ARAŞTIRMA MAKALESİ / RESEARCH ARTICLE

The European Union's Approach to "Women, Peace and Security": Discourses, Representations and Constructions

Avrupa Birliği'nin "Kadınlar, Barış ve Güvenlik" Gündemine Yönelik Yaklaşımı: Söylemler, Temsiller ve Oluşumlar

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Abstract

"Women, Peace and Security" (WPS) Agenda has been introduced by the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) and advocated by its follow-up resolutions. It has four main objectives: "prevention and conflict resolution; protection of women and girls from gender-based violence; participation of women in all stages of decision-making in conflict resolution; and relief and recovery." The European Union has also developed a perspective on the relationship between gender and security since the mid-2000s in line with the UNSC resolutions on WPS. This study argues that the EU's approach towards the WPS Agenda is constructed through discourses of the patriarchal global system and representations of women as "victims", "those to be protected", and "agency" promoting peace. The study utilises feminist and post-structural views and provides an analysis of the EU's discourses on WPS.

Keywords: Gender Equality, European Union, Security

Öz

"Kadınlar, Barış ve Güvenlik" (KBG) Gündemi ilk olarak Birleşmiş Milletler Güvenik Konseyi'nin 1325 (2000) sayılı kararıyla oluşturulmuş ve onu takip eden başka kararlarla da desteklenmiştir. Gündemin dört temel amacı bulunmaktadır: "önleme ve çatışma çözümü; kadınların ve kız çocuklarının toplumsal cinsiyet temelli şiddetten korunması; kadınların çatışma çözümündeki tüm süreçlere karar-alma aşamalarındaki katılımı; rahatlama ve iyileşme." Avrupa Birliği de, KGB ile ilgili alınan BM kararlarına uygun olarak 2000'li yılların ortalarından itibaren toplumsal cinsiyet ve güvenlik arasındaki ilişkiye yönelik bir perspektif geliştirmektedir. Bu çalışma, AB'nin KBG Gündemi'ne yönelik perspektifinin, küresel ve ataerkil sistemin söylemleri ve kadınları "kurban", "korunmayı bekleyen" ve barışı destekleyen "aktörler" olarak nitelendiren temsilleri yoluyla oluşturulduğunu ileri sürmektedir. Çalışma feminist ve post-yapısalcı yaklaşımlara dayanarak AB'nin KBG'ye yönelik söylemlerini analiz etmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Toplumsal Cinsiyet Eşitliği, Avrupa Birliği, Güvenlik

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1. Introduction

Studies on the relationship between gender and security have gained increasing attention in the field of International Relations mostly over the past 30 years (Kennedy and Dingli, 2016, pp. 154-155). In particular, many of them mainly focus on a wide range of issues including the place and role of women in security with regard to the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on "Women, Peace and Security" (WPS). The WPS as an agenda has an overall purpose of "prevention and resolution of conflicts; participation of women in all stages of decision-making in conflict resolution; protection of women and girls from gender-based violence, relief and recovery." The European Union has also developed an approach to WPS Agenda since the mid-2000s. In the security sphere of the EU polity through the WPS Agenda, the concept of "gender equality" has considerably been reinforced by the notion of "mainstreaming gender". In February 2005 in Luxembourg, the Ministers of the EU on Gender Equality confirmed that they would launch required initiatives, programmes and policies to implement the UNSCR 1325. The EU's Comprehensive Approach to WPS is one of the earliest documents that was published regarding the WPS Agenda in 2008. The EU has then proceeded the framework on WPS with the announcement of the Strategic Approach in November 2018. In particular, when compared to the previous official documents, the EU's strategy refers to a role of the EU in advancing a gender approach in the global security system. However, this study argues that the EU's discursive engagement in WPS has noticeably been grounded on the representations of women as both "victim" and "agency" in security environment and still has implications of "patriarchal ideology" as Lazar (2007) argues. The EU's gender perspective still embraces a language of "protectionist" view, and it also regards women as "agency" that can still be found in its textual discourse of gendered structures of security (Otto, 2018). Therefore, it further assures the reproduction of the current representations of women and constructions of the relationship between gender and security. In this framework, the study aims to provide a textual analysis approach employing Lazar's views on Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis, Critical Discourse Analysis, and post-structural approaches referring to Foucault's accounts on discourse and power; and a number of prominent feminist scholars including, Cameron, Butler, Tickner, Enloe, Khalid, Cockburn and Shepherd.

Section I consists of two interrelated parts. It starts with a theoretical explanation of the relationship between gender and power; and between women and security through a discursive approach and a feminist view. It also examines a number of UNSC resolutions on WPS from an analytical standpoint. The feminist challenge, here, points to the main social constructions of gender relations, hierarchies, militarism, and patriarchal structures which are embedded in the international security system. Section II depicts the EU's approach to WPS through an analysis of the EU's official documents such as the Comprehensive Approach to Strategic Approach towards the "Women, Peace and Security", the EU's Strategy towards WPS and the EU's "a Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025". Therefore, the second section scrutinises the EU's discourses that are mainly based on a protectionist view and an approach regarding "women as agent".

2. Gender, Discourse and the UNSCRs on the "Women, Peace and Security" Agenda

This section offers a theoretical and analytical perspective for understanding the relationship between gender and security referring to the concepts of power, ideology, and patriarchy. It attempts to portray the discursive constructions of gender relations with regard to Critical Discourse Analysis, Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA), and post-structuralist arguments (Lazar, 2007, pp. 141-143). Therefore, the section initially places a great emphasis on the relationship among gender, power/ideology and discourse. Admittedly, as an assumption, the primary goal in feminist theory is to contribute to the achievement of an overall transformation of the relationship between gender and power, and unequal and unjust social practices and structures. However, this view also intentionally and critically reveals how social practices and institutions are gendered and become a part of patriarchal ideology that is constructed through discourses and representations of women (Lazar, 2007, p.152). Therefore, this section provides us with a theoretical explanation of the relationship between social practices and discourses and the levels of analyses of language used in text. The second part similarly portrays how discourses are produced through the UN security mechanism based on the UNSC resolutions.

2.1. A Feminist Critique

The study departs from an argument that language is ontologically important as it constructs gender. From this perspective, feminism attempts to account how the relationship between women and men is established, and thus how it is transformed through discourses and practices (Cameron, 1992). It also help us depict the discursive construction of the relationship between "gender and power" and correspondingly "women and security".

According to Foucault, discourse is, in its formation, "constituted by a group of sequences of signs, in so far they are statements, that is, in so far, as they can be assigned particular modalities of existence". The statements – that are neither hidden nor totally visible – can be derived from the signifying elements that are traced or pronounced in texts (Foucault, 2002, pp. 121-122). Discourses in texts and speeches aptly display structures and practices. In his view of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), Fairclough (1989) makes an argument on the performance of discourses by mingling the role of language and power and then linking this relationship to ideologies and social practices. He also argues that "discourses function as rhetorical purposes in particular in neoliberal narratives of globalisation as imaginaries" (Fairclough, 2005, p.56). In other words, social practices and structures as a part of ideology are essentially discursive. Discourse, in general, "constitutes and is constituted by" social structures and institutions (Lazar, 2007, pp. 149-150). In Derrida's deconstruction of discourses – as a practice of reading – the "metaphysics of presence" also signifies a space made up of a unified structure of concepts, ideas, language, signs, and discourses. It too includes the relations between men and women (Hansen, 2006, p.17).[1]

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1   Derrida uses deconstruction as a process more than a theoretical approach aiming at analysing the texts to reach to "ground of meaningful and nonmeaningful, reason and unreason in terms of an original presence…". This would be a deconstruction of "unconditional rationalism" (Kurana, 2016, p.84).

The international security system and its militaristic components denoting patriarchy essentially form the liberal ideology. Patriarchy as "an ideological system also has interactions with other ideologies" and embraces asymmetrical and hierarchical power relations in discourse (Lazar, 2007, p. 142). Patriarchal ideology, in this sense, privileges men over women and is discursively (and textually) signified in texts. The representations of gender and women in ideologically, patriarchally and militarily designated global security structures are aptly composed of discourses. Foucault's thoughts on power-based neo-liberal system principally also represent the gender dynamics of security discourses. In Foucauldian sense, "orders of discourse" roughly defines procedures and systems of "inclusions and exclusions". The system specifies "insiders" and "outsiders" of particular identities and subjectivities including gender, ethnicity, religion, social class, etc. (Foucault, 1981; Howarth and Stavrakakis, 2000, pp. 3-4; Hansen, 2006, pp. 15-17). In addition, these various identities are interrelated with each other. Thus, gender intersects other social identities categorised with respect to sexuality, ethnicity, social class, etc. (Lazar, 2005, p.1).

In his renowned study in "Language and Power", Fairclough argues that the relationship between discourse and social structures can also be valued in terms of "representations, relationships and identities." In particular, security and gender-related issues together manifest themselves in the representations of identity which are discursively constructed (Campbell, 1992, p. 204). Butler (1999, p. 4) asserts that within the political, ideological and social domain women are discursively "either misrepresented or not represented at all" (Fairclough, 1989). For Tickner, women are largely represented through a series of "myths of protection" (Tickner, 2001, p. 51). For example, "masculinised men" who are also militarised are mostly seen as "rational strategists and protector" while women are identified as "emotional and protected" (Enloe, 2004, p. 154). Furthermore, women are also viewed as "less appropriate" in the matters of foreign and security policy where "power, strength, rationality are attributed to men and masculinity" (Tickner, 1992, p. 3). Women are always objectified with certain roles and tasks that would suitably be exercised in gendered security structures. Therefore, the approach to the role of women in war is seen as a product of "hegemonic masculinity" (Tickner, 2001).[2] From this perspective, discursive construction of gender evidently constitutes the levels of production and reproduction of identities and subjectivities, and entirely displays the arranging security patterns of the political and international system (Hansen, 2006, pp. 15-17).

2.2. Security Discourse and the UNSCRs on WPS Agenda

Security discourse is originated in the security domain according to Foucault's notion. Security, as a form of power[3] generates its mechanism that is based on different levels of techniques and apparatus. Legislative measures, regulations, decrees, different types of preventive, punitive

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2   "Hegemonic masculinity" represents the dominant position of masculinity within the international system. This type constructs the masculine hegemonic order. Hegemony can also be understood from Gramscian logic signifying an order that has penetrated into the all aspects of political, social and economic life. See Tickner (2001; 1992).

3   For Foucault (2007), power is not grounded on itself; rather "it has mechanisms and procedures including hierarchial subordinations."

and protective measures totally set up a security mechanism (Foucault, 2007, pp. 1-27). The environment in which these security mechanisms are embedded is therefore seen as a reflection of the neo-liberal system and liberal ideology comprising politics, economy, social aspects of the global system as a whole. For Hudson (2010, pp. 3-8), the UNSC resolutions are the best place to start an analysis of gender discourse as the UN is constantly identified as the centre of the collective security system. More exactly, all the member states of the UN and regional entities such as the EU and NATO are committed to act in line with the principles of the UN.[4] This section also shows that a liberal conception of security which reinforces the gendered constructions of a hierarchically designed global system clashes with the emancipatory goal of the critical thinking. For the latter approach, within the existing structures, representations of women can rather be viewed as the mirror of political representations of power and ideology (Hansen, 2006, p. 6).

To comprehend the UN security mechanism, primarily, it would be appropriate to set out the most relevant UNSC Resolutions. This is because the UNSC produces the most apparent outcomes of the rhetoric of "the maintenance of peace and security". The language of the resolutions, in general, proves the liberal system's logic on "gender mainstreaming". In particular, since its creation, the UNSCR 1325 has been regarded as a breakthrough in the UN history for the reason that "gender mainstreaming"[5] has officially and manifestly entered into the UN's security discourses and practices. More concretely, by the UNSCR 1325, the UN has, in this manner, reaffirmed "the role of women in the prevention, protection, participation and relief and recovery" in all "efforts of the maintenance of peace and security" (George and Shepherd, 2016, p. 298). The UNSCR 1325 was then followed up by a number of resolutions, namely, 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106 (2013), 2122 (2013), 2242 (2015) 2272 (2016), 2331 (2016), 2467 (2019) and 2490 (2019).

The UNSCR 1820 (2008), which was adopted 8 years after the approval of the UNSCR 1325, additionally states that "women and girls are the targets of sexual violence, as a tactic of humiliation and domination." This resolution also calls for "the protection of civilians including women and girls and take necessary measures for this purpose." Engle (2014, pp. 23-47) argues that the UNSCRs 1325 and 1820 both exclusively put an emphasis on women and girls who are mostly seen as "vulnerable to sexual violence".[6] The gendered positions and representations of women would be maintained through the additional categorisations provided by, for example, the UNSCR 1888 (2009). It principally supports women's engagement in all levels of decision-making and the appointment of women as the senior positions in the peace missions.

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4   This argument therefore offers an analytical insight in examining the regional entities such as the EU, which also take part in and thus contribute to a gendered system of norms, rules, and procedures that exercise the global logic in security matters.

5   The term "gender mainstreaming" has appeared in the Third World Conference (1985) and then been used in the Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing (1995). The previous initiatives of the UN are the establishment of the Commission on the Status of Women (1946), the UN Decade for Women (1975-1985), the adoption of the convention on the Elimination of All Forms Discrimination Against Women in 1979.

6   The following resolutions also refer to "civilians, boys, and men as those who are also at risk" (see Engle, 2014, pp. 23-47).

The UNSCR 1960 (2010), likewise, further approves of the "inclusion of women in the peace processes particularly with the appointment of more women protection advisers to the peace missions." The UNSCR 2122 (2013) roughly endorses "the empowerment of women in conflict and post-conflict situations for the sake of the promotion of gender equality with the women's full participation and protection in the political processes of post-conflict reconstruction process." In addition, for the prevention of the sexual exploitation and abuse by the UN and non-UN forces including military, civilian and police personnel, all levels of authorities would provide training programmes and adequate investigations in cooperation with the national authorities (UNSCR 2272, 2016). Despite the UN's objective for the protection and inclusion of women in all stages of conflicts, the latest resolutions precisely reaffirm the long-term concerns over the continuing and serious "allegations of sexual violence and also abuse by United Nations peacekeepers in the United Nations as well as under-representation of women in peacebuilding processes" generally as stated in 2272 (2016), 2331 (2016), 2467 (2019) and 2492 (2019), 2493 (2019).

Bellamy and Williams (2005, pp. 17-38) observe that the UN peace operations, though, widely contribute to the construction of liberal polities rather than providing an opportunity for creation and continuation of an effective system to resolve conflicts between states. Likewise, as for an ideological perspective, liberalism characteristically raises an interventionist idea with its rhetoric of peace. For example, over time, in international environment, for the anti-militarist feminist groups, the UN peacekeeping has become one of the alternatives to the traditional (and national) combat forces particularly since the military operation in Afghanistan that was launched in 2001 (Hansen, 2006, pp.169-170). However, the UN peacekeeping has long been reputed to be ineffective as its presence has evidently created insecurity rather than security for women in various conflicting regions (Klot, 2015, pp. 736-737; see BBC News, 2017). This is because the liberal ideology in security terms is also interwoven with the militaristic view and the rationale of intervention. Such an argument surely refers to the motivation of intervention which can be regarded as the nature of state institution (Khalid, 2015, pp. 632-647; Enloe, 2004). However, feminist approach extensively criticises state-centric views and argues that security discourse has long been maintained as a "practice" of state and state-centric mechanisms (including internationalist ideas in the 20th century). Security is accordingly constructed through a language of strategy, legitimacy, control, protection and prevention in the same way state utilises security discourses in domestic and external environment (Foucault, 2007; Tickner, 2001). The UN, which derives its legitimacy from states ideologically embraces the notion of "militarised masculinity" (for the term "militarised masculinity" see Enloe, 2004).[7] For example, the UNSCR 1325 raises a question whether it can be paradoxically used for the legitimisation of intervention as a part of the UN system in the name of "protection of women" and consequently for the "victimisation of women" (Engle, 2014, pp. 23-26). George and Shepherd (2016, p. 301) also describe "intervention" as an "engagement with women in an essentialising, even imperialising, fashion as gendered and vulnerable actors who require little more than protection." Similarly, the notion of war and intervention filled with masculine culture also well fits into a gendered definition of peace that

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7   Cockburn (2012) views militarism and war as a process of forming masculinities.

signifies an inevitable association of women and peace. By this is meant that "peaceful women" is constructed as the opposite of "warrior men". At this point, the UN's discourse is mainly based on a "dichotomy between war and peace" (Tickner, 2001, pp. 13 – 60). However, it can under no circumstances eradicate the gender hierarchies. Such an essentialist view within the UN security mechanism on the connection between women and peace is thus seen as challenging to the idea of gender equality.

3. EU's Perspective Towards the WPS in Discourse

The EU has constructed a "strategic" notion through traditional discourses of power, authority, and ideology. Admittingly, it is neither a state nor a typical international organisation. However, the EU pursues a strategic discourse claiming to provide security and to protect civilians, women, and girls in wartime (see, for example, Khalid, 2015, pp. 632-647). The EU's international identity considerably persists state-centred and patriarchal conceptions of security.[8] To a certain extent, the EU can also be identified as a domain where sovereign state discourses are reproduced, strengthened, and thus contribute to the gendered patterns of power, hierarchies and relationships in the global system. On the other side, the EU's premise that it is a "global actor" can also be viewed as an attempt to legitimise its own practices just as a state asserts its ideology and sovereignty in the current international system (Cebeci, 2012, pp. 566-69). Similarly, the EU's institutional commitment to the UN for an "effective multilateralism" and both civilian and militaristic portrayals of the EU's security culture seem to be of a reproductive international system as well as a part of its own historical, political and cultural expressions. For example, the EU openly conceptualises its "global role" through the discourses on cooperation with the UN, in particular, in short-term crisis management situations (Council of the European Union, 2003; European Council, 2016).

Basically, the EU's approach has been made up of two main conceptual dimensions: "gender equality" and "gender mainstreaming". It was an initial step taken by the Ministers of the EU who are responsible for the issues related to gender equality in February 2005 that they would take the measures to implement the UNSCR 1325 and to initiate a number of programmes and policies (Ministerial Declaration of the Conference of Ministers of Gender Equality, 2005). Gender mainstreaming in the EU also implies the creation of a vision towards "women and security" and adaptation of the existing institutions and policies of the Union to reach its goal in this regard.[9] The EU then established the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) in 2006 to support gender equality in different policy areas such as migration, poverty, education, health, economy, justice, culture, and violence. Moreover, it supplies gender analysis, research, and data

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8   The EU represents both a state-like unit and regional/international actor as its rhetoric of "post-modern entity" intensely sounds that of a sovereign and modern State (see, for example, Cebeci, 2012).

9   The responsibility for the implementation of the UNSCR 1325 and the follow-up resolutions is given to the Member States of the EU, the European Council, European External Action Service (EEAS), EU Delegations, the EEAS Principal Advisor on Gender and WPS, the Commission, EU Special Representatives, the High Representative and Common Security and Defence Policy missions and operations and civil society organisations.

to the EU. Following the adoption of the UNSCR 1325, the EU published numerous documents such as the 2005 European Consensus on Development, the 2006 Commission Communication Roadmap to Gender Equality, the Commission Communication Roadmap to Gender Equality in Development Cooperation of March 2007, and the 2008 EU Concept for Support to Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR). The EU also added UNSCR 1325 to the "Africa-EU Strategic Partnership", and delivered the EU Plan of Action on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development (2010-2015), the EU Gender Action Plan II (2016-2020), the EU's Strategic Approach to WPS that was adopted in 2018, the EU Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2019-2020), and EU's "a Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025". [10] Despite the attempts to develop its vision and policy to achieve gender equality, the EU's discourses on WPS still construct gender through the representations of women as victims from a protectionist view and as "agency" in keeping with the dominant gendered language of the global system.

3.1. Women "in Need of Protection"?

The adoption of the Comprehensive Approach for the Implementation of the UN Resolutions 1325 and 1820 in December 2008 is a significant step for the EU to propose a procedure that could put women in an "emancipatory value" (Otto and Heathcote, 2014, p.7). Thus, the achievement of "gender equality" would be possible through an inclusive security understanding rather than gender-based and militaristic security mechanisms. The EU also regards the Common Security and Defence Policy missions as the main tools for the fulfilment of the UNSC Resolutions 1325 and 1820 in crises (Official Journal of the European Union, 2010). However, regarding the textual language of the EU in the Comprehensive Approach, a "protectionist perspective" that is also derived from the language of the UN resolutions openly reinforces "masculine dependability"; the commitment of protecting those who become vulnerable in face of an attack; and consequently, interventionism (Otto, 2018, p. 113). In the EU's texts, women are represented as vulnerable, weak, and in need of assistance and protection mainly in wartime. The EU's Comprehensive Approach categorically evidences these standardised representations:

> Contemporary conflicts affect civilian populations in particular, and in this context women have often become strategic targets, sometimes on a massive scale, as when rape is used as a tactic of warfare and ethnic cleansing. Many women and girls also become combatants' domestic and sexual slaves. Women are however not only victims of war and violence. They also play active roles as combatants, peace builders, politicians and activists. The equal participation of men and women in these roles is both an essential goal and means to help prevent and resolve conflicts and promote a culture of inclusive and sustainable peace (Council of the European Union, 2008).

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10   The EU's Action Plan on WPS (2019-2024) includes "the statements and assessments of the main objectives of the EU on the achievement of the gender equality" (Council of the European Union, 2019). See O'Connell (2013).

Despite the importance of the equal participation of women and men, from the text, it is inferred that the conflicts, wars and military institutions themselves predominantly organise the gender roles in a hierarchical system based on the constructions of masculinity. It widely constructs a discourse of "salvation of victimized women in particular from the patriarchal structures of the oppressing regimes" (Kennedy and Dingli, 2016, p. 158). More concretely, the EU's Action Plan on WPS, for example, states that the EU "supports all efforts for institutional mechanisms for protection of women and girls as well as men and boys, in fragile environments and conflict affected contexts to help prevent all forms of sexual and gender-based violence" (Council of the European Union, 2019). The EU's Strategic Approach to WPS also claims that it has gone further with the reassurance of "rights, agency and protection of women and girls and their participation in decision-making processes"(Council of the European Union, 2018). However, from a protectionist view, when gender-based violence is reduced to conflict-based sexual violence (for example, rape), a gender analysis – grounded on evidence – would then call for a new agenda for intervention in specific regions. In this perspective, the use of force can be considered to be justifiable and reasonable for the "protection of peacemakers and peacebuilders, especially of women, in post-agreement/transitional settings." This context would do nothing but to aim to "make war safer" for women (Otto, 2018; Council of the European Union, 2019). For example, the emphasis on sexual vulnerability uttered by the UNSCR 1325 would merely shift the attention from preventing war to the negative impacts of war on women. Similarly, the UNSCR 1820 (2008) aims to "prevent sexual violence against women and girls" through the deployment of peacekeeping forces. Therefore, it can be argued that the gender analysis-based research here prioritises the protection of women in both conflict time and post-conflict time and maintains the traditional view on the role and place of women (see Boesten, 2018). Here lies an essentialist view attaching these roles to "women's natural and biological features". For example, for Whitworth (cited in Klot, 2015, p. 731), the UNSCR 1325 radically constructs gender throughout a "pathological relationship based on sexed bodies." Rape and sexual torture are some of the forms of violence in military terms. Moreover, it vastly endorses many aspects of the relations between patriarchy and militarism: "Women's vulnerability to sexual abuse" would also help to "rescue and even protect women" in turn. Such a stance can no longer end violence but surely keep it continue (Engle, 2014, p.33). The "myth of protection" would thus secure its existence through such discursive and operational cycles (Tickner, 2001). For example, the UNSCR 2242 (2015) demands "the increase in the number of women in peacekeeping that will also strengthen the effectiveness of the operations." The EU's Action Plan on WPS, similarly, addresses the "improvement of gender balance in CSDP missions and operations" (Council of the European Union, 2019). Thus, by the sound of inclusivity and participation of women in military operations, women could be seen in the "same category with men" in both representation and practice (Lazar, 2007, pp. 152-153). In addition, the EU's Strategy, which specifies the gender-related causes of violence and encourages the EU to initiate an overall gender-responsive perspective, does not truly explain why violence recurs, continues and why military intervention is necessary for the conflict and post-conflict regions. Instead, the EU's peace-oriented interventionism that is mostly manifested by the rhetoric of human rights in the EU's humanitarian discourse proves the reverse of the

purpose (Council of the European Union, 2018). For example, there seems to be less emphasis on the recent resolutions in the Strategy, mainly on "continuing and serious allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations peacekeepers in the United Nations."[11] The EU could have a more precise vision for the subject such as trafficking. Considering that "a Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025" underscores "the trafficking of human beings both in and outside the EU", the EU could also take concrete steps in framing the issue in its security discourses (see European Commission, 2020).

In conclusion, the EU's strategy raises considerable criticism for having been founded on the patriarchally-shaped ideological and procedural settings. From both civilian and military sides, as Muehlenhoff (2017) argues, the neoliberal approach does not provide a reliable ground for the prevention of conflict-based sexual violence. It somewhat sustains the policy processes of global security structures along with a motivation for future military intervention in different regions. Mass killings of civilians and gender-related violence that leave women as "victim" and "in need of protection" are not natural consequences of war. Instead, violence against civilians, women and girls in war and peacetime adds up to "by-product of a deliberate strategy of the neo-liberal regime". All in all, it is essential for the EU to establish a more inclusive and transformative security notion by addressing social inequalities (see Thompson, 2006, p. 344).

3.2. Women as an "Agency"

In particular, with the adoption of the EU's Strategic Approach in November 2018 the EU has showed a particular interest in furthering its institutional, technical and bureaucratic capacity. The EU's Strategy has seemingly advanced an inclusivity approach for women: "The integration of gender perspectives into all EU policies including security, conflict prevention and resolution as well as long-term peace-building" is regarded as the main objective to achieve "gender equality" (Council of European Union, 2018). According to the Strategy:

> The EU Strategic Approach places the WPS Agenda at the centre of the full spectrum of the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy, as an essential tool in ensuring that the rights, agency and protection of women and girls are observed an upheld at all times, and to confirm that a meaningful and equatable role in decision-making is secured for women of all ages during all stages of conflict prevention, peace-making, peacebuilding and post-conflict rehabilitation (Council of European Union, 2018).

The EU attempts to strengthen and diverge its functions as well as the capacity and to play a particular role in encouraging women to participate in all stages of conflict resolution and peace processes. Therefore, through a "meaningful and equable" participation, women having an agency

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11   For example, the case of United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA). Issues such as "Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (and all forms of sexual exploitation) are placed in the UNSCRs 2272 (2016), 2331 (2016) (see Council of the European Union, 2018); See UNSC Resolutions 2467 (2019) and 2490 (2019).

role would be co-opted into the security system and expected to achieve certain goals (Kennedy and Dingli, 2016). In addition to that framework, the EU's approach to inclusivity would also be reinforced by gender analysis and collection of data. Seen itself as a model to promote normative values, the EU specifies its role as "gender equality promoter": "Neglecting to carry out gender analysis and to integrate a gender perspective would negatively impact on the EU's leading role as gender equality promoter" (Council of the European Union, 2018). Regarding the statements on "women's meaningful and equitable participation in peace and decision-making processes" the Strategic Approach aims to go much further beyond the previous documents:

> Women are not only victims of war and violence. They also play diverse roles as, for example, combatants, peace builders, politicians, economic actors and activists. The equal participation of women and men is both an essential end and a way to prevent and resolve conflicts and promote a culture of inclusive and sustainable peace (Council of the European Union, 2018).

The EU, here, outlines a holistic approach towards the "achievement of peace" and is inclined to prioritise women as an agency in its engagement of gender-related issues in a violent environment. This system founded on the masculinised hegemony of the UN system overtly constitutes a sphere where gender persistently operates in different fields ranging from diplomatic to military (see, for example, Khalid, 2015). The EU's aim on peace well corresponds with "the achievement of gender equality." For example, in the Strategy, the EU aims to "promote women participation and leadership in humanitarian action and development programmes in both and informal decision-making and priority setting spaces" (Council of the European Union, 2018). Similarly, the role of women is placed in the EU's Action Plan: "Women's leadership, the participation of women's organisations and women rights defenders would also be involved in conflict-related settings and/or in conflict prevention, and peace negotiations, peacebuilding and humanitarian actions" (Council of European Union, 2019). More exactly, the Strategy represents women's position as an agent. It states that women have a vital role in the conflict management processes including "development, preventing and countering violent extremism, counterterrorism and migration." However, to exercise an agent role as a part of the neoliberal system is contradictory (Council of the European Union, 2018).

Although women's empowerment in peace processes is conditioned by "meaningful participation" of women, the textual language maintains "women's victimhood", mainly in conflict situations. In discourse, "meaningful participation[12] regardless of essentialist views on the arguments of the interrelationship of "women and peace" could contribute to the achievement of "gender equality" insofar as peace is not symbolised and idealised in a liberal and interventionist narrative in general. Like military conflicts, military solutions can produce "natural roles of men and women" (see Moran, 2010). Ruby (2014, pp. 173-184) also observes that military intervention does not

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12   "Meaningful participation" specifically signifies the participation of women's civil society and women's rights activists as well as other related actors in the decision making process to achieve peace.

make a difference for women; it only instrumentalizes the UNSCR 1325 and rationalizes military operations. For example, in the EU's Mainstreaming Human Rights and Gender into European Security and Defence Policy, it is indicated that: "Gender mainstreaming in the area of ESDP is not a goal in itself; the ultimate objective is to increase the EU's crisis management capacity by mobilising additional resources and exploiting the full potential of the human resources available." Muehlenhoff (2017, p.161), similarly, argues that "the EU renders women as military agency" and "resource" because of their role in the security and defence missions. However, such a contention might also support the patriarchal system where women are still represented as "victim" and increasingly an "object" who are expected to join the whole international activity on peace, war, or development. Thus, women in the system are considerably associated with a sense of "self-responsibility granted with adequate resources" (Muehlenhoff , 2017, p.163). In this sense, women and women organisations are also expected to be involved more actively in the efforts for humanitarian assistance delivery. However, women are viewed as aid providers and "first responders" in the relief and recovery categories. (Council of the European Union, 2018).

Although the EU uses an "equality" discourse, its call for women's inclusion in all the aspects of peace processes can be reduced to the confines of the male-dominant strategy making alongside the patriarchal characteristics of the system (Enloe, 2004). The inclusion of women is possible when women become those who "think, explain the problem or even reshape the order" and with the achievement of equality between women and men (Enloe, 2014, pp.97-98). Women's experiences based on context/s and their equal access to all sectors of social and economic life would be more effective in the elimination of gendered structures of security. However, women do not represent uniqueness; therefore, it would be more meaningful that the EU points to women's experiences regarding different backgrounds. For example, it could systematically document the experiences and analysis of the role of women, in particular, in meditation, and their inclusion in high-level peace processes (Davis, 2019). The EIGE (2020a) too asserts the role of experiences from both men and women in conflict and peacetime stating that "security is not gender-neutral". In its recent document that is on the "fifth review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform", the EU has emphasised the importance of inclusion of women in security and defence matters. For the EU, the main priority is to maintain gender-sensitive training and use of gender advisors; thus, its policies are comprising both armed conflict and diplomatic missions. However, such a notion, in particular, for the adaptation of the EU's gender mainstreaming into different policy areas remains inadequate when it comes to the security field. In other words, for example, migration can not be effectively incorporated into a general security framework in particular when the issue is widely related to "terrorism" in matters of the EU's internal security. However, more exactly, the fields of migration, asylum seeking and discrimination can not be considered without the external environment in constructing a notion of gender mainstreaming (EIGE, 2020b). In this regard, the EU can bring different but interrelated policies together and provide equality indicators for a wide range of areas, for example, including education, social policy, health and labour force. For example, the EU's "Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025", focusing on gender-based violence, calls for a coordination of all the policy areas

(European Commission, 2020). Likewise, the EIGE can produce knowledge, data analysis and policy frameworks for social practices and structures to achieve gender equality. In addition, the EU can also evaluate its strategy to WPS along with other security and gender related strategies .

4. Conclusion

This study has attempted to analyse the European Union's discourses on the relationship between gender and security and the representations of women as both victim and agency with regard to the UN's agenda on "Women, Peace and Security". The textual analysis is based on the EU's official documents including, for example, the Comprehensive Approach, the EU's Strategy to the "Women, Peace and Security" and "a Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025". As a framework, WPS Agenda has initially been adopted with the UNSCR 1325 and its follow up resolutions. The main purposes of these resolutions are "prevention and resolution of conflicts, protection of women and girls from gender-based violence, prevention and recovery." Thus, the paper has portrayed the relationship between patriarchal and hierarchical forms of power and gender in defining the interconnection between security and women. This relationship is formed by the representations of women in written and spoken language. The theoretical approach of the study is comprising Critical Discourse Analysis, Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis, post-structural approach, and a feminist critique on security. On the other hand, the UNSC Resolution 1325 has created an interest among the scholars of critical approach insofar as it would open up new discussions for the emancipatory aspects of feminist arguments. In general, security in both discourse and practice is viewed as a product of the current liberal international system; and gender as ideology constitutes one of the forms of this patriarchal ideology, hierarchal subordinations, and the exclusions and inclusions of this system. The EU's security imaginary in both war and peacetime, if not necessarily in militaristic form, has been co-opted into the UN's security mechanism. The EU has developed a gender perspective to achieve "gender equality" and thus generated a gender mainstreaming view through the establishment of a wide range of tools, strategies, institutions, procedures and structures.

Despite the shift in the EU's policy-making and strategy towards WPS in terms of inclusivity through meaningful participation, to some extent, the EU pursues a conventional view; for example, it utilises a logic of protectionism through the representations of women as "victim" and "in need of protection" as in the UN's discourse. Mainly grounded on the UN Resolutions of 1325 and 1820, the construction of the status of women seems problematic. Women are associated with biological and natural features representing vulnerability and weakness, mainly, in risky areas from an essentialist point of view. Likewise, the EU has attempted to take further steps for the advancement of gender mainstreaming to achieve its goal of gender equality by framing a vision for "women empowerment." This would be possible through the participation of women in all stages of peace-oriented policies. However, women as an agent within the EU's security structures, the sense of equality has been regarded women as the replacement for men, for example, in peacekeeping operations. In the same way, in decision-making processes, women,

regardless of any ethnocentric categories, need to be involved in an inclusive security area rather than solely a gendered, context and conflict-based situation. On the other hand, to further its gender perspective, the EU has also adopted a notion towards gender equality pointing to poverty, inequality, deprivation, religious and ethnic differences as gender inequality indicators in its "Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025". Likewise, the European Institute for Gender Equality has roughly framed a vision combining women and security concerning different policy areas. However, the patriarchal and all aspects of inequality between men and women and among women, representations of women, and the construction of existing liberal security patterns through discourses could still contribute to the legitimisation of reproduction of this unequal system.

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