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A journey through Chechnya**

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The Lessons from »Brexit«:

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a progressive alliance in and for »Core Europe«**

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Europe. It's always Europe – growing problems and fading hopes. Then came Brexit, another heavy blow, although one that many people prefer to interpret as a step toward liberation. They suppose that the way finally has been cleared for the urgently needed deeper integration in economic, fiscal, and social policy, a path that the British have been blocking for a long time, but which absolutely must be opened up if the core problems of the EU ever are going to be resolved. At best, this argument is only half true, because in this matter the United Kingdom never has been the sole obstacle in the Union. Hence, we should pay close



attention to the proposal aired by Professor Mario Telò, an Italian expert on European affairs, that emerged from a network of leading researchers on Europe. The plan is elaborated in some detail in the essay he contributed to this issue. To regain its credibility and effectiveness – which have a reciprocal influence on one another – Europe has to take a giant step forward and do it quickly: the creation of a large »Core Europe« consisting of as many of the EU countries as possible that are prepared to engage in more extensive integration. If that core had its own economic and fiscal governance, and a parliament and budget of its own, it could, in short order, adopt credible measures to confront the smoldering euro crisis and deal with a refugee problem that presumably will once again become acute. That would inject new hope and new energies into the project of European integration. If successful, this strategy in time could also persuade other countries from among the broader circle of the 27 that the EU is in a position to solve their major problems.

People in Europe and especially in Germany are of two minds about Russia. Are Putin's irritating policies, particularly those in Ukraine, the outcome of a previously problem-plagued marginalization policy of the West, or are they part of a long-planned geopolitical strategy directed against the European Union? What are the reasons behind the increasing authoritarianism of his domestic policies? What is the attitude of Russian society toward all this and what stance should the West take on those same trends? These are just some of the other topics to be addressed in this issue. We are also embracing a slogan that the newly elected Chancellor of Austria, Christian Kern, has interjected into the debate: »For a new social democratic century!« In the world as we know it can his words amount to anything more than a phrase heard today and forgotten tomorrow? We think so and that is why we ask: what can be said in behalf of Kern's statement and what might be done to make it come true?

Thomas Meyer

Thomas Meyer
Editor-in-Chief and Co-Publisher

Golineh Atai

Fear Haunts Everyday Life

A journey through Chechnya

»You see how many nice new buildings there are here. But you know – apples rot from the inside.« His eyes dart nervously back and forth. Nobody seems to be watching us, so there is a brief moment of freedom. I have the sense that someone wants to tell me a lot very quickly. »You won't have a chance to see the poverty here. I can't show you my own neighborhood. Here, about 70 % of the people are unemployed. Sometimes we Chechens get so angry that we want to go into the streets and scream, just scream, about the injustice that befalls us every day. But there surely will be a power shift at the top. And if Ramzan Kadyrov escapes and emigrates, then we will take our revenge on his clique. They humiliate people. Did you see how a young man in his underwear was put on a treadmill and made to praise Putin? Did you see how Kadyrov, on state TV, humiliated a woman – right in front of her husband – who had criticized him until she repented? And then these huge demonstrations for Kadyrov – everyone is dragged to them. We have to go; otherwise our wages are docked or we get fired. It is all just a carnival.«

The man who is telling me all this would be in mortal danger if I revealed his identity. I have seen signs of torture on his body. Not only his own life, but also the lives and the dignity of his family members would be in jeopardy.

The truth behind the attractive facade

We are in Russia or, more precisely, in Grozny, the capital of the Republic of Chechnya. It became famous 16 years ago as a »war-ravaged hellhole.« According to a UN report from that time, it was the world's most devastated city. Now, towers reach toward the sky. There is an almost uninhabited, empty skyline in front of a golden mosque – the Republic's leader had a monument built to himself, paid for with money from Moscow. The streets are clean and the buildings' facades spick and span. Everything has a peaceful aura. »But there is a kind of peace that is at least no better than war – when every face conceals a terrible secret, when blood oozes out from under the marble which someone has to clean up every morning.« These are the words of Russian journalist Oleg Kashin about Chechnya. It would be impossible to make a film about the truth behind the marble stage set. Anyone who talks to Western journalists comes under suspicion. Even our native drivers take a risk. In contrast to the situation three years ago, our calls to the few independent human rights activists in Grozny go unanswered. Many of them have left. After a series of Russian and Western journalists were arrested, deported, or beaten, we decide to work with human rights advocates chosen by the state. They set up official appointments for us, exploit the visit of a Western TV crew as propaganda for their own ends, and collect money from us for all that. I soon realize that, as an officially registered journalist here, I am drawn into moral and psychological constraints and predicaments similar to those experienced by anyone who wants to live honestly in this republic.

A street poll on Putin Boulevard: I ask passers-by why many Chechens want to move to Germany. There, the number of asylum applications has been rising. »I have not heard anything about this. On the contrary, people there want to come back,« says one woman. »Because we have stability here. I would say that our republic is thriving. We are working; we have leisure time; we have a really good governor of the republic; we are quite satisfied; we love him.« A minute later I ask another woman who had quickly put on her sunglasses when she saw our TV crew. »I would like to go to Germany too. It is much better there than here. There you have a legal order and laws. Here too, maybe, but it is different,« she sighs. I tell her that we had heard everything was fine here. She smiles: »Yes, they do say that. They say a lot of things. But what people are saying and writing on the Internet about how things are here – that is the only thing close to the truth. Goodbye.«

»People are inwardly divided,« the Russian human rights activist Svetlana Gannushkina tells me, and she knows Ramzan Kadyrov personally. They live on streets named after their Russian tormenters. They had to forget the wars against Russia and the drive for independence. They had to repress their own history, the deportation of an entire people under Stalin. Now they are being pressured again by a ruler who allows himself to be addressed as »king« and who regards every complaint as a crime. Every person who points out the blood oozing out of the marble is branded as a traitor and can disappear, lose his family, or watch his house burn down. »Fear forces the Chechens to love their dragon. At the psychological level it may be a protective reaction, a defense mechanism; otherwise they would go crazy,« Gannushkina says. »There are eye-witness reports according to which Ramzan personally attends torture sessions. Psychologically speaking, he probably should be classified as a sadist. Maybe he enjoys it. Everyone knows about it: the state prosecutor is in the loop and so is the interior minister, and others.«

The story of the village of Kenchi, in the southeastern part of the republic, symbolizes Kadyrov's rule. In a ten-minute-long homemade video produced in April, one inhabitant of the village, Ramazan Jaladinov, appeals to President Putin. The family man had tried several times to interest federal authorities in the plight of his village. The damages inflicted by the last war and the devastation caused by a flood had never been repaired. The village residents had received compensation only after paying a kickback of two-thirds of the sum to local officials. The wages of the teachers in the village were so often in arrears that many of them had abandoned the profession. Arbitrary actions, corruption, the disappearance of social welfare payments that come directly from Moscow: none of this was really news in the republic. In an interview with an independent Russian journalist, villagers confirmed Ramazan Jaladinov's statements. From that point on, he was a marked man. Since his video appeared on YouTube he began receiving death threats, so he fled into neighboring Dagestan. His wife and daughters were thrown out of their house by armed men, then the house was set on fire. Later his wife told journalists in Dagestan that the armed men had held a pistol to her head, saying: »Your husband has to apologize for his lies and apologize to Kadyrov; otherwise you or your daughters might disappear.«

Soon the village is surrounded by security forces. The boss of the republic visits

Kenchi. Kadyrov is angry with the man who had gone over his head directly to Putin. The villagers who previously had closed ranks with their neighbor now denigrate Jaladinov, accusing him of hypocrisy. Finally, after six weeks, the petitioner retracts his video message and apologizes to the head of the republic. He claims to be ashamed of himself for making such big mistakes, and hopes his fellow human beings will not repeat those errors. Ramzan Kadyrov posts the video – together with the apology – on Instagram with the remark: »Every person is entitled to make a mistake. [He is] an intelligent man who realized that something had gone wrong and admitted it, and got back on the path of truth. I understood from the very first day that some unscrupulous and malicious forces wanted to misuse the unhealthy villager for their own purposes. A media attack to intimidate him and suggest that his life and the lives of his family members were in danger. They tried to force him to leave Chechnya. But no one will take such good care of him as we do in Chechnya.«

We are not allowed to visit Kenchi. Instead, we are invited to a shish-kebab meal by the Kadyrov youth in a gorgeous mountain village, where the »king« is having a ski area built. The state-appointed human rights representative, Nurdi Nuchaev, explains it to us this way: »Since we have built such nice streets and houses here, it wouldn't be too much to ask of you to report about them. And if you don't want to praise them, then it would be best to say nothing at all.« Unidentified dark forces, recipients of funding from the West, had set fire to the villager's house, or so Nuchaev wants us to believe.

A kind of consensus

Jaladinov had appealed many times to leading politicians in the Russian Federation. He directed his video message to Russia's president, but Vladimir Putin never replied. The human rights activist, Svetlana Gannushkina, describes the relationship between the Kremlin and Grozny, Putin and Kadyrov, as a »kind of consensus,« perhaps not written down anywhere, but merely verbal, maybe in this form: »You can do whatever you want, as long as you recite these words every day: Russia is our mommy and Putin is our daddy. As long as you advocate the position that Chechnya is a part of Russia, you can do as you please.«

Russian journalists and human rights activists constantly point out to Putin that the Russian constitution and federal law are a dead letter in Chechnya. »There is only one law, and that is Ramzan's command,« explains Gannushkina. Even in the Soviet era such a state of affairs never existed: in Chechnya Russian lawyers operate under the threat of death and cannot accomplish anything. When armed Chechens set a bus full of journalists and human rights advocates on fire, destroy the office of a human rights organization in Grozny, or punish the entire families of terrorists by burning down their houses and torturing family members, the Kremlin's well-rehearsed response is always: »That is unacceptable.« But the words are never followed up by deeds. In April Putin extended Kadyrov's term of office. The chief of the Chechen Republic, who was never elected, has been in office for nine years.

Ramzan Kadyrov holds the highest Russian orders of merit. On Instagram he likes to pose with baby tigers or crocodiles on his arm. He enjoys inviting Hollywood stars

to his rebuilt Grozny, looks for his runaway cat online, and has picked a quarrel with U.S. comedian John Oliver. He is often shown wearing Putin T-shirts and Koranic prayer beads around his neck. He regards himself as the supreme human rights activist and judge. »He considers the money that flows into Chechnya from Moscow as his own personal fund, and he decides how it will be spent. Housing in Chechnya built and paid for out of state funds is then sold off. Kadyrov owns an amazing castle, a zoo, and marvelous horses from the Arabian emirates,« explains Svetlana Gannushkina.

A few days after the villager Ramazan Jaladinov apologized, we suddenly get an invitation from the authorities to go to Kenchi. It is evidently important to the regime that the man should share his apology and self-incrimination with a Western television network as well. I turn down the offer. I do not want to submit a report in which I misuse a man under obviously intense pressure as a propaganda tool of the regime.

The list of human rights violations is long

When President Putin's Human Rights Council makes an official trip through the Caucasus, I travel to Grozny once again. On the agenda are a meeting with citizens and an appointment with Ramzan Kadyrov. But at the last minute the Council, authorized by Putin, has to change its schedule. Kadyrov threatens that he cannot guarantee the safety of the Council members in Grozny. I meet with Council member Igor Kalyapin, a member of the Russian NGO »Committee for the Prevention of Torture,« in the neighboring republic of Ingushetia. The Russian has investigated countless cases in Chechnya. However, his organization, founded in the aftermath of the murder of human rights activist Natalia Estimirova, can no longer work in Chechnya. Its office has been ransacked several times. When Kalyapin inquired of the Russian Attorney General whether Kadyrov's rule was in keeping with the principles of the Russian constitution, he soon became *persona non grata* in Grozny. In an interview with us, the human rights advocate talks of a new quality in the Kadyrov regime: »It is evidently no longer enough for Ramzan that his rule should be utterly arbitrary and that his people can do anything they want to any Chechen and walk away unpunished – that is no longer enough for him. Now Kadyrov wants to make sure that nobody talks about it.«

A few Chechens have traveled the 100 kilometers from Grozny to Nazran, in Ingushetia, to meet with Kalyapin there. »If you show us here with your camera, Ramzan will kill us,« they told me. They are looking for legal advice and moral support. One case concerns a missing daughter; in another, people have been tortured because they criticized Kadyrov on a social network. I hear about confessions and self-indictments coerced through torture and threats, forced resettlements, and collective punishments. An attorney tells me that many innocent young men have been accused of belonging to the Islamic State. Documents are forged and statistics are sugarcoated to give Moscow the impression that criminal prosecutions of terrorists in Chechnya are going exceptionally well. One Chechen turns to me, explaining that a lot of people do not want to talk to me because they are afraid that something will

happen to their relatives: »But believe me, people all over the country have had enough.«

Igor Kalyapin sits at a table in the Regional Administration of Nazran with a portrait of Putin hanging on the wall above him. He looks pensive and beleaguered. One case especially is preoccupying him, he tells me. It is the story of a young Chechen girl who worked for a Western refugee aid organization and was kidnapped in Grozny years ago, and has not been seen since. The European Court of Human Rights ruled that Russia should pay compensation to her relatives. The young woman was taken by a special operations unit of Kadyrov's security forces, so, says Kalyapin, Kadyrov bears direct responsibility in this case. The case is hopeless. »During the First and Second Chechen Wars, there were massive casualties among the civilian population. But never before has the population been so afraid of the state, their own neighbors and themselves as they are now, in present-day Chechnya, with all its light shows, fountains, skyscrapers, and Putin Boulevards. I think there has never been anything like this in the history of the Chechen people. Maybe there was something like it in Moscow in 1937.«



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Jutta Scherrer

Vladimir Putin as Teacher of Russian History

Russian President Vladimir Putin has an extraordinary fondness for the history of his own country, but his invocations of Russia's past are always adapted to current political circumstances. Still, underlying his eclectic use of political history there is one consistent, overarching theme: the strong Russian state and its unbroken continuity from the great medieval empire of Kievan Rus (9th-13th century) down to the present day, including Stalin's regime. This thousand-year history is based upon several elements that unify the »Russian world«: notably, its language and culture, as well as the Russian Orthodox religion. Russian history thus understood is a transnational ideological construct that includes, under the heading of Russian civilization, all of the territory formerly occupied by the Soviet Union in which Russian people live. That is the premise Putin invoked to justify the annexation of the Crimea in March, 2014. Even Putin's geopolitical Eurasia Project is undergirded by the hegemonic »Russian world« and the »Russian idea« that holds together the European and Asiatic parts of the country.

In order to substantiate his political ideas (or, better, his ambitions), Putin's speeches cite statements made by Russian philosophers who defend a conservative vision of Russia's history – or so the President or his speech writers sometimes

erroneously assume. Remarks made by a motley array of thinkers such as Ivan Ilyin or Nicholas Berdyaev are stripped of their original content and assigned to analogous political contexts as needed. Sometimes, the very same quotation is made to do double duty by supporting diametrically opposed arguments (cf. Michel Eltchaninoff's book *In Putins Kopf: Die Philosophie eines lupenreichen Demokraten*, 2016).

The following pages will point to some of the crucial features that characterize Putin's uses and abuses of Russian history since the beginning of his rule in 2000.

To begin with, patriotism is seen as an element in the cohesion of the almighty Russian state apparatus. Putin was prescribing patriotism to Russia's youth even when he still included Russia in European culture, at least during his visits to foreign countries in the West. In the meantime the decree on patriotism has been updated again and again to include new aspects, among them the patriotic military education of youth. The patriotic mission admits that Russia is a multinational state, but insists that it is the Russians who insure its cohesion and form its foundation. Even though the constitution officially recognizes other religions, including Islam, Judaism and Buddhism, it is Russian Orthodoxy, the religion of most ethnic Russians, that is said to embody the traditional values of Russia as a great power.

The cult of memory concerning the »Great Patriotic War« and victory over Nazi Germany is closely associated with patriotism and solemnized every year with increasingly elaborate military parades. The idea is to buttress the power of the Russian state and fortify the self-consciousness and identity of Russia as a great and invincible nation.

As recently as 2009, Putin admitted in an address delivered in Danzig on the occasion of the seventieth anniversary of the start of World War II that all of the treaties signed with Nazi Germany between 1934 and 1939 were »morally unacceptable« and »politically pointless.« But at a meeting with young historians in Moscow in November, 2014, he justified the Hitler-Stalin Pact by arguing that the Soviet Union needed time to modernize its armed forces. The secret additional protocol providing for the division of Poland between National-Socialist Germany and the Soviet Union was something that the Poles allegedly brought upon themselves. In the aftermath of the Munich Agreement of 1938, in which the Western powers acquiesced in the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia, the Poles supposedly got their pound of flesh as well. »In return, they simply got what was coming to them.« Putin's minister of culture, Vladimir Medinsky, concluded that the Pact had been »a colossal success for Stalin's diplomacy (Friedrich Schmidt in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*). For quite a while now school textbooks on Russian history have pointed out (many using maps as proof) that the assignment of certain areas to the Soviet Union in the Non-Aggression Pact was justified because those areas corresponded to territory held previously by the Russian Empire.

Russia – »holy power«

One of Putin's first official acts in November, 2001 was to bring back the melody of the Soviet national anthem, introduced by Stalin in 1943 and later abolished by Boris

Yeltsin. The words »the infallible party« were replaced by »Russia – holy power.« Yet Putin's patriotism, which he sees as a component of the national identity, also draws on imperial Russia. The new national holiday decreed in 2004 – the day of »national unity« – is supposed to commemorate the expulsion of Polish Catholic invaders on November 4, 1612 by an all-Russian militia. The victory ended the »time of troubles« (*smuta*) and inaugurated the reconstruction of what, at that time, was still the state of Moscow. The Russian Orthodox Church was deeply involved in the choice of this date, on account of its religious connotations. As early as the first year of his presidency, Putin had already granted the Church the right to canonize the last Tsar, Nicholas II, on the grounds that he had suffered a martyr's death. In general, the Church plays a prominent role in Putin's historical discourses. It vouches for traditional Russian values and is the bedrock of the Christian morality of Putin's state apparatus, a morality that supposedly has been abandoned in the decadent, immoral West. Orthodoxy is the heart and soul of the original, independent »Russian« civilization, a notion – closely tied to nostalgia for imperial Russia – that appears more and more frequently in Putin's speeches. Recently, Putin has taken to invoking what he calls the Russian »state-civilization« (*gosudarstvo-civilizacija*).

In his address to the nation of March 18, 2014, delivered right after the Crimea was annexed, Putin reminded listeners that that territory contained »sites with 1000 years of Russian history« which »are sacred to us,« and that is why »the Crimea will always be an inseparable part of Russia.« Even though Putin often refers to »holy Russia,« he also dedicated Europe's largest mosque in September of last year, and considers Islam to be »one of the traditional Russian religions« in a »united, multi-national, and multi-confessional country.«

Resistance is stirring

History is much too important to the legitimation of Putin's rule for him to leave it to historians, let alone to teachers of history. Again and again he hosts gatherings of the latter. He is worried about the proliferation of history books, which he would like to replace with one homogeneous historical narrative that would be presented to all the pupils in Russia's schools, as was the case during the Soviet era. Indeed, Putin has commissioned a textbook for history teachers entitled *Russia's Recent History, 1945-2006*, whose author, Alexander Filipov, was not even a historian. It portrays Stalin as the »leader of a powerful Russian state« and the »machine of Soviet industrialization.« While Stalinist repression is not justified in the textbook, it is clearly overshadowed by the dictator's successes. Above all, Stalin's name is associated with the Russian victory over Germany. To their credit, numerous Russian historians and history teachers have openly opposed this and similar historical interpretations favored by Putin. Furthermore, Putin's obliging successor, interim president Dmitri Medvedev, set up a »commission to combat attempts to falsify history to the detriment of the interests of Russia,« which also disconcerted numerous historians and representatives of civil society. They were especially dismayed to see that the commission was composed of representatives of the secret service and the army (commonly described as *siloviki* in Russian, which means, roughly, »strength«) who were known for their nationalistic

views and »great power« thinking. By now the commission has been dissolved. Nevertheless, more and more pseudo-historical films are inundating state television and contributing to the glorification of the strong Russian state proclaimed by Putin. Those movies also cultivate images of the enemy, with the United States at the top of the list.

No place for guilt and responsibility

Putin pushes the politics of history to a degree unmatched by any of his predecessors, including even the Soviet ones. At the heart of his image of history, focused as it is on Russian identity and national sovereignty, is a justification of the greatness of the Russian empire, whether under Soviet or pre-Soviet auspices. Past Russian greatness offers some solace for the demise of the Soviet Union, which Putin so deeply regrets. One year prior to the one-hundredth anniversary of Lenin's Russian Revolution in 1917, Putin is moving away from the view that the Revolution degraded the state and destroyed the cohesion of the Russian empire in its traditional historical form. The great-power and patriotic myth disseminated by Putin sees in the history of the fatherland little more than a series of glorious and heroic exploits that legitimize his own policies, notably those that aim at the strengthening of state power. There is no place for guilt and responsibility in this myth. Nor is there any need, from Putin's point of view, for Russians to come to terms with the Soviet past. Appealing to historians at the beginning of his first term in office, Putin warned: »We should not permit anyone to foist guilt feelings on us.« Their job, he added, was »to instill again in our young citizens, especially, a feeling of pride in their country.« Yet Putin has not denied the crimes committed under Stalin, at least not recently. He simply believes that the »method« was wrong. Nor did he try to prevent the establishment of a gulag museum in Moscow, which recently opened, but only because he did not want to let civil society dominate discussion of the Soviet-era prison camps. Yet the victims of Russian history do not detract from his conception of Russia's greatness, and that is another reason why Stalin increasingly has been rehabilitated. In a conversation about the Second World War, Putin asked rhetorically: »Amid all the critique of Stalin can anyone maintain with certainty that a course of action other than Stalin's would have helped us achieve victory?«

Now as before, it is the institutions of civil society that will be left to investigate the crimes committed in the Soviet Empire, above all Stalin's acts of repression, and determine who instigated them and was responsible for carrying them out. Let's hope that the representatives of society will be allowed to continue their activities, since foreign foundations and NGOs, formerly involved in such research are increasingly being discredited, branded as »agents.«



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Rudolf Walther

Nuit Debout: More than merely anarchists

As compared with the 1970s, the number of days lost to strikes in France has fallen from just over 300 for every thousand days of work to only 100. But workers are still 25 times more willing to go on strike in France than they are in the Federal Republic of Germany. Every government during the Fifth Republic has introduced bills that have managed to provoke the labor unions and mobilize their members to strike. In February, the Manuel Valls government floated a labor law reform proposal that the unions took to be a declaration of war. The point was to open up some clearings in the impenetrable thicket that is the 3,600 page-long French *code du travail*. Labor law was to be »simplified,« social dialogue »strengthened,« and much else »liberalized.« The »reform« appeared to be the handiwork of the classically liberal minister of economics, Emmanuel Macron, and obeyed the usual market imperatives: »Work more, earn less,« and »Make it easier to fire employees.« Right from the start, the labor unions understood the bill not as an invitation to join in a »social dialogue« or form a »social partnership« as in the German model, so they responded with protests and strikes.

In the aftermath of these protests a social movement emerged known as »Nuit debout« (»Up all night« or, more loosely translated, »We fell asleep and are going to wake up«). It has spread like wildfire to more than 170 cities, in which mostly ordinary people, most of them young, have been discussing how one might live another kind of life in a more just society. The strike movement against the labor law »reform« also gained new life. More than a million people all across the country demonstrated on March 31 even though the three largest labor unions were divided over the issue: The General Confederation of Labor (CGT) and the so-called Force Ouvrière went on strike in hopes of having the project shelved, while the CFDT (French Democratic Labor Confederation) simply wanted to weaken certain aspects of the bill. Business associations exacerbated the conflict by making maximal demands that went far beyond what was envisioned in the government's draft legislative proposal. At first, the government played for time, but was prepared to make concessions when it realized that the striking unions and protesters from Nuit debout were beginning to make common cause.

In addition to the labor law »reform,« two satirical and critical documentaries kick-started a broad protest movement: *Merci patron!* by François Ruffin and Demain by Cyril Dion and Mélanie Laurent, which played in more than 250 theaters and were viewed by about two million people between February 24 and April 14 alone. Ruffin's declared goal was to lure »people out of the privacy of their own four walls.« *Le Monde* announced the birth of a »*Cinéma de combat*« (fighting cinema). A diverse protest movement emerged first in Paris then quickly spread to other cities as well. It attracted the 18- to 30-year-old unemployed, labor union members, high school and college students, interns, people with precarious employment, the homeless and squatters, and militant ecologists. What united them was the conviction that no party, election, parliament, government, and certainly not the capitalist economic and social order was able or willing to provide them with access to education, a vocation,

a home, or opportunity. As *Le Monde* put it succinctly on April 8, 2016, they were protesting against »a precarious life and an uninhabitable world.« The sociologist and economist Frédéric Lordon captured the movement's goal in a provocative statement: »We demand nothing,« that is, »We demand everything«: a complete transformation of the system. There is a paradox here that has been noticed, at most, by those on the fringes of the movement: this kind of abstract universalism leads into a political blind alley, one in which minorities keep getting stuck when they claim to represent everyone and speak for all.

In the wake of the big demonstration of March 31 and under the banner of *Nuit debout*, the protesters assemble nightly at the Place de la République in Paris, where they party, dance, and debate until early hours of the morning. Many of them camp out in tents and improvised shelters. To dispel the surmise that all this is merely a flash in the pan that would quickly fade away, the demonstrators have fortified their political resolve by counting dates in a new way. After that successful day in March, they keep on counting days as though the month had never ended, so that April 5 becomes March 36.

Reclaiming the public space

The multi-city protest movements have been monitored and discussed attentively by the French media. One smartphone user who made short films of these events attracted 80,000 followers or clicks within just a few days. The protests were front page news in the print media as well as the lead story in television news broadcasts. A few politicians did visit the Place de la République discreetly, but they were unable to find any leaders with whom they could appear in front of the cameras. The protest movement tacks unsteadily from discussions and votes taken in plenary sessions to working groups and informal circles. At any rate it has no perceptible hierarchies. On its own initiative the protest movement rejects the backing of any political party or even the government, limiting itself to reclaiming the public space once again, after it had been occupied for months by the forces of order in the name of the state of emergency. The only participants who were prepared to talk – in this case in the Education Ministry – were representatives of high school students' organizations that had blockaded some 100 high schools across the country and forced their fellow students, teachers, and school administrators to take part in discussions. By dint of its willingness to talk – and following a well-rehearsed tactic – the Ministry managed to smooth down ruffled feathers and take the wind out of the sails of the blockade movement.

The conservative French Press, with *Le Figaro* in the lead (a paper owned by the media and armaments mogul Serge Dassault, who controls about 70 newspapers in all), quickly launched a real smear campaign against *Nuit debout*. A small minority of violent demonstrators was portrayed as embodying the entire movement, and it was they who henceforth would dominate the headlines. On April 22 the lead article in *Le Figaro* indiscriminately attributed a »totalitarian ideology« to the movement: »Islam-Marxism,« »Human-rights activism,« and »Robespierism.« Ski goggles, which some demonstrators wore as protection against tear gas assaults by the police, were branded as »weapons.«

The reaction of leading German media was equally predictable. For nearly two weeks the protest movement did not attract any attention at all. It was not until April 11 that the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* broke the silence with the caption: »When the people awakens.« The brief report filed by Paris correspondent Michaela Wiegel was rancorous and demagogic. Under an image of six masked, rock-throwing anarchists or »autonomous« demonstrators (in French they are called *casseurs*), the report goes on to suggest that the protest movement relies exclusively on rocks and rioting to make its points. The facts are these: There is a group in Paris, well-known to the police and including about 300 youth, known as MILI (*Mouvement inter-luttes indépendant*) that tries to exploit every demonstration for its own muddled ends. Martina Meister, a correspondent for the *Welt* (Berlin) and the *Tagesanzeiger* (Zurich), used the protests to issue a platitude-filled scolding to the labor unions under the title, »The last dinosaur,« thereby siding with the government and its »reform.« Christian Wernicke, the *Süddeutsche Zeitung's* correspondent, trivialized the political protest by casting it as a harmless happening staged by »French night owls.« Only after two weeks of extensive reporting in the French media did the German media provide coverage of the movement – which had by this time spread across the whole country—that was up to professional standards. But then this sort of reportage soon faded away, only to be replaced by articles on clashes between demonstrators and the special police unit known as the CRS, notorious for its brutality and housed in military-style barracks.

Nevertheless, the movement *Nuit debout* resonated widely. Groups from the cultural sphere were especially quick to offer solidarity to the Paris demonstrators of »Théâtre debout,« Musée debout,« »Art debout,« »Orchestre debout,« and »Bibliothèque debout.« Charlène Dinhut, program director of the Centre Pompidou, explained that »cultural institutions are not exempt from the issues raised by *Nuit debout*.

Fear of being exploited

Leading French intellectuals, supported as well by the German sociologist Wolfgang Streeck, presented an appeal in *Le Monde* (May 4, 2016), in which they identified the goal of *Nuit debout* as »cooperation with the labor unions and the working class.« The leaders of the two big union confederations, the CGT (Philippe Martinez) and the CGT-FO (Jean-Claude Mailly), declared: »We would like to see coordination of the struggles of the unions with those of *Nuit debout*.« But this has occurred only at the local level, because each side fears being exploited by the other for its own purposes.

The conservative side mocks and demonizes the protest movement either as a »vest pocket revolution« (*Le Figaro*, April 27, 2016) or as the product of »militant *petit bourgeois*« forces (*Le Figaro*, April 21, 2016). Today, according to *Le Figaro*, *Nuit debout* means »dozens of burned-out cars, looted stores, damaged public spaces, neighbors driven out of their homes.« The campaign against *Nuit debout* peaked when Alain Finkielkraut, a right-of-center philosopher and member of the Academy, paid an evidently provocative visit to the Place de la République. He was called names,

insulted, and even spat upon by one vulgar person. The philosopher Michel Onfray, writing in the conservative weekly *Le Point* (April 21, 2016), compared this despicable attack to the prisoners' numbers tattooed on the forearms of Finkelkraut's forebears, who, as Polish Jews, were transported to German concentration camps. Onfray interpreted the spitting boldly as »wounding – like the stab of a knife« and »as a final warning before the catastrophe.« In his whining report about the incident, Finkelkraut himself struck some false notes, charging that the »avant-garde« of *Nuit debout* wanted to »eliminate all dissenting thought, as if the twentieth century had never taken place.« He also alluded in dramatic fashion to the fate of his ancestors when speaking of the »persecution of otherness« and »reinvention of totalitarianism.« Those who took the protest to be a short-lived movement staged by the media are in denial.



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A New Social Democratic Century

In 1983 the sociologist Ralf Dahrendorf offered his famed diagnosis: The century of social democracy was over; almost all the goals of the movement had been achieved. They had left their imprint not only on society and public awareness, but even on the programs of all the political parties. So much for the analysis. Then came the liberal wishful thinking: By dint of their successes, the social democratic parties allegedly had outlived their historical usefulness. At the time, there was much to be said for that analysis. But today, after three decades of neoliberal dominance, it is completely obsolete. The social democratic parties now must analyze carefully the extent of and reasons for its obsolescence, if they are to succeed in making a new start.

Too many of the achievements that once seemed to justify Dahrendorf's judgment – mainly in the crucial areas of social security, the embedding of markets, parity positions for both business and labor in collective bargaining, and the promise of upward social mobility for all – have been thrown into reverse lately. The neo-liberal era enabled a »silent revolution« below the threshold of perception of the media-influenced public sphere, one that erased much of the erstwhile social democratic image of reality or made it unrecognizable (Wolfgang Streeck). The overall picture has been transformed: Class society and the dominance of markets are back, while the social market economy has mutated into a new version of »feudal capitalism« (Sig-hard Neckel). The principle that achievements should be rewarded, together with the promise of upward mobility, two of the fundamental legitimating norms of our society, have been repudiated all down the line. This is the case because, in the top echelons of

society, obscene inequality of income and wealth unconnected to demonstrable achievement has become routine; meanwhile precarious work expands and opportunities to move up the ladder dwindle. Indeed, large groups are now threatened by the prospect of social descent. We have become a society of »downward mobility« (Oliver Nachtwey). No wonder that a massive loss of confidence in the future and in the parties that once embodied people's hopes has occurred. In this atmosphere right-wing populism flourishes splendidly.

The once striking features of social democracy in the image of present-day society have faded. Moreover, the vision of the future that social democracy stands for today has not been articulated clearly enough to make people believe that social democrats can and want to turn the page.

Polanyi's pendulum

So has the Social Democratic Party, which did after all achieve so much, finally revealed its true nature as a Sisyphus? Yes it has, but not only that, because the great stone of progress has not rolled all the way back down into the valley. And besides: Even a social Sisyphus would always be a genuine hero in democratic capitalism. This is true at least in times when – according to the plausible theory of the great economic historian Karl Polanyi – social progress is only possible as a swing of the pendulum between periods in which capitalism is restrained by society and those in which it regains some of the turf it had ceded to the latter. Then eventually the threshold of pain is exceeded, which calls forth social energies capable of containing capitalism once more. Now the pendulum has swung too far away from the interests of society, and social democracy itself is partly to blame (liberalization of financial markets), although it has also put some checks on untrammelled capitalism (the minimum wage). The new chancellor of Austria, the Social Democrat Christian Kern, was right: The time is now ripe for a new social democratic century.

Hence, today even long lists of (good) specific reforms take too narrow a view. What is needed is an across-the-board, historic reversal of the momentum behind Polanyi's pendulum. The continually increasing inequalities in many individual spheres, blatant though they may be, are clearly not the only problem. The whole structure or dynamic of society has gotten out of balance. The fundamental political and economic arrangements at the core of society have undergone a shift, so that they now systematically generate effects contrary to the interests of society. Under-regulated financial markets continue to dominate (Martin Hellwig), while the social market economy is being dismantled (Marcel Fratzscher) and replaced by a form of »patrimonial capitalism« (Thomas Piketty) or »feudal capitalism« (Sighard Neckel) not conducive to achievement and efficiency. Central elements of the erstwhile economic democracy have been weakened such as neo-corporatism, stakeholder control of management, country-wide collective bargaining agreements between strong labor unions and management, and effective market regulation. In shareholder capitalism, guided as it is by the financial markets, a hermetic leadership caste grants itself fantastic salaries and luxurious pensions, all without any demonstrable relationship to real-world accomplishments. Meanwhile, around a third of blue-collar workers

and white-collar employees find that their jobs and living conditions have become much more precarious, while the income they derive from work has stagnated or even fallen. At the core of this structure an unhealthy dynamic has emerged that is producing many problematic outcomes. Business enterprises now take a short-term view of their investment decisions and focus narrowly on shareholder interests. At the same time, inequality has gotten out of hand, yet it constitutes a permanent refutation of the norm that efficiency and achievement should be rewarded. Finally, the restraints that once held some segments of the elite in check have fallen away, a trend that undermines the »social« culture of the entire country.

A new, strategic reform policy has to begin with the core elements of this dynamic and, from that starting point, overcome both class society and feudal capitalism, chiefly by strengthening economic democracy (the stakeholder principle, business-labor partnership in collective bargaining, regulation). The reform efforts must also introduce effective control over financial markets as well as set a symbolically and really effective upper limit on the permissible ratio of average to top incomes (by laws and/or taxes). At the heart of these substantive reforms there must be an effort to address what Karl Lauterbach revealed as the entrenched roots of a »two-class society«: inequalities in the fundamental sphere of human life such as health, life-expectancy, education, medicine, care for the infirm, and pensions.

Open questions

The counter-image to the new capitalism goes by two different names: »social democracy« and the »good society.« The basic outlines of both conceptions need not be invented all over again, but their coordinates have to be updated. As we sketch out the main elements of a reversal of social momentum, we also must find plausible answers to some open questions that are being asked today.

Equality or freedom? Social democratic communication concerning equality is usually defensive and therefore vulnerable. Nevertheless, its notion of equality is essentially defined by freedom. What is at stake here is the equal liberty of all persons, and in particular the whole range of freedoms, including the material prerequisites for a self-determined life. Only equal freedom is freedom made real for everyone. Unless a high level of equality in real-world life chances is given – what we may call base-level equality – freedom degenerates into a privilege of the affluent and remains a hollow promise for most people. Base-level equality in social matters includes such items as equal access to education, income, social security, »inclusive« pensions that insure coverage for all, as well as public goods that enhance the quality of everyday life. Forms of inequality that persist above and beyond that base level do not necessarily conflict with justice and solidarity, but only if everyone stands to benefit from them. Real freedom is equal freedom (Étienne Balibar). Now that is an idea ready-made for going on the offensive.

The digital revolution already has changed society profoundly, with severe consequences for work, freedom, and privacy. Only when its future development has been harnessed by society will it become a force for good, and that will not happen until the blueprints are no longer being designed and executed by the narcissistic,

libertarian utopians of Silicon Valley who think they can ignore anything as narrow-minded and old-fashioned as social limits and democratic rules. There is a deep ambiguity inherent in everything produced in the informally-managed workshops of the Valley, and it will take resolutely interventionist policies to get it back on a socially responsible track: i.e., one that redounds to the benefit of the entire society and does justice to the aspirations of its citizens to be free. The Internet is a public space, and as such it must be shaped by the means available to democratic politics. The digital restructuring of the world of work calls for a renewed collaboration between firms, labor unions, and the state, as in the time-tested and successful German model.

In the judgment of many intellectuals and civil society critics, the chief shortcoming of the left and especially the SPD, is its lack of attention to *global justice*. That is probably valid in the case of public communications, but much less so where actual programs are concerned. The SPD's program contains some quite far-reaching and timely waypoints on this issue. Germany, acting on its own, could achieve much more than it does now – if it at least adhered to its own self-imposed guidelines for development aid policy (the goal is to spend 0.7 % of GDP) and emphasized the right things. Still, the most important factor in shaping a more just world is for the rich countries to coordinate their policies with an eye to achieving the United Nations' millennium goals (now known as sustainable development goals). Essentially, these are designed to put into practice the fundamental social and economic rights laid down in the UN Covenant on Social, Economic, and Cultural Rights which most wealthy countries have ratified. One aspect of those policies would be a fair trade regime that provided greater room for maneuver in the poorer countries' quest for development. The corrupt elites and thieving clans that in many places rip off their own countries often can be combatted only indirectly from outside, and then only if one attacks them on vulnerable points – unless of course they have committed flagrant crimes against humanity. Blatant state failure, poverty, hunger, repression, life-threatening situations, and then mass flight – i.e., global inequality in its worst forms – frequently derive from intra-societal conflicts over power, recognition, and opportunities. But these sorts of deadly crises are exacerbated and perpetuated if and only if the outside world fails to do everything in its power to deny the aggressors access to weapons and financing. In fact, it often does precisely the opposite, particularly when the outside powers in question succumb to apathy and selfishness. Therefore, the SPD's global equality policy calls for the party to exert influence on its own government so that it will bear these circumstances in mind when it designs its own development and arms sales policies. Likewise, it behooves the SPD to work diligently toward the goal of global justice in the international institutions and organizations of which it is a member. As early as 1979, i.e., over three decades ago, the Brandt Commission proved that such policies are directly in our own interest. Its conclusions have been underscored in the most dramatic fashion by the present-day waves of refugees.

The new politics of identity. Arguably the hardest problem for social democrats to solve is the looming threat all over Europe that new lines of conflict over the politics of identity will divide society. The defusing of these conflicts in the long run will help

decide the role and magnitude of social democratic parties in Europe. At issue here is not so much the determination to fight hard against right-wing radicalism, since social democratic policies have long been committed to doing that. However, the ability of populist *entrepreneurs of identity* to mobilize their followers politically and emotionally is hardly less important than the twentieth century's ideological struggles. For one thing, they can hope to obtain the support of many democratic protest voters who by no means concur in their programs. They are experimenting with an ideologically souped-up version of fundamentalism meant to attract »the people« (as distinct from the elites). Their brand of fundamentalism is really a placeholder for other, essentially social and political conflicts that they have displaced and saturated with cultural meanings. These identity salesmen can only mold a successful, broad-based protest movement as long as the social conflicts remain unresolved which they pretend to overcome on cultural grounds. Inequality, fear of downward mobility, and insecurity all play key roles here. The party that has traditionally attracted the »little guy« would be ill advised to abandon to the Alternative für Deutschland that one-third of society alienated by entrenched injustice and insecurity. The risk is especially great, given that the errors of Merkel's refugee and integration policies threaten to throw that segment of society into a panic. It would be a mistake to draw a *cordon sanitaire* between these people and »respectable« society. The fault line should run instead between those who are merely insecure and the hard core of activists from organized right-wing populism. Wolfgang Thierse has shown accurately where the boundary should be: »We sense that German society is going to change markedly due to migration (...). Individual and collective identities will be called into question because of the foreign element and the foreigners who have moved closer to us – on account of globalization, open borders, immigrants, and refugees. Consequently, fears of losing one's home arise, which find expression in the mobilization of prejudices, rage, and aggressive protest.«

Anyone who predicts far-reaching transformations for society without stating where exactly it is headed and whether the way forward has been secured, is simply feeding such anxieties. When there is a lack of public debate, reliable waypoints, and sturdy guardrails for the great transformation, the voluntarism of a chancellor who just a few years ago proclaimed the »absolute failure« of multiculturalism cannot instill confidence. The growing fears about jobs, social security, social cohesion, and the familiar world of everyday life, which of course are not entirely unrealistic, have to be taken seriously and used as a starting point for a social democratic alternative which offers convincing deeds that would take the wind out of the populists' identity-political sails. It is a mistake to imagine that the modern world is now dividing into two camps: instinctive communitarians who don't want to let any foreigners in, and world-traveling cosmopolitans for whom the gates are not open wide enough. Both are unrealistic constructs of extreme points on a continuum. Real human beings with their own divergent views are located somewhere between these artificial extremes. Most of them want to feel that their country is home, but are not completely against immigration as long as it is manageable. Then there are the cosmopolitans who are very open to what is »foreign,« but want to have a place in the world where they can feel at

home. A convincing refugee and integration policy could effect a rapprochement of the two groups under social democratic auspices. Sigmar Gabriel has proposed one element of such a policy: a pact of solidarity that would shift the line of conflict desired by the practitioners of identity politics so that it would no longer run between the bottom third of the native-born population and the refugees (double integration). This realignment would be accompanied by, and depend on, a comprehensive integration policy (school, vocational training, housing, language courses, geography).

All of these tasks will pose challenges aplenty for a new social democratic century. It has to start now, before it is too late.



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Empowerment and Networking as Foundations of Integration Policy

A brief international and historical comparison

The daunting challenge of finding temporary lodging for refugees in Germany has largely been met. Now it is time to worry about their integration. The approach that Germany should take to this second challenge has been a hot topic of discussion at the political level during the last few weeks. The debates have focused mainly on a putative »duty to integrate,« whether those who »resist integration« should be sanctioned, and whether their place of residence should be assigned under certain circumstances, as was recently proposed by the Federal Cabinet in the form of an integration law. What has been overlooked in all this is the fact that »integration« cannot be ordained by law. It is a far more complicated process that requires a lot of time and may even extend over several generations. Also, there may be multiple paths that lead to the same goal. In the Federal Republic of Germany we find examples indicating that »integration« has come about mainly through processes of assimilation (learning the language, educational success, professional advancement, intermarriage, naturalization process), as has been true of immigrants from Spain. There are also cases in which immigrants have preferred to keep to themselves, and have made great, untiring efforts to maintain the culture that they brought with them. Members of the latter group less frequently have been inclined to accept German citizenship, yet they have been well »integrated« (for example, immigrants from Greece).

There is one common factor in most of the »success stories« of integration policy. Diverse groups of immigrants all have managed to organize themselves effectively,

and articulate and assert their interests vis-à-vis the host society, sometimes even against the dogged resistance of German organizations and institutions. A case in point is the equal right to education for foreign children in the German school system, which immigrant organizations won at a time when the state was still committed to the dictum that immigrant children should not lose their ability to return to their native lands. Now a process of integration lies ahead for the newly-arrived immigrants, and it will be equally crucial for them to preserve their self-help capabilities and powers. Examples from history and international comparisons both confirm the importance of this observation. Whenever immigrant groups have managed to band together, help each other, and represent their interests in contacts with the host society, in the end they have succeeded in overcoming their marginal status in society and becoming an important driver of social development. This phenomenon can be observed often – and quite impressively – in the United States, especially in the case of immigrants from India, many of whom participated in the IT boom in Silicon Valley through networks and self-organization. How do things stand in the case that is now before us? Are the initial, tentative measures for improving integration well-suited to bolstering the self-help capabilities of the immigrants and thus promoting their »integration«? A brief survey of three central areas of integration – housing, work, and language – will show that, even at the outset of the integration process, thought must be given to the self-determination and self-help of the migrants.

Housing

In comparison with the United States and many European countries, we do not find much cultural and social segregation in German cities. The proposed integration law and the possibility of an »assigned place of residence« should continue to forestall that kind of segregation. At first glance, this is understandable. Nevertheless, such an approach also overlooks the positive effects of self-determination and the potential for networking and self-help among the migrants when they enjoy the freedom to choose where they will live. Especially when immigrants' kinship relations are involved, or when family members and acquaintances have already moved to Germany, it is important to make use of those networks. That is the kind of system that Sweden has, for example. There, asylum seekers have the option of staying with family or friends while their asylum application is still being processed. It is also possible for migrants to live in privately rented housing there. Of course, they then must finance their own lodging, but that does reduce costs for the state. Currently, around a third of asylum seekers in Sweden avail themselves of one of these options. In many instances, the rental units in question are advertised by other migrants or migrant organizations. That fact demonstrates the integrative potential of the community cited earlier, especially since counseling and translation help are often funded privately rather than through the state. In Germany too, the first resort for many refugees are the migrant organizations and integration committees of municipalities – although it must be said that these contact points are not always well-equipped to do their jobs, nor do they enjoy adequate support. In this case it would be reasonable to develop further the existing self-help structures for migrants, rather than relying on coercion by the state.

Work

Much the same holds true for labor markets. Many jobs are offered and accepted via networks and relationships, as numerous studies attest. The most crucial step is to put newly-arrived immigrants in touch with their first labor market as soon as possible, whether through internships or (unpaid) work experience. In this endeavor, migrants who have already been in Germany for a while and gotten a foothold in the labor market can play an important role. They can set up contacts between the new arrivals and companies in Germany and thus help to establish important networks. Initially, the really decisive factor is of course access to the labor market. To this day, many asylum seekers are de facto denied the opportunity to work. By law, asylum applicants now are supposed to be issued a work permit after three months. However, the long waiting periods before asylum procedures even can be initiated amount to a denial of access to labor markets for a much longer time. Here we can learn from Switzerland, which now conducts its asylum proceedings more quickly and efficiently, because it has introduced new and more sophisticated systems for processing applications. However, the Swiss arrangements could not be transferred to Germany point for point.

These long waiting periods entail extreme psychic distress for the refugees, while reinforcing their feelings of insecurity and hopelessness. And those experiences, in turn, generally have a negative impact on integration. Examples from the past corroborate this conclusion. Certain immigrant groups such as the Lebanese were caught in the ambiguous position of being tolerated but not officially accepted, which meant that they had few prospects for integration into German society and were condemned to long periods of idleness. By contrast, Lebanese immigrants to the United States are among that country's most economically successful groups. It would clearly be better to use their time and energy from the very first day for a preliminary orientation phase, during which, for example, language courses and vocational counseling could be offered. Here, too, it is worthwhile to take a look at Sweden, where asylum seekers are allowed to work from the very first day they arrive. It is certainly true that unskilled immigrants, in particular, will encounter serious difficulties in finding a decent job. Nevertheless, it is never too early to begin providing the new arrivals with access to their first labor market and helping them set up internships and unpaid work experiences in local firms. Furthermore, Sweden and other countries also offer the option of a so-called »track shift.« Asylum seekers can decide to forego their asylum application and instead request the status of immigrant worker. That relieves some of the burden on the asylum system and offers new prospects to the track shifters.

Language

In addition to the other factors mentioned – housing and access to the labor market – rapid acquisition of the local language promotes integration. Hence, a key role is reserved for language courses. Language courses should be offered even if the status of the refugee has not been clarified yet, and it is not certain whether s/he will be able to stay. Once again, Sweden has long played an exemplary role. Until 2012

asylum seekers had the right from day one to take Swedish language courses, regardless of whether they would be allowed to remain in the country or not. Those language courses were free and geared to the different needs and previous knowledge of the participants. Once the latter had acquired a working knowledge of Swedish, s/he was entitled to obtain other qualifications in English, mathematics, and information technology. At the time, this generous and liberal policy led to a situation in which asylum seekers were able to acquire important skills even shortly after their arrival, ones they could use later in Swedish society or even in their countries of origin.

It is instructive to consider the case of the flight of Iraqis to Europe. Besides Great Britain and Germany, Sweden was the country most likely to offer them a place of refuge. After the toppling of Saddam Hussein in 2003, these migrants were intensively involved in Iraq's rebuilding process, especially in the northern part of the country. The large migrant communities in Great Britain (about 400,000), Sweden (around 120,000), and Germany (roughly 110,000) helped to stabilize the country and reconstruct the economy through their remittances and investments. Many of them returned to their home country as soon as an opportunity presented itself. Thus, the education minister for northern Iraq returned from Sweden and, in 2009, began importing elements of the Swedish school system into his home region. In March of 2016 the first adult education center for women in the northern Iraqi city of Halabja was founded by a woman returning from Sweden. Returnees from Germany also have played an important role. To cite just one example, the mayor of the city of Erbil in the northern part of Iraq lived in Bonn for a long time. In other words, the rebuilding of crisis-plagued regions does not necessarily begin with a peace accord. It often starts long before, with the training and integration of refugees. The refugees of today are the activists of tomorrow, who – with their economic, social, and civic engagement – also combat the causes of flight for future generations.

In short: Smart investments in the refugees will pay off, although not always right away. In addition to the purely humanitarian reasons that speak in favor of accepting and integrating refugees, they also offer an opportunity to the host countries. Of course, the examples cited here come from different countries the basic conditions of which vary widely. Still, it has been shown that, if an asylum and integration policy succeeds in empowering the refugees and strengthening their powers of self-organization, that outcome may benefit all parties: the refugees themselves, their host countries, and – in the middle- and long-term – possibly the refugees' countries of origin as well. The sooner the process can begin, the better.



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Mario Telò

The Lessons from »Brexit«

A new agenda for European legitimacy: building a progressive alliance in and for »Core Europe«

The crisis of legitimacy and efficiency in the European Union (EU) has to be considered in its economic and political contexts, both national and international. Brexit and the more general rightward drift that has occurred throughout Europe are both the consequence of novel, highly specific challenges. A broad progressive alliance linked politically to »Core Europe« may be able to rein in right-wing extremism and provide the EU with renewed legitimacy.

For the remaining members of the EU and the social democratic parties of Europe there are three lessons to be learned from Brexit. First, the victory of the pro-Brexit faction confirms that, except in Spain, the Europhobic movement is firmly in the hands of the right and extreme right in every country. In the United Kingdom itself, that would include the UK Independence Party and the right-wing Conservatives. The rightist capture of anti-EU politics represents a significant shift from the situation that prevailed a few years ago, when leftist rhetoric about a Keynesian alternative to the European Central Bank (ECB) and the Commission's policies dominated the Euro-skeptical movement. Yet in large measure the future destiny of social democracy will depend increasingly on whether we can succeed in making the EU a more democratic and competent institution and insuring that the euro continues to be its currency.

Second, differences of opinion concerning the common currency and its significance for the role of Europe might trigger the downfall not only of Britain's Labour Party but even of social democratic parties in other EU member states. Those currency controversies could even tear the Labour Party apart. Its vague criticisms of the »neoliberalism of the ECB« were a contributing factor in the defeat of the »Remain« campaign. After all, why should British workers support the EU when leftist critics portray it as »dominated by German primacy and the ECB's austerity policy?«

Third, the triumph of Brexit advocates is the outcome of 40 years of British utilitarian discourse about the European project («We are in favor of it because the EU market is convenient for our exports.») Because Great Britain has pursued an instrumental approach to the EU, the crucial political issues capable of mobilizing citizens (citizenship, democratic identity, sovereignty, and world peace) have been abandoned to the Europhobic movement. Opponents of European integration were able to exploit the nineteenth-century nationalist idea and the fear of mass migration as the key themes of their campaign. Citizens voted not only for utilitarian reasons; they also expected politicians to offer them hope, a high-profile political »project EU,« and a leading role for their country within it.

Twenty years ago the Labour Party quite properly proposed a referendum on membership in the European Union. By disparaging the idea that Britain should join the »heart of the EU,« British parties, including Labour, paved the way for the

independence campaign of Nigel Farage. No nation would be very interested in joining a club in which it is self-condemned to be and remain forever a second-class member.

Authoritarian temptations on the far right risk provoking Europe's disintegration

Karl Marx was right in predicting that capitalism would provoke deep economic and social crises; however, he expected that the latter would lead to the political triumph of the labor movement, a forecast that has not been borne out. To the contrary: now, in the second decade of the twenty-first century, the outlook for European politics rarely has been so gloomy. It is confronted by a set of problems more vexing than any it has faced in decades, perhaps not since the 1930s. Uncertainty about the future of the EU is reinforced by concerns about terrorism and migration, both of which threaten the continent's democracy. Parties committed to democracy have no choice: if they don't come up with new ideas and approaches to render European politics more efficient, while simultaneously legitimizing it (both of which would halt the right-wing extremist wave), all the achievements of the past sixty years in Europe – peace, prosperity, and democracy – may fall into ruin.

Despite the confusion that still reigns, a widely shared consciousness is gradually emerging. The novel element here is that the democratic parties of the continent, those of the center and the European People's Party (EPP) as well as the social democratic parties seem increasingly aware that they must support the consolidation of the eurozone with an offensive alliance in favor of a new EU. Of course, each party has a different idea of how this should be done, and many consider the alliance with Angela Merkel and the moderate conservatives as the »lesser evil.« Nevertheless, it has become urgently necessary to launch a new political initiative and establish institutional guidelines that would combine a democratized eurozone with a progressive grand alliance against populism. We need something more than a defensive reaction against an impending disaster. For one thing, the independence of social democracy in matters of fundamental values must be asserted and maintained. Moreover, we should strive to create a more deeply-rooted alliance with the center-left. Comparing this proposed alliance with the anti-fascist alliance of the Thirties and Forties can be instructive for two reasons. Such a juxtaposition fosters awareness of how serious the threat to the democratic system currently is, while underscoring the weakness of a merely defensive political posture that does not incorporate a common offensive European reform strategy.

It is crucial to recognize that the Europhobic wave that has swept over the continent has been dominated by the far right. The extreme left with its anti-euro discourse has lost much of its voter base, as the following recent electoral results show. DiEM, the new party in Greece founded by Yanis Varoufakis won only 2 % of the vote; the SEL (Sinistra Ecologia Libertà) in Italy captured 3 %; DIE LINKE in Germany managed between 6 and 8 %; while the Parti de Gauche of Jean-Luc Melenchon and the PCF (Parti Communiste Français) in France took 4-5 % of the vote. Furthermore, the right-wing extremist parties leaven their anti-European discourses with references

to the malaise that has accompanied globalization and with support for the anti-immigration movement, which lumps together immigration and the growing threat from terrorism. Responsible social democrats dare not ignore these diffuse anxieties, which stoke right-wing extremism. All democratic forces must confront these fears and insecurities by offering new and constructive political responses.

It is certainly necessary for Europe to stimulate growth and employment, but that is not sufficient by itself. Social democratic demands for quantitative easing by the ECB, the »Juncker infrastructure plan,« and similar measures to boost growth are the first steps in a long-overdue pivot in eurozone policymaking. Thus, for the most part the Juncker/Moscovici Commission has put a de facto end to the policy of austerity. Although demands for a more socially-minded Europe have gone unfulfilled, and the average unemployment rate still hovers around a level that is 4-5 % higher than it was in 2007, the time is now ripe for a new alliance between the left and the center. But challenges remain, especially uncertainty about the likelihood of a future economic slowdown and the absence of a long-term compromise between northern and southern member states. The latter would combine »risk sharing« by the north with a serious commitment to »risk mitigation« by the south. But factors besides social dislocations have brought about the multifaceted crisis of the EU. Four or five years ago the question on many people's minds was whether there might be a structural contradiction between efficiency and legitimacy in crisis management. The response was to revive the struggle for a more social-welfare-oriented and democratic Europe. The ongoing multiple crises of legitimation require a new linkage between social and security issues.

Right-wing anti-system parties have profited from disarray in the EU and now can longer be considered »protest parties.« By this time, many of them have become potential governing parties in their respective countries. If one of the Europhobic parties ever should seize power in a western European country (as has already occurred in Poland and Hungary), that would surely hasten the disintegration of the EU. But in addition, the victory of forces that want to see a weaker and more illiberal Europe would have further repercussions on the prospects for international peace.

No one should underestimate the implications of this critical historical juncture. The presidential election in Austria in 2016 was a vital test, and almost 50 % of the voters there supported the right-wing populist candidate Norbert Hofer, who may actually win the re-vote scheduled for this fall. That election displayed parallels to those held in other countries of western and central Europe and might trigger domino effects. The Dutch far-right party (»Party for Freedom«) headed by Geert Wilders already has been projected as the winner of the May, 2017 general elections. If his party does win, Wilders is expected to launch a »Nexit« campaign. Austria and the Netherlands are both wealthy societies with unemployment rates well below the European average, and they have not been hit particularly hard by the social crisis. Germany's unemployment rate is similarly low, at around 5 %. Nevertheless, the Europhobic and anti-immigration party Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) won an average 12 % of the vote in state elections held back in March, including a 24 % showing in the state of Saxony-Anhalt.

Not only are all three countries relatively wealthy and peaceful; they also enjoy a good deal of social harmony and have been governed by moderate, reasonable grand coalitions that include social democrats and moderate conservatives. Moreover, they have been spared the worst blows of Islamic terrorism. Yet in spite of the solid economic and social performance of the Austrian government, its two coalition partners (the SPÖ and the ÖVP) achieved miserable results in the first round of the aforesaid presidential election. Incidentally, neither the Netherlands nor Austria has been negatively affected by the so-called »Troika procedures,« i.e., they do not have to reckon with any constraints on their economic policies emanating from Brussels.

Finland and Denmark display tendencies similar to those we have observed in the Netherlands and Austria. Despite their governments' social and economic success, right-wing extremist parties are on the rise in both countries. These examples show that purely social explanations for these right-wing and Europhobic trends are inadequate. Furthermore, they do not do justice to the multifaceted nature of the legitimation crisis that has arisen recently.

The French Europhobic and anti-immigration Front National (FN) still finds support among 27 % of the voters (Gallup poll), even though 61 % of the French consider it »dangerous for democracy.« It is pushing the French political agenda in an intolerant, nationalistic, protectionist, and anti-European direction that threatens not only the EU but even the basic principles of democracy. In Belgium the extreme right-wing party Vlaams Belang has increased its share of the vote from 3 to 12 % since the refugee crisis began. In Italy, meanwhile, the Lega Nord, now led by Matteo Salvini, has morphed from a secessionist, territorial party into nationalistic, right-wing extremist one now allied with Fratelli d'Italia, the successor to the old Italian Fascist Party. After the party increased its poll numbers from 3 to 15 % in just one year, Salvini and the Lega Nord have replaced Berlusconi and his more moderate Forza Italia as the senior member of the Italian extreme right/right coalition. Salvini's new program includes an exit from the eurozone and an end to the Schengen Agreement as a means to stem immigration into Italy. Furthermore, the mutual convergences and exchanges of electoral support between the Lega Nord and the Five Star Movement founded by Beppe Grillo are also cause for indignation. Both parties oppose the euro and campaigned against the Democratic Party of Matteo Renzi as »Merkel's handmaiden« in the municipal elections recently held in Rome and Turin (each won by the Five Star Movement). The political trends reviewed here display analogies to the Weimar Republic and the increasing convergence between left-wing populism and right-wing extremism. The Weimar coalition (SPD, Center, and Liberals) was challenged initially by the extreme left and then ultimately (1932-33) by the far right.

Something similar may be observed in several European countries. For example, in the 2016 state elections in Germany, one million voters switched allegiance from DIE LINKE to the AfD. This electoral shift may be attributed to a rhetorical strategy that boasts of the right's early opposition to the euro while advocating a populist, anti-immigration agenda featuring barely concealed xenophobia and Islamophobia. There is a definite risk that the coalition government in Germany might collapse under the pressure of criticism from both national and international components of the

right wing (the CSU, elements of the CDU, Wolfgang Schäuble, the AfD, governing parties in the Visegrád group, and all of the other parties on the extreme right in Europe).

The governments in the Visegrád countries are evolving into an anti-EU and anti-German club. On the domestic level, the extreme right now holds governmental posts in three of the four countries. The EU has already initiated infraction procedures against the governments of Poland and Hungary, alleging violations of constitutional law. Relying on a »zero refugees« policy, a border fence, and his refusal to take in his country's EU-imposed quota of refugees, Viktor Orbán has forged a right-wing national consensus in Hungary. In Slovakia Marian Kotleba is now a member of the governing coalition alongside Prime Minister Robert Fico. He is organizing a »local defense militia« that is calling for violence against Sinti and Roma, »decadent artists,« and illegal Muslim immigrants. It is worrying to note that an extreme right-wing hard core has begun to form between Warsaw and Budapest, one that – disregarding the words of Pope Francis – identifies exclusive national identities with Catholicism and suppresses internal opposition.

Evidently, the populist move to the right has become a structural feature of Western democracies (think of Donald Trump as the Republican Party's candidate in the upcoming U.S. presidential election). Of course, the European Union is one of right-wing extremism's chief targets, because it symbolizes the project of fostering peace and democracy, embodies cosmopolitan values, and advocates progressive policies. Yet there is evidence of an »authoritarian temptation« even outside of the USA and Europe. The 2016 *Freedom House Report* points to similarities between the current situation and that of the 1930s, when social crises brought authoritarian regimes to power. Of 195 countries surveyed, 105 are less free and democratic than they used to be. At least a quarter century has passed since openly illiberal regimes (e.g., in Turkey, Russia, Hungary, and Poland) have been as arrogant and provocative as they are now.

However, it would be a serious mistake to confuse this rightward drift and the various forms of illiberal and »defective« democracies (Wolfgang Merkel) with classically fascist tendencies. In order to analyze properly this emergent post-democratic reality, we need to develop a new conceptual framework. To begin with, we must emphasize that right-wing extremist populism already has been so successful at manipulating people's fears in many member countries that it is able to win majority support and seize control of the state's power centers. The challenge in this case is political and not merely social. A classical political concept that might prove useful in explaining this phenomenon is »Caesarism,« referring to an authoritarian regime that depends on the power of a strong leader. The latter possesses charisma that attracts broad public support and often channels popular, plebiscitary participation into referenda, a move which in turn undermines the existing democratic party and trade union systems. In this way, fears of chaos, terrorism, and migration are manipulated while illiberal measures are instituted on the domestic front. In international affairs intolerance and aggressiveness are showcased along with the pledge to resolve social conflicts and crises and to satisfy demands for internal and external security.

Of course, every Caesarist regime (Viktor Orbán, Jaroslav Kaczynski, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, and Vladimir Putin) and every far-right party is different and distinctive. Indeed, a few of these right-wing movements are simply offering the wrong responses to the right questions. Populist parties and movements share a great deal in common: intolerance toward minorities and immigrants, xenophobia, antipathy toward the EU and globalization, and a strong attraction to nationalistic, authoritarian, and illiberal policies. In the case of the EU, that means they are deeply hostile toward the euro as the political symbol of a unique political project. They also share a diffuse but adamant opposition to democracy in the EU and a common admiration for Vladimir Putin. The worsening international environment (huge migration flows, external challenges and threats, deep economic and financial instability, the twin menaces of Russia and IS) increases the likelihood of a weakening or even breakup of the EU. By contrast, only ten years ago Europe's peaceful role in the international arena bolstered the argument that its common identity, internal cohesion, and legitimacy should be strengthened. The principal goal of right-wing extremist parties is to dismantle the democratic structures of the EU, because they symbolize liberal democracy itself.

The anti-German dimension of extreme right-wing populism

In an alliance such as the EU, questions are bound to be raised about the leadership role of its most powerful member state, Germany. After ten years of crisis, Germany is recognized as the EU's economic and political leader. The EU's mistakes and vacillations during the period from 2011 to 2015 are considered by many to be the outcomes of the primacy of German interests. The German government is accused of abetting the transformation of the EU into a hierarchical, anti-democratic Europe hostile to national sovereignty. The new and paradoxical element here is that the German leadership, once criticized for years as excessively selfish, is now under fire for the »culture of welcome« it has extended to migrants.

On the one hand, domestic critics charge the German government with combining the cosmopolitan culture of welcome with expensive European commitments, both of which allegedly run counter to the country's true national interests. On the other hand, the culture of welcome is highly prized by the EU member states in southern Europe, whereas Germany's northern and eastern neighbors condemn it as a unilateral decision. Leftist rhetoric directed against the »German economic diktats and the EU Commission's neo-liberalism« has in fact (albeit indirectly) paved the way for the successes of extreme right-wing parties and movements. The time has come to reconsider the myth of German domination and replace the notion of the »reluctant hegemon« (*The Economist*) by the promise of a more responsible and constructive hegemony.

German economic policies at home and in Europe have changed for the better during the last five years. The nature of German economic policy was never simply »neo-liberal.« Rather, it has usually been »ordo-liberal« and, since the era of Willy Brandt, linked to social democratic goals such as codetermination, concerted action, and a generous, universalistic welfare state. This background understanding of the

ends of economic policymaking influenced not only the status of the German Bundesbank but also the foundation of the European Central Bank and, more broadly, the monetary policies of the EU, all of which helped it to surmount the recent economic crisis. The independence of the ECB with Mario Draghi at the helm became a factor in its proactive growth policy. The German government, the European Council and the Council of Ministers all supported the ECB and backed its decision to say »no« to Grexit. The reasoning that lay behind the policies of the German government was both economic and political: Halt the fragmentation of the eurozone, strengthen economic regulation, and prop up Greece as the pillar of the coming EU common refugee policy and common external border controls. Despite an internal debate, this strategy also has been backed by a verdict of the Federal Constitutional Court in June, 2016. Of course, EU Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker's proposed infrastructure improvement plan should be combined with reforms in the southern European countries coupled with employment policies that may help to halt and reverse the electoral trend favoring right-wing populism. Here Germany should function as the engine that spurs growth. The clear message delivered by the »ten point plan« announced by German Social Democratic spokesmen Sigmar Gabriel and Martin Schulz at the end of June was that we should move forward on all these fronts.

Be that as it may, voting trends in Austria, the Netherlands, and Germany suggest that it will not be enough to reduce the unemployment rate to 4-6% or to signal a change of course in economic policymaking. The paradigm shift mentioned already will require more investment in integration policy and a strong political will in support of internal and external European security policies. Otherwise, the EU project might fail. The German leadership should be more acutely aware that the agenda for bolstering the EU's legitimacy overlaps with that for maintaining its institutional survival.

Even in the absence of treaty reforms, the new course to be set in EU governance should move in four realistic and complementary directions such that each, in its own right, represents a response to one or more of the multiple challenges to legitimacy.

1. Both the European Council and the EU Council of Ministers should revert to their multilateral rules and put a stop to the trend toward asymmetrical, unilateral, and hierarchical methods. In the midst of the economic and refugee crises, these principles sometimes were violated by unilateral decision-making.

2. The new modes of governance, however sound they may appear in theory, cannot be an extension of the community method into new policy areas, because that would involve a complicated reform of the treaties upon which the EU is based. The EU's deeper form of multilateralism already permits a combination of intergovernmentalism with the supranational roles of the Commission, Parliament, and European Court of Justice. The European Semester, the various forms of experimental governance, and the open method of coordinating national policymaking are the best routes out of the policy efficiency deficit. At the same time, the democratic dimension must be reinforced with a view to the demands raised by the European Parliament in February of 2016.

3. These steps should be combined with a courageous reform of the EU's institutional architecture in accord with the progressive model of »core Europe.« In this way, the Union should be better equipped to meet three of its major challenges: a stronger economic union, internal security/immigration policy, and external border controls/defense policy. Core Europe must remain open to future rapprochement with the second circle (the outer ring) of member countries as a resource and flag for the pro-EU parties in each of those countries.

4. New legitimacy provisions are necessary given the famous »governance dilemma« (the stronger the supranational regulation, the more urgent is the need for deeper supranational legitimacy). It is widely accepted that the EU cannot claim state-like legitimacy, but what it can offer is »mixed legitimacy« which is typical of a regime that can be classified as a »mixed constitutional polity«: legitimacy at the national level fused with enhanced legitimacy of the central coordination point, the supranational level. One key purpose of this arrangement is to render democracy in the creditor states compatible with democratic legitimacy in the crisis states. The institutions and agenda for enhancing supranational legitimacy are already in place: the European Parliament, the national parliaments, the dialogue among social actors, and mechanisms for citizen participation, and, finally a new, distinctive parliamentary body for Core Europe.

Core Europe and its democratic legitimacy

Without a strong political and democratic dimension, the four institutional reforms risk imparting new momentum to the Europhobic extreme right. That is the reason nothing will be achieved unless a new, broad-gauged social and political alliance can be forged and subsequently consolidated. It should seek to establish a reasonable version of the culture of welcome at the European level (Jürgen Kocka in *Neue Gesellschaft/Frankfurter Hefte*, 3|2016) and promote a more political and democratic European Union. The new alliance will not come into being without the collaboration of Europe's democratic parties, but they will have to undergo an internal housecleaning, notably against the likes of Orbán and Fico. A more in-depth dialogue will have to occur among proactive NGOs in order to reconcile interests and moral principles, civil society movements and cultural currents, trade unions and social movements. An alliance of this kind could give rise to a common transnational network and create a more effective counterweight against authoritarian nationalist temptations. But this new alliance can succeed only if it manages to harmonize two distinct goals: expanding democratic participation and fostering a more efficient and internationally independent EU. The latter will have some important tools at its disposal: European Monetary Policy (monetary union), the external border control agency Frontex, and the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP).

A new institutional architecture for the EU is needed, but it will have to overlap somewhat with the institutions of Core Europe. Brexit presents a favorable opportunity to address the issues of its legal framework, memberships, and the three so-called »value added« goals: economic union, migration and asylum policies, and common foreign and security policy. It is to be expected that the founding member states will

seize the political initiative in a quick, resolute manner. That initiative should develop along two different lines. First, there should be movement toward closer cooperation on the issues of migration, defense, and security policy. How? According to Thomas Piketty, the legal framework should be established through a new intergovernmental treaty comparable to the Fiscal Pact of 2011-12. Other commentators argue in favor of relying on the »enhanced cooperation« clauses of the Lisbon Treaty. The intergovernmental treaty approach has the advantage that it would work regardless of the number of member states involved. By contrast, the Treaty of Lisbon requires that nine specific member states should act as the founding members: Germany, France, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Spain, Portugal, and Greece. Of course, other eurozone members such as Austria, Slovenia, or Poland also could join at the very outset. This smaller Core Europe would overlap to some extent with the eurozone, thus keeping the door open for an enlarged membership and influencing political cleavages in those countries still outside the core.

Enhanced cooperation must be preserved within the framework of the EU's remits and objectives. Only countries within Core Europe would have the right to vote on its affairs. Those outside the core would be allowed to take part in discussions, but would lack veto power, and decisions would be binding only on the core members.

Second, regarding economic and social governance and following the suggestion of former European Council President van Rompuy, the eurozone should strengthen its cohesion by establishing a banking union and maintaining its own budgetary capacity, funded by the member state according to the EU's budget criteria.

Changes in EU governance were initiated as early as the onset of the financial crisis and have further reinforced intergovernmentalism. Given the magnitude of the challenges, this was to some extent inevitable. Despite the long strides it has taken in the direction of supranationality, the EU remains a regional league of states. The continuing relevance of the Council of Ministers and the European Council is beyond doubt; indeed, it increases when risk sharing on a grand scale is being weighed (the European Stability Mechanism assumes, for example, that 700 billion euros are available to the crisis countries). However, the technocratic implementation of the fiscal pact, along with the tough conditions imposed, dramatically increased the democratic deficit in the crisis countries, but without any compensating enhancement of democracy at the level of the EU. That is the reason why a distinctive democratic body for the eurozone is a necessity, either a smaller parliamentary committee of the European Parliament (to include only MPs of the member states belonging to Core Europe) or a new parliamentary chamber drawn from the national parliaments of the member states.

Whatever its legal basis may turn out to be, this double and largely overlapping hard core will then be surrounded, *de facto* or *de jure*, by three outer rings: the European Union of 27 member states; the European Economic Area (EEA) with its member states, perhaps to include the United Kingdom; and the associated countries. This kind of EU architecture represents an alternative to two other projects that have been floated. One of these envisions an architecture composed of non-overlapping clusters with the intended or unintended consequence of a split European governance. The

other, the conservative, self-defeating project of a »3 A Club,« to include Germany and a few of its northern neighbors (little Schengen and the little eurozone) would divide the founding member states of the EU and perhaps kill the European idea itself.

We do not have an »EUtopia« in mind. The steps outlined here follow one possible logic implicit in the current complex trends. The authoritarian temptation seducing many member states and the growing salience of the »Putin model« can be addressed by enhancing both the efficiency and legitimacy of EU policies. The steps required to accomplish those goals presuppose a broad political and social alliance in favor of a new EU as its political driving force, but now fusing democratic representation with enhanced efficiency. Multilateral and responsible political leadership in Germany, the will of some member states, and new ideas are the main building blocks supporting construction of a strengthened Core Europe. Even the member states outside the core area would benefit indirectly from improvement in the governance of the EU, and be stimulated to follow suit, as has occurred in the past. Comparative studies show that critical historical junctures make it possible to break with long-established practices and institutionalize new forms of enhanced cooperation. Only a political renewal of this kind could curb the authoritarian tendencies of right-wing extremism and ameliorate the profound troubles currently afflicting national democracies. Moreover, the steps adumbrated here would help to contain the disintegrative influence of Brexit while holding in check the external rivals of the EU and of European democracy.

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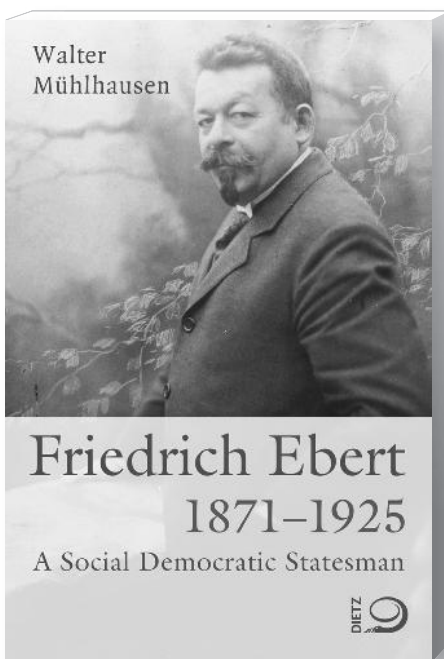
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