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Marina Henke. "Networked Cooperation: How the European Union Mobilizes Peacekeeping Forces to Project Power Abroad." *Security Studies* 28:5 (2019): 901-934.

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In this article Marina Henke takes an interest in force generation processes in European Union (EU) peacekeeping operations. Even though the EU is the subject of the research, force generation in multilateral peacekeeping operations is indeed an overlooked phenomenon in general. As such, and beyond the carefully studied and researched case that Henke examines here, her findings and the network theory of force generation that she offers have great potential for further empirical testing and validation in the framework of the operations of other organizations such as the United Nations or NATO.

Henke's main argument is straightforward: the process of force generation in EU civilian and military operations relies on the ability of EU pivotal actors to mobilize the necessary troop-contributing member states through their social and institutional networks. Overall, this is essentially a bargaining process between pivotal and troop-contributing states, which is characterized by frequent side-payments and issue-linkage tactics. In order to make her point, Henke looks at two EU operations: the EU Military Force (EUFOR) Chad, a military peacekeeping operation spearheaded by France from the very beginning, and the EU Police Force (EUPOL) Afghanistan, a civilian, police-training operation in which Germany played a decisive role. The research is informed by dozens of qualitative interviews undertaken with actors who were involved in the force generation process of both operations. Below, I will review some of the main strengths and weaknesses of the article, starting briefly with literature review, and then moving on to theory, methodology, and empirical demonstration.

The early sections of the article include a significant and comprehensive review of the specialized literature on the European Union's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). Readers who are familiar with this literature may find the extensive effort slightly unnecessary, but it is certainly a welcome effort in a journal such as *Security Studies*, whose emphasis is not on EU security policies. In any case, this review of the literature rightly makes the case that very little has been dedicated to the issue of force generation.¹

¹ The most significant exception is Frank Hagemann, *Strategy Making in the European Union: The Quest for Comprehensive Security in the EU's Military Operations* (Berlin: Carole Hartmann Miles, 2010). See also Alexander Mattelaer, *The Politico-Military Dynamics of European Crisis Response Operations: Planning, Friction, Strategy* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

However, one important reference is missing from the picture on the case of EUFOR Chad: Björn Seibert's *Operation EUFOR TCHAD/RCA and the EU's Common Security and Defense Policy*, which devotes much discussion to force generation challenges during the operation.² This being said, Seibert's purpose is mainly descriptive, and he does not delve so much into the backdoor political intricacies of face-to-face meetings that actually drove the force generation process, as Henke does in her research. (Seibert is now Head of Cabinet of the President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen).

Theoretically, one definitive contribution of Henke's approach is that it does not engage in the endless debates that have been going on in European and security studies regarding whether the CSDP is driven by realist or normative concerns.³ Even though the normative argument that EU member states commit troops to EU operations because they believe it is the right thing to do deserved more attention in the article (more on that below), Henke makes a compelling case that her network approach is probably closer to the empirical reality of how multinational peacekeeping forces are assembled.

On the negative side, the claim that the article builds a network theory of force generation is somewhat unfulfilled. This has to do in no small part with the fact that the concept of network remains underspecified (910 and following). There is not much reflection on what makes a strong network, and whether it is mostly quality or quantity that matters. To put it differently: do we expect an EU member state to become a pivotal actor when it has a lot of institutional and social network connections, for example because it has a numerous diplomatic staff or because it is involved in numerous European and international organizations, committee meetings, etc.? Or is it the quality of these network connections, the frequency of social interactions, the trust that a state and its security actors create in the community, their ability to be recognized as skillful diplomatic mediators, that strengthens the pivotal situation of a state? The fact that France and Germany are taken as the pivotal actors in the two cases under examination seems to point to the first explanation, but this is not very explicit from the conceptual work in the article.

My larger reservations with the article have to do with the methodology and the choice of comparison between the military EUFOR Chad and the civilian EUPOL Afghanistan operations. The author argues that the two operations selected follow the methodological logic of a most similar cases comparison (903), but I am not certain that this is the case. In fact, military and civilian operations vary in their force generation processes. By nature, the force generation process in EU civilian operations is much more heavily dependent on EU officials (rather than country nationals), in large part because the funding rules of the operation are different.⁴ While the deployment of military operations is primarily funded by contributing states (this is the 'costs-lie-where-they-fall' principle), civilian operations are financed under the general EU budget for foreign and security policies. The responsibility of EU officials in the process of generating forces in the latter case is therefore presumably stronger.

Thus, when Henke observes in her empirical demonstration that Germany proved to be a much less central pivotal state in the force generation process of EUPOL Afghanistan than France was in EUFOR Chad, this should probably come as no surprise because of the in-built bias of the comparison in the research. In the case of EUPOL Afghanistan, EU

² Björn H. Seibert, *Operation EUFOR TCHAD/RCA and the EU's Common Security and Defense Policy* (Carlisle, Pennsylvania: U.S. Army War College, 2010).

³ Comprehensive syntheses of the theoretical debate can be found in Bastien Irondelle, Chris J. Bickerton and Anand Menon (eds.), "Security Cooperation beyond the Nation State: The EU's Common Security and Defence Policy," *Journal of Common Market Studies* 49:1 (2011): 1-190; and Xymena Kurowska and Fabian Breuer (eds.), *Explaining the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy: Theory in Action* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012).

⁴ Carmen-Cristina Cirlig, "Financing of CSDP Missions and Operations," European Parliamentary Research Service, PE 577.958, 16 February 2016:
[https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2016/577958/EPRS_ATA\(2016\)577958_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2016/577958/EPRS_ATA(2016)577958_EN.pdf)

officials filled the void created by Germans, but probably not just as a consequence of the latter's lack of political leadership and will, but also because it was their institutional role from the start, in the context of a civilian operation. It appears as though the strength of the empirical demonstration suffers somewhat from this underappreciated contrast in the two cases that have been selected.

That being said, the remainder of the empirical demonstration, especially the fieldwork interviews, are definitely a great strength of the article. While my knowledge of the case of EUPOL Afghanistan is more limited, I can testify to the relevance of empirical findings drawn from Henke's interviews with EUFOR Chad officials, having myself conducted research with them (including General Patrick Nash, who is quoted on several occasions in the article).⁵ The overall story of France taking the diplomatic, and then strategic-military lead, to initiate, implement, and man EUFOR Chad is well-established but finds a convincing confirmation in this article. Indeed, I would add an element from my own research that feeds into Henke's argument that the force generation process often comes with side-payments to the troop contributing states: in the case of France trying to convince Ireland to get on board, France had also promised to support Ireland's claims to let go of the mutual defence clause in the Lisbon Treaty, which at the time was being negotiated amongst EU member states.

To conclude, this article offers a lot of food for thought for EU and security studies scholars who have an interest in the deployment and conduct of multilateral peace operations. Even though Henke modestly claims that her study is of an exploratory nature (904), her article certainly opens interesting grounds for future research on the matter. Being myself quite sympathetic to normative theoretical arguments, I will simply regret that the empirical demonstration does not, in my opinion, make a definitive case against the idea that many EU states contribute to EU operations out of normative concerns (or a logic of appropriateness). Again, when looking at the case of EUFOR Chad, one cannot help but observe that neutral countries like Austria, Finland, Ireland, and Sweden all contributed troops to an extent that exceeded what could have been expected from them. Didn't they do so because of a normative commitment to these kinds of operations? Or was it solely a bargaining exercise that was linked to side-payments? I am not sure that the latter explanation is the one that prevails.

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⁵ Antoine Rayroux, *L'Union européenne et la maintien de la paix en Afrique* (Montréal: Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 2017).