

Ranabir Samaddar

A Post-Colonial Enquiry into Europe's Debt and Migration Crisis

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Ranabir Samaddar
Calcutta Research Group
Kolkata, West Bengal
India

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Hitherto men have constantly made up for themselves false conceptions about themselves, about what they are and what they ought to be. They have arranged their relationships according to their ideas of God, of normal man, etc. The phantoms of their brains have got out of their hands. They, the creators, have bowed down before their creations.... Once upon a time a valiant fellow had the idea that men were drowned in water only because they were possessed with the idea of gravity. If they were to knock this notion out of their heads, say by stating it to be a superstition, a religious concept, they would be sublimely proof against any danger from water. His whole life long he fought against the illusion of gravity, of whose harmful results all statistics brought him new and manifold evidence. This valiant fellow was the type of the new revolutionary philosophers in Germany.

—Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels,

The German Ideology: Critique of Modern German Philosophy According to Its Representatives Feurbach, B. Bauer, and Stirner, and of German Socialism According to Its Various Prophets, in Marx-Engels Collected Works, Volume 5 (New York: International Publishers, 1975), “Preface”, pp. 22–23

For Sandro Mezzadra

Preface

Four of the five chapters of this book were composed in the months of July–November 2015 around the debt and currency crisis in Europe (known as the Greece crisis, March–August 2015) and the immediately following migration crisis (August–November 2015). The first three chapters dealing with the debt issue reflect three specific concerns on the Greek crisis. The fourth chapter reflects on what is known as the European migration crisis and probes the links between the two crises—debt and migration. Indeed, the migration crisis continues and shows little signs of lessening. The chapters therefore bear the marks of the two crises developing in quick succession.

The concluding chapter discusses the connecting theme between the analyses of the two crises. The theme is of course expressed in the title of first chapter itself, namely the post-colonial bind of Greece, but in a larger sense of Europe. To be truthful, attention to Europe's migration crisis helps to put her debt crisis in proper perspective. Readers, however, should not assume that the author expresses elation in this book that one more country has joined the post-colonial ranks, and behold this time a country from within the European Union! The purpose is to examine in the light of twenty-first century capitalism few notions such as crisis, rupture, dialogue, migration, and the old, never to be settled, question of ideology. The author only wishes to suggest that a critical post-colonial sense of history, accumulation, nation form, and contemporary time will help us make sense of what is now happening to Europe. Therefore, this short book should not be confused with the chaste, upper class works on post-colonial studies that abound the departments of literature and cultural studies in the universities of the West and now increasingly India. It does not belong to that traditional genre of post-colonial studies. Rather, it aims to ground post-colonial reference in a materialist framework.

In the context of the first crisis—the debt and currency crisis—the author has tried to examine here the extent to which the issue of debt can work as a mobilising focal point and more importantly as a template for transformation of social consciousness towards rupture and revolution. In the context of this issue, the author has tried to examine the illusions of the European Left and the New Left, the illusion of Europe, and the illusion regarding the capacity of social mobilisation as a

substitute of political mobilisation to effect revolutionary transformation of consciousness. One of the chapters, the second in fact, therefore proposes to scrutinise the tactics of negotiations by Greece leadership with European Union, and another chapter, the third, undertakes a brief journey into the emergence of Europeanism as ideology, which turned the struggle of the Greek working masses into former's victim. The fourth chapter then moves on from the first crisis to the second crisis—the migration crisis. This chapter is crucial for the book, for in course of discussing in detail the migration crisis, anticipates the connection between the debt and currency crisis on the one hand and the migration crisis on the other hand. It shows, how the Europeanist ideology and the politico-economic-financial system could not but produce the second crisis. It was perhaps providence that the second crisis followed the first so quickly.

Now to introduce the chapters briefly:

Chapter 1 deals with the post-colonial nature of the Greek financial and political crisis. It shows how the European scenario is typical across much of the world and how Europe's periphery is now playing out a script already performed many times in the post-colony. In this context, it discusses certain aspects of politics in the time of a crisis, which too resemble post-colonial experiences. Yet what is significant, the chapter argues, is that the Greek leaders remained oblivious of the post-colonial destiny of the Greek nation.

Chapter 2 analyses the negotiations over debt restructuring between Athens and Brussels in the five months of February to July 2015 and shows how the Europeanist and democratic illusion of the Syriza leaders of Greece led them to ignoring the similarities between what we can call the rules of dialogue and rules of war. In this context, it discusses the respective stands of the parties to the negotiations. It argues that a greater awareness of the complexities of the realities of the crisis was essential for Greece to engage with the financial and political might of the euro zone and corporate Europe as a whole.

Chapter 3 begins with details of the deal, analyses the neoliberal programme of reshaping the Greek state through the deal, and then proceeds to unravel the phenomenon of Europe as the eternal illusion—the Europa to be rescued eternally from her abductors. The chapter in this context engages in a discussion on the ideology of Europeanism which had put Greece in the first place in the service of *euro*, the common currency of a large chunk of the continent and the main instrument of a monetarist union, through which Europe had transformed itself into a neoliberal land. Once again the chapter argues that at the heart of the illusion lay a self-created and self-held belief that the nation question in Europe was over, that Europe had a special history, and the destiny of Greece lay with this special history of Europe, and that a radical transformation of Greece would come only through a continent wide transformation. In this context, the chapter examines the illusions of the European Left and the New Left, the illusion of Europe, and the illusion about the capacity of social mobilisation to work as a substitute of political mobilisation towards revolutionary transformation of consciousness.

Chapter 4 discusses the political, ideological, and discursive context in which migration appears as a “crisis” for Europe. Europe achieved continental unification through economic means, liberal constitutionalism, and currency union. It set goals of peace and security that encouraged everyone to be a liberal with unfettered freedom to access the market, and on the other hand allowed the European Union to follow interventionist policies near abroad. The consequences of the Union are to be found in Europe’s restrictive and contradictory policies and programmes relating to immigration and refugee protection. European migration crisis originates from this. The book concludes by way of suggesting that neoliberalism’s victory in Europe may have come at a great cost. As the Paris and Brussels killings suggested, even though this victory may be pyrrhic, its impact on population flows (including labour flows) may be severe. Europe as a neoliberal union (or empire) has to forge today’s appropriate care and protection regime. Both force and monetary tools will operate as instruments of this transformation. In that sense, and as the suspension of the Schengen arrangement by France in the aftermath of Paris killings suggested, Europe has already arrived at a post-Schengen era.

In sum, these chapters argue that taken together these two crises are the signs of a transformation of Europe from being a liberal union to a neoliberal imperial formation in which national, class, and geopolitical contradictions can only sharpen. And to the extent this happens, Europe will more and more resemble the post-colonial bind in which much of the world finds itself. This is the central argument of this book, namely that Europe’s present crisis suggests a post-colonial bind or to put in stronger term a post-colonial destiny of that continent.

Chapter 5 is a postscript to the book. It discusses in view of the preceding chapters the link between the two crises—the debt and the migration crises—and raises the question of method in analysing the link. In a way, these last few pages form the most critical section of the book. It concludes the book by way of discussing what do we mean by post-colonial in this context? What is its place in the neoliberal world? And, specifically, why does the simultaneous presence of debt crisis and migration crisis convey the global relevance of the post-colonial world and in particular the interlinked crises of debt and migration?

Since this is not a pure academic essay, writing from Kolkata a political tract on Greece, Europe, debt, and migration was not easy. Literally trying to keep pace with the speed of events as the latter were unfolding it was difficult to separate chaff from the grain and see through the machinations and the ideological designs of the Right and the illusions of the Left. The failure of the Greek Left, known as the Syriza, was not at all a surprise to people hardened in defeats and protracted war against capitalism. The events of June–August have acted as a catalyst for undertaking a thorough critique of the politics of the European New Left. It is time to recall Marx and Engels, who said in preface to *German Ideology*, “Hitherto men have constantly made up for themselves false conceptions about themselves, about what they are and what they ought to be. They have arranged their relationships according to their ideas of God, of normal man, etc. The phantoms of their brains have got out of their hands. They, the creators, have bowed down before their creations.... Once upon a time a valiant fellow had the idea that men were drowned in water only

because they were possessed with the idea of gravity. If they were to knock this notion out of their heads, say by stating it to be a superstition, a religious concept, they would be sublimely proof against any danger from water. His whole life long he fought against the illusion of gravity, of whose harmful results all statistics brought him new and manifold evidence. This valiant fellow was the type of the new revolutionary philosophers in Germany”.

Today as Europe again threatens to be the eye of an unprecedented storm, it is important to recall these words vis-à-vis the Europeanist illusions of some of the Left intellectuals of Europe. Many of the illusions grew from an earlier Keynesian era, which gave birth to the welfare state, idea of social citizenship, various forms of social mobilisation, and the distinct ideology of Europe. All these resulted in the illusion of the possibility of a return to welfare state even when monetarist policies in the wake of neoliberalism and the crash of 2008 should have made these European intellectuals aware that such return was not possible. An awareness of the larger post-colonial reality of the world could have told them that outside in the post-colonial world, there was no sharp distinction between Keynesian policies and neoliberal policies, between liberal democracy and authoritarianism, social mobilisation and political mobilisation, and populist politics and Left politics. More importantly, the post-colonial experiences could have told them the continuing relevance of the nation form of politics in combining classes, masses, and the people—in other words, class struggle, democracy, and solidarity with struggles elsewhere. In an astonishing mood of iconoclasm, the New Left intellectuals swept aside the long history of struggles for socialism, as if everything in the past had failed and was bad and the time for the new had come. Likewise when flames of war burnt the entire Middle East (Europe’s near abroad), Europe (including official socialists) assumed that it would not be harmed by the consequences of that war, one of which would be massive migration. It was assumed by many including the official socialists that strict immigration rules to strengthen the *cordon sanitaire* backed by strong police, military, and surveillance methods would do. Once again an awareness of the larger post-colonial reality of the world could have told them that outside of Europe that is to say in the post-colonial world, countries like Jordan (or India), had borne the brunt of war and migration for a long time.

All these discussions will help us to understand the post-colonial reality that has today engulfed the world including Europe, and a critical post-colonial framework is the best lens to understand what is happening to today’s so-called developed world. The dilemmas, paradoxes, limitations, projects of state restructuring, and the ethics and politics of protection and power—all these carry post-colonial imprint. Lessons are to be drawn from this feature of our time, and Europe the object of our admiration and goodwill can perhaps do better if it opens its eyes onto the outside world and learn how India and many other countries in the post-colonial world have tried to tackle such crisis. Europeanist illusions need to be discussed therefore in the interest of intellectual clarity and in a spirit of collective engagement. This book has been written to that end. Apart from contemporary sources, the book draws from several rounds of discussions in the past three years with European militant intellectuals and activists—discussions marked by frustration,

irritation, mutual incomprehension, agitation and at times disappointment, leaving a silent question in author's mind: Is it then a question of *Our Marx, Their Marx*? But we know that we are travellers of the same road.

One final introductory comment: While this is a political writing, it is also in the nature of writing on current history, a work of political journalism, and also a piece of analytical commentary based on contemporary sources. It is not a historical piece. It draws its strength from being a work on contemporary time, plus the fact that in place of the usual Western writings on India and the post-colonial world in general, it is a piece of counterreflection that of the post-colonial on the West. It is a time-sensitive work. Much of its nuance will be lost if we do not remember that this book has the nature of contemporary reportage, the nature of contemporary history, and a commentary on our time—*this time, this moment, this cycle of events...*

Kolkata, India
April 2016

Ranabir Samaddar

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My debt, above all, is to Etienne Balibar. I have learnt from him through several years and have come to appreciate the best of a European mind and a European dream that includes justice for the migrants and vision of a democracy from below. Perhaps he will not agree to everything I have written here. But I shall continue to learn from his method of analysis.

This short work is dedicated to the friendship Sandro Mezzadra offered me more than a decade back and which I continue to cherish immensely.

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About the Author

Ranabir Samaddar has worked extensively on issues of migration and forced migration, nationalism and post-colonial statehood in South Asia, and new regimes of technological restructuring, labour control, and forms of labour. His recent writings on post-colonial capitalism and India's neoliberal development have signalled a new turn in critical post-colonial thinking. His coauthored work on new towns and new forms of accumulation *Beyond Kolkata: Rajarhat and the Dystopia of Urban Imagination* (2013) takes forward urban studies in the context of post-colonial accumulation. He is currently Distinguished Chair in Migration and Forced Migration Studies, Calcutta Research Group, Kolkata.

Chapter 1

The Post-colonial Bind of Greece

Abstract This chapter deals with the post-colonial nature of the Greek’s financial and political crisis of 2015. The decade-long financial crisis snowballed into a debt and currency crisis marking European politics and economy of last few years. The chapter shows how the Greek, and in a sense, the European scenario is typical across much of the world, and how Europe’s periphery is now playing out a script of debt, bondage, and neoliberal reforms, already performed many times in the post-colony. In this context, it discusses certain aspects of politics in the time of a crisis, which too resemble post-colonial experiences, including experiences of populism. Yet what is significant, the chapter argues, is that the Greek leaders remained oblivious of the post-colonial destiny of the Greek nation. Even European Left politics was imprisoned in the politics of the welfare state of the post Second World era that fed into a European economic project and failed to recognise the emerging post-colonial realities made global by neoliberalism.

Keywords Debt crisis · Euro zone · Neoliberal · Troika · IMF · Syriza · Populism · Post-colonial bind · European central bank · Varoufakis · European stability pact · Monetarism · Greek referendum

A Post-colonial Debt Crisis

To term a country in Europe as a post-colony will be considered an insult. Colonialism and post-colonial destiny is for others—countries, nations, and peoples outside the Euro-North Atlantic world that includes few honorary members such as Japan and Australia. Europe has given birth to democracy and is naturally democratic. And if there are periods of authoritarianism, do not forget that democracy returns and returns inevitably, in much like the double movement of Polanyi (1957).¹ According to this double movement, history evolves in cycles—periodic disembedding movements, when the market because of its speculative and

¹On the reflection of Polanyi’s thesis in the current impasse, see Konngs (2015); see also, Patomaki (2014).

individualising logic is estranged from its social and political foundations, followed by re-embedding movements, when society reorganises and brings the market back under the considerations of public good. Thus, the argument of the natural inclination of Europe for democracy views a financial crisis as a powerful reminder of the inability of markets to self-regulate and accordingly takes such a crisis as a turning point, when again through the effort of the society the market will be brought back under social control. Some have argued taking a somewhat different line that “democratic global Keynesianism would enable processes of de-commodification and new syntheses concerning the market/social nexus” (Patomaki 2014: 746).

Most of the anti-austerity social movements in Europe practising new democratic methods, such as occupy, referendum, grassroots elections, local solidarity bodies, capturing municipal governmental power, etc., thus focus on debt and crisis copula to make a return to democracy possible. Political strategies are accordingly designed and pursued at times with admirable success. The conventional Communist parties failed to link debt, crisis, and democracy in this mode and thus have been marginalised by the evolving political dynamics of neoliberalism, at least for the time being. There is some truth in this view, and surely the Communist movement will have to learn from this.

Yet there is a fundamental problem with this view. The trouble with this view is that it does not link the fortunes of democracy with post-colonial destiny. Therefore, the entire Euro-North Atlantic debate on debt, crisis, and democracy leaves out the question of neocolonial domination, which is not only the necessary background against which debt, crisis, and democracy interrelate, and democracy’s fortune is determined, but which also acts as an almost invariable factor shaping the interrelations of the three. The thesis of “radical indeterminacy”² is too lazy to take into account the analytics related to colonial and post-colonial histories and the law of unequal capitalist development.

To appreciate this question, we must ask: Is Greek debt an exceptional event? Or, is it not the case that much of the post-colonial world has suffered for long from indebtedness—ranging from peasant indebtedness to national indebtedness—and has experienced debt crisis, and Greece is only the latest to feature in a long list of indebted countries? And if so, did Syriza, the anti-austerity Greek Left platform ruling that country, study the global history of debt crisis? The fact is that while with graphic and often visual details of its shuttered banks, public protests, and the plight of a country brought to its knees by a crippling debt burden, the account of Greek crisis has been gripping and tragic, a full-blown sovereign debt crisis was already on in much of the post-colonial world for the last few decades. Greece’s plight is far from unique. Several countries in the post-colonial world—from Sub-Saharan Africa to South East Asia—lie in a debt danger zone, where an economic downturn or a sudden jump in interest rates on world debt markets can lead to disaster. Investors from the countries with rock-bottom interest rates have

²Phrase ascribed to Marx by Varoufakis (2013).

become footloose looking for bigger returns than what they can get at home. In many cases, the mobility has lured and prompted post-colonial states, commercial firms, and financial institutions to go on fresh borrowing frenzies, inviting potential problems. At times, these states are compelled to borrow; at times, they build for themselves rosy futures to be realised with the help of cheap borrowings. While there is some difference between the current Greek scenario and traditional national indebtedness of the ex-colonies, there is at the same time an extraordinary similarity of post-colonial experiences with the current phenomenon of sovereign debt.

While debt loads up many think that the borrowed money can be gainfully deployed towards diversification of economy and improvement of infrastructure. But this does not deter the empty financialisation of the country including financialisation and privatisation of its all kinds of assets, accompanied by massive corruption, which this process must bring in. Ghana among others is a big example. In many countries, government debt is about or higher than 30 % of GDP, a current account deficit of over 5 % of GDP, and future debt repayments worth more than 10 % of government revenue. Tanzania had severe debt crisis in the 1990s. It has now managed to come out of the crisis; repayments have fallen from 27 % of government revenue to 2 %; child mortality has dropped; fees for primary schools have been abolished; more children are completing their schooling. But in Tanzania government revenues are heavily dependent on exports of gold and precious metal ores. Falling commodity prices combined with a strong dollar have endangered countries in Africa even more, because borrowing is dollar-denominated there. And, yet borrowing seems to be rising again, in Tanzania as in Ethiopia. Likewise Mongolia has welcomed foreign investment to exploit its huge natural resources, including coal, and plans to borrow heavily to create infrastructure suitable for said exploitation.

In short, current levels of lending threaten to recreate debt crises. Yet it is not just in the post-colonial world that we find that the legacy of the crisis deepens. The temptation to paper over the cracks with borrowed money is truly a global phenomenon linking the democratic West and the post-colonial world in a remarkable but enigmatic knot. One estimate puts net cross-border lending worldwide increasing from \$11.3 trillion in 2011 to \$13.8 trillion in 2014. The same source also admits that all this debt is probably being accumulated because other sources of growth are increasingly in decline. As the Greek Left leaning ruling party Syriza found, debts appearing manageable one day could quickly become unsustainable the next if conditions in financial markets or the economy churlishly called “sentiments” abruptly shifted (Bruno and Shin 2014: 5, Fig. 1).³

In the euro zone, periphery countries became the sites of funnelling loans so as to benefit from low interest rates in the core countries because in this case sharing the same currency as in Germany made such mobility of credit easier. It only delayed

³Estimates, however, vary. Another analysis suggests: “The past two decades have witnessed a remarkable increase in cross-border bank lending activity. Between 1995 and 2012, total cross-border loan claims almost tripled to reach 20 trillion U.S. dollars” Cerutti et al. (2014: 6); in the first instance, the figure is of total liabilities. The figures in this and the preceding paragraph are collected from the sources cited in this note.

the appearance of the debt crisis, though the effects of a surge of capital inflows on real exchange rates should have been clear to all. Domestic prices rose faster than those of trading partners. Investment increased in non-tradable sectors (such as real estate and construction, mostly linked to a logistical vision of economy) and financial assets such as domestic stocks and shares. Everywhere such situation has made exports more expensive and imports cheaper, further aggravating the decline. Everywhere the emerging markets receiving large capital inflows also had real estate and stock market booms, and then the downturn. What one economist calls the “debt funded profligacy” (Phelps 2015) has in the end resulted in capital flight and financial crisis. And, then as if in a pre-scripted drama, the lender countries levelled charges against the debt-ridden countries of irresponsibility and made demands on these indebted countries for adopting prudent economic policies. This happened in much of the ex-colonial countries, now happening in the euro zone. Much as elsewhere, now in Europe we have the *north* and the *south*.

So Greece will find its experiences similar to those of Bhutan, Ethiopia, Ghana, Laos, Mongolia, Mozambique, Samoa, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda, Belize, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Gambia, Grenada, Ireland, Jamaica, Lebanon, Macedonia, Montenegro, Sri Lanka, Tunisia, Ukraine, Sudan, Zimbabwe, and many others countries. Armenia and Ukraine entered this list after the *anusmirabilis* of 1989. Pro-European Greeks may find comfort from the fact that Spain and Portugal—two ex-colonial powers—also suffer the same destiny that post-colonies symbolise in this world.⁴

We can get some idea of what sovereignty can mean for a debtor country at least under certain circumstances from a cursory comparative glance on Japan and Greece. Japan has higher level of debt than Greece and yet it did not need international bailouts. And, we have to note that Greece’s sovereign debt is not the world’s largest. Though it is 177 % of GDP, it is 234 % of GDP in case of Japan—the global leader in public sector debt. One main reason is that much like China and (to some extent) India, a significant chunk of Japanese government debt is owed to itself. Taking this out will mean that the debt to GDP ratio will amount to 140 % only. Likewise, quite a chunk of Japanese debt is owed to Japanese investors. The Japanese have very high rates of household savings, and much of this is invested in Japanese government bonds. Another factor is that Japan retains significant room to raise taxes to pay off its debt. Currently, the country’s consumption tax stands at 8 % only—much lower than rates in other countries such as the UK where VAT is 20 %. In Greece, for some goods it can be as high as 23 %. Japan has control over its own monetary policy. If it wants to start printing money, it can. Thus, the Bank of Japan has been printing money to buy government debt. Greece, in contrast, does not have this option. The Japanese government can initiate steps for fiscal stimulus. Plus, it has a strong public sector delivering services and supports to Japanese industry. It does not mean of course everything rosy in Japan and that the country

⁴On the similarity between third-world debt crisis, see Stewart (2015); also, the analysis by Jubilee Debt Campaign (2015), and Ghosh (2012).

can ignore its huge national debt. But the difference in situation indicates that Greece—and Europe more widely—can learn from how other countries can live and deal with debt, without it being such a crisis, if it has national sovereignty in a substantive sense and at least to some extent (Spicer 2015).

European exceptionalism therefore is a myth. Countries of Europe's periphery are now playing out a script already played many times in the post-colony. What is happening in Europe is not what the liberals portray, namely some fallout of an attempt at economic union without political commitment to fiscal transfers. That idea also is a myth and only plays to the neoliberal tune. The European scenario is typical. The European peripheral countries therefore may like to examine the ways in which debt crisis has been handled or averted or postponed—for instance in India, Malaysia, Argentina, all of whom violated global rules, imposed temporary capital controls, depreciated their currencies, effectively defaulting on debts, and followed expansionary fiscal policies at home. The global managers were angry, but could do little. Finally, they can of course learn from China, which never incurred foreign debt after she became free.

How and why was it possible? After all these countries too had faced austerity, which unlike in Europe was not an exceptional phenomenon but a general condition of life? Yet, at some point politics there became incomparably richer. This is where we have to bring back the question of democracy and the post-colonial impact on democratic theory and the repertoire of democratic experiences.

Debt, Crisis, and the Democratic Closure

Greek crisis may be seen as a conflict between national democracy and EU governance, particularly after the Greek public rejected in the 5 July referendum the continued EU demands for austerity measures.⁵ But as against this, some think that the clue to a political solution to the conflict is in more EU democracy. Political parties not only in Greece noticed the democratic dysfunction of Europe. It is one of the reasons why many in Europe are advocating an exit from the euro, and more broadly a return of competencies from the European to the national level. Once again the classic question has come back to the agenda: What is the locus of sovereignty? Where does the democratic will, the general will of the people, reside? If the model of national parliaments is to be no more the true source of legitimacy and the best

⁵The referendum to decide whether Greece was to accept the bailout conditions to get out of the debt crisis proposed jointly by the European Commission, the European Central Bank, and the International Monetary Fund (jointly known as the Troika) was held on 5 July 2015. The referendum was announced by Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras announced the referendum on 27 June 2015. It was ratified the following day by the Greek Parliament and the president. It was the first referendum to be held since the Republic Referendum of 1974. In the referendum, the bailout conditions were rejected by a 61 % of the voters with a “NO” while 39 % approved the conditions. The rejection vote won in all of Greece's regions.

venue for democratic decision-making, then where is it now, and where should this be? All these questions now vex democracy, particularly European democratic politics—whether practiced by the pro-European liberals or the pro-European Left.

The point is that we still do not have any worthy example of continental democracy. We still have no blueprint of democracy delinked from the nation and the nation form, which is not to say that the nation form is sufficient to achieve democracy. At the same time we must also remember that the nation form never meant in the first place an absence of internationalism, international dialogues, international dialogic arrangements, and international solidarity of the working class and working peoples.

Look carefully at what happened recently in Europe: The Greek voters rejected austerity policies imposed by the euro zone causing a GDP fall of 25 % over the past five years and massive unemployment rise just as high in the country. They responded democratically. It was also democratic to put before the people the choice for more austerity. Yet other countries and electorates in Europe have said or could have said “No” to the euro, or “No” to a common constitution for Europe, or to a massive loan to Greece that Greece required. If the victory of Alexi Tsipras, the Greek Prime Minister, in the referendum renewed his legitimacy at home, then by the same measure French and Dutch voters rejected the EU constitutional treaty, and may have even opted for xenophobia against migrants. This is thus only to some extent a battle between democracy and Europe. The European vision may be coloured by democratic hue, but democratic compromise will involve a substantial technocratic process of identifying the Europe’s conflicting wills. The answer is sadly but surely not in democracy as many would like to think.

Once again, a deal was again on the table and was concluded with all democratic requirements including fresh elections, thus escaping the standoff. Stringent reforms, harsh austerity, massive privatisation, coupled with debt-restructuring at some stage stabilised to some extent Greek presence in the euro zone. The referendum may have been the trick of Alexi Tsipras, who after gaining new legitimacy (thrice—January 2015 elections when the Syriza came to power, the referendum of 5 July, and then the snap elections of 20 September⁶) has used it now to implement

⁶Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras announced resignation on 20 August 2015 to seek fresh mandate to implement the austerity deal with the Troika. The Greek legislative elections were held on 20 September. This was a snap election, the fourth since 2009, since new elections were not due until February 2019. The elections to 300 seats resulted in an unexpectedly large victory for Tsipras’ Coalition of the Radical left, known as the Syriza. It fell 6 seats short of an absolute majority and was able to reform a coalition government with the right-wing Independent Greeks (ANEL). Opposition center-right New Democracy (ND) was stagnant at 28 % of votes and 75 seats. Far-right Golden Dawn (XA) came out as the third political force rising slightly to 7 %. The Communist Party of Greece (KKE) failed to increase its vote tally. The Syriza-splinter group Popular Unity could not reach the required 3 % threshold and did not win parliamentary representation. The turnout was low—at 56.6 %, the lowest ever recorded in a Greek legislative election since the restoration of democracy in 1974. Commentator noted voters’ apathy and weariness after being continuously called to the polls (this election marked the third vote throughout 2015, after the January 2015 election and the July 2015 referendum).

a neoliberal agenda. We shall have to ask: Why had the anti-austerity politics to be framed in terms of staying within euro zone or going out? Was this not a classic case of what Michel Foucault would have called the enlightenment blackmail? Let us recall Alexi Tsipras, “We are confronted with crucial decisions. We got a mandate to bring a better deal than the ultimatum that the euro group gave us, but certainly not given a mandate to take Greece out of the euro zone”. And then the appeal for party unity: “We are all in this together” (Tsipras 2015). One has to ask, did not the Syriza and the European Left self-drive into a bind by framing the question as *for it or against it*? And why also the framing as following, *if the euro fails*? How could a question of pure tactic become one of strategy marked by theological belief? This is how the spectre of *Grexit* (Greek exit from the euro zone and the European Union) was created scaring and threatening the European and Greek Left into submission. The neoliberal discourse of responsibility rode on the democratic discourse of anti-austerity, turned the latter into its other and what had originated as the risk of corporate Europe transformed into a responsibility of the common people. Everyone said—from Prime Minister Tsipras to Chancellor Merkel—a crisis has been averted (Scally 2015). Every democratic politician said, *Grexit* would have been a disaster and a chaos! To avoid this chaos, Syriza was asked to streamline the party, marginalise the militant sections, and constitute itself as a democratic parliamentary power. This is precisely what happened. We truly witnessed through these events a new form of passive revolution whereby capitalism in Greece would now develop. And, this is the link between neocolonial form of power and the interrelations between debt, crisis, and democracy.

Can we escape the bind of debt and crisis through internationalisation of the strike movement? One attempt framed the agenda in this way:

Austerity is now the new normality in Europe. In these years monetary policies have been used to enforce neo-liberal labour reforms, privatization of the commons, cuts in welfare benefits, and less civil rights. European governments and financial institutions use debt and technical parameters as a political tool to play workers and populations against each other, as the blackmail against Greece has shown... Through outsourcing and subcontracting the strength and the power of strike action is challenged. The many existing struggles throughout Europe on wages, housing, welfare and freedom of movement are confronting, from different sides the current attack on life and working conditions. Faced with the transnational dimension of these attack, it becomes apparent the need to overcome their isolation and to find common priorities. The new forms of mutualism and local self-organization which have developed since the crisis are confronted with the problem of enlargement and inability to communicate with other struggles on wage and working/living conditions. The capitalist divisions between permanent workers, temps and unemployed, migrants and locals, formal and informal sectors create obstacles to the organization of successful struggles inside and outside the workplaces, throughout all of society. While Trade Unions, associations and movements centre their activity within a national context, the transnational dimension of the European government of mobility and labour requires the capacity to build a power on the same scale of the attacks deployed. In front of this situation, we want to build up a process for a transnational social strike that could create connections, organization, transnational communication and strengthen common bonds between social and labour struggles. The transnational social strike starts from the limits of traditional forms of social and labour struggles and the form of trade union organization, from the loss of power that the strike, even when general, has experienced due to

precarization and the transnational dimension of production. The strike is the name of a practice and of a process of organization that entails the need to bring labour (in all its current forms) back in the agenda of the social movements.... How do we strike where the borders between the inside and the outside of the workplaces are blurring? Are the claims on European minimum wage, income, welfare and minimum residency permit for migrants able to work as tools of transnational organization and of connection between the already existing struggles in different cities and countries of Europe and beyond?... Everyone who is interested in building this process and in contributing to its organization is very welcome to participate in the meeting (Conessioni Precarie 2015).⁷

Even though in this manifesto the word *democracy* is missing, clearly the idea is to broaden the base of local struggles, overcome divisions among the working people imposed by capitalism, and take the social form of protest to a higher, supposedly (more) *political* level. Support worthy as these attempts are, they still miss the specificity of the political—the politics of democracy. Social is the political to the European Left—the non-Communist Left—and they are not aware that their social dream stands against two ghosts—one from the past and other too having its own lineage, namely democracy and the nation form. A little awareness of the global history of neocolonial domination would have alerted the twenty-first century European Left to address these two issues in its fight against neoliberalism. On the first that is the *democratic question*, it thinks that democracy continuously practised would develop endlessly and somehow transform into socialism. On the second that is the *nation question*, it thinks that the nation question will vanish with the practising of democracy, and in any case with globalisation the nation question has become irrelevant.

To put briefly, the innocence of the European Left regarding the machinations of democracy is due to four reasons:

- (a) The social politics of the European Left has delinked the fight against neoliberalism from the fundamental struggle against capitalism (inasmuch as the old Left that is the Communist Parties delinked from their struggle against capitalism the struggle against the new phenomenon of neoliberalism), and thus, the European Left focuses solely on precariousness, debt, financial crisis, and austerity to the neglect of everything related to strategic politics;
- (b) As a consequence they have delinked the two issues—democracy and the nation form;
- (c) Thus, they have thrown away the sword (in form) of the nation in the absence of which the bourgeoisie has been able to turn the “global” (that is European) against them; not only that that sword has been taken up by the bourgeoisie against the working masses;
- (d) Still more as a consequence the European Left now depend on parliamentary reform measures while agreeing to swallow the bitter pills of capitalism—a political strategy as old as the one advocated by Bernstein.

⁷See also Blockupy (2015).

In other words, the European Left with a vision obsessed with the “social” will miss the politics of democracy. It was all the more ironic for the Greek Left and Syriza in particular, because they forgot that long back for few centuries some Greek cities had mobilised intense popular participation in politics and war, combining this with monumental public architecture and urban wealth management, giving the whole thing a name, *democracy*, the management of the polis. Freedom in public life encouraged the Hellenic thinkers to develop secular, rational, argumentative, and complex methods of deliberation. Democracy was a pragmatic thing, and not an ideology. Freedom meant contributing to that pragmatism. Neoliberalism in particular and liberal thought in general have turned the pragmatic into ideological—making it perfect for the bourgeois rule to function with democracy and succeed. It has become a religion. This is the reason why the democratic route cannot take the anti-austerity struggle far and transform the latter to a higher form of resistance. Indeed, the anti-austerity struggle relapses and has relapsed in several instances in Europe into constitutionalism. That is also the reason why delinked from the nation form popular democracy loses its teeth. Is it accidental that democracy and Europeanism of our time have gone ahead hand in hand and have been partners in crime against the people?

Reflections on all these concerns will help us to realise why in place of authoritarianism democracy became the general route to passive revolution—more so in the neoliberal age. Not without reason Marx castigated republican parliamentarianism as the most sophisticated form of bourgeois rule and Lenin saw through the institution of democracy and found only the evidence of the most effective form of class rule. Also not without reason, the Syriza through broadly following the parliamentary democratic path reached only this far and to save its rule it has to now push through the throat of the parliament a neoliberal agenda and for that has to reconstitute itself into a party of order.

Populism

What is then the relevance of post-colonialism to all these—to the fortunes of the European South?

The post-colony is no post-colony if it did not symbolise and relate to us the rich experiences of populism which have left their heavy imprint on the democratic question. And this is where we must connect the two destinies—the European and the post-colonial. I am referring here to the enormous experiences of populist politics with which the post-colonial countries have resisted the bourgeoisie and a very authoritarian institutionalist straightjacket of democracy. In the time of neoliberal globalisation if democracy is the path of passive revolution and capitalist development, populism remains one of the principal weapons in the hands of the lower classes to defend their existence threatened by ruthless corporate interests. Populism evokes the links between the classes and masses, between petty producers and workers. It is the *other scene*, the *displaced site*, of what the Communists

following Chairman Mao used to call once upon a time the united front (Tse Tung 1938). It represents an unstable historic bloc in the time of neoliberal crisis. It is a response to crisis. Since precarious life is the general post-colonial condition, populism retains an abiding reference to it. In the absence or weak presence of Communist movement, populism is the weapon of the weak. Populism enables popular forces to articulate demands of the people against indebtedness, precariousness, and governmental austerity measures; it raises the discourse of rights to a new contentious level and heightens the awareness that in the time of crisis people need their government which can protect them at least to some extent and for that it can throw away bourgeois institutional respectability, conservative discourse of responsibility, and make a case for defending a society under attack. If the social movements in Europe aim to conjure up a form of politics on the basis of social assemblies and assemblages, populist movements in the post-colonial world aim to conjure up a society on the basis of populist politics—a society fractured into classes, groups, fractions, strata, caste, ethnicity, gender, and many other identities to be assembled on the foundations of some popular perceptions of claims and justice. It has a healthy disrespect for the institutionalist-authoritarian version of democracy. It can to that end become personality-centric, assimilative, coalitional, tactical, and issue-oriented.⁸

Not without surprise, repeated crises in Europe have produced many populist movements (much like in the post-colonial world, which is marked by precariousness and austerity as general condition), both of the Right and Left varieties. Here is a recent history to ponder. In 2010, a good five years before a Left-popular coalition government was formed in Greece then EU President Herman van Rompuy had called populism “the greatest danger for Europe” (BBC News 2012). Since then, many establishment voices have done the same, warning against populism, while remaining vague on the exact meaning of the word. Donald Tusk, the European Council president, has warned that the Greek crisis is helping to fuel a “pre-revolutionary atmosphere” in Europe. Tusk, who brokered the Greek bailout deal, was reported to have told, “For me, the atmosphere is a little similar to the time after 1968 in Europe. I can feel, maybe not a revolutionary mood, but something like widespread impatience. When impatience becomes not an individual but a social experience of feeling, this is the introduction for revolutions” (Khan 2015). It is this ideological and political contagion that really worries the European political class, not just the financial contagion that Greek crisis may cause.

We have to note that those who have voiced this warning against the supposed omnipresence of populism are mostly the parties and persons in power. In the neoliberal discourse, populism is a pejorative word. It is to be denounced because it is a form of politics that combines demagoguery, charismatic leadership, rhetoric, and lower culture.

⁸On this my reading of populist movements and politics in the post-colonial world veers away from Ernesto Laclau’s reading in *On Populist Reason* (2005) as well as his and Chantal Mouffe’s thesis on radical democracy (1985). See in this context, Hancox (2015).

While the neoliberal denouncement is based on false reading of a particular form of politics, it is true that populism will like the society to be seen as composed to two separate entities—the people and the corrupt, anti-people elite. Thus, larger political agenda, such as an alternative vision of economy or politics, is not the concern of populist politics. Populism is thus neither inherently the true content of democracy nor its negation. All that we can say is that to a great extent it is anti-liberal democracy. It can be illiberal, but in many other cases, it can be pluralist. It is thus neither to the Right nor to the Left; or can be both. Perhaps it is more on the Left in European South while more to the Right in the European North. In Eastern Europe, agrarian populism had a remarkable history. Racist and anti-immigrant parties later embraced populist politics and language. Populist Right in the 1980s beginning with Belgium, France, spread to Austria, Denmark, Poland, Italy, Finland, the Netherlands, and some other countries. It will be safe to say that populism has marked the entire European scene and been successful electorally on a number of occasions. In many East European countries, such parties exercise governmental power (Mudde 2015).

One can also say that the path Syriza took may only facilitate further advance of populism in Greece as people would even more base their politics on the belief that important issues, such as life and life conditions of common people, would not be addressed by political elites. This may further relate to issues like integration, immigration, unemployment, and welfare policies. One can see how populism has strengthened following changes in labour structure in Europe and has focused on what can be loosely called “socio-economic issues”. This is the third way, the way of the centre-left—if the first way is neoliberal and the second is the Old Left politics. Overwhelmed by the power of the media in the neoliberal structure of politics, people think they are powerless in front of the neoliberal monolith. Feeling of helplessness exacerbates populist conduct of politics. This precisely is the milieu in which Syriza led government worked and is working and has allowed its nose to be smothered to dust. We cannot forget that during the massive anti-austerity protests and encampments in the summer of 2011, one of the principal slogans was quintessentially populist, “We are neither right nor left, we are coming from the bottom and going for the top” (Hancox 2015: n. 8).

Yet the problem is that a party like Syriza will never admit that its fascination with Europe and euro—uttered in the same breath—is more due to its populist moorings than to any scientific analysis, and the scary prospect of anarchy, where an exit from the euro zone to happen, is essentially a consequence of that populist conception of what a Left or Marxist politics should be, because this kind of Leftism has its origin in the now forgotten story of euro-Communism. That story essentially centred round the idea that Europe was exceptional, it was instinctively democratic, and all that the Left needed given the lofty European ideals was to incrementally increase its parliamentary following, win governmental power, and reform the state. Europe did not need Communist parties; it needed more democracy for society. Therefore, it allowed itself to be pushed to a bind; its repeated

popular mandates at various levels and times through constitutional ways only deepened its illusion, and belittled the power of the enemy. The lack of political audacity stemmed from an almost religious conviction that the Syriza as a responsible party could not back out; it had the onus of saving Greece from anarchy. Ironically, one may say, It capitulated before the European oligarchs not because it was populist, but because it was not enough populist to play the game. Its seriousness at conducting negotiations without creating other options mocked at its own populist origin.

Here is the relevance of the post-colonial experiences of populism. Its relation with democracy, particularly with parliamentary democracy, is much more complex and contentious. Even though it abides by the rules of democratic governance, it is cynical about these rules, almost bordering on a healthy disrespect. At heart, it knows that democracy has an essential populist side to it (precisely what Aristotle had taught us), and there is no democracy that does not have a populist dimension to it. Thus under populist politics in post-colonial countries, allusions to people have proliferated dramatically, if newspapers are to be believed, though to be historically faithful, democracy was always in some respects a business of putting the demos on stage. Filthy talks characteristic of daily life, its coarseness and masculinity, threats, words of coaxing and cajoling, beating into submission, coupled with spontaneous dialogism—all that we associate with the daily life of the lower depths make their marks in populist politics.

As in several post-colonial countries, the language of politics changes with the entry of lower classes in mass parliamentary politics. Stakes in politics become high for them. Civility can wait. Inasmuch as the earlier civility of language had no reference or equivalence to the administrative methods of law and order, today the barbarity of language has little relation with the amount of actual administrative coercion. Whatever doomsday prophets tell, life in the post-colonial world is not necessarily nasty, brutish, and short, though post-colonial world's share of global violence cannot be denied. Cities, small towns, and villages are not burning in the post-colonial world, where the coarse language of populist world signifies something else. Power is now exercised in a different way, at different scale, and at different speed. This is where the demos come to play. Previously power was exercised in the name of birth, lineage, education, status, caste, patrimony, etc. Now with parliamentary democracy and regular votes, power must be exercised finally in the name of demos.

Yet populism is a double-edged source. This is what Ernesto Laclau forgot when he wanted to identify a reason, *popular reason*.⁹ Gramsci on the contrary spoke of

⁹Therefore Laclau in *On Populist Reason* (2005) could never analyse the “people” as a material category or even state analytically what he thought of the term “people” except that it was a linguistic product (hence away from the shadowy notion of *class*, a term absent from the book); see particularly Chap. 4, “The ‘People’ and the Discursive Production of Emptiness” (pp. 68–128); class struggle appears only 8 times in the book.

*common sense*¹⁰ and Mao spoke of *from the masses to the masses*.¹¹ In the former, there is complete abdication of revolutionary critical judgment and practice; in the latter, there is an admission that there are ideas and sensitivities below, which require deliberation and judgement through collective and critical procedure to become a revolutionary step. Ideas of people cannot be ignored, they cannot be deified. They must be the raw material of Communist political work, the essence of what Mao repeatedly called, *mass line*.

Hence, there is nothing called good populism and bad populism. The only thing is that its nature has to be understood in the specific historical context in which it emerges. Populism is not fascism, which the conscientious, responsible, and theological Leftist friends tend to forget, though populism may slide into latter. There will be grounds to fight populism in defence of the rights of the people, lower classes of people in particular, when a populist government becomes xenophobic, subservient to big, autocratic forces, and serves corporate interests. To the same extent, if and when a populist government helps the people with populist measures, howsoever small duration these measures may be, the Left, who claim to be leaders of the people, must support them. We need thus a more discerning view. In the age of post-colonial globalisation, liberal democracy may come and go. Populism as a distinct form of politics marked by the presence of the lower classes will remain.

¹⁰Common sense may mean normal, “native” intelligence, sound practical judgement, independent of special knowledge and training. Antonio Gramsci theorised common sense as the embedded, incoherent and spontaneous beliefs and assumptions characterising the conformist thinking of the mass of people in a given social order. All people and not only specialist professional intellectuals are philosophers, wrote Gramsci, but while their spontaneous philosophy may contain an element of practical, empirical knowledge (which may be termed as good sense)—the germ of an alternative world-view—common sense is in the main composed of superstition, folklore, simple religious beliefs, and the deposits of previous philosophy. Gramsci made clear, common sense is established by a process of consent to ruling class attitudes and interests which are thereby accepted by society at large as being in its own general interests. What is specific and partial is therefore universalized, what is cultural is naturalized to the point of being taken for granted in a view of the world as simply the way things are. Common sense in this way becomes crucial for the maintenance of economic and political hegemony. However, common sense is not unchanging. It is the task of intellectuals to criticize, Gramsci argued, the chaotic aggregate of disparate conceptions comprising common sense, and help develop new popular sense, a new common sense, and thus a new culture and a new philosophy. This requires conscious political work and education to engender criticism of established common sense and thereby articulate a coherent philosophy which will be the foundation of an alternative hegemony. This will be the philosophy of praxis, by which Gramsci meant Marxism. Gramsci’s ideas on common sense are strewn throughout his—*Prison Notebooks*. See in particular, Gramsci (1996: 323–333, 419–425).

¹¹Mao Tse Tung wrote, “In all the practical work of our Party, all correct leadership is necessarily “from the masses, to the masses”. This means: take the ideas of the masses (scattered and unsystematic ideas) and concentrate them (through study turn them into concentrated and systematic ideas), then go to the masses and propagate and explain these ideas until the masses embrace them as their own, hold fast to them and translate them into action, and test the correctness of these ideas in such action. Then once again concentrate ideas from the masses and once again go to the masses so that the ideas are persevered in and carried through, and so on, over and over again in an endless spiral, with the ideas becoming more correct, more vital and richer each time. Such is the Marxist theory of knowledge.” (1943: 119).

That will be the biggest challenge for the Left in coming years in shaping anti-capitalist strategy.

Populism in the Greek case meant that the Syriza leaders underestimated the strength of capitalism and thought that chamber negotiations would win them the day. It also meant that while they allowed themselves to be pushed to a corner, they themselves had not thought of any alternatives should the negotiations fail. The blackmailing of Greece by the creditors left open two paths: *Grexist*, which meant that Greece would have to decide if she was ready to fight for her people's survival, or an agreement with the troika, which would mean subjecting the necessity to fight for her people's survival to the hope that golden day would arrive sooner or later when Greece's salvation would be delivered by Europe-wide class struggle and goodwill of other European countries. We all know what Syriza decided, namely agreeing to a new memorandum, which means staying with the EU structure at the cost of complete subjugation. Even the Syriza leadership agreed that the euro group's and IMF's programme amounted not only to global administration of Greece's debt and insolvency but also an attempt at political restructuring of the Greek nation from outside—as one commentator put it, “trusteeship as a shadow government”.¹² Yet the decision could come only because the Syriza had the illusion that Greece was European, independent, and an equal and honourable member in the committee of European nations. Therefore, the autonomous act of the popular “Oxi” (No) happened simultaneously with the intensified vulnerability to fiscal blackmail of the state (bank closures, state bankruptcy). Thus while democracy of the squares consciously rejected centralist politics, the Syriza Prime Minister Tsipras could ignore even after the verdict the massive popular mandate and opt for agreement with the troika against which the popular verdict had been declared. Democracy in the square was helpless. The situation only signalled vacuum in the movement of the streets. And therefore, while in the words of one witness, “in the feverish week of mobilisation, the ‘Oxi’ campaign drew strength not from the Syriza leadership but from the courage of the innumerable activists who created, multiplied, and consequently also socialised their own Oxi on the streets” (Blockupy Goes Athens 2015), the leadership question came up again and again. The much maligned vanguard issue brought back the phantom of Lenin which the European Left had all these years desperately wanted to avoid.¹³ It had all along thought that the conflict was between Keynesianism and monetarism, and memory of Lenin has to be put aside and confined to polite discussions in Leftist academic circles. Indeed, Lenin disturbed the neat binary of Keynesianism and monetarism, liberal capitalist welfarism and neoliberalism.

Of course, if one recounts the possibility of rebellious actions in future days, OXI will remain the central political antagonism of the years to come and at the same time miles ahead of other protest movements in Europe in creating a singular

¹²Slavoj Žižek cited in the statement by the European Network of Alternative Thinking and Political Dialogue (2015).

¹³Typical of such views, Panitch (2015).

will—will to revolt. To lead the revolt, the Syriza was not required to leave the government. All it needed was to learn the post-colonial lesson—the possibility of dual power existing in Europe, first articulated in strategic terms by Lenin in Tsarist Russia when he was theorising the experience of the workers' soviets within Tsarist Russia and later framed by Chairman Mao in the by now famous words, “Why is it that red political power can exist in China?” (Lenin 1917; Tse Tung 1928).

Without this political understanding, the capacities for solidarity, organisation, and innovation will be always stymied in face of the neoliberal reality of the euro zone. No wonder all pseudo-left commentaries focus on how anarchy would have come down on Greece following the expulsion of Greece from euro zone. These are typically model building exercises for the prophesied doomsday. (One may refer to some pages from history: China was not in the United Nations for long, it gained due recognition through struggle and self-respect. Revolutionary Russia was not in the League of Nations. But the USSR became a cofounder of the United Nations on the basis of strength and self-dignity.) That the options open to the Syriza government were even more structured by the way the new memorandum aimed to discipline Greece's integration into neoliberal Europe became soon clear. The answer to the bind was not in comparative exercises on two possible economic policies, but in the field of political strategy: How to unfold and develop the revolutionary initiative further? How to lead the democratic inspiration towards further radicalisation? The post-colonial experience is important because it is in the post-colony that the reality of the closures and the histories of the struggle for the exit from the closures are to be found.

To gain from the post-colonial register of lessons means to first learn how populism has worked, succeeded, and failed in the struggle against neocolonialism, imperialism, and the corporate bourgeois rule in the neoliberal age.

The Post-colonial Predicament and the Limits of the New European Left

The Greek crisis put an end to the belief that had held the European Left in its grip for long that there was a distinct European variety of capitalism which could be positively contrasted with the more “free market” American variety as well as the more undeveloped “stagnant”, crisis-ridden post-colonial variety. Of the many reasons, as to why this was not true at least in the twenty-first century, was the fact that, at the core of the Greek crisis was remorseless financialisation of global economy including the European economy. Financialisation has affected the post-colonial economies greatly as has been explained in this chapter. Financialisation is the collective name of processes by which financial markets, financial institutions, and the financial bourgeoisie gain control over both private economic institutions and public policy-making apparatuses. It leads to frequent rounds of instability and crisis as financial gains increasingly get disconnected from

actual production processes. Financialisation provided impetus to European Monetary Union and the establishment of a common currency, the euro. The inflation of financial value, characteristic of several countries in the post-colonial world, was a feature of Europe also in the last two decades. Slow growth, debt accumulation, and high profit marked many economies of Europe in the same period. Indeed, the euro accentuated the process of financialisation. As profit margins on rapid financial investments became smaller, it led to taking even more debt to create leverage and increase the portfolio of investments. Debt was also used to increase assets. As long as financial returns increased, the possibilities for borrowing increased correspondingly, with existing investments used as surety on new loans. Financial bubbles and debt accumulation had ruined many countries earlier. It ruined Greece this time; and as elsewhere common people suffered as a result. Keynes was hardly the satisfactory answer in such condition. Greece proved as was proved earlier in several countries that in a situation of sovereign debt crisis not only the existence of a particular country's central bank did not count for much, it would not be also able to guarantee that unsustainable external debt would not develop. In this sense, the stand of the European Left proved paradoxical: while they wanted Greece to stay in the euro zone, at the same time they expected Greece and other European countries in similar situation being able to revert to neo-Keynesian policies. But this paradoxical expectation accepted financialisation as given, under which people would transform into buyers and consumers, thus taking on more debt; new markets would be created of out of hitherto non-tradable values into tradable—in fact globally tradable values; and there would be greater reliance on export mechanisms creating antagonisms between say the labour of exporting countries and labour of importing countries. Some advocated a kind of global Keynesianism as a way out.¹⁴

Lessons of history are easily forgotten. If Germany forgot the treatment it received from the victors after the First World War, Greece forgot how the post-colonial world had reeled under debt crises or that in the last two decades Germany's deflationary policy had worked at home so long as its exports had continued to build surplus and other countries had become indebted or more indebted. Financialisation has put paid to the central Keynesian idea that relatively even distribution of wealth can lead to increase in aggregate demand, simply because under the conditions of financialisation real wages of the vast majority of people will barely rise and pressures to cut wage levels will only increase. In short, the division between southern markets and northern goods will be reproduced globally. This indeed one of the principal aspects of what we have termed as post-colonial predicament.

The labour movements of Europe were considered as the decisive force behind greater state involvement in economy and greater social welfare measures. The construction of the European Union and the development of a currency union put further gloss on it whence it was considered regressive to even think of exiting the

¹⁴See on this, Patomaki (2012), particularly Chap. 6, pp. 104–132.

neoliberal Europe at each phase of its development. The European Left thought that either participation in the neoliberal institutions was essential for it, or Europeanism under the garb of internationalism was the order of the day. They did not question the principles of free trade and free capital flows across Europe underwritten in the neoliberal character of the Treaty of Rome (e.g. European Stability Pact, European Common Market, Central European Bank). It forgot Marx who had said that free trade was only freedom to colonise and exploit.¹⁵ To get out of that illusion, the European Left had to look to the experiences of the vast post-colonial world. Now of course, the hyper-austerity policies pursued in Europe since 2008 in the wake of the second great global capitalist crisis after the Second World War should end Left's illusions about Europe. The collapse of the Syriza strategy in Greece should be a decisive moment in the decimation of those illusions.

Indeed, why look for only the post-colonial experiences? As one commentator has reminded us of the forgotten history of another radical tradition in Europe: Recall the time when in mid-1970s Tony Benn and others in the British Left had opposed the referendum on entry to the Common Market because they recognised the limits joining Europe would impose on their Alternative Economic Strategy.¹⁶ The opposition to joining Europe on the Left of the Swedish labour movement which advanced the radical wage earners fund (WEF) proposals was rooted in the same recognition.¹⁷ The Swedish bourgeoisie ganged up against labour in order to tide over the crisis of the Fordist economy—factor that worked in the case of UK

¹⁵It does not mean that Marx supported protectionism either. Marx and Engels were consistent on their principles views on internationalism and international solidarity of toilers. If the history of free trade was made possible with colonization and wars to grab colonies from other colonial powers, protectionism meant the freedom of the bourgeoisie to exploit the workers at home while making the economy dependent on international economy. See, Marx (1848), and Friedrich Engels' (1888) preface to the 1888 English edition of Marx's speech, "On the Question of Free Trade". Engels wrote in that preface, "It was under the fostering wing of protection that the system of modern industry—production by steam-moved machinery—was hatched and developed in England during the last third of the 18th century. And, as if tariff protection was not sufficient, the wars against the French Revolution helped to secure to England the monopoly of the new industrial methods. For more than 20 years, English men-of-war cut off the industrial rivals of England from their respective colonial markets, while they forcibly opened these markets to English commerce. The secession of the South American colonies from the rule of their European mother countries, the conquest by England of all French and Dutch colonies worth having, the progressive subjugation of India turned the people of all these immense territories into customers for English goods. England thus supplemented the protection she practiced at home by the Free Trade she forced upon her possible customers abroad; and, thanks to this happy mixture of both systems, at the end of the wars, in 1815, she found herself, with regard to all important branches of industry, in possession of the virtual monopoly of the trade of the world".

¹⁶Tony Benn's alternative strategy of a "real Labour policy of saving jobs, a vigorous micro-investment programme, import control, control of the banks and insurance companies, control of export, of capital, higher taxation of the rich, and Britain leaving the Common Market"; see Benn (1989: 302); see also, Aaronovitch (1981).

¹⁷On this, Ryner (2002), Chap. 7, "Why Social Democrats Become Neo-Liberals—The Swedish Case", pp. 166–170.

also.¹⁸ Likewise those who subsequently looked to the emplacement of a Social Charter at the core of the process of Economic and Monetary Union were consistently disappointed by the quick march to a common currency regime. This recent history was forgotten, even when it became clear that the core of the Syriza leadership would not cross the boundaries the EU had set for them and that the Syriza had never believed also that in course of developing the struggle they may have to get out of the neoliberal EU. To think along that line would not have been narrow nationalism that the Europeanists would have us believe. Having pushed itself to a corner where if you are damned if you talk of *Grexit* and damned if you do not, Left populism in Greece could now only flip-flop along its route to discover the supposed radical democracy. The search for the weakest link was over as soon as Wolfgang Schauble, the German Finance Minister, threatened Greece with *Grexit* (Varoufakis 2015b). The focus was thus cleverly shifted from the proposed harsh measures to the possibility and desirability of expelling Greece from the euro zone. French leader Francois Hollande was crucial in this neoliberal strategy. Everyone had a sigh of relief when expulsion was stayed. Nobody said small mercy! No one said that steps like nationalising the banks, reorganising them around a new currency, and taking into account the large grey economy could have been some of the immediate coping steps. Ingenuity and resourcefulness were not clearly the resources of the Syriza movement. On this, we shall have detailed discussion in the following chapter.

What is astounding is that since the Syriza failed in negotiating the critical moment, the European Leftist thinkers from the ex-Finance Minister of Greece, Yanis Varoufakis, to the metropolitan Leftist intellectual Slavoj Žižek said that the situation warranted no possibility of alternative. Žižek in a typical intellectual gloss has said,

The Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben said in an interview that ‘thought is the courage of hopelessness’ - an insight which is especially pertinent for our historical moment when even the most pessimist diagnostics as a rule finishes with an uplifting hint at some version of the proverbial light at the end of the tunnel. The true courage is not to imagine an alternative, but to accept the consequences of the fact that there is no clearly discernible alternative: the dream of an alternative is a sign of theoretical cowardice; it functions as a fetish which prevents us thinking to the end the deadlock of our predicament. In short, the true courage is to admit that the light at the end of the tunnel is most likely the headlight of another train approaching us from the opposite direction. There is no better example of the need for such courage than Greece today.

It was strange that intellectuals like Žižek refused to think ahead. He said further,

¹⁸The Swedish industry was highly dependent on export markets. When these markets began to diminish as a consequence of the crisis of mass production in the capitalist world, the Swedish employers chose a transition to flexible production strategies. To do this, they needed to dissolve central wage bargaining, the cornerstone of the Swedish Fordist institutional order. It was easy in this background to mobilise the employers against labour’s proposal of WEF. The underlying economic upheavals and class interests led to the failure of the WEF proposal. On this, Pontusson and Swenson (1996); see also, Swenson (2002).

The really catastrophic thing about the Greek crisis is that the moment the choice appeared as the choice between Grexit and the capitulation to Brussels, the battle was already lost. Both terms of this choice move within the predominant Eurocratic vision (remember that the German anti-Greek hardliners like Wolfgang Schauble also prefer Grexit!)... The Syriza government was not fighting just for a greater debt relief and for more new money within the same overall coordinates, but for the awakening of Europe from its dogmatic slumber.” And then he admitted, “... the key question is: how will our engagement in it... affect other struggles? The general rule is that, when a revolt begins against an oppressive half-democratic regime, as was the case in the Middle East in 2011, it is easy to mobilize large crowds with slogans which one cannot but characterise as crowd pleasers – for democracy, against corruption, etc. But then we gradually approach more difficult choices: when our revolt succeeds in its direct goal, we come to realise that what really bothered us (our un-freedom, humiliation, social corruption, lack of prospect of a decent life) goes on in a new guise. In Egypt, protesters succeeded in getting rid of the oppressive Mubarak regime, but corruption remained, and the prospect of a decent life moved even further away. After the overthrow of an authoritarian regime, the last vestiges of patriarchal care for the poor can fall away, so that the newly gained freedom is de facto reduced to the freedom to choose the preferred form of one’s misery – the majority not only remains poor, but, to add insult to injury, it is being told that, since they are now free, poverty is their own responsibility” (Žižek 2015).

Once again we find that the intellectual refuses to examine thoroughly the phenomenon of populism to examine the predicament, and therefore, the intellectual thinks that the way ahead cannot be thought through on the basis of the experiences of struggles and that the Communists and the Left must reconcile to the defeat, which has been actually brought by it upon itself to large measure. Even a liberal economist like Paul Krugman said that exit from the euro zone was an uncharted path and there was no scientific basis to think that it would be necessarily worse than agreeing in a servile manner to the diktats of the euro zone. He could have strengthened his arguments with references to the vast post-colonial experiences of China, India, Argentina, pre-devastated Iraq, and several other countries. He said:

The thing is, all the wise heads saying that Grexit is impossible, that it would lead to a complete implosion, don’t know what they are talking about. When I say that, I don’t mean that they’re necessarily wrong — I believe they are, but anyone who is confident about anything here is deluding himself. What I mean instead is that nobody has any experience with what we’re looking at. It’s striking that the conventional wisdom here completely misreads the closest parallel, Argentina 2002. The usual narrative is completely wrong: de-dollarization did not cause economic collapse, but rather followed it, and recovery began quite soon. There are only terrible alternatives at this point, thanks to the fecklessness of the Greek government and, far more important, the utterly irresponsible campaign of financial intimidation waged by Germany and its allies. And I guess I have to say it: unless Merkel miraculously finds a way to offer a much less destructive plan than anything we’re hearing, Grexit, terrifying as it is, would be better (Krugman 2015).

Make no mistake: Syriza acted—Marx mentioned in a different context—“as the unconscious tool of history” (Marx 1853). By capturing governmental power on the basis of the slogan of fighting austerity of neoliberal Europe, calling and winning the referendum, building up an organisation on the basis of a network of about 400 solidarity associations, by sticking to negotiations to the point of exasperation,

rousing pride among the people and the nation against imperialist onslaught, and by upholding street democracy, it broke new grounds in democratising and advancing struggle. It also showed ways to build unity between proletarian and vast semi-proletarian masses. It indicated ways of how to get out of the bind in which the old Communist movement had been locked. These positive lessons are for all of us. Yet and to the same extent, by rejecting the popular verdict, marginalising the advanced Left elements in the organisation, capitulating to the neoliberal diktats of Europe, not daring to think of alternatives, Syriza did immense harm to the cause of global socialism, Communism, and revolutionary democracy. Many thought that the Syriza epitomised the profoundness of the Gramscian strategy of hegemony in place of the Leninist idea of striking at the weakest link in the imperialist chain have been made to lick the dust. They had understood neither Lenin nor Gramsci.

Indeed, future historians may say that this was the moment when passive revolution began in Greece. This was the tipping point. Institutionalised democracy from now on would be more and more the route by which passive revolution and restoration of capitalist rule would begin. Yanis Varoufakis spoke of the coup against Greece and Europe. Who will speak of the coup that happened on 7 July in Athens—against the Left, against the people, and the Syriza itself by the Europeanised and globalised intellectual class of Greece that had no faith on the capacity of the people of Greece, or any alternative vision? This was also the denouement of Antonio Negri's immaterial labour (teachers, architects, software mechanics, composers, etc.) who were to lead Europe to socialism as well as Ernesto Laclau's thesis of radical democracy (which did not need revolution).

There is no doubt that the tactics followed by Communist and workers' parties in different countries on earth before the Second World War and following it in the global Keynesian period (roughly from 1950s to 1980s) cannot be copied or even followed totally today. The following era of monetarism and neoliberalism has given birth to new realities and therefore new strategies and tactics of the Left and the working masses. The focus on the social, the networks, the *habitus*, street democracy, autonomy, finance, debt, institutions—these and several others features have given rise to new social movements that partly look forward to a new non-capitalist form of society, but also secretly harbour a dream of return to the good old liberal age of social protection of the poor by the capitalist order. Thus, Syriza never understood why poorer European nations within the EU currency zone never supported Greece, which was seen as demanding from Europe privileges that they lacked—like decent pension or facilities for children that quite a good amount of the East European nations lacked. The *social* was thus found limited in building coalitions to a greater extent than the old *political* succeeded in building, even though building coalitions had been held up as the *raison d'être* of this *social*. Possibly therefore the world will see different ways of combining the old and new strategies and tactics of struggle for socialism. It will be wrong to write off the Communists inasmuch as to belittle the experiences of the Syriza. Precisely, therefore the dialogue between the Communist movements with their politics of class struggle on one hand and the social movements against precarious life on the other has to resume. That calls for among others a respect for and attention to the

vast anti-colonial and post-colonial experiences, which have always seen this dialogue, ways of extricating from the binds of monetarism, creative deployment of populism as a strategy, and combining the political and the social, which is to say, combining classes, masses, and the nation. It also means the recognition that the new internationalism that the social movements (typically demonstrated in world social summits, Seattle-type demonstrations, and occupy movements) are justifiably proud of has strong limits. The legacy of the three Internationals has not died. That legacy can still show how to value the national-popular, peoples of various nations, their spirit of cooperation, and internationalism.

There should be also no doubt that what had happened in Greece is not the last chapter in the current epoch of Left movements. The unsustainable debt servicing and loan return programme that Europe has forced upon Greek people will produce even more struggles against austerity, debt, and the exploitative conditions of life. Also, it will bring with greater clarity the old question of the nation form and, at the same time, harden the determination of similar movements elsewhere. The search for answer to the question will become worldwide, namely how to combine the old tactics and the new? Finally, there is no doubt that the answer will be found in different combinations.

But one thing has to be clear: We are not going to pursue the dream of a return to cyclical transition to Keynesianism from the hard monetarism of the current neoliberal time. The cyclical theory of Polanyi referred to at the beginning of this chapter will have to be put aside while developing a new vision of a non-capitalist society.¹⁹

One of the saddest moments in a socialist's life is when s/he has to see that a worker thinks that s/he is equal to the capitalist, the peasant thinks that s/he is like a landlord, the weaker nation placates the mighty to get a seat around the same table, and the periphery has the illusion that it is the centre and forgets the cruel reality of domination, the harsh realities of power. Greece was always less about economics, but more about politics, which as Lenin was never tired of repeating, was the congealed form of economics. The mumbo-jumbo of social vision, social mobilisation, social solidarities, social summits... all that proliferated in this world

¹⁹Fraser (2014: 554) has written, "Today, moreover, as many on the Left have long warned, and as Greeks have discovered to their dismay, the construction of Europe as an economic and monetary union, without corresponding political and fiscal integration, simply disables the protective capacities of member states without creating broader, European-level protective capacities to take up the slack. But that is not all. Absent global financial regulation, even very wealthy, free-standing countries find their efforts at national social protection under pressure from global market forces, which institute a 'race to the bottom'. The globalization of finance requires a new, post-Westphalian way of imagining the arenas and agents of social protection. What is required are, first, arenas in which the circle of those entitled to protection matches the circle of those subject to risk; and second, public agencies whose protective capacities and regulatory powers are sufficiently robust and broad to rein in effectively the transnational private powers and to pacify global finance".

following the breakdown of the global Keynesian order and the triumph of neoliberalism has shown its weakness in face of the ruthless reality of the domination of capital. This weakness has also been responsible for ignoring as in Greece the radical protest of the organised working class in all these years, as in the steel industry in Greece (*The Guardian* 2015).²⁰ This weakness was evident in the irrepressible Europeanism of Left symbolised by people like Varoufakis, who analysed thus, and listen to the strange analysis,

The lesson Thatcher taught me about the capacity of a long lasting recession to undermine progressive politics is one that I carry with me into today's European crisis. It is, indeed, the most important determinant of my stance in relation to the crisis. It is the reason I am happy to confess to the sin I am accused of by some of my critics on the left: the sin of choosing not to propose radical political programs that seek to exploit the crisis as an opportunity to overthrow European capitalism, to dismantle the awful euro zone, and to undermine the European Union of the cartels and the bankrupt bankers.

Yes, I would love to put forward such a radical agenda. But, no, I am not prepared to commit the same error twice. What good did we achieve in Britain in the early 1980s by promoting an agenda of socialist change that British society scorned while falling headlong into Thatcher's neoliberal trap? Precisely none. What goodwill it do today to call for a dismantling of the euro zone, of the European Union itself, when European capitalism is doing its utmost to undermine the euro zone, the European Union, indeed itself?

A Greek or a Portuguese or an Italian exit from the euro zone would soon lead to a fragmentation of European capitalism, yielding a seriously recessionary surplus region east of the Rhine and north of the Alps, while the rest of Europe is would be in the grip of vicious stagflation. Who do you think would benefit from this development? A progressive left that will rise Phoenix-like from the ashes of Europe's public institutions? Or the Golden Dawn Nazis, the assorted neo fascists, the xenophobes and the spivs? I have absolutely no doubt as to which of the two will do best from a disintegration of the euro zone.

I, for one, am not prepared to blow fresh wind into the sails of this postmodern version of the 1930s. If this means that it is we, the suitably erratic Marxists, who must try to save European capitalism from itself, so be it. Not out of love for European capitalism, for the euro zone, for Brussels, or for the European Central Bank, but just because we want to minimise the unnecessary human toll from this crisis (Varoufakis 2015a).

One can see the difference between what the workers attempted in the early 1980s in Europe to which we have referred earlier in this chapter, and the revisionist lessons that Varoufakis drew from the defeat of the workers at that time. Varoufakis thought that by sticking to the neoliberal solution of the early 1980s the workers could be saved now. Not even an erratic Marxist as he labelled himself could propose such solution; but we cannot ignore Varoufakis, for he symbolised the best of the liberal spirit of the Left in that time of crisis, which meant the social in place of the hard political. It also meant a lack of determination—unwillingness or inability to determine the principal contradiction of the time, similarly a lack of determination to visualise politics as a space of conflicts and contentions. If this was

²⁰See also, Lountos (2015).

what he meant his by thesis of “radical determinacy”,²¹ we can see how this inability to determine became a serious weakness and contributed to the wobbly character of the social. This weakness led to a disinclination to analyse rigorously the exit route—its possibilities and difficulties—and consequently mobilise the Greek people on the path of self-reliance and social transformation. It did not have to be either/or in terms of exiting from the EU at one go, but rather strategising the exit from the euro zone. The situation called for a consideration of the intermediate items of construction of the relationship of forces also—and that was possible only when the binary had been posited, and the moment of rupture had been anticipated.

Stathis Kouvelakis pointed out that “the idea of the ‘good euro’ and ‘making Europe move forward’, meant an obstinate refusal of a plan B and confinement in a gruelling process of pseudo-negotiations leading to the greatest disaster of the Left in Europe since the collapse of the USSR”. Jacques Sapir told as much the same but more politically:

In reality, no change in the EU from the interior is possible. The “Radical Left” should set as its primary objective rupture, at least with the institutions whose semi-colonial content is the greatest, that is to say, the Euro, and it must think about its political alliances from this objective. For this left, the time of choice has come; it will break or be condemned to perish.²²

If the strategic direction had been made, the Syriza government could have gone along or at least planned the path of capital control, currency devaluation, a democratic programme of austerity and self-reliance, attack on the oligarchy controlling the export business, restructuring of economic relations inside the country, and recognising the tremendous damage to the Greek economy because of more than decade-long tax evasion, capital flight, and oligarchic operations. It perhaps would have meant greater social control over banks and other financial instruments, including measured nationalisation. That the Greek radical forces by and large did not consider various options seriously and rigorously and left mass mobilisation half way showed a kind of illusion of the currency. It prevented proper political analysis of the national question, because to this New Left, it became either social or political, which meant in their eyes national-monetary logic only. The search for intermediary form was prevented by some kind of allergy to political way of seeing thing.

One cannot forget what Marx said long back,

Do not say that social movement excludes political movement. There is never a political movement which is not at the same time social. It is only in an order of things in which there are no more classes and class antagonisms that *social evolutions* will cease to be

²¹In explaining what he meant by “radical determinacy” Varoufakis referred to Marx: “... Marx discerned the potential for change in the seemingly most constant and unchanging of social structures....” See Varoufakis (2015a, n. 3); but Varoufakis was only confirming his status as an “erratic Marxist” when he ascribed his own disinclination to analyse the principal contradiction of the time by referring to Marx.

²²Both citations from Husson (2015).

political revolutions. Till then, on the eve of every general reshuffling of society, the last word of social science will always be: “Le combat ou la mort; la lutte sanguinaire ou le neant. C’est ainsi que la question est invinciblement posée” [From the novel *Jean Ziska* by George Sand: “Combat or Death: bloody struggle or extinction. It is thus that the question is inexorably put.”] (Marx 1847/1975: 80).

We must not forget that Europe through this crisis has shown that it too has peripheries. It too has the South. It too has its neocolonies, and it too depends on neocolonial domination. Echoing Chairman Mao, one can say that Europe’s peripheries (the countryside) are surrounding the core (the cities) in a protracted war. In this war, the stakes on both sides are high.²³

What we require then is not provincialisation of European experiences, but an awareness of the continuing globalisation of the post-colonial predicament.

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²³Therefore some of the radical voices in Europe have called for hard thinking on “How to exit from the Euro? ... Are we supposed to wait fatalistically for the collapse? Or do we try to build a popular movement in order transform the exit into a step towards a better future? Second end: which is our idea about the future? What society we aim for? Which social and political forces may realise it? The third aim is directed towards the Left. As Left we consider a wide spectrum of political and social movements, trade-union forces, cultural and intellectual currents in their specific ways opposed to the destructive forces of globalisation who have been fighting against respective centre-right and centre-left governments. The antagonist Left has been marginalised especially by the systemic Left ... Two things clear for us: First: If the antagonist Left continues to rot in its trenches the path is cleared for reactionary adventures. Secondly the Left can only resurrect and become protagonist in a historic battle if it frees itself from the Euro taboo and tackles the question of national identity. It must dare to start the struggle against the Euro and for monetary sovereignty. Within the Euro cage monetary sovereignty has become the symbol of people’s sovereignty... this cunning propaganda labelling all enemies of the Euro dictatorship ‘reactionary populists’ and depicting the entire Left to be pro-Euro. They are obsessed by ‘ending the Right-Left dichotomy.’”—Conference Statement of the Anti-Imperialist Camp, Chianciano, Terme, Italy, 11–12 January 2014, http://www.antiimperialista.org/beyond_the_euro (accessed on 17 October 2015).

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Chapter 2

Rules of Dialogue: Seven Lessons from the Negotiations Between Europe and Greece

Abstract The second chapter analyses the negotiations over debt restructuring between Athens and Brussels in the five months of February to July 2015 and shows how the Europeanist and democratic illusion of the Syriza leaders of Greece led them to ignoring the similarities between what we can call the rules of dialogue and rules of war—both characterised by specific dynamics of power. In this context, the chapter discusses the respective stands of the parties to the negotiations. It argues that a greater awareness of the complexities of the realities of the crisis was essential for Greece to engage with the financial and political might of the euro zone and corporate Europe as a whole. Part of the delusion and consequently ignorance of the rules of dialogue and war came from the belief of the Left that there was no alternative to Keynesian policies, and thus what Greece immediately needed was more money to tide over the crisis. We can thus speak of an elective affinity between rules of dialogue and rules of war. Its awareness will help us understand why in a span of only twenty days—24 June when the negotiations entered the dramatic phase to 14 July—history witnessed two unforgettable nights: the night of glory, 5 July and the night of ignominy, 14 July.

Keywords Debt negotiations · Rules of dialogue · Die Linke · European Union · Baltas · Tsipras · Varoufakis · Grexit · European stability mechanism · Euro zone · Greek bailout · Referendum · Euro group

In Berlin and Brussels

Angela Merkel did not have a smooth sailing in the German Parliament in August 2015 when she presented the draft deal with Greece in an astonishing resemblance with the situation that Alexi Tsipras almost at the same time was facing in Greek Parliament (Buergin and Parkin 2015). Opposition politicians claimed that the German chancellor and her finance minister, Wolfgang Schäuble, had tried to split Europe on debt crisis with some opposition members of the Parliament accusing them of blackmailing Athens. Gerhard Schick, the financial expert of the German

Green party, accused the finance minister of acting “extremely dangerously” by proposing a temporary exit of Greece from the euro zone. “With his Grexit plan Schäuble was calling for the division of Europe,” he said. The deputy leader of the German Left Party *Linke*, Dietmar Bartsch, accused the German government of extortion. “This negotiation result is a German diktat and nothing other than blackmail,” he told German television. “Schäuble ... with his Grexit paper had taken the axe to Europe.” But nationalist approval in Germany remained with Merkel. According to one survey 64 % of Germans applauded Schäuble’s behaviour, with 62 % giving Merkel their backing (Connolly 2015).

When François Hollande, the French President, in the traditional Bastille Day interview insisted that Greece had not been “humiliated” by the EU bailout deal, and that the most important thing for the Greeks and for Europe was that the country remained in the euro zone (Chassany 2015), no one seriously believed him, including Hollande himself. His words were as hollow as the French Presidential power had become to make Europe democratic. He had famously told Tsipras before the deal was struck, taking on himself the role of a mediator, “Help me to help you” (*Wall Street Journal* 2015). The mediation was to basically help Greece to swallow an extremely bitter pill, at the same time proving to the dominant partner (Germany) that the junior partner (France) too had some clout and worth.

Other good Samaritans were not lacking. One expert said that Germany and Greece needed a mediator. “Athens and Berlin are so outraged with each other that they need to calm down before any kind of resolution can become possible. Is counselling the answer?” *The Guardian* asked by way of introducing Michael Scaturro’s view, namely, that only with a mediator helping Germany and Greece to cool down the situation could be retrieved and was conciliation then the way out? Given that imposing a 77 % VAT increase—from 13 to 23 %—and other punitive measures on Greece were bound to fail, was not mediation therefore needed to thrash out an effective settlement—particularly when both Germany and Greece did not believe in the efficacy of this deal and hated it? Again, from the mediator’s point of view, Germany felt that she was being asked to give a gift with a gun pointed at her head, sinking money into a country that would never actually pay it back, also did not have the ability to pay back; and Greece was outraged that more austerity would further lower its condition and ability to pay back, thus forcing her to bow completely before Europe’s de facto hegemonic power, and effectively crash out of the euro zone. In this situation, an impartial mediating team could help treat the emotion and lower the outrage (comment by Scaturro 2015).

Note that neither Hollande nor Scaturro ever mentioned the possibility of debt restructuring and reduction of the debt burden as an essential on the negotiating table. And it is not that some of the European countries had not actually tried to mediate in the chambers of Brussels. But they had failed, because they or the European Parliament in the last few years had been already rendered powerless. They lacked the power, ability, force, and legitimacy to mediate and compel a solution. A new set of institutions such as the euro Group and the European Central Bank along with the IMF had become the controller of European destiny. Mediation became a part of the neoliberal game in Europe. France played the part that Britain

had played in Munich before the Second World War—if following the ex-Greek Finance Minister Yanis Varoufakis we have to resort to historical analogy drawing memories of the war ravaged last century.

Hollande said that driving Greece from the euro zone would have been considerably more humiliating. Without the Franco-German couple, it was not possible to find an agreement. In his words, when Germany and France are not united, Europe does not go forward. France and Germany would now draw up new rules for “better economic governance” in the EU and that France would come up with proposals. All these made the Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras more determined to make his party and the Greek Parliament fall in line if necessary by purging members and ministers from his team, than he was in securing a better deal in Brussels. Here was again a sweet gloss: Greek Interior Minister Nikos Voutsis said, the real issue the government (in Athens) faced would be finding and enacting policies that could have an ameliorating effect on the painful consequences the measures were likely to have socially. In his words, “Social counter-measures must be found which will give hope to people” (Inman et al. 2015).

Future diplomatic historians will be able to tell us whether all these were well thought out moves. But clearly the play of the hard and soft lines, groups, statements, and advices had succeeded in pushing the limelight away from the problem of restructuring and lessening of debt and reduction of burden on the people, and the eventual problem of debt. The light was now on the supposed slim possibility of Greece’s continued membership in EU, as if getting out of euro zone automatically implied getting out of the European Union and finally Europe. Euro zone had usurped the EU, and the EU had become the Europe. In this sense, Hollande and Schäuble were doing a tango—not for the last time. This has been the ploy of the victors in many battles with weak, naive, and dreamy-eyed adversaries, who had not taken their impending wars and disasters seriously. The conquered Greek leaders reminded the literature loving readers not of Hector but of Paris.

Lesson no 1 then: You cannot embark on a dialogue with the enemy without treating the rounds of discussion as the other form of war.

Meanwhile, what was the third great European power doing? Britain of course was watching given its own intriguing past of being in Europe and yet not. At the same time, Britain desisted from telling Greece that the latter might have had one or two lessons for it from the former’s past, because Britain’s Europe is not exactly nationalist but an extension of the Anglo-American alliance, but she remained wary at the same time that should the EU decide to extend one more tranche of loan to Greece, no burden should fall on her shoulders. Therefore, George Osborne, the UK Chancellor arriving at the meeting of EU finance ministers in Brussels on 14 July 2015 declared that Britain would not contribute any money to the Greek bailout. He told, “Britain is not in the Euro, so the idea that British taxpayers will be on the line for this Greek deal is a complete non-starter. The euro zone needs to foot its own bill” (Mason et al. 2015). He further said that the UK government opposed the use of a stability mechanism known as the European Financial Stability Mechanism (EFSM), to which the UK Treasury contributed, to help fund Athens’ new rescue package. Britain was adamant that she would not let the EFSM (funded by all 28

EU members) be used to underwrite short-term loans to Greece, as this would break an earlier deal between the UK and Brussels. Osborne in taking a tough line knew that even if Greece got money from the EFSM Britain would be spared, and the Chancellor could then claim a victory on away soil against the Eurocrats. *The Guardian* reported:

David Cameron has ruled out British taxpayers providing any funding for a Greek bailout, despite speculation the UK could be asked to contribute as much as £1bn towards the bill.

The prime minister's official spokeswoman said ... that Cameron did not believe that UK cash should be on the line, and there was currently no proposal on the table for this to happen.

George Osborne, the chancellor, said earlier that he would block any EU move to draw on an emergency fund containing British money for the new bailout programme (Mason et al. 2015).¹

European stock markets were lacklustre in early trading on the fateful day, 15 July. It rallied somewhat, but never responded very enthusiastically through the twenty days' drama from 24 June to 14 July. The stock market cried politics was hindering a return to health. Even if a deal had been struck, who would guarantee political stability to ensure that an un-implementable deal would be properly implemented? The market depended not so much on Merkel, but on Tsipras, who as Connor Campbell, a financial analyst at Spreadex, explained, "fresh from his mental 'crucifixion' at the EU summit, has another few tortuous days ahead of him as he tries to stem a growing left-wing rebellion in his own party, all in order to pass legislation by Wednesday that will go some way to unlocking a third bailout (Campbell 2015). Some are already speculating that interparty issues over the weekend's Greek deal could lead to a much-touted, and no doubt Germany pleasing, Tsipras resignation." Tsipras of course did not resign. Dutifully he said that a captain could not leave the ship in rough weather. Europe in this way succumbed to monetarist pressure. And, the Syriza gave signs that probably though slowly it would turn into one more social democratic party. With this good news the market sentiments should have, but refused to cheer up. In rather uncertain trading—hardly surprising given the circumstances—European markets in the main, ended on 16 July. Investors wanted to wait to see if the Greek deal agreed after marathon weekend meetings would actually stick. The final scores showed on 17 July:

- The FTSE 100 finished 0.23 % higher at 6753.75
- Germany's Dax added 0.21 % to 11,508.46
- France's Cac closed up 0.61 % at 5028.51
- Spain's Ibex ended 0.38 % better at 11,266.4
- But Italy's FTSE MIB dipped 0.3 % to 23,097.51
- In the US, the Dow Jones Industrial Average was up 0.29 %.²

¹See also Wearden and Fletcher (2015).

²Quotations and figures from Wearden and Fletcher (2015).

In these 20 days the pressure on the Greek team at Brussels continued. Finland, one of the staunchest allies of the Germans raised the stake as its Finance Minister Alex Stubb said that bridge financing could be a problem, because euro zone countries could not just hand over funds to Greece without conditionality. Tightening the screw he added, “But it is probably impossible to back down at this stage, so some kind of agreement will be found. Perhaps bilateral loans to Greece, Europe is battling to find a way to provide bridge financing to help Greece meet its short-term funding demands, while a third bailout is agreed” (*The Guardian* 2015). It was clear what Europe was telling Greece: you will get eventual assistance, the money you need, provided you can repay as per schedule. But since you are insolvent, you do not have even short-term money to survive and repay. Thus, without short-term money, that is immediate loan, you cannot survive, so you cannot live even another day to get the loan. We will give the bridge financing if you only you realise your naked condition. You have to agree to take the short-term loan today following the way we suggest so that you can take the big loan tomorrow.

Playing the same tune, euro Group President Jeroen Dijsselbloem said “Officials were still working on a way to help Athens meet its repayments to ECB (European Central bank) this summer, starting on July 20.” *What was then holding it up?* His answer was, “We are looking at all the instruments and funds that we could use. They all seem to have disadvantages or impossibilities or legal objections, so we’re still working on it.”³

The situation called for some more tightening of the screw—this time from countries such as Slovenia. Other non-euro European countries also told Greece to fend for herself. Lithuania, Slovakia, Latvia, and Malta, besides Germany, Netherlands, Belgium, Austria, and Finland—all expressed in brutal terms their dislike for Greece. If Greece was asking money not for Europe’s poorer countries, but for her own nationalist purpose, why would poorer countries such as Lithuania agree to give money, or to the Stability Mechanism being activated for Greece? Their logic was namely, Greece was invoking Europe to get more euros for her nationalist purpose. Estonia also, along with its Baltic neighbours, took a tough line, arguing that a Greek default could cost poorer euro zone members 4.2 % of their GDP. Having swallowed the bitter austerity medicine earlier, the Irish leaders while urging fellow European leaders to look at the bigger picture, was keen to ensure that Greece did not get a no-strings bailout. Likewise, Cyprus with memories of its own chaotic €10 billion bailout in 2013 hoped that Greece would ensure further reforms. Slovenia wanted Greece to remain in the euro zone but wanted to see Athens sign up to verifiable reform measures to regain trust. Only France, Italy, Spain, and Luxembourg expressed their determination to prevent Grexit, though they concurred with further reforms. The figure: 9 countries were open to exit; 5 wavered but preferred to avoid Grexit, and 4 wanted to avoid.⁴ Because Greece

³Statement on 14 July 2015—*ibid*.

⁴“Exit Map: How the euro zone nations Line Up”—http://interactive.guim.co.uk/uploader/embed/2015/07/grexit_map-zip/giv-21277LGVnnLhbVHuV/ (accessed on 27 July 2015).

appeared focusing on its debt problem and only its own debt problem, it could not effectively counter the German strategy and had to swallow the bitterest pill.

Potentially, euro zone members could override either countries such as Germany or Finland—the extreme on one side or countries such as France and Italy—the countries at the other end willing to walk the extra mile to accommodate Greece. But this meant resorting to an emergency voting procedure requiring only 85 % of the euro zone countries to take a decision. This besides causing open split in the euro zone was also an uncharted legal terrain. It implied also an admission that the economic and financial sustainability of the euro zone was at stake. These divisions helped Greece to secure the bailout it needed, but the compromise that helped these divisions to cement, at least temporarily, also implied that Greece was not able to focus on the European debt crisis. The focus was on Grexit. Back home Tsipras may have claimed from Brussels negotiations a pyrrhic achievement, but he could not deceive the hardnosed capitalist countries of Europe. He possibly thought that he had been able to defer the battle. Yet in another sense, Left's progress against neoliberal Europe suffered immense harm. The only good thing was that notwithstanding the dreamy-eyed European Left intellectuals the euro had lost much gloss.

Take the significant case of Greece's backwater, Bulgaria. Bulgaria watched the crisis and decided that it was in no rush to join the euro. The Bulgarian central bank issued a statement saying that the Greek banks' branches—which accounted for nearly one-fifth of the financial sector in Bulgaria—were companies established under Bulgarian law and that they could not transfer money out of the country without central bank permission. It also ruled that the depositors in Greek banks in Bulgaria would continue to have unfettered access to their money because "any action on behalf of the Greek government and central bank to impose measures in the Greek financial system has no legal force in Bulgaria and can in no way affect the normal functioning and the stability of the banking system." The Greek banks in Bulgaria had raised their capital adequacy ratios to 25–28 % during the past five years of Greek debt crisis—more than double the minimum that the Bulgarian bank law required after the country suffered an economic crash in 1996–1997 and was forced to introduce a currency board under International Monetary Fund (IMF) advice. Due to the crisis Bulgaria lost Greece as an important export market and leading foreign investor. Some 6 % of Bulgarian exports were now going to Greece—twice less than before the crisis. Some 10,000 small Greek businesses moved to Bulgaria since 2009 fleeing the crisis in their homeland. Meanwhile Bulgarian currency lev (BGN) made inroads in Greece. While earlier Greeks used to see Bulgarians as their destitute northern neighbours, now with the crisis hotels, restaurants, and smaller establishments in northern Greece started taking payments in Bulgarian lev. Bulgaria's lev is pegged to the euro at a rate of BGN 1.95 for €1 since mid-1997, though to be sure, Greeks despite losing a quarter of their GDP in the past six years are still three times richer than Bulgarians. The crisis hurt key Bulgarian exports to Greece, such as cereals, while Greece's share in Bulgaria's exports slipped to 6 % from 16 to 18 % which was the share before 2009. The crisis has also threatened the small Greek businesses which migrated to Bulgaria and were creating thousands of jobs (Zhelev 2015).

Lesson no. 2, therefore: do not treat dialogue as dialogue between two. In the classic sense of the term, even a monologue in a play has to have the audience in mind, which will determine how to monologue. A dialogue is always a multilogue. Treat each present and temporarily absent stakeholder in the dialogue seriously. The reason is that while the dialogist may enter into a specific conversation, but that dialogue is not a system existing by itself. It is a subsystem dependent on many general variables and conditionality. We may summarise the situation as made up of hidden variables. These hidden variables make the subsystem relational. Therefore, a dialogue does not float aimlessly that you can push it to any direction you like. The dialogist can attend to the layers and levels of an engagement provided that the dialogist has a consistent strategic aim in view of the relation of forces, and therefore can plan accordingly.

In Washington and Elsewhere

Meanwhile, what was that venerable institution without which countries (barring very few) cannot exist in global economy either as lenders or debtors, the IMF, doing? Sensing the impending crisis, from January 2015 the IMF issued 32 statements based on internal and external consultations. Having gone all the way with the other two institutions of the hated *troika* (ECB and the EU) in pressing Greece to agree to the merciless conditions for a third bailout, the IMF now advocated pragmatism. It also appeared to be interested in taking on the role of a conciliator. Its statements basically meant Greece had to repay, but the repayment period could be long. In other words, the IMF as a healthy fund should enable Greece to live so that the latter would be forced to allow more foreign investment (besides German credit) in the country, and given the strategic nature of Greece's membership of NATO, the United States would be able from now on to turn Greece into an American neocolony instead of Greece turning into a European neocolony. Crisis presented the IMF with an opportunity and prospect to drive wedge between Europe's various constituents. Christine Lagarde, the IMF Chief, who had a key role in the rounds of negotiations with Greece in Brussels, famously said on 18 June that the long drawn out, on-off aid-for-reforms talks would benefit from the presence of some adults in the room (Reuters 2015a).

In this context we have to remember that the Washington-based IMF has ideological objections to Greece's current proposals, which rely mainly on tax increases to boost revenue rather than on spending cuts. The IMF characteristic of the capitalist ethos of the United States argued in those months that the country's tortured economy was already heavily taxed and further hikes would harm growth. At the same time IMF was unhappy with the reluctance of European creditors—its euro zone partners and the European Central Bank—to come up with any concrete proposals on debt relief. The total debt now amounted to about 175 % of Greek GDP and the IMF had long felt that without at least some long-term relief (including writing off a proportion of the debt) Greece's borrowing was

unsustainable. IMF's challenge was how to bridge the gap between Tsipras' insistence on taxes being the main route to the generation of more revenues towards repayment of the debt and EU insistence on full scale fiscal reforms and immediate privatization of all assets.

Caught in this imbroglio, on 13 July 2016 the IMF released nine key questions it thought should be the basis of discussion on the Greek indebtedness. These were:

- What would the IMF like to see happen to resolve the situation?
- What happens to Greece because of the failure to make a repayment when due?
- Is there a grace period?
- Can a payment be postponed?
- How does the IMF work to resolve overdue payments?
- Are there penalties for a failure to repay?
- What does being in arrears to the IMF mean for Greece's other creditors?
- Is the IMF's ability to finance other members hurt by this non-payment?
- Will the IMF's shareholders suffer losses if Greece does not repay?

The IMF's clarifications were revealing. It said that its priority remained helping the Greek people through the difficult period of economic turmoil and the best way to do this was through a balanced approach. That meant Greece taking steps to reform its economy and the country's European partners providing additional financing and debt relief. The IMF knew through experience of working with its many members that economic change was hard and took time. This is where the IMF's financial support came in, providing a government with the space needed to carry out reforms over time. Of course, as the IMF declared, the immediate effect of Greek failure to respect the schedule of repayment was that Greece could no longer receive financing from the IMF under the existing extended arrangement and the IMF would not approve new financing to Greece until it cleared its arrears. For the time being, Greece would be eligible for IMF's technical assistance on a range of economic issues, including tax administration and financial sector policies. But there would be no grace period. When a member country failed to pay its obligations to the IMF by the due date, it was in arrears. A member country could request a postponement, but the IMF did not extend payment terms as a matter of longstanding policy. However, the IMF had a policy in place to work collaboratively with members to clear their arrears. The IMF reminded others that between 1978 and 1989, 19 countries had failed to repay and gone into arrears to the IMF. With the exception of Sudan and Somalia, all of these members were able during this time period to work with the IMF to clear their overdue balances. The only country with protracted arrears incurred in the more recent past was Zimbabwe.⁵

We know of course what happened to Africa following IMF's advice.

As negotiations wore on, IMF's belief strengthened that Greece's debt restructuring was needed on the basis of three main measures: longer term for loan

⁵Information in this paragraph from IMF, <http://www.imf.org/external/country/grc/index.htm?pn=2> and <http://www.imf.org/external/country/grc/greecefaq.htm> (both accessed on 25 July 2015).

repayment, some hair cut meaning partial reduction of debt burden, and policies for a stronger investment climate in Greece. After all Washington was the place where the New Deal was born about eighty years ago. On the eve of the crucial negotiations, on 14 July the IMF unofficially released a report, actually leaked the report to the news agency Reuters, that Greece's public debt was likely to peak at 200 % of its national income within the next two years, with the risk that the actual outcome could be even worse. In the report, it said that the severe damage caused to the Greek economy by more than two weeks of bank closures and capital controls meant that Greece would now require far more generous debt relief than was currently on offer from the euro zone countries. What was more crucial was the timing of the unofficial release. The debt sustainability analysis came on the eve of a crucial vote in Athens where Alexis Tsipras was seeking parliamentary approval for the fresh austerity measures demanded by the euro zone in return for a three-year rescue package worth up to €86 billion. "The dramatic deterioration in debt sustainability points to the need for debt relief on a scale that would need to go well beyond what has been under consideration to date—and what has been proposed by the ESM," the IMF said, referring to the European Stability Mechanism bailout fund which would have to be used to bankroll the Greek bailout plan (Elliott and Smith 2015).⁶

But did the IMF not know that Germany would not listen to IMF's advice? Clearly the advice was meant for Greece—in line with the strategy of bringing Greece in its orbit. It was a signal to Alexis Tsipras who was battling to convince the Greek members of Parliament to accept the euro zone conditions for a third bailout, namely that if you live today, you can come back tomorrow on the basis of IMF's ideas. But alas, American economic clout was in decline. The Germans taunted, why could not the IMF advance the required extra money to Greece? Wolfgang Schäuble offered United States a swap: Greece for Puerto Rico. Puerto Rico was also a defaulter (USD 72 billion) in the dollar zone while Greece was in the euro zone (*Hotnews* 2015). The Germans knew the US did not have the money to swap slaves; they were aware of the facts of relative strength of the partners of the *troika* and were ready to call the bluff.

The entire IMF-EU rift had to be seen in the context of the on-going Trans Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) discussions between Europe and the United States. The EU had already given into the US pressure and had agreed that there would be no more climate action before 2020 (Sethi 2015: 2). The United States also pressed that "On NATO the United States is leading from the front, now Europe must step up", and Europe needed to commit more support to Ukraine.⁷

In any case, if Greece was looking for an external source to boost its position in the Brussels talks, why did it not talk earnestly with the BRICS countries, particularly Russia and China? Here is a relevant report: "Greece could consider buying

⁶For the full report, see Reuters (2015c).

⁷"Transatlantic Take", news analysis from the German Marshall Fund of the United States, 29 June 2015.

membership in the New Development Bank as an alternative to Western financing.” Russia said Greece could get financing from the New Development Bank operated by Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (BRICS) if it buys a few shares of the institution to become a member. The bank, which is set to begin operations next April 2016, is seen as an alternative to Western financing. Deputy Russian Finance Minister Sergey Storchak said becoming a part of the bank would require Greek officials to make a *political* decision (italics mine). “We do not have any co-relation between a contribution and an amount of funding,” Russian news agency Tass quoted Storchak as saying. “There is general agreement that the system of the countries’ assets will be balanced.” Russian Finance Minister Anton Siluanov said on Tuesday that it was necessary for the new bank to “carve out a niche” since competition among international banks was intense, and the European Union and the IMF should have acted sooner to solve the Greek debt crisis. He said Greece would need to

... work on getting its liabilities in line with the possibilities of its economy’ before joining BRICS, adding Russia never considered lending money to Athens because Greek authorities didn’t ask. Siluanov’s deputy said the new bank would start considering membership applications after starting operations. Storchak said gaining BRICS membership should not be a problem for Greece. The BRICS bank is expected to be capitalized initially at \$50 billion, with likely growth to \$100 billion (Mukhopadhyay 2015).

The crucial word was “political.” Greece needed to know the multi-polar world closely, had to be less Eurocentric, be aware of its post-colonial destiny, and decide its tactics for the negotiating game on the basis of available options before it decided to go to Brussels (as it went to Brussels). It would have been a challenge for BRICS also, as Greece was determined to remain in the euro zone. Somewhere Greece had to make a choice in the interests of its own people—to remain servile to Brussels or accept the reality of a multi-polar world, which would help her to attain far greater autonomy than it had now. Tsipras went to Moscow but we do not know what came out of the two visits.

In any case, The IMF announced early on 20 July that Greece had gone further into arrears by missing a debt repayment for the second consecutive month. It had been due to pay €456 m to the Washington-based fund.

In the end perhaps then, all these moves proved of little worth. Greece succumbed. But clearly the fault lines in the neoliberal imperial world had become clearer. The peripheries were up for the grabs. Who will win in this interimperialist conflict? Will the poorer nations and peoples be able to negotiate their own destiny through the impending storm? Recall Lenin’s famous pamphlet, *The Impending Catastrophe and How to Combat it* (Lenin 1917).

Truly, Alexis Tsipras said, the government was constantly retreating and manoeuvring because, “they had set us a trap in the battle of Europe ... with aim of financial suffocation and the government’s overthrow... They had everything set up to shipwreck us... and the country.” However, the Finance Minister at that time, Y. Varoufakis, clarified that the manoeuvres and retreats of the Greek government also had some “red lines,” which the Greek government did not intend to cross.

A general in battle always sets some red lines, but the fury of the battle at times blows away those lines

Lesson no 3: The grammar of politics is not learnt in a porcelain shop, but in a war room.

In Athens

Yet, the main scene was not Brussels or Berlin or even distant Washington DC, but in a sense Athens, where governmental strategies and tactics were being made in those days with immense historical consequences. Tsipras had gambled with the referendum of 5 July. A defeat would have been convenient for him in order to continue with the negotiations and say that he had accepted the conditions because the people supported the conditions set by the euro group. But with the unexpected victory presented to Tsipras by the people, he had to now twist logic unbelievably and say that the referendum was a “no” to policies of austerity, but not Grexit. Therefore he argued that he had to submit to the conditions set by Brussels and Berlin to avoid Greece’s exit from the euro zone. In his words, “We are confronted with crucial decisions. We got a mandate to bring a better deal than the ultimatum that the euro group gave us, but certainly not given a mandate to take Greece out of the euro zone.” And there was an appeal for party unity: “We are all in this together” (Wearden and Fletcher 2015).

The greatest damage from this bizarre logic was that it immediately opened up the fault lines within Syriza, and the Finance Minister had to resign because he could not agree to the negotiating strategy of Tsipras. Several others rebelled. The spotlight was now firmly on how Tsipras would reshuffle his cabinet. With the deal done, Greece now raced to meet its first deadline: to pass four pieces of legislation by the end of Wednesday, 15 July. Cracks now emerged in the coalition. Away from parliament, strike actions were already called. Considerably weakened, Tsipras had no option but to push on so that the Greek banks would receive an urgent injection of cash and vital bailout funds. Andrew Walker of the BBC economic service reported that Greece would have to sell off silver, about 70,000 properties strong portfolio that included rich tourist islands, port, transportation units, and many more. Civil servants called for a 24-h strike on 15 July. The hash tag became popular, “This is a coup.”

Kammenos, whose Independent Greeks party underpinned Tsipras’ coalition government, said that his party would back plans agreed by Greek parties before the weekend, but “no other measures that are imposed.” Some 30 Syriza MPs, led by left-wing Energy Minister Panagiotis Lafazanis, refused to defend the Prime Minister, though urgent reforms were passed in the Greek Parliament with the help of opposition party support. Euro zone summit statement was passed that black Wednesday. VAT changes with the top rate of 23 % extended to processed food, restaurants, etc., 13 % to cover fresh food, energy bills, water and hotel stays, and 6 % for medicines and books were approved. VAT discount of 30 % was abolished

on islands, except remotest islands. Corporation tax was raised from 26 to 29 % for small companies. Luxury tax for big cars, boats, and swimming pools was up from 10 to 13 %, and farmers' tax from 13 to 26 %. Early retirement was to be phased out by 2022, and retirement age was raised to 67. The Greek statistics authority Elstat would have full legal independence. A special authority was to be set up for overseeing privatisation.

All red lines were swept away. It is impossible to find from the fine lines of the deal as to how a primary surplus that would not kill the small and medium sectors could be secured. Confusion remained with regard to the structure of the debt: what must be paid, to whom, and when. Also nothing indicated that the Greeks had been able to decide how there could be more investment than savings, which would indicate that capital would not lie stagnant but invested. But this had nowhere happened in the debt history of Europe, particularly when debt amounted to 200 % of the GDP. In the light of past history, that kind of debt would need probably hundred years to be repaid! In the olden days, it had needed colonial wars to wipe off the national debt.

Greece was thus caught in what elsewhere has been termed as the scissors crisis. Investment needed suitable environment, meaning more state money had to be made available for private investment. But loan repayment would leave little scope for augmenting state money. Therefore, beneficial public private partnerships implied even more free loot of national resources. Meanwhile, the government said nothing about the average wage that had gone down by 25 % in recent years, the simultaneous tax increases, direct and indirect, and the pension reductions coupled with increasing living cost. In some sense then the Greek communists were not wrong when they alleged that the negotiation of the Syriza government with the lenders would have never led to a recovery of the enormous losses the popular strata had undergone in recent years, because its strategy was focused on how to save the domestic ruling class. The primary surplus, which was at the centre of the discussions and continuously going down, would now be translated into new subsidies for capital, euphemistically called "productive reconstruction." In other words Greece was returning to the age of greater extraction of primary surplus.

More and more therefore the government began promoting the principle of responsibility. From now on, payment of taxes became a patriotic task—taxes imposed on the workers and other popular strata by the previous governments. The big shareholders of the monopoly groups, with 140 billion euros abroad continued to remain outside the firing line. The ship-owners would continue to pay minimal taxes. The big industrialists would expect new subsidies from the government. The popular strata would once again shoulder the burden of the capitalist crisis and return of the economy to capitalist growth.

The most interesting thing in all these is that a movement against austerity ended in this way that is greater austerity. Yet, is it surprising that a movement that focused only on debt, relief, and austerity would have to submit to the economic logic of more investment as the way out, which could mean in the present context more capitalist investment—the only way capitalism knows to come out of the

crisis? Capitalism-debt-austerity-misery-crisis-investment-capitalism-debt... this is the eternal cycle in which the dreamy social movements will be circulating.

There was one more lesson. *Trust* was one of the words circulating most in this period. The rhetoric of trust was perhaps most frightening of all. The Greeks were accused of having squandered the money given to them in trust in the past years, which assumed of course, that they had it in the first place. For, the Greeks had proved unworthy of being trusted for allegedly cooking the books in order to get into the euro zone. Trust was in this manner a kind of red herring, because what was demanded in the negotiations was namely that Greece should have in the first place absolute faith in Germany, German economy, and German power: to have absolute faith therefore called for trust in Germany, the financial austerity of the Protestant North Europeans! (Abbas 2015).

In this situation, referendum as a popular democratic exercise was fine, but as a tactic in war? Was it a preparation for mass involvement in a battle ahead or a knee jerk reaction? Referendum as a step in negotiation was a separate issue which should have been deliberated upon more closely—particularly if agreement with Brussels and Berlin was the goal. Michael Fuchs, deputy parliamentary floor leader of Angela Merkel’s party the Christian Democrats, was quick to raise concerns: “We have to be very careful because honestly, I have a little bit of a problem to trust it because what is the difference between Sunday and today?” (Reuters 2015b).

The trust these people were referring to had something to do with market trust as well. Financial experts welcomed what they saw as growing signs of an agreement. Markets reacted positively to the existence of a document, saying that it sent out a positive signal. Some welcomed the Greek proposals as a starting point, saying: “The Greeks are coming closer to the creditors. That was not to be expected after Sunday’s referendum....” Scepticism however remained. Some countries complained, the Greek government had not presented anything new to Brussels. But more intriguingly the Greek government had presented the very same list of reforms which it had advised its people to reject just a week ago.⁸

Trust is thus an un-definable social good that becomes important in dialogue. Trust develops from networks. Networks in turn play an important role in dialogues. While the Syriza leaders travelled to Ireland, Moscow, and several places to address and explain their politics and in turn were visited upon by many socialists and unsolicited advisers, clearly there was little trust building network among countries involved in the negotiations and supposedly sympathetic to Greece. What is more, the negotiations ended with loss of trust on Tsipras at home to quite an extent.

Lesson no 4 then: As in collective actions, in negotiations too trust networks count. Surprises are mounted only when as tactics they succeed in bringing dividends.

⁸<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2015/07/08/why-the-greece-crisis-could-be-the-beginning-of-the-end-of-europe-as-we-know-it/> (accessed on 20 July 2015).

The Europe that Tsipras Wanted Greece to Attach with

What is this Europe that Alexis Tsipras wanted his country to attach with? We have seen that the European Right was consistent from the beginning. It knew where its priorities lay, and accordingly applied pressure. It increased the pressure gradually in a way that squeezed Greece to an extent where she succumbed. We have seen also that on the other hand the Greek leadership had neither any credible fall back option (all explanations on this were flimsy), nor any time table, nor indeed any idea of where other options lay. All these were precisely because the Syriza leadership's vision was clouded by a bourgeois Europeanist ideology, while its practical steps were geared towards saving Greece and not Europe. This uneasy combination made no sense economically or politically. The discourse was a mumbo jumbo of nationalism, Europeanism, and populism. Therefore its negotiating strategy failed on either count. It neither saved Europe nor Greece.

But what was this attraction for Europe? At one level we may say that it represented the links of the Greek bourgeoisie with European capitalism and the feelings of insecurity and fear among the petty bourgeois classes and the huge bulk of petty producers, and finally the illusion of the trans-national Greek intellectual class. Europeanism was their world outlook. It was not the outlook of the working class.

In those tumultuous days, the ex-Finance Minister Yanis Varoufakis had famously said of Europe, that our so-called partners led by the German establishment, behaved towards us as being their colony and they are nothing more than brutal blackmailers and financial assassins. Never before had the European Union made a decision that undermined so fundamentally the project of European Integration. Europe's leaders, in treating Alexis Tsipras and our government the way they did, dealt a decisive blow against the European project. He also suggested that the media was wrong to focus on whether Greek MPs would pass the legislation. The crucial question was: Did the Greek economy stand any chance of recovery under the terms set by the EU?⁹

But Yanis Varoufakis in exclaiming his regret and anger emerged as acting in bad faith. This was sad and ironic, because of all the Syriza leaders' his analysis appeared, at least in the English language press, as most incisive. But what was this European integration he was talking about? When has capitalist integration benefited the society? When has global integration become good for the peripheries? To be truthful, the project of European integration from the start was an imperialist project—from the coal and steel days to the disastrous days in Athens. Only the dreamy-eyed European Left harboured illusions that out of this bourgeois project something good for the masses could come. One blogger reminded the ex-Finance Minister:

⁹Varoufakis' blog, <http://yanisvaroufakis.eu/2015/07/14/on-the-euro-summits-statement-on-greece-first-thoughts/> (accessed on 17 July 2015).

Don't forget that it was Germany who dragged NATO and the US into the war with Yugoslavia!

Not the other way around.

It was Germany that rushed to recognize Slovenia's and Croatia's independence and hence ignited the war in Yugoslavia.

Do you see any parallels to the situation in Ukraine? What was the role of Germany in the Maidan and whose plan was it to connect Ukraine with the EU?¹⁰

How could the Syriza and other Left forces in Europe forget that the characteristics of a periphery from the twentieth century up to the present day lay among others in the imbalance of industrial and agricultural production, also the unbalanced development of the various industrial sectors? Or, that the policy of plundering, annexations, transforming states into protectorates, and that of dismembering states was not a result of political immorality, but an issue of capital export and unevenness at national and international level which was inherent in capitalism? Greece now became one of the characteristic examples of selective capitalist development while the assimilation of the country in the EU and generally its relation with the global capitalist market led to an even bigger restriction of the utilization of its resources. And all these went on in the last 15 years while the country had significant energy resources, considerable mineral resources, industrial and agricultural production, and crafts, all of which taken together could cover a large part of the people's needs. Yet, as a result of the crisis and the whole course of the assimilation in the imperialist pyramid, Greece was downgraded even further. It became dependent on imports while the Greek products remained unsold and buried—much like the unproductive capital that Varoufakis had referred to. In such condition, as always it was impossible for the bourgeois class to defend the sovereign rights for the benefit of the people.¹¹ For all these reasons, Europeanism emerged in the course of last few years, particularly in the years following the crash of 2008, as the biggest ideological enemy of the working class in Europe. Europeanism is the vehicle of neoliberalism in Europe.

But if Europeanism is an ideology, to which we should devote closer attention, what is the purpose of the ideology? If one purpose is to serve German and other European corporate interests, the other is to paper the cracks in the European edifice. It is to the second function that we should attend now because it relates to certain material condition.¹²

It all started with coal and steel. After the horrors of 1914 and 1939, France and West Germany decided in 1951 to tie their economies so closely that there would not be another continental war. Italy, Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands

¹⁰Comment posted on the above mentioned blog site by Aristoteles, 16 July 2015 (accessed on 17 July 2015).

¹¹See also details of the critique by the Greek Communist Party, <http://inter.kke.gr/en/firstpage/> (accessed on 18 July 2015).

¹²For greater details to the historical character of Europeanism as ideology, Chap. 3.

joined the project and the European Common Market was born for the strategically vital resources and to prevent any renewed rivalry. This was succeeded by the European Economic Community, which again expanded to become in 1993 the European Union. Common currency came in 1999, which is expanding since then. Lithuania is the latest member. There were apparently no signs of lessening of its eastward expansion. But now probably for the first time this process of expansion may be facing a huge stumbling block—not in the form of nationalism as the continental liberals and the Left alike would have us believe, but because of its weight, funny because the weight is often empty, meaning full of debt and bubble. The idea that closer economic ties would lead to closer political ones or the one that there should be closer political ties before economic integration—both are misleading, because both ignore the inherent contradictions in the European capitalist project fuelled in the recent decades by neoliberal policies. Germany knows that European countries cannot have an effective common currency without sharing a treasury, because having the same currency means having same monetary policy, which is today not the case. Some country may have lower interest rates than Germany, and some may use a lower exchange rate than either of them. Money market may be too tight for some. On the other hand, political union will be slow till the hard economic things are tackled. The euro, in other words, had great problems from the beginning. Probably Germany knew that this would happen. When the *crisis* would come, the crisis of currency would be used to force various countries to fall in line. Countries would be forced to take political steps to take a monetarist society. They will be scared to exit from the euro zone because of the prospect of greater unemployment, inflation, and spreading bankruptcies. That fear would deter the countries to look for lessons in the world elsewhere, where cheaper currencies had made trade and exports more competitive, and national reconstruction easier. In fact in those countries the currency does not reflect at times the strength of the economies, as in India, where the currency become free floating and is subject to dollar trading, and market becomes susceptible to invaders.

Balibar et al. (2015) in a perceptive article made a structural analysis of the situation and discussed what they called the “material constitution of Europe.” They pointed out that the negotiation and the deal indicated a crisis in the EU of which Greece was both the symptom and the victim. They also indicated what they thought to be three strategic domains of the situation: (a) the debt situation and the effects of the austerity measures; (b) the division of Europe into unequal zones of prosperity and sovereignty; and (c) the collapse of democratic systems and the resulting rise in populist nationalism (Balibar et al. 2015). In course of their analysis, they referred to some of structural aspects of the situation, discussed in some details in the foregoing pages. Unfortunately, however, the article failed to convey a sense of urgency. As if the call was—let us renew from ground zero. But there is no ground zero in war, no veil of ignorance that can be afforded. The working class struggle is full of immense reverses, bloody losses, and sacrifice of time, life, and resources due to lack of proper strategy and tactics. Also the situation reminded of what Lenin was said to have remarked somewhere, there are decades where nothing happens; and there are weeks where decades happen.

The crisis that Balibar, Mezzadra, and Wolf refer to was not simply structural but produced by event also. Events such as the rise of Syriza and its accession to governmental power propelled by debt, austerity, and militant protests followed by tortuous negotiations between Brussels and Athens and marked by massive presence of the people on the streets on 5 July do not repeat often. Such an event does not come regularly, daily, planned, and forecasted. Event produces its own history. The current Left analyses in Europe lack that sense—a sense of urgency that perhaps we have missed the bus. As negotiations went on, the crisis deepened, like a self-fulfilling prophecy. That is the role of politics in a crisis. It pushes critical elements along the fast and slippery road to explosion. Structures make no sense unless we have added contingency to that wisdom. The negotiation became a catalyst, in as much as other actors such as the Syriza, the German bosses Merkel and Schäuble, the sharp publicist Varoufakis, dissenters within the ruling party in Greece, and most importantly the protesters on the streets of Athens were equally significant catalysts. Consequently the crisis became social, economic, and political. A structural crisis alone was not enough to bring matters to a point. This was the difference between 2008 and 2015. In 2008, global economy blew part, but politics lagged because it had no focal point. Yet, well-meaning Left intellectuals forget the specific role that politics plays in the development of a contradiction. For example, one commentator wrote,

The development of the new monster, German Europe, is a natural offspring of the pre-conditions provided by the ‘nation state-free market’ paradigm....

Up until the explosion of the more political than economic European crisis, it was the bubble around the heads of many Eurocrats, pundits and political experts. The bursting of the bubble has revealed sharp antagonisms, strong emotions and a deepening cleavage between the European South and the North. The emperor is naked: Europe under German *diktat* is not the EU of citizens. There is no unity in this outburst of diversity....

The southern and eastern periphery of the EU is set against its northern and western core. This schism might escalate into the protracted and sharp conflict that Mary Kaldor calls a “new war”. In the absence of viable alternatives, this structured peripheralization might become (and partly became) the hotbed of resurfacing nationalisms, racism and all kinds of possible social, political and cultural exclusions....

A grand debate should be launched about the Future of Europe – a debate which was dismissed after 1989/91. An open, bottom-up dialogue might not result immediately in solidarity among Europeans. But it might help to reveal opportunities as well as constraints. This, however, should start immediately – in fact, it has already begun in smaller and bigger circles throughout the continent. We need to find out how to connect these local debates and turn them into a grand debate on the future of Europe.

With a long delay, ‘Europe’ has to start to learn about herself. This learning process might be never ending, but it might be fruitful. The speed of bubble bursting can be accelerated: civil fora, universities, parliaments, online and offline magazines, regional TV stations, European movements and political parties with cross-border aspirations, social networks, trade unions, etc., should be interconnected by it... (Miszlivetz 2013).

In this cry for “Europe needs a new debate,” the commentator forgot that the debate had already started with the presence of activists on the streets, and political

organizations organizing and gearing up for the battle ahead. The event was the greatest critique of neoliberal Europe and had set a new round of contest of ideas and routes. Contradiction is the essence of life. We can recall Marx's idea of critique, namely that force of critique has to be substituted by a critique by force.

Indeed, we should briefly discuss the issue of crisis. Marx commented that the theme of bourgeois economy denoted no more than the most *abstract form of the crisis*, as, "without content, without a compelling motivating factor." He said that in the bourgeois economy sale and purchase may always fall apart and this represented a potential crisis—which was we may note was the case with the current European crisis enmeshed particularly with money supply. Yet as he noted, the possibility of crisis into an actual crisis was not contained in the form of the crisis itself, it only implied that "the *framework* for a crisis exists" (Marx 1863). We can also recall the Leninist idea of crisis. To recall, Lenin had argued that a crisis emerges when besides the inability of the rulers to live in the old way, the ruled must also find their suffering and want more acute than usual and therefore intolerable; and they cannot therefore live in the old way. As a consequence of these two causes, there is a considerable increase in the activity of the masses (Lenin 1914–1915: 213–214). To the revolutionary leadership such a crisis presents itself as a revolutionary crisis, where the crucial issue is leading the masses. Therefore, mobilization and organization of the masses become the most significant dimensions of the crisis. Study of the rank and file therefore leads us to its dialectical opposite—a study of leadership, indeed a study of the dialectical relationship between masses and leaders. This is because in that dialectical relationship between the subaltern and the vanguard, we can see the emerging shape of a new historical bloc. For an analysis of a historical process, the development or non-development of subaltern masses is therefore a matter of fundamentally important discussion. Syriza failed disastrously in this task. The negotiations had presented to the Left leadership with that rare historical moment when the historical bloc of subaltern masses and the leadership would have become remarkable with dynamism and courage.

The French Marxist philosopher and a theorist of continental citizenship Etienne Balibar argued that the current situation warrants that "a new Europe can only come from the bottom-up" (Balibar 2013). This he suggested was the way for a *restructuring* (emphasis Balibar's) of the Union for the purpose of building another Europe. But this union cannot be restructured through a bottom-up oriented activity, for his idea, namely, that "another Europe" must be able to suggest alternatives, which make sense to the majority of the citizens across the continent, does not happen in a gradual way. Crisis is precisely the mechanism and the time when alternatives start making sense to the masses. Therefore, there cannot be any pure "bottom-up" in as much as there cannot be any pure "from the top." In response to Etienne Balibar, another Left Europeanist Sandro Mezzadra argued, Europe make sense only insofar as it became a space which made it easier to get rid of the fear the crisis was disseminating within the social fabric, a space where it was more viable to struggle against poverty, exploitation, and discrimination. He spoke of the need for a founding campaign to realise such a restructuring of Europe (Mezzadra 2013). If fear was the main problem requiring a foundational campaign, was it fear of debt

and precariousness, or the fear of anarchy consequent upon exit from the euro zone? Besides, here too in this call for a foundational campaign, one would search in vain to get at least some reference to the fact that events accelerate campaign and the events were all pointing to the fallacy of Europeanist ideology. Again, this was because the struggle was against the Union which represented corporate interests; and the struggle was for a state and a government that protected the people against a neoliberal Europe, in other words struggle firmly anchored in popular democracy and the nation form. This does not mean that the working classes in other countries were not fighting, or that there would be no coordination, mutual solidarity, and assistance, or even coordination of strategies. But make no mistake the struggle was for the nation to be free from the yoke of neoliberal capitalism symbolised by the EU.

In Chap. 3 we shall move on to examine the ideology of Europeanism. Presently, it is sufficient to note that the negotiations brought parties to a deal because of the overarching importance of Europeanism. If the European neoliberals thought that without a European framework they would be unable to stabilise their position or expand, then the debt ridden Greeks thought that without the European umbrella they would be consumed by the fire of anarchy. The dissenters were dubbed as “nationalists,” “sectarians,” and “populists.”

Tilly (1998) had long back argued that dialogues were like contested conversations. Such a conversation develops and follows own causal logic. What differentiates contentious discourse from material resources and social ties is that the symbolic structure of the conversation has a dialogic and dialectical nature. Therefore, a dialogist is not free to enter into a discussion room and walk away the next moment or day. The structure of the conversation binds the dialogist in as much as the dialogist’s conversation moves the dialogue to an unpredictable direction. As the above pages testify, one of the crucial dimensions of the Greek crisis was not that it was economic, but consisted of the rounds of discussion that accelerated the development of events and brought the situation to a *political* crisis—for which Syriza and its leader Alexis Tsipras were ill prepared. They had not perhaps realised that dialogue was like a war. Negotiation making and war making had immense similarities.

By way of concluding, let me then go back to the question of dialogic lessons, which punctuate this essay. In the foregoing pages we noted four lessons, to which we can add three more:

Lesson no 5: Dialogic act is a relational act. While therefore we can ground the question, wherefrom does a dialogic situation come—in philosophy, morals, metaphysics, and rational choice—the implicit model presented here puts this question in terms of contentious politics. The model speaks of dialogue as a contentious act.

Lesson no 6: In framing a dialogue, contentions on the street have a major role to play. Dialogues therefore mark the cracks and not unity.

Lesson no 7: Dialogues form the field of governing people and their relations. It can advance democracy or can be a governmental technique. It can be both a mark of democracy, and its deficit. And, therefore a dialogic act is never about reaching

truth, but about determining the relation of the dialogists (and their desire to dialogue) with truth.

If these are the lessons (at least seven, but there can be others as well), one may reasonably ask, why did not the Syriza leadership prepare itself for these rules of dialogue (or rules of war)? Perhaps, the most direct and therefore a simplistic answer would be that they had not taken the business of state remaking seriously. There are two grounds to suggest this: one, they did not realise that under neoliberalism the economic restructuring of the state goes on through several political modes of which one is enforced dialogues (negotiations); two, a non-dialectical attitude to dialogue leaves the actor (dialogist) over dependent on it, reduces its negotiating space, and to that extent immobilises it. We can end this chapter with brief comments on these two aspects.

On the first: today, global and local capitalist as well as non-capitalist enterprises are interconnected through global (that is, where exchange happens between entities across national boundaries) and local (that is, where exchange happens between intranational entities) markets. This is the materialization of a value chain. Neoliberal capitalism through the supply chains (consisting of various modes such as outsourcing, subcontracting, and off-shoring) gives rise to new circuits of global capital. Connected to these circuits are new practices and relationships that produce new subjectivities and a new hegemonic social reality that aims to foreclose the language of class precisely by retaining and underscoring the presence of the so-called informal, agricultural, and the household sectors. Yet the history of crises tells us how capitalist crisis becomes one of accumulation through the reinforcement of the social in the productive process—thus the resistance of the worker (and the society) does not allow beyond a point the operation of the so-called remorseless laws of accumulation. The State whose singular importance in the accumulation process was brought out by Lenin again and again becomes the crucial site where politics negotiates the inevitable binds that accumulation as a process continuously throws up. There is thus perhaps as some have called “an elective affinity between capitalism and passive revolution: the decentralised nature of the accumulation process, driven by competition among capitals, is evidently compatible with a wide range of political forms, giving scope for individual states to restructure the process” (Callinicos 2010).

Hence, there should be no ground for confusion about what we arguing in this chapter. The purpose is not to criticise the negotiations Greece embarked on. We are also not suggesting that because the idea of economic agency is a fiction in this capitalist world, perhaps Alexis Tsipras should have worn a tie in the formal meetings in Brussels or Varoufakis should have at least occasionally smiled nicely and spoken in tea party language to extract some concession. Or, that the weak should never enter into negotiations with the strong. Indeed, the negotiations brought home new truths. We are only suggesting here that even when or particularly when, the dialogist engages in dialogue to seek justice, the dialogist will do well to remember that rules of dialogue and rules of war have remarkable similarities. Just as the general when planning a campaign studies similar campaigns of the past and knows that a campaign is always undertaken in the shadow of the

historical memory of previous campaigns, likewise a dialogue is also conducted in the shadow of similar dialogues of the past. Thus, during the five months of negotiations, the Athens-Brussels deal was repeatedly compared with the Versailles. As a result so much historical dust was raised that the German Chancellor Merkel was reported to have said, “I never make historical comparisons” (cited in Abbas 2015). It is therefore important to note as to who invokes historical memory and who wants to efface it.

On the second, that is a relative lack of attention to the dynamics of dialogue that immobilized the government and the Syriza to a damaging extent: in a wide ranging interview on the tensions and challenges of working within the Greek state the Syriza Minister of Education and Culture Aristides Baltas examined the impact of the negotiations on the task of politically leading the society and forging an appropriate functioning of the government. To a question, “In terms of now occupying such a position inside the state, you also said near the beginning of our previous interview that the Greek state—and you were stressing the distinctive history of Greece in this respect—is ‘absolutely corrupt, beyond possible measure corrupt.’ Now that you’re inside, was this is an exaggeration? Or is it true?”, Aristides Baltas responded,

...There is the question of whether to destroy the state or rationalize it. This seems to be the wrong question. On the one hand, you cannot rationalize this kind of state. On the other hand, rather than destruction we need a different word. What I would prefer, based on my experience in these few months, is to say: open up the state. For example, we have a big hall downstairs, and when schools arrive for different events I go down to address the students and teachers, and this is a breath of fresh air... This is part of opening up the ministry to the outside, to plain sight. But this applies vice versa, which is more important, I think. I try to visit schools, as far as time allows, and go to class, literally, without a camera, without anything, just telling the director of the school I will be coming tomorrow, so don’t be surprised... (Baltas and Panitch 2015).

The interviewer persisted:

But why are they (people) silent? Why are they immobile? When we spoke in 2012, you said what was distinctive about the conjuncture which brought Syriza to the doorstep of the state was the diverse local movements. It started with the student revolt, but it kept coming up, you said, even in small things — save a tree, don’t build a stadium, all these things we talked about. So why is everyone holding their breath now? Is it only the negotiations? Or is it themselves sensing how difficult it is to change the state, even when our friends are in? What is the reason for this immobile movement?

Aristides Baltas responded with these words:

I think one of the reasons is that they don’t trust any institution, any party, any newspaper, or any television station. And they all of a sudden see a government which opens doors, takes away barriers... We have the smallest possible ministerial cars and no people surrounding us when we go to the market or go wherever. They look at us and say, what kind of minister are you? They feel it. And so they don’t think that we are there to take advantage of being in government. So when we tell them we don’t have any money, they understand it. They are not demanding more wages and things like that. They understand that they cannot ask for these things now... But yes, overall, I think that everybody’s holding his or her breath for the negotiations, hoping to get the money when the economy

improves. So for now they find it by themselves, by working, by sharing. So this is a way of creating new social relations. This kind of thing is happening within this immobile movement, but without this taking voice and expressing itself in a way that could be heard by people who just visit Greece, or even by us... There's a time lag here too in the sense that we have not yet understood the connection with party and government, with party and parliamentary group. We are making steps in that direction, but the general feeling of a large part of the party is still, so to speak, at the level of only offering criticisms in terms of why don't you move further in this or that direction, why are you appointing that guy and not that guy, and things like that. So instead of helping, they don't help... there is a kind of time lag, reflecting impatience or mistrust in the air, so to speak... Perhaps! But for the moment the future from this point of view is completely unknown to me, even in the sense of having an inkling of what the future will be like. The real problem right now, for this ministry, is that we cannot yet govern, because everything hangs on the negotiations, and even this ministry, which is not in the negotiations, cannot really start to function in a literal sense unless we have the minimal kind of money to just let things go on and start making the kind of reforms we were talking about before... So it's three months of freezing, as it were, the internal workings of the state, not really doing business as usual, not at all like that, but just letting some things go on because you cannot do otherwise, trying to stop other things because we can. I'll give you an example. We have European funding for development which amounts to a lot of money for us. What is going to happen with this money? So at the level of governing, we are very constrained. We have not yet started to really control the state (Baltas and Panitch 2015).

We have deliberately cited long parts from the interview to show how the dream of "opening up the state" ended in immobilization. To speak of opening up the state as the path to "withering away of the state," as Aristides Baltas put it, was not wrong; yet what was lacking in that analysis was an awareness that the state does not wither away through mere opening up, but through massive and continuous self-mobilizations and self-governance of economy, politics, and society amidst class struggles of which war and dialogues are the two intersecting forms. Without class struggle, "opening up" ends in passivity. It happened that way and subsequent Greek elections proved this analysis. Indeed, all that Syriza's single minded attention to negotiation with Brussels produced was a confirmation of Greece's status as the "new euro zone colony" and its juridical status as a debtor (Jargow 2013). Meanwhile, eight months passed since the election of Syriza on 25 January 2015 up to the snap elections in September, during which the Syriza leadership kept on with their rhetoric of opposition to austerity while they knelt down in submission to the *troika*. And when the game was no longer required, they called snap elections to exploit the pervasive fear and misery among the population and gain renewed legitimacy to rule. During this period the anti-austerity government emptied the Greek Treasury to pay the EU bankers, stripped pension and municipal funds to meet IMF obligations, and allowed the flight of over 40 billion Euros from Greek banks to overseas accounts. All these were done, as James Petras pointed out, while the Syriza leadership did everything possible to distract, bluster, and mislead confused supporters. Radical rhetoric, empty gestures, and verbal defiance were aided by armchair rebels, who sat in the Cabinet and "slavishly followed Tsipras for seven months, engaging in sterile internal party debates and giving interviews to the dwindling bands of leftist academic tourists, while ignoring the street fighting youth," and thus lost disastrously in the new election. They too had been involved

the negotiation game and proved unequal to the task of convincing a cowed, confused and fearful electorate that they should unite, organise and fight. The EU bankers immediately got a measure of a so-called Left government as organically incapable of breaking out of the EU cage, renouncing the euro and the debt. With their long historical experience, euro-imperialists know how to treat the soft socialists who negotiate on bended knee. As James Petras put it, “The more you kick them, the less they ask.” Defeat came in this way. The Syriza leadership neither knew the rules of dialogue nor of war, because to know one you have to know the other too (Petras 2015).

To repeat: part of the delusion and consequently ignorance of the rules of dialogue and war came from the belief of the Left that there was no alternative to Keynesian policies, and thus what Greece immediately needed was more money to tide over the crisis (Schmidt 2011, 2016). We can thus speak of an elective affinity between rules of dialogue and rules of war. Its awareness will help us understand why in a span of only 20 days—24 June when the negotiations entered the dramatic phase to 14 July—history witnessed two unforgettable nights: the night of glory, 5 July and the night of ignominy, 14 July.

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Chapter 3

Europeanism: The Repressed Anxiety of a Transnational Intellectual Class

Abstract This chapter begins with the details of the deal between European Powers and Greece over debt restructuring, analyses the neoliberal programme of reshaping the Greek state through the deal, and then proceeds to unravel the phenomenon of Europe as the eternal illusion—the *Europa* to be rescued eternally from her abductors. In this context, the chapter engages in a discussion on the ideology of Europeanism which had put Greece in the first place in the service of *euro*, the common currency of a large chunk of the continent and the main instrument of a monetarist union, through which Europe had transformed itself into a neoliberal land. The chapter argues that at the heart of the illusion lay a self-created and self-held belief that the nation question in Europe was over, that Europe had a special history of being a continental self, and the destiny of Greece lay with this special history of Europe, and that a radical transformation of Greece would come only through a continent wide transformation. In this context, the chapter examines the illusions of the European Left and the New Left, the illusion of Europe, and the false hope on the capacity of social mobilisation to work as a substitute of political mobilisation towards revolutionary transformation of consciousness.

Keywords Europa · Europeanism · Keynesianism · Welfare state · European Left · New Left · Anti-austerity · Monetarist union · IMF · Islamophobia · Hellenophilia · National question · Lenin on Europe

The Merciless World

Let us again begin from the beginning. Let us first speak of the merciless world from which the European Left and the Greek Syriza leadership thought that the Idea of Europe would protect them. We are speaking here of the ten-point deal and the ten crucial moments in the recent history of neoliberal reforms in Greece.

First, we shall see in some details the nature of the deal in return for the proposed grant of 86 billion euro loan to Greece. The deal offered by the euro group and accepted by the Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras had among others these policy

commitments and actions to be taken in consultation with EC/ECB/IMF (European Commission/European Central Bank/International Monetary Fund):

1. Effective from 1 July 2015, the supplementary budget of 2015 and the medium-term fiscal strategy of 2016–19 will have a sizable and credible package of measures. The new fiscal path will be premised on a primary surplus target amounting to 3.5 % of GDP in 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2018. The package will include VAT reforms, other tax policy measures, pension reforms, reforms in public administration, reforms addressing shortfalls in tax collection enforcement, and other parametric measures as specified below.
2. *VAT reform*: Legislation to be passed to reform the VAT system that will be effective as of 1 July 2015. The reform will target a net revenue gain of 1 % of GDP on an annual basis from changes in the parameters. The new VAT system will: (i) unify the rates at a standard 23 % rate, which will include restaurants and catering, and a reduced 13 % rate for basic food, energy, hotels, and water (excluding sewage), and a super-reduced rate of 6 % for pharmaceuticals, books, and theatre; (ii) streamline exemptions to broaden the base and raise the tax on insurance; and (iii) eliminate discounts on islands, starting with the islands with higher incomes and which are the most popular tourist destinations, except the most remote ones. This will be completed by the end of 2016. The increase of the VAT rate described above may be reviewed at the end of 2016, provided that equivalent additional revenues are collected through measures taken against tax evasion and to improve collectability of VAT. Any decision to review and revise shall take place in consultation with the institutions (EC/ECB/IMF).
3. *Fiscal structural measures*: Legislation will be required to close possibilities of income tax avoidance (e.g. tighten the definition of farmers), take measures to increase the corporate income tax in 2015 and require 100 % advance payments for corporate income and gradually for individual business income tax by 2017; phase out the preferential tax treatment of farmers in the income tax code by 2017; raise the solidarity surcharge; abolish subsidies for excise on diesel oil for farmers and better target eligibility to halve heating oil subsidies expenditure in the budget (2016). Also, in view of any revision of the zonal property values, property tax rates will have to be adjusted to safeguard the 2015 and 2016 property tax revenues at €2.65 billion. This will also eliminate the cross-border withholding of tax introduced by the instalments act and reverse the recent amendments to the ITC in the public administration act, including the special treatment of agricultural income. Under fiscal measures, outstanding reforms will be needed on the codes on income tax, plus to introduce a new Criminal Law on Tax Evasion and Fraud and develop a tax framework for collective investment vehicles and their participants consistently in line with best practices in the EU. The budget will introduce a framework for independent agencies, phase out ex-ante audits of the Hellenic Court of Auditors and account officers, give EU oversight agencies the power to superintendent public sector finances, and phase out fiscal audit offices by January 2017. At the same time, the budget

will increase the rate of the tonnage tax and phase out special tax treatments of the shipping industry. By September 2015, the government will simplify the personal income tax credit (ITC) schedule, and redesign and integrate into the ITC the solidarity surcharge for income of 2016 to more effectively achieve progressivity in the income tax system. On health care, effective as of 1 July 2015, INN prescription will be fully introduced and mandated, without exceptions; as first step, the price of all off-patent drugs will be reduced to 50 % and all generics to 32.5 % of the patent price, and the prices of diagnostic tests will be reviewed to bring structural spending in line with claw back targets. At the same time, Social Welfare Review will be launched under the agreed terms of reference with the technical assistance of the World Bank to target savings of ½ % of GDP. Furthermore, legislation will be enacted to reduce the expenditure ceiling for military spending by €100 million in 2015 and by €200 million in 2016 with a targeted set of actions, including a reduction in headcount and procurement, to raise corporate tax rate from 26 to 28 %, introduce tax on television advertisements, announce international public tender for the acquisition of television licences and usage related fees of relevant frequencies, and extend the implementation of luxury tax on recreational vessels in excess of 5 m with increase of the rate from 10 to 13 %, coming into effect from the collection of 2014 income taxes and beyond. Legislation will be required to generate revenues through the issuance of 4G and 5G licences.

In case of fiscal shortfalls, some compensating measures may be introduced such as increase of the tax rate to income for rents, for annual incomes below €12,000 to 15 from 11 % with an additional revenue of €160 million and for annual incomes above €12,000 to 35 from 33 % with an additional revenue of €40 million; and increase of the corporate income tax by an additional percentage point (i.e. from 28 to 29 %) that will result in additional revenues of €130 million.

4. *Pension reform*: It is recognised that the pension system is unsustainable and needs fundamental reforms. This is why the government will implement in full the 2010 pension reform law and implement in full or replace/adjust the sustainability factors for supplementary and lump sum pensions from the 2012 reform as a part of the new pension reform in October 2015 to achieve equivalent savings and take further steps to improve the pension system. Effective from 1 July 2015, the authorities will phase in reforms that would deliver estimated permanent savings of ¼–½ % of GDP in 2015 and 1 % of GDP on a full-year basis in 2016 and thereafter by adopting legislation to create strong disincentives to early retirement, including the adjustment of early retirement penalties, and adapting to the limit of statutory retirement age of 67 years, or 62 and 40 years of contributions by 2022, applicable for all those retiring (except arduous professions, and mothers with children with disability) with immediate application. This will be concurrent to the adoption of legislation to the effect that withdrawal from the social insurance fund will incur an annual penalty, for those affected by the extension of the retirement age period,

equivalent to 10 % on top of the current penalty of 6 %. All these will also be simultaneous with the provisions starting from 1 January 2015, namely (a) all supplementary pension funds will be financed only by own contributions, monthly guaranteed contributory pension limits in nominal terms until 2021; (b) provision to people retiring after 30 June 2015 the basic, guaranteed contributory, and means-tested pensions only at the attainment of the statutory normal retirement age of currently 67 years; (c) health contributions for pensioners will be increased from 4 to 6 % on average and extended to supplementary pensions; (d) all state-financed exemptions will be phased out and contribution rules for all pension funds will be harmonised with the structure of contributions from 1 July 2015.

Moreover, in the interest of sustainability of the pension system, the authorities will legislate by 31 October 2015 further reforms to take effect from 1 January 2016. The goal will be (a) to achieve specific design and parametric improvements to establish a closer link between contributions and benefits; (b) broaden and modernise the contribution and pension base for all self-employed, including by switching from notional to actual income, subject to minimum required contribution rules; (c) revise and rationalise all different systems of basic, guaranteed contributory and means-tested pension components, taking into account incentives to work and contribute; and (d) harmonise pension benefit rules of the agricultural fund (OGA) with the rest of the pension system in a pro rata manner. The consolidation of social insurance funds will take place by the end of 2017. In 2015, the process will be activated through legislation to consolidate the social insurance funds under a single entity and the operational consolidation will have been completed by 31 December 2016. In parallel to the reform of the pension system, a Social Welfare Review will be carried out to ensure fairness of the various reforms. The institutions (EC/ECB/IMF) are prepared to take into account other parametric measures within the pension system of equivalent effect to replace some of the measures mentioned above, taking into account their impact on growth, provided that such measures are presented to the institutions during the design phase and are sufficiently concrete and quantifiable.

5. *Public Administration, Justice, and Anti-corruption*: Legislation will be required to reform the unified wage grid, effective 1 January 2016, setting the key parameters in a fiscally neutral manner and consistent with the agreed wage bill targets and with comprehensive application across the public sector, and in connection with the skill, performance and responsibility of staff, also to align non-wage benefits such as leave arrangements, per diems, travel allowances and perks, with best practices in the EU, effective from 1 January 2016, the aim being to achieve the fiscal targets and ensuring a declining path of the wage bill relative to GDP until 2019. This will be possible when managers will be hired to assess performance of all employees (with the aim to complete the hiring of new managers by 31 December 2015 subsequent to a review process). The legislation will also enable the introduction of a new permanent mobility

scheme to promote the use of job description and will be linked with an online database that will include all current vacancies. Final decision on employee mobility will be taken by each service concerned. This will rationalise the allocation of resources as well as the staffing across the General Government. It will help to reform the Civil Procedure Code, introduce measures to reduce the backlog of cases in administrative courts, and to work closely with European institutions and technical assistance on e-justice, mediation, and judicial statistics. It will also aim to strengthen the governance of ELSTAT (Hellenic Statistical System), including the role and structure of the Advisory bodies of the Hellenic Statistical System, the recruitment procedure for the president of ELSTAT following transparent procedures and selection criteria, and root out other factors impacting on the independence of ELSTAT, including financial autonomy, and the role and powers of Bank of Greece in statistics in line with European legislation. Along with such legislation, a revised Strategic Plan against Corruption will be published by 31 July 2015. It will amend and implement the legal framework for the declaration of assets and financing of the political parties and insulate investigations into financial crime and corruption from political intervention in individual cases. Moreover, in collaboration with the OECD, the authorities will strengthen (a) controls in public entities, (b) internal audit processes in high spending local government Institutions and their supervised legal entities, (c) controls in public and private investment cases funded either by national or cofunded by other sources, public works and public procurement (e.g. in health sector), and (d) transparency of tax and customs authorities. In view of the need to have a clear governance framework and a framework for waste reduction and waste management, it will also assess major risks in the public procurement cycle.

6. *Tax administration*: In this field, the deal requires adoption of legislation to establish an autonomous revenue agency that specifies: (a) the agency's legal form, organisation, status, and scope; (b) the powers and functions of the CEO and the independent Board of Governors; (c) the relationship to the Minister of Finance and other government entities; (d) the agency's human resource flexibility and relationship to the civil service; (e) budget autonomy, with a new funding formula to align incentives with revenue collection and guarantee budget predictability and flexibility; (e) to eliminate the 25 % ceiling on wages and pensions and lower all thresholds of €1500 while ensuring in all cases reasonable living conditions and accelerate procurement of IT infrastructure to automate e-governance. Also legislation is required to accelerate deregistration procedures and limit VAT reregistration to protect VAT revenues and accelerate procurement of network analysis software, and provide the Presidential Decree needed for significantly strengthening the reorganisation of the VAT enforcement section in order to strengthen VAT enforcement and combat VAT carousel fraud. Such legislation will aim also to combat fuel smuggling, via legislative measures for locating storage tanks (fixed or mobile). Besides, the government will produce a comprehensive plan with technical assistance to combat tax evasion which includes (i) identification of undeclared deposits by

checking bank transactions in banking institutions in Greece or abroad, (ii) introduction of a voluntary disclosure programme with appropriate sanctions, incentives, and verification procedures, consistent with international best practice, and without any amnesty provisions (iii) request from EU member states to provide data on asset ownership and acquisition by Greek citizens, (iv) renew the request for technical assistance in tax administration and make full use of the resource in capacity building, (v) establish a wealth registry to improve monitoring. A plan will be developed to promote the use of electronic payments, making use of the EU Structural and Investment Fund. Finally, a time series database to monitor the balance sheets of parent-subsidiary companies towards the improvement of risk analysis criteria relating transfer pricing will be created.

7. *Financial sector*: The deal will require amendments to the corporate and household insolvency laws to cover all debtors and bring the corporate insolvency law in line with the EU norms; also amendments to the household insolvency law to introduce a mechanism to separate strategic defaulters from good faith debtors as well as simplify and strengthen the procedures and introduce measures to address the large backlog of cases, and to improve immediately the judicial framework for corporate and household insolvency matters. There will have to be also in place legislation to establish a regulated profession of insolvency administrators, and a comprehensive strategy for the financial system. This strategy will take into account the new environment and conditions of the financial system with a view of strengthening the private sector banks by attracting international strategic investors and ensuring a sustainable funding model over the medium term.
8. *Labour market*: The government will launch a consultation process to review the whole range of existing labour market arrangements, taking into account best practices elsewhere in Europe. Further input to the consultation process will be provided by international organisations, including the ILO. The organisation and timelines will be drawn up in consultation with the institutions (EC/ECB/IMF). In this context, legislation on a new system of collective bargaining should be ready by 2015. The authorities will take actions to fight undeclared work in order to strengthen the competitiveness of legal companies and protect workers as well as tax and social security revenues.
9. *Product market reforms*: The reforms in this sector will include among others legislation to implement all pending recommendations of the OECD, except OTC (over the counter) pharmaceutical products, starting with tourist buses, truck licences, code of conduct for traditional foodstuff, euro codes on building materials, and all OECD recommendations on beverages and petroleum products. In order to foster competition and increase consumer welfare, the authorities will immediately launch a new competition assessment, in collaboration and with the technical support of the OECD, on wholesale trade, construction, e-commerce, and media. The assessment will be concluded by Q1 2016 and the recommendations will be adopted by Q2 2016. The authorities also open the restricted professions of engineers, notaries, actuaries, and bailiffs

and liberalise the market for tourist rentals; reduce red tape, including on horizontal licensing requirements of investments and on low-risk activities as recommended by the World Bank and the administrative burden of companies based on the OECD recommendations. It will also require designing electronic one-stop shops for businesses through analysing information obligations that the businesses have to comply with, structuring them accordingly and helping to design a project on developing the necessary ICT tools and infrastructure by 2015. Product market reforms will also include the adoption of measures to reform the gas market. Irreversible steps (including announcement of date for submission of binding offers) to privatise the electricity transmission company, ADMIE, will be taken. Or by October 2015, an alternative scheme will be in place with equivalent results in terms of competition, in line with the best European practices. With regard to the electricity markets, the authorities will reform the capacity payments system and other electricity market rules to avoid that some plants are forced to operate below their variable cost, and set tariffs based on costs, including replacement of the 20 % discount for HV users with cost-based tariffs. The authorities will also continue the implementation of the road map to the EU target model and for that will prepare a new framework for the support of renewable energies, implementation of energy efficiency plan, and review energy taxation. Besides, the authorities will strengthen the electricity regulator's financial and operational independence.

10. *Privatisation*: The final item in the ten-point deal is the privatisation scheme. Endorsed by the Cabinet, the Board of Directors of the Hellenic Republic Asset Development Fund will approve its Asset Development Plan which will include privatisation of several assets. This will involve plan to facilitate the completion of the tenders, and the authorities will complete all government pending privatisation actions including those needed for the regional airports, the ports of Piraeus and Thessaloniki and Hellinikon. This list of actions will have to be updated regularly and the Government will ensure that all pending actions are timely implemented. The government will announce binding bid dates for Piraeus and Thessaloniki ports of no later than end the October 2015, and for TRAINOSE ROSCO, with no material changes in the terms of the tenders. It will also take irreversible steps for the sale of the regional airports at the current terms with the winning bidder already selected.¹

The details of the measures outlined in the above-mentioned ten points will be in the Technical Memorandum. The details remained almost the same, if only worse and not better, through the negotiations between the Greek Syriza government and

¹This section is prepared from: "The Greek Reform Proposals", 10 July 2015, <http://www.naftemporiki.gr/finance/story/976680/the-greek-reform-proposals> (accessed on 1 August 2015); see also—"Full Text: 1. Greece Reform Proposals", Financial Market News, *MNI—Deutsche Borsce Group*, 9 July 2015, <https://www.marketnews.com/content/full-text-1-greece-reform-proposals> (accessed on 26 July 2015) for the euro summit statement containing the principles of all these measures and adopted on 12 July 2015; Vandoorne (2015); Reuters (2015); also Christie (2015).

the EU. Therefore, it will be also important to keep in mind the milestones in the debt history of Greece. We leave out here the moment of original sin, namely Greece's entry in the euro zone in 2001. That it was the original sin is now acknowledged even by the ex-Syriza Finance Minister Yanis Varoufakis. Accounts were fudged or cooked up then to prove that Greece was in line for the adoption of the new currency on the basis of the agreed euro zone norms. The ten decisive moments came after Greece got into the euro zone. These moments are additionally significant because they collectively make the double register of indebtedness and negotiations for further debt on one the hand and the protests on the streets on the other.

1. With its economy sinking following the crash of 2008, Greece admitted on 19 October 2009 the existence of a financial black hole when George Papandreou's new socialist government revealed a large gap in Greece's accounts. He admitted that the budget deficit would be double the previous government's estimate and would hit 12 % of GDP. Greece could default on its debts, as the prime minister said that the economy was in "intensive care". He of course assured the EU and Greek people that Greece would use its worst debt crisis in decades to rebuild itself, and pledged reforms to set right the perilous state of the nation's public finances. The austerity plans set of strikes in the ensuing months. On 8 December 2009, the financial markets tumbled after Fitch downgraded Greece's credit rating from A- to BBB+. Costs of borrowing spiralled upwards as other rating agencies S&P and Moody's started saying that the Greek debt was junk.
2. The government on 14 December 2010 initiated structural reforms to improve Greece's Public Finances and following that on 23 April 2010 activated €45bn EU/IMF Rescue Loans. People assembled in front of the Greek parliament protesting against the austerity measures which were approved by the Parliament on 6 May 2010.
3. Greece was granted €120bn EU Bailout on 23 June 2011. The new package of loans was over and above the €110bn bailout agreed in 2010. More protests erupted in Athens and Greece. George Papandreou quit on 6 November. Greek politicians decided to form a unity government to persuade the people to accept further austerity measures. On 23 January 2012, the Greeks came to know that 4151 Greeks owed €14.9bn in taxes.
4. Another Greece bailout package worth €130bn was signed off by EU Leaders on 12 March 2012. The deal came Greece reduced slashes its debts by more than €100bn by swapping its privately held bonds for new, longer maturity paper with less than half the nominal value. Meanwhile on 4 April 2012, a pensioner shot himself outside the Parliament over debts. People gathered at the spot where the man had shot self in front of the Parliament. He had left a note saying that he did not want to pass debts on to his child.
5. On 26 September 2012, violence erupted on the streets in Greek cities in protest against austerity measures. Around 200,000 protesters marched on the streets in Athens. The police attacked the marchers, which in retaliation turned violent. It

was a general strike. The main opposition leader Alexis Tsipras issued a warning that continued austerity demands on Greece would shrink the economy further.

6. Fresh crisis erupted as snap elections were suddenly triggered on 29 December 2014 following the failure to elect a president. Stavros Dimas failed to win the required number of votes, which meant that parliament had to be dissolved and a general election had to be held within 30 days.
7. The anti-austerity Left party Syriza achieved victory, however, just short of an outright majority. Alexis Tsipras became the prime minister and Yanis Varoufakis was appointed as finance minister on 25 January 2015. Varoufakis described austerity programmes as “fiscal water boarding”.
8. However, fears of default gripped the euro group as Greece was granted four-month extension on 2 March 2015 after Tsipras bowed to German-led pressure to stick to the broad terms of the rescue package.
9. Debt negotiations entered the dramatic phase from 24 June 2015. Tsipras in the early morning of 27 June 2015 suddenly ordered Referendum on the austerity measures demanded by the euro group on 25 June 2015. The Referendum took place 5 July 2015. As a result of the Referendum, the bailout conditions were rejected by a majority of over 61 to 39 % approving, with the “No” vote winning in all of Greece’s regions. Yet the same evening with the Referendum results out, the Finance Minister Varoufakis resigned citing pressure for his resignation from the euro group which wanted a different Finance Minister with whom they would negotiate.
10. Alexis Tsipras and his new Finance Minister Euclid Tsakaloto capitulated to the bailout conditions rejected in the Referendum, arguing that the verdict in the Referendum was against the austerity measures but not for leaving euro zone. Alexis Tsipras also said that there was no other option left but to agree to the conditions. The deal was signed on 14 July 2015. Protests returned on the streets. Deep divisions developed in Syriza over the bail out. The government survived with rightist votes in the Parliament and declared its resolve with the measures for reforms agreed upon as part of the bail out.

These details of the deal and the milestones in the development of the crisis are given so that we get a sense of the nature of the stakes, the consistent attempts by the successive Greek governments to somehow manage a deal with the EU by agreeing to remain within the euro zone at the cost of dignity and security of labour, and the equally consistent response of the working people protesting against austerity and debt. The ten-point details of the deal show the blueprint of how a new State is to be formed in Greece through thoroughly restructuring governance. Debt and repayment is simply the gateway for the restructuration of the State. Restructuration is the reason, which combines VAT reform, fiscal reforms labour reform, public administration reform, pension reform, legislative process enhancement, etc. These together form the template of restructuration of the State.

These also suggest an ideal picture of neoliberal governmentality and should be studied by every student of modern governance. This new ideal of government takes the *principle of calculation* to its extreme, for on correct calculation of the outcomes of the ten interdependent steps rests the success of the reforms and the reformed State. Calculation removes or replaces the principle of competition and uncertainty. This is the great threshold of neoliberal governmentality. The second point is that through establishing the linkages of these ten fields of reforms a new task of government is set. The task is woven around an assemblage of all economic and social phenomena connected to public debt. Private debt is not necessarily bad. Either the private debtor will crash out of the money market or the government will rescue it—as the US government did post-2008. But public debt was bad, public debt was a social and a moral burden. The government's main purpose should be to devise its mode in a way so that government remains solvent. History will show in due course the enormous consequences of the new reason of government.

But, we have also another hidden story here that tells us of the links between the ten points of the deal and the ten significant moments in the restructuring of the polity. The successive capitulation to the demands of the euro group by the socialists and the Left dominantly known as the Syriza under the illusion that staying with the euro would bring in credit and security of the people was paralleled by continuing popular protests. The deal could come only by suppressing popular protests. Let us therefore see briefly the politics of indebtedness (whose other scene was the counter politics of rebellion) in a context dominated by illusions of Europe. To those illusions congealed in the ideology of Europeanism, we shall come little later.

The Politics of Indebtedness and Government

The tragic capitulation and decline of the Greek government is directly linked to the postures of the Radical Left and hence is the cause for greater alarm. A government that was elected to overturn austerity agreed within five months of coming to power on the same or worse terms for austerity measures. It was a government that had promised to return to the Greeks their dignity and lost popular sovereignty, then accepted the ultimate humiliation, such as the dismissal of the Minister of Finance and the international humiliation of the prime minister at the summit of the euro zone and then EU countries. The most humiliating part for the Greek people was the return of a more severe and punitive version of the euro group proposals rejected in the Referendum of 5 July—only a week before. Of course political activists, commentators, and analysts all over the world know that militant Greek people did not take this lying down. The Left in Greece has split. The Communists are also rethinking their sectarian strategies. The debate over the euro has only sharpened. The question of alternative, at times in a programmatic sense called Plan B, has become equally sharper.

Yet at one level, these sound like hollow and pious observations and hopes, if we do not acknowledge the massive nature of the defeat, the causes of the Left's weaknesses, and the intractable nature of the government under neoliberal conditions and its relation with indebtedness. Socialists and Communists have to face the fact of government: the realities of the way power functions. After all, as suggested above, if we closely examine the details of the ten-point reform plan which the deal is to facilitate, we must ask, what are they collectively if not the road map to a new style of governing, a new government, or the blue book for setting up a neoliberal state through establishing in painstaking details the cogs and wheels of neoliberal governance? What does austerity mean in the grammar of rule? What does indebtedness signify in terms of restructuring the state, the new process and agenda of legislations, establishing new protocols for public administration, new standards of productivity, and new forms of relations with private capital, techniques of measurement, and finally the dynamics of harmonisation with a global model of rule? If this is the new logistics of setting up a government, at the same time it is no less a *Utopia* of our time. Hence, we must look into some of the uncomfortable aspects of the Left politics, which was probably never more than a version of Left Keynesianism, and not surprisingly collapsed in front of the neoliberal realities of our time.

Future historians may say that debt was the instrument through which the state was restructured, and the socialists and the European Left with their ideology of pan-Europeanism facilitated this, because this ideology closed their eyes to any alternative. The underlying deficit of this government was in the illusion about its ability to win popular sovereignty and abolish austerity through memoranda with the EU and especially the euro zone. The illusion led to the destructive logic of the Left that failed to understand that the fight against the EU was a crucial aspect of the struggle for the emancipation and progress of the peoples of Europe and that therefore it was crucial in each country, at least in each debt ridden and peripheral country, to strengthen the fight against the EU. To build a popular, democratic, and Left front and movement to exit the euro zone was a decisive step in the struggle to secede from the European Union if necessary, precisely because the euro had become the "super neoliberal weapon of anti-democratic European Union" (Anti-imperialist Camp 2015c).

Some of the voices on the Left are now calling for an orderly exit, an "orderly disintegration of the euro zone". In the words of Stefano Fassina, a former Italian deputy minister,

We need to acknowledge that the euro was a mistake of political perspective. We need to admit that in the neo-liberal cage of the euro, the left loses its historical function and is dead as a force committed to the dignity and political relevance of labour and to social citizenship as a vehicle of effective democracy. The irrelevance or the connivance of the parties of the European socialist family is manifest. Continuing to invoke, as they do, the United States of Europe or a pro-labour rewrite of the Treaties is a virtual exercise leading to a continuing loss of political credibility... The choice is a dramatic one. The road of continuity is the explicit option of the grand conservative-led coalitions and "socialist" executives (in France and Italy for instance). The road of discontinuity may be the only one for attempting to save the European Union, revitalize the middle-class democracies and reverse

the trend of the devaluation of labour. For a managed dis-integration of the single currency, we must build a broad alliance of the National Liberation Fronts, starting from the euro zone's Mediterranean periphery, made up of progressive forces open to the cooperation of the democratic right wing sovereignty-ist parties. The time available is increasingly short.²

Here too we see the same illusion, namely that the conflict is between Left wing Keynesianism and monetarism and that the goal is not a political and social revolution but attainment of social citizenship through a return to ole post-war national labour welfare regimes.

Meanwhile, the Greek protests have thrown up from the bottom solidarity of militant Left in Europe that harbours no illusion of a continental social citizenship. This is best exemplified by the spirit of solidarity extended to the Greek proletarian masses by the German Anti-capitalist Left platform within Die Linke in the words, “No to austerity even if it means break with euro” (Anti-imperialist Camp 2015b). We must also remember that at the same time making his visit to Israel on 19 July 2015 the Greek Defence Minister Kammenos signed a mutual “status of forces” agreement. Although particular details are still not known, such agreements usually regulate the conditions under which foreign military forces can operate on the sovereign territory of a given state. Israel has had such a treaty in place only with its closest ally and long-time protector, the USA. The Syriza government has thus complied to two inviolable dogmas—supporting euro and shoring up relations with Israel. As has been pointed out, there is a whole series of striking examples like Gysi, the former head of the German Left opposition party Die Linke. In order to become a partner for government formation, he accepted German support for Israel as necessary “reason of state”. Though strongly attacking austerity measures imposed by Schröder, he opposed any questioning of the EU and the euro regime. The same held for the Italian Rifondazione Comunista before its demise (Anti-imperialist Camp 2015a). The fallacy was crisply explained by Alekos Alavanos, a Syriza leader and the first to advocate the exit from the euro zone:

The whole policy of Syriza from 2012 onwards, when they abandoned their position ‘the euro is not taboo’ is based on a cynical lie: We can abolish austerity and the same time stay in the euro zone. This led to a policy agreeable for large sections of people because it did not involve *ruptures*, but it was a policy totally unrealistic. This policy, for which the party of Syriza bears full responsibility, would necessarily lead to ‘cloudy Sunday’ of 12 July (Anti-imperialist Camp 2015a, italics mine).

Rupture: this is the most important word, and the most important point is that the way the Greek and the European Left approached the question was one of *continuity and not rupture and normalcy and not crisis*. This explains the astonishing flip flop, the absence of an alternative plan, the hesitation to revolutionise the masses, and the inexorable governmentalisation of the party, politics, and strategy. Theoretical gloss over this fundamental inadequacy of the European Left and the

²<http://yanisvaroufakis.eu/2015/07/27/for-an-alliance-of-national-liberation-fronts-by-stefano-fassina-mp/> (accessed on 3 August 2015).

Syriza has not been lacking. *Almost as if nothing has happened, one commentator puts the problem as one of how to find ways of radicalisation of democracy and not rupture and revolution.* In this commentator's words,

The biggest wound in this process of tactical retreat – which was experienced as defeat, indeed self-defeat – was surely suffered in the ranks of the movement. The experience has been traumatic, and the condition of response to this trauma is at this point an aporia. It is understandable as to why, if we return to what I pointed out at the outset. The movement lives in the now. It is not made for, nor concerned with, tactical manoeuvres of retreat. The immediacy of its social base, relative to the mediation of the exigencies of governance, keeps the movement free of responsibility to sovereignty, to the entirety of the polity within which after all the movement fights agonistically, where time is in constant flux and parameters can change at any minute and in directions that may run counter to plans and wishes, even principles. Here, democracy is severely tested.

... Developing a left governmentality entails precisely that internal dissent would register its critical force as part of the governmental capacity. I repeat: Syriza is a heterogeneous coalition, not a party, strictly speaking. Hence, the notion that 'voting No in Parliament against the measures is a vote of support to the government,' as was voiced by various dissenting Syriza MPs, utterly bamboozled the media technocrats and the liberal parties, who can only understand a hierarchical, mono-vocal, and ideologically sutured party politics.

... Nothing is more radical, more troubling, and more trouble-making than a government that proclaims that it disagrees with the policies it has agreed to implement, a government that refuses to identify with these policies because it recognizes them as abhorrent and unfeasible.

... Radical democracy and left governmentality are not about the politics of unreality – so-called alternatives that belong to fantasies of the past, like the nationalist self-enclosure of Grexit scenarios. They are about crashing with realities head on, from the precarious position of groundlessness on matters of principle and the sheer incalculability of decision in the midst of struggle exactly at the point where all options have been removed from the table.... (Gourgouris 2015).

The main problem in this sort of analysis is that it reifies the governmental capacity of a non-revolutionary administration and assumes that radical democracy can emerge by itself from a void, which means a condition of being without direction, living in the present—a present incapable for charting out a path of the future. This is what Marxists call the *worship of spontaneity—the complete abdication of responsibility.*

It also means a refusal to think of the political economy of the crisis seriously, because it assumes that with continuous injection of money into the market the lives of the workers can be maintained. Therefore, one may ask: What does this "Left governmentality" have to say with regard to, say for instance, the neoliberal mechanism, QE (quantitative easing)? Described by one commentator as "the most important thing on the planet" (Bird 2014), QE was originally deployed by the US Federal Reserve to enable markets to recover from the 2008 recession, but has since spread worldwide. Officially, it involves the central bank of a country pumping capital into key financial institutions so as to boost liquidity and spending. Money is thus digitally created—disconnected from actual economic activity. And in that

sense, it is a substitute of the latter. QE thus frees money from its real-world moorings and turns it into a good that can be freely produced whenever a central bank chooses. It is not that governments in the past had not printed money to cope with emergencies. However, QE takes this practice to a different level, assets created as a result accounting for more than 20 % of the GDP of many developed countries now. There is no doubt that with the injection of the money that Greece sought and will get will come from QE, which will perpetuate the crisis Greece and several other countries in Europe faces. Equally, there is no doubt that from this crisis, a few business barons will emerge richer.

In other words, only a deeper appreciation of the dialectics of the reality of crisis in capitalist economy and society can tell us of the significance of the discontinuities from the politics of the earlier Keynesian period. To be sure then, the crisis emerges as a nodal point in class struggle ready for a revolutionary resolution in the form of a rupture in politics. Crisis in this way involves the discontinuous within the continuous. As Lenin saw, the revolutionary situation engendered by the contradictions of society accentuates crisis—precisely because it has introduced discontinuity within continuity. A theory of radical democracy without revolution fails because it cannot integrate the temporal dimensions in its approach to the crisis of a structure—in other words, the dichotomy of diachrony and synchrony, the two complementary aspects of temporality, known otherwise as continuity and discontinuity. The dual determination of history in this way functions, only the Left in Europe forgot this classic lesson.

Why? This is where the next argument in this critique takes off. We have to speak here now, though inadequately, of the ideology of Europeanism that led the European Left into the blind alley of a social democratic version of Keynesianism. Europeanism implied that the Left had to forget the political significance of *rupture*, which is a substitute of a more dangerous word, *revolution*.

Europe as Ideology

Europe is a neoliberal reality. Euro is its tool. Europeanism is the ideology of the continental intelligentsia, whose stakes are satisfied in the neoliberal construction of Europe—a financial world made of the financial class of the continent binding in its web the bourgeoisie of the European countries and the aristocratic stratum of labour in the continent. Europeanism is the sigh of a defeated Left. It is the religion of social democracy. It is also the repressed anxiety of a section of the Left that only some version of European social democracy remains the only course left by history for the people of the continent. And as ideology, it is guarded by the sword of the financial mighty of the continent.

Yet, as ideology, Europeanism is not only guarded by the financial might of a continental class—with anti-Communism in its DNA and firmly bound by a trans-Atlantic alliance with the USA—it draws on the cultural presuppositions of a

discourse of universality and uniqueness of a particular national or continental culture. It ignores the heterogeneity of the social space called Europe and the place of immigration in making this heterogeneity.

After the Second World War, British historian Arnold Toynbee in an unprecedented mood of apology and self-condemnation wrote *Civilization on Trial* (1948) and following that *The World and the West* (1953), in which he argued that the ascendancy of Europe in the world and the spread of Western civilisation were remarkable events, but militarism and militant nationalism were the causes for the overstretched position that Europe had reached. It was evident that Europe had suffered the terrific double strain of inward transformation and outward expansion and could no further squander with impunity resources, spend material wealth and human resources unproductively, or exhaust muscular and psychic energy. *Civilization on Trial* contained an evocative essay, "The Dwarfing of Europe", first delivered as a public lecture in 1926, which summarised his apologetic mood. Even though "The Dwarfing of Europe" remained a famous essay for the powerful metaphor, which also expressed a concept, readers of Toynbee are less aware how the British public and the community of professional historians received Toynbee's argument and the proposition that the two wars had shown that the age of Western imperialism and uniqueness was over.

The hostility in Britain to Toynbee's later writings was not so much around the question of colonialism or imperialism that marked modern European history, but the implications of his position, namely that it involved the question of liberalism and uniqueness of the West in the debate. Critics said that Toynbee's Reith lectures had been wrong and significantly a strategic disaster, because, in the face of the challenge of Communism Toynbee by criticising the West as a civilisation was guilty of accepting Soviet propaganda. He was disparaging its uniqueness. It was a sort of McCarthyism in British orthodox intellectual climate. The West was not wilting before the creative forces of Asia. It was wrong to assume that the British mind was comfortable and complacent with the sureties and prospects of liberalism. Toynbee was too much anxious about the values that supposedly guided civilisations and therefore wrong in suggesting that the decline of the West lay in the limits of its core values, first of which was liberalism. He also dragged in the issue of religion, specifically Christianity, which along with liberalism had made European progress and expansion possible. Toynbee's fundamental error, critics argued, was to remind the country of the linkages of liberalism with empire in the post-war era when the country was searching for ways to reground "Western values". With his emphasis on the moral and religious values, Toynbee had earlier alienated the Leftists and the mainstream liberals, and now with his criticism of the Western emphasis on liberal and Christian values, he had antagonised the Right.

The interesting point here is not Toynbee's ideas and suggestions, or the idea of decline in European history which has a long genealogy, but the animosity Toynbee's ideas roused in mainstream intellectual circles, and the failure of his ideas and suggestions to create any impact among thinkers, policymakers, and leaders even in that moment of war-ravaged Britain. The dialogue suggested by Toynbee did not take place, because the West was not ready to admit responsibility

of centuries of colonialism and the devastations of colonial and imperial wars. One may ask: Is the situation in this respect any better today? Even though Europe is caught in financial, economic, and other forms of crisis, does it appear that she is now in a chastened mood and ready to learn from others? After all, post-war Europe was in no better position than she finds herself in today. The only difference is that the USA with Marshall Plan was accepted as the saviour then, and Germany appears as the saviour today. Dialogue of continents or nations thus depends not only on benevolence, platitudes, and goodwill of few; they are conditioned by externalities setting the stage for dialogue. The trope of dialogue and the rejection of dialogue—both demonstrated in the recent instance of the negotiations between Athens and Brussels—show the deepest of the anxieties of power that is inherited, stored, exercised, and accumulated.

While power can be conceptualised as a matrix, it is important to keep in mind at the same time that power is a flow. It is relational. Power, in other words, acts on power. Dialogue as a political and cultural act is implicated in that relational world of power. Anxiety is only the displaced state of that power matrix. We are speaking here the specificity or universality of the “European” path towards development and democracy. It also relates to the supposed truthfulness of the received discourse about the European history of democracy, urbanisation, industrialism, secularism, and citizenship. The issue of Europeanism also as a political space (as distinct from a social space) revolves around the so-called homogenous space Europe has sought to create for itself by putting around itself a barrier in order to prevent immigrants from coming in, which will help Europe to retain her mythic white, Christian, parochial, and Atlantic-centric self. This policy of “Fortress Europe” reflects on its culture of citizenship, social rights, legalism, etc. Already one can see how the democratic polity in Greece came under attack in the last two years as the country was forced to swallow bitter pills at the command of European bankers and international capital.

On the other hand, as the philosopher Jürgen Habermas has now asked, should not the Europeans become post-secular to appreciate the pluralities of the post-9/11 world? In the context of this one more invocation of the speciality called Europe, it will be good to recall what Habermas (2008) said recently on the pluralities of the post-9/11 world. He wondered if the European countries were not already in a post-secular stage. The occasion of rethinking, he admitted, was the large-scale entry in Europe of immigrants with faiths other than Christianity, the US war against terror, and the conflict of secular societies with fundamentalist beliefs. In a thoroughly euro-centric view of the world by his own admission, he argued,

A “post-secular” society must at some point have been in a “secular” state. The controversial term can therefore only be applied to the affluent societies of Europe or countries such as Canada, Australia and New Zealand, where people’s religious ties have steadily or rather quite dramatically lapsed in the post-War period. These regions have witnessed a spreading awareness that their citizens are living in a secularized society. In terms of sociological indicators, the religious behaviour and convictions of the local populations have by no means changed to such an extent as to justify labelling these societies “post-secular”. Here, trends towards de-institutionalized and new spiritual forms of religiosity have not offset the tangible losses by the major religious communities (Habermas 2008).

Habermas drew inspiration from Kant, the father of modern Europeanism, who too wanted to cope with the secular-religious divide and the presence of the affective subject in his distinct way, that is, by a priori assumptions. The idea that man can profess or practise faith not for ultimate gain but as the way of a moral being, and only in this way man could be both religious and rational—though as Kant said that there was no inherent need to be so—was succinctly expressed in the title of his essay, “Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone” (1793). Kant wrote:

Yet an end does arise out of morality; for how the question, what is to result from this right conduct of ours, is to be answered, and towards what, as an end – even if granted that it may not be wholly subject to our control – we might direct our actions and abstentions so as at least to be in harmony with that end: these cannot possibly be matters of indifference to reason (Kant 1793).

Kant could envisage the presence of religion in the formation of a moral subject, but the formation of a rational subject with critical capacity had nothing to do with religion. It is this theory of the rational subject of public affairs that must now encounter the affective subject in any dialogue—and clearly dialogues with the *outside* implies dialogues *within*, precisely Europe is no longer (even if we assume it once was) a homogenous space. Immigration is one of the markers of this heterogeneity of the social space called Europe.

Clearly, the heterogeneity of the social space called Europe³ necessitates dialogues *within* in order to have meaningful dialogues with *outside*. Heterogeneity of economies, the emergence of the affective subject of politics, the return of primitive accumulation as the other of the most advanced and virtual mode of accumulation, increase in extraction processes, massive labour flows, different forms of forced migration, crisis of the imperial mode of political unity and organisation, the decline of the liberal parliamentary model, and the worldwide ascendancy of the executive, assertion of autonomies at every level of political society, expansion of dialogues, new forms of democracy making, and finally newer ways of state making characterise the world in which the project of making One Europe aims to be successful. We have to realise, particularly after the financial crash of 2008, that it is not only the global South which is bound by a post-colonial destiny, but that the post-colonial predicament is global; it faces Europe also. This predicament, to repeat, stems from histories of rampant capitalism (particularly the domination of financial capital), unbridled hegemony of the market, a framework of liberal rule that fails to understand popular aspirations from below, neocolonial and imperial practices, and neglect of other social histories of growth, development, and the making of political societies. It is post-colonial, because it is marked by the realities of post-colonial capitalism, post-colonial politics, post-colonial (commonly known

³Heterogeneity implies that while the European Left thought of Europe as a three-dimensional space (dimensions of member state, the European Union, and the people), Europe became more and more a highly interconnected network, and in the form of a network Europe emerged as a space. The European Left failed not because its Marxism was of old variety, but because it could not appreciate the way Europe had emerged as a distinct *space*.

as neocolonial) interventions by great powers of the West (in Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Syria, and many other countries), and the impact of these on the so-called metropolitan world as well. The strength of the ideological posture of neoliberalism comes from the delusion it spreads, namely that the cultivation of the self has no relation with force, violence, and coercion that actually underpin the neoliberal order. The European Union by the same measure and extent is not connected to the bombings in the Middle East, Afghanistan, and Africa, and deaths of the immigrants in the Mediterranean due to FRONTEX operations⁴ and the Union is all about social democracy and enrichment of the member nations!

There is another source of Europeanism. Recall Ralf Dahrendorf's *Reflections on the Revolution in Europe* (1990), wherein he argued that it was mainly the attraction of democracy and liberal culture represented by the idea of Europe that had unleashed the revolutions in East Europe. In his words, these countries were "motivated by the desire to be part of Europe" and were guided by the Copenhagen criteria (set by the EU summit in 1993 at Copenhagen) that included the "the adoption of a constitution of liberty in candidate countries" (Dahrendorf 1990: p. viii). Even though Lord Dahrendorf said that his reflections differed from Edmund Burke's *Reflections on Revolution in France* (1790)—because Burke cautioned the harms of revolution while he hailed revolutions—yet today, it is clear that whoever upholds the ideology of Europeanism will have to base his/her hopes on the basis of some sort of liberal conservatism. The continuity from Burke to Dahrendorf is not difficult to trace.

The continuity lies in deeper cultural fantasies, particularly the fantasy of the beautiful lady *Europa* played over countless times to the ears and eyes of inhabitants of the continent since the time of Titian's painting *Rape of Europa* (1562) or even earlier, and retaining till this day its seductive charm. The abduction of Europa has happened repeatedly in the phantasmagorical history of Europe, each time to be rescued, freed, enjoyed, and then consummated by the forces of liberty and progress. The subject of *Europa* became the theme, inspiration for books, art piece recovery narratives, films, and commentaries. The French gave Lynn Nicholas,

⁴The Emergency EU summit ten-point proposal (21 April 2015) on the Mediterranean refugee crisis includes steps like: "Reinforce the Joint Operations in the Mediterranean, namely Triton and Poseidon, by increasing the financial resources and the number of assets. We will also extend their operational area, allowing us to intervene further, within the mandate of Frontex; A systematic effort to capture and destroy vessels used by the smugglers. The positive results obtained with the Atalanta operation should inspire us to similar operations against smugglers in the Mediterranean; EUROPOL, FRONTEX, EASO and EUROJUST will meet regularly and work closely to gather information on smugglers modus operandi, to trace their funds and to assist in their investigation; EASO to deploy teams in Italy and Greece for joint processing of asylum applications; Member States to ensure fingerprinting of all migrants; Consider options for an emergency relocation mechanism; A EU wide voluntary pilot project on resettlement, offering a number of places to persons in need of protection; Establish a new return programme for rapid return of irregular migrants coordinated by Frontex from frontline Member States" (Migrants' Rights Network 2015).

author of *The Rape of Europa: The Fate of Europe's Treasures in the Third Reich and the Second World War* (1994), the *Legion d'Honneur*.⁵

The crucial impact of the ideology of Europeanism has been in the form of erasure of the question: Is the National Question over in Europe? Raising this question in Europe is perhaps strange, given the fact that Europe's history is marked in the last hundred years with for instance the internationalism of the Spanish Civil War, the International Brigade, and the internationalist gesture of Europe towards the republicans in Spain. About a decade earlier, it was argued by Benedict Anderson in *Under Three Flags: Anarchism and the Anti-Colonial Imagination* (2006) that nations are brought up within a specific international milieu and it was in a specific imperial universe that anti-colonial imaginations sprouted, were nurtured, and flourished. For anti-colonial people, there was no pure nation standing on its own balance. Nations were first anti-colonial and in a strange way therefore internationalist. In two ways, the nation inherited in the international. First, the nation was born in a bigger universe. To be internationalist anti-colonial peoples did not have to renounce the nation form. Second, the colonial form of international relation gave fillip to anti-colonial nationalism.

In *Under Three Flags*, a brilliantly original work on the explosive history of national independence and global politics, Benedict Anderson has provided a radical recasting of themes from *Imagined Communities* (1983), his classic book on nationalism, through an exploration of late nineteenth-century politics and culture that spanned the Caribbean, Imperial Europe, and the South China Sea. He tells us the story of a jewelled pomegranate packed with nitro-glycerine primed to blow away Manila's nineteenth-century colonial elite. This was actually the climax of the novel *El Filibusterismo*, authored by the great political novelist and anti-colonial revolutionary Jose Rizal who was executed in 1896 at the age of 35 by the Spanish authorities in the Philippines. Anderson explores in this context the impact of avant-garde European literature and politics on Rizal and his contemporary, the pioneering folklorist Isabelo de los Reyes, who was imprisoned in Manila after the violent uprisings of 1896 and later incarcerated, together with Catalan anarchists, in the prison fortress of Montjuich in Barcelona. On his return to the Philippines, by now under American occupation, Isabelo formed the first militant trade unions under the influence of Malatesta and Bakunin. Anderson considers the complex intellectual interactions of these young Filipinos with the new "science" of anthropology in Germany and Austro-Hungary, and with post-Communist experimentalists in Paris, against a background of militant anarchism in Spain, France, Italy, and the Americas, Jose Marti's armed uprising in Cuba and anti-imperialist protests in China and Japan. In doing so, he depicts the dense intertwining of anarchist internationalism and radical anti-colonialism, at a general-level militant internationalism and anti-colonial nationalism.

⁵On the genealogical details of the idea of abduction of Europa, see Burgess (2003: 93–99); on different perspectives of Europeanism as ideology and Europe as vision, Chenal and Snelders (2012), and May (2013).

Therefore, to be aware of the national question is not to be narrow, parochial, and ignorant or dismissive of internationalism. To exit from the euro zone or EU is not to become national-chauvinist. The abduction of Europe is a myth par excellence. It conveys, as all nationalist myths do—including the classic nationalist fantasy of the nation as the mother—the figure of the woman, the fairy lady in distress, perpetually waiting for abduction, and thus to be rescued. Therefore, one has to ask: Is there not a nationalist core in Europeanism, the imagination of Europe, Europe as a nation? In this nationalist imagery, as Peter Burgess has commented, the grand narrative tradition of abduction is not just a parlour game. The meaning of Europe lies in its own abduction. Only when abducted, Europe becomes Europe. “The virgin princess—this strange, erotic, majestic, violent, creative spirit of European heritage—has indeed been carried from Asian beaches, in the clutches from a lecherous demigod to become the noble mother of our (read European) culture” (Burgess 2003). The grand tradition of the abduction of Europe is itself the story of abduction, of coopting the myth of origin, and now more importantly of abducting politics and economics. Europeanist cultural history is to a large extent the story of this abduction... The endless violence is part of the heritage that the abduction recalls and ritual violence is the act by which new victims are substituted for the original, and while the original violence is far gone beyond memory and myth, Europe remains subject to this history and prehistory. It is therefore time for us to think, how we can escape the trap of liberty and liberalism that are built on this prehistory and history of an originary violence that now perpetuates through what can be called symbolic acts? Is there any evidence that Europe can be imagined without the scapegoat, the sacrifice, needed to make the dream of Europa a reality? Peter Burgess suggests that from Monnet and Schuman to Kohl and Mitterand—all these masters of European construction found themselves on eastern shores of their time, discovered the princess, seduced her, and carried her away to form the European Union. Like Jupiter, they were unaware of her message and meaning, and European imagination today is nothing but the attempt to control the innate ambivalence and that meaning. “European construction is an incessant and contested process of interpretation” (Burgess 2003). European politics is thus essentially hermeneutic and therefore cultural; European Union as ideology is based on this cultural fantasy. Greece in her crisis has now the historical mission to rescuing the Europa, abducted by neoliberalism.

Yet, is it not strange that Greece’s own history is increasingly seen as a post-colonial testament against the perspective of an all-conquering Europe? Thus, the Gospel of Mark is seen as a “resistant literature”, as a “way to contextualise the Jews resist(ing) the Roman Empire in the first century” (Fitzgerald 2011). In other accounts, Greece’s dependence on Europe is seen as an emotional legacy of the past, marked by proximity—as a colony—with the Ottoman Empire and by inference Islam. Thus, as one commentator has noted,

History lays hold on identity in unexpected ways, obscuring the norms that regulate... Such norms reside in the systemic environment of nation building, in which history becomes a property that those who exercise power jealously guard and hedge around with rules for its ownership.... Islam stood in the national imaginary as a blank slate on which

Greeks projected those aspects of their history and character deemed scandalous by their significant political others. Greek Islamophobia was a condition of owning and discarding, of selecting in order to be accepted by others.... If Islamophobia is the *phobos* (fear) of Islam, then for a peripheral country such as Greece it harbours the paradox of a political *diploopia* that allowed the nation to survive through times of hardship, often at the expense of minority cultures.... The final form of Islamophobia comprised a meta-narrative, (which) originated in the dual institutional development of Greek identity as the product of Western civic traditions and the sacred child of a theological discourse upheld by the Orthodox Church.... The marginality of Greece in the geopolitical arena would eventually translate into a redeeming narrative, according to which Greece stole the seeds of Western civic-democratic teachings to implant them in Europe's Eastern backyard, the southeastern Mediterranean region. The tree that grew out of this venture was supposed to bear the fruits of universal progress. The fact that, to this date, Greeks consider themselves a European people with an Eastern *habitus* but Western *civilité* bears testimony to their split *mentalité*: Eastern by proximity but Western by necessity.... (Tzanelli 2010).

Indeed, how can one think of Greece in Europe without this complex history? Historical parallels have therefore abounded in the current crisis. As Abbas (2015) has reminded us,

For what is Europe without the heavy symbolism of destiny and history? What is German thought without the symbolic importance of Greece to Herder, Winckelmann, and Hegel? Sometimes the virulence of the German response seems to suggest that the Germans cannot forgive actually existing Greeks for being inconveniently and insistently who they are, given the importance of ancient Greece to the German intellectual imagination ... that Greeks are not just broken statues, stripped of paint, in the world's museums. At the same time, references to Sarajevo before World War I and the Sudetenland have swirled in the media.... For a project meant to fix history will, of course, summon historical analogy.

In a sense then, Greece–Europe relations and in general the idea of Europe cannot be imagined without reference to orientalism and colonialism, even though one has to agree that analyses of religion, myth, or imageries, and the deployment of concepts such as ethnicity, binary thinking, temporal relativism, middle ground, or networks as tools of analysis can be meaningful only when they are done with caution and in adequate historical depth and rigour. Yet, there is no doubt that too often, “ancient Greeks have been considered as though they were both white and European - who put together and kept rocking the cradle of Western civilisation” (Malkin 2004: 342), inasmuch as there is no doubt that while Europe may define itself in terms of the ancient Greek world, it does not warrant that either the ancient Greeks owed their self-definition in that manner or that the modern Greeks have to self-define in that way. There is a greater irony in this situation, namely that Greece, a member of the European Union, has been considered for long the ideological bedrock of Europe, which has claimed Ancient Greece as its foundation, and yet there is a greater similarity of Greece with post-colonial countries than with countries of Northern Europe. On the top, the European Union's current migration policy forces on Greece (and other Mediterranean countries) the bulk of responsibility for its implementation while Northern European tourists flock the land year in and out (Karides 2010). There is one more aspect of this post-colonial position that Greece occupies in Europe. It has to do with the juridical way in which the European Union has constructed the legal personality of one of its members,

Greece, who is now actually a neocolony of Europe. This juridical personality of Greece as a responsible member of the Union and accepted by the former hides the colonial relation between the Union and Greece exactly in the way the juridical personality of the colonial human subject was constructed by the colonial power. This entire legal development can be traced back to its genesis in 1957, when six Western European countries, France, Western Germany, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Belgium, and Italy had formulated the European Economic Community (EEC). The EEC's goal was to provide economic integration, crucial after the war, as most of Europe's economic infrastructure was destroyed. Then in 1992, the ECC was expanded through the Maastricht Treaty that officially created the European Union and the euro. It also set limits on sovereign debt, foreshadowing the situation today. Greece joined the European Union in 2000 in the high noon of neoliberalism. As neoliberalism waxed, Greece was advised to expand its dependency on foreign loans.

As the global financial market crashed in 2008, the contraction made Greece among others the scapegoat. It was framed as one of the weak economies that could sink the Union. The Union asked Greece to cut the deficit from €24.7bn (10.6 % of GDP) in 2009 to just €5.2bn (2.4 % of GDP) in 2011. Since Greece was not a fully privatised economy, this resulted in family income dropping by more than 40 %, jobless rate soaring to 30 %, and birth rate plummeting by almost 15 %, and waves upon wave of dissent, working class revolts, and political violence marking the situation in Greece. This is the situation when violence broke out between the Leftists, Fascists, and their supporters, and the Golden Dawn (the Fascist Party) began attacking and murdering the immigrants. In this way, Greece, which much of its early modern history had a very weak centralised government and strong local and regional politics characterised by a robust middle class, craftspeople, general assemblies in most cities, universities, and the presence of public political forums reflecting a specific national deep democratic tradition, was transformed into a weak neoliberal polity. That is how the juridical personality of Greece as a European nation was accomplished.⁶

In the context of the complex history of Europeanism and Greece's involvement in it as briefly mentioned above, it is not accidental therefore that neoliberalism and the idea of European unity have developed and survived together.

We can recall here five of what Philip Mirowski calls "the thirteen commandments" of neoliberalism in order to see why the nation form is not always suitable for neoliberal politics and economics, and why the apparently seamless world of the global is conducive to the neoliberal hegemony.⁷

First, as demonstrated in the second half of the twentieth century, the neoliberal project has stood out from other strains of right-wing thought in that it is

⁶On this, see Jargow (2013).

⁷<http://www.the-utopian.org/post/53360513384/the-thirteen-commandments-of-neoliberalism> (accessed on 4 April 2014), "The Thirteen Commandments of Neo-Liberalism", is an excerpt from Mirowski (Mirowski 2013).

self-consciously constituted as an entity dedicated to the development of doctrines intended to mutate over time. Neoliberals do not have a fixed Utopia. Crisis seems to be the preferred field of action for neoliberals, since it offers scope and provides occasion for the introduction of experimental reforms that only precipitate further crises down the road. Michel Foucault argued in *Birth of Biopolitics* (1978) that neoliberalism should not be confused with the slogan “laissez-faire”, but on the contrary, should be regarded as a call to vigilance, to activism, to perpetual interventions.

Second, it is important to see the sort of market neoliberals want to foster and protect. For the neoliberals, the notion of market allows escape from the contradiction between their constructivist tendencies and the supposed timeless appeal of the market. This is achieved through increasingly erasing any distinction among the state, society, and the market, and the insistence that their political project is aimed at continuous reform of society by subordinating it to the market.

Third, and this can be understood in the context mentioned above, a primary ambition of the neoliberal project is to redefine the shape and functions of the state, not to destroy it. The contradiction with which the neoliberals constantly struggle is that a strong state can just as easily thwart their programme as implement it; hence, they are inclined to explore new formats of techno-managerial governance that protect their ideal market from what they perceive as unwarranted political interference. One way to achieve this and restrain political democracy is to bend the state to market logic pretending one can replace “citizens” with “customers”. Consequently, the neoliberals seek to restructure the state with numerous accountability devices and impose rationalisation through introduction of some kind of new public management, or, better yet, convert state services to private provision on a contractual basis.

Fourth, neoliberalism thoroughly revises what it means to be a human person. Classical liberalism identified labour as the critical original human infusion that both created and justified private property. Foucault had correctly identified the shift from labour to the concept of “human capital” as the signal neoliberal departure. It has undermined centuries of political thought which had made humanism as the quintessential story of natural rights. Not only does neoliberalism deconstruct any special status for human labour, but it lays waste to older distinctions between production and consumption rooted in the labour theory of value and reduces the human being to an arbitrary bundle of investments such as skill sets and identity marks, such as family, sex, or race. In this way, *government of the self* becomes the basis of social order. In the neoliberal world, freedom can only be only therefore “negative”. It cannot be extended from the use of knowledge in society to the use of knowledge about society, because self-examination concerning why one passively accepts given knowledge may lead to contemplation of how market create some forms of knowledge and erase and restrict others.

Fifth, neoliberals begin with an assumption that capital has a natural right to flow freely across national boundaries. Since this entails persistent balance-of-payments problems for the countries, neoliberals have invented all kinds of transnational devices for economically and politically disciplining nations and nation-states.

They introduce what they consider to be pure market discipline, such as flexible exchange rates or dismantling capital controls, and know that suitably staffed international institutions such as the World Trade Organization, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and other units are better situated to impose neoliberal policies upon recalcitrant nation-states. The role of such transnational organisations is to restrict the range of political options of national governments. Sometimes, they displace indigenous crony capitalists with a more cosmopolitan breed of cronyism.

In the context of these neoliberal precepts and commandments, there will be a tendency to continuously reform or reconstruct Europe along these lines and thus create more and more neocolonial relations within Europe. Neoliberals will not want strong countries in Europe willing to defend their respective peoples, but in their place a Europe governed by certain select standards of rule. One way to escape that fate will be to think of Europe as less of a bounded continent but as a landmass continuing through to Asia and thus becoming what is known as for instance, Eurasia. Europe can present itself, besides as it does through centralised offices in Asia's capitals, Delhi, Kathmandu, etc., searching for collaboration in high technology and science education in universities, etc., or its link programmes (Asia link, etc.), in a more decentralised manner, in a federal way, encouraging new forms of collaboration, mediation, and translation. That will go a long way towards the recovery of the dialogic subject in Europe. Differing diversities constitute opportunities for convergence and cooperation, but as concrete universals they will stay in asymmetrical relationships. These contentions will be and are marked by rival claim makings, collective assertions and violence, governmental controls over society, and between wealth and pomp on the one hand and want and desire on the other. This world is too physical to be thought of as a clean space of European convergence and cooperation.

The deficit in the idea of European unity at the cost of national divergences and characteristics and the federal idea and practices of dialogue is also linked an organic deficit in the idea of working of democracy itself. While liberal thought ascribes democracy to individual liberty and less state control, it has to emphasise similarly its relation with people, popular sovereignty, equality, nationalism, etc. European political history shows that this mix is still not deficit-free. Also, and more importantly, and as we in India through our own researches on democracy by means of concrete investigations into issues of justice, autonomy, women's rights, rights of non-citizens, etc., have demonstrated, democracy's internal deficit is big. It treats autonomy, justice, rights of non-citizens (non-people) as exceptional considerations, and not intrinsic to democracy's success. The question will be: Why is this so? Some will of course say that this is precisely what democracy is, that is it is the blood brother of market. Therefore, the principles of autonomy, justice, etc., are acceptable so far as market accepts them. But that apart from the historically obsolete nature of the belief also takes away from the autonomy of democratic politics, by which I mean autonomy of claim making, of contentious politics, of the political subject. That is the other half of the story of democracy, rarely told in public, but which all governments keep in mind. All governments fear the crowd,

the insistent claims for justice, the demands for equity regardless of profit-economics, etc. All governments fear the madness of the street. This strong democratic tradition owes its life to many sources: early rebellious religious thoughts, anarchist ideas, ethical insistence, subaltern conceptions of collective life, ideas of equality and justice, intense deliberations in cafes, halls, markets, street corners, public meetings, village gatherings, church and mosque gatherings, utopian clubs, students assemblies, and finally and to a large measure to another factor—anti-colonialism and anti-racism. These are proving their robust nature as elements of democracy in this time of globalisation, which is promising everyone a journey to paradise.

Rejecting this dialogic national pasts and going for the European option is to vote for integration. This integration process means among others more coordinated bombings on say Afghanistan, or more allegiance to the US policy on Iraq, or a strengthening of the Euro-American alliance from WTO to war fields, more threats to Iran and North Korea, more devastation of a developed Southern country like Iraq, more coordinated neoracism, and more coordinated restrictions on immigrants. Such integration carries ill-tidings not only for us, but for Europe too. Not only migration from Northern Africa or South Asia will be affected, the same from eastern to the western part of the continent will be similarly affected. Refugees and asylum seekers are not alone as footloose people they are joined by immigrants and trafficked labour and women. Reinforcement of borders outside can only lead to these borders inside, where law, citizenship, religion, social life, literature, region, everything will be caught with concentric circles partitioning and repartitioning the continent. The space of integrated Europe looks from outside more like a concentric circle leaving out in its each loop some section of it.⁸

In sum, we can say that as a political response to the neoliberal design and destiny, it is important to underline the theme of Europe as a heterogeneous social space.

It will not be amiss perhaps if we recall here a discussion that occurred in the midst of the First World War involving Rosa Luxemburg and Lenin. Rosa Luxemburg wrote in the *Junius Pamphlet*:

The modern proletariat comes out of historical tests differently. Its tasks and its errors are both gigantic: no prescription, no schema valid for every case, no infallible leader to show it the path to follow. Historical experience is its only school mistress. Its thorny way to self-emancipation is paved not only with immeasurable suffering but also with countless errors. The aim of its journey – its emancipation depends on this – is whether the proletariat can learn from its own errors. Self-criticism, remorseless, cruel, and going to the core of things is the life's breath and light of the proletarian movement. The fall of the socialist proletariat in the present (first) world war is unprecedented. It is a misfortune for humanity. But socialism will be lost only if the international proletariat fails to measure the depth of this fall (and) if it refuses to learn from it (Luxemburg 1915).

⁸For a comparative history of the idea of post-Second World War Asianism, see Samaddar (1996).

She mentioned in this context the mistakes of the German working class movement. While appreciating and admiring the internationalist character of the pamphlet Lenin wrote:

The first of Junius' erroneous propositions is embodied in the fifth thesis of the Internationale group, 'National wars are no longer possible in the epoch (era) of this unbridled imperialism. National interests serve only as an instrument of deception, in order to place the working masses at the service of their mortal enemy, imperialism.' The beginning of the fifth thesis, which concludes with the above statement, discusses the nature of the present war as an imperialist war. It may be that this negation of national wars generally is either an oversight, or an accidental overstatement in emphasising the perfectly correct idea that the present war is an imperialist war, not a national war. This is a mistake that must be examined, for various Social-Democrats, in view of the false assertions that the present war is a national war, have likewise mistakenly denied the possibility of any national war (Lenin 1916).

Lenin then went onto a discussion on the dialectical relation between national war and imperialist war, and critiqued Rosa's treatment of the chronology of the national wars, as if the national wars collectively formed the preceding stage of imperialist war, and now with the advent of the interimperialist war national wars had become impossible. Lenin's observation is significant because in Lenin's analysis of the dynamics of accumulation under imperialist condition colonial plunders, and therefore, national wars become inevitable in as much as inter-imperialist wars are. The acute awareness to contemporary situation led Lenin to mention the possibility of national wars even in an era of interimperialist wars.

Lenin further wrote in his commentary on the Junius Pamphlet:

We have dwelt in detail on the erroneous proposition that 'national wars are no longer possible' not only because it is patently erroneous from the theoretical point of view – it would certainly be very lamentable if the 'Left' were to reveal a light-hearted attitude to Marxist theory at a time when the establishment of the Third International is possible only on the basis of un-vulgarised Marxism. But the mistake is very harmful also from the standpoint of practical politics, for it gives rise to the absurd propaganda of "disarmament", since it is alleged that there can be no wars except reactionary wars. It also gives rise to the even more ludicrous and downright reactionary attitude of indifference to national movements. And such an attitude becomes chauvinism when members of the 'great' European nations, that is, the nations which oppress the mass of small and colonial peoples, declare with a pseudo-scientific air: 'national wars are no longer possible'! National wars against the imperialist powers are not only possible and probable; they are inevitable, progressive and revolutionary though of course, to be successful, they require either the concerted effort of huge numbers of people in the oppressed countries (hundreds of millions in our example of India and China), or a particularly favourable conjuncture of international conditions (e.g., the fact that the imperialist powers cannot interfere, being paralysed by exhaustion, by war, by their antagonism, etc.), or the simultaneous uprising of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie in one of the big powers (this latter eventuality holds first place as the most desirable and favourable for the victory of the proletariat) (Lenin 1916).

The Lenin–Rosa debate was not only over political tactics. It involved, as we know, broader questions involving their respective views of imperialism, national revolutionary wars, etc.

We may of course ask: Is a turn towards the national question justified in a discussion on the crisis? To that question, we should turn to another war time intervention by Lenin at the same time when he was developing the theory of revolutionary defeatism along with his profound sensitivity to the national question.

In 1915, when his party discussing the slogan of a “United States of Europe” as a counter to the imperialist war, Lenin wrote that as a political slogan though it made some sense, he argued:

Political changes of a truly democratic nature, and especially political revolutions, can under no circumstances whatsoever either obscure or weaken the slogan of a socialist revolution. On the contrary, they always bring it closer, extend its basis, and draw new sections of the petty bourgeoisie and the semi-proletarian masses into the socialist struggle. On the other hand, political revolutions are inevitable in the course of the socialist revolution, which should not be regarded as a single act, but as a period of turbulent political and economic upheavals, the most intense class struggle, civil war, revolutions, and counter-revolutions. But while the slogan of a republican United States of Europe... is quite invulnerable as a political slogan, there still remains the highly important question of its economic content and significance. From the standpoint of the economic conditions of imperialism—i.e., the export of capital and the division of the world by the “advanced” and “civilised” colonial powers—a United States of Europe, under capitalism, is either impossible or reactionary. Capital has become international and monopolist. The world has been carved up by a handful of Great Powers, i.e., powers successful in the great plunder and oppression of nations.... That is how the plunder of about a thousand million of the earth’s population by a handful of Great Powers is organised in the epoch of the highest development of capitalism. No other organisation is possible under capitalism... A United States of Europe under capitalism is tantamount to an agreement on the partition of colonies.... Capitalism is private ownership of the means of production, and anarchy in production.... In this sense a United States of Europe is possible as an agreement between the European capitalists... but to what end? Only for the purpose of jointly suppressing socialism in Europe, of jointly protecting colonial booty against Japan and America, who have been badly done out of their share by the present partition of colonies, and the increase of whose might during the last fifty years has been immeasurably more rapid than that of backward and monarchist Europe, now turning senile.... Uneven economic and political development is an absolute law of capitalism. Hence, the victory of socialism is possible first in several or even in one capitalist country alone... A free union of nations in socialism is impossible without a more or less prolonged and stubborn struggle of the socialist republics... (Lenin 1915).

Therefore, crucial issues like exit from euro or building of national resistance will hinge on the question, is the Left supposed to wait fatalistically for the collapse; does it try to build a popular movement in order transform the exit into a step towards a better future? It is clear that if the antagonist Left continues to rot in its trenches the path is cleared for reactionary adventures. The Left can only resurrect and become protagonist in the continuing historic battle if it frees itself from the integration and euro taboo and tackles the question of national identity, because like it or not, within the euro cage monetary sovereignty has become the symbol of people’s sovereignty. In this context, we must dispose of the idea that enemies of the euro are automatically certain rightist people searching for shelter. This mindset leads to the fatalist conclusion that exiting the euro zone drives us into the arms of revanchist populism. Even some Left intellectuals have been of great help to this

cunning propaganda labelling all enemies of the euro dictatorship as “reactionary populists” and depicting the entire Left to be pro-euro.⁹

Recall the words of the Germany’s Chancellor Angela Merkel when she said In view of the revelation that she was being spied on by the USA, “between friends, that is just not done”. In fact, between friends there are certain unwritten rules that must be observed; otherwise, we lose our friend. But are there friendly nation-states? Or are all the countries economic competitors and, therefore, the other nation-states are opponents? This is a question derived from the neoliberal and globalist ideology that was hegemonic worldwide between 1979 and 2008.

The imperialism of a few and the necessary nationalism of all do not prevent the cooperation between nations and the building of international institutions. The rule is not just to compete; it is to compete and cooperate, because we live in the same world. But the necessary solidarity between human beings cannot be mistaken for dependence or subordination. The interaction and dialogue of autonomies is the strategic opposite to the neoliberal global we see in form of EU and other multi-lateral and intergovernmental institutions. To along that path we have to oppose every form of domination, including the domination in the garb of integration.

The Transcendence of Revolutionary Politics

The revolutions in Europe in 1848 were continental, yet national. The revolutions in 1870s were also same. The revolutions in 1917–22 were again continental, yet national. Again, the anti-colonial revolutions in 1948–51 (in some way 1948–1976) had global character, yet they were firmly national. Bolivarism in Latin America and national liberationist and Fanonist movements in Africa were continental, still firmly rooted in national contexts. The dialectical nature of this duality holds true today as in earlier times. Ralf Dahrendorf was therefore acting in bad faith when he emphasised the *European* nature of political changes in Europe. Twenty-first-century European Left committed gross error when it thought that the continental character of European changes was devoid of the national contents and contexts.

⁹This common assumption among Left intellectuals about the nationalist virus (“spectre of nationalism”) partly lies in Cold War history, followed by the history of the Balkan (Yugoslav) Wars of the 1990s. The Left intellectuals partly internalised the geopolitical discourse of division of Europe, on the basis of which the ideology of new Europeanism from the 1980s symbolised by the construction of the European Union sprouted. Brzezinski had characterised the eastern part of the Europe marked by Balkan nationalism as dynamic, radical, and dangerously irrational. To stop this, a united Europe was needed, and the European Union was the response, direly needed by the West. See Brzezinski (1989: 16); see also for a comprehensive review of the geopolitical history, Luoma-Aho (2002). Brzezinski’s concern also possibly stemmed from the fact that up to the Leninist period most of the Marxist intellectuals (except the ambiguous positions of the founders Marx and Engels)—if we go by the table provided by Anderson (1979: 7–8)—originated in the Eastern side of Europe and none of them was enamoured by the European idea.

The European Left now fears the word *dialectics*, possibly hates it, or simply due to intellectual arrogance dismisses it. Therein is the biggest problem. The neglect has led to ignoring the logistical aspects of the struggle against neoliberalism today, namely institutional requirements, support structure, determination of supply requirements, backup plans, possibilities of alternative operations, acquisition, storage, equipment, maintenance of supply—repeating the history of the Greek Communists who had failed in the civil war nearly seventy years ago.¹⁰ This failure assumes extra significance in times of crisis, when logistical requirements call for extra ordinary calculations and decisions in times of hurry, accentuated troubles, and tempests. Europe as the Syriza ex-Finance Minister of Greece says, Europe has entered a crisis of its own making—one that is endangering sixty years of European integration. In the post-Minotaur world, some countries are fully reliant for their very survival on maintaining aggressive, expanding surpluses. But this also requires someone to absorb those surpluses as deficits (Varoufakis 2011: 219–220). This is the nature of neoliberalism, which on the one hand necessitates neocolonial modes of exploitation, and on the other hand nationally based resistances. The ideology of Europeanism suppresses this contradiction by extolling a borderless space called Europe, curiously juxtaposed to the programme of *Fortress Europe*.

There is one more contradictory situation. As indicated in the first two sections of this article, debt-induced reforms set up the broad contours of neoliberal governmentality. Yet and against this, mass support and mass mobilisations built from below in resistance against these reforms open up the possibility of a government that is like a halfway house: it will be a government that will be based on the legitimacy and certain select practices of these mobilisations and practices. On the other hand, the *government of the people* will be at the mercy of the *government of finance*—therefore, struggle at each moment, decision at each hour how much to compromise, and resolve on each day to transform this struggle towards new possibilities and forms of socialist governance. This is the contradiction between rupture and gradualism, on which the intermediary government will be perched. Therefore, the eminent philosopher and the Syriza Minister of Education and Culture Aristides Baltas, when reflecting on the tensions and challenges of working within the Greek state, said that there was no hard and fast red line that the Syriza government was faced with; he was only minimising the level of antagonistic contradiction between the two models of governmentality. He admitted while concluding his reflections of Syriza governance:

So it's three months of freezing, as it were, the internal workings of the state, not really doing business as usual, not at all like that, but just letting some things go on because you cannot do otherwise, trying to stop other things because we can. I'll give you an example. We have European funding for development which amounts to a lot of money for us. What is going to happen with this money? So at the level of governing, we are very constrained. We have not yet started to really control the state (Baltas and Panitch 2015).

¹⁰On this, see Shrader (1999).

Mark it, he was thinking of “controlling the state”, “opening up the state”, and not dismantling or destroying the state (Baltas and Panitch 2015).

Yet this contradictory situation points out to one truth, namely the transcendence of revolutionary politics. There is no better way than to learn from Marx who showed how this transcendence flows from the way revolutionary politics conceptualises the question of absolute or radical negativity. The need to go beyond a critique of market and private property in negating capital creates the ground for *revolution in permanence*, which means a constant search for socialist alternatives to capital and its arrangements. This also means constantly critiquing the givens of capitalist politics and economics, whose one expression is the ideology of Europeanism. Transcendence is dialectics. Istvan Meszaros wrote 20 years back:

Today, in light of the 20th century historical experience and the failure of all past attempts to overcome the dehumanizing constraints and contradictions of capitalism, the meaning of radical negation can only be defined as a subordinate moment of the positive project of labour’s hegemonic alternative to capital itself... without the proper target of the strategic offensive—orientated towards the socialist order as a hegemonic alternative to the existent—the journey itself is without a compass (Meszaros 1995: 793, cited in Hudis 2000: 128).

In the previous chapters, reasons were cited as to why in the post-Second World War era marked by the high noon of Keynesianism, Left intellectuals thought primarily in terms of parliamentary polity, mass parties, welfare state, governmental protection for the society on the basis of expanding budgets, and democracy. When the dream run of the Keynesian state was over and right-wing monetarist economics and politics set in, these intellectuals were taken back. Beneath their new conceptualisations lay suppressed a desire to get back to the easy days. Almost 40 years back, Perry Anderson had noted some of the characteristics of this thought. Such thought was concerned almost exclusively with philosophy in place of politics and economics. It was mainly confined to campus and became known as academic Marxism. It was pessimistic about the hard nature of social transformation and revolution in general. And therefore perhaps not curiously it was romantic about possibilities of democracy, and in its search for that Utopia it became engrossed with a mythical speciality called Europe (Anderson 1979: 103).¹¹ All these meant that it was unable to address the questions raised by post-Leninist world, whose answers do not lie in the province of philosophy: What is the real nature and structure of capitalist economy today? What is the nature of bourgeois democracy? What kind of revolutionary strategy is required for the overthrow of the capitalist state? Where are we to seek the sources of resilience of the nation form? What is neocolonialism, and thus, what is the true configuration of imperialism as an international system of economic and political domination? What is the historical form of the state in this neoliberal age, which the Left and particularly the Marxist intellectuals must analyse with rigour, for after all it is the Greek state, which while opening itself up to the participation of popular forces forced an anti-austerity

¹¹Perry Anderson offers here a broader explanation of the fate of the European Left intellectuals of the post-war time.

platform like Syriza into submission, it was the state's parliamentary form that suppressed the popular will expressed in the Referendum, its coercive machinery that suppressed popular discontent, and its dynamics that allowed the big cats to become fatter at the expense of people's sweat and blood. It is not accidental that the Greek crisis raised precisely these sorts of questions, which have made historical materialism once again the key stone of critical thought.

Yet, and this is the most important question, has the Left drawn adequate lessons from the defeat? The impact of the strategic defeat of last year is still very strongly shaping various reactions within the Greek and the entire European Left. As one ex-Syriza central committee member Andreas Karitzis put it:

Some people seem content with superficial explanations of what happened and return to habitual ways of thinking and acting; others sense the strategic depth of the defeat and turn inward to disappointment and demoralization. SYRIZA's choice by its painful defeat deprived the people of a crucial 'tool' in this fight: the political representation of non-compliance with financial despotism. SYRIZA eliminated the chance of a 'tactical withdrawal', a collective process of reassembling our forces that could take into account the escalation of the fight provoked by elites – and forming a more effective and resilient 'popular front' that would build its resources to challenge neoliberal orthodoxy in the future. However, there is a danger of underestimating the brutal strategic defeat that we all suffered in 2015. The choice SYRIZA made is – among other things – a symptom of the deeper, structural weaknesses of the left (Karitzis 2016).

Unfortunately, once more, people are proving the vanguard, and the so-called vanguard is proving to be the tail. Once again the New Left speaks in empty phrases of democracy, autonomy, self-organisation, network, etc., and skirting the issues of politics, economy, power, state, and most importantly class. Even when they see that the neoliberal EU and euro zone has been busy in transferring important policies and powers once belonging to the nation-state out of the reach of the people, they refuse to be active, and play the austerity/anti-austerity game. At the same time, a vast array of neoliberal regulations and norms govern the function of the state. The New Left is unwilling to demand that the nation intervene and claim a say on these issues. They ignore the twentieth-century history of class struggles that enabled popular power to make nation a popular reality and put the imprint of popular power on the way the state functioned. The working people made possible for the nation to demand say in the way the balance of forces would be arraigned. They through long anti-fascist struggles made the national-popular. All these were lost upon the European Left, especially the New Left. Syriza with approximately 35,000 members at its peak and the various solidarity networks that included thousands of people focused on a strange electoral and gradualist game to avoid hard decisions of contentious politics.¹²

In place of thinking of these hard questions, the European Left thought that radical democracy was enough. Socialism as an alternative was meaningless. Therein was its greatest mistake. Counselling by the now "dwindling bands of Leftist academic tourists" (Petras 2015)—overwhelmingly European and North

¹²Figure provided by Karitzis (2016).

American—Alexis Tsipras and the dissidents in Syriza both ignored the fire on the street, barricades, angry marches, and strikes, and kept on talking among themselves. Precious time was lost on the revolutionaries; dissidents gave hollow interviews; the compromisers won enough time to derail the process of political transformation. Europe appeared as an empty chattering club.¹³

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¹³This failure of the mainstream Left thought of Europe has a strange similarity with the fate of the traditional post-colonial theory, which too like its Euro-American mainstream Leftist counterpart originated in universities and the academia, was disconnected from mass movements of the peasantry and the working people in the post-colonial world, and sought refuge in cultural, literary, and quasi-philosophical explanations of the developing world. The traditional post-colonial theory therefore has failed in the face of neoliberal transformation of the economy, and the neo-colonial assault on the erstwhile colonies. While there are important differences in the two academic discourses, the similarity is striking.

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Chapter 4

Human Migration Appearing as Crisis of Europe

Abstract This chapter discusses the post-colonial political, ideological, and discursive context in which migration appears as a “crisis” for Europe. Europe achieved continental unification through economic means, liberal constitutionalism, and currency union. It sets goals of peace and security that encouraged everyone to be a liberal with unfettered freedom to access the market and, on the other hand, allowed the European Union to follow interventionist policies near abroad. The consequences of the union are to be found in Europe’s restrictive and contradictory policies and programmes relating to immigration and refugee protection. European migration crisis originates from this. This chapter concludes by way of suggesting that neoliberalism’s victory in Europe may have come at a great cost. As the Paris and Brussels killings suggested, even though this victory may be pyrrhic, its impact on population flows (including labour flows) may be severe. Europe as a neoliberal union (or empire) has to forge today’s appropriate care and protection regime. Both force and monetary tools will operate as instruments of this transformation. In that sense, and as the suspension of the Schengen arrangement by France in the aftermath of Paris killings suggested, Europe has already arrived at a post-Schengen era.

Keywords European migration · European migration crisis · Post-Schengen · Neoliberal empire · European borders · FRONTEX · Boat people · Syrian refugee · Lampedusa · Greek communist party · Labour migration · European labour mobility · Autonomy of migration

Migration to Europe as a Post-colonial Crisis

Europe achieved continental unification through economic means, liberal constitutionalism, and currency union. It sets goals of peace and security that encourage everyone to be a liberal with unfettered freedom to access the market and, on the other hand, allow the European Union to follow interventionist policies near abroad. The consequences of the union are to be found in Europe’s restrictive and

contradictory policies and programmes relating to immigration and refugee protection. European migration crisis originates from this.

Crossing borders might be a banal routine for cosmopolitan elites, yet reports everyday show that it continues to be a death-resisting and not infrequently death-embracing journey for refugees, other victims of forced migration, and immigrants in search for life and security. Yet undeterred by the risk that borders represent, the Palestinian–Italian filmmaker Khaled Soliman al-Nassiry said recently at the Sydney premiere of the documentary comedy *On the Bride Side*, “Our hearts are broader than borders.” He continued that we shall change the colour of the border from blood red to a different aesthetic. In the context of the violence and immense sufferings that borders are imposing on the people on the move, he added, we are witnessing the production of a new culture, which is both innovative and post-colonial and post-globalisation (*Jaddaliya* 2015). The entanglements between various spaces the travellers are passing through deserve the attention of scholars and human rights activists. After all, the history of humanity repeatedly shows that borders are there to be crossed. People, who have chosen not to have a homeland, repeatedly take decisions to cross the borders, pass through them connecting the spaces they walk, or sail through with new destinies that these spaces had never been assumed to be associated with.¹ Migration has emerged through the recent events in Europe as the unconscious tool of history to end the last liberal empire in the modern age.

The end days of any empire present a surrealistic picture. Blame game, last tangos, and futuristic talks prevail, while the end draws remorselessly close. For instance, when already Syria was burning after the Western intervention and refugees from Syria were pouring into Europe, the glory crazy French President Francois Hollande, on arrival in New York to attend the United Nations General Assembly, announced on 27 September that French warplanes had attacked a training camp in eastern Syria after it had been identified by French air surveillance with help from the coalition of Western and Middle Eastern states conducting the air campaign against the Islamic State. With a flourish he said, “Our forces reached their objectives: The camp was completely destroyed. Six jets were used, including five Rafales, and they were able to ensure that our operation did not have any consequences for the civilian population.” He added that France might launch other strikes in the coming weeks if necessary, with the goal of “identifying targets that

¹Some of the recent reports have attempted to trace more than thousand mile routes through which migrants have reached Europe from Syria and Iraq—mainly on foot to Turkey, walking through the country, crossing the Aegean, reaching Greece, or sweeping through the Balkans from Turkey, onto Macedonia and other contiguous countries, boarding trains sometimes to Austria, Germany, reaching as far as far as Norway, some then swinging through the north of Norway to Russia. No partition refugees even attempted such long campaigns on foot. Some reports speak of use of cell phones and other modes to gain information and track safe routes, evading the border police, etc. See, for instance, *International New York Times* (2015b, c); there were also reports of former refugees helping new arrivals to move on—see for instance the report by Barbara Surk (2015).

are training camps or places where we know that terrorists can threaten the security of our country” (Breedensept 2015: 5).

Europe was the last liberal empire in history. It had achieved unification after the Second World War through dialogues on coal and steel, peace, and economic means, it established a charter of rights, it founded a European Court of human rights, it curbed nationalism, it broadly attained currency union and held peace and security as the goal of the union, and finally as Lord Dahrendorf remarked after the *annus mirabilis* of 1989, it encouraged everyone to be a liberal with unfettered freedom to access the market so much so that countries in the east of Europe joined one after another the union to make it a true empire two centuries after Napoleon Bonaparte had failed to create one and had provoked unwittingly the first concert of the continent in 1815. Yet crucial fault lines remained. The peaceful empire was built in the last fifty years on whiteness of skin, a particular faith called Christianity, anti-communism, stringent anti-immigration laws and practices, neoliberal tools of economic coordination, massive banks, and geopolitically what turned out to be most uncertain for the fate of the continent, that is doing away with the old fuzzy division of the continent into west, middle, and the east. The present crisis of Europe in the wake of the entry of massive numbers of migrants from the Middle East and North Africa is perched on all these fault lines. The immigrants are non-Europeans, they are predominantly Muslims, quite a lot of them are not white, and they have disturbed the seamless nature of the united space called Europe, because the old divisions into west, middle, and the east have now resurfaced in the wake of the migrant rush.

One thing more as an introductory comment to the question of migration appearing as a crisis of Europe: Europe’s migration crisis follows in quick succession Europe’s currency crisis. The two in combination have dealt a blow to the liberal empire, from which the latter will find it hard to recover. Is there a connection between the two? While many left-leaning intellectuals in Europe think that the coincidence was only God willed, the connections are deep and structural. Suffice it to say that the European Monetary Union could not have been achieved without defining what the borders of the union were. In other words, while empires have frontiers and states have more defined borders, in this case the empire wanted to achieve state like clarity. Thus, the old historical divisions were replaced with new seamless unity. Migration to Europe hurts the core of the unification project. If the old concert vanished into history with its failure to define the respective boundaries and borders of the great powers and folded up after the Berlin Congress (1878) that divided Africa, the present union is facing the same problem of settling boundaries.

Yet the prehistory of this liberal empire is marked by massive migrations. Greeks travelled extensively and built cities in Asia and North Africa. The Romans created an empire stretching from England to Turkey. Europe between the fourth and seventh centuries witnessed what is called the “migration of the nations,” when Huns, Goths, Franks, and Angles moved into new homelands, in the process creating the foundation of the nation-states of today’s Europe. Around the seventeenth century and lasting for more than 400 years Europeans moved from one part of the

continent to another in no coherent pattern. In the core West European countries, large parts of their working classes were formed in the nineteenth and early twentieth century by migration from the Mediterranean nations. In these two centuries, migrants from all over the world also travelled to Europe with ease, and Europeans migrated to the vast lands of the Americas and Australia. In the post-war years, no country was more associated with guest workers, the *gastarbeiter*, than Europe. All these need to be retained in mind as a necessary backdrop to the current migration crisis. It will help us to ask: Is the migration a crisis, or is it that migration appears as a crisis of Europe in the particular conjuncture of today?

If migration is a crisis, it is because of associated reasons and not simply because a large mass of people has moved to Europe and is still moving towards the continent. In the long arc of unrest stretching from Afghanistan through Iran and Iraq to the coasts of Syria and Turkey, people are moving westwards. They are also crossing the waters of the Mediterranean from the south and the east to Europe for refuge, employment, and escape from violence. As we know last year, more than one million individuals made this larger trek, and at the beginning of 2016, the flow continues. The numbers are still short of 2015's total, but last year's total may be surpassed by the time the summer ends. Unaccompanied children, when they survive the ordeal of the long, risky, and hazardous journey, are also arriving from Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria (Bennhold 2015).² In Lebanon, there are 1.5 million Syrians, a third of whom live in endless shantytowns, and another million Syrian refugees can be found living in culverts, ruins, slums, and better quality apartments throughout Lebanon—a nation itself of only 4.5 million.

But migration is a crisis also when the delusion of stability breaks down and time appears to produce only forces of instability all around. In that condition, all immigrants appear as trafficked, and all networks become tentacles of mobility mafia. Thus, policy papers regularly appear linking the increasing number of arrivals in Europe with unknown forces of evil, clandestine traffickers. Europe is innocent, Europe had nothing to do with instability near abroad, and thus, the forces of evil hiding in darkness must be brought out to light. UNHCR also contributes to this delusion. Thus, one policy document says, "Egypt's unique geographic location on the Mediterranean and the fact that it links the African continent with Asia and Europe makes it an integral part of the trafficking process that takes place through both regions. There are limited statistics to accurately portray the magnitude of human trafficking and smuggling in Egypt. In particular, available statistics do not differentiate between national and transnational trafficking. However, even though statistics are not available, 'since around 2006, the Sinai Peninsula in eastern Egypt, bordering Israel, has been the site of what the UN has referred to as one of the most

²Bennhold's report said, "The International Organization for Migration's figures suggest that the migrants come in different family configurations. The largest number of migrants coming to Europe was composed of men, traveling without their families. For example, of the migrants recorded entering Macedonia from Greece between Dec. 9 and Dec. 20, 46 % were men, 22 % were women, 35 % were children accompanied by a parent or "caretaker," and 1.5 % were unaccompanied children."

unreported humanitarian crises in the world.’ Many of the trafficking victims of the criminal networks operating in the Sinai Peninsula and Sudan are refugees from Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sudan, and Somalia; these same refugees in fact constitute a significant number of those smuggled into Egypt. The process initially begins as human smuggling where the refugees pay smugglers to get to Egypt but as soon as they arrive in Sudan the process transforms into human trafficking where they are sold to Bedouins in Sinai. In other instances, refugees are kidnapped from refugee camps in Sudan and Ethiopia and are transported by Sudanese tribes to Sinai where they are sold and then extorted for ransom. These refugees are often kidnapped, tortured, raped, and held captive until, they, their families, or, members and organisations of their diaspora are able to pay the ransom demanded by the traffickers. There were also many reported cases of death and deliberate murder of victims of trafficking” (Abdel Aziz et al. 2015: 52–53; Woldermaria, 2013). This is not to say that there are no traffickers. But reports like this singularly ignore the interface and entanglements of autonomy of migration, state control policies and practices, and the global syndicates of human smuggling. But we need not anticipate here this point, which will be dealt in detail towards the end of this chapter.

The 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees *obliges* the governments to extend protection to someone who has fled his or her country “owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion.”³ But the Convention of 1951 has simply been blown away in face of the panic-stricken response of EU. The UN figures indicate that today roughly one-third of all refugees worldwide are Syrian—a truly extraordinary percentage. Yet, the discussion on Syrian refugees is not complete unless we remember also that Macedonian officials are using tear gas and stun grenades against asylum seekers trying to get through the razor-wire fence with Greece, or French police are attacking and burning migrant camps as in Calais, or xenophobic people in Germany are beating up refugee population groups. But with the help of these, the global migration issue cannot be wished away, like the refugees themselves will not go away. Right-wing governments in Hungary, Slovakia, Poland, and Macedonia are closing borders to repel new arrivals. The Balkan corridor has been shut following a deal between the EU and its Balkan neighbours, a bargain that anticipated the EU-Turkey accord to refuse refugees, which has been a gross violation of international law. Deportation is now the norm.⁴

³Article 1 of the Convention; on this see UNHCR (1979: 37–42). Critical jurists however have noted the Western imprint (particularly in the Cold War era) on the formulation of the definition of a refugee in this Article, particularly the phrase, “well-founded fear”. See, for instance, Tuitt (1996: 80–86); also Hathaway (1991: 65–80); also the discussion on the determination of refugee status in the postcolonial status, Samaddar (2003), “Introduction”, pp. 21–68.

⁴A recent report says, “A second group of refugees has been deported from Lesbos to Turkey, despite activists attempting to stop the ferry leaving the harbour by clinging onto its anchor. A ferry carrying 45 Pakistani refugees left Greece for the Turkish port of Dikili on Friday morning. Three volunteers were arrested after jumping into the harbour in Mytilene, trying to stop the boat from leaving the port. They were dragged from the water by the Greek coastguard, and the ship left for Turkey. Five protestors demanding that the refugees be allowed to remain were also

The other idea is to make the asylum grant process that immigrants will be forced to return.⁵

What is now happening in the Middle East is a rush back of a history that goes back to the understanding between the European great powers during the First World War to divide the colonies and govern the post-war colonial world. The post-colonial region of the Middle East is now obviously reshaping. An important causal factor for ISIS was the invasion of Iraq by the USA in 2003. The invasion intervened in the way the transformation of the region. Fortunately, the two antagonist global powers—the USA and Russia—are at the same time cooperating on certain aspects of managing the crisis, such as aid to be delivered to besieged Syrian towns and cities and cessation of hostilities to be followed by a more formal ceasefire. Yet, clearly, the refugee crisis demands reconciliation within Europe. And more importantly, in the Middle East, a minimum of pragmatic sense is needed. Make no mistake that

... a huge historical shift is now taking place, one that involves exactly the last one hundred years beginning in 1916 with Sykes-Picot. Great powers, states, client states, sub-states all have to be aware that a giant wave is rolling across the region that will require *sang froid* to navigate. The people on the move do not control governments. They endure and persevere. Governments, all governments, need to think of them and strive to imitate their modest, human strength (Barnard 2016).

In fact, it would have been in Europe's own interest to acknowledge its complicity and involvement in realities of the post-colonial population flows and take appropriate steps towards at least pragmatic reconciliation for the Syrian war has killed at least

(Footnote 4 continued)

arrested outside the port, where they reportedly clashed with fascist demonstrators. The activists chanted 'stop deportations', 'EU, shame on you' and 'freedom for the refugees'. This was only the second deportation since Ankara agreed their controversial deal with the EU, described by the UK director of Amnesty International as 'a dark day for the Refugee Convention, a dark day for Europe and a dark day for humanity.' Under the terms of the deal, the EU will house one of the more than 2.5 million Syrian refugees residing in Turkey for every 'irregular' refugee returned from Greece to Turkish shores. The Erdoğan government has also scooped around £2.3 billion in aid, and is set to secure free movement through the Schengen zone for its citizens and 're-energised' negotiations over EU membership. However, there is currently only enough room for around 200,000 people in Turkey's refugee camps, while the government has also been accused of denying refugees access to basic supplies and shooting Syrians dead at the border. An estimated 80 % of Syrian refugee children in Turkey are unable to attend school. On Monday, 202 refugees were sent back to Turkey. Deportations have since slowed as refugees rush to be considered for asylum rather than be dispatched to Turkey, which is not considered a 'safe country' by charities such as Amnesty. The UN has also suggested the deal violates international law. Refugees have a right to be sent to a 'safe country' and it is also illegal to carry out "blanket" deportations without considering individual refugees' right to asylum" (Broomfield 2016).

⁵One report says, "Refugees buying one-way tickets home after finding Germany intolerable" says since it can "take two to five years or more before their families might be allowed to move to Germany—an intolerable wait that is one of the main reasons that hundreds, perhaps thousands, of refugees are giving up on Germany every week, even as up to 3000 arrive every day" (Kirschbaum 2016).

250,000 and forced over half of the population from their homes, and is still raging. Four years of fighting and shifting battle lines have led to the deaths of thousands, and roughly 11.6 million people have been displaced from their homes—about *half* of Syria’s prewar population, with 4 million of them forced out of the country. These refugees are largely housed in overcrowded and underfunded camps in neighbouring countries such as Turkey and Lebanon. With little hope of returning home, many of these families are seeking new lives in Europe. The numbers of Syrians heading to Europe have swelled in the last one year and half. On the other hand, if one takes UK as an example of a typical European country pledging and talking big in pious and liberal terms and doing almost nothing, one should not be surprised at the bare response: in the week of 18 December (Friday) 2015, the UK met its commitment to resettle 1000 men, women, and children from refugee camps around Syria before Christmas in the first stage of a government pledge to receive 20,000 Syrians by 2020. By UK standards, one commentator noted, it was a dramatic improvement given that in September the country had taken just 216 through official channels! (Smith 2015). If this was the record of the UK, another European country, Denmark, officially constructed tents to house refugees (in lieu of accommodating them in houses). Denmark moreover decided to confiscate refugee belongings to help fund their stay in Denmark (Reuters 2015).⁶ And amidst all these, German Chancellor Angela Merkel said on 3 September 2015, “Germany is doing what is morally and legally obliged—not more, and not less.”

⁶The Reuters report said, “An MEP from Denmark’s centre-right ruling party has defected in protest at government plans to seize valuables from refugees to help fund their stay in the country. Denmark has mainly been a transit country for refugees, and the minority Liberal government hopes to deter more from seeking asylum by taking valuables or cash worth more than 3000 Danish crowns (£290) during border searches...”

Jens Rohde said... he was joining the leftwing Social-Liberal party. ‘I’m wondering and I’m concerned that there’s no major outrage among Danes, that there aren’t more people standing up and saying this can’t be right. It cannot be right that we have to accept that they take the last bits of jewelry and the last dignity from refugees when they arrive to Denmark.’... The immigration reform bill, which has yet to be approved by parliament, would give authorities ‘the power to search the clothing and luggage of asylum-seekers and other migrants without a permit to stay in Denmark with a view to finding assets which may cover expenses,’ the immigration ministry said.”

The record of Denmark once again reminds us of the record of UK in putting immigrants in camps. Daniel Trilling has asked, “... what are the costs for a society that toughens its borders and achieves a significant drop in undocumented immigration? Britain is a case in point. In the early 2000s, in response to a rise in asylum applications, it constructed a network of detention centres, ostensibly to process applications more quickly, and made the system tougher. Asylum seekers are banned from working and must live on £36.95 a week, one of the lowest rates in Western Europe. Detainees can be locked up for unlimited periods while allegations of verbal abuse and mistreatment have been widely reported. The institutional violence of this system is hidden, and aside from a small but growing protest movement focused on the women’s detention centre at Yarl’s Wood, it goes largely unopposed. Its supporters would argue that it works: asylum applications to the UK have fallen from a peak of 84,130 in 2002 to a low of 23,507 in 2010. Throughout the current crisis Britain has remained largely unaffected, outsourcing the disorder at Calais to the French authorities. Widespread public disgust at the government’s perceived lack of sympathy with Syrians fleeing war has not prompted a questioning of the way our own asylum system sorts the deserving from the undeserving, refugees from ‘economic migrants’” (Trilling 2015: 12).

Her statement implied that moral and legal obligations had matched in Germany's case—probably because she had defined the legal obligation first to which then moral obligation found itself congruent. On the same day, Prime Minister of Hungary Viktor Orban said, “The problem is not a European problem; the problem is a German problem. Nobody would like to stay in Hungary.” In this case, the deceit was in the untold fact of Hungary creating all kinds of border controls to disallow the migrants to enter Hungary. Prime Minister Matteo Renzi of Italy declared on 30 August, “It will take months, but we will have a single European policy on asylum,” while the Austrian Foreign Minister Sebastian Kurz cautioned on 28 August, “Europe must wake up at long last and recognize that this is a serious problem.” The European theme had been set a few days earlier by the European Commissioner President Jean-Claude Juncker in the following tweet on 23 August, “We need a strong, European approach on migration. And we need it now.” Only the Serb Prime Minister Aleksandar Vucic as reported by the Reuters declared on 26 August, “We will never erect any fences, any walls” (*The New York Times* 2015).

Some Aspects of the Contemporary History of the Migration Crisis

To direct attention to some of the select aspects of contemporary migration crisis, we have to first put the analysis of contemporary migration in the frame of what can be called as the “the primacy of movement” (Nail 2015: 236). Thereby, it will allow us to realise that contemporary migration is not a secondary phenomenon between states. Rather, it is the primary condition by which societies and states are constituted and reconstituted. The expulsion of the migrant becomes the condition for social expansion. Thus, social expansion takes place only with social expulsion, which does not have a single axis only. The expansion takes place through as always a mixture of territorial, political, juridical, and economic types of expulsion (pp. 19–21).

Therefore, it should not surprise us that it is not that post-war Europe for the first time is facing immigration flows on a large scale; also, it is not true that this time it is the biggest flow the any part of the world is receiving. After the Algerian war, the Algerian population in France between 1962 and 1975 doubled from 350,000 to 700,000, and France became a country of massive immigrant population. While the headlines have outlasted the media's usual attention span this time,⁷ they will inevitably fade, as they faded after the Balkan wars in the 1990s, when there were 670,000 asylum applications to fifteen EU countries. In fact last year 626,000 people (44,000 fewer than 1992) applied to the 28 EU countries. And to be truthful, many more refugees and shelter seekers have sought and found shelter elsewhere. Turkey hosts 1.8 million Syrian refugees, Lebanon 1.2 million, and Jordan 600,000.

⁷*International New York Times predicted*, “mass migration poised to rise”, and stay that way (Nordland 2015).

Turkey now shelters more refugees than any other country in the world, and only four countries (Turkey, Pakistan, Lebanon, and Iran) host 36 % of global refugees. Europe also wants to think that Germany and others are helping refugees, but Germany's refugee-to-native ratio is about 40 times less than Jordan's, and in the USA refugee admissions have dropped to 70,000 from a peak of 122,000 in 1990.⁸ Twenty-five percent of world's refugees are in the least developed countries.

And although the UNHCR is still the institutional focal point of refugee protection, individual governments in the rich West determine how many asylum seekers they will admit,⁹ while camps are mostly in the LDCs, and the structure of power and influence in the global protection regime is decidedly skewed.

No one is asking, if many are straggling into Europe, how many are simply left behind, how many stopped, and, most importantly, how many are dying? Warnings of the great humanitarian disaster were aplenty in the last few years when the roulette parleys among the European powers went on with absurd regularity and monotony on stricter currency union norms. Undeterred by the Mediterranean boat tragedies, the European powers forged yet another tool against human migration. They met in Marseilles in April this year, decided to further tighten the immigration rules, strengthened the FRONTEX, the European border agency, and forged one more policy, that is targeting the migrants as the evil outcome of climate change. Border fencing also saw a dramatic rise. One report had this to say,

Europe will soon have more physical barriers on its national borders than it did during the Cold War. This year's refugee crisis, combined with Ukraine's ongoing conflict with Russia, has seen governments plan and construct border walls and security fences across Mediterranean and Eastern Europe. On September 15th, Hungary completed a fence along its border with Serbia, a major point of entry for refugees making their way into the European Union (EU) this year. Within hours, over 60 people were arrested for attempting to scale it. Hungary's is the latest in a ring of anti-migrant fences along the southern fringes of the EU's visa-free Schengen zone. In the mid-1990s, Spain fenced off its Moroccan enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla, followed in 2012 by fences on Greece's and Bulgaria's borders with Turkey. Recently, reports have circulated on social media that Romania will build defences too. Ukraine began sealing off its border with Russia last year. This year the Baltic States announced they are following suit. That would leave Belarus's as the only unsealed border between the Baltic and the Black sea.

Since the fall of the Berlin Wall, 40 countries around the world have built fences against 64 of their neighbours. The majority have cited security concerns and the prevention of illegal migration as justifications. More than 30 of those decisions were made following 9/11, 15 of them this year. In the Middle East, the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria as well as the associated wave of refugees have prompted most countries to close borders. By the end of this year, when it completes its border-wall with Jordan, Israel will have surrounded itself entirely. In Asia, too, walls and fences have proliferated, generally designed to prevent illicit movement of people and goods rather than to seal disputed borders, though Kashmir's line of control at India and Pakistan's disputed northern boundary remains a highly-militarised example.

⁸Figures are from Farley (2015); another report speaks of 2800 deaths in crossings since January 2015: Ozerkan (2015).

⁹Thus, country after country in Europe declared unilaterally the number of asylum seekers they would admit (*The Statesman* 2015c).

Some proposals for border fences are less plausible than others. In 2013 Brazil announced a “virtual” wall, monitored by drones and satellites, around its entire, nearly 15,000 km- (9000 mile-) long border. It began work on the Paraguayan and Bolivian sections this year, which are hot-spots for smuggling. But sceptics point out that much of Brazil’s border runs through rainforest that is impassable and hard to monitor. Even given easier terrain, high-tech border security often fails. The United States, which has several times fortified its border with Mexico, and Saudi Arabia, which has shuttered five of its borders since 2003, have struggled with proposals that were either too expensive or didn’t work (or both). For most countries, barbed-wire or electric fences, combined with ditches and buffer zones, are the reality. Thankfully, in contrast with the Cold War, transgressors of Europe’s new borders are no longer shot (The Economist 2015).

One of the spectres looming over this script of the twilight age of the anthropocene is the massive migration to the West from the supposedly climatically inhospitable regions of the South. Millions, we are told, will want to escape the floods, earthquakes, droughts, and famines to crowd the rich countries of Europe, Japan, North America, and Australia. These are the climate refugees. They sail through the Mediterranean, pass through the snow fields, cross barbed wires, and crawl into the bellies of ships, wagons, and aircraft to reach the Promised Land. This is the final disaster that will strike the world marking the end of the age of human intervention in nature—the twilight of the anthropocene.

Those historically minded will remember that this was the spectre that haunted the rulers in colonial India also in the last quarter of the nineteenth century when the El Nino famines struck the country, and became, in the memorable words of Mike Davis, the late Victorian holocausts (Davis 2002). In that, age, climate change, social factors, abrupt economic transitions, and particular political command structures combined with devastating effect to cause millions of deaths in India and also across large parts of the world. The colonial organisation of power accentuated environmental impact on the peasantry and destroyed the customary ways of providing relief to the distressed and the victims. Famine foods (foods that rats can eat but humans cannot) and migration facilitated the spread of epidemic diseases such as cholera, dysentery, malaria, and smallpox. Similarly, the managers of global governance are now worried: How will they stop migration? How are they to make these dangerous migrants resilient and stay put in face of war and climate change? How can they find a way to make migration an appropriate adaptive strategy? How are they to stop the travelling diseases from entering safe countries? These indeed are the concerns voiced this time by European politicians.

Yet we all know that migration makes no country safe or dangerous. In the words of Daniel Warner, we are all migrants at one point in the human life.¹⁰ Possibly therefore we may witness in the wake of the forthcoming Paris Conference on climate change even more desperate efforts to regulate migratory flows of humans who are supposedly escaping not only violence, but floods, famines, and droughts—all caused supposedly by climate change. Migrants with skills will be admitted, and they will be the good refugees. This is the prevailing EU wisdom,

¹⁰Exact words of the title of the essay, “We are all refugees” (Warner 1992).

while the rest will be told to move within their respective countries, learn skills, and become more adaptive. Meanwhile, developing nations will be asked to reduce their emission levels, not to develop at a fast space, and to open their economies to the more climate-hospitable technologies of the West producing cars, chemicals, leather products, and engineering products. Not to forget money—the most climate friendly commodity on earth. Yet as the present phase of migration from the Middle East and the Aegean Sea boat tragedies occur, remember that when the Marseilles discussion was taking place, migrants from Africa were sinking and dying in the Mediterranean.

Therefore, it will be good to view the present migration with some historical sense. Let us quickly glance through some of the most conspicuous reports in the last five years:

- Left-to-die in the boat on the Mediterranean: The boat left Libya carrying 72 Africans, but quickly ran into trouble and began losing fuel. Using a satellite phone, the passengers contacted a priest in Italy who alerted authorities. A military helicopter dropped water to the boat and was never seen again. The boat drifted for days after, at one point nearing a French aircraft carrier. No rescue operation was mounted, despite international law dictating that any oceangoing vessel must help another in distress. All but nine of the passengers died. An inquiry by the Council of Europe blamed the disaster on a “catalogue of failures” and recommended Europe overhaul its immigration policy. The United Nations declared that all migrant vessels in the Mediterranean be considered “in distress”. This was April 2011.
- Then on 18 September same year, as many as 15,000 migrants were stranded in Croatia, as the prime minister said his country could no longer accept refugees and began sending people north. The migrants had been booted from Serbia, and Hungary and Slovenia have closed their borders. Critics said that years of tight immigration policies in Europe had forced migrants to attempt ever-more-dangerous crossings. The death of 800 migrants in a single accident in April 2011 prompted calls for Europe to do more to help, and all summer leaders debated strategies. With European countries struggling to control the influx of migrants from Syria and North Africa, the European Council President set a meeting of EU leaders to discuss the crisis on 23 September.
- Tragedy again struck on 6 September 2012 near Greek shores, 160 feet east of Samos, when a fishing boat carrying Iraqis, Syrians, and Palestinians travelling from Turkey capsized, killing 60, nearly half of them children. The boat was only around 160 feet from shore; around 45 people managed to swim to safety. Meanwhile, the Greek police announced that they had caught tens of thousands of migrants trying to cross by boat or via the strip of land connecting the country to Turkey. Three months after the fishing boat accident, Greece completed a 6½-mile fence along its border with Turkey with funding from FRONTEX, the EU border agency. Bulgaria followed suit with a fence of its own. Human Rights Watch told the daily *The Guardian* that closing the land bridge simply forced more migrants to opt for the “most deadly route:” crossing the sea.

- On 18 October 2013 after another boat carrying 200 people capsized, Italy rescued more than 100,000 people with a special rescue programme, but 2014 was still the deadliest year yet for migrants. Nearly 3500 died or went missing. Yet other European countries in place of appreciating Italy criticised the latter for not coordinating with them and argued that through the special rescue mission Italy was encouraging migrants to come over to Europe. The EU governments asked Italy to shut down the special mission and launched its own operation, Triton, which emphasised that its duty on the Mediterranean Sea was not rescue but surveillance with the help of data from helicopters, drones, and satellites.
- The second week in February 2015 saw more than 300 migrants drown in failed crossings.
- On 18 April 2015, a ship carrying an estimated 950 people sank 17 miles off the Libyan coast with 800 people on the ship drowning. Amid international outcry, European ministers agreed on a 10 point plan to address the migrant issue, which meant in effect systematic efforts to destroy smuggling boats, tighter border controls on refugee routes, and a scheme to offer migrants resettlement options.
- Decomposed bodies of 59 men, 8 women, and 4 children who had suffocated in the back of an abandoned, unventilated truck travelling from Hungary, were found on 27 August 2015. The police found a Syrian passport on one of the victims, and the authorities believed that the victims were migrants being smuggled into Europe. The lining of the truck, registered in Hungary by a Romanian national and bearing the logo of a Slovak chicken company, was ripped from the inside, suggesting the victims had made a desperate attempt to escape. Yet another tragedy happened on the same day, with two boats carrying 500 migrants sank off the Libyan coast killing up to 200, some while trapped inside one of the boats after it capsized. Survivors said the smugglers had beaten them with sticks to keep them below the deck.¹¹
- Finally, on 2 September 2015, photographs of Kurdish-Syrian toddler Alan Kurdi's body brought a reckoning to Europe's halls of power. Nilufer Demir's photograph of the dead body of a drowned boy lying on a tourist-heavy beach became the My Lai girl's counterpart in this crisis. It instantly became a media sensation. European politicians claimed that they would reconsider their refugee policies. The British Prime Minister and the German Chancellor promised a more open door policy, while migrants and refugees stuck in Hungary protested against the shabby treatment by that country's government. No one of course forgot that the same British government had refused to accommodate the migrants trapped in the English Channel tunnel few months back.¹²
- Yet after Alan Kurdi's death further tragedies happened. Among many more deaths, prominent was the death of 22 migrants in the Aegean Sea in more than

¹¹*International New York Times* (20 October 2015a, p. 1) put the figure of deaths on 27 August 2015 in the abandoned truck as 71.

¹²News items excerpted from <https://www.timeline.com/stories/europe-immigration-crisis?gclid=COPj3cnrtcgCFVYSjgodut4OHw> (accessed on 28 October 2015).

one boat disaster on 30 October. Migrants were from Syria and trying to cross the Aegean to reach Greece (*The Statesman* 2015d).¹³

Who are these boat survivors and the boat people who died?¹⁴ Of course one has to remember in this context, and as mentioned earlier, that the boat survivors reaching Europe are always seen as victims of human smuggling. Thus, an earlier cited report puts the matter of migration as, “In the context of cross-Mediterranean mixed migration flows, migrants are particularly vulnerable to both smuggling of migrants and trafficking of human beings. One of the specific reasons pointed out by the literature is that emigration choices are made under particularly strong pressure and this often pushes migrants to leave without notifying their families and personal networks of their intentions and without informing them of the different migratory steps. Such lower reliance on family and community safety nets is certainly a relevant factor in raising migrants’ vulnerability to even extreme exploitation. Smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings are often confused as analogous or even identical phenomena. There are certainly overlapping and contiguities: smuggling networks do often function also as trafficking networks and vice versa; they can both involve organised criminal networks and they are both highly profitable businesses. At the regional level, some blurring of the boundaries between smuggling and trafficking has been highlighted in, for instance, the progress report of the United National High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on its strategy, as well as its Regional Plan of Action on Smuggling and Trafficking from the East and Horn of Africa, which states, ‘risks of human trafficking, abduction and abuse are widely reported along the routes taken by refugees and migrants alike’” (Abdel Aziz et al. 2015: 12–13; UNHCR 2014: 2).¹⁵

¹³See also on the Aegean boat disasters, *International New York Times* report (2015a).

¹⁴On the total number of migrant deaths on way to Europe, one report of 5 November 2015 said, “So far this year, 3692 migrants have died while trying to reach Europe, including 32 Africans who recently perished trying to travel to the Canary Islands, an archipelago off Morocco that is part of Spain. Most of the migrants were from Africa, the Middle East and South Asia—and, in particular, from Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria. ‘We know migration is inevitable, necessary and desirable,’ said William Lacy Swing, the director general of the International Organization for Migration, which has been tracking the migration figures.

‘But it’s not enough to count the number of those arriving—or the nearly 4000 this year reported missing or drowned,’ he said. ‘We must also act. Migration must be legal, safe and secure for all, both for the migrants themselves and the countries that will become their new homes’” (Chan 2015).

¹⁵The UNHCR report also said, “As regards trafficking, comprehensive and updated estimates on the overall size of the phenomenon in the Mediterranean MENA countries are lacking. However in 2005 the International Labour Organisation (ILO) reported at least 2450,000 persons to be exploited as victims of trafficking in human beings worldwide. According to another study, it is estimated that the global economic costs suffered by all victims of forced labour amounted to 21 billion dollars in 2009.... The total illicit profits produced in one year by trafficked forced labourers were estimated at about 32 billion dollars in 2005.... The data are rough estimates and actual numbers can be significantly higher than those presented by the ILO; however, these global tentative estimates are significant in portraying the profitability and scale of the phenomenon” (p. 12); once again the source is not very clear on these estimates (ILO 2009: 32).

While European powers have been playing their ping pong diplomacy around the boat survivors, similar events are taking place nearer our part of the world. Probably, it began with *Komagatamaru* ship, travelling from coast to coast for days and months and refused entry by the biggest colonial power hundred years ago in the early part of the last century.¹⁶ Then came the Haiti boat people, the Vietnamese boat people, and now the Rohingyas, many of whom after being pushed out of Myanmar do not have formal access to food, shelter, or work, and in search of secure life are now being compelled to take to the sea in perilous journeys to Southeast Asian countries such as Malaysia, with Bangladesh and Thailand being the main transits. Labelled as the “Asia’s new boat people,” their plight is being compared to the Vietnamese exodus by boat in the 1970s. But which European power cares for Asia’s boat people perishing in Bay of Bengal, the Strait of Malacca, and Indian Ocean, with Australia denying the shelter seekers any right of entry and in fact quarantining them in off shore islands?¹⁷ Deaths of refugees, migrants, and asylum seekers in the seas of Asia had been happening for quite some time;¹⁸ yet the European powers looked the other way till the Mediterranean boat

¹⁶The journey of *Komagata Maru* represented the convergence of several trends in the colonial world. The harassment and endless misery to which the Indian immigrants into Canada were subjected indicated a new feeling of anxiety within the Empire about the immigrants, aliens, and foreigners. By the beginning of the twentieth century, Canada solved the problem by insisting on continuous voyage from the country of origin. The immigrants of *Komagata Maru* were suspected to be part of a grand plan by seditious Indians to hatch an international conspiracy. This was amply borne out by the correspondence between the Criminal Intelligence Office, Shimla, and the intelligence departments in Bengal and Punjab. The authorities in Hong Kong, Shanghai, Penang, Singapore, and Rangoon also shared information on a regular basis. The *Komagata Maru* incident took place near Kolkata when the people on ship were prevented from alighting. Violent clashes broke out between the immigrant returnees and the colonial security forces ending with several deaths and several returnees escaping. The incident of *Komagata Maru* becomes more comprehensible in the light of the larger context mentioned above. On the *Komagata Maru* voyage, Chakrabarty (2016).

¹⁷For a comprehensive report on the Rohingya boat people, see the report by Calcutta Research group: Chaudhury and Samaddar (2015); see in particular Chapter 3, Sucharita Sengupta (2015), “‘Maritime Ping-Pong’: Rohingyas at Sea”, pp. 15–29; There are other reports also on the Rohingyas and Bangladeshis drowning the seas. For instance, *The Daily Star* (2015); Chowdhury (2015); the CRG report also provides an exhaustive list of reports on the Rohingyas.

¹⁸See the series of reports by Ian Urbina in *The New York Times*, for instance Urbina (2015); Urbina wrote of the immigrants, “Once aboard, the men endured 20-h workdays and brutal beatings, only to return home unpaid and deeply in debt from thousands of dollars in upfront costs, prosecutors say. Thousands of maritime employment agencies around the world provide a vital service, supplying crew members for ships, from small trawlers to giant container carriers, and handling everything from paychecks to plane tickets. While many companies operate responsibly, over all the industry, which has drawn little attention, is poorly regulated. The few rules on the books do not even apply to fishing ships, where the worst abuses tend to happen, and enforcement is lax. Illegal agencies operate with even greater impunity, sending men to ships notorious for poor safety and labor records; instructing them to travel on tourist or transit visas, which exempt them from the protections of many labor and anti-trafficking laws; and disavowing them if they are denied pay, injured, killed, abandoned or arrested at sea. ‘It is lies and cheating on land, then beatings and death at sea, then shame and debt when these men get home,’ said Shelley Thio, a

tragedies started occurring with frightening frequency and Lampadusa became a town with ill forebodings for the managers of Europe.¹⁹

(Footnote 18 continued)

board member of a migrant workers' advocacy group in Singapore.... The Singapore-based company that recruited Mr. Andrade and the other villagers has a well-documented record of trouble.... In episodes dating back two decades, the company has been tied to trafficking, severe physical abuse, neglect, deceptive recruitment and failure to pay hundreds of seafarers in India, Indonesia, Mauritius, the Philippines and Tanzania. Still, its owners have largely escaped accountability. Last year, for example, prosecutors opened the biggest trafficking case in Cambodian history, involving more than 1000 fishermen...."

¹⁹Lampadusa's new counterpart in the eastern part of Europe is Idomeni, a train stop on the Greece-Macedonian border. Idomeni has now featured in various news reports on the European migration crisis. For instance, Smith (2016) reported, "Not long ago few had heard of Idomeni, a train stop on the Greek-Macedonian border. Now it has become Europe's biggest favela: an embarrassment to the values the continent holds so dear.

"Its tents, clinics and cabins lie on mud-soaked land. Its fields, once fertile, are toxic dumps. Its air is acrid and damp.... Children dart this way and that, exhausted, hungry, unwashed. Waterlogged tents surround them – women sitting inside, men sitting in front, attempting vainly to stoke fires on rain-sodden wood.

"Everywhere there are lines: of bedraggled refugees queuing for food, of scowling teenage boys waiting for medics, of teenage girls holding babies, of older men and women staring into the distance in disbelief. And everywhere there are piles: of sodden clothes, soaked blankets, muddy shoes, tents, wood, rubbish – the detritus of despair but also desperation of people who never thought that this was where they would end up...

"Idomeni was never meant to happen. It is a bottleneck that abruptly occurred when Macedonia – following other eastern European and Balkan states – arbitrarily decided to seal its frontier. At its most intense, 14,000 people – mainly Syrians and Iraqis but also Afghans, Iranians, Moroccans, Algerians and Tunisians – have converged on this boggy plain, all bound by a common dream to continue their journey into central Europe...

"No one knows this better than those in Idomeni. Doctors are quick to say that until they got to the camp they had no idea what a public health emergency meant. Exposed to the elements, the place is being described as a time bomb. The vast majority of refugees have been here for weeks with some close to completing a month. Cases of fever, pneumonia, septicaemia, hysteria and psychotic breaks are all on the rise, according to health workers.

"We have found women in tents writhing in pain as a result of [intrauterine] foetal deaths,' says Despoina Fillipidaki, who is coordinating volunteers, clinics, drug supplies and medics for the Red Cross in the tent city. 'My biggest fear is that soon people will start to die. And what was their crime? All they want is a better life, to escape war, to escape poverty. And what do they get? Greece of [Nazi] occupation. These are scenes from another century, another time.'

"Idomeni is also symbolic of something that has gone very wrong. In the chaos many fear the unravelling of Europe, the end of the founding principles that once united warring nations on European soil. In the mud and mayhem, decency, manners, solidarity – the glue that has kept Europe together – appear to have been lost...

"The wound of Idomeni is that those most affected still believe in hope... Greece knows it is walking a tightrope. There is explosiveness in the air and with each passing day it becomes more apparent.

"Asked if, perhaps, the best solution would be to airlift the emigres out," the Greek migration minister, Yannis Mouzalas, did not disagree. "You know, I like that idea," he confided, surveying the camp with Avramopoulos. "My big hope is that Europe will decide to behave like Europeans at the summit."

The New Situation and the Management of Migration Crisis

Europe's 10-point (now 17 point) action plan is faulty, to say the least. In the first place, Europe aggravated the Syrian situation by joining the US bombings and intervention in Syria and Iraq. In trying to force regime changes in Syria, earlier in Iraq, Egypt, and Libya, it caused its own borders shrink inward. Already its compromise on the issue of Palestinian self-determination had aggravated the insecurity of a liberal empire. On the top of all these, its policies against Iran and Lebanon had worsened the situation in the Middle East and had contributed to the instability of the region. The liberal empire had and still has no coherent foreign policy, only knew how to hold on to the trans-Atlantic alliance, and keep on producing a consumerist happy continental economy. It is now receiving the just due. Europe now has to carry the burden of its actions and must shelter the thousands that move into the continent.

Remember the *coalition of the willing*? Since the US invasion of Iraq in May 2003, more than four million Iraqi civilians were uprooted in one of the largest humanitarian crises of our times. Approximately two million of these refugees lived for long thereafter in desperate conditions and legal limbo in Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon whose governments received barely any support from the international community. In comparison, only 100,000 Iraqis claimed asylum in the EU countries between 2003 and 2007. There were no legal routes to Europe for Iraqis fleeing persecution; this was exacerbated by the fact that the coalition troops and embassies within Iraq did not accept asylum claims. The vast majority of successful Iraqi asylum claims were made in Sweden, with European countries joining the *coalition of the willing* and later displaying not even the minimum humanitarian concern for displaced Iraqis.

The EU plan now focuses only on the Balkans. Yet as one source mentions, through September 204,630 illegal border crossings were identified on this route, while 359,171 people attempted to cross through the Eastern Mediterranean route and 128,619 opted for the Central Mediterranean. Over the past 6 months, this sort of piecemeal approach allowed the crisis to spiral. The EU now wants to pay Turkey 4.6 billion euros to settle its borders with the latter, which implies that Turkey with that money would henceforth confine the migrants within its confines and not allow them to move into Europe. EU candidacy is also a bargaining chip. This is truly a "boats and camps" approach with necessary bribe to the boat and camp managers (Postel et al. 2015: 13; Taylor, 2015).

But cash and other financial incentives to secure borders of Europe will only create greater problems for the empire. However, we are mistaken if we view this step mainly as privatising security or subcontracting the security of the borders of the east. Its economic rationale must not be lost upon us.

Money as protection is not something as scandalous as the idea at first hearing suggests. After all to protect one needs resources. With resources one can provide care, care in turn functions as an element of power. Also, the fact that the global protection regime is marked by power and influence should not also astonish us to

death. What is new is the fact that money, resources, care, and protection are now globally deployed to enhance market economy and make the weak and the vulnerable also economic agents of the market. What Europe is doing today as strategy to cope with migration marks a broader transition of the continent towards becoming a neoliberal empire. Therefore, we have to have at least a sense of the changes in the patterns of migration flows prompting changes in the strategies of care and power. Let us note in this context three fundamental changes, each of which demands full-length scientific study. So, we can only barely mention them here:

First, today's migration flows are massive and mixed. Thus, the way in which the Refugee Convention of 1951 conceptualised forced migration as a single individual's decision to leave his/her country and seek shelter elsewhere is not the case today. Population flows are massive because all types of migrants—refugees, illegal immigrants, economic migrants, climate and environmental refugees, previously internally displaced persons, asylum seekers, trafficked men, women, and children, escapees of war, violence, and natural disaster—are mixed up today in these population flows. Not only persons and groups are mixed up, but also reasons to migrate are also mixed up and complex. This is the fundamental reason as to why the UNHCR is becoming increasingly ineffective today, giving rise to protracted nature of displacement.

Second, the ideology of humanitarianism is overwhelmed with humanitarian practices that must depend on market norms. Therefore, we shall see more and more private–public partnership in protection strategies and policies such as camp management, sale of refugee products, health management, and management of refugee economies, and more importantly, celebrity endorsement, all of which we first saw in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. Angelina Jolie began appearing endorsing refugee causes from then on.

Third, the international legal structure of protection is becoming weaker, while on the other hand regional protection pillars are not being strengthened. Even the fact that most of the care of the vulnerable is borne by societies across the world in informal ways is dismissed by models of global governance. Add to these the fact that war induced population flows is not discussed at all in the 1951 Convention, which refers to war only in the context of the aftermath of the World War.

In the fifties and sixties in the last century when the refugee protection norms were put in place, the cold war was the context. European protection of refugees has now a different context. In place of cold war, there is the global post-colonial predicament with flows from the post-colonial world, also flows from the poorer parts of Europe to its richer part. In this changed context, Europe does not any more adhere to global protection principles. European powers are discussing today distributing the “refugee burden” among various EU members—something unthinkable under the 1951 Convention. What will be the norm of such distribution? Wealth, GDP, population, size of the country, population–wealth ratio, labour market needs, country of first, second, and then the later order of access, ethnic, or other similarities with the refugee population flow? It will be like marketing commodities and distributing public goods. Angela Merkel in fact demanded on a binding quota for all EU members for relocating around 120,000 refugees from Italy, Greece, and

Hungary (*The Statesman* 2015a; *The Toronto Globe and Mail* 2015). The transition to neoliberal economic policies takes place in this way. In Africa, market friendly protection and support practices are now being experimented. In Turkey, refugee economy is already working like an immigrant niche in the overall national economy. The immigrant niche in the market is marked by outright plunder of labour power known as primitive accumulation, distress work condition, semi-free labour, old labour recruitment pattern, bank loans to entrepreneurs, etc. The products of this market are linked to global commodity chains.²⁰ Angela Merkel's gesture towards Turkey during her visit to Turkey on 18 October with aid, money, and allurements of EU membership is the first step towards constructing these fringe economies on the periphery of Europe towards a neoliberal population management regime (*The Statesman* 2015b: 8).²¹ Refugees will provide child labour,²² semi-slave labour, intense work conditions, encamped labour market, and a deregulated labour market. Without this capitalism cannot survive today. Global capitalist economy is fast moving from the old aid strategies towards making the needy self-sufficient, which means making them resilient, market-enabled actors.²³ This is one of the modes of European transition from a liberal union to a neoliberal empire. The present crisis will be a great occasion of a neoliberal restructuring. This will once again prove that neoliberalism survives by making virtues out of crises. Crisis is its mode of existence (on this, see Mirowski 2013).

Along the line of thinking around the policy of reconstruction, there are calls for a new Marshall Plan, exactly as the debt crisis provoked a similar appeal. Aid agencies are now calling for a Marshall Plan for Syrian refugees. The Norwegian Refugee Council for instance has argued that international community must agree to a new plan for Syria's refugees, if it is serious about tackling the "largest humanitarian crisis since World War Two. Many refugees are currently being condemned to a life in legal limbo with an array of restrictions leaving them in fear of arrest, detention, and deportation". Clearly in European perception, this is the largest humanitarian crisis, for refugee crises elsewhere such as Afghanistan or Bangladesh refugees in 1971 have been forgotten. They have called for massive international investment plan in return for the host countries allowing refugees to work and thus giving them the chance to support themselves. Separately, the World Bank is working on new ideas for raising billions of dollars for large-scale

²⁰On Turkey and Middle East in the wake of the war-caused devastation and refugee flows, Canafe (2015).

²¹On the issue of ghettoed labour of immigrants in the Middle East, in particular Turkey, see Canafe (2015).

²²Consider the report by Andrew Hosken on Syrian refugee children (Hosken 2015); the report by Fisk (2014); also the *Telesur* (2016) report.

²³Strangely, while capitalism in its neoliberal phase makes child labour an element in the labour market (even though this in actuality means semi-slave labour and depressed wage), the child asylum seeker is becoming under the refugee protection regime a juridical subject; she is supposed to represent herself before the courts of law adjudicating her need for protection. See a report by Jerry Markon (2016).

investments. The plan aims to help host countries build infrastructure, right their economies, and deal with the steep costs from the refugee population. Eventually, it would expand to rebuild war-stricken Syria, Libya, and Yemen. The bank estimates it will cost 170 billion US dollars over 10 years to rebuild Syria and an additional 100 billion US dollars to rebuild Libya (Høvring et al. 2015). Is this a new idea? No, the experiences of post-Tsunami reconstruction show what aid for reconstruction means in terms of creating a new and more iniquitous market economy.

This is not to say that it is a story of complete cordons and enclosures. In an atmosphere of xenophobia, citizens, human rights activists, pastors, labour activists, and several anti-racism groups mobilised support for the migrants throughout the last few years. Yet one example of how virtuous, cosmopolitan thinking on hospitality can be transformed by neoliberal economics to its opposite is the way modern asylum and protection policy has displaced the idea of right of visitation, hospitality, and stay with an economics of a segmented labour market based on immigrant labour—a phenomenon that can be termed as “immigrant niche.”²⁴ Thus, one can study in the context the way migrants are and can be quartered in the cities. The ghetto-like existence producing fringe economies is an outcome of the way cities accommodate the migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees. They are in UNHCR’s language “urban refugees” (UNHCR 2009).²⁵ Recently, Costas Douzinas, a Member of Parliament in Greece representing Syriza and serving as Chair of the Standing Committee on National Defence and Foreign Relations, refoated the proposal of cities of refuge along the line of Jacques Derrida, Pierre Bourdieu, Toni Morrison, and Salman Rushdie, who founded in Strasbourg in 1994 a network of cities of refuge.²⁶ Douzinas argued,

After the consolidation of the modern state, asylum and the politics of refuge became a privilege granted by the sovereign as a sign of mercy. In reality however protection was no longer just a moral obligation. It became a tool in ideological rivalries. The famous 1951 Geneva Convention on Political Asylum was a typical creation of the Cold War. Asylum was granted only to refugees from Europe who had fled their home country before 1951 and was extended to all refugees only in 1967. It allowed Western Europe to offer protection to

²⁴See Samaddar (1999), Chap. 10, “Agrarian Impasse and the Making of an Immigrant Niche”, pp. 150–161.

²⁵The document also provides a comprehensive list of UNHCR documents and guidelines on urban refugees.

²⁶On this, see Kelly (2004), Derrida (2001); the original *cities of refuge* of course come from the Bible. In the book of Numbers God orders Moses to institute six “cities of refuge” or “asylum” for the “resident alien or temporary settler”. This concept was taken into Christianity as the “sanctuary” provided by churches to secure immunity and survival for refugees. The concept of cities of refuge pointed to a strategy for assisting refugees, asylum seekers, and immigrants beyond the traditional nation-state politics, within a sphere of local, regional aid. Germaine Greer spoke of individuals and families *adopting* refugees—taking them into their own homes and taking responsibility for them. Perhaps there are other dimensions for assisting refugees—for example in which companies, voluntary groups, football clubs, trade unions, churches, and town councils, even political parties, could each take in and be responsible for those who seek sanctuary in this country. For a detailed discussion of the idea with its philosophical ancestry, see Baker (2010). See also, Eurocities (2015).

people persecuted by the newly established communist regimes. This is why the Convention stipulates that those protected must have fled their country of nationality because of a “well-founded fear of persecution” because of their race, religion or political views...

Cities have always been the physical place of asylum and protection for the persecuted. Within the urban web, anonymity and the protection of privacy allows the traumatized refugees to gradually acquire the necessary means in order to start life again. Before the consolidation of state sovereignty, the Italian, Hanseatic and Ottoman cities — the matrices of European urbanisation — offered asylum to the persecuted. More recently, a number of great intellectuals such as Jacques Derrida, Pierre Bourdieu, Toni Morrison and Salman Rushdie founded in Strasbourg in 1994 a contemporary network of ‘cities of refuge’. They aimed to protect oppressed intellectuals. At the time of the initiative, artists and writers were persecuted by the new Islamic regime in Algeria. Soon, great cities like Barcelona, Hamburg and Liverpool participated in the initiative and a network of cities of refuge and hospitality of persecuted intellectuals was created. Today an international organisation of such cities exists. However it has become inactive recently and its focus remains the protection of people of arts and letters.

The wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and now Syria have given rise to a huge number of refugees fleeing the war zones. In the last twelve months over one million people, 80 % on whom are Syrian refugees, travelled through Greece on the way to the contemporary Argos in Northern Europe. It is important therefore to return to and expand the institution of the cities of refuge by offering protection to the persecuted of our time irrespective of educational or social background. We must take initiatives to create a new network of European cities of refuge, which will host a number of refugees per city and offer them shelter, food and care for their basic needs and help them settle in their new home...

But there are also good policy reasons for such initiatives. Europe is getting old. Its pension and social protection regimes are no longer viable. The demographic data are worrying. First, we have a very low fertility rate, 1.5 births per European female in child-bearing age when a 2.1 rate is needed for the reproduction of the population. Second, life expectancy has increased greatly. Finally, the ratio between working and out of work population has deteriorated. The EU predicts that Europe needs around 60 million new immigrants in the next 40 years in order to reproduce its active population. Angela Merkel understood this fact and without grand statements accepted around 1 million new immigrants. The EU predicts that Europe needs around 60 million new immigrants in the next 40 years in order to reproduce its active population. Angela Merkel understood this fact and without grand statements accepted around 1 million new immigrants.

Europe needs new blood and new ideas. The refugees knocking on Europe’s door are educated, dynamic – this is always the case with people who go through all kinds of hardship to get to their imagined Argos. Repulsion, xenophobia and racism show not only meanness and lack of morality but also ignorance of basic facts about population needs.

The contemporary supplicants must therefore be welcomed. They flee bombs, death and oppression, to which western policies contributed. They are ready to work hard in order to build a new life.... We call for the creation of a new ‘International of Cities of Asylum’ initiative, asking the demos of great cities to follow in the steps of the citizens of Argos. It is not just about humanitarianism, philanthropy or solidarity. Behind every kind of morality stands the responsibility to offer asylum. The face of the other who suffers lies behind the identity of each and every one of us (Douzinas 2016).

Observers of course raised several concerns relating to the idea of cities of refuge. Some said that it was important to acknowledge that “refugees” and

“migrants” were not two isolated and disconnected categories. Hosting them was primarily an ethical duty and should not be perched on the ground of economic gain from admitting migrant labour. Most important for Europe and the West was the imperative to recognize its moral and ethical responsibility towards the refugees. After all, it was pointed out, the “migrant crisis” was in effect the crisis of imperialism. Though everyone was busy talking about Islam and the ISIS, Europe was forgetting that the ISIS was created by the American/Saudi imperialism to fight Soviets in Afghanistan, and then the invasion of Iraq by the combined Anglo-American military forces. Again, it was asked in many public forums, namely, was it not the dismantling and disintegration of the Iraqi army after which some of its army officers escaped to the north of Iraq to form a group to resist and fight Anglo-American imperialism, that eventually became ISIS? This part of the story had remained absolutely absent from the public debate. No one ever mentioned that it was the continuing Western imperialism which was responsible for what was happening particularly in the Middle East, and consequently the forcible displacement and migration of people. In short cities of refuge as an idea had provoked several angles to the issue of hosting and protection. If some thought in terms of economic gain, some thought in terms of ethics, yet some others in terms of political responsibility.

The cosmopolitan idea of cities of refuge has thus problems the most critical of them being that the cities are already become cities of refugee with the refugee and immigrant population being quartered and turned into subjects of a primitive labour process. No wonder then that in this scenario, the social media has wavered. CNBC reported of one poll that said that 55 % of the French citizens opposed any easing of restrictions on immigration and over 430,000 British citizens had signed a petition calling for the government to receive more asylum seekers, while over 110,000 lent their support to a counter petition; 51 % British citizens opposed letting more Syrian refugees come to the country; 60 % of Germans felt that the country could cope with the refugees arriving; 44.6 % of the public wanted Switzerland’s borders to be temporarily closed; 94 % of Czech citizens felt that the EU should deport all refugees, while 44 % did not think that Czech Republic should be helping refugees at all.²⁷ More and more news started coming in recent months of Europe including Germany of attacks on migrant groups. Refugee camps have been attacked in some places in retaliation to Paris killings. All the more therefore one can only feel proud of the migrant solidarity movements in Europe against the heavy tide of xenophobia, racism, and war mongering.

More importantly, migrants while seeking from the respective European states protection, asylum, and security are not behaving exactly as obedient subjects seeking help and protection. Their conduct is at times near rebellious, as if they are autonomous agents. Thus, on the one hand, there is ever-increasing range of control mechanisms and biometric modes of supervision; on the other hand, there are

²⁷<http://www.cnn.com/2015/09/08/how-europeans-have-reacted-to-migrant-crisis.html> (accessed on 10 September 2015).

autonomous moments in contemporary migration flows that put the tightest schemes of surveillance and control in question.²⁸ These autonomous moments are marked by resistance, solidarity, knowledge of European condition, and subversion. It has been observed that immigrant people's decisions can be:

“... contingent... Language is an important factor – people from former British colonies head to Britain and people from former French colonies to France – but networks of family and friends who may have made earlier journeys, or just a person's temperament, also play a role. Another major factor is the asylum policy of particular EU member states: how quickly and favourably they process claims and what sort of living conditions asylum seekers are kept in while they wait... A Sudanese refugee who spent the first five years of his adult life living rough in various parts of Europe told... that his compatriots used to head for Norway, until Norway made it harder for Sudanese people to get asylum there. When that changed, his friends tried Britain. A group of Eritreans ... in Calais told ... they'd be happy to stay in France if it wasn't for the fact that a housing shortage had left their friends living on the street in Paris, even after they'd claimed asylum. Asylum seekers would have less of a reason to move around Europe if they were assured of the same basic conditions wherever they arrived. A 2005 EC directive sets standards for the speed at which applications should be processed, as well as the living conditions and level of care that should be offered to asylum seekers while they wait, but its provisions are vague and in practice conditions vary wildly. A torture survivor is entitled to psychological treatment, but their access to this depends on whether or not the host country provides trained staff, who can identify traumatised people; few countries do. One reason these inequalities persist is that the EU has made reception conditions a lower priority than policing borders. In 2014, the annual budget for the European Asylum Support Office was €14.5 million; the 2014 budget for Frontex was €98 million.... Huge delays plague the Italian asylum system; the Greek one doesn't work at all. This is why, as the number of people crossing the Mediterranean has risen, so too has the number of people sleeping rough in Calais... smuggled from Italy to France but then gets stuck at the English Channel.... The clandestine refugee route through the western Balkans (Greece, Macedonia, Serbia, Hungary – or now Croatia), where scenes of chaos have unfolded in recent months, has in fact been used for years.... Nobody wants to become, in the words of the Croatian prime minister, a 'migrant hotspot'. Hungary, with its hard-right government and a prime minister given to making apocalyptic statements about the threat migrants pose to 'Christian Europe', may have chosen an extreme response by building fences, threatening refugees with imprisonment for crossing its border illegally and approving the use of 'non-lethal force' to repel migrants, but it is following a logic shared by the European system as a whole (Trilling 2015: 10).

The autonomous moments are thus parts of the very regulation structure of Europe. These moments are constituted by migrant strikes also. Migrant strikes have become noticeable in Italy. On 1 March 2010, Italy witnessed massive migrant strikes in major cities:

It was the first strike of thousands of migrants and Italians against the exploitation of migrant labor, spread across a vast region. March 1st, 2010 was certainly more than just that. At least 300,000 people filled the streets of dozens of Italian cities: from Trieste to Syracuse, from Palermo to Turin, including large demonstrations in Milan, Naples, Brescia and Bologna. In various small Italian cities, possibly for the first time, the widespread presence of migrants in the social fabric was demonstrated through picket lines or rallies... The word *strike* was put into circulation and then it was discussed: on the one hand, it

²⁸For a comprehensive discussion on the concept of autonomy of migration, see Scheel (2013a, b).

provoked misunderstandings, hasty declarations, and legal analysis – before, it should be noted, of the renewed debate that this word created a few months prior as a result of the FIAT referendum in Pomigliano – and even distancing. On the other hand, some groups decided to build a mobilisation in order to organize a real strike: they found a widespread desire on the part of the migrants to be key players, for the first time, of a strike that would be *their own*. The desire on the part of the migrants to lead a strike was not new; the novelty was instead the limelight and the fact that this strike was, in a way, announced. No one knew where it was coming from, but the phrase was circulating: ‘On March 1st the migrants will have their first strike...’ (Connesione Precarie, n.d.).²⁹

Women migrants became particularly restive in the strikes.³⁰ The call also declared,

We do not accept that the police legally checks accounts statements of migrant workers; continues to release an occupancy permit for waiting only six months when law provides that it is not less than one year; does not respect the deadline of 60 days to renew a permit and that the permit renewed starts from the date of submission of the application for renewal; do not issue permits to all those who have participated in the latest amnesty; and does not respect the deadline of 730 days to the closing of the practices to obtain citizenship.³¹

The inherently subversive and oppositional nature of migration expressed in these strikes and other acts of freedom has been the greatest worry for the EU, and the reactive nature of their resistance to control practices is also matched by the fact that the migrant resistance anticipates many of the control measures. Thus, as some have suggested, “the relation between control and escape is one of temporal difference: escape comes first” (Papadopoulos et al. 2006: 56), or one can say that the migrant autonomy is already “entangled in and regulated by control” (p. 43). European policies meet as adversary migration practices, both anticipate each other, and the end result is an enormous difficulty to make migration an orderly, regulated, and purely economic process based on labour market needs.

This also brings back to Europe what can be its border dilemma. If EU needs within its territory seamless passage of capital, credit, and currency and to some extent labour, it also needs at the same time strict border regime and practices to cope with the irreducible ambivalence of the migration practices. As the European crisis of migration demonstrates, this border regime has to synchronise the

²⁹Connesioni Precarie (n.d.). According to this call, migrants are the critical factor in the organisation of what it terms as “transnational social strike”. It says, “Indeed, the challenge for a transnational political process as Transnational Social Strike is to connect the movement in France with the conditions of millions of precarious workers, migrants and students across Europe. How to make common claims – such as a European minimum wage, a European welfare and income, a European visa for all migrants – resonate from the squares in France to the factories on the other side of the continent? How to build commonalities across borders? How can these claims help building a transnational movement?”

³⁰“Saturday, May 31 in the Square to the Freedom of Migrant Women”, Call in Bologna on 27 May 2014, <https://migranda.org/> (trans. from Italian; accessed on 13 January 2016).

³¹“What do the Police do with Your Residence Permit?”—<https://migranda.org/> (trans. from Italian; accessed on 13 January 2016).

regulatory and surveillance practices on both its outer borders and its inner walls in form of borders of EU member countries. The question is: Will the biometric border regimes of Europe be enough to streamline various border regulations and synchronise them? The differential responses of various EU member countries indicate the enormous difficulties on this path. The paradoxical phenomena of autonomy of migration and regulation of migration within the biometric border regimes can be theorised only in this context. The European crisis of migration stems from this duality formed by several attending factors, for instance the encounters³² between migrants and the Visa Information System (VIS—one of the largest biometric databases in the world), encounters between the biometric and non-biometric border regimes, requirements of security and the phenomenon of labour mobility, between the practices of illegal migration, stay, and appropriation of legal residency permits on the one hand and legal arrival and existence of the migrants,³³ and finally the encounter between a single framework of regulation³⁴ and control and the sheer variety of migration practices, their irreducible individuality, and the vast multiplicity of the subjectivities that migrants embody in their acts of migration. This uncontrollable plenitude of thousands of independent decisions, taken by migrants for a wide variety of different reasons on a daily basis, produces a surplus of

³²Stephan Scheel (2013a) speaks of the interface of the principle of autonomy and government as embodied encounters, for instance, between migrant's autonomous practices of movement and myriad of regulations, including biometric surveillance.

³³Most regularisation mechanisms, including marriage to a legal resident or the recognition of paternity of a child of a migrant by an EU citizen, comprise a built-in loss of legal status. Legalised migrants remain in a state of probation: they are issued only temporary residence permits that can be revoked at any time and whose renewal hinges on meeting the requirements of their initial issuance. There is thus a probationary logic in most regularisation mechanisms. Many migrants thus leap back and forth between periods of legality and illegality. On this, Walters (2010); see also, Walters (2011).

³⁴The attempt to achieve a single framework of regulation includes a continent wide a refugee relocation scheme. European Union/Member state compliance with emergency relocation scheme includes planned relocation places to be made available as percentage of member state quota. The EU parliament agreed in September 2015 to transfer 160,000 people from most affected states. EU member states have so far made only 1418 relocation places available and relocated even less refugees. The proposed relocation scheme was adopted by the European Council on 14 and 22 September 2015 and promises a significant reduction of the pressure on the most affected member states. The scale of relocation reveals a spread of several orders of magnitude in RPA (relocation places made available). Of the countries that have already made places available, Germany ranks the lowest with an RPA of 0.04 %; Romania, Sweden, Finland, and Cyprus have RPAs between 7 and 10 %. Luxembourg's RPA (15.33 %) is only topped by Malta, whose RPA is 100.00 %. Several countries have not yet begun to create relocation places, which is why their RPA is 0 %. Extrapolating the visible trends into the future, countries with RPAs higher than about 7 % will be able to fulfill their quota within two years. RPA is a good indicator for fulfilment, because it takes the created relocation places into account. It is reasonable to assume that countries will relocate refugees once they have created places for them. The EU's emergency relocation mechanism is only one facet of the broader refugee crisis. In its current state, it is doubtful if the mechanism is working efficiently. Thus, achieving a single framework of regulation is easier said than done. On this the report, "EU Refugee Relocation Scheme Visualised", 4 November 2015—http://datadesigncompany.com/blog/eu_refugee_relocation.php (accessed on 4 January 2015).

sociability that exceeds the capacities of any border regime to entirely regulate migratory movements. Autonomy of migration and conversely the power of migration control both are the sites of crisis, which find its most congealed expression in the present moment, termed as Europe's migration crisis.

There is one more aspect to the dual nature of the crisis. We have noted how European border controls are enmeshed with autonomous migrant practices. The greater question is: Can these formal border controls exist without encouraging unofficial, cartel-controlled (known as smugglers' chains) mobility practices? Indeed, one can say that "the 'industry' of controls in Europe is productive: it generates large rewards as well as new technologies, social relations, border realities, and roles for migrants and border workers—with distressing consequences, as we see in the tightly packed boats, newly erected fences, and detention centres characteristic of Europe's failed 'fight against migration'" (Andersson 2015). The interface of these two realities—border controls and unofficial mobility agencies—is at the core of what Ruben Andersson calls the "illegality industry." He says,

The panicked political debates on the 'refugee crisis' this summer have displayed a fair bit of amnesia, as if our shores had suddenly been hit by an unforeseen natural disaster. In fact, European leaders should have been well-prepared for the spike in arrivals, and not just because the Syria conflict has kept festering while UN humanitarian efforts for refugees have remained vastly underfunded. In fact, Europe has seen successive 'border crises' over more than a decade, including the first large arrivals of sub-Saharan Africans into Italy in the early 2000s, the Spanish Canary Islands 'boat crisis' of 2006, and numerous 'emergencies' announced ever since. Each crisis has spawned more investment in border security, which has in turn worsened the problem by displacing routes, triggering more risky entry methods, and feeding the smuggling networks facilitating entry via those riskier methods and routes. We face a vicious cycle at the borders where the failure of controls feeds a demand for ever more controls: a cycle where many powerful groups stand to gain, while border crossers face ever graver risks to their safety.... As the Libya and Senegal examples show, Europe's border security response has for years involved 'off-shoring' (or 'externalising') controls into non-EU space. Like the international value chain for the production of cheap consumer goods, the 'illegality industry' works on its human 'goods' across a dispersed geographical site, involving a bewildering array of sectors. The industry's 'outsourcing' efforts involve not only offshore security forces, but also humanitarian organisations, NGOs, and private outfits collaborating closely with the policing response, whether in reception, detention, deportation, or on the open seas (Andersson 2015).

Today, as everyone knows, Turkey is the latest offshoring or externalising site. And no wonder this policy has its snowball effect. Turkish military reportedly is now engaged in creating a neutral zone along the 100-km border with Syria which would not only contain the Islamic State, but also prevent the creation of a Kurdish state along Turkey's south-eastern border and keep the Syrian refugees within the borders of Syria. The refugee crisis is thus compounded by domestic compulsions of states like Turkey which battles domestic Kurdish insurgency for decades, much like what Europe is doing to cope with the immigration flows in view of its internal compulsions.

All these lead European powers into thinking of what befell Rome one thousand five hundred years ago in the wake of the entry of the Huns, Visigoths, and Vandals into Roman territory and ending in sack of Rome. Like then, war has devastated

Europe's near abroad for the last twenty-five years. Neoliberalism's victory has come at a great cost. Also, as the recent Paris killings suggest, even though this victory may be pyrrhic, its impact on population flows (including labour flows) may be severe. We may see on the one hand the desperate need of a continental neoliberal economy for new labour and on the other hand an equally desperate drive for securitisation involving severe restrictions on population movements. Add to this the contradiction between a pan-European vision of a continent-wide neoliberal polity (represented by Germany most) and the nationalist politics of the smaller East European countries (represented most by Hungary and Poland), but in a way by all major European countries. On 21–22 August, there was large-scale rioting against a refugee centre within its borders in Heidenau in Germany. The attack in Heidenau was not an anomaly, a sort of echo of history, in a Germany keen to present itself as tolerant and forward thinking, but rather the latest, and most prominent moment in a series of nationalist and racist actions intensifying in recent years. This chauvinism expresses itself as a post-crisis European chauvinism, which includes a distrust of migrants and refugees, a fear of Islam, and disgust towards the poor or the “lazy” (which in Germany finds its synthesis in the figure of the “Greek fisherman”). “Whilst the attacks in Heidenau were roundly condemned by all parties, one need only see the tone which the largest parties and media channels used during this summer's negotiations with Greece's Syriza government to realise this national chauvinism runs deeper than relatively small neo-Nazi structures”.³⁵ In this context, what we are witnessing therefore today is the emergence of a neoliberal regime of protection, fraught with internal contradictions. We may revise therefore the thesis of Europe being a liberal empire caught in the crisis of its refugee protection policy.³⁶ We can also sense the deep organic link between Europe's debt crisis and the migration crisis.

Europe as a neoliberal union is forging today's appropriate care and protection regime. Both force and monetary tools are operating as instruments of this transformation. Population flows into the continent happen to be the occasion, when the continental border enforcement and management policy will be revised. In that sense, and as the suspension of the Schengen arrangement by France in the aftermath of Paris killings suggests, Europe has already arrived at a post-Schengen era.

³⁵Introduction to an interview, “Migration and the Far Right: An Interview with German Antifascists on Heidenau”, *Viewpoint Magazine*, 28 August 2015—<https://viewpointmag.com/2015/08/28/migration-and-the-far-right-an-interview-with-german-antifascists-on-heidenau/> (accessed on 18 December 2016). The German anti-fascist Sarah significantly commented on state response, “The racist attacks and arson at the moment can be used by the state as an easy example of how Germany ‘can't deal with this many refugees’ and other EU countries need to take them. So whilst these images of over-extension are not totally produced on purpose by the state, they are helpful. It's a complex dynamic that is hard to analyze.”

³⁶On the contradictory aspects of border security and protection on the US-Mexico border, De Leon (2015); Jason De Leon raised a question in this book, relevant to our discussion.

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Chapter 5

Postscript: The Link Between the Two Crises

Abstract The concluding chapter probes the structural link between European debt crisis and migration crisis. It summarises the narratives of the previous four chapters and argues that the European debt crisis and the migration crisis taken together are the signs of a transformation of Europe from being a liberal union to a neoliberal imperial formation in which national, class, and geopolitical contradictions can only sharpen. And to the extent this happens, Europe will more and more resemble the post-colonial bind in which much of the world finds itself. In rounding up the book, the concluding chapter raises the crucial question of method in analysing the link between the two crises. This chapter concludes the book by way of discussing what do we mean by post-colonial in this context? What is its place in the neoliberal world? And, specifically, why does the simultaneous presence of debt crisis and migration crisis convey the global relevance of the post-colonial world and in particular the interlinked crises of debt and migration? What indeed is crisis? And, what are its manifold dimensions? Finally, why is it that only with a critical post-colonial mode of enquiry that we can probe the European crisis?

Keywords Kouvelakis · Baltas · Karitzis · Athanasiou · Statelessness · Post-colonial mode · Post-colonial world · European exceptionalism · European citizenship · Crisis · Financialisation · Migration crisis · Transnational citizenship

The Post-colonial Mode of Enquiry

The migration crisis was on when these commentaries were being composed. Observers were absorbed in the development of the debt and currency crisis in Europe and how Greek politics was responding to it. Very few, if any, then connected Europe's ongoing migration crisis with the debt crisis, possibly because of the dramatic way in which the debt crisis was unfolding in those months. Very few sought to inquire if the simultaneity of the two crises was incidental or if there was a structural link between the two. In this sense, the previous chapter was crucial for this book as it sought to establish the link between the debt crisis and the migration

crisis. The way this link has been sought to be analysed in a post-colonial frame is in some sense the crux of the book. The nexus of debt and migration is hard to analyse without an understanding of the post-colonial world, its histories of debt, war, peace, and resistance, and of course the anti-colonial revolutions, in as much as an understanding of post-colonial capitalism is essential for such an analysis. Given the long history of European practices of issuing commentaries on India, a post-colonial analysis of the intersection of the debt and migration crises in Europe may appear as a counter-commentary with intended irony. The post-colonial analysis of the intersection of the debt and migration crises in Europe is possibly an unintended irony given the long history of European commentary on India. Yet this book was not written as kind of talking back to that history. Its origin is in the commitment to consider the global dimensions of the post-colonial as opposed to the idea of provincialising Europe.

To date, there has been no lengthy examination of the intersection of the so-called migration and debt crises in Europe. Some attempted this discussion by way of falling back into banal observations such as the fact that Greece has not only been the subject of European austerity politics but also an important entry point to Europe for many migrants. Only with dual attention, we can escape that banality and untangle the knot of this intersection—the necessity of thinking politically, theoretically, and at the same time thinking carefully through the flux of reportage. It is not enough to say that our lens is a post-colonial analysis and our mode is a post-colonial mode of analysis. The point of entry is a combined critique of neoliberalism, democracy, and European Marxism. Such a critique enables us to weave into the main argument that is the interconnected themes of populism, sovereignty, Europeanism, European exceptionalism, and Keynesianism as a key component of these ideologies.

Therefore, we must confront the big question: Does the book suggest a post-colonial solution? For two reasons: No.

First, as indicated few lines earlier, we are not proposing any particular ideology of post-colonialism, but only a particular way of analysing and critiquing based on the long histories of colonialism, decolonisation, domination, exploitation, accumulation, social destruction, wars, and anti-colonial resistance towards social transformation and revolutions. This is a global history, in which Europe's own past and present history is involved and remains an organic part. To be truthful, the global today reproduces the post-colonial conundrum and the paradox. This reproduction involves the reproduction of the core-periphery relations, law of unequal development of capitalism, and the weak links in the capitalist chain, in as much it involves the modern neoliberal features of logistical production, extractive capitalism, and the mass phenomenon of transit labour. This history has a duality to it. On the one hand, it emphasises the existence of nation and colony, and seems to neglect, at least relatively, the state and empire. This neglect is perhaps expected in an analysis that emphasises the national moment of democracy. The question of how nation articulates to state in a global post-colonial framework opens a vast field of heterogeneity. For instance, are all states nation-states where the political organisation of democracy through the nation form can rebound on the state and

result in initiatives such as the nationalisation of banks or the devaluing of currencies? Therefore, we may need a greater deliberation on the destiny and actuality of the state even when we move away from Weberian or Schmittian ideals (Greece as non-sovereign state, India as continental-state, etc.). Or we may ask: If the globe is post-colonial what has then become of empire? Or, we could ask: Is not the empire the other aspect of the history of the nation, as Lenin so assiduously told us? This is where Greek Marxists such as Varoufakis, Kouvalakis, Lapavitsas, or thinkers such as Habermas and Balibar could have put more stress as they were contributing in their specific ways to the discussions on the issue of Europeanism and euro-Marxism.¹ In other words, the post-colonial critique does not aim to provide any alternative theory, but a dialectical mode of analysing contemporary capitalism and suggest that there is much to learn from the vast reservoir of anti-colonial politics in the present phase of the global struggle for ending capitalism.

Second, the post-colonial mode is relevant not because Marxism as the path towards social transformation is antiquated, but because the current phase of global economy is a combination of neoliberal capitalism and post-colonial capitalism. Debt, crisis, primitive accumulation, financial controls over national and world economy, corporate oligarchy, populism, crisis and resurgence of sovereignty, war, new forms of democracy and dialogue, the return of land question, accumulation of capital along the fault lines of gender, caste, race, ethnicity, religion, place-based identity, environment, (all that are considered by economists as extra economic), extraction, logistics and new modes of organising supply chains, massive migrations of people, and many more things considered as crucial elements of today's global economy bear the marks of neoliberal capitalism and post-colonial capitalism. Indeed, the former could not have come into this world without the latter, and the latter would not have appeared as a global question without the former way of reorganising capitalist economy.

Let us take the issue of border. Borders of Europe reflect on the possibility of transnational citizenship, in other words European citizenship. Such possibility is predicated today by the issue of migrants as well as the right of the peoples of various debt-ridden countries of Europe towards enjoying rights of life, labour,

¹While we discussed in this book the views of Yanis Varoufakis, Aristides Baltas, Andreas Karitzis, Stathis Gourgouris, Etienne Balibar, and Jurgen Habermas, though only in some specific contexts and therefore extremely inadequately, it was necessary to take into account the views of other Greek thinkers—a task in which this book fails. To be truthful, Costas Lapavitsas had argued almost four years back in *Crisis in the Euro Zone* (London: Verso, 2012) that following the credit crunch governments around the world had stepped into bail out the banks and the sequel to that debacle was the sovereign debt crisis, which hits the euro zone hard. Ordinary citizens across Europe realized that socialism for the elite Europeans meant more holes in their already-tightened belts. Cutbacks in public spending implied a longer, deeper recession, worsened burden of debt, and further imperilled banks. The crisis in the monetary union known as the European Union signalled the need for restructuring and relying on the forces of organised labour and the society at large. This also implied that impoverished states in the continent may have to quit the euro and cut their losses or worse hardships would ensue.

social security, and dignity. In both cases, borders define the situation. Standing on the borders of Europe, Etienne Balibar had told us years ago and in memorable language,

I am speaking of the “Borders of Europe” in Greece, one of the “peripheral” countries of Europe in its traditional configuration - a configuration that reflects powerful myths and a long-lived series of historical events. Thessaloniki is itself at the edge of this border country, one of those places where the dialectic between confrontation with the foreigner (transformed into a hereditary enemy) and communication between civilizations (without which humanity cannot progress) is periodically played out. I thus find myself it seems, right in the middle of my object of study, with all the resultant difficulties.

The term border is extremely rich in significations. One of my hypotheses is that it is undergoing a profound change in meaning. The borders of new sociopolitical entities, in which an attempt is being made to preserve all the functions of the sovereignty of the state, are no longer entirely situated at the outer limit of territories; they are dispersed a little everywhere, wherever the movement of information, people, and things is happening and is controlled - for example, in cosmopolitan cities. But it is also one of my hypotheses that the zones called peripheral, where secular and religious cultures confront one another, where differences in economic prosperity become more pronounced and strained, constitute the melting pot for the formation of a people (*demos*), without which there is no citizenship (*politeia*) in the sense that this term has acquired since antiquity in the democratic tradition.

In this sense, border areas - zones, countries, and cities—are not marginal to the constitution of a public sphere but rather are at the centre. If Europe is for us first of all the name of an unresolved political problem, Greece is one of its centres, not because of the mythical origins of our civilization, symbolized by the Acropolis of Athens, but because of the current problems concentrated there.

Or, more exactly, the notion of a centre confronts us with a choice. In connection with states, it means the concentration of power, the localization of virtual or real governing authorities. In this sense, the centre of Europe is in Brussels, Strasbourg, or in the City of London and the Frankfurt stock exchange, or will soon be in Berlin, the capital of the most powerful of the states that dominate the construction of Europe, and secondarily in Paris, London, and so on. But this notion has another, more essential and elusive meaning, which points to the sites where a people is constituted through the creation of civic consciousness and the collective resolution of the contradictions that run through it. Is there then a “European people,” even an emergent one? Nothing is less certain. And if there is not a European people, a new type of people yet to be defined then there is no public sphere or European state beyond technocratic appearances. This is what I meant when I imitated one of Hegel’s famous phrases: *Es gibt keinen Staat in Europa* (“There is no State in Europe”). But the question must remain open, and in a particularly “central” way at the border points (Balibar 2005: 1–2).

Not incidentally, these reflections on the possibilities of transnational citizenship were awakened during his visit to Greece—a country truly on the periphery of Europe, peripheries of finance and politics, and yet crucial for Europe because migrants visit the periphery to visit and stay in Europe. What was Greece yesterday is Turkey today in the perspective of migration control and border reinforcement measures. Border reflections mark in this way a double bind. They are ambivalent because while they deliberate on the question as to whether such a common European political home exists, and they are perched also on the possible existence of such a common home, at least in some form and through some route, which

made it possible for Balibar to reflect on European citizenship. Border is in this way an enigmatic site of thinking on citizenship. Critical post-colonial approach makes us aware of the circularity in the discussion on citizenship, particularly its future possibilities, for such a discussion assumes much in the present reality of citizenship, while debating its future based on the supposed reality of today. Perhaps this is inevitable for we can see here, an attempt to work out of two simultaneous problematic—Europeanness of a given people or the Europeanness of a combination of given national population groups and second, the norms of citizenship. This book demonstrates the closure of such circularity in the background of two hard material realities: indebtedness of the periphery of Europe, consequently the production of core–periphery relationship, and the persistent phenomenon of migration into Europe forcing the latter to face alienhood of a large mass of humanity as its own part, in the process unsettling all norms of citizenship, labour market rules, spiritual basis of a common Europeanness, constituted by Christianity, anti-communism, Islamophobia, free market culture, etc. Inquiries into these two relations proceed as parallel to each other throughout the book. Therein is the relevance of the post-colonial approach because that enables us to conduct this interlinked double inquiry. The life of the post-colonial world is constituted by these two relations.

In some ways, therefore, we are confronted with the liminality of the problematic which casts its long shadow on the theme of the post-colonial bind of Europe—a Europe that is not post-colonial in the given sense, yet a Europe which can be understood only in a post-colonial frame. This book is an exercise in liminality. If Europe thought believes, and the Greek Left gave us no room for misunderstanding, that European transformation cannot happen on the model of what Antonio Gramsci called “war of position” or direct confrontation, but rather on that of “war of manoeuvre” or gradual construction of a new historical hegemony, this has been purely utopian thinking. It assumed a new way of thinking and a new collective “common sense”² without reckoning the presence of the historical elements of nations, national democracy, national struggles for socialism, workers’ movements, and all that Antonio Gramsci indicated by his idea of the national popular, and the internationalist movements that accompanied the struggles for socialism also. Yet these have survived and they still speak of the continuing realities of irreconcilable class struggle and what Gramsci termed as war of position.³ In other words, new

²Phrase deployed by Balibar (2005: 172–173).

³It is important to note that some Greek thinkers at least realised the limits of a singular dependence on “war of manoeuvre” that is gradually winning away of opposition without recourse to frontal struggle. Kouvelakis (2016: 45–46) has recently admitted, “First, one should not underestimate the popularity of the euro in the southern periphery countries—Greece, Spain, Portugal—for whom joining the EU meant accessing political and economic modernity. For Greece, in particular, it meant being part of the West in a different way to that of the US-imposed post-civil war regime. It seemed a guarantee of the new democratic course: after all, it’s only since 1974 that Greece has known a political regime similar to other Western countries, after decades of authoritarianism, military dictatorship, and civil war. The European Community also offered the promise of combining prosperity with a social dimension, supposedly inherent to the project,

historical forces can materialise on the basis of a series of historical continuities and discontinuities, and incidentally Gramsci spoke of both and not the salience of one over another.

This dialectical sense is the gesture of a post-colonial critique.

Simultaneity, Comparison, Incommensurability

We may further ponder: After all the developed capitalist countries and the post-colonial countries do exist in the same time of history, and if so, is not the simultaneity of two existences a symbol of some kind of convergence? Here we are speaking of comparison as convergence, as a framework of simultaneity, and not a technique. The post-colonial approach enables us to think on the simultaneity of certain phenomena—say of debt, crisis, migration, populism, workers' movements,

(Footnote 3 continued)

which sealed the political compact that emerged after the fall of the Junta. Joining the euro seemed the logical conclusion of that process. Having the same currency as the most advanced countries has a tremendous power over people's imagination—carrying in your pocket the same currency as Germans or Dutch, even if you are a low-paid Greek worker or pensioner—which those of us who'd been in favour of exiting the euro since the start of the crisis tended to underestimate.

Even now, after five years of some of the hardest shock therapy ever imposed—and the first imposed on a Western European country—public opinion is still split on the issue of the euro, although now with a much narrower majority in favour of staying in. This frame of mind also reveals a very strong subaltern mentality in Greek society, which probably goes back to the formation of the state in the 1830s—an ideology that emanates from the Greek elites, who always felt inferior to their European counterparts and had to demonstrate how faithful they were; they always thought they owed something to the Western powers. And indeed, each time their power was threatened, Western intervention played a decisive role in securing the existing social order, more particularly in the 1940s and the period leading to the 1967 military coup.

Second, in contrast to the position of Sweden, Denmark, or the UK, for Greece quitting the euro would be extremely conflictual, because it would mean breaking with the neoliberal policies of the memoranda. If you are serious about this, you have to be prepared for a confrontation..."

Kouvelakis even honestly admitted, "It was predictable that defeat in Greece would send a negative shock wave across the rest of Europe. Though there are other factors involved, I think it played a role in Podemos saying they won't break with the euro, not even with the Stability Pact, and revising their position on the debt. Currently, they're not even setting a break with austerity as a condition for collaboration at government level. Iglesias says that the point is to rise above the shoulder of PSOE and orient the hand of social democracy to the left. The Portuguese have drawn a similar conclusion; there the impact of Syriza's defeat is even more apparent... But it's a fundamental mistake for formations of the radical left to agree to a line that is merely complementary to social democracy... That's the danger that the remainder of the radical left faces in Europe now, after Syriza's failed attempt: the danger of giving up on the very idea of more radical change. But not everyone draws the same conclusions... Mélenchon has organised discussions in Paris about the need for a Plan B—I think he has drawn more correct conclusions from the Greek case, and denounced Tsipras's capitulation. He is now talking openly about the necessity for all the parties of the European radical left to make alternative plans which do include the option of leaving the euro and preparation for full-scale confrontation" (pp. 69–70).

primitive mode of accumulation, the most virtual mode of accumulation, return of mercantilism in various countries, and several more things—and ask, how can we put them in a comparative framework, not to stress their differences in two settings, but to explain their simultaneity. To speak in such circumstances of heterodoxy is not enough. Mere espousal of heterodoxy will not help the cause of theoretical rigour.

The concept of comparison is still woefully limited. Of course, comparisons have been made since centuries—by Aristotle to Montesquieu—for practical inquiries, classifications, and drawing structures. Comparisons bring out taxonomies. Yet historians, anthropologists, economists, sociologists, and political scientists generally do not think in comparisons to learn a particular phenomenon. We have still to learn from Marx who not only gestured towards contemporary history of England to learn what capitalism in Germany could be in future, but also made giant comparisons to illustrate coexistence across scales of time and volume, and formulate categories of thinking on political economy. After Marx comparisons were never simple and geared towards commonness or difference. Through his lifelong study of the value form of a commodity, Marx taught comparison could be geared towards not explaining the *other* (another country, economy, history, culture, individuality, etc.) but the *self* (the self of labour, capital, mode of exploitation, time in production chain, money, etc.)—the self that will always break into duality to realise itself.⁴ Comparison, we have learnt from Marx, enables us to think of category. Comparison thus busts any myth of exceptionalism—in this case of European history, culture, and life. Marx also never studied capitalism in England to highlight the English history of capitalism, but to develop a critique of political economy, the political economy of capital. Today, the decline of Marx's mode of analysis mirrors the decline of the ability to think in terms of category in this age of neoliberal capitalism when everything is subject to managerial explanations. This book on the twin European crises of debt and migration is formed in a wider polemical milieu that contests the managerial habit of explaining the globe in terms of fixing the nuts and brings back the issue of categories of analysis. In this book, the comparative mode is the silent guide. It is silent because it does not cite heaps of similar instances of crisis in post-colonial countries. Instead, it gestures towards the idea of thinking of Europe in a new, critical way based on an awareness of the simultaneity of events and phenomena, and the need to think through comparison as convergence. Because only with an awareness of simultaneity and convergence, we become aware of the giant global trends of neoliberalism, post-colonial mode of capitalist development, socialism, popular democracy, environmental struggles, etc.

⁴Marx wrote, “By means, therefore, of the value relation expressed in our equation, the bodily form of commodity B becomes the value form of commodity A, or the body of commodity B acts as a mirror to the value of commodity A.19 By putting itself in relation with commodity B, as value in *propria personâ*, as the matter of which human labour is made up, the commodity A converts the value in use, B, into the substance in which to express its, A's, own value. The value of A, thus expressed in the use value of B, has taken the form of relative value” (Marx 1867: chap. 1, p. 36).

If comparisons were earlier more longitudinal, they are now more latitudinal. If earlier we were saying that Indian capitalism in 1980s was as underdeveloped as say capitalism in mid-nineteenth century England, and that the latter developed in time comparison with the former; today we are asking, why has Greece suffered as say India also suffered in contemporary time (of course suffering differently)? Thus, it is important to appreciate that comparison is less an analytical method or technique, but a narrative gesture towards categorical exercise, towards understanding the present in terms of concepts and categories.⁵ Therefore, by saying that we are using the post-colonial mode of inquiry, we are not suggesting similarities or differences between the European and the non-European world, for obviously they could be basically similar or basically different, depending on what the analyst wants to achieve. Thus, many have compared the Greek case with the Italian or Spanish in this decade, but comparison with India or China—then our textbook learning about Greece may get jolt. The main thing is that as Benedict Anderson pointed out, “good comparisons often come from the experience of strangeness and absences” (2016: 18).

Link is often about simultaneity and not causality. Thus, the link between one crisis (debt) and another (migration crisis) is to be first found in their convergence on a time scale. That is how a chain is formed, and we inquire the weak links in the chain. In other words, when untrammelled simultaneity is no longer possible, the chain snaps. This will be the moment when the problem of incommensurability will appear. Simultaneity will find its equivalence in incommensurability. This book walks on the thin line of simultaneity/incommensurability between coexisting phenomena. This by itself is a contradictory exercise, but is also a reflection of the strange, incommensurate position of Greece and Europe in general in present global order, trapped with no exit in sight, till Greece and Europe wake up to the post-colonial predicament and search for a radical position—incommensurate with the present neoliberal politics of gradualism and technocratic mending of the state from within. Indeed, the incommensurability of a radical Greece in a Europe controlled by high financial institutions and oligarchies tells us of a much more general phenomenon—that of incommensurability of various elements that have gone into making of what we know as Europe. Or, one could say that the notion of political revolution appeared in the European horizon in the last two critical years was as much less persuasive, not because there was no Soviet to give all powers to (thus the question of dual power), but because political revolution in Europe was imagined as a commensurate affair, that is to say that such a political revolution was expected to be timely and non-utopian.

Precisely on the question of incommensurability of coexisting relations, Lenin staked his opposition to the call for the United States of Europe. He wrote,

⁵Marx wrote, “Of course the method of presentation must differ in form from that of inquiry. The latter has to appropriate the material in detail, to analyse its different forms of development, to trace out their inner connexion. Only after this work is done, the actual movement can be adequately described. If this is done successfully, if the life of the subject matter is ideally reflected as in a mirror, then it may appear as if we had before us a mere a priori construction” (1873: 14).

Uneven economic and political development is an absolute law of capitalism. Hence, the victory of socialism is possible first in several or even in one capitalist country alone. After expropriating the capitalists and organising their own socialist production, the victorious proletariat of that country will arise against the rest of the world—the capitalist world—attracting to its cause the oppressed classes of other countries, stirring uprisings in those countries against the capitalists, and in case of need using even armed force against the exploiting classes and their states. The political form of a society wherein the proletariat is victorious in overthrowing the bourgeoisie will be a democratic republic, which will more and more concentrate the forces of the proletariat of a given nation or nations, in the struggle against states that have not yet gone over to socialism. The abolition of classes is impossible without a dictatorship of the oppressed class, of the proletariat. A free union of nations in socialism is impossible without a more or less prolonged and stubborn struggle of the socialist republics against the backward states. It is for these reasons and after repeated discussions at the conference of R.S.D.L.P. groups abroad, and following that conference, that the Central Organ's editors have come to the conclusion that the slogan for a United States of Europe is an erroneous one (Lenin 1915/1974: 343).

It is of course obvious that each country or land or region or continent has specifics to its cultural diversity, in as much as Europe has. As a continent with enormous contentious past, only from outside it may look monolithic. None but the insider, that is the “European” knows how different she is at different times. Add to this the current talk of new Europe and old Europe, besides the white Europe and black Europe, Arab Europe and the White Christian Europe, Mediterranean Europe and Baltic Europe, Anglo-American Europe and the rest of the Europe, male Europe and female Europe, immigrants’ Europe and the stable bourgeois Europe, Europe as part of the Eurasian landmass and Europe alone ... and one can go on. The discourse from “outside” on Europe as a geo-cultural unity may not be necessarily valid and such “outside” perceptions may be thin. All distinctions are crucial and legitimate in their own ways. But what is proving critical to Europe’s democratic future is the overlapping of its colonial past and post-colonial present—the distinction and displacement of one with the other. This is at the heart of the twin questions of simultaneity and incommensurability of coexisting phenomena. This is the reason why Europe became the mediator of many ideas expressed in many languages in course of its mercantile, industrial, and colonial past, just as other regions had played similar kind of role at other phases of history.⁶ Europe’s

⁶On this, we can recall the significant remarks by Balibar (2002). The idea of the “vanishing mediator” has a long lineage. Besides Althusser, Jameson (1973) analysed the concept; the concept of the vanishing mediator denotes the function of mediating between two opposing ideas, as a transition occurs between them. At the point where one idea has been replaced by the other, and the concept is no longer required, the mediator vanishes in terms of the idea of dialectics particularly as propounded by Hegel, the conflict between the theoretical abstraction and its empirical negation (through trial and error) is resolved by a concretion of the two ideas, representing a theoretical abstraction taking into account the previous contradiction, whereupon the mediator vanishes. In political history, we have seen social movements operating in a particular way to influence politics, until these movements are forgotten or they change their purpose. Jameson wrote, “... Protestantism assumes its function as a “vanishing mediator.” For what happens here is essentially that once Protestantism has accomplished the task of allowing a rationalisation of inner worldly life to take place, it has no further reason for being and disappears from the historical

imperial and colonial forms not only created diverse conditions outside Europe, and its own internal diversity was also a product of its various engagements. One would of course have to sift evidences and interrogate deeply to find out the layers of diverse formations in what apparently manifested in the history as religious diversity only. That European diversity has produced post-colonial subjects, such as Greece or the thousands of migrants are neither an extraordinary matter, nor its displacement by a discourse of uniformity is shocking. To be truthful, current reaction among the European political class and the cultural elite to Islam, immigration, terrorism, etc., fails in making one believe that Europe is a uniform continent. Yet this is a banal observation. The point is that diversity and difference have been to the non-European world (we leave out the Northern America and Australia from the non-European world), matter of common sense to be tackled, they were and are issues of practicality, and they never assumed the theological significance that they achieved in Europe. On the other hand, the post-colonial subject with long histories of knowledge of colonialism and intimate encounters with other worlds became cosmopolitan, reflecting on the metropole constantly as way of engaging with life, anti-colonial nationalism from day one being was both immediate in origin and long distance. Even though we see here a kind of convergence, with the post-colonial world increasingly imitating neoliberal norms of the Euro-American world, and losing fast that sense of practicality and in its place adopting theological stance. The way Rohingya refugees have been treated in South and Southeast Asia is not much different from the way Europe has treated the immigrants from Syria, Iraq, and the North African countries. Or, we can refer to the nearly same ways in which statelessness is created today in Europe and Asia or Africa. Once again, the convergence of neoliberalism and post-colonial capitalism is striking.

The convergence of neoliberal capitalism and post-colonial capitalism has resulted worldwide reduction in citizenship in place of “reduction of statelessness”. Statelessness is no longer an issue of positive definition, that is, a definition that sets complete conditions for statelessness. It is rather a refraction of a positive reality

(Footnote 6 continued)

scene. It is thus in the strictest sense of the word a catalytic agent which permits an exchange of energies between two otherwise mutually exclusive terms; and we may say that with the removal of the brackets, the whole institution of religion itself (or in other words what is here designated as “Protestantism”) serves in its turn as a kind of overall bracket or framework within which change takes place and which can be dismantled and removed when its usefulness is over. This is the point at which to observe that such a picture of historical change—however, irreconcilable it may be with vulgar Marxism—is in reality perfectly consistent with genuine Marxist thinking and is, indeed, at one with the model proposed by Marx himself for the revolutions of 1789 and 1848. In the former, it was Jacobinism which played the role of the vanishing mediator, functioning as the conscious and almost Calvinistic guardian of revolutionary morality, of bourgeois universalistic and democratic ideals, a guardianship which may be done away with in Thermidor, when the practical victory of the bourgeoisie is assured and an explicitly monetary and market system can come into being. And in that parody of 1789, which is the revolution of 1848, it is similarly under the cloak of the traditions and values of the great revolution, and of the empire which followed it, that the new commercial society of the Second Empire emerges” (p. 78).

known as citizenship, citizenship as an institution that always, to use the word of a philosopher “incompletes” itself. Statelessness has a definition that always even if unknowingly bases itself on a kind of displacement of a reality—the reality of state, nationality, and citizenship. Statelessness is now a sign of permanent incompleteness—a reality that always seems to fall short of a hyper-reality, and therefore the ideal reality of citizenship, entitlements, legal protection, full proof identity, solemn recognitions by courts of law, and the avowals by the state or an imperial polity like Europe. Indeed, the experiences of migrants in Europe and Asia demonstrate statelessness as more a situation, a condition, or a set of conditions that make what can be called a *limit situation* and *limit experience*, by which we mean *situated at the limits, and experience of the limits of a situation, at the same time limits of an experience and situation we have defined in this case as citizenship*. Such an understanding must at one point of time brush against the positivism of law. It is up to law (in this case international law) to live up to these refracted, displaced realities, whose function is to tell the society the limits of the assured knowledge of institutions such as border, state, citizenship, rights, humanitarianism, and constitution. If the subject of the state is the citizen, the stateless is the alien. We can thus say: the citizen is the defence of the visibility of constitution; the alien is the shadow, its prey. The citizen exists in the alien as the savage form. Citizen is articulate; the alien is inaudible, silent. To understand this life world of the stateless, we shall have to adopt the strategy of interrogating alterity. The same principle of interrogation will be valuable in studying actual conditions of statelessness in the post-colonial world. There is no doubt that the phenomenon of stateless population groups will become increasingly significant in Europe as well as the post-colonial world. As states, one again go to wars, come up and go down in history, countries fight newer forms of colonialism, newer forms of decolonisation occur, and borders and boundaries play havoc with settled configurations, the number of stateless population will increase. We may see a reduction of *de jure* statelessness, but a rise in *de facto* stateless population around the world. It may also become increasingly difficult to distinguish between a refugee group and a stateless group. Newer identity practices imposed by States may produce stateless condition. If the preceding century was a century of partitions, this century may be known as the century of stateless people. Europe and the post-colonial world will share the same feature.⁷

This then is one more area of convergence: The migration crisis and the debt-currency crisis not only happened at the same time (2008–2015, and the migration crisis continues, while the debt crisis lingers on and we do not know what the next flashpoint will be), but also they produced the same result. Citizens lost much of their rights, and immigrants were never assured of their rights.

⁷On growing statelessness in the post-colonial world and a critique of UNHCR understanding of statelessness, see Banerjee et al. (2015); also Basu Ray Chaudhury and Samaddar (2015). On growing stateless population groups in Europe as a consequence of Europe’s policy on immigration, Samaddar (2015); also Canafe (2015).

Increasingly, citizens of Europe looked like aliens in their own land. This is the final irony.

To be sure, the financial republic that Europe has gradually transformed into will need citizens and migrants both as *de jure* categories of population. Financialisation, and as consequence, indebtedness will create immigrant niche in the economy, and this will call for more migrant labour in the depressed wage markets of Europe. Labour divides will increase. Sectors involved in infrastructure building, software, household, care, and entertainment will see even more influx of immigrant labour. As one analyst recently put the context in a succinct way,

Marx's analysis of primitive accumulation takes us much further in this regard. Indeed there are many theorists who have seen a source of the ecological crisis in the cyclical need for a savage, unchecked capitalist exploitation of natural resources. Colonial capitalism in this savage state not only conquers land and overexploits people but also exhausts what it delineates as nature, from soil to mineral and vegetable resources. It does so by endless cycles of mindless unregulated extractions and appropriations. This conception of colonial capitalism allows us to see a unifying principle between the racialization, domination, and exploitation of people and the alienation, domination, and exploitation of resources. It invites us to understand the observed similarity in the patterns of ecological and colonial crisis as the product of a unified logic of capitalist exploitation that makes them obey a similar tempo and follow similar trajectories. With some prodding it might even help us make sense of the exploitative logic that is behind the figures of the "overexploited" earth and the "over-colonized" Arab as the products of an "overexploiting" capitalism that increasingly needs to be in a permanent state of savagery sustained by an equally permanent state of exception. It could be argued that in the same way that earth systems scientists argue that the exploitation of the environment has led us to transgress "core boundaries" involving biodiversity loss and species extinction, the transgression of similar core boundaries in the colonization of the Arab world has generated the figure of the 'over-colonized'... (Hage 2016: 10).⁸

And yet this is the same trend of financialisation, which will give no respite to the nations of Europe. Governments and people will reel under the impact of relentless financial swindle, control, speculation, trading in financial commodity, swapping, and unimaginable mobility of credit and money. The new corridors of money supply will make labour even more precarious. Immigrant or native—labour in both identities will appear in the figure of migrant labour. This will be the final stamp of post-colonial destiny on a Europe that chose to be neoliberal.

To have a proper understanding of the neoliberal and the post-colonial world, we must thus dialectically approach the twin problematic of convergence and

⁸In that essay Hage argues that the sentiment of being "surrounded by barbarians" was once specific to settler-colonial societies. But as the European refugee crisis made headlines in 2015, it became evident that this sentiment is gaining widespread currency in the Western world. Three developments lie behind its extension: first, the resurgence in the militarised Western appropriation of world resources and its colonial imaginary; second, the crisis in the order of the national borders that has regulated the exploitation of land, resources, and labour in the neocolonial era; and third, the ecological crisis, which equally manifests itself as a crisis in the order of the borders of domestication that defined the modern exploitation of nature. Analysing the intersection of these social processes offers us important insights into some of the dominant dynamics of Western culture today (pp. 1–12).

incommensurability. This was the approach of Marx. This was the approach of Lenin. This is at the heart of a critical post-colonial mode of inquiry into today's capitalism.

Yet it is also true that without the twin European crises of debt and migration, the interface and the convergence of the neoliberal capitalism and post-colonial capitalism could not be grasped. Therein lay the significance of *crisis*—crisis as phenomenon, as *defeat*. While The Left hitherto analysed crisis as a phenomenon and as event from different angles and on different historical occasions, it did not analyse to the same extent the phenomenon of defeat—crisis as defeat, defeat as crisis. Defeat is an important aspect of working class thought and praxis. This is because, as Athena Athanasiou (2015) reminds us, we have always been in defeat engagement with political actuality and potentiality, and therefore a contradiction between two temporal registers. Athanasiou also reminds us of Walter Benjamin who called this a “critical state of the present” (Benjamin 2002: 474), whereby what is brought to crisis is not the status quo, but rather the forces of possibility. What can we do politically with this defeat, despite its debilitating logic? What spaces of possibility has it already opened up? How do we appreciate the indeterminate elements of future suppressed in the present? Both migration crisis and the debt crisis have presented in their unity to Europe and the post-colonial world the opportunity to struggle against capitalism in new ways, incorporate issues that take Left politics beyond the Keynesian shackles, and think of politics globally in a way that can overcome the post-colonial and developed capitalist world divide.

Raising that possibility has been one of the aims of this book.

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Greece: Select Events and Analyses (August–April 2015)

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AUGUST 2015

27 August: What About the Greek Communist Party? (<https://www.jacobinmag.com/2015/08/tsipras-syriza-debt-greece-kke/>)

Recent developments in Greece are reshaping the country's Radical Left. Most of the discussion has centred on Syriza and its failure to tackle austerity as well as the growth of Left opposition within (and now outside) the party.

26 August: Fifty-Three Left Platform Members Resign from Syriza Central Committee (<http://greece.greekreporter.com/2015/08/26/fifty-three-left-platform-members-resign-from-syriza-central-committee/>)

Fifty-three members of Syriza's Central Committee, most of them affiliated with Panagiotis Lafazanis' Left Platform, resigned on Wednesday. In a letter, they stressed that they were unable to serve the new memorandum signed by Greece, which they said delivered the final blow to the Greek people, as Central Committee members. The majority of the 53 have already joined Lafazanis' Popular Unity Movement.

22 August: Yanis Varoufakis brands Alexis Tsipras the 'new De Gaulle' as election gets ugly (<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/aug/22/varoufakis-brands-alexis-tsipras-new-de-gaulle>)

Greece's pre-election campaign has turned ugly before it has even officially commenced, with senior figures—including the former finance minister Yanis Varoufakis—rounding on the Prime Minister, Alexis Tsipras, for his governance of the crisis-plagued country...

21 August: Greece: 'Popular Unity' is born! (<http://www.versobooks.com/blogs/2182-greece-popular-unity-is-born>)

Foreign corporations from countries including Germany, China, and Russia are lining up to buy Greek state assets as the country struggles to pay its European creditors.

20 August: The Post-colonial Bind of Greece (<https://viewpointmag.com/2015/08/20/the-postcolonial-bind-of-greece/>)

To call a country in Europe, a post-colony could be considered an insult. Colonialism and post-colonial destiny are for others—countries, nations, and peoples outside the Euro-North Atlantic world, including a few honorary members such as Japan and Australia...

15 August: The Great EU-IMF Standoff (<http://www.forbes.com/sites/francescoppola/2015/08/15/the-great-eu-imf-standoff/#169492953354>)

At yesterday's euro group meeting, a humbled and compliant Greece agreed to every condition its creditors threw at it in order to secure 86bn Euros of new financing to meet its obligations. In other words, it borrowed yet more money from its creditors in order to enable it to meet its existing obligations to them.

15 August: German Company Set to Take Over Operations of 14 Greek Airports (<http://greece.greekreporter.com/2015/08/15/german-company-set-to-take-over-operations-of-14-greek-airports/>)

Following the finalisation of the third Greek bailout, privatisations and operation takeovers of Greek public assets are expected to recommence. Greek newspaper "Kathimerini" reported that German Fraport AG and Slentel Ltd will soon complete the takeover of the operation of 14 Greek airports.

15 August: Greece just got €55bn debt relief (<http://hugo-dixon.com/2015/08/15/greece-just-got-e55bn-debt-relief/>)

The euro zone just gave Greece up to €55bn in debt relief. Hang on. I thought the euro zone was not even going to talk to Athens about debt relief until after the first review of its new bailout programme—and that will not be until October at the earliest..

14 August: Syriza Votes for a Disastrous New EU Austerity Program (<http://www.counterpunch.org/2015/08/14/syriza-votes-for-a-disastrous-new-eu-austerity-program/>)

The new austerity programme that was proposed by the Syriza government and voted by the majority of Syriza and the discredited old pro-austerity and pro-EU parties brings disaster for the Greek people. Economic depression will be aggravated, foreign debt will be increased, wages and pensions reduced even more, poverty exacerbated, and Greece's subservience to EU's imperialism heightened.

13 August: Greece and the fatal debt (<http://www.alainet.org/en/articulo/171703>)

On Monday, 3 August 2015, Puerto Rico defaulted on its debt four weeks after Greece did the same on July 1. Ukraine is bordering on a cease of payments, while their backers are providing them with arms and munitions on credit, in spite of their financial situation.

12 August: Alexis Tsipras's Remarkable Transformation (<http://www.wsj.com/articles/syriza-has-shredded-all-its-red-lines-1439411292>)

That the Greek government has reached an agreement with its creditors on a new three-year bailout programme is remarkable; that it has done so just five weeks after

it successfully urged Greek voters to reject the terms of the previous bailout programme in a referendum that seemed to sound the death knell for its euro zone membership is astonishing.

12 August: The Unsettled Greek Revolution (<http://www.socialeurope.eu/2015/08/the-unsettled-greek-revolution>)

While Syriza slowly recovers from the shock of the last few weeks, Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras is searching for a role. Greece after the referendum, closure of banks, and the Brussels diktat. An investigation....

11 August: Greek Dockworkers Against the Troika (http://therealnews.com/t2/?option=com_content&task=view&id=31&jumival=14447)

Dockworker and Union Leader, Giorgos Gogos, who is also a member of the Central Committee of Syriza says the workers are very ready for the struggle against privatisation and austerity in the memorandum.

9 August: Greek tragedy (<https://www.themonthly.com.au/issue/2015/august/1438351200/christos-tsiolkas/greek-tragedy>)

Former finance minister Yanis Varoufakis on Greece's economic crisis.

7 August: Greece: Was, and Is There, an Alternative? (<http://www.socialistproject.ca/go.php?id=2432>)

On January 25, Syriza, the Coalition of the Radical Left, emerged with a plurality of 36% of the popular vote in Greece's national legislative election, winning 149 seats, two short of a majority, on a radical anti-austerity programme. With the support of ANEL, a small right wing but anti-austerity party, it formed a government..

6 August: The Myth of the Bloated Greek State (<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/greece/2015-08-06/myth-bloated-greek-state>)

From Athens to Berlin to Washington, there is one thing about Greece that many seem to agree on: The country's main problem is a bloated, overpaid, and corrupt state, which is suffocating the private sector..

5 August: Greek forces to train in Israel as Syriza-led government deepens alliance (<https://electronicintifada.net/blogs/ali-abunimah/greek-forces-train-israel-syriza-led-government-deepens-alliance>)

Greek, along with Italian, military forces are soon to train in Israel. This is the latest indicator of the deepening military alliance being forged between Israel and Greece's government led by the Leftist Syriza party..

5 August: The case for Grexit (<http://www.versobooks.com/blogs/2163>)

The prospect of a Greek default and exit from the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) first arose during the euro zone crisis in 2010. From the perspective of monetary theory, Greece's problem is plain: A weak economy with major institutional problems has joined a structurally deficient monetary union..

1 August: Universities forced to search for funding (<http://www.ekathimerini.com/200143/article/ekathimerini/news/universities-forced-to-search-for-funding>)

Austerity is putting new pressure on the education sector, with the University of Athens said to be considering delving into funding put aside for research to bankroll its operational costs.

JULY

31 July: Escaping the Euro Dream (<http://www.socialistproject.ca/go.php?id=2418>)

The following statement was published by Nicole Gohlke and Janine Wissler, two radical MPs in Germany’s Die Linke (The Left Party) associated with one of its far left currents, Marx21. In it, they criticise what they perceive as the party’s failure to entertain political possibilities outside of the euro zone, limiting itself to strategies of creating a “social Europe” within the confines of the European Union (EU). Instead, they argue for a widening of the strategic debate in Die Linke in the light of Syriza’s defeat at the hands of the troika....

31 July: Addressing the pressing need to reduce global and European imbalances (<http://www.soas.ac.uk/cdpr/publications/pb/file103905.pdf>)

In examining global imbalances, this Policy Brief focuses on projected trends over the next ten years in two key economic variables: GDP growth rates and current account balances as a ratio to GDP.

30 July: Europe will be the epicenter of a new Western despotism (<http://www.versobooks.com/blogs/2155>)

Europe has become a laboratory of the future. What is being tested there should be cause for concern for all democrats and particularly for everyone on the left.

29 July: The euro, a political error (<http://www.versobooks.com/blogs/2146>)

I think that this is a battle between Northern Europe, with Germany in the lead, and the Mediterranean countries. What has been presented to the peoples of Europe as a unification process is, in reality, the process by which Northern Europe and international capitalism are consolidating its hegemony over the Mediterranean countries.

29 July: European ‘alliance of national liberation fronts’ emerges to avenge Greek defeat (<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/economics/11768134/European-alliance-of-national-liberation-fronts-emerges-to-avenge-Greek-defeat.html>)

It has come to this. The first finance minister of a euro zone country to draw up contingency plans for a possible euro exit is under investigation for treason. Greece’s chief prosecutor is examining criminal charges against a five-man “working group” in the country’s Finance Ministry for the sin of designing a “plan B”, a parallel system of euro liquidity and bank payments that could—in extremis—lead to a return of the drachma.

26 July: Grexit, De Long and the wages of Sinn (<https://thenextrecession.wordpress.com/2015/07/26/grexit-de-long-and-the-wages-of-sinn/>)

Now that the dust has settled (for a while) in Greece, mainstream economics has been reconsidering what went wrong with Greece and what the best solution would have been. And it now it seems that both main wings of the mainstream: neo-classical, neoliberal Austerians on one side; and Keynesian on the other side, agree. Grexit would have been and still is the best solution.

25 July: What Greece Could Do (<https://www.jacobinmag.com/2015/07/tspiras-syriza-euro-currency-debt/>)

Greece could ease the crisis by establishing control over its central bank. Here's how...

25 July: Greece, the Sacrificial Lamb (<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/26/opinion/greece-the-sacrificial-lamb.html>)

As the Greek crisis proceeds to its next stage, Germany, Greece, and the triumvirate of the International Monetary Fund, the European Central Bank, and the European Commission (now better known as the troika) have all faced serious criticism. While there is plenty of blame to share, we should not lose sight of what is really going on.

25 July: Greece: The First Consequences of the Capitulation (<http://www.europe-solidaire.org/spip.php?article35519>)

Very quickly after the Greek government and parliament capitulated to the creditors (European Commission, ECB, and IMF), changes were made to the government.

24 July: The great Greece fire sale (<http://www.theguardian.com/business/2015/jul/24/greek-debt-crisis-great-greece-fire-sale>)

Greece needs to sell off €50bn worth of state assets such as airports and marinas quickly as part of its third bailout deal. But is such a plan realistic?...

23 July: The Euro zone's German Problem (<http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/germany-current-account-surplus-problem-by-philippe-legrain-2015-07>)

The euro zone has a German problem. Germany's beggar thy neighbour policies and the broader crisis response that the country has led have proved disastrous.

22 July: Knife at its throat, Greece yields to Troika brutality (<http://links.org.au/node/4527>)

In a summing-up speech to the Greek parliament in the earlier hours of July 16, Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras said of the punitive July 12 funding deal accepted by Greece after negotiations with euro zone leaders.

21 July: Alexis Tsipras, Greek Prime Minister, Sheds His Identity as a Radical (<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/22/world/europe/alexis-tsipras-transforms-himself-as-he-sells-greek-bailout-terms.html>)

On the eve of his election in January, Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras of Greece talked with pride about how his Leftist Syriza party rejected "the mentality of establishment parties" and provided space for the diverse views of its members.

20 July: Europe's Vindictive Privatisation Plan for Greece (<http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/greece-privatization-plan-public-assets-by-yanis-varoufakis-2015-07>)

On July 12, the summit of euro zone leaders dictated its terms of surrender to Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras, who, terrified by the alternatives, accepted all of them. One of those terms concerned the disposition of Greece's remaining public assets.

20 July: What's in the new Memorandum? (<http://socialistworker.org/2015/07/20/whats-in-the-new-memorandum>)

"A list of atrocities". That is how the German magazine Der Spiegel described the new agreement. "Tsipras submitted to 'mental waterboarding'" read the

headline of the Guardian. Tsipras was like “a beaten dog” in Brussels, according to Bloomberg.

19 July: Greece deal highlights the euro’s design flaws (<http://www.independent.ie/opinion/comment/greece-deal-highlights-the-euros-design-flaws-31387146.html>)

The euro group summit failed to give the Greek economy a realistic lifeline and failed to bring stability to the listing euro zone.

21 July: Alexis Tsipras’ Anti-Politics (<https://www.jacobinmag.com/?p=23483>)

By voting for a new memorandum, the government and the majority of Syriza’s parliamentary caucus have not just said farewell to Left politics but to politics altogether. By making this choice, they have not only disposed of Syriza’s programme or the commitments the government made to the Greek people.

17 July: Syriza Was In a Lose-Lose Situation (<http://www.socialeurope.eu/2015/07/syriza-was-in-a-lose-lose-situation/>)

It was not a deal, it was a rape. And the consent was acquired in a criminal manner. Alexis Tsipras has said correctly that it was done with a knife to its throat. That is very customary for this kind of thing.

July 19, 2015: The Systemic Crisis of Financialization (<http://www.socialistproject.ca/leftstreamed/ls211.php>)

Costas Lapavistas has done research in the political economy of money and finance, the Japanese economy, the history of economic thought, economic history, and the contemporary world economy. This presentation was recorded in Toronto, 3 March 2014.

16 July: The Great Greek Bank Drama, Act I: Schaeuble’s Sin Bin (<http://coppolacomment.blogspot.co.uk/2015/07/the-great-greek-bank-drama-act-i.html>)

Greece’s banks have been closed since 29th June. The closure followed the ECB’s decision not to increase ELA funding after talks broke down between the Greek government and the euro group.

16 July: Jürgen Habermas’s verdict on the EU/Greece debt deal (<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/jul/16/jurgen-habermas-eu-greece-debt-deal>)

The Greek debt deal announced on Monday morning is damaging both in its result and the way in which it was reached. First, the outcome of the talks is ill-advised. Even if one were to consider the strangulating terms of the deal the right course of action, one cannot expect these reforms to be enacted by a government which by its own admission does not believe in the terms of the agreement.

16 July: Greece, Europe, and the United States (<http://harpers.org/blog/2015/07/greece-europe-and-the-united-states/>)

The full brutality of the European position on Greece emerged last weekend, when Europe’s leaders rejected the Greek surrender document of June 9, and insisted instead on unconditional surrender plus reparations. The new diktat—formally accepted by Greece yesterday—requires 50 billion euros’ worth of “good assets”—which incidentally do not exist—to be transferred to a privatisation fund.

16 July: Greek MPs pass austerity bill as Athens police clash with protesters (<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jul/15/greek-mps-pass-austerity-bill-as-athens-police-clash-with-protesters>)

Five years into the worst crisis to hit their country in decades, Greek MPs voted by a large majority in the early hours of Thursday morning to accept draconian austerity as the price of further bailout funds but at great personal cost to Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras.

16 July 2015: Plan C for Advancing the Commons Transition in Greece (http://p2pfoundation.net/Plan_C_for_Advancing_the_Commons_Transition_in_Greece)

Plan A is the name for the capitulation towards the demands of the creditors; plan B is the Grexit which offers Greece an independent path within the same economic logic; plan C stands for a Commons Transition, which can take place either under conditions laid out by plan A or plan B, but which could become the main strategy under conditions of a revival of popular power and democracy.

15 July: The IMF position on Greece—explained (<http://www.theguardian.com/news/datablog/2015/jul/15/the-imf-position-on-greece-explained>)

A brutal assessment of the bailout terms facing Athens by the International Monetary Fund calls for substantial debt relief for a further 30 years.

14 July: The False Greek Dilemma (<http://www.truth-out.org/news/item/31867>)

What might have happened had Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras gone to Brussels with a serious and innovative proposal based on a solution outlined by Bernard Lietaer? What if he had gone with a plan that could address the threat of Grexit with its danger of global financial fallout and also propose a viable way to repay the debt based on a monetary approach proposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) research department?

14 July: New memorandum seals destruction for Greece, claims Syriza's Left Platform (<http://en.enikos.gr/politics/32373,New-memorandum-seals-destruction-for-Greece-claims-Syrizas-Left-Platform.html>)

The new bailout agreement signed by Alexis Tsipras is a humiliation for Greece, says an editorial in Iskra website which reflects the views of Syriza's hardliners. The article says that the agreement reestablishes and extends the guardianship of the troika and seals "social enslavement".

12 July: Greek parliament's president: 'No to ultimatums, No to the Memoranda of servitude' (<http://links.org.au/node/4510>)

The following speech was delivered early in the morning of 11 July 2015, by Zoe Konstantopoulou, president of the Greek parliament, on the question of the government's proposal to the creditor institutions.

11 July: Schauble Proposes '5 Year Grexit With Humanitarian Support' (<http://www.zerohedge.com/news/2015-07-11/schauble-proposes-5-year-grexit-humanitarian-support-what-other-eurozone-finmins-are>)

As we await the verdict on whether Greece will be in or out, here are the earlier comments from the euro zone finance ministers and others attending the euro group meeting.

11 July: Greece Financial Crisis Hits Poorest and Hungriest the Hardest (<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/12/world/europe/greece-debt-crisis-athens-poverty-inequality.html>)

Behind the lace curtains of a soup kitchen run by a parish in the humble Athens neighbourhood of Kerameikos, the needy and hungry sit down to a plate of sliced

cucumbers, three hunks of bread, a shallow china bowl of chickpea soup, and often a piece of meat. Sometimes there is even ice cream, a special treat.

9 July: Greece debt crisis: Athens accepts harsh austerity as bailout deal nears (<http://www.theguardian.com/business/2015/jul/09/greece-debt-crisis-athens-accepts-harsh-austerity-as-bailout-deal-nears>)

The Greek government capitulated on Thursday to demands from its creditors for severe austerity measures in return for a modest debt write-off, raising hopes that a rescue deal could be signed at an emergency meeting of EU leaders on Sunday. Athens is understood to have put forward a package of reforms and public spending cuts worth €13bn (£9.3bn) to secure a third bailout from creditors that could raise \$50bn and allow it to stay inside the currency union.

8 July: Open Letter to anti-Greek Eastern European bloc (<http://analyzegreece.gr/topics/greece-europe/item/277-zoltan-pogatsaq-open-letter-to-anti-greek-eastern-european-bloc>)

Dr. Zoltan Pogatsa believes that the euro zone states of the former Eastern bloc have been duped by the major powers into firmly opposing Greece. They are being led to believe that Athens is damaging to their economies. It is all a deception, the Hungarian professor of political economy argues, as Eastern euro zone members' money never actually went to Greece, but to Brussels, in order to support the euro.

6 July: This is a chance for Europe to awaken (<http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/2015/07/Slavoj-Zizek-greece-chance-europe-awaken>)

The unexpectedly strong No in the Greek referendum was a historical vote, cast in a desperate situation. In my work, I often use the well-known joke from the last decade of the Soviet Union about Rabinovitch, a Jew who wants to emigrate...

6 July: Greece says no to austerity and yes to solidarity (<http://socialistworker.org/2015/07/06/no-to-austerity-and-yes-to-solidarity>)

Greece voted “no” by a landslide margin against the blackmailers of Europe in a referendum on whether the government, led by the Radical Left party Syriza, should accept further drastic austerity measures on top of those that have plunged the economy deeper into crisis over the past five years.

6 July: Greek Referendum July 2015 (<http://www.socialistproject.ca/go.php?id=2359>)

Results of the referendum: 61 per cent voted No; and 38 per cent voted Yes. All regions of the country in favour of the OXI vote.

4 July: The Greek referendum and the tasks of the Left (<http://nakedkeynesianism.blogspot.ca/2015/07/the-greek-referendum-and-tasks-of-left.html>)

For six months, after its January 2015 election victory, the Syriza government began negotiations with the EU. In these negotiations, Syriza was confronted with the stubborn and increasing intransigence of EU and its companion institutions (the ECB and the IMF). Syriza very soon accepted the logic and the structure of the troika programme; that is the Economic Adjustment Programme for Greece popularly called the memorandum.

3 July: Greece's Yanis Varoufakis prepares for economic siege as companies issue private currencies (<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/economics/11716318/Greeces-Yanis-Varoufakis.html>)

Greece has stockpiled enough reserves of fuel and pharmaceutical supplies to withstand a long siege and has set aside emergency funding to cover all the country's vitally-needed food imports. Yanis Varoufakis, the Greek finance minister, said the left-wing Syriza government is still working on the assumption that Europe's creditor powers will return to the negotiating table if the Greek people do not agree to their austerity demands in a referendum on Sunday, but it stands ready to fight unless it secures major debt relief.

2 July: IMF says Greece needs extra €60bn in funds and debt relief (<http://www.theguardian.com/business/2015/jul/02/imf-greece-needs-extra-50bn-euros>)

The International Monetary Fund has electrified the referendum debate in Greece after it conceded that the crisis-ridden country needs up to €60bn (£42bn) of extra funds over the next three years and large-scale debt relief to create “a breathing space” and stabilise the economy.

1 July: Austerity not enough to save Greece—leaked IMF documents (<http://rt.com/news/270853-greek-debt-unsustainable-imf>)

Even if Greece accepted all of the austerity measures demanded by its main creditors, the troika, it still would not be able to make ends meet by 2030, according to IMF estimates revealed in a set of documents obtained by a German newspaper. The most optimistic scenario shows that Greece would face an unsustainable debt in 2030 even if it agreed to the package of tax increases and spending cuts proposed by the European commission, the European Central Bank, and the IMF in exchange for a five-month €15.5bn loan from its creditors...

1 July: Why we recommend a NO in the referendum—in 6 short bullet points (<http://yanisvaroufakis.eu/2015/07/01/why-we-recommend-a-no-in-the-referendum-in-6-short-bullet-points/>)

Negotiations have stalled because Greece's creditors (a) refused to reduce our unpayable public debt and (b) insisted that it should be repaid “parametrically” by the weakest members of our society, their children, and their grandchildren.

1 July: Greece debt crisis: Tsipras prepares for compromise deal (<http://blogs.channel4.com/paul-mason-blog/greece-debt-crisis-tsipras/4005>)

I'm outside the Maximos Mansion in Athens where Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras is getting ready to stage a climbdown and he will tell them he's about to accept something very very similar to the conditional bail out he rejected on Friday. And the reason is clear, what six months of political pressure and diplomatic fighting have not produced in Europe, five days of financial terror have produced.

July 1, 2015: Weisbrot and Krugman are Wrong: Greece cannot pull off an Argentina (<http://yanisvaroufakis.eu/2012/05/16/weisbrot-and-krugman-are-wrong-greece-cannot-pull-off-an-argentina/>)

There are two arguments against the recommendation that Greece and Argentina are similar enough to warrant an Argentinian road for Greece. There are those, such as the Cato Institute and IMF diehards, who never forgave Argentina for having successfully escaped the clutches of the poisonous austerity (and internal devaluation) that the IMF had imposed upon the country.

JUNE

30 June: Euro Zone Profiteers: How German and French Banks Helped Bankrupt Greece (<http://commondreams.org/views/2015/06/30/eurozone-profiters-how-german-and-french-banks-helped-bankrupt-greece>)

Alexis Tsipras, the prime minister of Greece, has called a national referendum this Sunday to call the bluff of the European Union and International Monetary Fund who are trying to force his country to accept severe austerity in return for effectively rolling over much of the countries' debt.

29 June: Where did the Greek bailout money go? (<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jun/29/where-did-the-greek-bailout-money-go>)

Only a small fraction of the €240bn (£170bn) total bailout money Greece received in 2010 and 2012 found its way into the government's coffers to soften the blow of the 2008 financial crash and fund reform programmes. Most of the money went to the banks that lent Greece funds before the crash.

29 June: Greece in chaos: will Syriza's last desperate gamble pay off? (<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jun/29/greece-chaos-syriza-gamble-banks-closed-referendum>)

If it all ends on Monday, with the Greeks voting for austerity in order to keep the euro, the first far left party to hold office in modern Europe will be judged by its critics a failure. By calling a referendum, Syriza has gambled that it can strengthen its hand in negotiations with its lenders.

28 June: Greece crisis could be a Sarajevo moment for the euro zone (<http://www.theguardian.com/business/2015/jun/28/greece-crisis-eurozone-sarajevo-moment>)

A hundred and one years ago on Sunday, gun shots rang out in a city in southern Europe. Few at the time paid much heed to the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife as they drove through the streets of Sarajevo. Within six weeks, however, Europe was at war.

28 June: Greece referendum: did the euro just die at 4 p.m.? (<http://blogs.channel4.com/paul-mason-blog/greece-referendum-euro-die/3978>)

We're staying in Europe! says the headline of the Greek liberal paper Kathimerini today. While the far left government will pose the referendum as a vote for or against austerity, the right will say it is an in–out vote for the single currency and the EU itself.

28 June: The law of Grexit: What does EU law say about leaving economic and monetary union? (<http://eulawanalysis.blogspot.com/2015/06/the-law-of-grexit-what-does-eu-law-say.html>)

A Greek referendum on whether to accept its creditors' offer is currently scheduled for next week. It is not clear at this point whether the Greek voters' refusal to accept the offer would necessarily lead to Greece leaving the EU or EMU, or at least defaulting on its debts.

26 June: Europeans take to streets to back Greece (<https://www.greenleft.org.au/node/59301>)

New solidarity protests with Greece broke out in several European cities on June 25, after the troika of the International Monetary Fund, European Union, and European Central Bank rejected Greece's earlier compromise in negotiations. The troika threw down new demands for further austerity in return for a deal over Greece's debt payments.

26 June: Tsipras goes for referendum on 5 July (<https://medium.com/@paulmasonnews/tsipras-goes-for-referendum-on-5-july-bf4c58d02534>)

Greek PM Alexis Tsipras has just called a referendum on 5 July. This after spending most of the week locked in discussions with creditors, in which no deal emerged. Here's a quick recap?—and why it's likely Greece will vote no.

26 June: Robert Mundell, evil genius of the euro (<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2012/jun/26/robert-mundell-evil-genius-euro>)

For the architect of the euro, taking macroeconomics away from elected politicians and forcing deregulation were part of the plan. The idea that the euro has “failed” is dangerously naive. The euro is doing exactly what its progenitor—and the wealthy 1 %-ers who adopted it—predicted and planned for it to do.

23 June: Syriza's Moment of Truth (<http://www.irishleftreview.org/2015/06/23/syrizas-moment-truth/>)

Syriza came to power on the back of an impossible pledge—namely to end austerity while keeping Greece within monetary union. The party's pre-election Thessaloniki Programme promised to write-off most of the country's €330 billion public debt through a European Conference. They also promised €4 billion in public investment, the creation of 300,000 new jobs, and a rebuilding of the welfare state.

23 June: Syriza and the EU after the first long battle—the balance sheet of the negotiations (<http://www.versobooks.com/blogs/2055>)

In the wake of the May 2014 European Elections, all economic actors in Greece—from the poorest household to the biggest multinational—were, for the most part, frozen in economic inactivity as they faced the prospect of Syriza's victory. This led to an artificial collapse in tax receipts, the freezing of all kinds of investment, capital flight and the cancelling out of the weak dynamic towards economic recovery that had appeared before the last quarter of 2014.

23 June: Creditors' economic plan for Greece is illiterate and doomed to fail (<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jun/23/creditors-economic-plan-for-greece-is-illiterate-and-doomed-to-fail>)

The troika plan for the Greek economy has already failed twice, and it will fail for a third time if the economically illiterate plan being foisted on Athens is adopted. Greece requires growth and debt relief, but the proposals currently being discussed provide neither.

20 June: How the uncomfortable and very possible scenario of capital controls would play out (http://www.ekathimerini.com/4dcgi/_w_articles_wsite2_1_20/06/2015_551270)

The following scenario could become a reality if the deposit outflows from local banks continue at the same high rate as in recent days: The governor of the Bank of Greece calls the Greek premier to inform him that capital controls are necessary to

prevent the domestic banking system from collapse. Due to the outflows, the banks are just hours away from running out of cash.

20 June: Greece, The Euro and Gunboat Diplomacy (<https://medium.com/bull-market/greece-the-euro-and-gunboat-diplomacy-3193983d8336>)

Original decision to provide a bailout is the source of the current crisis. Time for Europe to share the blame and financial consequences.

19 June: Greek debt crisis is the Iraq War of finance (<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/economics/11687229/Greek-debt-crisis-is-the-Iraq-War-of-finance.html>)

Rarely in modern times have we witnessed such a display of petulance and bad judgment by those supposed to be in charge of global financial stability, and by those who set the tone for the Western world. The spectacle is astonishing. The European Central Bank, the EMU bailout fund, and the International Monetary Fund, among others, are lashing out in fury against an elected government that refuses to do what it is told. They entirely duck their own responsibility for five years of policy blunders that have led to this impasse.

19 June: Greek crisis standoff: five possible outcomes (<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jun/19/greek-crisis-standoff-five-outcomes-greece-creditors>)

The stand-off between the EU commission and Greece must be resolved by the end of the month. Either Brussels releases the last €7.2bn (£5.14bn) of bailout cash due to Athens under its existing rescue deal or Greece goes bust. Here are the possible scenarios to how this may play out: 1. The creditors blink...

17 June: Executive Summary of the report from the Debt Truth Committee (<http://cadtm.org/Executive-Summary-of-the-report>)

In June 2015, Greece stands at a crossroad of choosing between furthering the failed macroeconomic adjustment programmes imposed by the creditors or making a real change to break the chains of debt. Five years since the economic adjustment programmes began, the country remains deeply cemented in an economic, social, democratic, and ecological crisis.

16 June: The Endgame in Greece (<http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/greece-endgame-eurozone-default-by-jeffrey-d-sachs-2015-06>)

After months of wrangling, the showdown between Greece and its European creditors has come down to a standoff over pensions and taxes. Greece is refusing to acquiesce to demands by its creditors that it cut payments to the elderly and raise the value added tax on their medicine and electricity.

15 June: Europe Offered Greece A Deal To Meet Its Obligations By Cutting Military Spending. The IMF Said No Way (http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/imf-greece-veto_n_7588594.html?section=india)

While European leaders and International Monetary Fund representatives continue to blame Greece for the impasse in negotiations over the terms of Greece's bailout, a Saturday report by the German newspaper Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung reveals the IMF vetoed a compromise that cut military spending proposed by the European Commission.

15 June: Greece accuses Europe of plotting regime change as creditors draw up ultimatum (<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/economics/11676867/Greece-accuses-Europe-of-plotting-regime-change-as-creditors-draw-up-ultimatum.html>)

Greek premier Alexis Tsipras has accused Europe’s creditor powers of trying to subvert Greece’s elected government after five years of “pillaging”, warning in solemn terms that his country will defend its sovereign dignity whatever the consequences. The defiant stand came as the European Commission lashed out at the Greeks and warned that the country would collapse into a “state of emergency” unless there is a deal to avert a financial crash.

11 June: Fighting Golden Dawn (<https://www.jacobinmag.com/2015/06/golden-dawn-syriza-immigration-far-right/>)

After five months of negotiations between the Greek government and the European “institutions”, things may be finally boiling over. The dramatic situation has captured international headlines and perhaps overshadowed domestic efforts at reform by the Syriza government.

9 June: If the euro zone thinks Greece can be blackmailed, it is wrong (<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/jun/09/eurozone-greece-blackmail-wrong>)

The never-ending Greek crisis witnessed a dramatic acceleration last week: The government submitted a list of proposals, the troika (the IMF, the European Commission, and the European Central Bank) came back with a list of its own, the Greek side rejected them out of hand, a parliamentary debate followed in Athens during which the prime minister repeated the rejection, and finally Greece failed to make a scheduled payment to the IMF on 5 June, presumably bundling all its payments for the end of the month.

9 June: Greece submits new reform plan amid talk of bailout extension (<http://www.theguardian.com/business/live/2015/jun/09/greek-pm-grexit-warning-bailout-extension-live-updates>)

Liveupdates Greek officials have proposed a new plan to break the deadlock, as Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras warns failure would be the beginning of the end of the euro zone.

9 June: Greek exit would trigger eurozone collapse, says Alexis Tsipras (<http://www.theguardian.com/business/2015/jun/09/greek-exit-would-trigger-eurozone-collapse-says-alexis-tsipras>)

Alexis Tsipras warned on Tuesday that the failure to agree a rescue deal for Greece would spell the end of the euro zone as he submitted a revised package of reforms to negotiators in Brussels. The Greek Prime Minister said if Greece fails, Europe’s leaders will have a bigger disaster on their hands because “it will be the beginning of the end of the euro zone”.

8 June: Restructuration, Audit, Suspension and Abolition of the debt (<http://cadtm.org/Restructuration-Audit-Suspension,11723>)

According to Eric Toussaint, debt restructuring has always been the result of economic and geopolitical calculation, rarely producing a favourable long-term outcome for the debtors, unless the creditors saw a strategic advantage for themselves in it. Sovereign debt “restructuring”, as it is now called by the IMF, the Paris Club and the big banking corporations, and more recently by the Left in Greece, Portugal, and Spain, is not a satisfactory expression, in fact using the actual term

“restructuring” is dangerous, because the creditors have loaded it with what they want it to mean.

8 June: Syriza, Podemos, Venceremos?

The emergence of new radical progressive parties in Greece and the Spanish state is not just a response to the biggest economic crisis since the 1930s, but also to the longer term hollowing out of “politics” under neoliberalism, which in many European states has been mainly channelled by far right populism, and has been driven by dramatic levels of social mobilisation—most notably the 15-M movement, and the twenty general strikes and square occupations in Greece.

7 June: The troika is supposed to build Greece up, not blow it apart. Time for a ceasefire (<http://www.theguardian.com/business/2015/jun/07/troika-build-greece-up-not-blow-apart-ceasefire>)

The phrase “trench warfare” comes to mind. On Friday evening, the Greek Prime Minister, Alexis Tsipras, lobbed some choice words at his foes in Brussels, calling their proposed debt deal “absurd”. Days earlier, the International Monetary Fund had joined its allies in Brussels to fire a volley of criticism at Athens. The Greeks already had “significant flexibility” to get out of their budget mess, IMF boss Christine Lagarde said, as she urged Athens to repay the €300m instalment of its bailout loan due on Friday.

5 June: Piraeus, where Syriza isn’t left wing enough (<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/greece/11652824/Piraeus-where-Syriza-isnt-left-wing-enough.html>)

On the dockside in Piraeus, workers have gathered to protest at ongoing austerity measures which have seen their pay cut and working conditions worsen during the Greek economic crisis.

5 June: Syriza Has No Choice: Greece Must Prepare to Leave the Eurozone (<http://inthesetimes.com/article/18015/>)

When Syriza won Greece’s parliamentary elections in January of 2015, much ado was made in the international press about the rise of a new Radical Left in Greece—a development that had punctured Greece’s long-standing two-party stalemate and opened up the possibility of rolling back the brutal austerity measures imposed upon it by “the troika”, the European Commission, the International Monetary Fund, and the European Central Bank.

4 June: Greece fails to agree with the creditors, prepares for elections (http://www.grrporter.info/en/greece_fails_agree_creditors_prepares_elections/12798)

The 5-h meeting between the Greek Prime Minister and the Presidents of the European Commission and the euro zone finance ministers did not result in a convergence of positions. Alexis Tsipras will meet again with Jean-Claude Juncker and Jeroen Dijsselbloem in Brussels on Friday in a new attempt to reach an agreement.

4 June: Greece refuses to make €305m IMF payment in show of defiance (<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/economics/11652623/Greece-refuses-to-make-305m-payment-due-tomorrow-to-IMF.html>)

Greece will skip its €305m (£218m) payment to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on Friday in a show of defiance as a deal between Athens and its creditors

remains out of reach. The country invoked a rule created by the IMF in the 1970s that allows it to bundle all of its €1.6bn payments due this month into one.

1 June: The Class Logic Behind Austerity Policies In the Euro-Area (<http://www.socialistproject.ca/bullet/1124.php>)

After the outbreak of the 2008 global economic crisis, extreme austerity policies prevailed in many parts of the developed capitalist world, especially in the European Union (EU) and the euro area (EA). Austerity has been criticised as an irrational policy, which further deteriorates the economic crisis by creating a vicious cycle of falling effective demand, recession, and over-indebtedness. However, these criticisms can hardly explain why this “irrational” or “wrong” policy persists, despite its “failures”.

MAY

27 May: Auditing the Greek Debt: unity of place, time, and action, as in classical drama (<http://cadtm.org/Auditing-the-Greek-Debt-unity-of>)

The recent debt currently being claimed presents features that make it irregular, illegitimate, illegal, unsustainable, and even odious. Allegedly, Greek debts that were cumulated before 2010 were already to a large extent illegitimate and/or illegal (arms contracts involving fraud and corruption, large-scale construction work related to the 2004 Olympics with overbilling and all sorts of embezzlement, tax giveaways to a privileged minority, bailing out of banks, excessive interest rates) but what is striking is the extent to which debts contracted since 2010 are flawed.

24 May: Syriza’s Left Platform call not to pay next IMF tranche (<https://greekanalyst.wordpress.com/2015/05/24/syrizas-left-platform-call-not-to-pay-next-imf-tranche/>)

Syriza’s Left Platform, spearheaded by Minister of Productive Reconstruction, Environment and Energy, Panagiotis Lafazanis, issued a document during today’s meeting of the Central Committee of Syriza, which will come for a vote later in the day. The document calls—once again!—for the rupture with the lenders. Specifically, it asks from the government not to repay the upcoming tranche to the IMF in June, if the “institutions” continue with the “same blackmailing tactic”.

19 May: Greek FinMin Varoufakis: Wages and Pensions a Priority; Hopeful for IMF Payments (<http://greece.greekreporter.com/2015/05/19/greek-finmin-varoufakis-wages-and-pensions-a-priority-hopeful-for-imf-payments/>)

Greek Finance Minister Yanis Varoufakis said that payments for wages and pensions are a priority and if he was to choose between paying Greece’s creditors or the country’s population he would choose the latter. “I hope we will be able to pay both (the IMF and pensions and wages) ... after a deal,” Yanis Varoufakis told Star TV channel’s late night show Ston Eniko.

14 May: Why Syriza Will Blink (<http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/syriza-eu-default-negotiation-by-anatole-kaletsky-2015-05>)

Once again, Greece seems to have slipped the financial noose. By drawing on its holdings in an International Monetary Fund reserve account, it was able to repay €750 million (\$851 million)—ironically to the IMF itself—just as the payment was falling due.

14 May: Syriza and Greece: Dancing with Austerity (<http://www.villagemagazine.ie/index.php/2015/05/syriza-and-greece-dancing-with-austerity/>)

Syriza's election on January 25th was a historic event. In the midst of a deep economic crisis and a steep decline of faith in political elites, Europe had elected its first Radical Left government since the Spanish civil war. Veteran Leftists cried and embraced, socialists from across the continent and beyond flocked to Athens to sing their anthems, and Greek society breathed a sigh of relief at a break from years of immiseration.

14 May: Greece to Privatise Port, Airports in Concession to Creditors (<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2015-05-14/greece-to-privatize-port-airports-in-concession-to-creditors>)

Greece will continue with efforts to privatise the country's largest port and regional airports as it seeks ways to attract investment for other state assets, Economy Minister George Stathakis said, in a government concession in talks with its creditors.

13 May: Russia invites Greece to join BRICS bank (<http://rt.com/business/257701-greece-russia-brics-invitation/>)

Greece has been invited by Russia to become the sixth member of the BRICS New Development Bank (NDB). The \$100 billion NDB is expected to compete with Western dominance and become one of the key lending institutions.

12 May: Workers move to stop Greece's Syriza government backsliding (<http://socialistworker.co.uk/art/40497/Workers+move>)

The Greek government, led by the Radical Left Syriza party, is backsliding under pressure from the European Union (EU) and International Monetary Fund (IMF). But workers are not taking this lying down. The government was in talks with EU finance ministers on Monday of last week and had to pay £544-million in debt repayments to the IMF on Tuesday.

6 May: A Blueprint for Greece's Recovery (<http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/greek-recovery-strategy-by-yanis-varoufakis-2015-05>)

Months of negotiations between our government and the International Monetary Fund, the European Union, and the European Central Bank have produced little progress. One reason is that all sides are focusing too much on the strings to be attached to the next liquidity injection and not enough on a vision of how Greece can recover and develop sustainably. If we are to break the current impasse, we must envisage a healthy Greek economy.

APRIL

28 April: Heading for a Grexit? (<http://socialistworker.org/2015/04/28/heading-for-a-grexit>)

Pressure to repay European creditors could soon force the Syriza government in Greece to either abandon key elements of the anti-austerity program that propelled it to victory and into office in January elections—or default on debt repayments, which could lead to a departure from the euro, the common currency of 19 European countries.

April 29, 2015: Syriza, Podemos, and the “eurocommunist” legacy (<http://www.analyzegreece.gr/topics/left-government/item/186-f-escalona-syriza-podemos-and-the-eurocommunist-legacy>)

In order to understand the dynamics along with the challenges that Syriza, as well as the whole spectrum of Radical Left, is confronted with it is useful to turn our attention to the ‘eurocommunist moment’ at the end of the 1970s. Despite the passage of nearly forty years since then, the debates that prevailed within the Radical Left at that time rise almost unchanged nowadays.

24 April: Greece: The Noose Tightens (<https://www.jacobinmag.com/2015/04/syriza-eurozone-default-exit-stathis/>)

Events in Greece have taken a dramatic turn, and insolvency is at the gates. On April 20, the Greek government issued a decree forcing local authorities to place cash reserves at the Bank of Greece.

22 April: European officials may be pushing regime change in Greece (<http://america.aljazeera.com/opinions/2015/4/european-officials-may-be-pushing-regime-change-in-greece.html>)

There are various narratives for what is happening to Greece as another deadline looms—the April 24 gathering of euro zone finance ministers in Riga, Latvia—and European officials show no sign of compromise.

21 April: The Next Hundred Days (<https://www.jacobinmag.com/2015/04/greece-syriza-european-union-austerity/>)

What should Syriza’s economic strategy be going forward, given Greece’s position in the euro zone?

19 April: Greek eurozone exit edges closer as markets brace for Athens default (<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/apr/19/eurozone-crisis-grexit-edges-closer-as-markets-brace-for-athens-default>)

Euro zone officials meet for further crunch talks on Greece this week amid warnings that time is running out for the country to avoid defaulting on its debts and being jettisoned from the single-currency bloc...

17 April: The Other Greek Left (<https://www.jacobinmag.com/2015/04/antarsya-syriza-communist-party-greece-euro/>)

On a Greek Left dominated by Syriza and the Communist Party, Antarsya is often overlooked. Where did the organisation come from and where is it going?

10 April: Joseph Stiglitz In Conversation With Yanis Varoufakis (<http://www.socialeurope.eu/2015/04/joseph-stiglitz-in-conversation-with-yanis-varoufakis>)

The Institute for New Economic Thinking (INET) is currently holding its annual conference in Paris. Part of the proceedings was a conversation on euro zone problems between Joseph Stiglitz and Yanis Varoufakis....

10 April: Greek Crisis: Very Little Wiggle Room for Syriza (Video) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=57TeHvNy2Sg>)

Newslick interviewed Prof. Jayati Ghosh, Economist, Jawaharlal Nehru University to discuss the possibility of a Greek default in its IMF repayments. Despite the heavy burden of austerity, Syriza is under pressure not to exit the euro zone as the Greek people do not want it do so.

8 April: IMF made a €2.5billion profit from loans to Greece (<http://www.keptalkinggreece.com/2015/04/08/imf-made-a-e2-5billion-profit-from-loans-to-greece/>)

Nice profit. With an interest rate of 3.6 %, the International Monetary Fund has made a 2.5 billion euro profit from the loans to Greece since 2010. Of *curse*, nobody lends money without profit, right? How much more when the majority of the IMF bailout goes to save banks and is paid back by people's taxes...

8 April: All eyes on PM Tsipras in Moscow; EU, USA fear Greece might asks Putin for a bailout (<http://www.keptalkinggreece.com/2015/04/08/all-eyes-on-pm-tsipras>)

All eyes are on Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras visiting Moscow, holding talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin. The BBC had a live stream when Tsipras laid a wreath at the Monument of the Unknown Soldier in the Red Square just like the UK-broadcaster would if the Pope or President Obama would visit Kremlin and the Russian Bear.

6 April: Greece puts a figure on World War Two reparation claims from Germany (<http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/04/06/us-eurozone-greece-germany-reparations-idUSKBN0MX1DO20150406>)

Greece's deputy finance minister said on Monday, Germany owes Greece nearly 279-billion euros (\$305.17-billion) in reparations for the Nazi occupation of the country. Greek governments and also private citizens have pushed for war damages from Germany for decades but the Greek government has never officially quantified its reparation claims.

4 April: Greece Has Cash to Make IMF Payment Next Week, Minister Says (<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2015-04-04/greece-has-cash-to-make-imf-payment-next-week-minister-says>)

Greece will not default on payments to the International Monetary Fund next week even as a lack of bailout disbursements has Left government coffers nearly empty, according to the minister responsible for meeting the obligations.

3 April: Greece considering nationalising its banks and issuing new currency, sources claim (<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/business/news/greece-considering-nationalising-its-banks-and-issuing-new-currency-sources-claim-10153668.html>)

Greece's government is prepared to nationalise the country's banks and could create a new currency to pay its bills unless the euro zone nations back down over austerity, sources have reportedly said...

3 April: The roots of the Greece crisis in European integration and what this means for the future (<http://www.socialistproject.ca/go.php?id=2278>)

As the simmering crisis between Greece and the institutions formerly known as the troika heats up again, it's a good time to look once more at the roots of the European crisis and what they mean for the possibilities open before Syriza at the present juncture. Greece is being squeezed by Europe: It's cash is about to run out, they have been limited from raising new funds on bond markets and are being asked for ever greater concessions in terms of the reforms....

2 April: Greece scraps hospital visit fee, to hire health workers (http://www.ekathimerini.com/4dcgi/_w_articles_ws1_1_02/04/2015_548763)

Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras said a 5-euro fee to access state hospitals had been scrapped and 4500 healthcare workers would be hired, the latest move by his Leftist government to ease what it calls a humanitarian crisis in the country.

2 April: Greece draws up drachma plans, prepares to miss IMF payment (<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/economics/11513341/Greece-draws-up-drachma-plans-prepares-to-miss-IMF-payment.html>)

Greece is drawing up drastic plans to nationalise the country's banking system and introduce a parallel currency to pay bills unless the euro zone takes steps to defuse the simmering crisis and soften its demands.

1 April: Greece What Is to Be Done? A Pamphlet (<http://marxandphilosophy.org.uk/reviewofbooks/reviews/2015/1786>)

Greece has become the storm centre of class struggle in Europe for the duration of this decade. The country has been the site of a relentless economic and political assault by the internal and external forces of neoliberalism.

April 17, 2015: TUNE Declaration concerning the situation in Greece (<http://www.socialistproject.ca/go.php?id=2277>)

The Trade Unionist Network Europe calls upon the European and International Labour Movement to confront the threats and scare tactics which are now being used against the Greek population and to make clear that any attempt to void or overturn the result of the Greek elections of 25 January will be met with coordinated trade union actions across Europe.

April 4, 2015: Greek reforms in the context of the 2015 Eurogroup Agreement (<http://www.socialistproject.ca/inthenews/GreekReforms.pdf>)

This document presents for the first time a full summary of the reforms and legislative projects that will be undertaken by the Government of Greece under the terms of the February 20, 2015 extension of the MFAFA. It is presented to Greece's European partners as a step towards completion of the final review of the present arrangement.

30 March: Germany says Greece must flesh out reforms to unlock aid (<http://www.ekathimerini.com/168664/article/ekathimerini/business/germany-says-greece-must-flesh-out-reforms-to-unlock-aid>)

Greece's biggest creditor Germany said on Monday that the euro zone would give Athens no further financial aid until it has a more detailed list of reforms and some are enacted into law, adding to scepticism over plans presented last week.

29 March: World Social Forum meets in Tunis, Syriza’s Tsipras urges ‘global struggle’ (<https://www.greenleft.org.au/node/58673>)

More than 4000 local and global groups from 120 countries took part in the 14th World Social Forum in Tunisia from March 24 to 28. The WSF was created as a popular alternative to the corporate-dominated, elite World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos.

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