

Gordana Ilić Markovićs Buch ist in jeder Hinsicht lesenswert – nur schade, dass es nicht zweisprachig konzipiert und herausgegeben wurde, um es auch dem deutschsprachigen Leser zugänglich zu machen.

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CLAUDIA STERNBERG, KIRA GARTZOU-KATSOUYANNI, KALYPSO NICOLAIDIS (eds):
The Greco-German Affair in the Euro Crisis: Mutual Recognition Lost?
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The much reported Greek debt crisis has occupied both the German and the Greek public sphere for quite some time and the rhetoric thereof has oftentimes been (over)zealous, judging by the press coverage in both countries. This has had consequences and sociopolitical side-effects, inevitably. The book reviewed here deals with the emergent dynamics and *problématique* thereof, arising from a comparative study of the rhetoric of the Greek and German press and their coverage of the ‘other’ amidst the Euro crisis.

The first chapter begins by introducing the object of research and provides the necessary theoretical and methodological foundations upon which the findings and analysis are built, particularly in light of the multifold EU crises and their symptoms. Namely, emphasis is placed on the concept of ‘mutual recognition’ as a means of reciprocal identification and acknowledgement among EU counterparts; mutual recognition, apart from the core theoretical tool, is also deemed by the authors as a useful way towards supporting and enhancing cooperation among European *demosi* (the plural of *demos*). Here the authors introduce the concept of ‘demoicracy’, a third way in which *demosi* and citizens jointly rule the EU, where mutual recognition is a *sine qua non*. The Greco-German affair and its challenges are essentially dealt with in the above-mentioned context. Moreover, the authors make sure to provide a detailed account of their theoretical framework, i.e. mutual recognition, offering glances into political theory, philosophy, and history, as they make a connection between disciplines, and demonstrate the usefulness of the concept in International Relations. Ultimately, in practice the conceptual framework boils down to rebuilding trust between European *demosi*, the fissures among which are all the more identifiable.

From a methodological perspective, the theme is examined via a comparative qualitative, interpretive analysis of the key discursive dynamics in the issue of the Euro-crisis concerning the ‘other’, i.e. the portrayal of Germans in the Greek press and vice versa, placing emphasis on the narratives that generate meaning and co-shape mutual recognition. The sample is from print and online media outlets between 2010 and 2015, a period of significant political developments regarding the crisis and, by extension, rife with such discourses. The research material is drawn from a carefully selected, representative sample that covered a broad ideological political spectrum as well as having a significant share of the respective readerships.

The second chapter covers five thematic patterns that dominated the press coverage of the crisis and the emergence of stereotypes utilised in the process of ‘othering’ one another. Namely, it sheds light on a constellation of elements that were instru-

mental in this othering discourse: such as collective morality, history and memory, self-image – co-shaped by reflection as well –, a peculiar dialectic of power and resistance in the collective imaginary, but also anxiety over the future. The oftentimes sweeping stereotypical generalisations notwithstanding, interestingly enough, a glimpse of partial recovery of the mutual recognition is identifiable. However, according to the findings, the differences in the collective perceptions on morality and priorities still constitute means of othering and stereotyping. Yet by delving into the moral composition and values of the ‘other’, a more complex image of what that ‘other’ comprises is constructed, thus indirectly – perhaps even unwittingly and unintentionally on behalf of the press – highlighting the existing commonalities among the European *demos*. Generally, it emerges that the ‘othering’ discourse brought about contours of overlaps and commonalities beyond the stereotypes, but still this was a by-product of a lengthy, openly hostile exchange that, somewhat easily, spoke to the intuitive popular perception.

In an equally interesting approach to the topic, the third chapter goes beyond the Greco-German affair and its tandem of overlaps and antitheses, and broadens the scope in order to encompass the EU and the way its image was affected in the eyes of Greeks and Germans alike. This was particularly so as the antitheses-laden emergent narratives that overwhelmingly populated the public sphere challenged the legitimacy of the EU, given that a basic premise of the Union – meant here both descriptively and literally – is the constellation of overarching commonalities. To varying extents, the competing discourses on the EU have not ceased, but it appears they do not depend on short-term impressions, impulses and cost-benefit rationales, given that they are linked to well-established perceptions and understandings of institutions, politics and national identity.

The fourth and final chapter seeks to make the most of these discourses by treating the theme focused on here as a learning process, seeking thereby to identify ways of recovering lost mutual recognition. In this context it is suggested that special attention is needed in order to better understand the construction of the self-image and that of the ‘other’ respectively, and the interaction and interrelation of the two. To be sure this is not a prescriptive analysis on how to heal the fissures that the Europeanisation process and the mutual recognition have sustained, but an admittedly Europeanist perspective that encourages the reader to see through the nebulae of stereotypes and appreciate the high degree of complexity that stems from the constellation of differences and commonalities and pervades mutual recognition; ultimately to engage productively and contest those stereotypes.

However, this is not a utopian endeavour. The authors make it clear that the EU is constantly-under-construction, a learning process that does not aspire to an engineered teleological equilibrium among *demos*, but rather to the restoration and consolidation of trust via mutual recognition. All in all, this contribution is well-founded, balanced, packed with content and meaning, thought-provoking, and an essential read when one wishes to understand the particulars of the Greco-German affair, and by extension its part in the collective European narrative.

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