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"The Eastern Partnership's contribution to security in Europe: bringing the political back in?"

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Abstract:

The analysis of European security has evolved considerably over the last decades, reflecting the dynamic shifts in security studies but also the continuous reshaping of the institutional setting in the European continent. One of the most relevant features of this process is the increased prominence of the European Union as a security provider, resulting from its enlargement process and the establishment of security and defence structures. The Eastern Partnership (EaP), however, has suffered from the very beginning from the lack of a clear vision within EU structures, regarding the type of contribution it would give to this changing security context. This paper puts forward new approaches to the study of European security, informed by post-structuralist perspectives on international politics and international security. The argument for using such approaches rests with the desire to understand the formative processes that shape the current European security order and to place the EaP in this framework. It is our contention that by doing this, we will be better prepared to identify the fundamental contradictions of this policy and its flaws. Building on an eclectic combination of authors from social theory and political sociology, the paper uses the concepts of politics and political to understand how security is being defined in Europe. From the analysis, it becomes clear that the EU's promotion of a depoliciced form of politics resonates more with the maintenance of hegemonic and hierarchical forms of stability and order, than with partnerships and emancipating forms of security. This is problematic in many ways, not least due to the subjectivities it creates, but also because of the lack of objective results in providing security.

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Introduction:

Mainstream studies of the EU's security actorness have developed along two main lines. The first has focused on the normative and rule-based approach of European integration, which translated into the establishment of a security community among former enemies (Deutsch *et al*., 1957; Wæver, 1998). The second has focused on the technologies of security which the Union has gradually set in place, namely through the development of its military tools (Hyde-Price, 2004; Kaldor *et al*., 2007; Menon, 2009; Bono, 2004). These approaches raise important issues regarding the EU's security actorness – its nature and capabilities – but address only superficially the processes through which such understandings of security come about in the EU as well as their co-constitutive nature of the social order – or *field* in Bourdieu's terms – sustaining such understandings.

This paper sets out to map the "symbolic power struggles" (Villumsen Berling, 2012, p. 453) which explain the nature of the social order underlying European security, particularly in the case of the Eastern Partnership (EaP) initiative. This approach is influenced by Bourdieu's concept of *social field* and *symbolic power* (Bourdieu, 1990), and how the latter is activated in order to remake hierarchies of power within the former. In this paper, the field we are seeking to map is the field of European security, which has been fast changing since the end of the Cold War (Villumsen Berling, 2012; Williams, 2007), and which we argue, is still being reshaped by constant struggles among different actors in their ambition to be perceived as legitimate and relevant agents in the process of shaping a new social order. Dominant narratives can be identified at specific times and on specific dimensions of security, but ultimately, a fast changing reality has made this field a highly contested one. By analysing the EaP from a security perspective, we place this EU policy framework within a broader logic of regional security provision, which has been clearly acknowledged in EU official discourse since its inception, in 2003, as the European Neighbourhood Policy.

Bourdieu's notion of *struggle* is, in our view, closely related to the issue of *the political*. Differentiating between *the political* and *politics* is a fundamental step, and we resort to Michael Dillon and Jenny Edkins' works, as both authors underline that the political is "a period where a new social and political order is founded" (Edkin, 1999, p.7), it is the allowing of human possibilities, "the plural 'how' dedicated to keeping the taking place of that possibility open" (Dillon, 1996, p.6). This understanding of the political as

possibility, as reordering and contestation contrasts with the understanding of politics as the institutionalised technological exercise of governmentality (Foucault 1997a, 1997b). Thus, by seeking to uncover the possibilities inherent in bringing the political back into the design of European security, particularly in the context of increasing EU engagement with its Eastern neighbours, we seek to understand the possibilities of redesigning the existing security order, the agents actively seeking to shape it, and the forms of power (or *capital*) they exercise in the process.

Whereas the European Union has emerged as a central security actor in the post-Cold War European security order, it should be perceived as an agent invested in the preservation of the existing hierarchy of power within this social field. Its approach to security, combining normative, soft approaches, based on the disciplining of social, political, and economic life in the continent, and the increasing use of the military for humanitarian goals, gives the EU several forms of capital to exercise. This process is also fundamental for the EU's social identity as a relevant agent in redefining the European security order and justifying its own existence. By being recognised as a legitimate agent by other players in the field, such as the United Nations, the United States (US) and NATO, but also Russia and the former-Warsaw Pact and -Soviet Union states, the EU has entered the European security field and, we would argue, has come to dominate it.

The escalating crisis in relations with Russia can be seen as the result of a struggle between agents in the field, contending for dominant discourses and resources. Russia's understanding of the EU's security role in Europe has gradually changed, to see it as an exclusionary force against perceived Russian interests. European Union management of this changing Russian position should be perceived in the complex setting of what Brian White (1999) has called European foreign policy, meaning that EU member states' positions within the Council of Ministers and elsewhere in other multilateral *fora* remain a fundamental part of the Union's views and actions on external matters. EU and US divergent views on what European security should mean, how it should be pursued and Russia's role in it reflect divisions among EU member states and institutions, raising issues of coherence of the EU's actorness. We, thus, have a multifaceted response to the ongoing contestation, which the Lisbon Treaty only began to coordinate within EU institutions. Ultimately, however, shifts in EU policies towards the neighbours have been largely reactive and driven by empirical events, such as the war in Georgia and the Arab

Spring (Maurer and Simão, 2013) more than by design, underlying the importance of context in agents' use of capital.

The article proceeds with the presentation of the conceptual framework linking the notion of the political and security, resorting to authors of political philosophy and sociology, such as Foucault and Bourdieu. It then moves on to see how these two notions have been articulated in the social field of European security and maps the competing agents and approaches, which are especially relevant to understand the EaP. It concludes with a final section on the dilemmas of politicising the EaP, from a security perspective, and what that entails for Waever's argument that the European community of non-war has been established through desecuritisation. This is followed by the conclusions.

The political moment and the search for security: irreconcilable processes?

Jenny Edkins starts her book on *Poststructuralism & International Relations: Bringing the Political Back in* by making a distinction between the concepts of 'political' and 'politics'. The author reads both concepts in light of Max Weber's notion of 'politics and bureaucracy' and links this to Zizek's work on 'the political and subjectivity'. From these perspectives, she sees politics as the daily management of decision-making by bureaucrats, the design and implementation of technologies of power and governance. This is a normalising process, designed to administer and order human communities (Edkins, 1999, p.19) and in that sense relates to Foucault's concept of governmentality and even biopolitics. Politics is also in charge of legitimising the prevailing order, but it does not question its origins, or the power struggles inherent to its development and maintenance. In order to understand these aspects and the construction of different subjectivities, one must look at the moment of the political (Edkins, 1999, p. 7). This is the moment when order breaks down and politics ceases to exist as previously established. In these crucial moments bureaucrats are no longer at the centre of the political process, but instead leadership is fundamental in order to redesign the frames of reference for the new social order that is about to take place. This is a relational process, and authority/leadership is recognised as legitimate as a result of its ability to provide meaning and structure to social relations, namely through discourse. This results in the establishment of new structures of politics, normalising life and constraining human

possibilities according to the new understandings of identity, belonging, power, and justice, which are valued by the political community (Edkins, 1999).

In order to illustrate this point, we can refer to the political moment in European Security, opened by the fall of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War. The established bureaucracies and norms had to be revised and adjusted to a new reality. NATO's central security role was contested, as was the understanding that security was largely a military, state-based affair. European integration, challenging the central role of the state in international affairs, and the movement towards broader understandings of security facilitated by policy makers and academics alike meant that new forms of social capital were now being promoted and recognised as valid and, in that process, new actors were allowed into the field of security, looking to establish new rules and hierarchies of power. Political leadership expressed by men and women like Gorbatchev (underlining cooperative security through the idea of a common European House), Gro Harlem Brundtland (striving for notions like sustainable development to be incorporated in global security governance efforts) or academics like Bary Buzan who strove for broader concepts of security. All of these actors used the opportunities provided by the new context to challenge existing views on security, to imprint new direction of action, and develop new structures to the field of global and European security.

In Bourdieu's terms, the political is the process through which new social fields are created and reshaped. Agency is a fundamental element in that it is through the activation of different forms of capital and their recognition by other agents in the field that power constellations and meanings are transformed (Bourdieu, 2004, p. 34). Villumsen Berling (2012) argues that the 1990s were a moment of active political contestation of the security field in Europe, which led to the emergence of new agents, but also to the valorisation of other forms of capital, besides the military, which had been at the centre of the Cold War understanding of security in the European continent (Buzan and Hansen, 2009, pp.156-183). She argues that think tanks and academic constructivist perspectives made their way onto the social field (Villumsen Berling and Bueger, 2013) and eventually contested NATO's military views. This notion of struggle within a given social field resonates with the creative moment (the moment of human possibility) inherent in the political, and contrasts with order, predictability, and knowledge, which are the founding stones of security, actively sought through politics.

Michael Dillon's work also sheds light onto this difficult relation between the political and security. According to Dillon (1996, p.6), the political should be the 'how' that allows human possibilities to develop; that allows human freedom to turn into possibilities. The reason why the political can be seen as contrary to security is because struggle and contestation, uncertainty and fear, inherent in the lack of a fixed structure of social meaning and order, and inherent in the moment of the political, are fundamentally at odds with security's desire for familiarity, predictability, stability, and knowledge. Dillon (1996, p. 17) goes as far as stating that today's "hypertrophic register of security" is a "monumental enterprise of power-knowledge" consuming all thought and all human life. Security is the ordering principle of modern civilization and the response to the human desire of order, truth, certainty, stability, and permanence, he argues. Security is thus fundamentally linked to the desire of all-encompassing knowledge and control over the unknown, over change, and the security endeavour seems to have been sequestered by politics, and its desire for preservation, order, and stability.

Security relations also take place in contexts of power asymmetries and hierarchies, inherent to the fields of action and meaning. This is relevant for several reasons. First, because power asymmetries allow established agents to reproduce and reinvent their capital (Villumsen Berling, 2012, p. 463), often not in the name of human freedom and justice (a cosmopolitan view of security), but as an automated process of self-preservation (an exclusivist communitarian view of security). New agents seeking to enter the field are thus constrained to comply with the existing views of order and security, especially if the forms of capital they can mobilise are either rejected or contested by more powerful agents. For instances, concerns with sovereignty and ethnic nationalist conflicts, which are still fundamental to many of the countries in the EU's borders, have reluctantly been addressed by the Union's foreign policy, partly because of how the EU and its members conceptualise security as deriving from a liberal democratic and capitalist order, which provides limited tools to address these forms of insecurity.

Secondly, power asymmetries are also important due to the subjective dimension of security and identity building. The production of authoritative/valid knowledge (security) rests upon a hierarchy of relations, placing certain agents and their discourses and perspectives at the centre and others at the margins of the system of belief, norms, and power (the fields, in boudieusian terms). We can thus conceive international security as a process of identity building, where the centre is perceived as having legitimate concerns

for action, whereas the margins have a legitimate obligation to contribute to the stability of the centre. This dimension reinforces power asymmetries, by defining security and insecurity as separate conditions and by prescribing a path out of insecurity that requires others to become like 'Us'. The secure 'Us' is the liberal democratic and capitalist West, whereas the insecure other is the violent and disordered periphery (Buzan and Hansen, 2009, p. 167) – a view proposed by two approaches to security developed in the post-Cold War context, namely the democratic peace theory and the two worlds theory.

However, as we have mentioned, the production of secure subjects implies the production of insecure ones. But it is in this shared essence of human condition, where we only know ourselves because we understand the insecurity of the other, that we can ambition to think security and insecurity together (Dillon, 1996, p. 19). This is a narrow window to overcome the apparently irreconcilable nature of the political and security, since the other cannot be totally unknown to us, as it is part of who we are and our identity can only make sense in relation with the other. "As William Connolly wisely observed: 'to redefine its relation to others, a constituency must also modify the shape of its own identity'" (Dillon, 1996, p. 3). Issues about the EU's identity have recurrently been related to its international security actorness, reflecting exactly this understanding. Ultimately, the fundamental question posed to European security, and which the concept of the political flushes out, is what type of political community is the EU, a major agent in the post-Cold War social field of European security, advancing? Is the EU focusing on a restrictive political and security community, with hard borders on the outside and exclusionary principles – what Richmond (2000, p. 54) has called a "communitarian model", or is the EU capable of conceptualising (in)security as an interdependent process, rooted in hybrid identities, reflecting what Booth (2005, 109) has called "ethical universalism or cosmopolitism"? In order to pursue the latter, the return of the political and the dismantling of the technologies of politics and governmentality, which constraint it, are fundamental. Nowhere is this need more visible than in present-day relations with Russia.

The social field of European security: redesigning the boundaries of the political

The previous section linked the political moment and the processes of politicisation to the definition of the boundaries and components of different social fields. We advance now to the analysis of the social field of European security, in order to understand what major

moments of politicisation and of depoliticisation have taken place. This competing game for authority in the shaping and structuring of the social field is the process through which we come to assess the development of the EaP and its contribution to European security.

The focus of analysis is thus on the struggle for a central stake in defining the "legitimate security logic in Europe" (Villumsen Berling, 2012, p. 462). This bourdieusian approach has parallels with Dillon's and Edkins' reading of the political, since it is fundamental to conceptualise a political process of open struggle for power, to be able to study how the new security order takes shape, how agency is exercised and how new norms come into existence, and how material resources are used. Bourdieu's theory of practice (Adler-Nissen, 2012; Adler and Pouliot, 2011), when applied to the field of European security, enlarges the focus of analysis to address the main struggles taking place and the means by which they are supported (Villumsen Berling, 2012, p. 462). What forms of capital are valued at a given moment and how is its use shaping a given field?

Since power distribution in the European field of security is uneven and the valorisation of a given capital (power) is relational, it is fundamental for an agent to be recognised by other authoritative agents as a legitimate player in the field. Legitimacy is derived from the valorisation of the capital, which the agent commands and to its access to the field. But there is an instrumental dimension, since agents who command certain forms of established capital in the field will perceive change as a form of survival. Villumsen Berling (2012, p. 469) underlines the strategic practice of conversion and redefinition of capital in fast-changing fields, as was the field of European security in the 1990s. Thus, she argues that, for instances, military power, which was valued during the Cold War as the most important source of capital (and legitimacy in the hierarchical structure of the field), was reinvented for humanitarian purposes, linking it to other forms of capital which began to be valorised.

With this process, agents which relied on military capital for authority within the field, such as NATO, the US, and Russia, needed to reposition themselves in the social field. The 1990s saw important changes in terms of the discursive valorisation of different forms of capital. Economic capital and soft power, linked to democratic norms and human rights, became more relevant. The peace dividend created the expectation that social progress, empowerment of the citizens, and cooperative relations would become the structuring features of the international system, and more specifically, of the European

context. Nationalism, sovereignty, and balance among great powers were largely marginalised as no longer relevant sources of security. As these forms of capital became valorised, new agents entered the field, and others remained outside of it. The EU was now perceived as a relevant actor for the provision of security, rooted in social stability, economic prosperity, and the promotion of norms and values. Other agents such as the Council of Europe and the OSCE became more prominent.

The European Union's enlargement was the most successful foreign policy tool of the EU, exactly because it provided irrefutable evidence that the EU's approach (and the types of capital that it promoted) were the most effective in providing security in the continent. The European Commission became a fundamental agent, by promoting a technocratic approach to geopolitical transformation. The roots of this approach are recognisable in Mitrany's functionalist approach to international relations, as a means to limit national states' power and shifting the subjectivity of international politics to international institutions. However, there remained a geopolitical motivation behind the processes of governmentality promoted by the EU, through which member states advanced their own interests (Moravcsik and Vachudova, 2003; Skàlnes, 2005). This also signalled the return to politics, as the bureaucrats assumed larger roles shaping the field of European security. Security in Europe was reconceived through the lenses of governmentality, through normalisation, regulation, oversight, and reform. This also had echoes of the global liberal agenda, which promoted good governance as a central element of conditionality for financial assistance packages of the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) and through the growing mechanisms of post-conflict statebuilding.

Throughout most of the 1990s, Russia's role in the social field of European security was rather marginal, both because military power was undervalued and because Russia was not capable of mobilising economic and normative resources of its own. Its most important contribution to European security was to the cease-fire agreements and management of the conflicts in the former-Soviet space, which the EaP is now confronted with. But these issues were hardly acknowledged as part of the European security agenda at the time and were mainly perceived as being part of a separate Eurasian security context, where Russia was granted tacit leadership and responsibility.

The 2000s saw the emergence of contradictory dynamics in the security field. Although military power had become less relevant during the previous decade, NATO nevertheless

remained a central actor, especially in Europe, both through its interventions in the Balkan wars and through its enlargement processes. Following 9/11, a fast remilitarisation of international relations pushed to the centre of the field the industrial military complexes and private security companies, creating pressure for domestic policing and militarisation, under the threat of terror (Dalby, 2003). Russia began a process of political and economic consolidation, which reverberated regionally and internationally. These contradictions and the powerful discourse on global terror opened the possibility for a new process of rapid hyper-securitization of many aspects of social and political life in Europe (and elsewhere) (Dillon, 2007).

The world became a geography of insecurities, in which the EU was an inspiring exception. This provided the Union with self-appointed additional responsibilities and legitimacy for normative and institutional expansion. The EU's big bang enlargement decided in Copenhagen, in 1993, was finalised in 2004 and with it the EU developed its neighbourhood policy, premised on the idea that the Union had a responsibility to share the benefits of enlargement beyond the new member states. Romano Prodi, the then-President of the European Commission was actively voicing this idea, present in many of the EU's official ENP documents. The European Security Strategy of 2003, designed by the EU High Representative for the ESDP, Javier Solana, extended this idea of a responsibility to participate actively in the promotion of security at a global level (Council of the EU, 2003). No doubt this vision of the need for a proactive EU, stabilising the countries in the neighbourhood, was shaped by the fears and insecurities associated with the global war on terror (Christou, 2010; Holm, 2004; Eder, 2011).

This new configuration of narratives, approaches, and instruments, pushed forward a delicate balance between military, economic, financial, and normative forms of capital, which were deeply intertwined. The political economy of security, using the tools of transnational liberalism and the opportunities of globalisation (Agnew, 1995), legitimised the bureaucratic expansion of democracy and ordered societies, based on the rule of law, and in the European case, by adopting EU regulations and norms, from the EU *acquis* – what Lavenex (2008; 2009) has called the externalisation of EU norms and governance. Agency in this process has been amplified, including the European Commission, but also agencies linked to the management of the EU's external border, member states, including the new ones for Central and Eastern Europe. The latter were particularly active in instigating the Commission and the fellow member states in developing the Eastern

partnership, making available financial and bureaucratic resources and building on the normative capital accumulated from their successful transitions.

Russia's role in the 2000s, however, changed considerably with the arrival of President Putin to the Kremlin. Russia was now endowed with the capital of political leadership at a time when the international political economy also valued Russia's natural resources, increasing energy interdependence between the EU and Russia and flooding it with financial resources. Based on a new-found pride, Russia sought to gradually command also normative power, promoting a multipolar world order and challenging the self-perceived benevolent nature of Western hegemony. The ultimate goal was to reposition Russia on the global scene as a great power, and in order to achieve that, control over the near abroad became a fundamental stepping stone (Freire 2011). This contrasted directly with the EU's Neighbourhood Policy, whereas anti-Russian sentiment, promoted by the new EU member states, created resentment in Moscow. The most visible moments when purposeful western action sought to unsettle Moscow's influence and promote the democracy-security nexus were the colour revolutions in Georgia and Ukraine, in 2003 and 2004 respectively. Russia sought to expose western support as a form of subversive action against the basic principles of sovereignty and non-interference in domestic affairs.

It is in this increasingly contested social field that the EaP comes about, as part of the EU's reaction to the war in Georgia, in 2008. This marks, in our view, a turning point in European security, which is now being continued in the current crisis in Ukraine. If on the one hand the EU's approach and vision of regional security continues to be deeply rooted in the promotion of governmentality, reform, and conditionality (the 'more for more' principle, benchmarking, reporting and monitoring); on the other hand, Russia has exposed the deeply hegemonic nature and this process and has successfully politicised what the EU sought to keep as a technocratic process. The next section looks in more detail to these dynamics, assessing the EaP's contribution to the reshaping of the European security order, and the challenges faced by the EU as it seeks to redefine security identities in this context.

The death of the political and the victory of politics: The EaP and European security

The European Neighbourhood Policy and the Eastern Partnership are marked by political ambiguity and conceptual deficiencies, causing a series of problems in EU relations with its neighbours. This is simultaneously a reflection of and is a constitutive part of the regional security environment in Europe, meaning that the positioning of the EU and its neighbouring countries in the regional and global structures of power and meaning are crucial to our understanding of the process. Moreover, a two level game is also in place, where domestic pressures influence external security relations.

The conceptual ambiguity of the ENP and the EaP rests essentially on the lack of a vision regarding the structuring of the pan-European space, which affects policy-making and identity-building processes. Richmond (2000, p. 43) argued that this ambiguity is also present in the process of EU enlargement, since it is not clear what drives the EU to enlarge: the desire to unite the European peoples; the construction of an economic bloc; the promotion of security through the political restructuring of the periphery, or through the economic development of these regions? Edwards (2008) identifies similar incoherencies in the development of the ENP, as different EU agents sponsored competing understandings of what the ENP might entail for regional security, and how it would reach such goals. How should regional approaches be reconciled with differentiation (Simão, 2013)? What legitimacy is there for conditionality in the absence of membership perspectives? How to redesign EU foreign policy in the pan-European context short of further enlarging?

Although the EaP sought to overcome some of these problems, it remains plagued with incoherencies. In order to strengthen differentiation, the EaP became a separate policy framework for Eastern neighbours, and their European identity was acknowledged, as well as some of the partners' European aspirations. The text of the Vilnius summit, signed in November 2013 is the most explicit in this regard, but the trend is visible since 2009. Despite the fact that ambiguity still persists, namely by not committing the EU to further enlargements, this has been a welcomed development. Another important development is the quality of EU positive incentives for reforms under the EaP. The EU has allocated significantly more funds than previously, and a new host of programmes, tools, and initiatives have made the EaP more dynamic, engaging non-state actors as stakeholders in the process in a less hierarchical and state-centred approach, which ultimately proved quite relevant in the case of Ukraine (although in the case of Armenia, for instances, it remained largely insignificant).

Despite these improvements, Korosteleva's analysis of the concept of partnership, promoted in the framework of the EaP, provides important clues to explain why the EaP remains a problematic tool for the promotion of an emancipating and ethical universalist view of security, as conceptualised by Booth (2005). Korosteleva (2011, p. 244 and p. 258, footnote 7) argues that the conceptual deficiencies of the original ENP still linger in the EaP. In her view, these include "a critically disincentivised form of partnership, which continues to be ill defined and EU-owned, thus causing further EU-isation of the region and so precipitating security dilemmas for the contested neighbourhood". Although the author does not explain how the security dilemmas develop from the EU-isation of EU policies towards its neighbours, this formulation seems to suggest that the fundamental problem is exactly related to the EU focus on security through governmentality and bureaucratic management, which is in itself a perpetuation of hegemonic, ahistorical, and apolitical dynamics. By conceptualising security in Europe as being dependent on the successful hegemonic domination of its vision of security, through democratic and liberal capitalist expansion, the Union falls into several complex dilemmas.

The first is related to the institutional and political limitations of further enlarging in a context of uncertainty about the meaning of the European integration project and economic and financial crisis. The second is the undemocratic and hegemonic nature of its project, reproducing imperial patterns of relations between centre and periphery, and what that entails for the development of political identities in Europe. This relates to the third dilemma, which is premised on the intersubjective nature of security, meaning that how each agent perceives its (in)security varies, as does what is worth securing. By promoting a model of security that values an ideal type of democracy and economic progress, the EU fails to acknowledge that *there is no* ideal type of democracy and economic development, that plurality of experiences of peaceful political management and political and social progress can be achieved and that any human (social and political) project needs to be historically contextualised (Fierke, [2007] 2012, p. 157-8).

Finally, a further challenge takes form in the way this EU project relates to competing visions of the pan-European security order. Whereas the end of the Cold War allowed the EU to become a predominant agent in the social field of European security and even to shape, with the US, global understandings of peace and security; the current context is one of competing multipolarity and rising powers, set on denouncing the hegemonic and imperialist features of this western-centric global order. Moreover, Russia is no longer a

weak actor, either regionally in Europe or globally, and has increasingly mobilised new forms of social capital to shape understandings of security. Although one should be cautious about attributing too much relevance to Russia as an explaining factor of the limitations of EU initiatives to provide regional security – essentially because it shifts the focus of attention from the EU's actions –, by bringing back the issue of military power to the agenda, Russia has sought to unsettle the EU's approach of de-securitisation and mobilise a form of social capital – the military – where major investments have been made by Moscow over the last decade, and where the EU still remains a limited actor. On the other hand, by insisting on a depoliticised view of regional security, the EU is increasingly perceived as being out of touch with the security concerns of its partners/neighbours, which continue to be premised in traditional and orthodox views of security, including challenges to their sovereignty, territorial integrity, ethnic nationalism, and institutional weakness.

Faced with these challenges, it is worth recovering Ole Waever's analysis of the development of the European security community, based on the EU. In his argument, Waever sets four stages of development of this community: insecurity and a drive for security through integration; this was followed by security and correspondent desecuritisation (and what he calls 'a-security'); the third stage is resecuritisation, but focusing on non-state referents of security, namely individuals and the European project itself; and finally, some form of a parallel process, where European integration is reinforced to avoid fragmentation, and national affirmation is accepted as a means to defend against integration (Waever, 1998, p. 91).

Of particular interest to our argument is the desecuritisation process. According to the Copenhagen School, desecuritisation means addressing issues as political rather than as an existential threat (Buzan, Waever and de Wilde, 1998). But what European integration has done is address issues through de-securitised and de-politicised, functional and technological approaches (Edkins, 1999). This foucaldian critique of technocratic governmentality is a claim for the return of the political. This is a major challenge to the EU way of doing politics in many subject areas, not least *vis-à-vis* its security. Edkins underlines that her understanding of depoliticisation is rather different from that of the Copenhagen School, since for her, desecuritisation of an issue, in order to bring it back to the realm of public policy, government management, and resource allocation is not the repoliticising an issue, but rather keeping it firmly away from the political and firmly in

the politics realm. As she puts it, "securitization is a further step in that direction, but for me that direction is one of depoliticization" (Edkins, 1999, pag. 11).

The process of resecuritisation identified by Waever, already in 1998, has meant that the political, as we have defined here, has been firmly removed from the EU's vision of security. Equated with uncertainty, disorder, underdevelopment, weak institutionalism, violent nationalism, the periphery of Europe has incarnated the vision of insecurity which contrasts with the very European identity the EU is promoting. Because desecuritisation has been wrongly perceived as an opportunity to institutionalise a hegemonic form of politics, rather than an opportunity for dialogue and inclusive politics in the pan-European context; the political struggle for influence in the definition of European security has been made through antagonistic processes and the recuperation of the military as a tool for security. Further undermining the credibility of the EU's (and western) security model is the drive for self-preservation, which is visible in many EU states and the undermining of supranational integration and solidarity, in the context of the current financial crisis. Both dynamics contain the seeds of future challenges to the EU's relevance for European security. External challenges will continue to antagonise EU views of security through governmantality and biopolitics, including challenges to the implementation of EaP Association Agreements, weakening its real and symbolic meaning, in the absence of membership perspectives. Internal divisions and the emergence of transnational nationalist and xenophobic movements, will further contribute to weakening the EU's normative image and its potentially positive impact in the development of new, more solidary, and emancipating forms of cosmopolitan communities.

These challenges, however, symbolise a struggle for repoliticisation of the European public space, also reflected in demands for stronger intra-EU democratic accountability of both the supranational and the intergovernmental processes. This is a clear opportunity for the Union to reinvent its security project along more inclusive lines, in which its neighbouring countries will be crucial elements. How the EU manages to institutionally include them in this new political moment is open for discussion (see the inspiring arguments by Kalypso Nikolaidis (2013) and Vivien Schmidt (2006), among others). Furthermore, how the EU balances pushes for remilitarisation, both from Russia and some of the EU's new member states, and its historical focus on civilian and normative instruments will further influence this drive for inclusive security policies. What seems certain is that the current way of projecting security through ordering and bureaucratic

politics will increasingly erode the EU's legitimacy as a relevant regional security actor and will fail to provide objective security in the European context.

Conclusion

This paper put forward new approaches to the study of European security, informed by post-structuralist perspectives on international politics and international security. The argument for using such approaches rests with the desire to understand the formative processes that shape the current European security order and to place the Eastern Partnership initiative of the EU in this framework. It is our contention that by doing this, we will be better prepared to identify the fundamental contradictions of this policy and its flaws. Considering the major ongoing crisis in Ukraine and the potentially devastating implications for the EU of continuing business as usual in its neighbourhood policy, this is a much welcomed reflection.

Building on an eclectic combination of authors from social theory and political sociology, namely Pierre Bourdieu's notions of social field and capital, as well as Michel Foucault's concept of governmentality, the paper used the concepts of politics and political to understand how security is being defined in Europe. By mapping the relevant agents in the "symbolic power struggles" underlying European security, and by identifying the forms of capital they mobilise in the process of restructuring of the European order, we were able to place the EU's policies towards its Eastern neighbours in the broader context of security restructuring in Europe. It became clear that the EU's promotion of a depoliticised form of politics resonates more with the maintenance of hegemonic and hierarchical forms of stability and order, than with partnerships and emancipating forms of security. This is problematic in many ways, not least due to the subjectivities it creates, but also because of the lack of objective results in providing security.

The current challenges to the EU-driven political order can either be perceived as a threat to the EU's way of promoting regional security, which would trigger a reinforcement of politics as usual in the EaP; or it could be perceived as an externally drive, but nevertheless relevant process of bringing the political back in to European security, proving the Union with an opportunity to redesign its security approach along more inclusive and emancipating forms of security and politics.

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