

## Greece, Financialization and the EU: The Political Economy of Debt and Destruction

*By Vassilis Fouskas and Constantine Dimoulas*

Basingstone: Palgrave and Macmillan, 2013, ISBN: 9781137273444.

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This is an ambitious and thought provoking account of the Greek financial crisis, a crisis which has attracted widespread attention in recent years due to its extremely costly social and human consequences. Standard accounts of the Greek crisis tend to emphasise either the institutional weaknesses of Greek's domestic political economy or the design failures of the eurozone system, with its costly consequences for the European periphery. There are also accounts that try to combine the interplay of domestic political economy and external factors to provide a more complete and nuanced picture of the recent Greek crisis.

What is novel in the present book is that it attempts to locate the current crisis in a broader historical and global context using the lenses of Marxian political economy. In retrospect, there are two elements that represent distinct and unique contributions to the literature. The first argument is that we need to understand the Greek crisis not as a purely local national level phenomenon or even a regional level phenomenon. Both the eurozone crisis and the specific case of the Greek crisis should be analysed within the broader

context of neo-liberal globalisation, with “financialisation” constituting its most distinctive defining element, as well as the profound shifts in the centre of economic and political power taking place in the current era from west to east. The “global fault lines” approach developed by Fouskas and Gökyay in an earlier study is used here as a basis for understanding the specificities of the Greek situation.

The second argument is that class structure matters and there is a need to understand the nature of the Greek capitalist class, and its relation to the Greek state and the nature of its alliance with the transnational capitalist classes, as a basis for understanding the historical roots of the distorted pattern of economic development in Greece that eventually culminated in a major economic and financial crisis. Indeed, the authors make a significant effort to show that the structural weaknesses of the Greek economy are not novel. They have been built up over time and the process of integration into the European Union and subsequently into the European Monetary Union have aggravated these basic structural deficiencies. The book

is quite rich in terms of the accounts of the evolution of Greek political economy over long stretches of historical time going back well into the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The over-ambitious nature of the book and the sweeping nature of some its statements also open it to criticism. For example, the link between the emerging “global fault lines” and the Greek crisis needs further elaboration to convince the sceptics. A central question that comes to mind is whether the “global” element is overplayed given the highly differential impact of the eurozone crisis, both on its Southern and Eastern periphery. How do we explain the fact that Poland has emerged quite strong from the eurozone crisis? Similarly, how do we account for the fact that countries like Spain and Italy, although deeply affected by the eurozone crisis, did not experience the same degree of collapse and disintegration as in the case of Greece? Another issue to be raised is whether the authors are too dismissive of the European integration project. We should not underestimate the enormous benefits brought upon by the process of European integration on the countries of the European periphery, especially on the path to full-membership, in terms of economic development and the consolidation of liberal democratic norms. The transformative impact of the EU has been tremendous both in Southern Europe and the Eastern Europe at different times. Even Turkey, a unique case with uncertain membership prospects, has benefited

from the transformative capacity of the EU, especially in the late 1990s and the early 2000s. There is no doubt that the impact of EU on the Greek economy is mixed, with the eurozone clearly creating moral hazard problems and disincentives for undertaking long-term economic reforms designed to create a more competitive and sustainable structure. At the same time, we should not underestimate the positive impact of the EU in the spheres of economic and democratic development.

Two additional critiques relate to class analysis and policy relevance of the book. First, although the Greek capitalists and upper classes have benefited disproportionately from lop-sided growth, is it also not true that large segments of the Greek society also benefited from an overextended welfare state and were quite resistant to reform? Second, what can policy-makers, faced with difficult and immediate choices, learn in concrete terms from such over-arching global and historical accounts of major crises, such as the current Greek experience?

In spite of these criticisms, the book deserves a wide audience given its provocative thesis and its attempt to move beyond purely economic accounts of and take into account the broader social and political context to provide an integrated, holistic explanation of the current Greek crisis.

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## Troubled Partnership: US-Turkish Relations in an Era of Global Geopolitical Change

*By Stephen F. Larrabee*

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The relationship between Turkey and the United States has been the subject of many books and articles. Although bilateral relations can be traced back to even the Ottoman period, the two countries upgraded their relationship to a strategic partnership right after the Second World War and the start of the Cold War. Although this relationship had its ups and downs, during the Cold War Turkey was protected and supported by the West and served Western interests in that it helped prevent the expansion of Communism. In the post-Cold War era the relationship between the US and Turkey got even stronger, while relations between Turkey and Europe lost momentum, as Turkey came to fulfil another role, that of the “bridge” between the West and the East. Example of this new “identity” was the Gulf War against Iraq and the assistance that Turkey provided to the US Army. This partnership, however, reached its lowest level in March, 2003 when US-led NATO forces asked for permission to launch attacks against Iraq through Turkey soil and the Turkish parliament voted against it.

The strategic partnership has had serious strains ever since, and Stephen F.

Larrabee’s book highlights these strains and focuses on this troubled partnership so that he can warn Washington that, if not handled with extra caution, Turkey “could be lost”. The purpose of the book, as the author writes, is to explore the sources of these strains and their future implications on relations. There are nine chapters in the book, with a tenth that serves as a conclusion.

In the introduction Larrabee talks about the origins of the partnership between the US and Turkey, which started at the end of the Second World War, and was made stronger in 1952, the year that Turkey joined NATO. In the second chapter, the author talks about the transition of the US-Turkish partnership from Turkey as “barrier” to Communism to it being a “bridge” between the West and the East. The end of the Cold War did not lead to a loosening but rather to a strengthening of bilateral ties. Turkey became even more important for the US. Washington saw Turkey as a “stabilising force” as it was a Muslim country in an unbalanced and volatile Middle East and Central Asia. Special focus is given here on the American base in Incirlik (in southern Turkey) and

its role in providing logistical support from/to Iraq and Afghanistan. In such an unpredictable environment, the US and Turkey need each other. In Chapter 3, Larrabee explains how the relations of US and Turkey deteriorated due to the parliamentary vote that did not allow US forces access through Turkey to launch attacks on Iraq. The Iraq war that led to the ousting of Saddam Hussein also brought up some new dangers and threats for Turkey, such as sectarian violence and Kurdish nationalism. The author states that Turkey was “one of the biggest losers of the US invasion of Iraq”. Both the US and Turkey started losing faith and trust in each other due to this war.

In Chapter 4, the author talks about Turkey’s efforts in diversifying its foreign policy, especially in the Middle East, and the growing independence in its diplomacy. It describes briefly Turkey’s relations with its neighbours in the Middle East. Special focus is given to Syria and Iran but since the book was written right before the Arab Awakening it is quite outdated. In Chapter 5, the author describes relations between Russia and Turkey. He starts by saying that in the post-Cold War era the Turkic former republics of USSR were seen by then-Turkey’s President Turgut Özal as a new frontier for expanding Turkish interests, but soon this dream collapsed as this region was still within the Russian sphere of influence. He focuses on the fear in the West (especially the US) that Turkey may start seeing Russia as a

security alternative to NATO, but that was highly unlikely due to the mistrust that is embedded in Turkish historical consciousness and most importantly because such a move would be a blow to the traditional Kemalist policy of Westernisation. Larrabee believes that such an alliance would be “anathema” for the Turkish military as well.

In Chapter 6, the author talks about the chronically problematic relations between Europe and Turkey, and the fact that Turkey is still viewed by many in Europe as the “other”. In moments of deterioration of Euro-Turkish relations, Turkey has always turned to the US for support but now this is more difficult because of the troubled partnership. So again he is expressing his fears that if the EU permanently closes the door to Ankara, then Turkey could abandon the West and seek alternative options. In Chapter 7, Larrabee focuses on defence cooperation and argues that the US should get engaged in a broad strategic dialogue with Ankara about the future use of military bases in Turkey, especially the Incirlik base. He fears that due to the currently strained relationship Ankara will be highly sensitive about allowing full access to the US military for the Middle Eastern contingencies. According to the author, Incirlik should be kept as it is one of the most important bases in the whole region. In Chapter 8, the focus is turned to Turkey’s domestic affairs and Ankara’s efforts to fully democratise the country. When the ruling Justice and

Development Party took over in 2002, a wave of reforms started, but in recent years the democratisation process has slowed down. The US should encourage Turkey to revitalise the whole process. In Chapter 9, the author makes some predictions about Turkey's future, and he describes four possible future scenarios: a pro-Western Turkey fully integrated into the EU, an "Islamised" Turkey, a nationalist Turkey and a possible military intervention. Finally, in Chapter 10, Larrabee concludes that given the geopolitical changes that are taking place today in Turkey's surrounding regions, it is vital that the two countries remain close allies. Revitalising the US-Turkish partnership should be considered a top US policy priority; Obama's visit in 2009 right after he took office shows exactly this. But the author believes that actions are needed more than words and official visits.

The purpose of this book may have been to highlight the strains in the partnership between US and Turkey and offer

suggestions of how to overcome them but we should not neglect the fact that the book was published by the RAND Corporation, which is a think tank that gets financing from the US government. Stephen F. Larrabee is the Distinguished Chair in European Security at the RAND Corporation. The real aim of this book is to warn Washington that such a strategic ally should not be lost or should not be driven to look for other security alternatives in that such a probability would harm the American interests in the area. Keeping Turkey as a close ally, Larrabee suggests, should be made US policy because of the interests that are at stake. I recommend this book to both students and practitioners of international relations who are interested in this region, as it will show that, contrary to conventional wisdom, the US needs Turkey more than Turkey needs the US.

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## The Fall of the US Empire: Global Fault-Lines and the Shifting Imperial Order

*By Vassilis K. Fouskas and Bülent Gökay*

London: Pluto Press, 2012, 196 pages, ISBN: 9780745326443.

The debate on the United States (US) as a declining power has been around since the late 1960s. It was reinvigorated in the 2000s, mainly due to the rise of

China, and gained pace with the US led global financial crisis. Among those scholarly works, it is worth paying attention to *The Fall of the US Empire:*

*Global Fault-Lines and the Shifting Imperial Order* with its theoretically in-depth international political economy (IPE) perspective, “global fault-lines” conceptualisation and historical insights.

The principal aim of the book is to investigate the roots of the global financial crisis that hit “the Anglo-American heartland” in the summer of 2007. It argues that the US has been a declining empire since the late 1960s and its policies of globalisation/financialisation and neoliberalism- which the authors call “financial statecraft” I (1971-91) and II (1991-2011)- have failed to hinder this decline and/or global power shift to the east, particularly to China and India. Even though the authors appreciate the usefulness of Trotsky’s notion of “uneven and combined development” (UCD) to assess the power shift, they criticise the notion’s Eurocentrism and prioritisation of global economic structure at the expense of political, societal, cultural and ideational ones. Going beyond UCD, as a more heuristic and all-encompassing concept, they propose “global fault-lines” to discern totality across historical time and space, whose elements/instances (political, economic, cultural, ideational, societal, geopolitical, geographical and ecological) are discursively interconnected, articulated and mingled, invariably generating political and economic change, global hegemonic transitions and power shifts (pp. xviii-xx).

Indeed, the methodological chapter elaborates on “global fault-lines” by critically reviewing major studies in the field of IPE, such as those of Robert Brenner, Leo Panitch and Giovanni Arrighi, to test its theses. The book proceeds with the second chapter that critically analyses the period between 1944-1971 known as “the Golden Age of Capitalism”, in which the foundations of globalization/neoliberalism were laid through the Bretton Woods regime. The third and fourth chapters examine the Anglo-American world’s adoption of “financial statecraft” in the periods of 1971-1991 (President Nixon’s closure of the gold standard of the Bretton Woods regime in 1971, Reaganism/Thatcherism) and 1991-2011 (currency devaluations, shock therapy, the Financial Services Modernization Act of 1999, financial innovations, etc.) to prevent its decline. Not to mention global financial vulnerabilities as revealed in the global financial crisis, those financialisation/neoliberalism measures have failed to address the root of the problems, which is a long-term fall and failure to recover the rate of profit, and the outsourcing of employment and industrial investment to the global east. The fifth chapter examines how this failure has set the stage for the power shift to the global East- particularly China and India along with Brazil, Indonesia, Mexico, Russia and Turkey, as Andre Gunder Frank anticipated in his seminal work *Reorient* (1998). This chapter also argues that the global

financial crisis has accelerated this shift to the east. Following on from the previous chapters that looked at how new policies caused financial vulnerabilities around the globe, the sixth chapter examines two other vulnerabilities: resource depletion (e.g. end of cheap oil, production peak) and environmental degradation (e.g. climate change). The conclusion chapter outlines the main findings and underlines an urgent need for a new economic system geared to sustainable development and proposes a new socialist alternative addressing the human needs of the many, rather than ensuring privileges of the few.

In many ways, through its encompassing “global fault-lines” conceptualisation, this book provides useful insights on, to use the term of Zbigniew Brzezinski, the “unprecedented instabilities” shaking today’s international arenas such as trajectory of the Arab “spring” in the Middle East. Most probably due to its publication date, the book has missed a great opportunity to test its theses, particularly those on global vulnerabilities, on the social laboratory that is the Middle East. Nevertheless, the reader would have to evaluate the usefulness of “global fault-lines” concept with its emphasis on historical structures at the expense of agency and/or domestic factors.

Turning to China’s rise thesis, from a modernist perspective, a critical reader could be sceptical about the sustainability of the rise of China under an authoritarian communist party

regime. Arguably, it will be tough for democratic China to attract sufficient foreign direct investment (FDI) to keep its current growth rates of around 10% as workers demand higher living standards.

Leaving aside China and India, despite their differing security perceptions and their domestic socio-economic structures and political systems, the book does not offer much hint about the prospects for emerging economies (Brazil, Russia, Indonesia, South Africa and Turkey) to contend with the American imperial order. Why would NATO member Turkey with its fragile economy prefer to challenge the status quo provided by the American imperial order? Apart from aggression in Georgia and Ukraine, and now under heavy Western sanctions, how would energy-rich Russia with its declining resource production contest the US in the long-term?

This point brings us to the American-led “unconventional energy revolution” in shale gas and oil production that will likely dramatically change global energy trends in the coming years, as recently argued by the International Energy Agency (IEA) and the Energy Information Agency (EIA). Nonetheless, the book does not have a persuasive counter-argument against this energy revolution that tremendously favours the US. Without a doubt, this dirty energy revolution is closely related with environmental degradation, particularly climate change and water scarcity. Related chapter of

the book on energy/environment could have further elaborated on this nexus of energy-water-environment.

Against this backdrop, and as an exit strategy for these vulnerabilities (financialisation, resource depletion and environmental degradation), the final chapter hints at a socialist vision to attain global sustainable human development. However, it leaves the reader to contemplate how it would be possible to materialise this radical transformation under current global political economic structures.

All in all, going beyond realism's shallow description of global politics as "the tragedy of great powers", the book's historical/structural political economic perspective in along with its "global fault-lines" conceptualisation provides an encompassing tool to better understand "the tragedy of globalisation". In this respect, it offers a widened perspective for international relations students to explore structural roots of today's socio-economic problems.

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## Another Empire? A Decade of Turkey's Foreign Policy under the Justice and Development Party

*By Kerem Öktem, Ayşe Kadioğlu and Mehmet Karlı (eds.)*

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Turkish foreign policy significantly changed after the Justice and Development Party (JDP) won the 2002 elections, and this change has been the hallmark of the last decade. *Another Empire? A Decade of Turkey's Foreign Policy under the Justice and Development Party* was written to understand the developments and changes in Turkish foreign policy after the JDP took the helm. In addition, this collection of essays seeks to explain the domestic foundations of Turkey's international

relations and the "reform choreography" of conservative change in the JDP era, which has created the context for Turkish foreign policy making. This book examines two important subject areas: the first are the allegations that Turkey's foreign policies have had a "change of axis", and the second relates to claims that the JDP's foreign policies are "neo-Ottoman" and geared at recreating the Empire, despite Davutoğlu's criticism of such an idea. Other important subjects in this book concern relations with



Middle Eastern countries and discussions around Turkey's model country role, or in another words its "big brother role".

This edited book includes three parts and 12 different chapters. The first part focuses on Turkey's transformation, examining new classes, identities, actors and networks. E. Fuat Keyman emphasises the proactivism in Turkish foreign policy and he argues that "Turkey is a model country or an aspiration for the future of democracy and Turkey is the most successful example today of a secular and constitutional democracy within a Muslim society". Keyman describes three main challenges for Turkish foreign policy and its proactivism. He also underlines the significance of realism and sustainability in foreign policy. According to him foreign policy must be complemented with realistic strategies to be effective and sustainable.

Ayşe Kadioğlu, who is the other editor of this book, examines the JDP's reform process. She highlights the importance of National Outlook Movement (NOM) traditions and the EU in the creation of the JDP's reform agenda. In another article Nora Fisher emphasises Turkish Foreign Minister Davutoğlu's strategic depth and zero-problem-with-neighbours doctrine. Examining the democratic depth argument, the author says that "Davutoğlu's strategic depth doctrine played a pivotal role in guiding Turkey's transformation over the past decade and with the strategic depth

doctrine's historical and geopolitical foundations help elucidate Turkey's place in the world and its relations with Balkans, Caucasus and ME as well as with Europe and the West".

In chapter four Kerem Öktem looks at Nye's *Soft Power*, using Nye's ideas to examine Turkey's soft power and its different modes of projection. Öktem also tries to explain Turkish soft power by using the Yunus Emre Foundation as an example. He categorises soft power into four areas- "ideological power, development aid, religious network and popular culture"- and underlines the importance of TİKA and the Gülen movement. At the end of the first part Mehmet Karlı analyses global economic power balances, the evolution of Turkish foreign trade and the growth in Turkish foreign trade. In the end he provides important data about Turkey's economic situation, validating his claim that "Turkey is the second largest economy in the region".

In the second part's first chapter Joshua Walker discusses Turkey's relations with the United States in a changing world. While Turkey is a G-20 member and has a seat in the UN Security Council and the European Union, it is also chair of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation. This shows that Turkey is an autonomous actor in the region and is also seeking greater regional and global influence. Despite the ups and downs if we look relations between this two

countries, Turkey continues to offer the US numerous opportunities for strategic cooperation and thus remains a critically important partner in the Middle East.

Chapter seven looks at what's wrong in Turkey's relations with the EU. Nilgun Eralp and Atila Eralp argue that the turning point in relations began when the accession negotiations between Turkey and the European Union began in 2005. In addition, the authors discuss the role of the Cyprus issue: "with the membership of the Republic of Cyprus the EU started to lose its catalyst role in the resolution of the Cyprus problem, while the persistence of the issue began to affect the Turkey-EU relationship rather negatively".

In chapters eight and nine Onton Anastasaki's and Dimitrar Bechev's articles examines Turkey's assertive presence in Southeast Europe and they focus on identity politics and elite pragmatism and relations with Greece, Cyprus and the other Balkan countries. For Anastasaki, the "JDP significantly increased its presence in southeast Europe over the past few years and with diplomatic initiatives, mediation, strategic economic investments and stronger cultural ties and Turkey tried to establish itself as a key regional player". The JDP adopted a more forceful ideological justification for Turkey's multi-dimensional foreign policy, promoting an ambitious narrative of Turkey's historical links, cultural

affinities and economic interdependence with the Balkans. In last part in his chapter Bechev gives information about trade, investment and interest in popular culture and tourism with the Balkan countries.

In the third part of book El Fadl examines relations between Egypt, Syria and Turkey. The author looks at the viability of the Turkish model for Arab countries and sees Turkey as an emerging middle power in the Arab World. The author also underlines Turkey's soft power approaches and civil society actors. She finishes her chapter with Gamil Matar's argument regarding Turkey's role: "it is too early to predict how Turkey's role will unfold, but what is certain is that the new players are neither entirely from outside nor from among us".

Chapter 11 outlines the determinants in Turkish-Iranian relations, and looks at the role of soft power. The author examines the opinion of Turkey on the Iranian nuclear programme and he also looks at energy ties. In this chapter we also can find useful data about trade and the economic relationship between Iran and Turkey. In the last chapter of the book, Görgülü examines the historical rapprochement with Armenia. In the epilogue Kalypso Nicolaidis from Oxford University writes about Turkish foreign policy's new orientations.

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## The Russian Origins of the First World War

*By Sean McMeekin*

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As the centenary of the First World War will be commemorated this year, the debate on the causes of the war continues among scholars. With regards to the Ottoman Empire, the most recent study in English that benefited from Ottoman archives in addition to other sources has been produced by Mustafa Aksakal.<sup>1</sup> He challenged the traditional view that the Ottoman Empire went into the war due to the pro-German attitudes and adventurist character of the leading political figures. Rather, Aksakal showed it was because the empire was in a grave situation, expecting Russian hostilities and unable to obtain weapons and credits from elsewhere. Though following the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, the new regime published a huge collection of material (consisting of dispatches, official correspondence, memoranda, etc.) to condemn the “imperialist war” of the *ancien régime* and its secret diplomacy, Russian military archives were left virtually untouched. This was partly due to the language barrier with regards to Turkish and Russian material. In addition, Russian state archives were inaccessible to most researchers from abroad. However, this situation started to change with the end of the Cold War.

In this vein, Sean McMeekin’s *The Russian Origins of the First World War* aims to meet this challenge. The author has used published and unpublished Russian archival material while also benefiting from other states’ archives, memoirs and other sources. An especially important contribution to the current literature is the unpublished material from the Russian military archives. By relying on these sources, the author also tries to accomplish another important task of deconstructing and challenging the current understanding surrounding the war guilt issue. The view that considers Germany responsible for the war suggests that Germany used the assassination of Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand on 28 July 1914 in Sarajevo as a pretext for its bid for world domination. The main defender of this argument was German scholar Fritz Fischer, who published his book *Germany’s Aims in the First World War* by relying on German archival material.<sup>2</sup> Even though Fischer’s views, which solely blamed German aggression, were later criticised to some degree, in the popular understanding since then it has become accepted that Germany was the only actor responsible for the war. As the war was seen an “automatic war” due to mobilisation plans, McMeekin also

challenges that point and proves that it was Russia who started mobilisation secretly first as early as 24 July 1914 (war was officially declared on 29 July).

McMeekin challenges this traditional view and tries to bring Russia's role to the fore in the mobilisation process and designs for partitioning the Habsburg and Ottoman Empires. In the author's view, war was welcomed by Russia and regarded as an opportunity to reach its objectives. It was supported by France financially in the pre-war era and improved its railway networks and industrial base and strengthened its armed forces. According to the author, the First World War could very easily be labelled "The War of the Ottoman Succession". The author utilizes the example of Russian memoranda to support his argument, one of which was prepared in 1895, on the seizure of Istanbul and the Turkish Straits through the landing of an amphibious force. Russia was encouraged by the Armenian mass protests that took place in 30 September 1895 in Istanbul which ended with armed violence. Following its defeat by Japan and the annihilation of an important part of its naval forces in 1905, Russia had for some time given up the idea. It was again revived following the 1908 Revolution and the schemes for modernising the Ottoman armed forces employed by the Committee of Union and Progress administration created great concern in Russia. The modernisation of the Ottoman military would make the task harder for Russia. In a Russian General

Staff memorandum of October 1910 it was stated that an amphibious force would land after an uprising of Christian minorities in Istanbul.

The abundance of archival material provides deep insights into the Russian decision-making processes and allows the reader to understand Russia's ambitious plans. On 21 February 1914, five months before the outbreak of war, there was a high-level special committee meeting in St. Petersburg that dealt with the plans to seize Istanbul. It was accepted that on M+5 (five days after mobilisation), a Russian force of 30,000-50,000 moving on ships from Odessa would land near Istanbul. However the setbacks in other fronts necessitated the postponement of this plan. It was Russia that demanded Britain not deliver the dreadnoughts built for the Ottoman Empire in the British shipyards (the *Sultan Osman* and *Reşadiye*) in order not to change the naval balance in the Black Sea. As the rest is well known, these ships were expropriated by Britain and then Germany sent *Goeben* and *Breslau*, which entered into Ottoman service and were renamed *Yavuz* and *Midilli*. Even while the Ottoman Empire was not at war in late September, Russia was intriguing with the British and French over its ambitions on the Straits and Istanbul.

As France faced a serious German offensive, it always had to come to terms with Russia as it was afraid that Russia would sign a separate peace treaty with Germany. The leverage Russia had over its

allies made them accept Russian territorial demands and the conduct of war because to the displeasure of France, Russia was more interested in beating Austrian forces rather than focusing on the German front in Eastern Prussia. The Gallipoli campaign of Britain and France was organized on Russia's demands and it was agreed that Russia would force the Bosphorus in coordination with the Allied landings in Gallipoli but the promised Russian contribution never came. Instead, Russia demanded that it should send a force only after its allies invaded Istanbul.

With regards to the Russian share in the tragedies of the Armenian population, the author uses Russian material to show that the events in Eastern Anatolia were organised by Russia and Armenian groups were armed secretly to serve its war aims. The most interesting point is that Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergei Sazonov, who always argued that the Armenians formed a majority in Eastern Anatolia before the war in order to force the Ottomans to grant autonomy to these provinces, changed his mind after the Russian forces invaded the region, and in his correspondence with Grand Duke Nikola (Supreme Commander in the Caucasus Front) instead opposed the idea of autonomy and argued that they did not constitute a majority in the region and

demanded strict control on their activities.

In conclusion, McMeekin's detailed study has illuminated many less well-known parts of the story and challenged the traditional myths that still survive both in the current scholarship and popular imagination. He showed that both Germany and Russia had imperial ambitions. He provides convincing arguments based on concrete proof such as published and unpublished archival material. His approach also allows the reader to see the discrepancy between the memoirs published by the statesmen in the post-war era with the purpose of defending their position and the official documents. His contribution will help in the emergence of a new and broader understanding of the events surrounding the war.

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## Endnotes

- 1 Mustafa Aksakal, *The Ottoman Road to War in 1914: The Ottoman Empire in the First World War*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- 2 Fritz Fischer, *Germany's Aims in the First World War*, New York, Norton, 1967.

## On Baltic Slovenia and Adriatic Lithuania: A Qualitative Comparative Analysis of Patterns in Post-Communist Transformation

*By Zenonas Norkus*

Budapest and New York: Vilnius, Apostrofa, CEU Press, 2012, 375 pages, ISBN 9789955605683.

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*On Baltic Slovenia and Adriatic Lithuania*, which was originally published in Lithuanian in 2008, garnered the Zenonas Norkus the prestigious Lithuanian Science Award in 2009. He was compelled to write the book to “provid[e] a building block for the Vilnius school of the post-communist studies which would be a worthy successor to interwar Wilno (Polish) school of Soviet studies” (p. 12). The book has had to compete with a number of other books that have analysed post-communist transformation from various perspectives, such as *Understanding Post-Communist Transformation: A Bottom Up Approach* (Richard Rose, Taylor & Francis, 2008) and *Post-Communist Welfare Pathways: Theorizing Social Policy Transformations in Central and Eastern Europe* (edited by Alfio Cerami and Pieter Vanhuysse, Palgrave MacMillan, 2009). Yet, this book is unique in its genre since the author uses the multi-value qualitative comparative analysis (mvQCA) as an analytical framework and employs TOSMANA software. Therefore, this book is “as innovative theoretically

as it is methodologically”, as the author argues in the “Introduction”.

The author surveys 29 countries in Eurasia in the 10 years following the end of communism and systematically examines 64 post-communist transformation paths, compares them and formulates generalisations. This is summarised in the fourth chapter, which Norkus defines as the central chapter of the book as it provides the conceptual framework necessary to understand the post-communist transformation theory. In so doing, the author has two goals. The first is “to outline a grounded general theory of post-communist transformation, using analytical techniques of qualitative comparative analysis as a framework for the construction of this theory”. The second is “to advance political economic understanding of a particular case- the Republic of Lithuania” (p. 335). The two purposes are very well achieved by dividing the book into two parts.

The first part of the book focuses on the concept of post-communist

transformation. In so doing, the author tries to answer a set of questions on the causes and obstacles to the rapid transformation of communist economic and political systems to various types of economic and political systems, namely rational entrepreneurial capitalism (REC) plus democracy (liberal democratic capitalism), REC with no liberal democracy, or liberal democracy with no REC. The theoretical framework that comes out from this approach is quite complex since many elements are taken into consideration. While the first chapter presents the concept of an exit from communism, and presents the project to devise a theory of post-communist transformation, the second chapter discusses in detail the initial conditions of post-communist transformation by means of three variables: a) the orientation of the post-communist transformation; b) the economic mode of the exit from communism; and c) the political mode of exit from communism. On this basis, the third chapter analyses the outcomes of the post-communist transformation. The economic outcomes are described by using three types of capitalism, namely rational entrepreneurial (or Weberian-Schumpeterian) capitalism (REC), political oligarchy and state capitalism. The political outcomes of post-communism transformation cover typologies of liberal democracy and authoritarianism. These three chapters are the basis for the analysis contained in the fourth chapter. The result is ten final patterns for the emergence

or non-emergence of liberal democratic capitalism. The author concludes by stating that these patterns are the “laws” of post-communist transformation. They are “unsimple truths about post-communist transformation, taking into account its diversity and complexity” (p. 193).

Although the subtitle clarifies the content of the book, the first part makes the title quite misleading since the focus is not on the Lithuanian case, but on twenty-nine countries, as previously stated. In this part Lithuania is hardly mentioned. Additionally, the author himself admits that in order to develop the main theme of the study (starting only on page 201) – the post-communist transformation of Lithuania in the context of Central and Eastern Europe – he has to adopt two strategies in the second part of the book. One is to extend the time period taken into account in the theoretical formulation. Thus, in this part he considers not only the first ten years after the end of communism, but he extends this period until 2009-2010. This is necessary to deepen the comparative contexts, he says. The other strategy is to focus on a comparison of Lithuania with only two countries that are Estonia and Slovenia. The reason why Norkus has chosen these two countries is that they are among the top performers of post-communist transformation. Furthermore, in the research on post-communist capitalism, Slovenia is considered the most unambiguous case of coordinated market economy (CME) or social capitalism.

Estonia is instead considered as the clearest case of a post-communist (neo)liberal market economy (LME). Consequently, according to the author, “as extreme cases, Estonia and Slovenia may provide limit points for the scale that can be used to locate and to profile Lithuania which is not such an unambiguous case” (p.206). In spite of this, the comparison inevitably includes Latvia, which is the third Baltic state. The author gives Latvia much space in the analysis together with Estonia and Slovenia. The second part of the book is divided into three chapters. The first answers the question of why Estonia was least hit by a transformational recession compared to others in the early 1990s, and why it recovered first and performed best among the Baltic States. In this context, the differences in the macroeconomic performance of the Baltic States, the advantages of Estonia in the internal and external economic conditions and the government of the ex-communists between 1992 and 1996 are discussed. The Latvian case is also assessed in the analysis.

The second chapter of this section explains why Slovenia can be considered a CME state, while the classification of Estonia as a LME country must be rejected. At the same time, the study answers positively the question about the possibility of a “Baltic Slovenia” while it rejects the eventuality of an “Adriatic Lithuania”. Finally, the third chapter of the second section focuses again on the three Baltic countries by analysing an exceptional period in Lithuanian

politics when President Rolands Paksas was removed through impeachment in 2003-2004. The author discusses three issues. He starts by looking at why impeachment happened in Lithuania but not in some other Baltic country, or more generally in some other post-communist liberal democracy. He continues by addressing the impact of the presidential impeachment on the consolidation of liberal democracy in Lithuania. He concludes his analysis by explaining why the perceived quality of democracy did not improve much after the impeachment. In this part, the author manages to provide an interesting and fascinating discussion on the post-communist transformation in Lithuania using a comparative perspective. However, he is obliged to extend the theoretical framework developed in the first part by taking into account “many more variables... in addition to orientations, economic and political modes of transformation that were [his] main analytical tools in the search for the general patterns of post-communist transformation” in the first part of the book, as he himself says (p. 201). This contributes to generate a clear split between the two sections of the study.

All in all, the book provides an original and innovative interpretation of post-communist transformation in Eastern and Central Europe by putting the Lithuanian case at the centre of the comparative analysis in the second part of the book.

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