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Conference topic: **EU Integration**

EUROPEAN VALUES AND PRINCIPLES IN THE FACE OF NEW SECURITY DILEMMAS. THE UKRAINIAN CRISIS AS A CASE STUDY

Abstract

The recent events that were generated by the Ukrainian crisis, which concerned all Eastern-European neighborhood, saw the weakening of the projection of the European Union's normative power towards them. The values and principles of democracy, protection of human rights and economic prosperity, behind which the EU stood up from the mere beginning of the crisis, gained another dimension with the ongoing of the crisis and the Crimean annexation to Russia. Namely, these events changed the EU's *milieu goals* into other geopolitical interests, before all, because of the Union's fear for its security and safety, especially its energy security. In base of that, this paper will speak about the relationship between European values and principles in confront to the new security dilemmas on the international scene.

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Traditionally in th last years, especially after the fall of the Iron Curtain and the establishment of the Common Foreign and Security Policy with the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992, the European Union promoted its newly gained epithet of "Normative power" in International Relations. This epithet was given above all, because of the way in which the EU changes concepts of what is thought to be normal in international relations (Manners, 2002). The Normative power of the EU is based upon its: 1. sui generis caracter of a post-westphalian entity (Manners & Whitman, 1998: 232; Manners, 2002:240-1; Whitman, 2011:5-7), 2. normative goals or so called *milleu goals* (Manners, 2002, 2004) which it promotes in international relations (Woulfers, 1962), and which concern the values of democracy, rule of law, protecion of human rights, sustainable development and other (article 21 paragraph 2 for the Consolidated version of the Treaty of Lisbon), 3. normative instruments, which represent the active dimension of the Union's normative power and by which the Union spreads its norms (Manners & Whitman, 1998, 2003; Forsberg, 2011), and 4. normative impact, which it has towards other subjects in international relations (Tocci, 2008:15; Sjursen:2006a,b). To that end we could mention a few successful projection of its normative power, which brought the Union many recognitions on the World scene, that is: the promotion for abolition of the death penalty (Manners, 2002; Lerch & Schwellnus, 2006), the founding and promotion of the International Criminal Tribunal (Scheipers & Sicurelli, 2007), the signing and the promotion of the Kyoto Protocol (Baker, 2006), and other.

This role of an international actor with normative power, which already reached a third wave of theorizing in the academic thought of International Relations and theories of European Integration (Whitman, 2013), changing even the name of the research concept from "concept of Normative power Europe" to „Normative power approach" (Manners, 2013), it is also present in the political rhetoric of the Union, in base of which she describes itself as a "formidable force for good in the world" (European

Security Strategy, 2003:15). But, unfortunately not always this rethoric is coherent with what the Union actually proclaims in International Relations. Namely, the praxis shows us a bit different scenario, in which the European Union sometimes doesn't succeed to be consistent with its stated values, especially towards third countries (Smith, 2008), as a consequence of which it widens the gap between its capability and expectations, best known in the literature as the „capability-expectation gap" (Hill, 1993) and practically earns another nickname of „EUtopia " or false image on an "ideal Europe" (Nicolaïdis & Howse).

On internal plan, this is a result before all of the complex system and the plurality of subjects within the Union, which, *inter alia,* in a big matter depend on the degree of 'Europeanization' (White, 2004:19-21), that is the degree of unitarity of the international identity of the Union (Manners & Whitman, 1998), while on the external plan, this happens as a result of the different trade, political and security interests of the European Union (Smith, 2008:25). Basically, up till now the praxis has shown that the European Union does not succeed to be coherent in its foreign policy especially when it comes to protection of security interest whether the Union's or the Member States (Ginsberg, 2001; Panebianco, 2006; Puetter & Wiener, 2007; Kaya, 2008;). Because of that, the new security dilemmas and geopolitical changes that happened on the international scene as an outcome of the Ukrainian crisis, inspired our thought and made us examine the real reasons behind which lies this kind of behavior of the European Union.

Namely, the crisis which was generated in Ukraine, and which reminded us of the well known bloody scenario which marked the disintegration of Jugoslavia, for a hair didn't tor up the long lasting *pax mundi,* which ruled not only these spaces but also wider on the global level. The threat of a 'Second Cold War', rang the papers of the World media (The Guadian/The Observer, Le monde diplomatique, The New York Times, Washington post, Der Spiegel и други), and knocked also on EU's door, putting its security at stake. In this scenario, which registered the involvement as protagonists in the role of pacificators and mediators to find a way out of the crises, on one side the United States and the European Union, that stood up to the side of the protection of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine, and on the other, the Russian community, that although espoused the side of a peaceful solution to the crisis, she didn't step back from the present *status quo* situation[1]. But, although the European Union stood on the side of the protesters and gave them support, even with the direct presence of some members of the European Parliament in the protestants street rows, the Union still did not succede to prevent the escalation of the events in Ukraine, which happened on the Euromaiden in Kiev and saw the death of hundreds of protesters, nor did it succede to oppose the Russian community and to take appropriate measures towards the "illegal" annexation of Crimea.

The reasons for this kind of incoherent approach of the Euroepan Union in the projection of its values and principles, take way back in the past and are deeply rooted before all in its Neighbourhood policy. Namely, with the establishment of this policy in 2003, the European Union actually wanted to create a framework in which it could project its values, norms and standards in the neighboring states, sharing European prosperity and creating a so called 'ring of friends' (Popescu, 2013:61), and having the main scope of this policy focused on the strengthening democracy, rule of law, protection of human rights and principles of market economy, but also, having the scope of peaceful resolution of the 'frozen conflicts' present in the wider region and prevention of new ones, as well as diversification of different energy sources and transport routes[2].

Albeit, the Union with this policy tried to regulate its international relations, still, 'consciously of uncounsciously' she droped the posibility to give these states the perspective of a future member, by consequence of what, left them in s.c. greay zones on the map of european membership (Haukkala,

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[1] When we speak about *status quo*, we mean the sovereignity and territorial integrity of Ukraine after the Russian annexation of Crimea in March 2014 and after the referenda in Donetsk and Luhansk for independence from Ukraine, held in May 2014.

[2] ENP Action Plan on Armenia, ENP Action Plan on Azerbeijan, ENP Action Plan on Georgia, ENP Action Plan on Moldova, EU-Ukraine Association Agenda to prepare and facilitate the implementation of the Association Agreement as endorsed by the EU-Ukraine Cooperation Council (Luxembourg, 24 June 2013), Belarus Country Strategy Paper 2007 - 2013 and National Indicative Program 2007 – 2011 (Europa website).

2011:48). Namely, the big enlargement of 2004, not only did it bring new member states to the Union, but brought also new neighbors, and above all, neighbors coming from Eastern Europe. Thus, while the Mediterranean countries stay outside the possibility of a European perspective, because of their non-European geographical position, which by the way is one of the basic criteria for joining the EU (article 49 from the Consolidated version of the Treaty of the European Union), the countries from the Eastern neighborhood re-enter in Europe's natural borders, and hypothetically could enter in the circle of states to whom the Union could enlarge. Besides that, these new neighbors continuously ask the EU for the grant of membership, because they retain that they naturally belong there.

To resume. This kind of policy, which at first look seems as altruistic and good intentioned, actually it has two faces or two sides, the first one is formal, while the second one is real. For what concerns the formal side, which rests on the constructivist visions of the international relations, and which mainly coincides the already described foreign policy of the Union towards the states from the Eastern Partnership, with it the Union promotes its values of democracy, rule of law, protection of human rights, peace, liberty and other, with the help of which it spreads its model of liberal democracy and market economy though its normative, economic and diplomatic instruments at its disposal.

In base of the real side, which is founded upon the realistic visions of international relations, it has to do with a policy which is a consequence of the real reasons behind which stands this kind of behavior of the European Union, and which in this concrete case are summed in two: general security and energy security of the Union.

For what concerns the first one, the reason of general security, in base of that the European Union evoids entering into the Russian sphere of influence which it traditionally exersizes towards Ukraine and other countries from Eastern Europe, with the purpose not to undermine the geopolitical equilibrium that is a garant of its peace and prosperity (Ünal Eriş, 2012). She is especially cautious when it comes to the normative rivalary which exists between the two, and these are the main reasons why the Union is so ambiguous towards the possibility of enlargement, because it would be perceived as a increased involvment of the Union and a tentative to install pro-western regimes in the neighbourhood, which in a near future could possibly threat the Russian community (Manners and Tocci 2008: 316).

In reality of everyday relations, this rivalry clashed in the two revolutions which happened in Ukraine. That is, in the first – the Orange revolution, it actually saw divided the two actors, from one side Russia, which supported the destructive and corrupted regimes of Leonid Kuchma (the then President of Ukraine) and Victor Yanukovitch (the then Prime minister of Ukraine), against the other side of the European Union, which supported the protesters of the Orange revolution, ahead with Victor Yushchenko and Julia Timoshenko in their opposition against the results from the presidential election campaign; while in the second revolution, this division was even more obvious, and saw the Russian side openly defending the corrupted prorussian regime of Victor Yanukovitch (the then President of Ukraine), which suspended the undersigning of the Association treaty with the EU, while on the other side, the European Union how it defends the protesters of the Euro maiden, promoting its values of democracy, rule of law and protection of human rights.

For what concernce EU's energy security, will say that just lately this security challenge passed the process of 'securitization' (Keukeleire & MacNaugathan, 2008:23) on the European agenda, and found itself at the list of global threats of the European Security Strategy of 2003, and as time passes it is becoming one of the main threats to the European security at all. In base of that, the incoherent behavior of the European Union is a result of the fact that the Union does not want to spoil its traditional bonds with the Russian community, because it fears that it could repeat the scenario which happened in 2006 and 2009, where as a consequence of a Russian – Ukrainian gas dispute, the gas supply to Ukraine was stopped *id est* to the European Union (Laïdi, 2008:10). This lack of energy supply left the Union and the concerned states of South Eastern Europe, exactly 13 days without energy supply, and that had repercussions in the

functioning of the industrial sector, which as a result brought financial crisis, leaving permanent scars in the proper economies. Practically, the fear from seeing the replication of this scenario, which at the moment we speak is happening, namely 'only a couple of days ago Russia stopped the gas supply towards Ukraine, because of unpaid bills for the last month'. To return to what said before, this explains the European incoherent behavior towards the Russian annexation of Crimea, which instead of facing up and defending the international law and its general principles, the EU quietly accepted it. Moreover, this explains the inconsistent and soft economic sanctions towards the Russian community, with which the Union avoids to impose direct sanctions to President Putin and his close collaborators.

Namely, this energy security threat which becomes even more real with the new deal for gas supply between Russia and Cina for the next 30 years, signed on the 21st May this year, with a cost estimation of over 400 billion of dollars, already became a question of utmost importance which concerns all of Union's member states especially Germany, Great Britain, Italy and others, and found itself to be on the priority list of the last European strategy for energy security, which should be adopted at the upcoming European council on 26 and 27 June, and in which the EU will confirm its collaboration with Russia in the upcoming period at least in short term.

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