

For the Workshop Discussion – Theses of the Speakers

Core and Periphery in the European Union – a New Phenomenon? Challenges for Modern Left Policies in the EU and in Europe

Friday, 24.10.2014

Opening

On the workshop: Judith Dellheim

The mainstream debate on core and periphery should not distract us from the really important questions on the causes and the causers of the crises and on how ruling policy deals with them. In this context we shall have to take note of the fact that the term “peripherisation” cannot adequately express the real challenges we face. These real challenges have to be analyzed in connection with changes of the position of the EU in the globalized world, and by changes in the EU effected by this globalized world.

During the whole workshop we should have the central question in mind: “How to develop solidarity within our societies and across our societies, taking into account their position within our globalized world?”.

“Transition” and Peripherization in Southeast Europe – Critique of dominant discourses: Aleksandar Stojanović

I will start from the insight that the transitory period in post-Yugoslav countries started before the dissolution of Yugoslavia. This insight will enable me to contextualize central statements present in transitory discourse in these countries and the specific political dynamic that is related to them. In this discourse the most important role has the representation of functional capitalist society and my analysis will be oriented towards investigation of the results that this representation produces. It plays a pivotal role in normalization of peripheral state of society which is introduced by transition from a new production relations and a new class structuration to new ideological constellation and a new role of the state.

I. Global Context, Experience and Theoretical Basics

The United States, Europe, the EU – relations and interrelations: Kees van der Pijl

1. From the beginning of the 20th century there has been a fear in the English-speaking West that continental Europe might join forces Russia in a larger Eurasia, the 'Rapallo syndrome' (after the 1922 treaty between Weimar Germany and Soviet Russia). This is playing out again today.
2. The West is still is by far the dominant force in the global political economy but its power is fragile as it relies on raw materials, outsourced production and on the financing of its debts by others which it insufficiently controls in the political sphere (Africa-China, Japan, Europe-Russia). From the 1980s the West has adopted an aggressive forward push ion these matters, including after 1991 the use of economic

warfare and military force also in Europe and the Middle East. Yugoslavia was a watershed in this respect.

3. The continued role of the dollar and adherence to neoliberal policies (the Dollar-Wall Street regime) are key in maintaining Western preeminence, but given US debt levels and a persistent slump, increasingly precarious. This adds to more violence because the military are the only branch of power which in the US is still 'at home' and it uses its military might as a compensatory force.

4. In the Ukraine crisis the EU and US have rival strategies which can be explained by the Rapallo syndrome. By forcing the continental EU ('old Europe') into a conflict with Russia by US/NATO economic warfare the EU will be forced to subscribe to the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Pact TTIP, a rehash of the Multilateral Agreement on Investment of the 1990s that perished in Seattle 1999.

Similarities relating to global debt: former colonies, CEE, "Euro-crisis-countries": Sergio Tzotzes

1. The Greek case can hardly be described as exceptional: it conforms to key neoliberalization processes of regulatory experimentation; inter-jurisdictional policy transfer; and setting trans-national rule-regimes.

For all intents and purposes, the processes we examined contribute to the formation of a new 'disciplined labour periphery' within the EU.

Notwithstanding historical and conjunctural specificities common elements emerge in the respective shock therapies implemented in Greece and the transition countries'.

2. In both the case of Greece and the transition countries the changes induced by the respective shock treatments were not driven by interactions between national stakeholders (capital, labour, and the state) but supranational agencies and global financial markets exerting relentless pressure on nation-states: governments recede to a secondary role as movers of a supra-national agenda.

The current economic crisis, which set in motion events in Greece, casts a new light on the existing "capital-state nexus" and the relations between the state and labour (Horn 2012:578). The Greek episode confirms the coercive nature of the imposed changes where governments emerge as local caretakers and enforcers of a disciplinary programme targeting the reconfiguration of the labour market to fit neoliberal imperatives.

3. Our discussion has exposed a key dimension of social reengineering that is carefully hidden in the dominant 'reform' discourse: the abrupt, dramatic disempowerment of the working class to consolidate "the shift in the entire balance of social power" (Gowan 2001:196-97).

4. Designed to shift labour market dynamics the same policy template underscored by identical theoretical and conceptual tenets and defined by the same ideological content has also been implemented under the crisis pretext in the other indebted countries of the European periphery. Hence, the case of Greece—and the other

'bailout' countries—contributes to the creation of an enlarged “disciplined labour periphery’ within Europe with deregulated labour markets and an essentially unprotected low-paid, often high skilled weakened labour force.

Such a space provides the perfect platform for transnational capital to amplify its gains, consolidate a privileged position and be internationally “competitive” at the expense of the working classes. In other words, a periphery emerges where “governments, as well as firms and workers, are internally and externally disciplined by market forces, or, to put it differently, by the power of capital (Gill 2001:61). Amidst deepening inequalities a new template of European “divergence” is replacing visions of “convergence”.

How Peter Gowan may help us to analyze the current crucial problems: Andrea Lagna

1) ORIGINS AND KEY DEFINITION OF FINANCIALISATION

Financialisation is the multi-faceted expansion of financial innovation in all spheres of human life.

Financial innovation is the ensemble of new practices and technologies through which bank and non-bank actors discover new business avenues. These dynamics often entail transforming into marketable securities previously non-tradable assets.

Financial innovation provides a tremendous boost to the marketization, or to say it better, the financialisation of human relations.

Historically, this phenomenon originated in the evolution of American capitalism since the late nineteenth century.

2) DIFFERENTIAL SPACES OF FINANCIALISATION

Financialisation spread globally for two intertwined reasons: a) as a result of the hegemonic role played by the United States in the world order; b) due to the fact that other societies restructured their domestic institutions by adopting themselves US-like financial practices. They did so for several context-specific reasons and depending on their domestic power struggles.

Thus, through these two dimensions, financialisation was shaped into a globally uneven process that unfolds at different spatial levels – e.g. regional, national, local, offshore, etc.

3) POLITICS, POWER AND AGENCY

People with different interests and resources shape the institutions of financialisation on the ground and use them to organise their collective life. In other words, financialisation is constructed politically through power relations amongst several actors.

Due to its nature, financialisation can only be examined politically by focusing on the dimension of agency and power.

This entails embracing the Hegelian roots of Historical Materialism rather than the overly structuralist ones. Our critical approach should be firmly based on a constructivist meta- theoretical position rather than a critical-realist one.

4) POLITICAL AGENDA

Our political agenda should aim at resisting people's participation in financial markets and, at the same time, de-commodifying human relations through the provision of collective and environmentally sustainable services in the field of housing, education, health, pensions and so on.

These services should represent fundamental rights for all human beings.

Limits of the centre-periphery model in the analysis of contemporary political environment: Özge Yaka

1. Reducing complex forms of exploitation and domination to the relations between the industrial west and the backward rest, the core-periphery model does not have analytical tools to understand intra- and trans-national relations of class, race and gender, which could not be depicted by the vocabulary of international frame.
2. Historical development of capitalism itself demonstrated the limits of the core-periphery model, as the industrialisation of certain "peripheral" regions such as South Asia and deindustrialisation of certain "core" countries such as the UK reversed the industrial west/non-industrial periphery equation, at least in certain regions, proving the dynamism and flexibility of capital accumulation process. The historically specific and tendential fixation of the relationships of domination and dependency between different geographies of capitalism should not be *translated* into static models.
3. In the contemporary conjuncture marked by financialisation, which crystallizes the transgressive character of capital accumulation, trespassing national borders, layering and diversifying the ways in which capital accumulates, we need a vocabulary that can go beyond the Keynesian- Westphalian nation state grammar to understand the contemporary forms of power.
4. The current crisis and the resistance emerged in the form of square movements have already surpassed the imagined borders between the core and periphery, stressing the global processes of capital accumulation and displaying the potential of a global resistance. The fact that the square protest have begun in the "periphery" and spread to the "core" and forms of protest, ideas, slogans, even the gestures have travelled across the borders with a considerable speed, register the resonance between the causes of the peoples of different geographies and their demands of equality and democracy, irrespective of which side of the imagined core-periphery frontier they are living in.

Comment by Johannes Jäger

1. Uneven development and dependency are crucial theoretical concepts to understand European developments and the present crisis. Within this framework a concrete analysis taking the geopolitical context into account is necessary in order to understand the complex reality. The EU periphery is not homogenous but there are different economic structures and growth models and therefore different types of crises (and possibilities to overcome it).

2. EU policy and the neoliberal “anti-crisis” management has deepened the crisis and disfavored or disabled progressive developments in the periphery. The management was mainly driven by capitalist groups in dominant European countries. The consequences are a deepening rift between the core and periphery, increasing conflicts within the periphery and a threat for European Integration. This is very unlikely to change substantially within the current structure of relation of forces and the preferences of dominant factions of capital.

3. Capitalist development usually implies productive (i.e. industrial) development. This is characterized by dependency for those parts of the EU periphery which are linked to the productive core of the EU. It is increasingly impeded for those countries which have even a more peripheral status. Dependency expressed by the existence of a “lumpen” bourgeoisie, a lack of effective development policies and foreign ownership structures imposes long-term restrictions to development. National policies and strategies (and state ownership of strategic industries) are crucial for more “progressive” dependent developments.

4. The neo-liberal European mode of integration (and neighborhood policy) is extremely unlikely to be abandoned in a foreseeable future. It has failed and will continue to fail to provide a viable framework for most peripheral regions and countries. More autonomy or “national policy space” and respective national processes are crucial for progressive developments in the periphery. Latin American experiences show within a different context that potentially alternatives are possible.

Saturday, 25.10.2014

II. Financialisation and Transnationalisation; Social and Production Structures

Classes and assets in Europe and EU/ European crises as global crises: Jan Toporowski

Sweezy and Monthly Review have presented a uniquely informed analysis of US monopoly finance capital based around Luxemburg's theme of how surplus is monetised in the latest phase of capitalism.

Sweezy saw 'financialisation' as the monetisation of surplus through increasing corporate indebtedness. This can only have a temporary effect since it increases corporate debt problems.

Monthly Review analysis of monopolists as reluctant investors is very apt in Europe today, and especially among the new member states of EU.

The revulsion against debt in the EU prevents effective use of fiscal policy. As Sweezy argued, Keynesianism ends in a debt crisis.

Transnationalisation and social marginalisation: Stefanie Hürtgen

In the mainstream discourse, the so called economic and social transformation process of main CEE-countries like Poland, Hungary or the Baltic States is taken as successfully concluded. After a painful "adaption period", so the widespread depiction, these countries have become attractive locations for production and services and thus are to be taken as ordinary European economies, including growth rates of the GDP which even – before the economic crisis 2008 – considerably exceeded those in Western Europe. Even more: thanks to this now principally existing economic strength, some of the CEE-Countries are ready for leaving the crisis behind and lance a new economic recovery.

This widespread discourse has to be questioned and sharply criticized. While doing so, I use a conception coming from Development Theory: "Dualisation" or, in Marxist / critical terms: "Structural Heterogeneity". Structural heterogeneity is a useful concept to catch the structural characteristics following today's Europeanisation (and with it: Transnationalization) which is: sharp inner fragmentation, growing "inner peripheries" and thus systematic social marginalisation.

Following own empirical findings, I argue in three steps / along three theses:

1. Contrarily to the overwhelming discourse about the need to strengthen economic attractiveness for establishing general(national) social welfare, reality can be described with the conception "structurally heterogeneity": Technologically and organisationally highly advanced production sites exist, but they do not lead to clusters or spill-over effects. Instead these locations and their impressive growth-data are sharply separated from another, non-productive, often black-market, family-

based economic sector, with a sometimes really poor working population (“Cathedrals in the desert”- phenomenon).

2. This heterogeneous economic structure leads to widespread uncertainty, poverty and misery. This is not only true for those who have to make ends meet in the “non-modern” sector, but also in the very centre of modern transnational production we find precarity and enormous wage pressure. Social Fragmentation is the result of structural heterogeneity.

3. One conceptual consequence of this structural heterogeneous development model is to avoid dualisms of the contemporary “crisis-discourse”: even in “non-crisis”-times we experience sharp social degradation. Resistance needs bridge, inclusive social addressing, not only during “crisis”.

Some reflections on our discussion as well as on societal and capital structures, and on production and consumption pattern: Judith Dellheim

The “4+2 connection”¹ determines the production and consumption patterns, alongside with their social and ecological consequences. Capital oligarchies are behind it. Since the beginning of the global economic and financial crises the strongest of them have caused deepening imbalances in the production structures of the EU. Already before the outbreak of the crisis, we could show a “core” of the 4+2 connection consisting of Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, North Italy, the Netherland, parts of Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom.

The EU and state’s rescue operations were especially in the interest of the economically strongest in Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Luxemburg, in the Netherlands, in Sweden and the United Kingdom. The eight contractual Public Private Partnerships “of strategic importance for European industry”, launched by the European Commission are in fact economic aid for companies and cooperating medium-sized enterprises in transportation and above all in high tech located above all in Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, in the Netherlands, in Sweden, partly in Spain and in the United Kingdom. The same is true about the results of the Key Enabling Technologies Summit. The energy and climate policies for more competitiveness should bring gains especially to actors in the countries mentioned, plus Austria, Italy, and Spain. Again, the road map for research infrastructures brings the highest benefits to companies and partners in Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, in the Netherland, Sweden and UK.

In the beginning of September 2014 the NATO Summit in Wales has laid down the following: “We agree to reverse the trend of declining defence budgets, to make the most effective use of our funds and to further a more balanced sharing of costs and responsibilities. ... A strong defence industry across the Alliance, including a stronger defence industry in Europe and greater defence industrial cooperation within Europe and across the Atlantic, remains essential for delivering the required capabilities.

¹ the mutually penetrating energy, transport and agriculture/agri-business, the military-industrial-complex/the security sphere. These are the globally largest consumers of natural resources and the globally largest polluters. The quartet always receives new input from their partners, because it is successfully interlinked with the high tech and the finance industries, the finance sphere.

NATO and EU efforts to strengthen defence capabilities are complementary.” The biggest military exporter of the EU is Germany. France, UK, The Netherlands, Spain, Italy and Sweden follow.

The imbalances in the EU productions structures are of course especially high in relation to concrete sections. “

Looking at the 12 pillars for competitiveness², we see pillars connected with our daily lives: local and regional infrastructure, health and primary education, higher education and training, labour market efficiency, financial market development, innovation. We can discuss about that what we want and need avoiding responding to the logic of competition. We should add the natural environment. We can mobilise against privatization, commercialization and for another use of the public, especially of public finance. We can change what could be changed on the local and regional levels: the energy, water and transportation systems, the food production, the public services. In the region the political actors needed for changing the political power balance can get together at first. The needed new political power balances for changing the society can sustainably grow only starting from the regions.

Case study: the French defense industry: Claude Serfati

The French defence industry – what we call the ‘French armaments meso-system’ (FAMS) - plays a core role in the French economy, especially when it is looked at the technological capabilities. Its deep anchoring in the French economy and society dates back to the early 1960s with the return to power of General de Gaulle.

The drivers which account for the persisting might and actual configuration of the FAMS are both political and economic. Buttressed on an unwavering political consensus (left-right) and the active role of the country in ‘war on the terror’, the defence industry is one of the most competitive industrial sector on the international market. Even if the focus is narrowly put on economic aspects, the cost of public expenditures devoted to military deserves a closer attention

Reflections from the perspective of socio-ecologic transformation:

Large groups of the population, elites, also members of capital oligarchies do in fact know that “business as usual” is in fact impossible and all attempts to ignore that or to extend the “business as usual” procedures would lead to an increase in the huge social, ecological and global problems. The current debate is extremely contradictory, but a chance for the left in so far that it is capable of dealing with the existing contradictions.

The elementary step is go to where people are already acting, here and now, in greater solidarity, and in a more socially and ecologically responsible manner than the mainstream of our societies, so as to help strengthen and expand such trends. Such a practice has to address social activities especially in four interrelated

² Institutions, infrastructure, Macroeconomic stability, Health and primary education, Higher education and training, Goods market efficiency, Labor market efficiency, Financial market sophistication, Technological readiness, Market size, Business sophistication, Innovation.

dimensions: Public funding/social security systems, Development aid, Budget consolidation and Debt cancellation. It will have to address effectively

(a) The comprehensive issue of financial markets;

(b) the “special projects” of the ruling forces, such as privatization, public-private partnerships (PPP), mega-projects, and local and regional problems; these often have to do with energy, transportation, agro-business, and “security/defense,” and hence with the competitive national positions of the causes of problems, and with concrete technologies and investments;

(c) poverty/social exclusion, discrimination and repression/violence – especially by advocating and implementing social, democratic and ecological minimum standards; and

(d) struggles against existing or planned socially and ecologically destructive projects/practices of governments and international institutions (EU, WTO) such as the TISA, TTIP, EU Services Directives ...

Further analysis of current social activities makes it appear that a consolidation of three interconnected strategic areas of action mentioned in the contribution before: the struggle for democratic, social and ecological standards; the democratization of the public space and of political decision-making processes over priorities and principles for the mobilization and on the use of public finances; and the movement for active and participatory local and regional development.

At the moment we can only say and “only” have to say: STOP! This is not attractive and in the parliamentary and intellectual debate we have said and could say what is needed and what is possible as a first step. And on local and regional levels as in the parliaments we should use all the small possibilities to act, but the only message that could be really heard within the society at large, is still simply “STOP!”.

But there are further the challenges:

- Taking the “Ukraine conflict” as a starting point to discuss the economic aspects of international security systems, the underlying interests of the economic agencies involved, and to try to develop a constructive approach to the issues energy security and industrial conversion, especially under ecological and peace requirements;
- Addressing the issues of Energy Sufficiency and of Renewable Energy Sources more systematically as a first step to broader conversion processes, with a special urgency due to the on-going changes of strategy in preparation by the new European Commission;
- Re-discussing our findings together with interested trade unionists and activists in social movements in order to develop concrete strategies for fighting poverty and social exclusion, as well as violence against people, climate change and vanishing biodiversity at the same time. “Concrete strategies” here will have to mean strategies capable of starting on local and regional levels, continuing on the national budget and

decision-making level and, in parallel, mobilizing against destructive EU policies asking for concrete alternatives to the existing and prevailing policies.

Former Yugoslavia in the globalization process: Domagoj Mihaljević

Dissolution of Yugoslavia marked the end of divergent and contradictory modernization achievements on European periphery. This modernization was accomplished through implementing liberal reformist program aimed at closing the development gap and realizing western standard of living. Although liberal political approach of adapting self-managed enterprises to international market principles was always under contestation of protectionist model it remained nonetheless (except in the immediate post-war years) the dominant strategy in defining political institutions, economic relations and social attitudes during the Yugoslav history. But process of internationalization of Yugoslav capital only exacerbated already existing uneven economic development between more developed regions (Slovenia, Croatia, Vovodina) and less developed regions (Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Kosovo). This economic divide especially came to the fore during the eighties when foreign creditors pushed for stronger implementation of liberalization packages and unremitting demand for austerity measures. Shortly before the political disintegration, in 1988, federal government restored the capitalist relations of production. Thus collapse of Yugoslavia did not mean the defeat of socialism because socialist elements were rapidly dismantled during the eighties. It meant the final triumph of liberal program with devastating social consequences for the least developed regions (Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia). And it is no coincidence that the nationalist violence exploded in those regions while the conditions of near full employment enabled Slovenia to exit Yugoslavia avoiding escalation of violence. What followed were the diverging trajectories of former Yugoslav republics arising from adapting to nationalist imperatives of political struggle under the influence of political (United States, Germany, European Union, Russia), economic (IMF, World bank) and military (NATO) international factors. Their role was of different dynamics and intensity in former Yugoslav republics but in the end it forced the post-communist liberal normalization and full integration in the global process of capital accumulation. Result was almost complete subordination of political and economic autonomy to the global centers of capitalist dynamics and reinforced liberal political and ideological domination.

Land grabbing in CEE: Tina Schivatcheva

The recent global rise of food prices has predicated the explosion of land-grab practices at a global geo-economic scale. The global financial crisis impacted particularly strongly the resource-dependent, export-oriented economies of Bulgaria and Ukraine. Consequently, instead of striving to develop the potential of the small-scale local farmers, the political elites of the two states have responded eagerly to offers for mega land-acquisitions, issued by powerful international actors such as China. Drawing on the Polanyian conception of land as a 'fictitious commodity,' the analysis focuses on two recent Chinese land acquisitions, which are taking place in Bulgaria and Ukraine. The constructivist analytical perspective of the study allows

exploring the socio-political construction of the 'land' and discussing the social resonance of the two 'land grabs.'

By exploring the framing of the major arguments of the movement for further land commodification and the ones of the protective counter-movement, the analysis strives to provide an insight into the collective identities supportive of the neo-liberal expansion and the ones opposing it within the post-socialist states.

Financialisation in Russia and the Ukraine: Mirjam Büdenbender

1. Financialisation is a phenomenon unfolding in, and affecting many societies.
2. The real estate sector has been one key dimension in this process (both as a sector being permeated by financial motives and actors and in serving as outlet for financial innovation).
3. Peripheral countries, even if not displaying sophisticated practices and tools such as securitization that usually define the condition of financialisation, do play a role in the unfolding of this process across the globe.
4. To account for the role of 'peripheral' economies in processes of financialisation I therefore propose to study how the former relate to and insert themselves into global markets. Concretely, I will advance the case of Russia's property market. This allows to shed some light on the way the Russian political economy is integrated in global markets and positions itself vis-à-vis processes of financialisation.

Possible consequences of an Association Agreement between the Ukraine and the European Union: Alexander Kravchuk

- Unfortunately, today's discussion in Ukrainian society about European integration reduced to abstract concepts of "civilization choice" between «Backward East» and "welfare states» of West democracies. Therefore, it is necessary to make critical analysis of integration in terms of its impact on the future socio-economic situation in Ukraine.
- In the mid 90's due to the result of "shock therapy", liberal economic policy, breaking economic relations with the former Soviet republics, criminal privatization, Ukraine lost more than 60% of own economy and still has not recovered to its previous level. In the economic structure became dominant sector of commercial services, finance, trade with the simultaneous decline in manufacturing. The survived industry has shifted to the sectors with low technological processing. The economy of Ukraine finally embedded into the world market as a supplier of raw materials and cheap labor force. The foreign balance of payments despite the economic recovery since 2000 has been negative and compensates by decreasing of international reserves, as well as by external debt growth. It threatens to default or increasing dependence on international financial institutions.
- Possibility of changing this trend also depends upon the economic part of Ukrainian euro-integration. According to the calculations in «GTAP», the rise surplus for Ukraine can be achieved only in two sectors: crop production and the textile industry,

while all other sectors of the economy will experience a significant increase in competition from European suppliers, leading to a decrease in production and trade surplus. Ukraine is currently not ready for full liberalization of its market for the EU. Some sectors are uncompetitive compared with European ones, which may bring about the decrease in production and export of domestic products, the disappearance of companies and job losses, particularly in the long run.

The case of Greece: Marica Frangakis

1. The Eurozone crisis has re-introduced the notions of core/periphery into the debate. This is a theoretically contested area between those who place special emphasis on international relations and those who emphasize class relations.
2. We focus on the case of Greece. We examine its historical background with 'contemporary eyes'. That is, we look for the roots of contemporary problems in the way its economic and political formation was put together, as well as in the pattern of its international relations. Overall, we find that the core-periphery dichotomy in combination with a class-relations perspective are useful analytical tools in understanding the present state of a country that is placed in the periphery of Europe and which has traditionally been on the margins of capitalism.
4. Special attention is paid to two areas of relevance to the formation of modern Greece and to its so-called public debt crisis: military expenditure and interest payments.
5. The Eurozone crisis is exacerbating pre-existing tendencies and contradictions across and within classes, as well as across national and European space. This is a once-in-a-lifetime crisis, which is weakening labour, impoverishing the middle class, pauperizing the poor. Confronting these contradictions is the task faced by the Left today.
6. Resistance against these trends is building up. It takes many forms. Militancy, solidarity initiatives and the rise of a hitherto small political party of the left to the main opposition party.

Sunday, 26.10.2014

On the situation and the development of alternative social and political forces in Europe: Laura Horn

- We can only fully grasp the nature of the ongoing developments in anti-austerity pro-tests through a thorough engagement with class - and hence the deeper structures of exploitation, consent and contestation that engender these social struggles.
- The unequal and uneven development of the crisis has generated differences in austerity and crisis measures, which also impacts on the participation of left groups and unions in a transnational counter-hegemonic movement.
- The increasingly authoritarian constitutionalisation of austerity, at the expense of the consensual dimension of the hegemony in the EU project, is a potential focal point for contentious collective action.