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Interrogating security from a relational standpoint: perspectives from Central and Eastern Europe (CEE)

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The Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 has brought security back on the political agenda of most Europeans and highlighted the fragility and deep inequality of the international order. Even though research on security has widened, military security and knowledge from the West still dominates the field because it plays into the hands of the elites of the world. This panel aims to amplify the diverse voices of Central and Eastern Europeans, especially when it comes to their security. We want to make a case not for one single conceptualisation of security but instead stress that we need contextualized and relational conceptualisations of security. Similarly, we see relational approaches on the rise in IR and beyond and see a need to explicitly link them to (critical) security studies. Therefore, to design a truly anti-colonial security architecture, we need to critically and relationally bring together the different (in)securities of a wide-range of regional actors and contexts, and consider the full spectrum of human security (physical, economic, social, and environmental).

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