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Krzysztof Feliks Sliwinski

Hong Kong Baptist University, chris@hkbu.edu.hk

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‘A-securitization’ of immigration policy – the case of European Union.¹

Abstract

This paper draws on the ‘securitization’ thesis with regard to immigration policy of the European Union and its members. Contrary to existing literature, it is claimed that the current immigration crisis that the European Union faces is driven by an opposite dynamic, which produces ‘a-securitization’ – a phenomenon defined, in this paper, as a condition where important social phenomena are declared security irrelevant and consequently treated as such (both explicitly or implicitly).

The analysis of the ongoing debate leads the author to identify major actors (drivers) on the pro-immigration side, their institutional forms and principles to which they adhere. These actors include: national political elites, the EU and its institutions, multinational companies and mass media.

The thesis of ‘a-securitization’ is proposed as a theoretical explanation that allows us to account for a number of seemingly illogical phenomena taking place at the EU level and at national levels regarding both national and human security of European societies as well as a majority of immigrants.

Introduction

November 13th was yet another day in the life of a big European metropole. Paris was full of its usual hustle, with most people going about their daily routines. France had however been for some time conducting airstrikes on the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/ISIS). Moreover, the country had been on high alert since January 2015 attacks that killed 17 people in

¹ This paper was presented at the annual conference of the European Union Studies Association Asia-Pacific, Hong Kong, 29-30 June 2016.

Paris. (“Paris attacks” 2015) As the reaction of political leaders and European citizens clearly showed, nothing could prepare Parisians for the tragedy that unfolded around 9 pm CET.

On that day, 130 people lost their lives in a series of considerably primitive terrorist attacks carried out by 9 terrorists in a number of venues around the city, from the prestigious Stade de France through various streets to Boulevard Voltaire and the Bataclan Theatre. Quite expectedly, to demonstrate resolve, President François Hollande declared the attacks to be an act of war - un acte de guerre (“Hollande: ‘C'est un acte de guerre’” 2015) along with the introduction of temporary border checks. Shortly afterwards, France launched the biggest airstrike as its contribution to the anti-ISIL bombing campaign, under the code name Opération Chammal (<http://www.defense.gouv.fr/operations/irak-syrie/dossier-de-presentation-de-l-operation-chammal/operation-chammal>).

The November 13th terrorist attacks are said to be the deadliest attacks on France since World War II. They were, however, but a chapter in a grim and discouraging book of counterterrorism endeavors as carried out by western societies against religiously motivated killings. The opening salvo that led to the so-called War on Terror was, as we all know, 9/11 (nine-eleven, the shorthand reference to the terrorist attack on the Twin Towers in New York city, that occurred on that date). The Madrid train bombings of 2004 and the London 2005 bombings are more often than not added to the ever-growing list of terrorist acts against Western societies.

The nature of the attacks in Paris, as well as those in Madrid and London, and more importantly, the identities of the attackers, prompted policy-makers and counterterrorism experts to face one of their worst nightmares. These attacks were in most cases carried out by French, Spanish and British nationals respectively. Since the terrorist threat consequently now comes from within as well as from outside of Europe, it begs the question that relates to possible links between immigration policies in the EU and security.

This paper addresses such links in a rather unorthodox manner. Drawing on the ‘securitization’ theorem put forward by the Copenhagen School of Security Studies, it looks at the current security environment in the EU with regard to immigration policies. The major argument introduced in the paper is about strong links between security and immigration.

Security here is understood not only as a state-related phenomenon but also as an individual-centered one. Arguably, terrorism fuses to some extent traditional (realist) and

postpostivist understandings of security inasmuch as it affects safety of a number of referent objects from states to societies and to individuals, albeit differently.

Immigration is defined broadly as a movement of people who come into a country of which they are not natives for permanent residence (Webster Dictionary).¹ In this sense, the latest immigration waves that reached Europe in the summer of 2015 and 2016 are considered a continuation of an ongoing trend rather than outstanding and ‘game-changing’ events.²

Another caveat needs to be introduced: this paper does not argue that all immigrants or all aspects of immigration policies are equally related to national and individual security. It is not the intention of the author to suggest that European security services and policy makers should take a U-turn in their approach to immigration. Nor does the author contend that there is no genuine need for Europeans to engage in the face of an ongoing humanitarian crisis in the Middle East or any other part of the world. What is asserted however is that the latest immigration waves to Europe are seen by European societies and European political elites as largely irrelevant to security both at the state and at individual levels.

The first part of the paper revisits the ‘securitization’ thesis of the Copenhagen School of Security, offering a brief literature review of the prevailing approach among scholars, who identify immigration policies of numerous countries as a ‘victim’ of the securitization process. The second part addresses the immigration policy of the whole EU and therefore sketches the contextual environment for the analysis that follows.

The main part of the paper analyses major actors (drivers) from the pro-immigration side, their institutional forms and principles to which they adhere. For the purpose of this paper, major actors involved in the immigration debate are national political elites, the EU and its institutions, multinational companies (MNCs) and mass media. Based on the interactions that take place among them, a phenomenon that seems to feature prominently in the European security environment is identified and analyzed, and the notion of ‘a-securitization’ is proposed to denote and ascribe the immigration-security relation.

In the conclusion, an argument is put forward that ‘a-securitization’ stems from political processes that revolve around the left-right ideological competition. At the same time, the author realizes that the proposed ‘a-securitization’ model is only a general reference. Its utility will differ from country to country. The drivers of ‘a-securitization’, although playing similar roles in

most democratic societies, differ in character and are subject to particular institutional arrangements and political cultures.

Securitization thesis of the Copenhagen School of Security Studies

The securitization theorem derives from the work of Ole Wæver (2011). It refers to the discursive construction of threat. According to Wæver (Copenhagen School of Constructivism), securitization can be defined as a process in which an actor declares a particular issue, dynamic or actor to be an ‘existential threat’ to a particular referent object. If accepted as such by a relevant audience, it enables the suspension of normal politics and the use of emergency measures in response to that perceived crisis.

Security in that sense is a site of negotiation between speakers and audiences, albeit one conditioned significantly by the extent to which the speaker enjoys a position of authority within a particular group. As such, securitization is context related, so it involves articulation of the threat only from a specific place, in an institutional voice, by elites.

According to the ‘Welsh School’ of critical security studies, ‘desecuritization’ (a process contrary to ‘securitization’) would leave security as a formidable tool in the hands of state elites, a tool that carries a high potential for disregarding all other referent objects than states or political regimes. Instead, proponents of the Welsh School propose ‘politicizing security’, a move that would bring security related issues (relating to numerous referent objects) back in to the mainstream of standard public scrutiny – typical to democratic regimes. As Ken Booth (protagonist of the emancipation thesis) asserts: “Security is what we make of it. It is an epiphenomenon intersubjectively created. Different worldviews and discourses about politics deliver different views and discourses about security.” (Booth, 1997)

Immigration policies in Europe and elsewhere are often depicted as examples of typical securitization phenomena in practice. Referring to the British case, Williamson and Khiabany (2010) assert: “[...] in mainstream accounts of the hijab in recent years and, especially, since Straw’s intervention in 2006, the issue is framed as a matter of life and death, in which a minority is not only putting the security of Britain at risk but is threatening the very existence of Britain and British ‘culture’.”

Similarly Seidman-Zager (2010) claims that: “Despite the frequent inability on the part of the public to distinguish between refugees and asylum seekers (Hobson et al. 2008), efforts at securitization appear to be largely directed towards asylum seekers rather than refugees.” Consequently, his paper focuses primarily on the effects of the securitization of asylum seekers.

In his seminal study, *Globalised (in)Security: the Field and the Ban-opticon*, Didier Bigo (2008) analyses the evolution of the notion of EU ‘internal security’ and asserts that it has considerably expanded both in the geographical scope and domain. He warns us strongly against this phenomenon: “The consequence of this extension of the definition of internal security at the European level is that it puts widely disparate phenomena on the same continuum — the fight on terrorism, drugs, organized crime, cross-border criminality, illegal immigration — and to further control the transnational movement of persons, whether this be in the form of migrants, asylum seekers or other border-crossers — and even more broadly of any citizen who does not correspond to the *a priori* social image that one holds of his national identity (e.g. the children of first-generation immigrants, minority groups). Control is thus enlarged beyond the parameters of conventional crime control measures and policing of foreigners, to also include control of persons living in zones labelled ‘at risk’ where inhabitants are put under surveillance because they correspond to a type of identity or behavior that is linked to predispositions felt to constitute a risk.”

In his work, Jef Huysmans (2006) demonstrates how the distribution and administration of fear creates a security issue with regard to immigration, especially refugees and asylum seekers in the European Union. The fundament of the EU – common market is supposedly the key area where the European integration process interacts with migration. “The assumption is that abolishing internal border controls and facilitating transnational flows of goods, capital, services and people will challenge public order and the rule of law. This link has been constructed so successfully that it has obtained the status of common sense.”

Much along the same lines, Alexandra Innes (2010) emphasizes: “In other words, alienating an ‘out-group’ especially if that out-group is within the state territory, solidifies the identity of the ‘in-group’ and this phenomenon is apparent in the securitization of migration within the European Union. Furthermore, difference is traditionally hierarchical; for instance, in

the example of European discourse, ‘difference was equated with inferiority and similarity with equality’.”

Matt McDonald (2005), referring to the Australian case, points out that 2001 was a turning point in the official attitude towards asylum-seekers in the country. “In 2001, the Australian government defined boatloads of asylum seekers as potentially undermining Australian sovereignty, and discussed responses to the ‘problem’ of asylum-seekers using the language of ‘border protection’ and ‘deterrence’. This conception of asylum-seekers positioned security in realist terms, wherein the nation-state was in need of being protected from external threats to its territorial integrity.” He concludes that alternative security discourses are always possible, in which case public mobilization seems to be the key, especially when or if US foreign imperatives are not implicated.

Finally, Dimitris Skleparis (2015) demonstrates how illiberal practices with respect to the control and management of immigration become ‘normalized’, especially on the fringes of the EU. He argues that this ‘normalization’ of illiberal practices is in itself a simple consequence of the functioning of the transnational field of (in)security professionals who compete to influence the definition of security as well as control and manage immigration.

Immigration policies in the EU – structural underpinnings

Back in 2009, EU Member States confirmed the need for a common EU-wide migration policy that would include regulations on visas and immigration. The legal basis of the EU approach in this regard is embedded in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. [This need was first recognized in the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 (Title VI, Provisions on the Cooperation in the Fields of Justice and Home Affairs, Article K.1 – K.9), now Title V, Chapter 2, TFEU]. It includes: entry and residence conditions for migrants; procedures for issuing long-term visas and residence permits; the rights of migrants living legally in an EU country; tackling irregular immigration and unauthorized residence; the fight against human trafficking; agreements on the re-admission of citizens returning to their own countries; and incentives and support for EU countries to promote the integration of migrants.³ To date, common measures include: EU-wide rules that allow citizens of countries outside the EU to work or study in an EU country; EU-wide rules that allow citizens of countries outside the EU who are staying legally in an EU country

to bring their families to live with them and/or to become long-term residents; and shared visa policies that enable non-EU citizens to travel freely for up to 3 months within Europe's single travel zone, the Schengen area. (Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom are not parties to common rules due to their opt-out on case-by-case bases.)

These general rules have been elaborated on by the European Commission in its Communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions (A Common Immigration Policy for Europe: Principles, actions and tools). The communication spells out 10 principles that supposedly provide for a flexible framework addressing EU countries' particular circumstances. These are included under three broad themes: prosperity, solidarity and security. As for the last theme, the Commission focused mainly on illegal immigration, internal security of the Schengen area, integrated border management and 'zero' tolerance for trafficking in human beings. Finally, effective and sustainable return policies are mentioned. All of these points are further elaborated by more detailed bullet points. As with many such documents, it seems more like wishful thinking, a shopping list of sorts, rather than a public policy document detailing practical tools that are to be used in order to actually achieve a desired effect.

In addition, EU member states apply their own national immigration rules according to which each country can decide: the total number of migrants that can be admitted to the country to look for work; all final decisions on migrant applications; rules on long-term visas – stays for periods longer than three months; and conditions to obtain residence and work permits when no EU-wide rules have been adopted.⁴

As of March 2016, Europe has experienced an influx of over a million asylum seekers (with more expected to come in the spring and summer of 2016), something considered even by mainstream media to be the biggest immigration crisis in Europe's history (Financial Times, 2015), perhaps even the greatest ever challenge to its political stability in both the short and long term. Greece and Hungary feel overwhelmed and cannot cope with big numbers of immigrants, while most members of the Schengen Area have unilaterally suspended Schengen rules for a limited time at various sections of their national borders (55 suspensions as of 9 June 2016).⁵

To address the crisis, EU heads of state or government convened an emergency summit with Turkey, seen as a key player given its geographical location and political and military

involvement in Syrian war. According to the agreement reached on 7 March 2016 (which comes at a price of around six billion euros plus a number of other commitments on the part of the EU), all new irregular migrants crossing from Turkey into the Greek islands are to be returned with the costs covered by the EU. Additionally, the EU agreed that for every Syrian readmitted by Turkey from the Greek islands, they would settle another Syrian from Turkey to the EU Member States (Statement of the EU Heads of State or Government, 07/03/2016). In the meantime, asylum seekers keep coming in and human tragedy unfolds in numerous places inside and outside the EU. Those who make it to Europe oftentimes face difficult realities due to lack of organization and financial capabilities of the local authorities. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) “Although the Greek authorities and military have ramped up their response, thousands are sleeping in the open without adequate reception, services, aid or information. With tensions mounting, the situation could escalate quickly into a full-blown crisis.” (UNHCR, 2016)⁶

Worse still, according to the International Organization for Migration, from the beginning of 2016 up to 17 May 2016, there has been a record number of 1,357 dead or missing immigrants who tried to access European shores via the Mediterranean (IOM, Mediterranean Update. Migration Flows Europe: Arrivals and Fatalities). More tragically, as of June 2016, since the beginning of 2014, the number of people who lost their lives in the pursuit of security totaled 9,492 (IOM, Missing Migrants Project, Mediterranean Sea). These numbers are likely to grow.

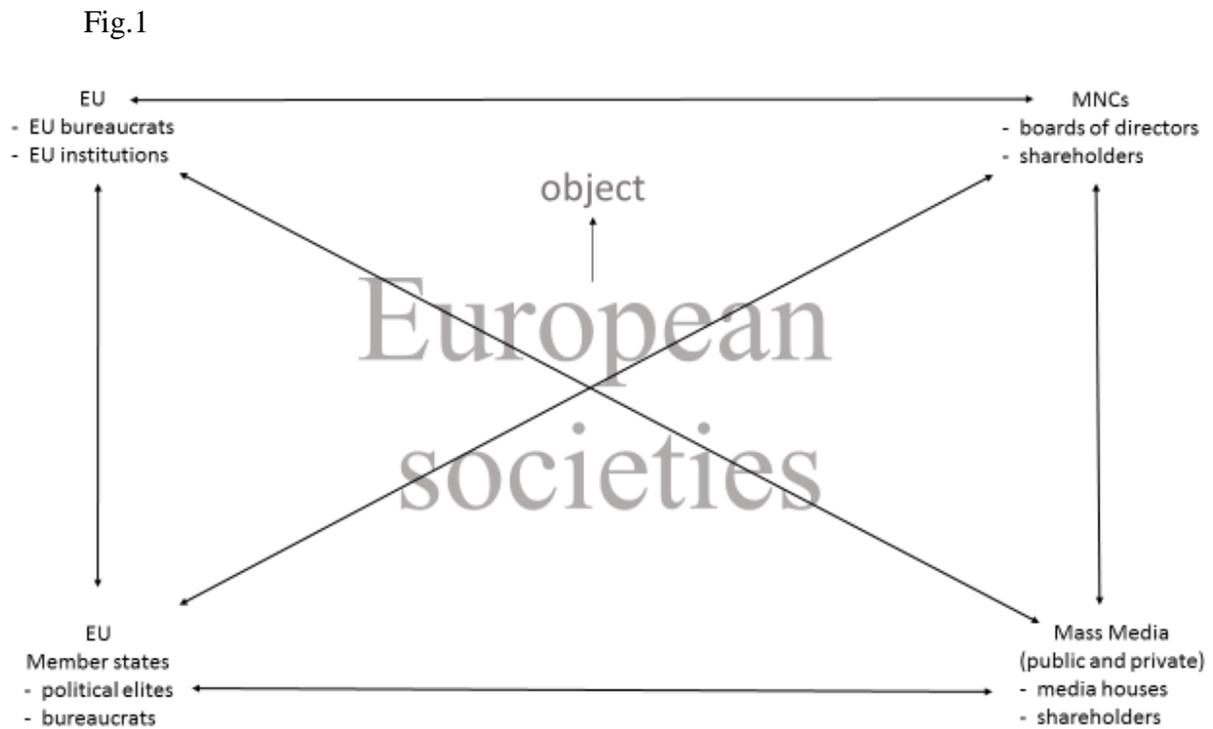
‘A-securitization’ phenomenon

This paper proposes the notion of ‘a-securitization’ as an attempt to account for a seemingly inexplicable lack of security concerns or a very low profile thereof in current public debate concerning the latest waves of immigration to the European Union. The notion of ‘a-securitization’ is based on a model that identifies four major groups of drivers who stand behind the phenomenon while at the same time benefitting from it in their own respective ways.

It is suggested that the phenomenon of ‘a-securitization’, defined as a condition where important social phenomena are declared security irrelevant and consequently treated as such (both explicitly or implicitly), derives from the dynamics that in the European context take place between four sets of actors.

This part of the paper will identify the drivers (actors) of ‘a-securitization’ and elaborate on major principles to which they adhere.

As Figure 1 indicates, starting from the top left, the European Union as an institution is understood to be one of the drivers of ‘a-securitization’. By “European Union”, the author specifically means EU bureaucrats, perhaps with the exception of those working in security related fields, and most EU bodies, such as the European Parliament, the European Commission, the Council of the European Union, the Court of Justice of the European Union and the European Council. These actors subscribe to a number of values and principles, some of which are especially relevant regarding the current immigration crisis.



Among the values that lie at the foundations of European integration, human rights feature prominently. Article 2 of the Consolidated Version of the Treaty on the European Union explicitly states: “The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons

belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail.” (Consolidated Version of the Treaty on the European Union, 2012)

‘Ever closer union’ is understood to be the underlying value of the process of European integration. It is to be found in preambles to both core functional treaties of the European Union (the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union). In practice, ever closer union is more often than not identified as within the context of federalism. (Schout & Wolff, 2010)

Going clockwise to the right in Figure 1, one locates Multinational Companies (MNCs) with their boards of directors and fragmented shareholders. As private for-profit entities, MNCs participate in the market mostly to optimize the processes of production and maximize profit. This has been in recent years facilitated mainly through the neo-liberal politics of deregulation of financial markets and marketization.

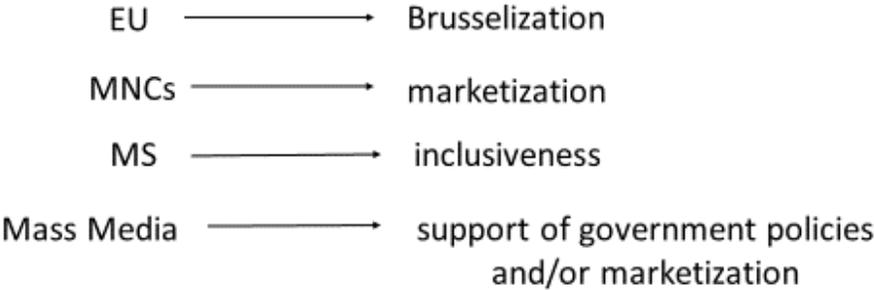
The left bottom corner lists national governments, which except for some notable exceptions like the UK or Czech Republic, have been overall EU-enthusiastic, in some cases (Germany or Belgium) openly calling for the establishment of political union, which in effect would be tantamount to a European federation.⁷ Apart from bureaucrats working in various branches and levels of national governments, political elites play a special role leading their societies towards proclaimed goals. Interestingly, the last few decades have seen a prevailing role of social democrats and liberals at the helm of many European societies. As such, social democrats consider themselves progressive as far as moral values are concerned, which consequently makes them vehement promoters of equality regardless of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation.

Finally, the right bottom corner of Figure 1 reveals the mass media. Ever since Marshall McLuhan and Quentin Fiore’s seminal study “*The Medium is the Massage: An Inventory of Effects*”, we are aware of the role of the mass media in contemporary developed societies. Volumes have been published since then on the role of the mass media in upholding civil society and democratic standards by preparing the grounds for participatory society. (Lipset, 1981) Mass media also play a crucial role in the ‘a-securitization’ model. Regardless of their ownership structure (public or private), most of the so-called ‘mainstream’ mass media need to play by

demanding market rules, at the same time performing the control function on democratically elected governments. However, market realities more often than not limit their free and objective inquiry. As such, most mainstream mass media are either pro-government or, especially if privately owned, simply pro-market. Media houses and shareholders are heavily engaged in constructing narratives that would either support government public policy (the case of Germany is a good example) (Ciaglia, 2013) or advance the arguments of proponents of either more or less incorporation of marketization into all spheres of social life. (Chrisman, 2013)

Figure 2 lists major drivers/actors of ‘a-securitization’ and prime values they subscribe to regarding the case of ‘a-securitization’.

Fig.2



The following part of the paper will explore the dynamics that take place between actors so identified. This will serve as an explanatory framework for the ‘a-securitization’ phenomenon.

- **EU and EU member states**

This dynamic is of particular importance for a number of reasons. Firstly, it is EU member states and EU member states only, as often emphasized by intergovernmentalists, that are uniquely powerful: they exercise legal sovereignty and political legitimacy. (Hoffman, 1966) In essence, this translates into a specific status under international law and (especially in the case of the EU) a democratic process that leads to the creation of governments, defined as representatives of societies in international relations. We cannot but notice that these two features give national governments a rather special standing vis-a-vis the European Union, Multi-National Companies or the media. The ongoing debate among many scholars and commentators regarding the so-called ‘democratic deficit’ of the EU draws precisely on this.

Secondly, the EU as an institution is also a unique form of particularly intensive cooperation, which, depending on the policy, is seen as either supranational or intergovernmental. (Nugent, 2010) It could be understood as an ‘organization plus’, since it basically combines features of confederal and supranational models of governance. As such, it is often referred to as a special case *sui generis* institution, which sets an example for successful, peaceful cooperation between formal enemies, capable of providing not only security but also prosperity. This is of paramount importance, as it has given the EU special legitimacy as an actor in international politics to set agendas and influence processes.

In the context of ‘a-securitization’ one identifies a number of intertwined phenomena that create a particular dynamic as depicted by Fig. 1. In particular, this paper lists four such phenomena, namely: the role of the European Commission (EC) and its secondary legislation, the role of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) and its rulings, the decreasing role of states defined in terms of nationally defined and sovereign actors in the process of European integration, and finally, the established class of European bureaucrats and their interests.

The role of the European Commission has been fluctuating over the last couple of decades. On the one hand, one sees its growth, based on two interrelated phenomena: the growing number of Communities/EU policies and statutory powers embedded in major treaties. On the other hand, it has been seen as declining in its powers due to a number of factors, such as loss of ‘pioneering’ status, increasing influence of the European Council or the growing importance of the use of new modes of governance rather than the ‘community method’. (Nugent,

2010) In any case, the European Commission is again a unique institution in that it: “It represents the interests of the European Union as a whole (not the interests of individual countries).” (European Commission)⁸ It rests with the EC to identify European interests with respect to proposed legislation and enforcement of EU Law, to set agendas for managing and implementing EU policies and the budget, and finally to represent the Union outside Europe (negotiating trade agreements between the EU and other countries, for example).⁹

In the case of immigration the EC has been particularly active in recent years. By virtue of their offices, President Jean-Claude Juncker; Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship Dimitris Avramopoulos; High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (Vice-President of the Commission) Frederica Mogherini; and Commissioner for Better Regulation, Inter-institutional Relations, the Rule of Law and the Charter of Fundamental Rights Frans Timmermans have been outspoken supporters of an inclusive approach to immigration.¹⁰

The EC’s own communication and legislation, which is rather voluminous, is based on a *European Agenda on Migration* as established on 13th of May 2015.¹¹ As such, the document is based on four pillars: reducing irregular migration, securing external borders of the EU, implementing the Common European Asylum Policy and reviewing the existing policy on migration. Consequently, as of the writing of this paper, the EC had just issued a proposal for a regulation on establishing the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an application for international protection – also known as Dublin reform.¹² Since the initial Dublin regime put excessive strain on countries of arrival such as Italy and Greece, this proposal aims at ensuring “fair sharing of responsibilities between Member States by complementing the current system with a corrective allocation mechanism. This mechanism would be activated automatically in cases where Member States would have to deal with a disproportionate number of asylum seekers.”¹³ In particular, the proposal introduces a ‘corrective allocation mechanism’ (CAM) based on two criteria: the size of the population and the total GDP of a Member State.¹⁴ More interestingly the proposal includes an alarming paragraph referring to financial solidarity. Accordingly, in the words of the document, “A Member State of allocation may decide to temporarily not take part in the corrective mechanism for a twelve-month period. [...] Thereafter the applicants that would have been allocated to that

Member State are allocated to the other Member States instead. The Member State which temporarily does not take part in the corrective allocation must make a solidarity contribution of EUR 250,000 per applicant to the Member States that were determined as responsible for examining those applications.”¹⁵

What this means in practice is that member states that for some reason do not wish to share the burden of receiving immigrants/refugees would be punished financially. This echoes earlier proposals made by the commission leading to the establishment of a permanent relocation mechanism amid calls by Jean-Claude Juncker (2015) for “more Europe in EU’s asylum policy and more Union in EU’s refugee policy”.

The President of the European Commission has recently made far reaching comments regarding the role of national representatives in EU decision-making bodies, allegedly suggesting that they should in fact “stop listening so much to their voters and instead act as ‘full time Europeans’.”(The Telegraph, 2016) Perhaps in Belgium such comments are welcomed, but in the UK and most countries in so-called post-communist central and Eastern Europe, they created quite some furor, as it would be tantamount to breaking constitutions.¹⁶

Equally important in this regard is the growing role of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU). As a similarly supranational institution, the CJEU has established itself over the years as more than just a judiciary body. Through its rulings it has effectively shaped two basic characteristic of European law: the primacy of what is now EU law (then, EC law) and the direct effect principle based on *Costa/Enel* (Case 6/641) and *Van Gend en Loos* (Case 26/62) respectively. Recently, the Treaty of Lisbon confirmed the primacy (supremacy) of EC law over national law in its declaration on Article 55(2) of the Treaty on European Union.¹⁷ (One should acknowledge however that the recognition of the primacy of EC law is included not in the treaty itself but in the declaration attached to it.)

The declining role of states defined as nationally based political communities functioning in an international system established on the principle of sovereignty is yet another relevant phenomenon. Fueled by the processes of globalization and rooted in economic liberalism, the contemporary international environment effectively limits the role of democratically elected governments meant to represent the interests of the societies they govern. In this context, European integration processes themselves, also constructed on liberal economic principles, have

irreversibly (as some claim) changed the political nature of EU member states. Whether neo-functionalists or liberal inter-governmentalists, we cannot but notice that the EU has profoundly changed the policymaking landscape in Europe. The application of the ordinary legislative procedure (OLP) (formerly the co-decision procedure) has been extended in the last decades to more areas of EU competence. OLP is significant as it gives equal weight to European Parliament (supranational body) and to the Council of EU (intergovernmental body). Its Qualified Majority Voting (QMV) in the Council of Ministers was adopted for a number of reasons, but its supranational character is beyond doubt in the context of decision-making.

Finally, the ‘commonwealth’ of European bureaucrats (European civil servants, as this group wants to be called) (Dallison, 2016) share the sense of unique ‘European’ status and see themselves as exponents of fundamental ‘European’ values such as peace, security, prosperity and human dignity. This group is mainly composed of the EU’s own bureaucrats and those members of nationally based political elites, whose work involves close cooperation with the EU. As an example, one sees constantly rising salaries of this group amid the Euro crisis, something greeted with unease especially by the Eurosceptic media. (The Economist, 2010) Scholars have studied this phenomenon and identified two interrelated phenomena present in most organizations that are relevant to the matter at hand, namely processes of institutionalization and socialization.

As Benett (1997), Walt (1997) and McCalla (1996) assert, such bureaucracies are actors in their own right with some degree of autonomy and an inherent interest in perpetuating themselves (institutionalization). McCalla further claims (originally referring to alliances) that such actors may actively resist change. They tend to affirm the necessity of the organization or even try to manage change by promoting modifications the organization’s roles and missions. Such modifications will change member state support while not threatening the organization’s core functions. Socialization stems from substantial contacts among political elites through their regular meetings. These meetings will facilitate international civil servants with a platform to cultivate a sense of community among elites and attentive publics through their pronouncements and lobbying activities (Duffield, 2008).

Amid an ongoing migration crisis, the European Commission, the European Parliament and some political leaders of EU member states have been openly calling for ‘more Europe’,

referring to more powers for supranational institutions and common asylum policy (Juncker, 2015).

- **EU vs. EU member states vs. Multi-National Companies – the marketization of politics**

Since the 1980s and the deregulation of financial markets agenda, an observable trend has been for states to withdraw from their function and effectively outsource their capabilities to private, for-profit companies. This trend has been referred to as ‘post-democracy’. (Crouch, 2004) “The idea of post-democracy helps us describe situations when boredom, frustration and disappointment have settled in after a democratic moment; when powerful minority interests have become far more active than the mass of ordinary people in making the political system work for them; where political elites have learned to manage and manipulate popular demands; and where people have to be persuaded to vote by top-down publicity campaigns. This is not the same as non-democracy, but it describes a period in which we have, as it were, come out the other side of the parabola of democracy.”

The clear winner in the post-democratic world according to Crouch is the global firm. Naturally, its role and influence will take diverse forms in different EU member states. The Anglo-Saxon model, with a strong concentration of power in the hands of a CEO, responsible only to shareholders, is a rather extreme form. Continental western members of the EU, Scandinavian members of the EU or newly admitted post-communist countries will vary greatly in this regard. Yet the currently negotiated Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) between the EU and the United States has already raised huge controversies for a number of reasons, most of them regarding the rising power of MNCs and the diminishing power of governments and consumer protections. (The Independent, 2015)

Similarly Henry Giroux (2016) claims that Neoliberalism “as a mode of governance, produces identities, subjects and ways of life free of government regulations, driven by a survival of the fittest ethic, grounded in the idea of the free, possessive individual and committed to the right of ruling groups and institutions to accrue wealth removed from matters of ethics and social costs. As a policy and political project, neoliberalism is wedded to the privatization of public services, the selling off of state functions, the deregulation of finance and labour, the elimination

of the welfare state and unions, the liberalization of trade in goods and capital investment and the marketization and commodification of society. As a form of public pedagogy and cultural politics, neoliberalism casts all dimensions of life in terms of market rationality.”

Processes of globalization fundamentally shape the contemporary political environment. They impose marketization logic in a rather remorseless manner. Consequently, national governments find themselves increasingly helpless at trying to strike both external and internal balance. This is especially relevant in case of the Eurozone, which, at the time of writing, still has not recovered from the crisis. The European Central Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank have become key regulatory bodies in the contemporary economy most of the time pushing national governments to implement austerity measures (as in the case of Greece, Spain or Portugal) and advocating even more deregulation of the financial markets that benefits only the biggest market players against the interests of societies at large. (Stiglitz, 2012)

In this context, the European immigration crisis seems strangely peculiar when understood in economic terms. Interestingly, one of the major arguments as put forward by the proponents of the 2015 (and its continuation in 2016) immigration wave to Europe rests on an economic foundation. Productivity is then used as a key criterion when addressing the declining effectiveness of economic output in Europe amid the ageing problem (Fuchs, 2005), caused by declining reproduction ratios all around the EU. In simple terms, Europeans need more and more cheap labour for their factories and service-oriented enterprises, a phenomenon with which historians are all too familiar regarding the economic migration to Europe between 1958 and 1972. (Koikkalainen, 2011)

Interestingly, economic-based argumentation that supports the influx of immigration to Europe is very similar to arguments published by George Soros (2015) on the website of Project Syndicate. Soros proposed a six-point plan for Europe (as of 26 Sept 2015) that in its sixth point postulates: “First, the EU has to accept at least a million asylum-seekers annually for the foreseeable future. And, to do that, it must share the burden fairly [...] Adequate financing is critical. The EU should provide €15,000 (\$16,800) per asylum-seeker for each of the first two years to help cover housing, health care, and education costs – and to make accepting refugees more appealing to member states. It can raise these funds by issuing long-term bonds using its largely untapped AAA borrowing capacity, which will have the added benefit of providing a

justified fiscal stimulus to the European economy.” According to Soros, states alone do not have the capacity to meet such goals which is why they should effectively outsource some of its functions: “Finally, to absorb and integrate more than a million asylum seekers and migrants a year, the EU needs to mobilize the private sector – NGOs, church groups, and businesses – to act as sponsors. This will require not only sufficient funding, but also the human and IT capacity to match migrants and sponsors.”

These arguments are constantly repeated by numerous pro-immigration European politicians, who look for immigration as a tool to address economic stagnation. Accidentally, when the first wave of immigrants finally arrived in Germany (after German Chancellor Angela Merkel declared Germany’s openness to immigration), German companies such as: BASF SE had their booths established along the borders to quickly offer jobs to any skilled individuals. (The Wall Street Journal, 2015)

The Guardian announced that Philippe Legrain, a former economic adviser to the president of the European commission, allegedly calculated that “while the absorption of so many refugees will increase public debt by almost €69bn (£54bn) between 2015 and 2020, during the same period refugees will help GDP grow by €126.6bn – a ratio of almost two to one.” (The Guardian, 2016) According to the report from the Tent Foundation and Open Political Economy Network, as published on May 18, 2016, – “Investing one euro in welcoming refugees can yield nearly two euros in economic benefits within five years.” (Refugees Work: A Humanitarian Investment that Yields Economic Dividends, 2016)

Along similar lines, Romin Khan, an expert on immigration policy for service-sector union Verdi, allegedly claims: "A residency status with permission to work shouldn't just be an option for highly qualified people. It should also be available to applicants who want to come here to train for a job. [...] asylum applicants should have access to the labor market - and not just recognized refugees." Seconding him, Wido Geis, immigration and labour market expert at the German Economic Institute in Cologne, points out that, “given the demographic changes facing Germany at the moment, such an attitude is very desirable.” (Deutsche Welle, 2015a)

Consequently, it seems logical that EU member states such as Luxembourg, Germany or the Netherlands are not happy with the application of the EU-Turkey agreement of 19 March 2016. As media report, Turkey seems to be sending their way the least educated and skilled individuals while retaining those that are economically valuable. (Demircan, 2016) Interestingly enough, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan of Turkey warned on 24 May 2016 that Turkish Parliament would block legislation related to the EU-Turkish agreement of 19 March 2016 if Ankara was not granted its key demand of visa-free travel. (EurActiv.com, 2016a)¹⁸ In light of recent events in Turkey i.e. unsuccessful military coup, one should expect the stance of Ankara to harden in the future.

Referring to states unilaterally reintroducing border controls, including Germany, Reiner Hoffmann, Head of the Federation of German Trade Unions (DGB), warned, “Open internal borders are the lifeblood of the European economy. They must not be blocked.” (EurActiv.com, 2016b). These few but important examples, well depict the general attitude of many economists and many EU citizens. In a nutshell, economically based argumentation in favour of immigration to Europe can be divided into two kinds: exclusive and inclusive. The former, will focus on added value that skilled immigrants will allegedly bring to European economies. The latter, will underline negative effects of limiting the freedom of movement as cornerstone of European single market.

These arguments are importantly disseminated by all kinds of mass media i.e. broadcast, digital, outdoor and print media as well as public speaking and event organization. In particular, the debate concerning immigration to Europe is heavily influenced by the so-called mainstream mass-media that in many cases support the governments’ immigration policies taking a stance in an ongoing ideological confrontation.

- **Mass media – between money and politics**

The final element in the securitization model is constituted by the mass media. In the contemporary world, the mass media play an increasingly important role, combining a number of functions, from controlling politicians to upholding democratic values (in democratic systems) to more mundane roles, such as money making.

As these functions present demands that more often than not clash with one another, the effect is likely to be a simple lack of objectivity and decrease in quality. As Curran and Seaton (2010) acutely observe: “Competition for readers and viewers, like the competition for advertisers that underlies the need to boost sales and ratings, reduces the resources available for investigative journalism and increases incentives for accepting pre-packaged material.”¹⁹

Referring to this phenomenon, driven according to Curran and Seaton by economic reasons, one easily observes similar phenomena caused by ideology. As is the case with numerous political elites throughout Europe, public policies are heavily influenced by leftist-originated, morally liberal/progressive ideologies. The pertinent value here is the one of ‘openness’. There is an undeniable trend, chaperoned by EU institutions such European Commission, to build open, inclusive societies where each and every human being is equal. Such embedded equality encompasses more and more aspects of social coexistence from gender and sexual orientation, through ethnicity to religion. As such, this ordained equality is positive only up to a point, where the so-called political correctness does not introduce effective censorship into public debate. This is admittedly exactly what we can observe regarding European public discourse. Mass media, needless to say, will play a pivotal role under such circumstances.

Recent Cologne massive sexual assault is a case in point. During the 2016 New Year’s Eve celebrations, around one thousand women were allegedly sexually assaulted in Cologne by men of Arab and North African appearance. Thefts and rapes took place in other German cities on that night, including Hamburg, Frankfurt, Dortmund, Düsseldorf, Stuttgart and Bielefeld, bringing the number of victims close to two thousand. Importantly, at first, major German media outlets ignored the assaults and only started reporting them four days later (on 5 January), mostly due to a wave of anger that spread through social media. In fact, public television channel ZDF later acknowledged that they had failed to report on the incidents, despite having sufficient knowledge to do so.²⁰

This seemingly anecdotal proof fits perfectly into a larger picture where as a rule, mainstream mass media in Europe do not report on the ethnicity of perpetrators of criminal acts. Worse still, any attempt at raising the question is usually labelled as ‘negative profiling’ or ‘scapegoat building’ image. (euroscope, 2016) (Hopefully ‘the European migration crisis and the

media' project run by the London School of Economics and Political Science will make an attempt at steering away from *a priori* thinking and allow objective research into the matter.²¹⁾

Sweden in this regard, presents a particularly interesting and relevant case. According to Ingrid Carlqvist and Lars Hedegaard (2015) of Gatestone Institute, Sweden is in fact the Rape Capital of the West. According to their research, this is the consequence of the 1975 Swedish Parliament decision to introduce the multi-cultural concept of society. Within forty years, the country has seen a dramatic rise in the number of rapes – up three hundred per cent. As it appears, the authorities aided by Swedish mainstream mass media, offer a number of explanations, none of which seem to have anything to do with the 1975 Swedish Parliament decision. They include: Swedes becoming more prone to report crime; the law having been changed so that more sexual offences are now classed as rape; and Swedish men being unable to handle increased equality between the sexes and reacting with violence against women. Tellingly, it is social media that one needs to follow these days to find information, often times supported with pictures or videos that show a somewhat fuller picture. Naturally, social media, where all of us become 'prosumers' (we act as both producers and consumers of information) are fair game for criticism when it comes to a lack of objectivity or professionalism. Sadly, these values seem to feature less and less when it comes to mainstream mass media. (Curran and Seaton, 2010)

The society – apathy and disorientation

Effectively, as shown in Figure 1, the society has been 'squared' by the drivers of 'a-securitization'. This manifests itself with many citizens being apathetic, disoriented or emotionally biased to the challenges that massive immigration brings. The picture of a three-year-old Syrian boy named Aylan Kurdi, who was found drowned on the shores of Turkey, caused very strong emotional reactions on the part of European societies and its political elites. As tragic as the case was, it became instantly abused by most media outlets and many pro-immigration NGOs. (Time, 2015) In fact, a simple 'Aylan Kurdi' search in Google produces 472,000 results, whereas 'European immigration crisis' produces only 619,000. Aylan Kurdi.rip on Facebook has 7,487 likes compared to only a 1,000 people talking about the European immigration crisis. [In fact, the family of Aylan Kurdi had been living for three years in Turkey

in a comparatively safe environment, when his father decided to search for better life for his family in Europe. (The Wall Street Journal, 2015)]

Sweden offers again an interesting and quite typical example of what one might term ‘ordained denial’. Except for one study back in 2006 by Ann-Christine Hjelm from Karlstads University (2006)²², there is no data on the ethnicity or religious denomination of rapists in Sweden, as this kind of research is not welcomed. However, a 1996 report by the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention reached the conclusion that male immigrants from North Africa (Algeria, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia) were 23 times more likely to commit rape than Swedish men.²³ Another example confirms that in 2002, 85% of those sentenced to at least two years in prison for rape in *Svea Hovrätt*, a court of appeals, were foreign born or second-generation immigrants. (Carlqvist and Hedegaard, 2015) The point of the matter is that in Sweden the existing immigration law is very rigid, and simply by raising such matters one can be charged with ‘denigration of ethnic groups’, which the case of Michael Hess clearly proves.²⁴ [In 2014 Sweden passed a law that prosecutes those who criticize immigration as such (FriaTider Lag&Rätt, 2014).] By the same token, Swedish police do not share any data regarding information about resources spent on managing the influx of refugees and the increasingly tense situation in many asylum accommodation centres. (euobserver, 2016)

In the meantime, Bertelsmann Foundation published a survey (Muslime in Deutschland mit Staat und Gesellschaft eng verbunden, 2015) according to which, because of the growing Muslim population, 57 per cent of Germans believe that Islam is threatening to German society, and 61 per cent believe that Islam does not fit into Western society. Most alarmingly, 40 per cent feel like ‘foreigners in their own country’.

Similarly, in Sweden, evidence from the Swedish Integration Board found that 67 per cent of those surveyed felt that Islamic values are not compatible with those in Swedish society. Further, 46 per cent of Swedes did not believe that Muslims were like Swedes, and 37 per cent percent were opposed to the building of mosques in Sweden. (Goran, 2006)²⁵

Perhaps contemporary societies are particularly apathetic (Crouch, 2004) and disoriented due to the prevailing culture of ‘crisis’ in the mass media. It is a sad and undeniable fact that in

the contemporary world, a crisis becomes a ‘media event’. (Jacobs, 2000) In this respect, when faced with the Eurozone crisis, Brexit and a general deterioration of the quality of life due to economic and environmental causes, the immigration crisis becomes one of the few domains where the average person might have a sense of actually ‘making a change’ and contributing to a good cause. Interestingly, according to Pew Research Centre recent report, most of the Europeans actually disapprove of how EU handles the immigration crisis with smaller but still significant numbers viewing EU in unfavourable terms (Euroskepticism Beyond Brexit, 2016).

Security relevance – a neglected link

According to the Washington Post, European security experts have no doubt that there is actually an undisputed link between the latest waves of immigration to Europe and terrorist attacks in Europe. The newspaper has traced down the path of four terrorists sent by the Islamic State to Europe. Two of them actually participated in the Paris attacks of November 2015. (The Washington Post, 2016)

In fact, in February 2015, ISIS threatened to send five hundred thousand migrants to Europe as a ‘psychological weapon’, information that is difficult to confirm with the mainstream mass media but allegedly acquired from telephone transcripts published in Italy. (MailOnline, 2015) As fantastical as this might sound, recently in a joint report, Interpol and Europol claim, “There is an increased risk that foreign terrorist fighters may use the migratory flows to (re)enter the EU.” (Migrant Smuggling Networks, Joint Europol-INTERPOL, 2016)²⁶. Finally, even Angela Merkel admitted publically that “in part, the refugee flow was even used to smuggle terrorists” (interestingly she made this remark during a low-level rally of her Christian Democrats in eastern Germany)²⁷.

According to Europol’s own report of 18 January 2016, “There is every reason to expect that the IS or another religiously inspired terrorist group will undertake a terrorist attack somewhere in Europe again... [...] (Changes in modus operandi of Islamic State terrorist attacks, 2016).” (This report was published after the Paris attacks and before the Brussels attack of 22 March 2016).

In another chilling piece of news, ISIS have allegedly created an entire ‘industry of Fake Passports’ seized in Iraq, Syria and Libya. This was confirmed by French interior minister Bernard Cazeneuve in late January 2016. Similarly, security experts have been warning for some time about the availability of Syrian passports in Turkey. Admittedly, one of the terrorists who carried out the attack in France had such a passport. (Wall Street Journal, 2016 and Aljazeera, 2015)

German authorities reported in February the disappearance of one hundred thirty thousand asylum seekers (BBC, 2016), a number that represents thirteen per cent of about 1.1 million asylum seekers in 2015 alone. German Police officially acknowledge the threat this might present to national security. According to BKA [*Bundeskriminalamt* (BKA) - Federal Criminal Police Office], close to five hundred potentially dangerous individuals of the Muslim religion are currently in Germany. This number has actually doubled since January 2015. (Deutsche Welle, 2016b) BKA openly acknowledges two important phenomena regarding radicalisation of German Muslims: a) there is a link between radicalisation and ongoing conflicts in Syria and Iraq; b) there is a link between radicalisation and Salafism. (Analyse der Radikalisierungshintergründe und -verläufe der Personen, die aus islamistischer Motivation aus Deutschland in Richtung Syrien oder Irak ausgereist sind, 2015)

An ISIS link is further emphasised by the Washington-based think tank Institute for the Study of War. According to their analysis, ISIS should be seen as a global actor, executing a global strategy to “defend and expand its territory within Iraq and Syria; to foster affiliates and exacerbate disorder in the Middle East, North Africa, and Central Asia; and to inspire and resource polarizing terror attacks in the wider world.” (Institute of the Study of War, 2015) According to Harleen Gambhir, ISIS maintains active affiliates in each of its governorates, mainly in the Middle East and North Africa, which provide the organization with strategic resiliency outside of Iraq and Syria. Alarmingly, these ‘wilayats’ overlap with countries of origin for immigrants arriving in Europe, with Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt and Turkey featuring prominently.

Apart from terrorism, security experts point to a plethora of issues relevant to the immigration crisis, such as transnational organized crime (smugglers networks, enslavement - forced labor and debt bondage²⁸, drug trafficking and people trafficking), social cohesion and

stability, potential radicalization of Muslims in Europe, growing lack of trust of large sections of society towards political elites, the rise of self-defense movements (possibly ultra-right)²⁹ and finally, the rise of right-wing parties with their dreaded narrative across Europe, possibly halting the process of European Integration. As Matthew Goodwin (2015) accurately observes, clearly the Liberals cannot present any coherent vision that would attract European societies *en masse* amid growing fears contrary to right-wing movements (oftentimes termed ‘radical right’ by the same liberals).

Last but not least, one should at least acknowledge the challenges presented by cultural and religious incompatibilities of Islam, especially of its most extreme manifestation – Jihadism. Scholars claim that recent terrorist attacks initiated by Islamic jihadists since 9/11 should be understood as an attempt to expand the contemporary jihadist movement to a global level. (Bendor and Pendahzur, 2003) It seems that the central theme of contemporary jihadism is re-conceptualizing radicalization as a form of ideological socialization. Consequently an argument is proposed regarding the division of the world into Islamic and non-Islamic lands, which by itself leads to challenging the existing political order. (Ali and Stuart, 2014) This is understood to be one of the undercurrents of a universal mission of Islam to be promoted by jihad (Mendelsohn, 2009). Al-Mawdudi, one of the leading thinkers of contemporary jihadism, asserts: “Islam wants the whole earth and does not content itself with only a part thereof. It wants and requires the entire inhabited world (...) Islam wants and requires the earth in order that the human race altogether can enjoy the concept and practical program of human happiness, by means of which God has honored Islam and put it above the other religions and laws. In order to realize this lofty desire, Islam wants to employ all forces and means that can be employed for bringing about a universal all-embracing revolution.” (quoted in Peters, 2005)

Conclusion

Interestingly, ‘a-securitization’ is based on the same mixture of ingredients as securitization, namely reason and emotions. Classical decision-making models such as multiple-criteria decision analysis (MCDA) include analysis based on a finite set of alternatives. These alternatives are then evaluated based on a number of criteria at the same time. The elimination of

some alternatives and the subsequent identification of a single best option is, as some chose to believe, entirely rational through and through. Decision (cognition of the decision maker) is however always a mixture of rationality (explicit knowledge) and irrationality (tacit knowledge – often influenced by emotions). As such, successful securitization relies at least partly on emotions raised and steered by a narrative that aims at promoting only one alternative, a suspension of normal politics and the use of emergency measures in responding to a perceived crisis. Consequently, one terrorist attack is treated as proof that individual freedoms need to be limited and state control needs to be extended.

‘A-securitization’ seems to be based on equally false arithmetic. No matter the evidence, the actors concerned will not admit that there is any link between, say, a terrorist attack and the need on the part of the state and its agencies to increase their efforts, be it through limiting freedoms, to provide public values such as safety to the very people they are expected to protect. Consequently, regardless of the factual decrease of personal safety on the streets of European cities and the number and severity of terrorist attacks, the supporters of personal freedoms together with promoters of tolerance and openness, who advocate for immigration, will stand by their values, proudly declaring that there is only one alternative – unrestricted tolerance to all social acts and belief systems – thereby holding that ultimate openness to ‘others’ is a symbol and proof of ‘our’ enlightenment and progressiveness as against xenophobia and backwardness. ‘A-securitization’ is therefore based on the axiological paradox derived from the notion that tolerance is more important than personal safety because ‘we’ (Europeans) define ourselves as, above all, tolerant individuals and tolerant societies. As Madi Sharma (EurActiv.com, 2016c), a UK member of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) asserts: “Our governments’ failure to act on the migration crisis is destroying the European Union and undermining our core values. This is not the Europe we dreamed of.”

‘A-securitization’ seems also to be a political process. It stems from the narrative of liberals and the left, who eagerly pronounce that any opposition to the values that they promote and policies that are consequently introduced is of ‘populist’ and ‘right-wing’ origin. In that sense, the phenomenon of ‘a-securitization’ has also become a by-product of a political battle that is rooted in the clash of opposing ideologies: cosmopolitanism vs. nationalism. During one of the debates held in Rome in early May 2016, Donald Tusk, President of the European Council

and former Polish Prime Minister of the Civic Party, allegedly compared the new Polish Government of Law and Justice to right-wing populists regarding its staunch opposition to immigration of non-Christians. (Reuters, 2016) There is an argument to be made here that perhaps in order to understand the meanders of European immigration crisis and specifically some seemingly unintelligible arguments put forward by the pro- and anti-immigration camps, one should bear in mind that this is in fact an ideological conflict between the right and the left. Between Euro enthusiasts, who envision United States of Europe with one European nation (regardless of religion, ethnicity and even place of origin, be it non-European) and Euro sceptics, who believe that only meaningful level of self-awareness and identity, in political terms, can exist at a national level at the most.

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¹³ Ibid., p. 4.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 18.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 19.

¹⁶ Tellingly, first reactions to ‘Brexit’ among top European Union functionaries seem to invoke even more shift of power from nations towards Brussels.

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²⁸ See for example a recent publication by Ben Judah titled: *This is London: Life and Death in the World City*, where he paints a gloomy picture of the harsh reality for immigrants. London: Picador.

²⁹ Examples throughout Europe see: ‘Stop Islamisation of Europe’ in Denmark and UK, ‘The Soldiers of Odin’ in Finland, ‘English Defence League’ in UK, ‘Sweden’s White Power Movement’ or ‘Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamisation of the West’ (PEGIDA) in Germany.