseder, 2019).

Our article not only builds on these insights and links them to the study of CSDP but also extends them by examining expressions of military force inscribed in EU discourse, practice and policy, and by explicitly foregrounding the question of how the EU is constituted and legitimised as a masculine military power. Both the literature on CSDP and

critical security studies have refrained from engaging with this question. The former because it has considered the EU to be a de-masculinised power or small military power at best; critical security studies because from its very conception it has sought to move away from what it considered to be an excessive focus on military power, state-centrism and aggression within (neo)realism and strategic studies (Stavrianakis and Stern, 2018). Yet, drawing on the concept of militarism as discussed within feminist and critical military studies, we contend that the way in which military power operates is not solely through aggressive practices of combat masculinity or the actual and effective engagement in military conduct. Neither does it operate distinct from, or in opposition to, security. Instead, military power 'is often justified by reference to security' and enacted by discourses and practices at multiple scales, from the global to the everyday (Wibben, 2018: 138). For instance, Victoria Basham (2018: 40) points out how what she calls 'liberal militarism' – the use of military force by liberal states to intervene in non-liberal states with the aim to 'fix' them – is made possible in everyday practices and relations, for example, by waving 'flags at military and monarchical parades', as much as in formal practices of foreign policy.

From this perspective, we can see how the EU operates as a military power in the sense that it is committed to maintaining, using and developing military force and capabilities in the name of security, even if the majority of its operations are said to be of a 'civilian' nature and 'do not involve military forces at all' (Smith, 2017: 10). In addition, a focus on militarism allows us to study how military power and the everyday are connected through masculinities that dominate militaries but also permeate the civilian sphere and everyday life. The next section elaborates on how militarism relies on and reproduces hierarchies of masculinities and femininities.

Centring Militarism and Masculinities

Although there is a rich body of scholarship defined by feminist security studies within IR, the study of the EU and its external relations has been remarkably ignorant of these contributions. Only recently, scholars have begun to interrogate the EU's role in the world, including its security and defence policy, from a feminist perspective. Most of this work takes the EU's implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women, Peace and Security and its follow-up resolutions as a starting point (Guerrina and Wright, 2016; Muehlenhoff, 2017). The majority of this work employs a feminist institutionalist approach to analyse how EU institutions such as the EEAS are gendered. For example, Roberta Guerrina et al. (2018) argue that CSDP lacks strong 'velvet triangles', consisting of 'femocrats' (feminist bureaucrats), organised civil society and epistemic communities, pushing for a gender-sensitive CSDP. Nadine Ansorg and Toni Haastrup (2018: 1138) find that the EU's support for security sector reform in Ukraine and Afghanistan only considers gender in the form of equal representation within EU missions: 'This is evidence that the EU's security institutions themselves have not implemented gender mainstreaming'.

To date, few scholars have been interested in how CSDP discourses, practices and policies have been gendered as such – an important exception being Annica Kronsell's (2016a, 2016b) work which will be discussed below (cf. Muehlenhoff, 2017). This absence is curious given that feminists have long demonstrated that security and defence are highly gendered areas of political life (Cohn, 1987; Tickner, 2004). Although this is true for all policy areas, more than any other site, security and military institutions shape conceptions of what

it means to be or act like a man, linking masculinity to particular traits, such as strength, aggression, competitiveness and rationality. R.W. Connell (1983) introduced the concept of 'hegemonic masculinity' in the 1980s and it has since been taken up by scholars in multiple ways (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005). Building on Connell's and James W. Messerschmidt's (2005) later work, we conceptualise masculinity in a relational way: 'patterns of masculinity are socially defined as contradistinctions from some model (whether real or imaginary) of femininity' (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005: 848). Hegemonic masculinity subordinates femininity and other types of masculinity in a hierarchical relationship and 'embodied the currently most honoured way of being a man, it required all men to position themselves in relation to it, and it ideologically legitimated the global subordination of women to men' (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005: 832). It becomes hegemonic by making other masculinities and femininities complicit in a consensus on the most valued form of masculinity. However, also other intersections, such as race and class, affect hierarchies of masculinities and femininities (Davis, 2008).

Although we mainly look at the discursive expression of hegemonic masculinity, masculinities are also material. For example, in the case of men's violence, '[w]hat "violence" is and what "violence" means is both material and discursive' (Hearn, 2014: 9). Hegemonic masculinity has material consequences as it allows men's discursive and physical dominance over other men and women (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005: 840). Regarding *military* masculinity, Kimberly Hutchings (2008: 390) writes, 'The standards that govern the being and conduct of men overlap with the standards that govern the being and conduct of war makers, from foot soldiers to weapons experts to generals and political leaders'. Such conceptions play an important role in the marginalisation of women both in war (think sexual violence against women) and 'at home' (think care work) (Martin De Almagro, 2018). Militarism, masculinities and the everyday depend on each other in their discursive and material production.

Yet, feminist work has also complicated the idea that security and defence are linked to a particular and one-dimensional understanding of masculinity. Gender constructs are complex and change. Claire Duncanson (2009: 71) argues that peacekeeping missions may reproduce *and* redefine ideas of femininities and masculinities by presenting 'alternative military masculinities'. Duncanson studies autobiographical accounts of British soldiers involved in peacekeeping in Bosnia in the 1990s to reveal how peacekeepers understand and construct their masculinity by 'claiming that peacekeeping is tougher, more dangerous and challenging than war' and by linking 'the everyday practices of peacekeeping such as building friendships, drinking coffee and chatting' to 'bravery and effective soldiering' (Duncanson, 2009: 70). This shows not only how strongly masculinity and military force are intertwined, but also how masculinities evolve when technologies and strategies of war change (Higate, 2007).

Similarly, the EU does not engage in classical military combat missions but in new forms of military engagement including civilian and peacekeeping missions. In this context, new ideas of masculinity and militarism emerge. Kronsell (2016a) argues that CSDP is based on different masculinities: 'A dominant EU hierarchical military masculinity is institutionalized in the EU's Military Committee, combat heterosexual masculinity in the Battle groups, and EU protector masculinity in the EU Training missions' (Kronsell, 2016a: 311). Kronsell's (2016a, 2016b) work provides an important starting point for our analysis. However, similar approaches to how militarism and military masculinities are embedded in and shaping CSDP are still absent. This absence may have to do with a strong focus within feminist security and critical military studies on state militaries and

on the armed forces of the US and UK in particular (Duriesmith and Ismail, 2019). It is also, as discussed, a consequence of the widespread notion that the EU lacks a strong military presence, and of a partly unreflective pro-integration bias in EU studies that fails to challenge the production of gendered and militarised structures and their consequences within the EU.

Our analysis of CSDP shows that protector masculinity, as identified by Kronsell (2016a 2016b) in her study of EU training missions, is still prominent, but that combat masculinity and entrepreneurial masculinity are becoming increasingly important in the current, so-called, times of crisis. Below, we outline these military masculinities and the absent/hyper-visible femininities that are constructed alongside them. First, however, we analyse how the current 'times of crisis' are constituted and how these discursive articulations of crisis are linked to the relaunch of EU security and defence.

The EU as a Masculine Military Actor: Defending and Protecting Europe

The latest developments in CSDP are closely linked to a narrative about Europe being increasingly vulnerable and facing a variety of threats. On the one hand, the notion of Europe being at risk is invoked by the transformation and extension of threat discourses, with Europe, as the Global Strategy has it, being presented with a range of 'new' challenges, including 'terrorism, hybrid threats, climate change, economic volatility and energy security' (EU, 2016: 18–19). On the other hand, these concerns are joined with a renewed focus on conventional threats, particularly a 'resurgent' Russia. While the European Security Strategy of 2003 stated that 'Europe as never been so prosperous, so secure nor so free' (EU, 2003: 1), the Global Strategy by comparison stresses that:

> We live in times of existential crisis, within and beyond the European Union. Our Union is under threat. Our European project, which has brought unprecedented peace, prosperity and democracy, is being questioned. To the east, the European security order has been violated, while terrorism and violence plague North Africa and the Middle East, as well as Europe itself (EU, 2016: 7).

The current crisis is an 'existential' one in the sense that it undermines the current world order and Europe's role as a global power, yet the *sources* of that same crisis are considered to be located mostly outside of Europe's reach. A promotional video for the Global Strategy puts it as follows: 'When Europe's region is unstable, terrorist groups can spread, our economies get weaker and many people around Europe are forced to flee their homes' (EEAS, 2017a). Insecurity in this view comes from aggressive 'others', often presented and imagined as brown men (EEAS, 2017a). This gendered and racialised diagnosis of crisis prevents the EU from considering other causes of insecurity, such as the EU's border policy or its own economic and monetary policies.

The crisis narrative further spurs a sense of urgency to intervene swiftly. This is translated into new demands for a more 'realistic' Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), which the Global Strategy defines as 'principled pragmatism' (EU, 2016: 9), and a more militarised and masculine CSDP. As Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker pointed out in his 2016 State of the Union speech, 'even though Europe is proud to be a soft power of global importance', it should not 'be naïve', as 'soft power is not enough in our increasingly dangerous neighbourhood' (European Commission, 2016). Juncker reiterates the gendered discourse constituting the EU as too soft and naïve, or, as Kagan (2002) once put it,

as coming from Venus, thereby devaluing specific traits that are associated with femininity and reaffirming that true power is rational, military, and masculine. Elsewhere, the EU boasts its strength in hard power by stating that Europe is not just a 'civilian power', but that it 'currently deploys seventeen military and civilian operations, with thousands of men and women serving under the European flag for peace and security – our own security and our partners'' (EU, 2016: 4). The discursive reference to a flag, under which men (and women) serve, evokes highly traditional masculine ideas of militarism that imply men's bravery and loyalty to the homeland. The latter is imagined to be feminine and in need of protection, even if a common homeland in the case of the EU is highly contested.

The call for a more militarised CSDP has become stronger since the election of US President Donald Trump in November 2016. A few months before, the Global Strategy already warned that 'as Europeans we must take greater responsibility for our security' (EU, 2016: 19), meaning that 'while NATO exists to defend its members [. . .] from external attacks, Europeans must be better equipped, trained and organised to contribute decisively to such collective efforts, as well as to act autonomously if and when necessary' (EU, 2016: 19). In a *JCMS* Annual Review Article of the EU in 2017, Nathalie Tocci (2018: 132), Director of the Istituto Affari Internazionali and special advisor to HRVSP Mogherini wrote:

> With the election of Donald Trump to the White House, [. . .] the sheer unpredictability of the American security guarantee to Europe woke Europeans from their torpor. In other words, the days in which Europeans exclusively took care of soft security while sheltering under the transatlantic hard security umbrella are fast fading. Not only can and must the EU enable and enhance the ability of Europeans to achieve strategic autonomy through a European Security and Defence union, but a strong transatlantic bond in the twenty-first century arguably rests on this foundation.

The goal of strategic autonomy in response to the described crisis context is linked to a growing commitment among European political leaders to increase defence expenditure. More generally, we see how the supposed need to move beyond soft power has given way to the rise of militarism and combat masculinity within CSDP.

Combat and Entrepreneurial Masculinity

State militaries have long been defined by combat masculinity given that '[c]ombat masculinity provides the micro-politics of the military organization's raison d'être, the capacity to use violence in an organized way, to kill, maim, or defend' (Kronsell, 2016a: 322). Kronsell has already pointed out how the EU Battlegroups – a rapid reaction force of 1500 soldiers from the Member States that are on standby for 6 months to respond to emerging conflicts and crisis – build on and reproduce warrior-like traits such as strength, aggression and competitiveness associated with combat masculinity. However, she also finds that the fact that to date the Battlegroups have never been employed shows that 'combat masculinity is not a dominant masculinity in the CSDP' (Kronsell, 2016a: 323). Recent developments suggest that combat masculinity is increasingly central within CSDP.

First, EU Member States appear more willing to employ military force. In 2016, the Council reaffirmed its commitment to make use of the Battlegroups in the future because '[i]n a world of predictable unpredictability, reacting fast is at times the only way to react effectively' (EEAS, 2017b). Furthermore, in 2017, the Council agreed to activate the hitherto unused mechanism of PESCO to deepen defence cooperation among Member

States. According to Mogherini, PESCO involves '25 Member States [that] have committed to join forces on a regular basis, to do things together, spend together, invest together, buy together, act together' (EEAS, 2018a). Once signed, PESCO is binding for the participating Member States. It is supposed 'to jointly develop defence capabilities and make them available for EU military operations. This will thus enhance the EU's capacity as an international security actor, contribute to the protection of EU citizens and maximise the effectiveness of defence spending' (EEAS, 2018a).

Second, Member States have shown a clear willingness to increase cooperation in military spending in the form of the EDF. Launched in 2017, the EDF will invest approximately €13 billion for the period between 2021 and 2027 to foster research and development (R&D) for armaments and defence equipment (European Commission, 2019). According to Elżbieta Bieńkowska, Commissioner for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs and responsible for the EDF, the EDF is:

> yet another important building block to ensure that Europe becomes a stronger security provider for its citizens [. . .] so that Europe benefits from cutting-edge, interoperable defence technology and equipment in novel areas like artificial intelligence, encrypted software, drone technology or satellite communication (European Commission, 2019).

The EDF is presented as a key enabler of military force and of the deployment of Member States' military forces. It clearly exhibits references to combat masculinity, to the extent that civil society and scholars have warned that the EDF will lead to the militarisation of previously strictly civilian EU research funding (cf. European Network Against the Arms Trade (ENAAT), 2016), and fundamentally challenges 'the nature of the European Union (EU) as a peace project' (Csernatoni and Martins, 2019).

At the same time, the fact that the EDF institutionally sits with the Directorate General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs demonstrates that combat masculinity is not uncontested among Member States. Arguably, the specific institutional setting of the EDF and the strategy chosen (funding military R&D rather than buying weapons directly) is related to the fact that many Member States continue to favour an intergovernmental approach to CSDP and a more civilian role for the EU. In this context, the Commission has been emphasising the need for a more competitive and innovative defence industry, as well as its own competence and expertise as a market-shaping power to make this happen (Hoijtink, 2014). The Commission also relies on increased cooperation with major defence corporations and European weapons manufacturers to lobby Member States.

Accordingly, the EDF not only legitimises and sustains militarism by linking it to economic growth, competitiveness and innovation, but it also relies on and reproduces alternative masculinities associated with economic prowess, rationality, technological capacity and entrepreneurship. Like warfare, work, business and the economy have long been associated with masculinity: ''masculine' qualities such as rational thinking, competitiveness and self-control were judged as best suited to the public sphere including political and economic activity', whereas 'feminine' qualities were judged as most appropriate for the domestic sphere (Hamilton, 2013: 94). As Carol Cohn (1987) has famously argued in her research on US 'defence rationals', entrepreneurial masculinity is particularly strongly valued among policy-makers in defence. In today's discussions about the EDF, however, we see a clear desire to capitalise on military applications of innovations in the *civil* domain, including big data analytics, artificial intelligence and blockchain technology and to imitate

entrepreneurial masculinities associated with engineering, coding and 'tinkering' that appear so central to the success of Silicon Valley and tech companies such as Google.

Protector Masculinity

While combat and entrepreneurial masculinities are on the rise within CSDP discourse and practice, EU military operations are often still legitimised through the need for protection. Protector masculinity dominates CSDP training missions, as Kronsell (2016a) showed, but it is also visible in other CSDP initiatives, such operation EUNAVFOR MED Sophia, which aims at the 'disruption of the business model of human smugglers and traffickers' in the Mediterranean Sea by deploying military vessels and by training the Libyan coastguard in this task (Council of the European Union, 2017: 61). While the mission's core mandate is to fight organised crime (normally a police/civilian task), EU policy discourse has emphasised that Sophia prevents the loss of lives at sea. Since 2019, after mounting pressure from the Italian government, operation Sophia has been reformed and downscaled. Currently, it conducts surveillance operations to deter human smugglers but no longer deploys military vessels, relying instead on air patrols and closer cooperation with the Libyan authorities. Human rights organisations have sharply criticised these developments, emphasising that this is 'an outrageous abdication of EU government responsibilities' that has 'nothing to do with the needs of people who risk their lives at sea' (Amnesty International, 2019). Although human rights organisations generally supported the rescue mandate of the operation and are themselves affected by the latest criminalisation of search and rescue activities, they have also been critical of operation Sophia because of the collaboration with Libyan authorities and its implicit goal to deter migration (Campbell, 2019). In fact, *Politico* revealed that an internal EEAS report admits that the EU itself knew 'that a number of its policies have made the sea crossing more dangerous for migrants', for example, because Libyan coastguards trained by the EU are 'collaborating with smuggling networks', or because smugglers now use small and more dangerous rubber boats since the EU destroyed their wooden ones (Campbell, 2019).

The leaked report stands in stark contrast to how the EU features operation Sophia in one of the promotional videos launching the Global Strategy. This video, which we understand as an attempt by the EEAS to define itself, portrays military force as necessary to rescue women and children. The reference to 'women and children' is a widely used gendered trope that feminists have problematised because it legitimises war and strips women off agency by reducing them to mothers in need of protection (cf. Sjoberg and Peet, 2011). The EU video tells the story of baby Sophia who was saved by an EU military vessel and born on a European military ship 'after human smugglers almost made her mother drown' (EEAS, 2017c). The storyline produces images of EU protector masculinity in relation to non-Western femininities marked by motherhood, victimhood and weakness, while it presents the masculine 'other' (human traffickers and smugglers with 'shabby boats' (EEAS, 2017c)) as dangerous to these women and the EU. The video further depicts a male white and a female white EU soldier providing training to a group of male Libyan coastguards (EEAS, 2017c), reproducing gendered and racialised hierarchies. The representation of the gender-equal EU soldiers signifies the EU's liberal democratic character in relation to the 'other', in this case Libya, who is supposed to learn how to do proper migration and population management.

Although the narrator of the video tells us that this is a 'story with a happy ending', she does not reveal what happened next to Sophia and her mother and why refugees have to

risk their lives to come to Europe (EEAS, 2017c). The EU presents militarism in migration policies not only as the most rational but also as the most humane thing to do because it supposedly protects migrants, especially women and children. The video omits that protector masculinity and militarism go hand in hand with the EU's externalisation of migration policies and the suspension of EU norms and standards (cf. Bialasiewicz, 2012). Furthermore, the video does not mention that EUNAVFOR MED has the military objective of contributing to 'the return of stability and security in Libya and to maritime security in the Central Mediterranean region' (Council of the European Union, 2019).

Protector masculinity is also visible in Mogherini's proposal for an EPF, a new fund of initially €10.5 billion for the next 7 years, replacing the Athena mechanism and the African Peace Facility (APF) (EEAS, 2018b). Whereas the Athena mechanism financed CSDP military operations, the APF was funded through the European Development Fund, supporting the African Union and the African Regional Economic Communities in peace and security policies. The latter was explicitly not allowed to provide financial resources for 'military equipment, arms, ammunition or military training' although it supported military peace support operations of African partners. The EPF will take this to a global scale and is explicitly supposed to provide funds to non-EU partners for them to buy military equipment. The EEAS legitimises this move by claiming that '[d]evelopments in Europe's neighbourhood and beyond are a constant reminder that our security is not free' (EEAS, 2018b), reproducing the US military's slogan 'our freedom is not free' that suggests that we need militarism for security at home (Wibben, 2018: 138). The EPF is a way to become more of a 'hard power', which is needed because '[. . .] sometimes quick and decisive military action is required first and foremost to save lives and prevent further conflict. Hard power has to complement soft power' (EEAS, 2018b). Moreover, the EEAS states that '[h]elping to prevent or contain conflict in our neighbourhood is a safe way to increase security for Europe and its citizens' (EEAS, 2018b). Peace organisations have called on the Council to stop the EPF and to 'avoid investing in militarised approaches that are prone to failure and risk' (Care International et al., 2019). The EPF will also increase funds for military operations facilitating the employment of the EU Battlegroups discussed above (EEAS, 2018b).

In all these ways, protector masculinity is at the centre of EU militarism, sustaining and legitimising military force to protect European citizens from insecurity abroad, or to save women and children abroad from dangerous men. The EU, in this sense, can be seen to pursue a form of liberal militarism, which relies on racialised, classed and gendered ideas of the other and presupposes that militarism is the ''rational' course of action' (Basham, 2018: 34).

Absent and Hyper-visible Femininities

Looking at EU promotional material on PESCO, the Battlegroups and the EDF, we do not see any women. Women are absent from the text and from visuals. There are pictures of male soldiers and of military equipment on the factsheet of the Battlegroups (EEAS, 2017b). The online news publication on EPF features an image of male African soldiers saluting a male white EU officer. The pictures show how EU military masculinity is respected and how the EU teaches others to provide security for themselves, in turn producing security for Europe (EEAS, 2018b). Although mostly absent, women are imagined as the ones to be protected because they are vulnerable and innocent. This becomes visible where CSDP material *does* mention and show women. In these instances, women become hyper-visible through the EU's construction of vulnerable and racialised femininities of

motherhood and victimhood, except in the case of the very few female EU soldiers presented (EEAS, 2017c). So, femininities are largely marked by a lack of agency, whereas men are shown as active providers of security for women and the homeland.

Considering the feminist question of 'whose security' militarism is protecting and defending, the EU conveys that it is protecting European citizens from threats outside its borders and saving women and children abroad from dangerous men. However, we know that:

> war and militarism have generated insecurity in a variety of forms – physical, gendered, food and health insecurity [. . .] – through direct physical violence [. . .] and the attendant strategies thereof [. . .] that have effects that are then labelled as security problems [. . .] (Stavrianakis and Stern, 2018: 5).

Militarism hinders the consideration of local contexts and structural causes of insecurity. It also reduces resources for other public investments at home and abroad, such as social security (Basham, 2018). Militarism (as a response to crisis) thus reinforces causes and consequences of crises rather than transforming them.

To conclude, the above discussion shows that the reforms of CSDP normalise militarism and associated military masculinities through various new initiatives and the discursive articulations of crisis surrounding them. We suggest that the EU builds on previous initiatives to strengthen its military power based on combat, entrepreneurial and protector masculinities. The EU justifies militarism through gendered and racialised references to security without asking questions about the effects thereof, especially for women. Meanwhile, it is creating an increasing number of policy nexuses between security and defence and other areas such as development (visible in the EPF) and migration (visible in operation Sophia) (cf. Allwood, 2019). Future research should analyse these policy linkages, how militarism is part of them and how it is legitimised by discourses that marginalise femininities and centre military masculinities.

Conclusion

We began our discussion by developing two related points regarding EU security and defence. First, empirically, we found that against the background of a widespread sense of crisis in the EU and in international politics, the EU's Heads of States have increased their cooperation in security and defence. Second, theoretically and analytically, we took issue with the way in which the academic literature on CSDP has often taken a prescriptive stance, which combines the shared analysis that the EU lacks military actorness with the normative statement that the EU *should* develop military capabilities. Drawing on feminist security and critical military studies, we have argued that the EU should be considered as a masculine military actor, constituted and shaped by protector masculinity, and, also, increasingly, entrepreneurial and combat masculinity. While the presence of militarism within CSDP and European politics more broadly is not a new development, the crisis discourse that we have analysed allows for the further advancement of militarism and the militarised masculinities associated with it, and for the normalisation of the use and/or funding of military equipment and employment in other policy areas, such as migration or development. This normalisation of military power and military masculinities beyond the military domain proper and its consequences for people's (in)securities requires further attention within academia and beyond.

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