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Security Practices

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Introduction

This essay adopts a sociological approach to security. It develops an international political sociology of security practices, subsuming elements from constructivist approaches to security, such as the Aberystwyth, Copenhagen, and Paris approaches (Wæver 2004; c.a.s.e. collective 2006; Bigo 2008). Following the path of a collective intellectual, discussing in an interdisciplinary way security, liberty, migration, and development, this essay has been written by a collective group of five authors. This collective is part of a larger collective group, called the c.a.s.e. collective, which has already published a long manifesto providing a critique of traditional approaches to security, exclusively grounded in international relations and political science. We will not repeat here the different arguments against the Realist, Liberal, and English Schools of security studies as we prefer to build a new space for thought and discussion which takes what practices of security are and what they do seriously.

A large part of the international relations (IR) literature, which claims to be pragmatist, positivist, and realist, in fact ignores the diversity of practices labeled as security and is highly idealist in the neo-platonic sense of the word. They believe in capturing the essence of the world through words. Their search for a definition of security (as good) opposed to insecurity (as bad) is always normative and often accepts the position of the dominant speaker. The study of security is done in the interest of someone. The confusion between security, state national interest, and reason of state repeatedly structures the narrative. The contribution of scholars coming from sociology, criminology, and history is largely ignored. Security is reduced to an international relations problem disconnected from other bodies of knowledge. This is an error that we try to correct in this essay, which consists of three sections.

The first section develops an interdisciplinary perspective, and insists on the need to analyze security and insecurity

not only as a process but as the *same* process of (in)securitization. It insists on practices as forms of social interactions which are derived from objective relations, rules of the game, which are neither directly visible nor conscious, but are more real than any description of the “substance” of a concept. The notion of practice originates from French sociology and was developed by authors as diverse as Pierre Bourdieu and Michel Foucault. It allows for deeper understanding of the security practices developed by the Copenhagen School of security, which too often reduces practices to discursive practices. The second section shows that practices are collective and historic acts, and analyzes the way they shaped the evolution of the fundamental distinction that used to define the field of security, that of internal vs. external security. The third section discusses the mutually constitutive relationship between the *dispositif* and the field, through the operation of law and technology. As this entry deals primarily with “security practices,” we concentrate more on concrete articulations of security practices, and less on conceptual struggles. Our aim is to highlight what practices are, how they emerge, and how they evolve. Analyzing practices cannot be mastered by learning the vocabulary in the abstract, but essentially by using it. This is what this essay tries to do.

Concept and Practices: What Security Means, What (In)security Does

“Security is an essentially contested concept.” This is the claim that opens many articles and books on security studies nowadays, but it is nonetheless not taken seriously enough (Gallie 1956; Baldwin 1997; Connolly 1999; Collier et al. 2006). This statement works, rather, as a form of liberal mantra, and for many authors it is merely a way to propose their own definition in a free market of security concepts. Even if they disagree about what security is, the search for a definition is considered necessary and desirable. Such authors look for an essence, for a core meaning of security.

This essay argues the opposite: the label “security” cannot be considered as a concept which can capture a coherent set of practices. Security is, instead, the result of a process of (in)securitization. It is a kaleidoscope of practices non-reducible to a core meaning or/and a linguistic formulation. The label “security” appears rather to work as a slogan, as a peculiar method through which a dominant group justifies and imposes a political program by assessing who needs to be protected and who can be sacrificed, who can be designated as an object of fear, control, coercion. In this (in)securitization process any attempt to obtain maximum security always provokes maximum *insecurity* and not, as traditional approaches to security may claim, minimum insecurity (Bigo 2008). To declare a referent object as being one of security or insecurity is thus deeply political, and designating it as such does not merely signify things but does things (Huysmans 1998). To understand this distinction, the concept of “securitization,” “drawn from the banking system,” has been adapted for and transferred into international relations (Wæver 1995; Balzacq 2005:178; Balzacq 2009) but needs to be reframed in a more interdisciplinary perspective to tie in with the works in criminology and sociology that analyze risk, fear, violence, and insecurity as processes.

The process of securitization – or rather (in)securitization – is central to the understanding of all of those practices, both discursive and non-discursive, drawing lines between groups and categorizing what is threat, what is fear, what is danger, what is unease, what is fate and destiny, what is protection, what is security. In this sense, the authors of this essay share a key argument of Wæver and the Copenhagen School that there is a need for a social constructivist approach concerned with the process of securitization and not merely focused on the definition of security. They differ in one crucial aspect, however: for the Copenhagen School, the convergence between a political theory of the exception, the role of the leader, and an approach to the process of securitization through the speech act of the agents (often reduced to the professionals of politics, such as the government, parliament, or the extra-parliamentarian opposition) has created a focus which is, in our view, far too oriented toward the discursive practices of these professionals and, as such, neglects the study of the conditions of possibility for the performativity of these narratives and the everyday practices of societal agents.

Discursive formations and speech acts are not sufficient to understand how security operates. Scholars need not only to account for the performative nature of utterances, but also to examine the (perlocutionary) effects of these words, as well as the conditions of possibility of security practices. These conditions are obviously ideational; but they are also physical, technical, material, and historical (Bigo 2006). In fact, the detailed analysis of heterogeneous narratives of security not only reveals that they are not necessarily resorting to the terminology of exception or emergency – insisting much more on the naturalness of a certain order – but also that they are often repeated, rooted in (liberal) traditions, in routinized practices of everyday politics, in calls for freedom and democracy. In brief, they are rooted in a certain form of governmentality (Dean 1999; Rose 1999).

The core purpose of this essay is to review the literature on security practices and encourage researchers to take both discursive and non-discursive practices seriously, by focusing on patterns of security practices. Though theoretically

complementary to a speech act perspective, the sociology of security practices encompasses both discursive and non-discursive practices. In other words, a sociological approach is stronger than a purely linguistic approach to securitization, because it combines discursive and non-discursive formations, including know-how, gestures, and technology. After all, social interactions are not only *rule-governed* (as in the speech act approach), but also, as the sociological view emphasizes, *rule-generating* (Pleasant 1999:53). Thus, non-discursive practices are not substitutes for discursive practices, but both are equally important for the analyst. They have different “logics,” but can produce the same effects.

“Practices,” writes Reckwitz (2002:249), are “a routinised type of behaviour which consists of several elements, interconnected to one another: forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, ‘things’ and their use, a background knowledge in the form of understanding and know-how, states of emotion and motivational knowledge.” For those who analyze security practices, (in)securitization is not necessarily the result of a rational design wherein goals are set beforehand, following a predetermined agenda. As Pouliot (2008:261) puts it, following Bourdieu, “social action is not necessarily preceded by a premeditated design. A practice can be oriented toward a goal without being consciously informed by it.” In this light, securitization consists of practices which instantiate intersubjective understandings and which are framed by the *habitus* inherited from different social fields.

Thus, trying to capture (in)securitization in terms of practices shifts our attention in at least three ways. First, instead of analyzing security as an essential concept, contested as it were, a sociological approach treats security as the result of a process of (in)securitization, *as a dispositif emanating mainly, but not only, from a specific field of professionals*. Second, rather than investigating the intention behind the use of power, understanding practices emphasizes their manifestations and effects, the way they distinguish themselves from other practices and not the practices themselves. Third, instead of focusing on speech acts, a sociological view unpacks the analytical leverage of three concepts – the *dispositif*, the *field*, and the *habitus* – which enable and constrain the production and instantiation of specific forms of practices (Bigo 1994; c.a.s.e. collective 2006; Bigo and Tsoukala 2008b). The *field* is a heuristic device that helps turn a not immediately apparent space of differentiated positions (i.e., positions of security agents/agencies) into a tangible social space determined by different forms and volume of capital (economic, cultural, symbolic, bureaucratic, etc.). By refusing to attribute any biological or cultural essence to the set of activities and preferences that the individuals believe to be personal, the field allows us to analyze the principles on which are based distinctions between practices within a space of social positions, which then becomes a space where positions are assumed and discursive practices occur. Structural homology between the two spaces is possible through the mediation of the space of dispositions of agents or *habitus*. This habitus is then a system of durable dispositions which governs the behavior and discourses of agents inside the field. But, of course, as agents live in many fields simultaneously, they believe in their individuality, in their free choice. By acting in many fields they transfer practices from one field to another. This creates a situation of transversality which is best captured by Foucault's notion of *dispositif* rather than by Bourdieu's concept of field of fields (or field of power), since Foucault insists on the heterogeneity of these practices, which are not reducible to a single common denominator, or to any form of power/domination (of a field). The *dispositif* weaves agents and agencies together and connects agents/agencies to the tools/instruments they use, yet they remain heterogeneous. According to Foucault (1980:194), a *dispositif* is

a thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions – in short, the said as much as the unsaid. The *dispositif* itself is the system of relations that can be established between these elements.

It is not the program of the most powerful agents but a diagram of the relations of power and resistance, which can never be seen as separated.

Defining the Field of (In)security Professionals and its Relation to Security Practices

The notion of field has a strong advantage compared to network theories because it explains both attraction and competition, and alliances and conflicts, by the notion of the entrance cost into a field. Following Bourdieu (1994; 1998), the social field can be defined in terms of three dimensions. First, the field is a *field of forces*, or a magnetic field, a field of attraction that polarizes around the specific stakes of the agents involved. Second, the field is a *field of struggles*, or a battlefield, that enables us to understand the “colonizing” activities of various agents, the defensive retreats of others, and the various kinds of tactical algorithms that organize bureaucratic struggles. Third, the field is

a *field of domination* vis-à-vis another field, the field as a positioning within a larger political and social space permitting the possibility of statements making truth claims on the basis of knowledge and know-how. [Bigo \(2001\)](#) has added a fourth element when he speaks of a field beyond the national political field, a *transversal field of power*, whose trajectory reconfigures formerly autonomous social universes and shifts the borders of these former realms to include them totally or partially in the new field. An example of this transversal field is the emergence of transnational guilds of (in)security professionals, where two quasi-autonomous social universes or fields – the police and the military – become more meshed together once the police have reinforced their contacts and missions abroad and once the military have reinvested the political scene abroad and even inside. This merging has reconfigured not only the police and the military but also the intermediary professions (customs, border guards, intelligence services, private companies working for these bureaucracies and for data production and retention) that result from the de-differentiation of internal and external security, through the practices of violence, technologies of identification and surveillance, and prevention.

This section examines the effects of de-differentiation between the fields of internal and external security. First, it investigates practices at the boundaries of state borders, laws, and mobility, and examines the differentiation and specialization of the forces of legitimate coercion. Second, it seeks to understand the rationales of the present trend toward de-differentiation of institutions which have a long tradition of autonomy, and the trend toward discourses of globalizing security practices and prevention.

The Growing Entanglement of the Internal/External Security Fields

The roots of the distinction between internal and external security run deep into late modernity, embedded in a historical process of competition over where to draw the line between the authority and limits of diverse agencies. In this regard, contemporary transformations in the field of security are neither exceptional nor unique. The historical sociology of the modern state demonstrates how the activities of war-making and state-making are closely interrelated and intertwined ([Elias 1982](#); [Tilly 1990](#); [van Creveld 1999](#)). It also shows how the territorialized monopolization of the means of coercion has progressively led to the “civilianization” of the European state ([Tilly 1990](#)) and a confinement of the military to particular spaces ([Elias 1982](#)). The role of the military was mainly to wage war outside, while the role of the police was to maintain law and order inside. This differentiation between police and military follows the lines delineating the realm of internal security from the realm of external security. It is, in many ways, one of the core principles of modern industrial societies in the “West” which developed as a universal model for politics in recent centuries ([Weber 1978](#); [Elias 1982](#); [Dandeker 1990](#); [Tilly 1990](#); [Liang 1992](#); [Bourdieu 1994](#); [Holsti 1995](#)).

This differentiation has thus led to institutionalizing the police as the sole institution in charge of crime and to demilitarizing control of public disorder within national borders ([Waddington 1999](#)). Even if, during the nineteenth century, the military remained a potentially lethal last resort in case of civil disorder, in most Western countries it became progressively the norm that armed forces were not to be mobilized in order to discipline and control citizens. The rationale for demilitarization is certainly rooted not only in the institutionalization of citizenship and democracy, but also in the fear of a military coup in most of the European countries during the nineteenth century ([Geary 1985](#); [Vogler 1991](#)).

Formalizing the police function is, in other words, closely linked to the process of exclusion of the military from the domestic realm. It has led to crime being perceived as a police and criminal justice related issue as opposed to a military issue. While this historical process has taken various forms and expressions in different countries, it can, nonetheless, be read as the creation and the “victory” of one profession – the police – over another – the military – within national borders. Finally, the development of criminality and social control as new domains of expertise led most modern Western societies to adopt the distinction between domestic security, associated with crime, civil disturbances, criminal justice, and the police, and threats to external security arising first and foremost from war between and outside of states.

It should be noted, however, that this differentiation has never been clear-cut ([Lutterbeck 2005](#)). While the role of the military in internal security tended to decrease during the nineteenth century, the contribution of armed forces to crowd/riot control and to imperial policing (soon to become counterinsurgency) was maintained in the colonial possessions of the European empires ([Anderson and Killingray 1992](#)). Moreover, at the beginning of the twentieth century, Western police institutions progressively started functioning as relatively independent professionalized bureaucracies, thus developing transnational forms of cooperation in order to search and prosecute subversives and anarchists at an international level and hence outside of the state ([Fijnaut and Hermans 1987](#); [Anderson 1989](#); [Deflem](#)

2002). Finally, it should be emphasized that in France, for instance, the military corps in charge of the policing of rural areas, the *Maréchaussée royale*, was maintained in spite of the emergence of the police as the main law enforcement agency in urban areas. Hence, even today, the national gendarmerie remains a police force, maintaining law and order on the national territory, with military status.

Through diverse historical processes, including exporting French law by Napoleon (Emsley 1999), this same model has been adopted in some European countries (e.g., Holland, Italy, Spain, Austria, Portugal) as well as in many former colonies.

The Möbius Strip: Understanding Differently the Boundaries of Inside/Outside

The Cold War can be described as a period during which the separation between the fields of internal and external security was relatively unambiguous in terms of professional boundaries, tasks, and limits of action. However, since the 1970s, a set of enduring dynamics have tended to demonstrate that this principle of differentiation has been progressively eroded (Bigo 1996; Sheptycki 2000). One of these dynamics is the increased tendency on the part of internal law enforcement agencies in the western hemisphere, and particularly in Europe, to cooperate in the fight against terrorism and transnational organized crime on an international level and in a realm that used to be considered as the sole domain of the soldier and the diplomat (Aron 1984).

On the other hand, the military has increasingly become engaged in peacekeeping operations in which a constabulary ethos seems to be gaining the upper hand over traditional military values. In many Western countries the military is becoming engaged in the defense of the homeland, on the national territory, in the fight against terrorism (Moskos 1975; Bonditti 2008; Bonditti et al. 2008). The latter process is usually justified and legitimized in terms of the exceptional threat arising from “global terrorism.” This is really not surprising. However, a key issue is that involving the armed forces in antiterrorism inside the national territory cannot be perceived as a mere exceptional practice that would allow a return to the state *ex ante*, once the “exceptional moment” is over (Guittet 2008). On the contrary, it reshuffles professional structures and blurs the boundaries between the domestic and the external fields of security, between the criminal and the enemy, between civil protection in the case of an emergency and civil defense in the case of a threat, between the protection of public order, defense of the democratic order, and the state of war. Hence, it seems necessary to take the hypothesis of a progressive de-differentiation of the fields of internal and external security seriously. This phenomenon is not so much a consequence of a dramatic change in crime and transnational violence as an effect of institutional and bureaucratic struggles between professionals of security, but always with reference to a dangerous externality (or perceived as such). Indeed, these struggles have caused professional boundaries and identities to be reorganized and reframed (Bigo 2001).

De-differentiation processes not only destabilize the boundaries of the social universes of internal and external security which were aligned along state boundaries, but also the belief that it was central for democracy to maintain by law a strong control of contacts between internal security services (magistrate, police, customs) and external security services (military intelligence services, military forces). But it is not, as a process, a mechanism of fusion, of integration, a mixing of two elements into a homogeneous blend where all these services would have the same tasks, the same uniforms, the same missions. The de-differentiation process is not the emergence of borderless security going global through the fusion of police and military activities. Global security is a myth perpetrated by its promoters. Instead, and more fundamentally, de-differentiation is a redrawing of boundaries of a field of practices which follows a different logic or a different topology. It is not a simple relocation of borders and an easy redrawing of an inside and an outside at a different level, more transnational or more global but not yet completely globalized. It is a more profound change which is characterized by an ambiguity about the location of the inside and the outside around the boundaries.

To give an example of what is at stake with this ambiguity: More and more civil police (with or without military status) go abroad, continuing to think and to assume in Kosovo or Bosnia that they have the same legitimacy among these local populations that they have at home. It is also the case of the attitude of the army when it is asked to put some groups inside their own country under surveillance and consider that they can use the same logics and technologies they use abroad in military peacekeeping operations. Military peacekeeping operations are re-read as a form of colonial police coming back home, to the mother country. The Northern Ireland form of policing used in Kosovo and then brought back to the UK is typical of this move. In both cases, boundaries are not erased, but it is as if the agents were not crossing a circle (the border of the state) delimiting an inside (where they come from) and an outside (where they are going), but as if they were walking a Möbius strip, a topological figure where the boundary exists but where recognition of where inside and outside are located is an intersubjective view, being constantly redrawn (Albert et al.

2001; Bigo 2001; Dobson et al. 2006; Bigo and Walker 2007b). Police missions abroad and military missions inside transform the idea of state boundaries which are projecting their inside out and projecting their outside in, through “corridors” of forces. At the very end, as during colonial times, foreign police and foreign military claim they are the insiders, that they are the defenders of law and order and a legitimate government, and that local rebels are de facto the outsiders, the foreigners in their own country as they contest the government's authority. This is a revolutionary development, one which has been underwritten by the practices of transnational guilds. The essay turns to this issue below.

Field, Experts and Expertise: The Emergence of Transnational Guilds

Reconfiguring internal and external realms evolves at the same time as knowledge and know-how about security and the roles played by different actors are produced. The epitome of contemporary reformulation of the field of security, and of the agents involved therein, is the “War against Terror.” From this perspective, there is a general tendency toward cooperation between “internal security agencies” and “external security professionals” through joint organizations and committees with both law enforcement agencies and armed forces (Bigo 2002; Donohue and Kayyem 2002; Hanon 2004; Garapon 2006; Tsoukala 2006; Bigo et al. 2008a). These include anti-terrorist coordination mechanisms such as the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre in the UK, the Center for Antiterrorist Coordination in Spain, or the Team for the Coordination of Operational and Reconnaissance Activities in Counteracting Political Terrorism in Poland (Bonditti et al. 2008).

These new structures bring together the entire intelligence community, police intelligence and military intelligence. At the EU level, the ATLAS network best illustrates this integration of security agencies (Bigo et al. 2007a). However, this does not mean that we are facing a homogeneous and integrated apparatus. Competition within and between agencies persists. For one thing, the evolution of American antiterrorist structures clearly shows how integrating security agencies involves symbolic and practical disputes over the legitimacy of means and ends. What we are witnessing, instead, is the constitution of transversal networks in which many elements of heterogeneity can be found but in which, nevertheless, the security agencies share the same vision of the threat as a deterritorialized and global one (Bigo 2005). For another, the *doxa* of the field of security is that the enemy is no longer a clearly identifiable, that is, immediately visible, body, but a clandestine group “hiding in plain sight” among a population that must be protected. In short, the focus is put on sorting out and identifying (Bonelli 2005; Bigo and Tsoukala 2008b).

This last element is crucial, primarily because it sheds light on the recent rediscovery of counterinsurgency practices and discourses upon which a high-technology perspective has been based. Indeed, as opposed to the traditional counterinsurgency doctrine inherited from the wars of decolonization, the focus here is increasingly put on the possibility of mapping out behavior and identity through data systems and high-technology tools (Ball and Webster 2003; Bigo 2006; Lyon 2007). The latter are used against the potential enemy of the “new wars,” the civilian population which is always suspected of being capable of entering into resistance in case of disagreement with the political options of the external forces. Local populations, but also domestic public opinions, are increasingly treated as potential or virtual enemies in a preemptive way. Populations are now, perhaps more than ever before, both a subject (public opinion that is targeted in order to influence its perceptions and allegiances) and an object of power (Olsson 2008).

The legitimacy and the authority of the professional of (in)security derives from the production of a very specific type of knowledge, “expert knowledge” or expertise, which accumulates data, frames categories of analysis, targets specific populations (Boswell 2009; Scherrer 2009). Thus, the hyper-specialization of knowledge concerning specific danger, risk, threats, or just every form of social change affecting the “established order” of the system has been one of the major trends of the construction of “reflexive government.” It has created, in other words, an abnormalization of parts of society by creating lines of division and exclusion inside each society along distinct but overlapping criteria: gender, class, poverty, race, ability to move. Combining the term “ban” used by Jean-Luc Nancy, as refigured by Giorgio Agamben, and the term “opticon,” as used by Foucault, we call this a “ban-opticon” (Bigo 2006a; Bigo 2006b). The concept of ban-opticon, as opposed to that of “pan-opticon,” allows us to understand how a network of heterogeneous and transversal practices functions and makes sense as a form of (in)security at the transnational level. The “ban” excludes categories whereas the “pan” targets the totality. However, the “ban” is as strong as the “pan” because it targets the “totality” of a defined category.

Three dimensions of the ban-opticon illustrate how control and surveillance of certain minority groups take place at a distance. This surveillance of minorities profiled as “unwelcome” is, in general, a function opposed to the surveillance of the entire population (or the “pan”), which is only the dream of a few agents of power, even if post-9/11 rhetoric

talks of “total” information. The ban–opticon is then characterized by the exceptionalism of power (rules of emergency and their tendency to become permanent), by the way it excludes certain groups in the name of their future potential behavior (profiling), and by the way it normalizes the non–excluded through its production of normative imperatives, the most important of which is free movement (the so–called four freedoms of circulation of the EU concerning: goods, capital, services, and persons). This ban–opticon is deployed at a level that supersedes the nation state and forces governments to strengthen their collaboration in more or less globalized spaces, both physical and virtual, sometimes global or Westernized, and still more frequently Europeanized (Balzacq and Carrera 2005). The effects of power and resistance are thus no longer contained by the political matrix of the relation between state and society. They exceed the frame of representations inscribed within the nation state, and disconnect direct relations between state and individuals inside and between the external of the nation state in its relation with other states, as a different universe.

To summarize: The process of de–differentiation of internal and external securities takes on many forms and shapes. But it often tends to highlight the importance of agencies and bureaucracies that used to be considered marginal because of their intermediary status between internal and external security: liaison officers of the police (Bigo 1996), gendarmerie–type forces, customs officers, counterinsurgency strategists are increasingly gaining new salience in a context in which the institutionalized boundaries between the internal and the external realms are becoming more fluid (Olsson 2008). De–differentiation parallels the emergence of new security tools and a substantial redrawing of the borders of the legal context within which, and through which, security practices unfold. In the next section, then, care is taken to substantiate the view that practices define the borders of a field. In this sense, while context could have both causal and constitutive effects on practices, the latter constantly (re)define its remits. The next section shows how.

The Tools of Security Practices

The aim of this section is to examine how security practices are enacted through certain tools. It starts by defining tools and then discusses two main types, regulative and capacity tools. The thrust of the argument is that beneath and above the discursive “level” loom subtle yet decisive processes of (in)securitization that only an approach through tools can disclose. Given the thickness of security programs, in which discourses and ideologies are increasingly hard to disentangle and differences between securitizing actors and audiences are blurred, there is growing evidence that securitization might best be understood by focusing on the nature and functions of policy tools used by agents/agencies to cope with public problems, defined as threats. In other words, the study of tools is not reducible to an analysis of their endogenous, technical functions. Instead, because operating tools activates a specific *dispositif*, they can be regarded as primary elements contributing to the emergence of an (in)security field and in the routinization of practices (i.e., *habitus*).

Symbolic and Technical Features of Security Tools

Security tools or instruments are the social devices through which professionals of (in)security think about a threat. They contribute to the taken–for–grantedness of security practices. Tools rest upon a form of background knowledge about a threat, and the way it needs to be confronted. Balzacq (2008:79) defines the instruments of securitization as “an identifiable social and technical ‘*dispositif*’ embodying a specific threat image through which public action is configured to address a security issue” (cf. Linder and Peters 1984; Salamon 2002:19; Lascoumes and Le Galès 2004:13). Put differently, security tools embody practices. This definition, imperfect as it may be, offers four basic characteristics of the instruments of securitization. First, each tool of securitization has *defining features* that align it with others, and *design traits* that make it unique or, at least, vary from one program to another. For instance, all EU Justice and Home Affairs databases require the collection, storage, and exchange of information, but they differ significantly in the nature of the information they collect, the duration of the storage, and the conditions under which they can be retrieved. Second, tools configure actions, in the sense that each instrument “has its own operating procedures, skills requirements, and delivering mechanisms, indeed its own ‘political economy’” (Salamon 2002:2). What is involved here, moreover, is the idea that tools are institutions of sorts, which means they are routinized sets of rules and procedures that structure the interactions among individuals and organizations. A nuclear weapon, for example, does not only provide a sense of security or power to the state that acquires the capacity to design one; it also alters the relationships between the latter and other states and thus transforms the configuration of the international system. In short, policy tools shape social relations in decisive ways. In this respect, by their very nature, tools “define who is involved in the operation of public programs, what their roles are, and how they relate to each other” (ibid.:19). Third, the tools of securitization reconfigure what is called public action, the aim of which is to

address issues identified as threats. Fourth and finally, tools embody a specific image of the threat and, to a large extent, what ought to be done about it (Balzacq 2008). In this respect, EU Justice and Home Affairs databases, for example, not only quantify but also categorize individuals entering into and moving within the EU area, as well as commanding a particular method of policing: tracing and localizing those whose marks are stored in the databases.

From what has been said, it follows that knowledge of security instruments and their attributes reflects something of the threat that public action is meant to respond to.

Further, it reveals policy preferences and the direction of action. In spite of basic similar attributes, each tool of (in)securitization phases in different effects. In fact, different tools are not equally effective in all cases. Moreover, sometimes security instruments have limited consequences or indirect effects. It therefore becomes obvious that the function of an instrument has a major impact on securitization. This function rests, in turn, on the nature of the tool.

Thus, the policy instruments of securitization do not represent a pure technical solution to a public problem. Of course, the operational – i.e. technical – character of any security instrument has to be adequately linked with a specific issue that it intends to address. However, a narrow focus on the operational aspect of security tools neglects two crucial features of instruments, namely the political and symbolic elements. On the one hand, the tools of securitization are fundamentally political. To put this point another way, both the selection and use as well as the effects of security instruments depend on political factors and require political mobilization (Peters 1998:552). It should thus be kept in mind that while security tools might have technical attributes, why they are chosen, how they operate and evolve, and what their consequences are cannot be reduced to the technical particulars of the instruments. On the other hand, there are symbolic attributes built into policy instruments “that (tell) the population what the (securitizing actor) is thinking ... and what its collective perception of problems ... (is)” (Peters and van Nispen 1998:3). In other words, the focus on the political and symbolic aspects of security tools will allow for an imaginative leap into a more robust conceptualization of how “the intention of policy could be translated into operational activities” (de Bruijn and Hufen 1998:12).

Broadly speaking, security practices relate essentially to two kinds of tools: regulatory and capacity instruments:

- *Regulatory instruments.* The starting-point here is that regulatory tools seek to “normalize” the behavior of target individuals (e.g., policy regulation, constitution, etc.). Policy instruments of this sort thus aim to influence the behaviors of social actors by permitting certain practices to reduce the threat; by prohibiting some types of political activities which are transformed into a menace; by promoting certain perceptions of threat – e.g., since 2002 almost all of the documents on illegal migration and asylum (in Western countries) have a strong connection to terrorism. Moreover, what makes regulatory instruments so attractive is that they often provide the framework within which capacity tools operate.
- *Capacity tools.* These are the most contentious tools of the EU strategy on counterterrorism, yet they are the most preferred. In simple terms, capacity tools often call for enablement skills, that is, skills that allow individuals, groups, and agencies to make decisions and carry out activities which have a reasonable probability of success (Schneider and Ingram 1990:517). Whereas regulative tools relate essentially to the processes of governmentality, capacity tools are specific modalities for imposing external discipline upon individuals and groups. In this sense, capacity tools include, inter alia, information (personal and non-personal), training, force, and other resources necessary to attain policy purposes (e.g., nuclear weapons). Finally, capacity instruments are hardly stable. EU internal security databases, for example, are always under pressure to adopt new protocols and practices, to extend their functions, and to mobilize new resources to attend to the transformations of what is perceived as a precarious environment. Tools change through practices; in turn, tools affect practices. Below, we explore these processes, by examining two instances of tools of security practices, one pertaining to regulative tools, and another pertaining to capacity tools.

Security, Law, Practices

In security studies, the relations between law, security, and liberties have often been framed through the lens of exception (Agamben 1998; 2004), as spaces of exception, extra-territorial spaces, in-between spaces, or states of exception (Morris 2003; Butler 2004; Minca 2005). The unintended effect of this framing is to place illiberal rule outside of ordinary law, as an exception to the norm. Many still seem to assume that there exists a clear distinction between liberal democracies and illiberal practices and replicate, despite its problems and increasing erosion, the discourse of the liberal state, contrasting a liberal inside with an anarchic outside (Walker 1993). Practices of legal

exclusions that have taken many historical and contemporary forms tend to prove otherwise. Liberal forms of governing are based not only on liberal, but also on illiberal practices that are engrained within it, and law can serve to guarantee fundamental rights as well as to limit the very same, and undermine the norms that liberal democracies seek to promote. Moving from the declaration of security to the practices of security – that is, security practices produced through ordinary law of the liberal state – emphasizes how illiberal rule is not outside the liberal state, but rather well embedded within it (Ewald 1991; Pasquino 2003). It shows how the control of populations is routinized and how unequal access to fundamental rights is a defining feature of the liberal state. Hence, a sociological approach to security, a turn to techniques of government, requires the analysis of law as an everyday practice (Basaran 2009), and how liberal forms of governing include liberal and illiberal practices (Burchell et al. 1991; Foucault 1991; Dean 1999; Bigo 2002; 2006).

Law, order, and violence are inherently interlinked (Benjamin 1978; Neocleous 2006; Huysmans 2006). The statue of *Iustitia*, for instance, that adorns many courts shows that law is about both force and justice, symbolized through the sword and the scales. Law is a tool of government that structures social life in modern societies. It is a tool for creating social order, reflecting power struggles in its constitution. Law defines order and by implication disorder, the normal and the deviant, the inside and the outside, mobility and immobility, and the conditions of possibility for liberal and illiberal practices. Law identifies those to be dealt with as social problems, in need of regulation, surveillance, and policing. It does so by designating (legal) identities, such as citizens and non-citizens, and producing (legal) borders and spaces for the application of specific laws, such as anti-terrorism laws, migration laws, or the scope of application for constitutional rights. These legal practices allow for policing and security practices and define the disproportionate use of violence for specific instances. Analyzing practices of law, in a critical way, means understanding how law constitutes social structures, differentiations, and borders. Practices of law include the constitutive powers of law, the concrete operation of law as well as the effects of law. It is especially the constitutive powers of law, how ordinary law is constitutive of in/security, that will be discussed in what follows.

The question of the relationship between ordinary law and practices is epitomized, for example, in the establishment of illiberal spaces at borders (Basaran 2008). Through ordinary law, spaces are created that provide for policing powers, but without concomitant rights. Take the French practice of waiting zones (*zones d'attente*) which, in many ways, finds its expression in other countries through similar forms of legal enclosure. Located within the territory of the state, the waiting zone is created primarily for refugees and unwanted migrants and provides for a set of particular rights, lesser rights than the ordinary legal regime of liberal democracies (Walters 2002; Salter 2008). The law on waiting zones has created a particular legal space with a set of particular rights, procedures, and institutions. It facilitates options that are contrary to international refugee law and even ordinary French criminal procedures. Thus, in the waiting zone, safeguards from detention, access to the judiciary, and rights of appeal are severely restricted. Hence, the law effectively acknowledges that people in the waiting zone can be held under police custody for longer periods of time than under ordinary criminal procedures.

Waiting zones are not created through exceptional law or extraordinary legal procedures or outside the law, but are produced through ordinary law. In ordinary law, it is a common procedure to establish legal identities and legal spaces. These legal tools can also be used to implement illiberal spaces that run counter to the constitutional guarantees of liberal democracies. In the case of the French waiting zone, this is based upon a difference created between territorial borders and legal borders. As such, a person can be on French territory, but not legally within the French state. The distinction between territorial spaces and legal spaces allows the government to establish spaces for populations that have not “legally entered” the territory yet, but are physically on the territory nonetheless. Legal borders are not fixed, but are flexible constructs, and as such multiple and in flux. They can be spatially extended and multiplied, at will, through ordinary law and its framework. The waiting zone initially spatially fixed to the international zone at the airport and including accommodation within the parameters of the airport, port, and train stations extends by now to all the places where the foreigner needs to be for administrative or medical reasons (CESEDA 2004:L221-2). Consequently, wherever a person in the waiting zone goes, he/she cannot be considered on French territory, but constantly in a particular legal space that characterizes the person as not having legally entered the territory yet with deleterious implications for their fundamental rights. Rather than containing and fixing illiberal practices, law thus opens up the possibility for their flexible multiplication and retrospective declaration, without possibilities of appeal.

Waiting zones are not unique. Other legal constructs operate under similar rationales. This is a commonly used sophisticated technique for the illiberal government of people in liberal democracies. In the US, for instance, physical presence in territorial waters is not considered as being legally within the US (Memorandum 1993). In Australia,

refugees and unauthorized migrants in a number of islands, offshore installations, and parts of the mainland are considered not to be legally on Australian territory (Migration Act 2001). As a consequence, they do not have access to fundamental rights granted normally in the US and Australia. Within this construction, in principle, liberal democracies grant fundamental rights to everybody, but some people can never come under the scope of this law, even if they are on the territory.

Law is hardly a new tool of governing differently and it is not solely applied to foreigners in this way. Legal segregations based upon race or anti-terrorism measures are longstanding precursors of a combination of legal spacing, legal identities, and lesser fundamental rights (Ford 1994; Delaney 1998). Even for Guantánamo, commonly seen as the paradigm of an exceptional space, a further analysis of its historical constitution shows that this legal space was created through a mixture of executive interpretation and judicial acquiescence.

Transnational Dispositifs

Technology is a basic form of capacity tool. The police, the military, and intelligence services consistently resort to technological tools, including biometrics, drones, and wiretapping. Technology is generally presented as the means by which security will be better achieved. Nothing is less sure than the idea that technology will eventually help in improving security. Nonetheless, it remains that the massive resort to technological tools by the police, the military, and intelligence agencies has a profound impact on both security practices and the very structure of the modern state's security apparatuses. This section shows that the current belief in technology and the heterogeneous usages of technological tools – mainly digital ones – tends to rearticulate the security apparatuses toward the temporal division between the actual and the potential.

Through the notion of “new technology” technology is usually associated with computing (Guittet and Jeandesboz 2009). Technology is seen as the result of digitalizing tools and techniques and refers much more to the idea of computing tools than to the wide range of methods and techniques through which the human species relates to its environment. This common understanding of technology is thus static and narrow. However, the scope of the term “technology” is broader and covers at least three areas: the usages of technical artifacts; the knowledge users have of these artifacts; and the way these uses affect the relationship between subjects (users) and their environment. The term “technology” thus refers both to material objects (tools and instruments), methods, and techniques – within which are articulated different tools to a particular end – and the relationship between subjects and their ever-changing environment. To investigate the articulation of technology and security in contemporary security practices, it is important to keep these different meanings of “technology” in mind. Put differently, when scholars of critical approaches to security examine technology, they often focus simultaneously upon three elements: tools (mainly capacity tools such as databases, biometrics, sensors, or algorithms); methods (networking, fusions, or military transformation); and techniques (instantaneity/simultaneity, automaticity).

The military have always been at the forefront of technological innovations (Balzacq and De Nève 2003). From mastering fire to mastering the atom, war, technology, and science have historically been closely connected. On the law enforcement side, police forensic laboratories can be understood as those police units where science and technology serve law enforcement missions. From the anthropomorphic techniques of the nineteenth century to the most recent DNA identification, technological developments result in renewed methods of investigation and evidence gathering. In other words, technological innovations often induce important transformations in the practices of security, with a crucial turn from a reactive to an anticipatory rationality named anticipatory defense and proactive policing, whether you consider the military or the police. In fact, among the technological developments that have had an impact on security, the digitalization of security practices initiated in the early 1970s with the first police electronic databases and the intensification of wiretapping marks a crucial if not radical turn. Since the mid-1990s, security agencies not only use such computing tools to increase their capacity in terms of firepower, precision, or data retention but also to integrate and fuse their components. This is how we should understand the progressive networking of the various agencies through interconnecting weapons systems (in the case of the military) and databases (in that of the police).

To be sure, the diverse ways law enforcement agencies and the military use technology reflect their different objectives. For the military, the aim has long been to increase firepower, speed, and projection capacities. Since the beginning of the 1990s it has been both to minimize the size of equipment – to answer the strategic necessities of force projection – and to improve precision while pursuing the elusive dream of “clean wars.” For law enforcement agencies, the worry has always been that of the systematic registering of people – for the perfect assignment of a unique identity to everyone – and that of data retention to keep the traces people leave behind in their everyday

mobility, whether it is earth based, social, or digital. This worry should be understood as being part of a broader political dream: the perfect traceability of anything and anyone in any circumstances.

Future Directions in Research

The investigation of security practices opens promising paths, but this potential can be realized only if at least three challenges are met. First, a sustained development of cross-disciplinary studies, in order to grasp the nuances of the transformations which underlie contemporary security practices. In IR literature, for instance, security is most often about survival of states and their armies, about the collective self of the nation, about critical infrastructures, about humanity. All the other forms of security (individual safety, life-style, law and order) are either securitized or given subordinate status. For criminologists and sociologists, on the other hand, these so-called subordinated elements define the core of security, thereby inverting IR's hierarchical logic of sacrifice. As long as scientific disciplines do not communicate, one can expect only partial and biased insights, but when a transdisciplinary approach is used, the arbitrariness of each disciplinary statement becomes obvious. The project of international political sociology is just that. Its primary objective is, in fact, to uncover the logics of hierarchization and exclusion that beset the discipline and practice of IR.

The second, related challenge is to address the "sacrifice" entailed in definitions of security. (In)securitization is not a definition but a process which creates the effect of reading social changes and social interactions through the language of order, and of initiating struggles for legitimacy between adversaries, which give an advantage to those who favor coercion, exception, or a dominant order over those who prefer non-coercion, normality of social change, and political transformations. It implies a sacrificial practice, not recognized as such, since more securitization does not lead to less insecurity, but on the contrary expands it as each practice of security creates more insecurity and fear for other groups, or even for the same group or person (Bigo 2008). The process of securitization is always drawing limits, excluding categories, banning people, even when it claims to be doing the opposite (as in human security).

Finally, because practices of security are deployed in a field of struggle and power, a sociological approach should devote more time to elucidating as clearly as possible processes of resistance from those who are the target of these practices. Wittgensteinian definitions (e.g., security as emancipation, security as right, security as protection, etc.), whose proclaimed project is to promote resistances of sorts, paradoxically seem to displace the problem, substituting as it were one practice of (in)securitization for another.

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Online Resources

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