

Implosion of the European System

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Majority opinion in Europe holds that Europe has all it takes to become an economic and political power comparable to, and consequently independent of, the United States. The simple addition of its component populations with its GDPs makes that seem obvious. As for me, I believe that Europe suffers from three major handicaps that rule out such a comparison.

First of all, the northern part of the American continent (the United States and—what I call its external state—Canada) is endowed with natural resources incomparably greater than the part of Europe to the west of Russia, as is shown by Europe’s dependence on imported energy.

Secondly, Europe is made up of a good number of historically distinct nations whose diversity of political cultures, even though this diversity is not necessarily marked by national chauvinism, has sufficient weight to exclude recognition of a “European people” on the model of the United States’s “American people.” We will return later to this important matter.

In the third place (and this is the main ground excluding such a comparison) capitalist development in Europe was and remains uneven, whereas American capitalism has developed in a fairly uniform way throughout the northern American area, at least since the Civil War. Europe, to the west of historic Russia (including the Ukraine and Belarus), is composed of three unequally developed sets of capitalist societies.

Historic capitalism—that is to say, the form of the capitalist mode of production that has become established on a world scale—took shape beginning in the sixteenth century in the London/Amsterdam/Paris triangle and attained its completed form with the French political revolution and the English industrial revolution. This model, which was to become prevalent in the dominant capitalist centers up until the contemporary epoch (liberal capitalism, as Wallerstein called it) expanded in the United States vigorously and rapidly after the Civil War, putting an end to the dominant position of the slave power in its federal government, and later also ending Japan’s power. In Europe, after

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1870, the model prevailed just as rapidly in Germany and Scandinavia. This European core (Great Britain, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Switzerland, Austria, and Scandinavia) has now come under the economic, political, and social sway of its own generalized (as I call them) monopolies, which, starting from earlier forms of monopoly capitalism, attained that status in the 1975–1990 period.

Still, the generalized monopolies proper to this European region are not “European”; they are still strictly “national” (that is to say, German, British, Swedish, etc.) even though their businesses are trans-European and even transnational (carried out on a worldwide scale). The same is the case with the contemporary generalized monopolies of the United States and Japan. In my commentary on the impressive research that has been done on this subject I have emphasized the decisive importance of this conclusion.

The second layer involves Italy, Spain, and Portugal in which that same model—thus, currently, that of generalized monopoly capitalism—only took shape much more recently, after the Second World War. Because of this, these societies retain peculiarities in their forms of economic and political governance that obstruct their rise to equality with the others.

But the third level, comprising the countries of the former “socialist (Soviet-style) world” and Greece, is not the base for any generalized monopolies proper to their own national societies (Greek ship owners being a possible exception, though their status as “Greeks” is highly questionable). Until the Second World War all these societies were far from constituting developed capitalist societies like those of the European core. Afterwards, Soviet-style socialism suppressed still further their embryonic national capitalist bourgeoisies, replacing their rule with a State Capitalism having social, if not socialist, features. Having become reintegrated into the capitalist world through membership in the European Union and NATO, these countries thenceforward shared the situation of others in peripheral capitalism—not ruled by their own national generalized monopolies but subject to those of the European core.

This heterogeneity of Europe strictly excludes comparison with the United States/Canada ensemble. But, you might ask, cannot this heterogeneity be made to disappear gradually—precisely through the construction of Europe? That is the prevailing opinion in Europe; I disagree, however, and will return to this matter.

Can Europe be Compared to the American Dual Continent?

My belief is that it is more realistic to compare Europe to the American dual continent (United States/Canada on one side, Latin America and the Caribbean on the other) than to northern America alone. The American dual continent constitutes an ensemble within world capitalism characterized by the contrast between its central and dominant north and its peripheral and subordinate south. This domination, which in the nineteenth century the rising American power (having in 1823 proclaimed its ambitions in the Monroe Doctrine) shared with its British competitor (then hegemonic on a world scale), is now mainly exercised by Washington whose generalized monopolies have broad control over economic and political life south of its border despite recent combative advances that might call its domination into question. The analogy with Europe is evident. The European East is in a peripheral situation of subordination to the European West analogous to the characteristic status of Latin America in relation to the United States.

But this, like all analogies, has its limits, and to ignore them would lead to wrong conclusions about what futures are possible and what are the effective strategies for opening the road to the best of those futures. On two levels difference, rather than analogy, prevails. Latin America is an immense continent endowed with fabulous natural resources—water, land, minerals, petroleum, and natural gas. In no way is Eastern Europe comparable on that level. Moreover, Latin America is likewise much less heterogeneous relative to Eastern Europe: it has two related languages (though there are many surviving Indian tongues) and little national-chauvinistic hostility among neighbors. But these differences, however important they might be, are scarcely our major motive for not going on with a simplified analogical reasoning.

U.S. domination over its American South is mainly exerted through economic means, as shown by the model of a pan-American common market promoted by Washington (though U.S. efforts to impose it are currently at a standstill). Even the part of this model, NAFTA, which is already in effect and annexes a subordinated Mexico to the big North American market, does not institutionally challenge Mexico's political sovereignty. There is nothing naïve about this observation. I am well aware that there are no sealed barriers separating economic methods from those operating on the political level. The Organization of American States (OAS) has rightly been considered by Latin American opposition forces to be "the United States's Colonial Office," and the list of U.S. interventions, whether military (as in the

Caribbean) or in the form of support to a coup d'état, is long enough to prove that.

The institutional form of the relationship among states of the European Union stems from a broader and more complex logic. There is indeed a sort of West European “Monroe Doctrine” (“Eastern Europe is part of Western Europe”). But that is not all there is to it. The European Union is no longer merely a “common market” as it was at its start, when it was limited to six countries before being extended to others in Western Europe. Since the Maastricht Treaty it has become a political project. Certainly this project was conceived to further the project of having the generalized monopolies manage the societies involved. But it is capable of becoming an arena for conflicts and for challenging those projects and their established methods of implementation. The European institutions are supposed to link the peoples of the Union and set forth several means toward that end, like weighting the representation of states in the European Parliament according to their populations rather than their GDPs. Because of this the prevailing opinion in Europe, including that of most leftists critical of its institutions as presently structured, clings to the hope that *Another Europe is Possible*.

Before discussing theses and hypotheses about possible alternative futures for the construction of Europe, it seems necessary to go into some discussion, on the one hand, of Atlanticism and imperialism, and, on the other, of European identity.

Europe, or Atlanticist and Imperialist Europe?

Great Britain is more Atlanticist than it is European, deriving this posture from its former position as imperialist hegemon—even though that heritage has now dwindled to the privileged position held by the City of London in the globalized financial system. Therefore Great Britain subordinates its very special sort of membership in the European Union to the priority it maintains for the institutionalization of an economic and financial Euro-Atlantic market, which prevails over any wish to participate actively in the political construction of Europe.

But it is not only Great Britain that is Atlanticist. The continental European states are no less so, despite their seeming intention to construct a political Europe. Proof of that is given by the central position of NATO in this political construction. That a military alliance with a country outside the Union has been integrated de facto into the “European constitution” constitutes an unparalleled anomaly. For

some European countries (Poland, Hungary, and the Baltic states) NATO's protection—i.e., that of the United States—against their “Russian enemy” (!) is more important than their adhesion to the European Union.

The persistence of Atlanticism, and the worldwide expansion of NATO's field of operation after the supposed disappearance of the “Soviet menace,” has resulted from what I have analyzed as the emergence of the collective imperialism of the triad (United States, Europe, and Japan). That is, the dominant centers of generalized-monopoly capitalism intend to remain dominant despite the rise of emergent states. It is a matter of a relatively recent transformation of the imperialist system, which had previously, and traditionally, been based on conflict among the imperialist powers. The cause for the emergence of this collective imperialism is the need for united confrontation of the challenge by the peripheral peoples and states of Asia, Africa, and Latin America eager to escape from their subordination.

The European imperialist segment at issue involves only Western Europe, all of whose states in the modern period have always been imperialist whether or not they held colonies, since they have and always have had a share in the imperialist rent. Contrariwise, the Eastern European states have no access to it since they have no national generalized monopolies of their own. They have swallowed the illusion, however, that they have a right to it just because of their “Europeanness.” Who knows if they will ever be able to get rid of that illusion?

Imperialism, having become collective and remaining so henceforward, shares in regard to the South a single common policy—that of the triad—which is a policy of permanent aggression against those peoples and states which dare to call into question its special system of globalization. And collective imperialism has a military leader, if not a hegemon: the United States. It is understood, then, that neither the European Union nor any of its component states have a “foreign policy” any longer. The facts show that there is but a single reality: alignment behind whatever Washington (perhaps in agreement with London) decides on its own. Viewed from the South, Europe is nothing else but the unconditional ally of the United States. And though there may be some illusions about this in Latin America—no doubt because hegemony there is exercised brutally by the United States alone and not by its subaltern European allies—that is not the case in Asia and Africa. The power-holders in the emerging countries know it: those in charge of the other countries in the two continents

accept their status as submissive compradors. For all, only Washington counts, not a Europe that might as well not exist at all.

Is There a European Identity?

This time the viewpoint from which this question is to be considered is internal to Europe. For from an external viewpoint—that of the broad South—indeed, “Europe” seems to be a reality. For the peoples of Asia and Africa, whose languages and religions are “non-European” even when that reality has been attenuated by missionary conversions to Christianity or by adopting the official language of the former colonizers, the Europeans are the “others.” Matters are different in Latin America which, like northern America, results from the construction of the “other Europe”—the “New World,” linked as a necessity to the formation of historic capitalism.

The question of European identity can only be discussed by looking at Europe as seen from inside. But the theses affirming and denying the reality of this identity clash in polemics that lead each side to bend the stick too far in its own favor. So some evoke Christianity, although one should talk about Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox Christianities and not pass by the far from negligible numbers of those with no religious practice and even no religious belief at all. Others will point out that a Spaniard is more at ease with an Argentine than with a Lithuanian, that a French woman will understand an Algerian better than she will a Bulgarian, and that the English move more freely in the parts of the world where people share their language than in Europe. The ancestral Greco-Roman civilization, whether as it was or as reconstructed, ought to make Latin and Greek, rather than English, the official languages of Europe (as they were in the Middle Ages). The eighteenth-century Enlightenment scarcely involved more than the London/Amsterdam/Paris triangle even though it was exported as far as Prussia and Russia. Representative electoral democracy is still very insecure and is too recent to see its origins as going back to the formation of Europe’s visibly diverse political cultures.

There is no difficulty in showing the still-present power of national identities in Europe. France, Germany, Spain, and Great Britain were all formed through centuries of bitter warfare. Although the insignificant Prime Minister of Luxembourg can say that his fatherland (or that of his bank?) “is Europe,” no French president, German chancellor, or British prime minister would dare say anything so stupid. But does there really have to be a common identity for there to be a legitimate

project of regional political integration? I hold that to be in no way the case. Provided that the diversity of identities (call them “national”) be recognized and that the serious reasons underlying the common will for a political construction be set forth precisely. This principle is not valid merely for Europeans: it is equally so for the peoples of the Caribbean, of Iberian America, of the Arab world, and of Africa. One need not believe in “Arabism” or “Négritude” to accept an Arab or African project as fully legitimate. Unfortunately, the “Europeanists” do not behave with such intelligence. The great majority of them think it enough to call themselves “supranational” or “anti-sovereignist,” which is at best meaningless and may even clash with reality. Therefore my discussion of the viability of a European political project will not be based on the shifting sands of “identity” but on the firm ground of the stakes at issue and the institutional forms for their management.

Is the European Union Viable?

The question is not whether “a” European project (which project? to do what?) would be possible (the answer, obviously, is yes), but whether the currently established project is viable or could be transformed to make it viable. I give no heed to the right-wing “Europeanists,” i.e., those who in submission to the demands of generalized monopoly capitalism accept the European Union essentially as is and care only to provide a solution to its present “conjunctural” (which I maintain are not conjunctural at all) difficulties. I care only about the arguments of those who claim that “another Europe is possible,” including the advocates of a reformed human-faced capitalism as well as those who share a perspective of socialist transformation for Europe and the world.

Central to the debate is the nature of the crisis pervading Europe and the world. As far as Europe is concerned, the upstage crisis of the eurozone and the backstage crisis of the European Union are inseparable.

At least since the Maastricht Treaty and, in my opinion, since much earlier, the construction of the European Union and of the eurozone have been conceived and designed as components for the construction of so-called liberal globalization—that is the construction of a system to assure the exclusive domination of generalized monopoly capitalism. In this context the necessary starting point is analysis of the contradictions that, to my mind, make this project (and therefore the European project included in it) unviable.

But it will be said, in unconditional defense of “a” European project (the project that has the advantage of existing, of already being in

place): it can be transformed. To be sure it can—in abstract theory. But what conditions might allow that? I think it would take a double miracle, and I do not believe in miracles: (1) that the transnational European construction recognize the reality of national sovereignties, the diversity of interests at stake, and organize its institutional functioning on that basis; and (2) that capitalism—insofar as it maintains the general framework of its way of governing its economy and society—be constrained to work in a way different from that dictated by its own logic, now become that of domination by the generalized monopolies. I see no indication that the majority of Europeanists are able to take account of these requirements. No more do I see their left minority, who do take account of them, as able to mobilize political and social forces capable of inverting the conservatism of the established Europeanism. Which is why I conclude that the European Union can be nothing else than what it is, and as such is unviable; the eurozone crisis shows the impossibility of this.

The “European” project as defined by the Maastricht treaty and the eurozone project were sold to public opinion by a propaganda campaign that can only be described as imbecilic and disingenuous. Some—the (relatively) privileged peoples of opulent Western Europe—were told that by erasing national sovereignties an end would be put to the hate-filled wars that had bloodied the continent (and the success of that claptrap is easily understood). It was served up with a sauce: the friendship of the great American democracy, the common struggle for democracy in that big backward South—a new form of acceptance for the old imperialist postures—etc. The others—the poor devils of the East—were promised opulence through “catching up” with western standards of living.

Both—in their majorities—swallowed this claptrap. In the East they believed, it seems, that adhesion to the European Union would enable that notorious “catch-up,” a good bargain indeed. But the price they paid—perhaps as punishment for having accepted regimes practicing the Soviet-style socialism called communism—was a painful structural adjustment lasting several years. Adjustment—that is, “austerity” (for workers, not for billionaires)—was imposed. But its payoff was a social disaster. And so Eastern Europe became the periphery of Western Europe. A recent serious study told us that 80 percent of Romanians reckon that “in the Ceausescu era things were better”! Could anyone look for a better sign of delegitimation for the supposed democracy characterizing the European Union? Will the peoples involved learn

their lesson? Will they understand that the logic of capitalism is not that of catching up but the contrary, that of deepening inequalities? Who knows!

That Greece is today at the heart of the conflict is both because Greece is part of the eurozone and because its people hoped to escape the fate of the other (ex-“socialist”) peripheral Balkan countries. The “Greeks” (I know not precisely what that means) thought (or hoped?) that having avoided the misfortune of being governed by “communists” (powerful in the heroic times of the Second World War)—and that by grace of the colonels!—they would not have to pay the price imposed on the rest of the Balkans. Europe and the euro would work differently for them. European solidarity, and especially that of the eurozone partners, however feebly it showed elsewhere (where the crime of “communism” was to be punished), would act in their favor.

The Greeks are stuck with the outcome of their naïve illusions. They should know now that the system will reduce their status to that of their Balkan neighbors, Bulgaria and Albania. For the logic of the eurozone is no different from that of the European Union; on the contrary, it reinforces its violence. In a general fashion the logic of capitalist accumulation produces an accentuation of the inequality among nations (it is at the source of the construction of the core/periphery contrast); and accumulation dominated by the generalized monopolies reinforces still more this immanent tendency of the system. Against this, it will be claimed that the European Union’s institutions provide the means to correct intra-European inequalities through appropriate financial support directed to the laggard countries within the Union; and this is believed by public opinion in general. In reality, this support (which except for agriculture, a question that will not be discussed here, is especially devoted to the construction of modern infrastructure) is too insufficient to permit any catching up; but, even graver, it facilitates penetration by the generalized monopolies and so strengthens the tendency to unequal development through a greater opening of the economies involved. Yet further, this assistance aims to reinforce certain sub-national regions (for example Bavaria, Lombardy, and Catalonia) and thereby to weaken the capability of national states to resist the monopolies’ diktats.

The eurozone was designed to aggravate still further that movement. Its fundamental nature is defined by the statute of the European Central Bank, which is forbidden to lend to national governments (and even to a supranational European state were one to exist, which is not the case),

but lends exclusively to banks—at a ridiculously low rate—which, in turn, draw from their investments in national bonds a rental income that has reinforced the domination of the generalized monopolies. What is called the financialization of the system is inherent in the strategy of those monopolies. From its inception I had analyzed this system as non-viable, destined to collapse as soon as capitalism would be stricken by a serious crisis; which is happening before our eyes. I had maintained that the only alternative which might support a gradual and solid European construction required maintenance of national currencies linked in a system of defined exchange rates conceived as a seriously negotiated structure of exchange rates and industrial policies. And designed to last until, eventually and much later, the maturation of its political cultures would allow the establishment of a confederal European State above, but without annihilating, the various national states.

And so the eurozone has gone into a foreseeable crisis that really threatens its existence, as has finally been admitted even in Brussels. For there is no sign that the European Union has become able to carry out any radical self-criticism that would imply adoption of a different system of currency regulation and abandonment of the liberalism inherent to the treaties still in force.

Those responsible for the bankruptcy of the European project are not its victims—the fragile countries of the European periphery—but, to the contrary, the countries (which is to say, the ruling classes of those countries), foremost among them Germany, that have been the beneficiaries of the system, which makes the insults against the Greek people even more odious. A lazy people? Tax cheats? Mme. Lagarde forgets that the cheaters in question are the ship owners protected by (IMF supported) globalization's freedoms. My argument is not based on recognizing conflicts among nations, even though things seem to be happening that way. It is based on recognition of the conflict between the generalized monopolies (themselves based only in the countries of the European center) and the workers of the European centers and peripheries alike, even though the costs of the austerity imposed on both have more markedly devastating effects in the peripheral than in the central countries. The "German model," praised by all Europe's rightist political forces as well as by a good part of the left, has worked successfully in Germany thanks to the relative docility of its workers who agree to salary levels 30 percent lower than those of the French. This docility is largely behind the success of German exports and the powerful growth of the rents that the German generalized monopolies

profit from. Everyone should understand how this model enchants the unconditional defenders of capital!

The worst, thus, is still to come: in one way or another, abruptly or gradually, the European project is to be split apart, starting with the eurozone. Then it is back to the starting line: the 1930s. We would have a mark zone limited to Germany and the countries it dominates on its eastern and southern borders, the Dutch and Scandinavians autonomous but willing to conform, a Great Britain distanced even more from the vicissitudes of continental politics by its Atlanticism, an isolated France (as with De Gaulle? or Vichy?), and a Spain and Italy that are unsure and volatile. We would have the worst of both worlds: national European societies submissive to the dictates of the generalized monopolies and the accompanying globalized “liberalism” on the one hand, and on the other their ruling political forces even more reliant, to the measure of their powerlessness, on “nationalist” demagoguery. That sort of political rule would multiply the opportunities of the extreme right. We would have (do we already have?) Pilsudskis, Horthys, Baltic barons, Mussolini and Franco revivalists, and Maurassians. The apparently “nationalist” speeches of the extreme rightists are lies, because these political forces (or, at least, their leaders) not only accept capitalism in general but also the only form it can take, that of generalized monopoly capitalism. An authentic “nationalism” today can only be populist in the true sense of that term: serving, not deceiving, the people. At this time the word “nationalism” must itself be used cautiously, and perhaps it would be better to replace it with “internationalism of peoples and workers.” Contrariwise, the rhetoric of those rightists reduces their nationalist theme to violent chauvinist excesses to be used against immigrants and Gypsies, who are blamed as the source of the disasters. Neither does this right fail to include the “poor,” held responsible for their poverty and accused of abusing the benefits of “welfarism,” in its hatred.

That is what stubborn insistence on defending the European project even in the face of the gale leads to: its destruction.

Is There a Less Distressing Alternative? Are We Headed Toward a New Wave of Progressive Social Transformations?

Yes indeed, because in principle more than one alternative still exists. But the conditions for one or another of the possible alternatives to become a reality need to be spelled out. It is impossible to return to a previous stage of capitalist development, to a period before the centralization of capitalist control. We can only go forward, that is

to say in starting from the actual stage of centralization of capitalist control, by understanding that the time has come for “expropriation of the expropriators.” No other viable perspective is possible. That being said, this proposition does not exclude leading struggles which, from stage to stage, go in that direction. On the contrary, it requires the identification of a strategic aim for each stage and the implementation of effective tactics. To do without this preoccupation with stage-adapted strategies and tactics of action is to condemn oneself merely to repeating facile and impotent slogans like “Down With Capitalism!”

In this spirit and in regard to Europe an initial effective move—which is perhaps already taking shape—starts from a challenge to the so-called austerity policies that, moreover, are linked to the rise of the authoritarian and antidemocratic policies required by them. The aim of restarting economic growth, despite the ambiguity of that term (restarting with which activities? and by what means?), is quite naturally linked to it.

But it must be recognized that this first move will clash with the euro’s established system of currency management by the European Central Bank (ECB). For that reason I see no possibility to avoid “leaving the euro” through restoration of monetary sovereignty to the European states. Then and then only can a space for maneuver be opened, requiring negotiation among European partners and, by that very fact, revision of the legal texts structuring the European institutions. Then and only then could measures be taken adumbrating a socialization of the monopolies. I envisage, for example, a separation of banking functions and even definitive nationalization of the troubled banks; a lightening of the grip of the monopolies over small and medium businesses and farmers; the adoption of strongly progressive tax codes; of expropriating the facilities of runaway companies in favor of their workers and local governments; of diversifying the number of commercial, industrial, and financial trade partners through opening negotiations, notably with the emerging countries of the South; etc. All these measures require the assertion of national economic sovereignty and therefore require disobedience to the European rules forbidding them. For it is obvious to me that political conditions allowing such moves will never simultaneously exist throughout the European Union. There will be no such miracle. So we must accept starting wherever we can, in one or several countries. I remain convinced that once the process has gotten underway it will quickly snowball.

To these propositions (whose formulation, in part at least, has been initiated by President François Hollande) the political forces in service to the generalized monopolies are already counterposing propositions that would deprive them of any significance: “restart growth by making all and sundry more competitive while respecting the openness and transparency of the markets.” This discourse is not only that of Merkel; it is likewise that of her social-democratic opponents and of ECB president Draghi. But it must be known—and said—that “open and transparent markets” do not exist. The markets, opaque by nature, are the domain of commercially conflicting monopolies. We are dealing with a disingenuous rhetoric that must be denounced as such. Trying to improve governance of the markets after having accepted them in principle—by proposing rules for their “regulation”—leads to nothing effective. It is to ask of the generalized monopolies—beneficiaries of the system they themselves dominate—that they act against their own interests. They know how to nullify the regulatory rules that supposedly would be imposed on them.

The twentieth century was not only marked by wars of a violence never before known, resulting in large part from the conflict among imperialisms (of which there were then several). It also was marked by immense revolutionary movements among the nations and peoples peripheral to the capitalism of that time. These revolutions transformed Russia, Asia, Africa, and Latin America at an accelerated pace and thus provided the major dynamic factor in the transformation of the world. But at the core of the imperialist system they found only a feeble echo at best. The pro-imperialist reactionary forces kept their grip on political control over the societies in what has become the triad of contemporary collective imperialism, allowing them to pursue their policies of “containment” and then of “rolling back” that first wave of victorious struggles for the emancipation of the majority of human beings. It was that deficiency in internationalism among workers and peoples which is at the source of the twentieth century’s double drama: the exhaustion of the forward movement begun in the peripheries (the first experiments with a socialist perspective, the passage from anti-imperialist liberation to social liberation) on the one hand, and, on the other, the European socialist movements going over to the camp of capitalism/imperialism with the drift of social democracy into social liberalism.

But the triumph of capitalism—become that of the generalized monopolies—will only prove to have lasted for a short time (1980–2008?). Democratic and social struggles taking place throughout the

world, like certain policies among emerging states, call into question the system of domination by the generalized monopolies and adumbrate a second wave of global transformation. These struggles and conflicts involve every society on the planet, in the North as well as in the South. For to maintain its power contemporary capitalism is compelled to attack simultaneously the states, nations, and workers of the South (to superexploit their labor power and to pillage their natural resources) and the workers of the North, who are forced to compete with those of the South. So the objective conditions for an international convergence of struggles do exist. But from the existence of objective conditions to their activation by subjective social agents of transformation there remains a distance still to be crossed. We have no intention to settle this question with a few big, facile, and empty phrases. Deep study of the conflicts between emerging states and the imperialism of the triad and of their articulation to the democratic and social demands of the workers in the countries involved, deep study of the ongoing revolts in the countries of the South and of their limits and diverse possible evolutions, deep study of the struggles undertaken by the peoples of Europe and America—these constitute an inescapable precondition to carrying out fruitful discussion about “the” possible futures.

It remains the case that any movement to break out from the internationalism deficit is far from visible. The second wave of struggles to transform the world, is it then to be a “remake” of the first? In regard to Europe, the object of our present reflections, the anti-imperialist dimension remains absent from the consciousness both of the actors engaged in struggle, as well as from the strategies they develop—if they have strategies at all. I insist on concluding my reflections on “Europe seen from outside” with that, in my opinion, highly important remark.

References

This article refers to fundamental concepts in my analysis of contemporary capitalism and of its crisis, the arguments for which (only whose conclusions are given here) are developed in my most recent works:

Au-delà du capitalisme sénile, 2002; *Obsolescent Capitalism*, 2003

Pour un monde multipolaire, 2005; *Beyond US hegemony*, 2006

Du capitalisme à la civilisation, 2008; *From Capitalism to civilization*, 2010

La crise, sortir de la crise du capitalisme ou sortir du capitalisme en crise, 2008; *Ending the crisis of capitalism or ending capitalism*, 2010

La loi de la valeur mondialisée, 2011; *The law of worldwide value*, 2010

I make particular reference to the concepts of generalized monopoly capitalism; of the collective imperialism of the triad; of historic capitalism and its special characteristics—accumulation by dispossession, of the safety valve of emigration to the Americas that enabled the unfurling of historic capitalism, of surplus in monopoly capitalism and of the imperialist rent, of the two long structural crises of monopoly capitalism and of the responses given to the first and to the second, of the North-South conflict and of that which confronts the emerging countries to the imperialist triad, of the two long waves of anti-imperialist (the awakening of the South) and anti-capitalist (the socialist revolutions) struggles and conflicts which filled the twentieth century and are underway in the twenty-first.

On these questions see my articles of synthesis:

Capitalism, a parenthesis in history, *Monthly Review*, 2009.

The battlefields chosen by contemporary imperialism, *Kasarinlan: Philippine Journal of Third World Studies*, 2009.

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The South challenges globalization, site *Pambazuka* 05/04/2012.

Critical analysis of European construction and of the management of the euro, the subjects of this article, are to be replaced in their global context. For developments regarding these questions see:

The fading European project {L'effacement du projet européen (*Au-delà du capitalisme sénile*, 2002; pages 110 et suivantes).}

The European project on shifting sands {Les sables mouvants du projet européen (*Pour un monde multipolaire*, 2005; pages 22 et suivantes).}

The European project called into question {Le projet européen remis en question (*Du capitalisme à la civilisation*, 2008; pages 151 et suivantes).}

Impossible to manage the euro {L'impossible gestion de l'euro, site Pambazuka 06/07/2010.}

The citation of a study about Romanian public opinion was based on an oral report by a Romanian participant in the Balkan Social Forum (Zagreb, May 2012).