

New Research in

Global Political Economy



Jannis
Eicker

The Peripheralization of the Greek State

A Poulantzian Analysis of the
Development of the Greek State since
the Introduction of the first Structural
Adjustment Program in 2010

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List of Abbreviations

General terms

CMP	Capitalist mode of production
CR	Critical Realism
EC	European Commission
ECB	European Central Bank
EEC	European Economic Community
EDA	Greek Democratic Alliance
EFSF	European Financial Stability Facility
ESM	European Stability Mechanism
EU	European Union
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISSJ	International Social Science Journal
KKE	Kommounistikó Kómma Elládas (Greek Communist Party)
IR	International Relations
ND	Nea Dimokratia (New Democracy)
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PASOK	Panellinio Sosialistiko Kinima (Panhellenic Socialist Movement)
SYRIZA	Synaspismos Rizospastikis Aristeras (Coalition of the Radical Left)
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
WB	World Bank

Abbreviations of Poulantzas's texts (in order of publication)

PPSC	Political Power and Social Classes (1973 [1968])*
FD	Fascism and Dictatorship (1974 [1970])
INT	Internationalization of Capitalist Relations and the Nation-State (1974 [1973])
CCC	Classes in Contemporary Capitalism (1975 [1974])
CD	The Crisis of the Dictatorships (1976 [1975])
SPS	State, Power, Socialism (2000 [1978])

* The numbers in the squared brackets always refer to the year of the *first* publication in the *original* language.

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Abstract

The aim of this working paper is to develop a theoretical framework that enables a deeper understanding of the transformations of the Greek state since the introduction of the first structural adjustment program in 2010. The main hypothesis is that this process can be described as a ‘peripheralization’. Such a description, however, necessitates an adequate conceptualization of the peripheral type of state in the first place. In order to enable a systematic and genuinely state-theoretical development of both these concepts, Nicos Poulantzas’s works will be examined for corresponding contributions. In particular, his description of the state as a material condensation of relations of forces based on the relative autonomy of the state and the notion of the imperialist chain are of central importance here. They enable a conceptualization of peripheral statehood without reducing it to either internal or external factors only. On this basis plus an evaluation of Poulantzas’s less known book *The Crisis of the Dictatorships*, the peripheral type of state will be characterized as an interplay of class struggle and the position of the dependent social formation within the imperialist chain. Thereby, this working paper adds further important aspects to the growing reception of Poulantzas’s work in recent years.

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1. Introduction

“Given in particular the force of the popular movement [...], the question of a transition to socialism is still as acute as ever, in the specific conditions of dependence experienced by these countries” (CD: 127).

Presenting this quote of the Greek neo-Marxist state theorist Nicos Poulantzas in this way, it appears as if it could have been written within the last five years as a reference to the success of leftist parties in the elections in Portugal, Spain and Greece. This would be based on the background of the mobilization of the popular masses against the massive intervention and ‘intrusiveness’ of the European Commission regarding their fiscal policies and crisis management. Actually, however, it refers to the overthrow of the dictatorships in these countries approximately 40 years ago. Whether or not this intuitively assumed similarity regarding the situation of ‘dependence’ actually exists is the topic of this paper.

When in May 2010 the Greek prime minister George A. Papandreou, the leader of the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK), agreed to the conditions of the first ‘bailout package’ offered by the members of the Eurozone and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), there seemed to be great hopes that Greece would quickly return to its former economic strength (Grant 2010). However, today, more than five years later, the economy is still in a deep recession and socio-economic figures (such as unemployment, poverty risk, and health care) are at strikingly negative levels entailing a crisis in almost every social sphere, from the economic to the political system. There is also increasing mention of a humanitarian crisis (Boukalas/Müller 2015: 391; Verney 2014: 27; Stavrakakis 2015: 276). Against this background and the fact that Greece was the first so-called ‘developed’ country that had to default to the IMF, some commentators have described the development in Greece as a ‘peripheralization’ (e.g. Backes et al. 2010: 3).

Thereby, however, such descriptions usually refer either to the country as a whole or only to the economy, merely considering the specific implications for the political system, especially the state. Whether the specific development of the Greek *state* since the beginning of the implementation of these packages can be described as a ‘peripheralization’ is the focus of this thesis. The difficulty in answering this question resides in the lack of a systematic theory of the state in the periphery, because so far state theory was mostly concerned with the realm of the OECD (Attaç/Lenner/Schaffar 2008: 4). While of course the theoretical debate on the ‘Western’ state is also far from being settled, there are at least approaches which are quite coherent in themselves. In the case of the peripheral type of

state, however, the approaches are mostly rather fragmented, as the literature review will show. Therefore, this thesis tries to dig up a more systematic conceptualization by looking into the works of one very prominent theoretician of the capitalist state, Nicos Poulantzas. He is not only considered “*the single most important and influential Marxist theorist of the state and politics in the post-war period*” (Jessop 1985: 5), but has also recently (though rather fragmentarily) been taken up again in discussions of peripheral statehood (cf. Attaç/Lenner/Schaffar 2008: 4; see for instance Heigl 2007; Becker 2008). And above all, his theory is said to provide a good possibility for application to non-OECD countries as well (Krieger 2015: 33-34).

To answer the research question, firstly, the debate on peripheral statehood shall be reviewed. After presenting the epistemological framework of this thesis as well as Poulantzas’s biography and epistemological positions, his state theory in general as well as his theory on the internationalization of capitalist relations will be portrayed. While these two parts of Poulantzas’s work have already received quite a lot of attention (especially within neo-Marxist discussions), his book *The Crisis of the Dictatorships* (CD, 1976 [1975]) has been rather neglected so far, although it also contains thoughts regarding states in peripheral positions. Therefore, it will briefly be presented in order to condense Poulantzas’s notion of the peripheral type of state as much as possible. On this basis, the usefulness of Poulantzas’s approach for analyzing the current Greek case will be evaluated after directly applying it. The reason for choosing Greece (instead of Spain, Portugal or Iceland) as an example is that it has been hit hardest by the crisis and that it has been the most exposed to structural adjustment programs.

2. Literature Review – The debate on the peripheral state

“Theories of ‘the’ state, in particular ‘the’ Third World state, have fallen far from their erstwhile theoretical pre-eminence. [...] [T]he theory of the Third World state has not fared well in the first half of the neo-classical nineties”
(Graf 1995: 141).

Today, one may only add to Graf’s quote that the theories of the peripheral state did not fare much better afterwards as will become evident in the course of this chapter. But before actually addressing the ‘peripheral state’ itself, the adjective ‘peripheral’ alone shall briefly be discussed, because it is often used in a very unspecific way so that even its origins remain hidden (Bohle 2003).

Furthermore, it has to be distinguished from the ‘colonial’ or ‘post-colonial’ state before it can be discussed.

2.1 ‘Periphery’

According to Dorothee Bohle (2003), the term ‘periphery’ originally stems from the theory of imperialism and was further conceptualized by dependency and world-systems theory which then brought it into greater prominence. Thereby generally the noun ‘periphery’ refers to “[t]he outer limits or edge of an area or object” (Oxford Dictionaries 2015) and, accordingly, the corresponding adjective ‘peripheral’ describes “[a] marginal or secondary position in, or aspect of, a group, subject, or sphere of activity” (ibid.). This means that the periphery can always only exist in relation to something else, whereby its antonym is usually the ‘core’ or the ‘center’. When applied to describe the empirical world of states, these terms traditionally refer to different positions and functions within the global economy (see below). Thereby, some authors imply a form of geographical rigidity, for instance, when equating the core-periphery divide with the North-South divide (e.g. Lipietz 1987: 2; critically Brand et al. 2008: 220 f.). However, other authors use it in a less geographically fixed way, for example Tilman Evers (1977: 14), who argues that parts of Europe can also be ‘peripheral’ regarding certain aspects. And, indeed, different authors refer to a ‘periphery’ within the capitalist ‘center’ of Europe today (cf. Kouvelakis 2012: xvii). Furthermore, a (global) historical approach to these shows that what is (part of) the ‘center’ now (e.g. Europe), has also already been the periphery at some point in time (Frank 1998: xv; Amin 1999: 193). Thus, the terms core and periphery can also be understood in dynamic terms.

As we shall see, the terms core and periphery, as well as their synonyms, such as ‘dependent’ and ‘independent’¹ – can be conceptualized in many different ways. The Latin American structuralists of the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA), for instance, described them in highly economic terms, while their theoretical successors, the dependency theorists, additionally integrated social and political characteristics (cf. Jenkins 2001: 239 f.).

Thereby, however, most approaches refer to the ‘periphery’ as something that is historically lagging behind in a process of more or less linear progress (cf. Evers 1977: 14). This

¹ For a distinction between the conceptual pairs core/periphery, dependent/independent and developed/developing see Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Enzo Faletto (1976 [1969]: 26 f.). In this thesis, however, these will be understood as synonyms.

understanding no longer seems valid today anymore² when Martina Backes et al. (2010: 3, transl. JE; cf. Brunkhorst et al. 2004: II), looking back at the latest economic crisis, argue that:

“[w]ithin the course of the last years, the periphery moves once to Europe and once to the USA, as the neoliberal project extends the ‘poverty zone’ into the North as well [...]. The periphery disappears here and reappears there”.

Finally, these terms may not only be used for a whole economy or a country, but also for certain parts of it (cf. Evers 1977: 14). The important question for this paper, then, is how to theorize them with regards to the (capitalist) state and, accordingly, as a state theoretical concept.

2.2 ‘Peripheral’ vs. ‘(post) colonial’

While many of the peripheral states are clearly colonial or post-colonial states at the same time, this is not the case for every peripheral state, because not every peripheral state has been colonized by European countries during their expansion period of approximately 400 years (Kössler 2011: 73). An example for such a country which is a peripheral country without ever being colonized is, for instance, Ethiopia (Lanzendorfer/Ziemann 1977: 145).

Within the global south, however, most states are both peripheral and (post) colonial, and arguably the former has caused the latter (cf. Hauck 2004: 412 ff.). But if the concept of the peripheral state is not merely a geographical determination but rather a political and dynamic one, other social formations than (post) colonial ones have to be included as well. Therefore, and since this thesis is on a state within the *European* periphery, the matter of colonialism, although highly important for understanding the state in (post) colonial countries (cf. Hauck *ibid.*), will not be further discussed here.³ This however entails that this thesis will not be easily transferred to a (post) colonial context, but will rather need some further elaboration, especially regarding the ‘Western’ origin and character of the ideas developed here (cf. Claar 2015: 65 f.).

2.3 ‘Peripheral state’

“So far, there is no systematic theory of the peripheral capitalist state” (Evers 1977: 11, transl. JE).

² Other regions, however, such as many former states of the Soviet Union, already experienced a process of ‘peripheralization’ more than twenty years ago, after they (in the wake of 1989) went through a political, economic and social transformation that left some of them in a state corresponding to the images of countries in the so called ‘third world’ (Altgeld et al. 2003: 15).

³ For more information on colonial and post-colonial states see, for instance, Kössler (2011). Regarding the question of post-colonial perspectives on Poulantzas see Simone Claar (2015: 65-70). A good overview on the influence of colonialism on the state in Latin America is provided by Alke Jenss and Stefan Pimmer (2015).

“A particular effort should therefore be made in research to work out general analytical principles in dealing with the type of state prevalent in the dependent countries, reaching beyond concrete case-studies on one or other of them”
(Poulantzas 1980: 604).

While Evers is right about this even today, there still are many different approaches which might serve as a basis for such a systematic theory, especially as many works, such as case-studies, contain implicit conceptualizations. According to Ilker Ataç, Katharina Lenner and Wolfram Schaffar (2008: 5) these can generally be divided into two categories: Either they assume a primacy of *external* factors in explaining a state’s peripheral form, or they stress the *internal* factors as causes for it. Regarding the approaches that will be discussed here, this categorization seems to be helpful, initially at least. For instance, Miriam Heigl (2007: 273-277; cf. Frank 1966: 17 f.) shows that dependency and world-systems theory rather highlight external aspects while the more recent debate in mainstream political science on ‘failed states’ primarily looks at internal factors. Actually, however, this dichotomy of internal vs. external factors expresses a common problem of all of them, which will become more clear in the course of this thesis.⁴

2.2.1 Earlier discussions

After the Second World War new states emerged on the world scene, not all of which seemed to fit into the analytical framework of that time (Smith 2003: 50); they seemed to be “*undeveloped*” (ibid.: 49) and accordingly not modern. On this basis, development theory emerged as a theory of the transformation of countries from ‘traditional’ to ‘modern’ by replicating the modern model (ibid.). Accordingly, the state in these countries should also resemble the ‘Western’ model. Against this idea and from a rather materialist point of view, dependency theory emerged in the 1960s, which also discussed the state rather implicitly (Heigl 2007: 273 f.; cf. Smith 2003: 74). The discussion on peripheral statehood then became rather explicit in the 1970s in the forms of the state derivation debate (Heigl ibid.: 273) and dependency theory’s ‘successor’, world-systems theory. And at the beginning of the 21st century, peripheral statehood was also explicitly discussed within the mainstream debate of political sciences under the term ‘failed states’. These approaches will now briefly be portrayed.

First of all, modernization theory suggests that the “*experience of the West is the norm for historical progress and sets the standard for the rest of the world*” (Gülalp 1998: 951). In

⁴ Of course, there are exceptions to this, even within the approaches just mentioned. Within dependence theory, for instance, Cardoso and Faletto (1976 [1969]: 28 f., 39) explicitly reject this separation between internal and external factors, in a similar way to Poulantzas (CD: 22; see below).

other words, ‘underdeveloped’ countries could simply ‘develop’ through copying the strategies of ‘developed’ economies (Leubolt 2011: 5). Accordingly, “*the mainstream development literature of the 1960s and 1970s presupposed a ‘modernizing’ or ‘developmental’ state*” (Graf 1995: 140), which would focus on ‘catching up’ by imitating the development of the industrialized countries. Thus, modernization theory primarily focuses on the internal causes of ‘underdevelopment’, while neglecting the importance of global structures (Heigl 2007: 276).

As a direct critique of this approach, Latin American structuralists such as Raúl Prebisch (1901-1986), mostly from the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA), developed the first analytical models of core and periphery in the late 1940s and 1950s (Jenkins 2001: 239-241). Their models divided the world economy into an industrial center of economically diversified but internally homogeneous countries and an agricultural periphery of heterogeneous countries with economies specialized in the primary sector. On this basis, they suggested that peripheral states should not hope for automatic development. Instead, peripheral countries should industrialize by developing their own substitutes for the industrial products they would otherwise import from the center (Ataç/Schippers 2011: 116 f.). this strategy is called import substitution industrialization (ISI) (Gülalp 1998: 955). Contrary to modernization theory, Prebisch and his colleagues located the reason for the peripheral position within the external sphere. Their view, however, is a very economic one as it merely considers factors other than economic factors (Jenkins *ibid.*). Furthermore, the ISI strategy failed, mostly as a result of internally dominant social groups that rather pursued their own interests (Ataç/Schippers 2011: 118).

In the 1960s, this approach was further developed into what is now called ‘dependency theory’. Thereby, the rather economic framework of ECLA was widened as dependency theory covers the (re)production of social structures as well, stressing the concentration of technological innovation and financial power in the capitalist core countries (Jenkins 2001: 239). Dependency theorists such as André Gunder Frank, generally reject modernization theory (Leubolt 2011: 12; Lipietz 1987: 2) and argue that the ‘underdevelopment’ of certain countries “*is in large part the historical production of past and continuing economic and other relations between satellite underdeveloped and now developed metropolitan countries*” (Frank 1966: 18). Europe’s success was (and is), according to dependency theory, built at the expense of the development possibilities of the periphery (cf. Claar 2015: 62). This relation is characterized by what Cardoso and Faletto (1976 [1969]: 224) call ‘peripheral industrialization’, which can be described as the production of goods which

represent luxury on the home markets, while being considered goods of mass consumption in the center. In other words, the peripheral state is seen as economically determined by the capitalist structure (*FD*: 22 f., fn. 6; cf. Smith 2013: 112), or more concretely, the international division of labor (Carnoy 2014: 191). Furthermore, dependency theory is criticized for tendentially ignoring the role of social struggles (cf. Wissel 2007: 14) and, accordingly, for being rather structuralist (Heigl 2007: 273 f.).

World-systems theorists, such as Immanuel Wallerstein argue, on the basis of Karl Marx (Wissel 2007: 11), that the capitalist world economy is not merely a collection of individual, separate economies, but rather *one* indivisible world-system (Gülalp 1998: 956). According to them, it is only at the level of this world-system (as the central unit of analysis) on which the division of countries into either the core, the periphery, or (between these two) the semi-periphery can be understood (Magala 1985: 139; cf. Gülalp *ibid.*). Accordingly, they suggest the “*primacy of the world system*” (Wissel 2007: 58). Thereby, the core countries are characterized by a concentration of “*high-profit, high-technology, high-wage diversified production*” (Wallerstein 1976: 462), while the peripheral countries contain “*low-profit, low-technology, low-wage, less diversified production*” (*ibid.*). The third category, the semi-peripheral countries, partly function as peripheral countries (*vis-à-vis* the core) and partly as core countries (*vis-à-vis* the periphery) (*ibid.*: 463). However, all these countries coexist within the same system of unequal exchange between core, semi-periphery and periphery, in which the states at the center fulfill the function of maintaining it (Gerstenberg 2007: 184; Wissel 2007: 59). This means that “[*t*]he form of the dependent State is [...] a function primarily of external capital and its need to extract surplus from the periphery” (Carnoy 2014: 203). Thus, states merely serve as functions of the system as a whole. World-systems theory has therefore been criticized as instrumentalist and functionalist (Carnoy 2014: 203; cf. Leubolt 2011: 12; Gerstenberg 2007: 184). And they can be considered rather pessimistic as well: According to world-systems theory, the international division of labor into stronger (high-skill) and weaker (low-wage) countries does not really provide a possibility for peripheral countries to move up the ladder by themselves, as such opportunities only arise, for instance, when inter-state rivalry shakes the structure of the whole system or when the whole world economy experiences a crisis (Jenkins 2001: 239-241). Therefore, world-systems theory, at least in its predominant form, is generally also criticized as structuralist and deterministic (Wullweber 2013: 237; Hay 2002: 102), disregarding the role of (national) social struggles and reducing the state to an instrumental class actor (cf. Wissel 2007: 58 ff.).

The state derivation debate was the attempt of neo-Marxist scholars (especially from Germany⁵) in the 1970s to derive the form of the capitalist state from Marx's analysis of capitalism (Gerstenberger 2007: 174). It served as a predecessor of the materialist state theory, which was developed further, for instance, by linking it to neo-Gramscian or neo-Poulantzian concepts and regulation theory (Leubolt 2011: 8; Hirsch 2002).⁶ More concretely, the state derivation debate tried to analyze the modern state on the basis of the capital relation and its circulation (Gerstenberger 2007: 180; cf. Hegelich 2013: 177), whereby the state represents a specific extra-economic institution that maintains capitalism by guaranteeing capitalist exchange relations (Seidl 2011: 86). Thereby, however, according to Heigl (2007: 274), structures are highlighted too much, while the political nature of the state such as the role of social struggles linked to it, is largely disregarded. More generally, actors and their (social) practices as the basis for political domination is rather neglected (Demirovic 2007: 14). All in all, the emphasis on the sphere of circulation tendentially leads to an economistic understanding of the state (Gerstenberger 2007: 180), as it cannot explain the autonomy of the political and culturally-ideological spheres (Demirovic 2007: 15).

As a mixture between dependency theory and the state derivation debate, Tilman Evers's (1977) book, *Bürgerliche Herrschaft in der Dritten Welt*, has received a growing interest within the last ten years.⁷ The departure of his analysis is the claim that a systematic theory of the capitalist state in the periphery has to rely, on the one hand, on a theory of peripheral capitalism, and, on the other hand, on a theory of the capitalist state. According to him (ibid.: 12), neither of these theories was given at that time. However, he claims to know at least their basic elements and argues that “*the generalization of commodity relations in form of the exchange of equivalents*” (ibid., transl. JE) is the basis of the ‘bourgeois state’ and that the peripheral social formations are characterized by their “*structural heterogeneity*” (ibid., transl. JE) as well as their economic dependence on the world market.

⁵ The derivation debate involved prominent Marxist scholars such as Joachim Hirsch and Elmar Altvater (Gerstenberger 2007: 175 f.; Hirsch 2002; 2013: 1).

⁶ Thereby, although writing most of his major works within the same time period, Poulantzas was only critically related to the state derivation debate (cf. Poulantzas 2002: 13, 18, 78; cf. Jessop 1985: 81; Krieger 2015: 279; Demirovic 2007: 17). And Joachim Hirsch (2002) argues that the state theory of Poulantzas was actually important to fill some blind spots in the derivation debate, such as the problem of describing the relationship between the ‘economy’ and ‘politics’ (Hirsch 1983: 158, 160). According to Klaus von Beyme (2006: 183), Poulantzas once said “*I don't care for your German Staatsableitung*”, after being criticized (in Germany) for his rather descriptive-analytical conceptualizations.

⁷ This increasing interest can be seen, at least, in: Miriam Heigl (2007), Joachim Becker (2008) and following Bernhard Leubolt (2011), Gregor Seidl (2011) and Emily Amann (2012). While Heigl (ibid.: 274) presents Tilman Evers as part of the state derivation debate, Becker (2008: 11) matches Evers with the dependency theory and Leubolt (2011: 11) rather presents him as an intermediary between the two.

Regarding the latter, Evers refers to the economic and social extraversion of peripheral state economies. According to him, they are largely under the (political) control of the metropolitan ruling classes (ibid.). The term ‘structural heterogeneity’ describes the continuance of (old) non-capitalist modes of production alongside (and functionally linked to) the (modern) capitalist mode of production (CMP) within peripheral societies (ibid.: 27 f.). Thereby, Evers claims that this coexistence is a product of the “*enforcement of metropolitan exploitation interests*” (ibid.: 28, transl. JE) in the peripheral regions. This pattern, furthermore, goes along with a variance in social relations, still including forms of personal dependence. While, for instance, the sphere of circulation in a peripheral country may be completely capitalistic, non-capitalist elements can be found in the sphere of production, mainly among people of color and especially in rural areas (ibid.: 28 f.). Splitting the analysis of the state and the social formation in two, Evers bases his analysis on a separation between an economic sphere which must be somehow different from the sphere in which the state resides. Accordingly, his research question actually does not ask for the peripheral *state* as such, but rather for how the functions and forms of the general bourgeois state change under the specific economic conditions of “*underdeveloped capitalism*” (ibid.: 12).

“Not the state itself, but the state’s framework conditions, as a product of its relation to the economic base, are the aim of the analysis” (Evers 1977: 13, transl. JE).

While Evers’s approach is generally well-received in contemporary thought (see footnote 13), it is criticized at the same time for its structuralism (Becker 2008: 11; Heigl 2007: 275). From my point of view, following Poulantzas (2000 [1978]), Evers’s separation of politics and the economy is to be criticized as well, especially his suggestion that one could study the state’s relationship to its economy without studying the state itself. This assumption, in turn, is based on a reductionist understanding of the state, as for him the state is nothing but its functions and institutions (Evers 1977: 15). Furthermore, it is striking that Evers (1977: 51, fn. 60) consciously and explicitly does not evaluate Poulantzas’s potential for the undertaking of his analysis, on the basis of a very biased categorization of Poulantzas’s work as being too structuralistic (for a criticism of this charge see below).

Due to political and scientific developments, these strands of thinking (from dependency theory to Evers’s approach) lost impetus (Heigl 2007: 275) when their conclusions failed “*to be revised considerably in the light of events in the 1970s*” (Lipietz 1987: 47).

Furthermore, according to Hirsch (1983: 158) state theory (and thus the derivation debate) was dead, also due to its high level of abstractness and the lack of connections to political reality.

2.2.2 Contemporary discussions

At the beginning of this century, the concept of the ‘failed state’ came up within International Relations (IR) to describe “*new forms of governance*” (Heigl 2007: 276; transl. JE). It refers to the phenomenon that in ‘difficult’ circumstances (such as civil war), various public but also private agents try to fulfill the same functions as a ‘functioning’ state would. Thereby, these private and public organizations can either work against or in cooperation with each other (cf. Hauck 2004: 411). Thus, the focus of this debate is mostly reduced to internal factors regarding the country’s development. Heigl (ibid.: 277) criticizes that this entails the neglect of the structures these actors find themselves in.

According to Heigl (2007: 277), all these above-mentioned approaches are either too structuralist (dependency and world-systems theory) or too voluntaristic⁸ (‘failed state’ approach). Therefore, she suggests expanding the analysis, whereby she picks up some ideas of regulation theory as well as Antonio Gramsci and Poulantzas. While regulation theory, especially Alain Lipietz’s (1987: 5) concepts of ‘peripheral Fordism’ and ‘bloody Taylorism’ (Heigl 2007: 279), enables her to add a strategic dimension of dependence (to the structural one), the works of Gramsci and Poulantzas, above all their concepts of ‘hegemony’ and ‘power bloc’ (Heigl 2007: 281 f., see below), allow her to base the analysis on the balance of forces, without neglecting structural constraints. However, her approach, in my opinion, remains rather fragmented and eclectic, as she does not really connect these concepts to one another. This is especially striking as the works of Gramsci, Poulantzas and regulation theory are well connected (cf. Brand 2007: 164). Thus, she provides good ideas, but misses the chance to develop a more systematic account of the peripheral state.

Only one year after Heigl’s article, Becker (2008: 11)⁹ took up some of these ideas and developed them further as a theoretical basis to analyze the difference between peripheral

⁸ Here, ‘voluntaristic’ refers to the tendency to neglect the role of structures or overestimating the ability to act, as if it was only a question of will (cf. Wullweber 2013: 236).

⁹ Actually, one year earlier in 2007, Becker had already sketched parts of this article together with other authors, however without any link to Poulantzas’s work at all (Becker et al. 2007). Therefore, this earlier version is rather economic and less relevant for a state-theoretical perspective (see below).

and metropolitan states regarding their ‘strategic selectivity’¹⁰, whereby he claims that it is shaped especially by the same two factors Evers had already identified as the peripheral state’s main characteristics (i.e. economic extraversion and structural heterogeneity, see above). He therefore also discusses Evers’s (1977) book and, similarly to Heigl (2007), criticizes Evers’s structuralist argumentation. However, he discusses it in more depth than Heigl and adds another feature of structural heterogeneity, namely the existence of a large group of urban poor who cannot find their ‘place’ within capitalism. Furthermore, he also builds upon the works of the regulation school which serves as his framework to theorize on the peripheral state’s economic outward orientation in more detail. Regarding this outward orientation, Becker (ibid.: 12) differentiates between active and passive forms, the former referring to an export-led and the latter to an import-dependent economy; this can further be differentiated with regards to different economic fields (such as trade, productive capital and money capital). Peripheral countries can then be characterized by a dominance of passive extraversion as a consequence of “*unequal treaties*” (ibid.: 13). Since this often goes along with a dependency on importing producer durable goods or technology in general, most peripheral countries face restrictions in the process of capital accumulation due to the lack of foreign currencies, which, in turn, often entails fiscal problems, as taxes depend on the accumulation process. Accordingly, another feature of peripheral economies is to import money capital and the control of key industries through foreign capital (ibid.: 13 f.). Furthermore, Becker (ibid.: 20) interprets this lack of material means as one reason for peripheral states’ limited capabilities to organize hegemony in their societies. In the face of restrained material resources, the ruling classes rather give concessions to key industries than to other sectors or the popular masses.¹¹ But according to him, hegemony is additionally limited as civil societies in peripheral countries are rather weak, and therefore “*openly authoritarian forms of statehood – which are seen to be a ‘state of emergency’ in the center – are no exception but often practice*” (ibid.: 24, transl. JE).

This line of thinking, from (dependency theory to) Evers (1977), then to Heigl (2007) and Becker (2008), and beyond (with the exception of the derivationists), does not genuinely

¹⁰ The term ‘strategic selectivity’ stems from Bob Jessop (2002: 40) and conceptualizes, broadly speaking, the different abilities of different groups to access state power (e.g. to influence government decisions).

¹¹ Heigl (2007: 281), on the other hand, argues that the material preconditions of hegemony are also given in peripheral states and that it is rather civil society which is lacking. However, they both draw the conclusion that peripheral states are best characterized by limited hegemony. In contrast to both Heigl (2007) and Becker (2008), Brand (2009: 72) suggests a widening of the understanding of hegemony in this regard. Rather than simply denying them the ability to produce hegemony completely (which would entail the prevalence of exceptional forms of rule), it should be analyzed *how* the relevant social groups accept practices and lifestyles which are oriented towards a certain form of development (such as the economic extraversion) and is being reproduced by these in such countries, thereby stabilizing them.

work state-theoretically, but rather eclectically by bringing together different elements from different approaches, of which only a few are actually directly connected to the ‘nature’ of the state (such as the continuance of pre-capitalist modes of production). This is probably a by-product of the debate taking place under the dominance of the question of (economic) development and the role of the state in this respect (cf. Boris 2007: 243). Most contributions might therefore be better framed as discussing ‘peripheral *countries*’ as they especially touch upon matters of economic and social structures, which can rather be seen as *products* of a certain type of ‘state’ (in the theoretical sense, see below) than as descriptions of the peripheral state itself. This is especially striking in Becker’s (2008) reception of Evers, since it is based on what Evers himself (1977: 12, 17, 72, see above) rather saw as the description of peripheral *capitalism* than of peripheral statehood. But still, all these works have made important contributions to the debate of the peripheral state, and at least partly connected the debate on peripheral statehood with Poulantzas’s works on state theory.

2.2.3 Contemporary accounts of Poulantzas

There has certainly been growing interest regarding the general works of Poulantzas in the last decades (especially since the late 1990s), although they had lost their earlier prominence in the 1980s after his untimely death in 1979 (see below) (Hirsch 2013: 3; Bretthauer et al. 2006: 16; Martin 2008: 24). However, all the fundamental changes since then do not render his analyses less interesting or important (Demirovic/Hirsch/Jessop 2002: 7). And indeed, these days there even seems to be a renaissance of his thinking (Hirsch 2013: 3; Bretthauer et al. 2006: 8 f.), even with regards to the peripheral state (see above; cf. Ataç/Schippers 2011: 125), although in the most cases only certain writings of Poulantzas have been taken up again, such as *Classes in Contemporary Capitalism* (1975 [1973]) and *State, Power, Socialism* (2000 [1978]). Accordingly, other works of Poulantzas, most importantly *CD*, have not yet received as much attention as they deserve, especially regarding the discussion on the peripheral state (cf. ‘Staatsprojekt Europa’ 2014; Heigl 2007; Becker 2008). The importance of Poulantzas’s works, especially for this thesis, stems from its ability to allow for an analysis of changes in the balance of power and its effects on the state configuration (Hirsch/Kannankulam/Wissel 2008: 111). Although not that important for this thesis, this further means that Poulantzas is very interesting for the analysis of the state in other regions than the ‘consolidated democracies’ (Krieger 2015: 33-34). Because his conceptualization of the state not only as a (pre-established) terrain of conflict but rather as the product of these conflicts themselves, the process of (continuing)

state formation can be grasped as well, which is often the problem at hand in countries within the global south (Krieger 2015: 33-34). Furthermore, Poulantzas enables a far better understanding of the peripheral type of state, but also the state in general, since he provides an approach which enables the avoidance of dualistic perspectives on both the relationship between economics and politics, but also ‘internal’ and ‘external’ with regards to the state (Wissel 2007: 14, 71).

One example of a very recent and fruitful engagement with Poulantzas’s state theory in general is the book *Kämpfe um Migrationspolitik* (English: *Struggles over Migration Policies*) edited by the research group ‘Staatsprojekt Europa’ (2014; English: ‘European State Project’). Their theoretical framework is built on Poulantzas’s understanding of the state as a “*material condensation of a relationship of [social] forces*” (SPS: 136; cf. Buckel et al. 2014: 18) in order to explain the paradigm shift within European migration politics since the 1990s (Georgi/Kannankulam/Wolff 2014: 88). They chose Poulantzas’s state theory as a starting point because, contrary to other approaches, it allows them to avoid a functionalist but also a voluntaristic explanation of the state and state politics. It neither reduces the state to its problem-solving function, nor to single actors and their strategies or interests (ibid.). This, among other advances¹², is why Poulantzas’s theory is not only considered a special position within Marxist literature on the state, but can even be called a “*modern classic*” (Jessop 2006: 48, transl. JE) in general. This comment on Poulantzas’s state theory shows that it seems to be well equipped to at least partly solve the problem identified above regarding the other approaches to peripheral statehood. However, although the group ‘Staatsprojekt Europa’ acknowledges that there may also be a ‘periphery’ within Europe, as Sebastian Wolff (2014: 134) notes that Spain spent a long time in the ‘European periphery’ before its rapid economic development starting in the 1990s, they do not evaluate its implications on a state theoretical level.

Therefore, one can conclude that the debate on the peripheral state or peripheral statehood still contains many open questions, especially from a genuinely state-theoretical perspective.

¹² Furthermore, one might hint at its originality in rejecting a separation between state and society (Demirovic/Adolphs/Karakayali 2010: 13), its ability to describe not only the capitalist state but also other state forms through its conceptualization as a ‘social relation’ (Jessop 2006: 48; see below). Thereby, describing the state as a ‘social relation’ is especially useful in the context of peripheral societies as these are often characterized by structural heterogeneity (cf. Schaffar 2014: 363; Heigl 2007: 282, fn. 6).

3. Epistemological framework of this thesis

The epistemology of this thesis is based on Critical Realism¹³ (CR), which is going to be outlined in this chapter. CR was developed from the 1970s onwards by scholars such as Roy Bhaskar, Margaret Archer, Russel Keat, John Urry, Tony Lawson and Andrew Sayer to maintain a realist position despite the criticisms against empiricist and naturalist views of science (Mingers 2014: 3 f., 16-27; Patomäki 2003: 5; Pühretmayer 2013: 217). Roy Bhaskar has been the most influential author, who, in turn, was inspired by Karl Marx, Louis Althusser and the early Frankfurt School (Pühretmayer 2013: 217; Patomäki 2003: 5 f.; Wullweber/Graf/Behrens 2013: 25). CR may be seen as some form of ‘middle ground’ between positivism and interpretivism as it is comprised of a realist ontology but at the same time recognizes the social and historical dependence of any knowledge (epistemological relativism; cf. Patomäki/Wight 2000: 224; Mingers 2014: 4).¹⁴ Originally, Roy Bhaskar called CR ‘transcendental realism’ or ‘critical naturalism’¹⁵. Later in the 1980s, however, he emphasized the term ‘critical’, as in critical social theory (Mingers 2014: 3 f., 16-27; Patomäki 2003: 5). He argued that there cannot be a split between facts and values, thus social theory is always transformative and should therefore be critical (Mingers *ibid.*).

As a *realist*¹⁶ philosophy of science, CR argues for a primacy of ontology over epistemology, which can be called ‘ontological realism’ (Patomäki 2003: 8) as it assumes the existence of an external world independent of our knowledge about it (Mingers 2014: 17). However, the realist basis of CR is not just a random postulation, but actually a description of scientific practice, be it in the social or the natural sciences, because every research question always assumes the existence of its object of research (Pühretmayer 2013: 218 f.; Patomäki/Wight 2000: 217). In other words, “*ontology logically precedes epistemology*” (Hay 2006: 84; cf. Patomäki/Wight 2000: 223), and so it does in practice.

¹³ In order to avoid misunderstandings here: CR is a strand of thinking within the philosophy of science and, therefore, is not at all connected to, for instance, the school of ‘Realism’ in IR (Patomäki/Wight 2000: 215, fn. 1).

¹⁴ In IR, ‘constructivism’ has emerged as a ‘middle way’ between positivism and post-positivism without, however, solving the problems of the two paradigms (Patomäki/Wight 2000: 214). Furthermore, the very idea of something inhabiting a ‘middle ground’ can be criticized as well, since the position of the ‘middle’ always depends on how the boundaries are drawn (*ibid.*: 214 f.). Furthermore, according to both Heikki Patomäki and Colin Wight (*ibid.*: 215), positivism and post-positivism, actually share more than is usually stated, namely the characteristic of being anti-realist. In that sense, one can also argue that CR does not constitute a ‘middle ground’ within the debate, but rather provides an alternative to both, positivism and post-positivism.

¹⁵ For more information on the connection between CR and naturalism, see John Mingers (2014).

¹⁶ “[A] realist understanding of science takes the view that certain types of entities – be they objects, forces, social structures, or ideas – exist in the world, largely independent of human beings; and that we can gain reliable, although not perfect, knowledge of them” (Mingers 2014: 11).

CR furthermore acknowledges that scientific analyses in practice are usually based on a stratified picture of reality. Accordingly, it distinguishes between three layers of stratified reality, namely the level of what can be (empirically) experienced, the level of what can possibly happen, and a level of mostly unobservable underlying structures or mechanisms which bring about the other two (cf. Pühretmayer 2013: 219 f.). More explicitly, these levels can be described as ‘the empirical’, ‘the actual’ and ‘the real/the deep’¹⁷ (cf. Sayer 2000: 12). However, these different levels are not necessarily directly linked. A certain structure can possess certain capacities without these being actualized in certain events; such events can take place, without being observable, and even if observable, one may not notice them (cf. Patomäki/Wight 2000: 223). Thus, CR is based on a “*depth ontology*” (Hay 2002: 122) or represents “*depth realism*” (Patomäki/Weight 2000: 218), which is to say that the way the world appears to us is often only the surface. This is why we need “*theory as a sensitizing device to reveal the structured reality beneath the surface*” (Hay 2002: 122). Or to use the words of Marx (MEW 25: 825, transl. JE. “[A]ll science would be superfluous if the appearance of things and their essence directly coincided”). Therefore, as Jessop (2001: 19, fn. 3, 20, fn. 6) argues, CR characterizes science as a spiral from the empirical observation of a phenomenon to the origins of this phenomenon in the deep structures. moving along this spiral from the observable to the underlying mechanisms is the process of understanding and knowledge production (cf. *ibid.*: 20, fn. 6). This form of reasoning, to ask for a phenomenon’s existential conditions, is called retroduction or abduction (Mingers 2014: 20).

But in what way is CR ‘critical’? Firstly, “*in contrast to naive realism, CR sees beings as relational and changing, and also argues that there is no unmediated access to these beings*” (Patomäki 2003: 9). Secondly, it distinguishes between ontology and epistemology, and thereby enables clear statements (e.g. critiques), by applying ‘judgmental rationalism’ (*ibid.*: 8 f.) instead of ‘judgmental relativism’, without assuming simple correspondence. And thirdly, “*CR includes a theory of emancipation*” (*ibid.*: 10; cf. Pühretmayer 2013: 217). More concretely, “[i]t stresses [...] the task to support political-emancipatory actions through processing scientific insights into structural relations and the actor’s capabilities” (Pühretmayer 2013: 219, transl. JE).

¹⁷ The term ‘the real’ does not mean that the other levels are ‘less real’. Rather ‘the real’ simply refers to “*whatever exists, be it natural or social, regardless of whether it is an empirical object for us*” (Sayer 2000: 11). Other authors call this level ‘the deep’ instead of ‘the real’ (Setterfield 2005: 72). Due to the possibility of this misunderstanding, ‘the deep’ is favored here.

Regarding the question of empirical research, CR is characterized by a general openness, not determining the decision of whether to work with quantitative or qualitative methods (cf. Mingers 2014: 171 f., 189). Although it has been rather critical towards quantitative research due to the empiricist tendencies it involves, it can be used if based on a clear CR basis (ibid.: 187). More generally, any method can be used, as long as it does not violate CR's philosophical principles (cf. Ibid.: 184, 189). The method of this thesis is the interpretation of empirical, mostly quantitative data (see chapter 9) within the theoretical framework developed before (chapters 6, 7 and 8).

At least some authors have pointed to the possibility of either connecting Nicos Poulantzas's works to CR or even interpreting them as implicitly based on its ideas (Pühretmayer 2013: 224; Morten Ougaard 2013: 2; Jessop 2015: 364). This will become evident in the chapter on his epistemology, after a brief description of his life.

4. Some notes on Poulantzas's life

Poulantzas was born in Athens on the 21st of September, 1936 into the family of a professor (Demirovic 2007: 10) and grew up in turbulent times during the authoritarian regime of Ioannis Metaxas's (1936-1941), the period of Nazi-German occupation (1941-1944) and the Greek civil war (1946-1949) (Martin 2008: 3). After attending an "*experimental school of the University of Athens*" (Kanderakis 2015) and receiving a high school diploma from the French Institute of Athens in 1953, he enrolled as a law student at the university of Athens (cf. Borrow 2002). He became politically engaged in the Greek student movements of the 1950s and then a member of the Greek Democratic Alliance (EDA), which was close to the (Moscow-orientated) Greek Communist Party (KKE); this was forbidden at that time (Hall 2000: vii; Demirovic 2007: 11). After he graduated in law from the University of Athens in 1957, he did his mandatory military service, went to Germany for a brief doctoral research stay (in Heidelberg and München according to Bretthauer et al. 2006: 13), and then moved on to Paris where many other Greek (diaspora) intellectuals such as Kostas Axelos and Cornelius Castoriadis were also located (Martin 2008: 3). While he worked on his doctoral thesis in law (on the renaissance of natural law in Germany), which he finished in 1961 and was published in 1965 (Bretthauer et al. 2006: 13), he worked as a teaching assistant at the Panthéon-Sorbonne University (Martin ibid.) and "*also published a number of reviews and articles dealing with various epistemological, philosophical, and substantive issues in the field of law*" (Jessop 1985: 38). Only three years after his doctorate, Poulantzas had also already finished his habilitation in law on the nature of

things within philosophy and sociology of law (Bretthauer et al. 2006: 13; Jessop 1985: 33). Also In 1964, he got involved in *Les Temps modernes*, the journal of Jean-Paul Sartre, and worked as an editor for another journal called *Archives de Philosophie du Droit* (Demirovic/Adolphs/Karakayali 2010: 12; Demirovic 2007: 11). Through his work (for *Les Temps*), he got to know the writer Annie Leclerc (Demirovic 2007: 11). In 1966, they married and in 1970 their daughter was born (Thwaites Rey 2007: 266). One of Poulantzas's articles in Sartre's journal *Les Temps Modernes* attracted Louis Althusser's attention (Hall 2000: vii). First "*Althusser's presence had [... only] taken form as a brief footnote*" in his doctoral thesis (Martin 2008: 5), but from then on he became his mentor and friend (Gallas 2016b: 142, 164). While Stuart Hall (2000: vii) says that Poulantzas soon became part of the so called 'Althusser group' of young Marxist scholars, Jessop (1985: 14) claims that Poulantzas was never at this group's *core* because, contrary to the other members, he was no longer a student but already an established intellectual figure of his own. Furthermore, his interest in Althusser was rather directed to his epistemological approach than towards his substantial concepts (see below). In 1968, Poulantzas started teaching sociology at the university of Vincennes (where Michel Foucault taught as well) and later at the *École pratique des hautes études* (Demirovic/Adolphs/Karakayali 2010: 12). In the same year, Poulantzas departed from Marxism-Leninism, quit the KKE and turned to the Eurocommunist party (KKE Interior) (Brand 2005: 46; Gallas 2016b: 145 ff.). Furthermore, he started openly criticizing the French Communist Party in his books (Brand 2005: 48; e.g. *SPS*: 124, 128 f.). And while he had supported the Leninist idea of a proletarian dictatorship in his earlier years, he abandoned it in the course of his career and rather demanded a socialist democracy towards the end (Ougaard 2013: 3; Gallas 2016b: 151). Furthermore, Poulantzas was engaged in organizing the resistance against the Greek military dictatorship (1967-1974) and was part of a group that tried to unite the French communist and socialist parties (Demirovic 2007: 11 f.).

However, it seems that Poulantzas had suffered from mental health problems for some time and on 3rd October 1979 he killed himself by leaping from a multi-story building in Paris (Demirovic 2007: 13; Martin 2008: 24). It seems that he died when he had gotten most famous, as the editors of the *International Social Science Journal* (*ISSJ*, 1980: 586) wrote just one year later "*when we decided to deal with the subject of the state, Nicos Poulantzas was the first specialist we consulted*". And according to Stuart Hall (2000: vii), Poulantzas was "*one of [Marxist theory's and the socialist movement's] most distinguished comrades*" with "*a just reputation as a theoretician of exceptional and original stature*". His overall

contribution is therefore not only comprised of his state theory, but also his discussions on issues such as social classes and the analysis of the political (ibid: viii; Bretthauer et al. 2006: 19).

After his death, Poulantzas and his works seemed to be forgotten rather quickly (Gallas et al. 2011: 13), especially since he could not introduce his thoughts into the discussions about developments such as the crisis of Fordism (cf. Demirovic 2007: 7) or “*new intellectual fashions*” (Kalyvas 1999: 5) such as deconstructionism. However, other Marxist scholars such as Bob Jessop (1985) and Alex Demirović (2007 [1987]) devoted monographs to Poulantzas, and at least in the case of Jessop, continued “*the theoretical project begun by [him]*” (Gallas et al. 2011: 14).¹⁸ But still, two decades after Poulantzas’s death, Andreas Kalyvas (1999: 5) complained that “*Poulantzas is hardly mentioned in current political debates and academic circles. A strange silence surrounds his name*”.

5. The works of Poulantzas with a focus on his epistemological positions

“*It is as an Althusserian structuralist that Poulantzas is most often presented*” (Jessop 1985: 317).

“*[T]here is nothing such as the true Poulantzas, but rather a ‘spectre’ [...] of different interpretations*” (Bretthauer et al. 2006: 20, transl. JE).

It is quite a complex task to lay out the work and epistemology of Poulantzas in brief, as it changed within his career (Carnoy 2014: 67) in which he had always been “*concerned with questions of methodology and epistemology*” (Jessop 1985: 26). Accordingly, his theories and epistemology contain many different nuances and refuse simple generalizations (Bretthauer et al. 2006: 20, fn. 21). However, there are many one-sided descriptions presenting it as deeply structuralist.¹⁹ ‘Structuralism’ involves an epistemological position which entails an ‘upward reduction’ (Ehrbar 1998: 2). In contrast to methodological individualism (favoring a ‘downward reduction’), structuralism tends to present individuals merely as a “*marionette of social relations*” (ibid.). Accordingly, it is “*widely criticized for its ahistorical and deterministic view*” (Carnoy 2014: 125).

¹⁸ In addition to Jessop, Alex Demirovic (2007: 7) lists Joachim Hirsch and Leo Panitch as important authors who maintained the presence of Poulantzas’s works in academic discussions.

¹⁹ Such a biased understanding of Poulantzas is, for instance, visible in Ellen Meiksins Wood (2010 [1995]: 75), in which she is only referring to Poulantzas’s first major state-theoretical work *Political Power and Social Classes* (1974 [1968]) and his debate with Ralph Miliband (Wood ibid.: 62, 250). This is, as this chapter will show, the ‘typical’ mistake when approaching Poulantzas’s works.

Very broadly, Poulantzas can be considered a ‘Western’²⁰ neo-Marxist (cf. Demirovic/Adolphs/Karakayali 2010: 9 f.; Hirsch/Kannankulam/Wissel 2008: 89). To analyze Poulantzas’s epistemological framework(s) in more depth, his academic life will be divided into different phases.²¹ The existing literature suggests either two (Jessop 1985: 26) or three phases (cf. Martin 2008: 2; Bretthauer et al. 2006: 13, 15 f.). The first version divides Poulantzas’s intellectual career into two periods: an early one in which he mostly worked on the philosophy and sociology of legal systems (Jessop 1985: 36, 38) “*within the framework of an existentialist-marxist position*” (ibid.: 48); and a later one which involved more political issues and most importantly state theory (ibid.: 50) from a rather “*structuralist position*” (ibid.: 49).²² However, this kind of periodization actually seems to strengthen the skewed image of Poulantzas as a strictly structuralist thinker as mentioned above, since it fails to account for the nuances within Poulantzas’s works from the late 1960s on. Therefore, it is better to talk of three phases, considering an additional ‘relational period’, in which Poulantzas moved away from some of Althusser’s influence and started to develop his ‘own’ *relational theory*²³ of the state (Bretthauer et al. 2006: 13, 15 f.).

Poulantzas’s first major state theoretical piece, *Political Power and Social Classes* (1973 [1968], PPSC), was very much influenced by Althusser’s structuralism (Demirovic/Hirsch/Jessop 2002: 9; Jessop 1985: 53; Hall 2000: viii), especially his concept of the ‘ideological state apparatuses’ (Carnoy 2014: 100). In PPSC, Poulantzas tried to construct a ‘regional’ theory of the political, drawing upon Althusser’s theory of relatively autonomous ‘regions’ within society, whereby the political region is inhabited by the state (cf. Carnoy 2014: 101). Here, it is important to note that Poulantzas (PPSC: 12) differentiates between ‘general’, ‘regional’ and ‘particular’ theories regarding the analysis of the capitalist state (cf. Jessop 1985: 60). While the former refer to Marxist concepts such as the mode of production, the latter is concerned with more concrete concepts, e.g. the *capitalist* mode of production. ‘Regional’ theories, then, discuss certain instances or levels of a mode of production, for instance the political (ibid: 16 f.; cf. PPSC: 12).

²⁰ The term ‘Western’ here points to the Marxist tradition that developed outside of the Soviet Union and is less characterized by economism and determinism than the ‘Eastern’ one (Hirsch/Kannankulam/Wissel 2008: 89).

²¹ There is quite some discussion on how to periodize Poulantzas’s intellectual life (cf. Bretthauer et al. 2006: 13, fn. 11), which might at least partly stem from the problem that “*Poulantzas’ later work [...] was in many respects more incomplete and provisional than earlier publications, yet consequently more suggestive and provocative*” (Bruff 2012: 178).

²² Other authors, such as Carnoy (2014: 97), do not consider Poulantzas’s earliest scientific works at all but begin their periodization with Poulantzas’s first major work (PPSC) and therefore use the term ‘early period’ for what will here be called the ‘structuralist’ or second period.

²³ Poulantzas’s theory is *relational* in the sense that the state is not seen as a thing or a subject, but rather as the product of social relations, as will become evident further below.

A very important event regarding Poulantzas's epistemology is “*the famous Poulantzas-Miliband debate*” (Jessop 1985: 14) which Poulantzas began in 1969 with his article *The Problem of the Capitalist State* in which he reviews Ralph Miliband's book *The State in Capitalist Society*. This debate is said to represent Poulantzas's most structuralist thoughts on the capitalist state (cf. *ibid.*; Carnoy 2014: 105; Das 2006: 68) and skewed the public image of Poulantzas's theory and epistemology (Bretthauer et al. 2006: 14; cf. Bruff 2012: 178).²⁴ Both Miliband and Poulantzas, acted rather rashly and thereby came “*close to living up to the crude parodies they present of one another*”, Miliband as an agency- or personnel-centered instrumentalist and Poulantzas as a state- or structure-centered structuralist (Hay 2006: 71 ff.). In his first ‘attack’ on Miliband, Poulantzas, although praising Miliband's book for disproving the bourgeois state theory by means of empirical data, criticizes that he does not provide a Marxist *theory* of the state, which could displace the bourgeois concepts (Barrow 2002: 4; 2006b: 13). Miliband, on the other hand, argued that Poulantzas's approach lacks an *empirical* foundation, which alone would actually enable a demystification of the bourgeois ideology of the state (Carnoy 2014: 105). In other words, while Miliband focuses on the empirical part within this debate (which he saw as being ‘Marxist’ on the basis of the *Communist Manifest* declaring that class struggle is the mover of history, and thus politics), Poulantzas stresses (based on his reading of Karl Marx' *Capital*) that one cannot simply understand history from stringing together facts, because these facts cannot be understood without a theory (cf. Barrow 2002: 34). Thereby, as Poulantzas (1976: 65 f.) later explained, he especially attacked Miliband's empiricist or – in Marxist terminology – ‘historicist’ position (cf. Hall/Hunt 1979: 198).

However, as noted above, Poulantzas never stopped engaging with his own epistemological position. And, accordingly, he increasingly moved away from Althusser's positions (Demirovic/Hirsch/Jessop 2002: 11)²⁵ In the wake of the revolts in May 1968 and as a consequence of his (ongoing) analysis of Gramsci's works he started to replace certain structuralist aspects he inhabited from Althusser with a greater emphasis on class struggle (Carnoy 2014: 97 f.) as he developed a rather dialectic understanding of the relationship between agency and structure (Hay 2006: 73). According to Joachim Hirsch (2013: 2),

²⁴ A similar debate existed between Althusser's and Edward P. Thompson's on structuralism vs. intentionalism (humanist and historicist Marxism) (Hay 2002: 115 f.).

²⁵ This interpretation, saying that Poulantzas moved away from structuralism essentially, is, however, rejected by some authors, such as Clyde W. Barrow (2006b: 4) and Morten Ougaard (2013: 4 f.), whereby the latter even rejects calling Poulantzas a ‘structuralist’. He rather interprets Poulantzas's early and more structuralist works as part of the same theoretical project as his later works which complements the earlier ones through a more explicit emphasis on social struggles.

Poulantzas's deviation from Althusser's 'formalist'²⁶ structuralism was first visible in *Fascism and Dictatorship* (1974 [1970]; *FD*), his second state-theoretical book which consists of a class-theoretical analysis of German and Italian fascism (Bretthauer et al. 2006: 14 f.). As its title suggests, Poulantzas increasingly addressed issues of politically strategic importance from then on and, in his last works, especially dealt with the problems that arose out of the 'crisis of Marxism'²⁷ (Demirovic/Hirsch/Jessop 2002: 11; cf. Poulantzas 1980: 602) as well as "new theoretical and empirical developments" (Bruff 2012: 178). From then on, Poulantzas focused his philosophical critique rather on formalism and economism than historicism (Barrow 2006: 19). In this context, he wrote three more books: *Classes in Contemporary Capitalism* (*CCC*, 1974 [1975]), *The Crisis of the Dictatorships* (*CD*, 1976 [1975]) and, only one year before his death, *State, Power, Socialism* (*SPS*, 2000 [1978]). Particularly in *SPS*, Poulantzas broke with his earlier structuralist conceptualizations of the state, focusing more on its social and especially class character instead (Demirovic/Adolphs/Karakayali 2010: 13). It is also the book which contains Poulantzas's most prominent and most widely used reference, namely his conceptualization of the state as a 'condensation of forces', which will be elaborated in the next chapter, following a brief interim conclusion.

As this chapter has shown, the early Poulantzas was very much inspired by Sartre's existentialism, and thus by Marxist humanism and historicism. Corresponding to his "shift from existentialism to structuralism" (Jessop 1985: 50), he started to make humanism and historicism the focus of his critique. However, in the third period, Poulantzas re-oriented his epistemological position again, and rather turned against formalist economism (Barrow 2006b: 18 f.).²⁸ Furthermore, different authors suggest that Poulantzas's works are either in line with CR or even (if only implicitly) based on it (Pühretmayer 2013: 224; Morten Ougaard 2013: 2; Jessop 2015: 364). And, indeed, as presented above, Poulantzas's works involve different levels of abstraction and thereby correspond to the depth of reality which

²⁶ The claim that Althusser's structuralism was 'formalist' is stated, for instance, by Lars Bretthauer et al. (2006: 15). Other authors, such as Ernesto Laclau, also charged Poulantzas's analyses with 'formalism' (Martin 2008: 14). Thereby, according to Martin (ibid.), 'formalism' refers to "a tendency to invoke concepts with predominantly 'symbolic' rather than logical functions, describing a unified content rather than explaining it". Poulantzas (2000: 15) himself describes formalism as conceiving a social totality "in the form of instances or levels that are by nature or by essence autonomous from one another".

²⁷ The 'crisis of Marxism' was claimed by Althusser at the end of the 1970s in order to induce a discussion of several problems of that time, such as the 'real socialism', the new social movements (which did not seem to fit into the Marxist categories) and the theoretical deficits regarding the state, law and ideology (Buckel 2006: 177).

²⁸ While, for instance, Jens Wissel (2007: 74) says that Poulantzas broke with Althusser's structuralism in *SPS*, Clyde W. Barrow (2006b: 23) rejects the idea of a real 'break' and rather suggests a 'shift' regarding what Poulantzas thought and explicitly stated, hinting at differences between Poulantzas and Althusser that had allegedly existed from the very beginning.

characterizes CR (Jessop 1991: 87). To put it in critical realist terms: Poulantzas's theory implies a stratified ontology. For instance, one could argue that the level of the deep in Poulantzas's theory is the mode of production (or the relations of production), the actual is where social formations and conjunctures could be located, and the empirical level contains observable data (e.g. economic data) (cf. Gallas 2016b: 151). And according to Jessop (*ibid.*), Poulantzas's analyses further move from the abstract to the concrete, showing that his reasoning seems to be retroductive (cf. Gallas 2016a: 38, 40). This is visible, for instance, in *CD* (see below) where he basically asks for the underlying mechanisms that have made possible the fall of the dictatorships.

6. Poulantzas and the capitalist state

The following two chapters shall lay the theoretical basis to analyze Poulantzas's notion of the peripheral state. While this chapter portrays his theory of the capitalist state as such, the following one will discuss Poulantzas's conceptualization of the process of the internationalization of capitalist relations.

6.1 Poulantzas's theory of the capitalist state

The two most important writings of Poulantzas on the capitalist state are *PPSC* and *SPS* (cf. Jessop 2006: 48 ff.; Demirovic 2010). As laid out above, Poulantzas's thinking underwent quite a change between these two books. Regarding his state theoretical arguments, this can be seen in the transition from a rather 'class-functional' and formalistic way of argumentation to a relational understanding of the state (Hirsch/Kannankulam/Wissel 2008: 96 ff.). Despite these differences, the two books can (at least partly) be seen as complementing each other: while the theoretical focus in *PPSC* was rather restricted to the general form of the capitalist state (Jessop 1985: 82), this general form was then used in *SPS* as the basis to develop a specific theory of the historically concrete capitalist social formation of the 1970s (i.e. the emergence of 'authoritarian statism'²⁹). In this regard, the latter can be seen as a further development of the former (Hirsch/Kannankulam/Wissel 2008: 97; cf. Barrow 2006a: 44 f.), which is reflected by the fact that Poulantzas often (although sometimes rather critically) refers to *PPSC* in *SPS* (cf. *SPS*: 14 ff., 21, 49, 53, 70). Accordingly, Jessop (2006) and Demirovic (2010) among others analyze

²⁹ Poulantzas discusses the phenomenon of 'authoritarian statism' in part four of *SPS* (203 ff.). As this topic cannot be discussed here and a brief description has to be sufficient, one may describe 'authoritarian statism' as "[a] marked shift in the organizing role of the state away from political parties towards state bureaucracy and administration, and the overall decline of the representative role of political parties" (Poulantzas 1980: 606).

Poulantzas's state theory relying on both books, but without taking into account those parts of *PPSC* which do not seem to fit in the framework of *SPS*, for instance, the economic determination (i.e. its dominance in the last instance) (cf. Hirsch/Kannankulam/Wissel 2008: 96). All in all, *SPS* seems to be “*more nuanced*” (Bruff 2012: 182; cf. Carnoy 2014: 125) as compared to the partly functionalist and structuralist tendencies of Poulantzas's account of the state in *PPSC*.

Since Poulantzas was very much concerned with epistemology, as we have seen already, both his books begin with a discussion of his understanding of Marxism, especially a critique of the traditional view on the base-superstructure relationship (*PPSC*: 11 ff., 17 f.; *SPS*: 14 ff.).

According to Poulantzas (*SPS*: 15), the ‘base’ must not be understood in economist terms. Certainly, it is the level of the relations of production and therefore includes what is usually termed the ‘economy’. However, Poulantzas stresses that it must not be understood as some form of closed space, able to reproduce itself. Rather its constitution and reproduction is *always* also affected by the ‘superstructure’ (i.e. politics and ideology), whereby the form of this interrelation depends on the mode of production and its stage and phase. Accordingly, by no means can one talk of an external relationship between the state and the economy:

“The position of the State vis-à-vis the economy is never anything but the modality of the State's presence in the constitution and reproduction of the relations of production.” (*SPS*: 17)

Within the CMP, these relations of production consist of the economic property relation (referring to the “*real economic power over the means of labour*”, *SPS*: 51) and “*the relationship of possession*” (*SPS*: 18; meaning the “*control and mastery over the labour processes*”, *SPS*: 51), or in different terms, the juridical form of ownership and the concrete form (Hirsch/Kannankulam/Wissel 2008: 99). In this regard, while pre-capitalist modes of production are characterized by a “*union of the labourer with the means of production*” (*PPSC*: 27), there is a separation of direct producers (laborer) from the means of production within the CMP. However, this separation exists not only in the property relation (as it was also the case within pre-capitalist modes of production), but the laborer is also separated from the means of production regarding the relationship of possession (*PPSC*: 27).³⁰ Thus, in the capitalist relations of production, the juridical arrangement of economic actions, in

³⁰ The property relation and the relationship of possession (the relations of production) in the CMP are therefore ‘homologous’, as they share the same feature (the ‘separateness’), while the pre-capitalist modes of production are ‘heterologous’ in this regard (cf. *PPSC*: 27).

the form of buying and selling including the buying and selling of (commodified) labor, demands that the worker finds an owner (of the means of production), willing to buy his or her labor power. This, in turn, (when achieved) allows the production of the surplus value but on the basis of the “*exercise of legitimate violence [...] implicit in the relations of production*” (SPS: 18, cf. PPSC: 17). Obviously, this is, at the same time, a process in which the specifically capitalist division of labor emerges.

The specificity of capitalism, in this regard, is that the economic and the political within the CMP articulate a “*relative separation*” (SPS: 18, orig. italics) of the state and the economy. Thereby, ‘relative’ is to be understood in the sense of ‘relational’ (Hirsch/Kannankulam/Wissel *ibid.*: 97; Buckel 2006: 182; Wissel 2007: 76). Accordingly, Poulantzas does not suggest the existence of an actual separation between the state (or the political) and the economy, which would allow the state to intervene in the economy externally. Quite the contrary, his relational conceptualization of the state describes in what specific forms the political (and thus the state) is constitutively present within the relations of production (*ibid.*: 99 f.). Furthermore, this means that the field and form of the political and the economy changes with the mode of production, and these modes must not be understood in economistically reductionist terms. Rather it is:

“the mode of production itself – that totality of economic, political and ideological determinations – which fixes the boundaries of these spaces, sketching out their fields and defining their respective elements. They are from the very beginning constituted by their mutual relation and articulation – a process that is effected in each mode of production through the determining role of the relations of production” (SPS: 17).

In a very similar way, the state is related to the class struggle and social classes as such (SPS: 25). Because the class struggle is the primary mover of history (PPSC: 37; CCC: 23) and since the state form depends on the (stages and phases of the) mode of production (and thus on history, SPS: 25), the state cannot be separated from social classes (SPS: 27; cf. Hirsch/Kannankulam/Wissel 2008: 100). Thereby, Poulantzas (broadly) defines social classes as “*groupings of social agents, defined principally but not exclusively by their place in the production process, i.e. in the economic sphere*” (CCC: 14), which can then also be described as delineations of “*objective positions*” (SPS: 27) which are linked to class practices (i.e. the class struggle).

According to this definition of social classes as places within the production process, the expression of class powers must lie within the relations of production (the relation of property and possession). But since the political and ideological relations are also already

present within the relations of production, the class powers are also “*organically articulated to the political and ideological relations which concretize and legitimize them*” (SPS: 26). This “*is also why the process of production and exploitation involves reproduction of the relations of politico-ideological domination and subordination*” (SPS: 27). This is the basis of Poulantzas’s understanding of Marx and Friedrich Engels’s formulation that “[e]very class struggle is a political struggle” (MEW 4: 471, transl. JE; cf. PPSC: 37).

As presented so far, Poulantzas’s understanding of the state builds particularly on two notions: Firstly, the presence of the state in the relations of production. Secondly, (and on the basis of the first notion) the state’s presence within the social classes and the class struggle. However, the classes (and thus, the relations of production) are also present within the state.

Accordingly, Poulantzas conceptualizes the state as a social relation (like ‘capital’). However, to him, it is not simply any kind of social relationship. Rather the capitalist state is “*more precisely the material condensation of such a relationship among classes and class fractions*” (SPS: 128).³¹ Thereby, the state’s materiality stems from the relative autonomy of the political vis-à-vis the relations of production (SPS: 127; cf. Hirsch/Kannankulam/Wissel *ibid.*: 100). More concretely, it stems from “*the fact that agents of the economically dominant class (the bourgeoisie) do not directly coincide with the occupiers and agents of the State*” (SPS: 91). Accordingly, the state cannot simply be reduced to state power, but rather “*exhibits an opacity and resistance of its own*” (SPS: 130). This materiality is articulated in all its apparatuses and branches and is the reason for its relative autonomy from the dominant class and fractions. Furthermore, this materiality entails that changes in state power do not directly translate into changes in state apparatuses, as these have their own operational logic (cf. SPS: 170). This was, for instance, visible when the Greek socialist party SYRIZA³² won the parliamentary elections in January 2015. Although SYRIZA has been in power since then officially, it faced many difficulties in implementing policies due to the materiality of the state bureaucracy. For instance, civil servants and public officials denied or impeded cooperation with the new

³¹ According to Poulantzas (PPSC: 49) this idea (of the state as a condensation of society) is already implicit (if incompletely) in the Marxist classics (Engels, Marx, Lenin).

³² SYRIZA was founded in 2004 as an electoral coalition, dominated by the socialist party Synaspismos (Azzellini 2015: 641). The term SYRIZA stands for ‘Synaspismos Rizospastikis Aristeras’ which translates to ‘Coalition of the Radical Left’ (Fortin 2012).

government, as they either thought SYRIZA would not stay in office long or opposed its policies (Douzinas 2016: 1; cf. Konecny 2015: 331, 333).

The importance of this conceptualization resides in its ability to avoid the equally problematic theories of the state as an instrument (of the dominant classes or fractions) or an independent subject. Firstly, the *instrumental* line of argument within the Marxist tradition is that the state functions as a neutral instrument or tool of the dominant class (SPS: 12, 129). However, following the soviet legal scholar Evgeny Pashukanis (cf. Wissel 2007: 71), Poulantzas (ibid.: 12) wonders “*why [...] the bourgeoisie [...] would] maintain [...] the state’s] domination by having recourse precisely to the national-popular State – to the modern representative State with all its characteristic institutions*”, including elections and even universal suffrage? The instrumentalist conception is not able to explain how the state can then still be an instrument of the dominant class. Secondly, the *subjectivist* strand of thinking (originating from the works of Georg Friedrich Hegel, Max Weber and Ferdinand Lassalle) presents the state as a subject which can, due to the power of the bureaucracy and political elites, act autonomously (SPS: 129; cf. Gallas 2016b: 149). This conception, however, cannot explain the capitalist state’s class-character.

In order to explain the relationship between the state, its materiality and the different classes and fractions in more depth, Poulantzas draws upon Gramsci’s concept of hegemony³³ (cf. CCC: 97). Firstly, with regards to the dominant classes, Poulantzas’s relational theory of the capitalist state enables an understanding of how the state itself is able to organize capital classes or fractions (ibid.: 107; cf. also Hirsch/Kannankulam/Wissel 2008: 103), since it is only the state’s relative autonomy (and thus its materiality) that allows the state to exert this function. This task of organization of the bourgeois interests is necessary in the first place because the bourgeoisie is divided into conflicting class fractions corresponding to the lines of monopoly vs. non-monopoly capital (SPS: 127 f.) and the internationalization of capital (see following chapter; cf. Wissel 2007: 105). In order to successfully represent their interests against other class interests, the different bourgeois fractions seek to form alliances (mostly, but not only, with other bourgeois forces) (SPS: 127 f.). Therefore, the state can be seen as “*the terrain of political domination*” (SPS: 128) on which these fractions, “*under the hegemony of one of its*

³³ In contrast to domination or coercion, ‘hegemony’ is based on consensus. More concretely, it is produced through the generalization of the interests of the dominant forces and maintained through the (partial) integration of the dominated classes’ interests (cf. Gramsci 2012: 12, 281).

fractions” (SPS: 127), form a ‘power bloc’³⁴, meaning that one fraction is able to take leadership over the other fractions on the basis of consensus (SPS: 127 f.; cf. Hirsch/Kannankulam/Wissel 2008: 103). Such a consensus can be reached, for instance, by means of generalizing its own interests through ‘real’ persuasion or (material and/or non-material) concessions. Furthermore, the (politico-ideological) construction of a shared ‘enemy’, such as SYRIZA in 2015, can also be the basis of hegemony. Fabian Georgi and John Kannankulam (2015: 367), for instance, argue that the threat of SYRIZA’s anti-austerity position reconciled the contradictions within the German power bloc (between the conservative-ordoliberal and authoritarian-neoliberal fractions) for a certain period of time.

Regarding the power bloc, the state is the organizer of what might be called ‘double’ hegemony (cf. PPSC: 317; CD: 112). It is ‘doubled’ in the sense that firstly, within the power bloc, one fraction establishes hegemony over the other bourgeois forces, and secondly, the power bloc on the basis of its “*conflictual unity*” (SPS: 127) furthermore establishes hegemony at the level of the whole social formation (CCC: 97 f.). Thereby, the relative autonomy allows the state to organize what Gramsci (2012: 281) had called the “*unstable equilibria*” which can be understood as compromises ensuring “*the general political interest of the power bloc as a whole*” (CCC: 97). Furthermore, it enables the state to organize hegemony vis-à-vis the dominated classes (corresponding to the overall class struggle). Poulantzas compares this relation of the capitalist state to the power bloc with the labor party and the popular movement. It usually acts in favor of what it represents, but seems to be relatively independent of it, as it does not necessarily do so (CCC: 98).

However, the power bloc contains not only the contradictions among the bourgeoisie fractions, but also those between the bourgeoisie and the working class. Accordingly, the latter is also present within the power bloc, but only in a “*mediated form*” (SPS: 143). Clearly the different dominant classes and fractions do not stand in the same relationship with the dominated classes and fractions altogether (SPS: 143). This opens up the possibility for alliances between the popular masses and the fractions of the power bloc (SPS: 144). In this sense, the state can also be the place to find possible ruptures within the hegemony of the dominant class and the power bloc and can, therefore, also be seen as a revolutionary place as in the example of Lenin (PPSC: 49; cf. INT: 38). Furthermore, the state contains the popular forces and their struggles rather directly as it is the material condensation of a relationship of forces, including the dominated classes as well (SPS:

³⁴ Poulantzas owes the term ‘power bloc’ (sometimes called ‘hegemonic bloc’) to Gramsci (Jessop 1985: 328).

140). This aspect is important, because only this “*structural presence*” (Buckel 2006: 176, transl. JE) hinders the monopolization of power by one class.³⁵ Thus, according to Poulantzas, popular masses and the popular struggles are also inscribed into the state (and its apparatuses) in opposition to the dominant classes, and not merely an external effect to the state (*SPS*: 141 f.). One example of a relatively successful inscription of working class interests into the state agenda is the Fordist period, in which not only were relatively strong unions able to achieve a high wage level, but also through the dominance of Keynesian economics, wages were generally thought to be important as a source of domestic demand (cf. Streeck 2011: 6 f.; Jessop 2013: 14; Gallas 2016b: 150).

However, as the following section on state apparatuses will elucidate further, the dominated classes cannot have a power of their own according to Poulantzas (*SPS*: 143), for two reasons: Firstly, because the dominant classes have the ability to change the location of *real* vs. *formal* power (see below); and, secondly, due to the materiality of the state itself, which reproduces the relationship of domination-subordination. The latter aspect is very visible in the case of the overthrow of the dictatorship in Greece (see below), in which some state personnel joined the democratization process only in order to uphold the state and its structure.

This organization of capital (i.e. ‘double’ hegemony, power bloc) and disorganization of labor (i.e. denied state power)³⁶ by the state works through the structural mechanism of state apparatus selectivity. This selectivity basically means that not all interests are represented (within the state) in the same way. It stems from the apparatuses’ materiality (i.e. their personnel), history and their specific interests and comes about through different mechanisms: the possibility of non-decisions, the determination of priorities (within the different apparatuses), filtering during the processes of decision-making and other activities responding to acute problems (*SPS*: 134; Hirsch/Kannankulam/Wissel 2008: 104). Thereby, the interests of the hegemonic fraction have privileged locations within the state, which tends to be the dominant apparatus (*SPS*: 137).³⁷ And while the different policies of a state might appear to be incoherent (due to the different interests it within its different apparatuses), they actually represent the organization of these interests and function

³⁵ The same is true for the power bloc, where the plurality of conflicting bourgeois interests enable the autonomy of the state vis-à-vis all these interests alone (Demirovic 2007: 83). Accordingly, the relative autonomy can be stronger or weaker (ibid.: 84).

³⁶ Another form of disorganization of labor is the organization of the petty bourgeoisie and the rural popular class as class supporters of the bourgeois fractions (instead of aligning with the popular class) (*SPS*: 141 f.).

³⁷ Which apparatus is dominant depends on factors such as the state form. In a military dictatorship, for instance, it is most likely the military, while in neoliberal states the finance ministry tends to be dominant (cf. Demirovic/Adolphs/Karakayali 2010: 14 f.; see the example of Greece in the 1970s below).

successfully from the perspective of the bloc in power in the long run (*SPS*: 134 f.). This unity of state *power* is then produced through a hierarchization of state branches and apparatuses, forming a chain of subordination. However, this process, corresponding to the struggles between the different forces, goes along with a constant change in the location of “*real power and formal power*” (*SPS*: 137, orig. emph.) between the different branches and apparatuses of the state, as these are in constant transformation regarding their functions and competences.

Despite the possible existence of such coherent political projects at the level of the apparatuses and branches of the state, i.e. at the micro-level of the state (cf. *SPS*: 135), the inscription of the contradictions between the different fractions and classes entails the possibility of conflicts between the very same (*SPS*: 133), as if they mirrored the state as a whole on a smaller scale in a way similar to the power bloc (*SPS*: 136, 139). In this sense, the state’s autonomy in relation to a given fraction, class or power bloc takes its concrete form in the relative autonomy of a certain state branch or apparatus vis-à-vis other parts of the state (*SPS*: 134). Accordingly, the state’s policy can take the form of an about-turn (*SPS*: 136). In this sense, the state can be understood as a strategic field and a field of conflict, which is united as an apparatus regarding the state power in terms of its overall policy following the hegemonic class or fraction’s long term political interest (*SPS*: 136).

Regarding these state apparatuses, Poulantzas draws on Althusser and Gramsci’s (*SPS*: 29 f., *PPSC*: 225 f.) distinction (although only descriptively and indicatively) between repressive and ideological (the RSA and ISA respectively) (*SPS*: 29 f.). Thereby, ISAs are not only formal state institutions, but can also be private institutions and refer especially to religious and educational institutions (*SPS*: 28). The RSA consists of the “*army, police, judicial system, prisons, state administration*” (*SPS*: 29) with the main task of (the threat of) physical violence. However, Poulantzas heavily criticizes this dual modality of repression and ideology³⁸, since it implies only *negative* state actions, merely framing the economy (*SPS*: 29 ff.). According to him, the state’s range of functions rather goes beyond this duality and also includes *positive*³⁹ activities towards the popular masses, especially material concessions, “*producing a material substratum for mass consensus*” (*SPS*: 31).

³⁸ Poulantzas furthermore argues that the state apparatuses (especially the ideological, but also the repressive) embody and reproduce the dominant ideology, which as the ruling ideology “*constitutes an essential power of the ruling class*” (*SPS*: 28). For the relations between science-knowledge as a product of intellectual labor (as opposed to manual labor) and the dominant ideology see *SPS* (55).

³⁹ According to Urs T. Lindner (2006: 158), Poulantzas’s notion regarding the ‘positive’ functions of the state is linked to his reception of Michel Foucault. For the relationship between Poulantzas and Foucault – which Sonja Buckel (2006: 171, transl. JE) called a “*secret dialogue*” – see *SPS* (part II, chapter 3), Stütze (2006) and Adolphs (2008).

These ‘productive’ activities are firstly the result of the class conflict within the state, and thereby secondly an important part of the possibility of hegemony as well. the capitalist state can, due to the autonomy of the political, also satisfy some economic interests of the dominated classes (*PPSC*: 191). Although this certainly challenges certain short-term economic interests of the dominant classes and fractions, it does not diminish their political power (*PPSC*: 192 f.). Quite the contrary, material concessions (such as the welfare state) can strengthen the power bloc’s hegemony over the dominated classes (*PPSC*: 193, *SPS*: 140). In this regard, the economic state apparatus, particularly its social policies, are of great importance (*SPS*: 169 f.).

6.2 Critiques of Poulantzas’s state theory

Of course, Poulantzas’s perspectives did not remain without criticism. One criticism which often appears in the literature targets Poulantzas’s state theory regarding its narrow focus on social classes, which are his central unit to reconstruct social struggles and the balance of forces (Krieger 2015: 35). Accordingly, many authors charge Poulantzas with class-reductionism (Krieger 2015: 41; Esser 2008: 213; Buckel 2006: 171; Wissel 2007: 85). The argument is that Poulantzas employs a traditional Marxist understanding of classes in his explanation of the determination of the social formation through capital and labor (Krieger 2015: 41). this allegedly ‘antiquated perspective’ cannot grasp the new social movements as it presents the state as a ‘class-state’ (Krieger 2015: 41; cf. Carnoy 2014: 125 f.).

However, Birgit Sauer (2001) turns this critique into a feminist extension of Poulantzas’s theory (2001: 87 ff.). Although she also criticizes Poulantzas (and neo-Marxism in general) for class-reductionism by emphasizing the underestimation of the importance of gender relations in particular, she draws on his conceptualization of the state and suggests expanding it with the “*condensation of gender relations*” (Sauer 2001: 158, transl. JE). According to Jörg Nowak (2006: 137, 139 f.; cf. Bretthauer et al. 2006: 21), Poulantzas actually related the class struggle to other power relations, including gender, but without producing a systematic account of this interrelation (*SPS*: 43). Poulantzas did not completely neglect other social struggles, but he also did not attribute a role of their own to them (cf. Wissel 2007: 75 f.). Sonja Buckel (2006: 177, transl. JE) also talks of a “*class-character in the last instance*”.

Regarding Poulantzas’s conceptualization of the state as a ‘class-state’, Max Koch applies another point of critique, namely the meaning of ‘class’ itself. Koch (2006: 133) criticizes that Poulantzas’s work on social classes, which is above all part of *CCC*, but on which *SPS*

is built (ibid.: 121), remains mostly abstract because he merely tried to empirically test his conceptualization. Furthermore, he argues that empirical studies have proved his concepts to be rather problematic (ibid.: 131 f.). But still, Poulantzas is considered a classical author in class theory (Bretthauer et al. 2006: 19).

The charge of ('structuralist') abstractionism against Poulantzas had previously been articulated by Miliband (1973: 84 f.), but it remains an open point. Martin Carnoy (2014: 126 f.; cf. Esser 2008: 213), for instance, claims that Poulantzas's theory is too abstract, lacking the historical-specific dimension. Furthermore, this abstractness makes it difficult to be translated into methodological operationalizations (Krieger 2015: 50). However, this critique clearly seems to neglect quite a lot of Poulantzas's work. While, for instance, Clyde W. Barrow (2006a: 44 f.; cf. Jessop 1985: 4) accepts the charge of abstractionism regarding Poulantzas's works influenced by Althusser (such as *PPSC*), he argues that Poulantzas moved towards an explicitly *historical* form of structuralism later on, which is visible in his development of regional theory in *SPS* (especially his analysis of authoritarian statism). Furthermore, the charge of abstractionism neglects Poulantzas's clearly historical studies such as *CD*.⁴⁰ Additionally, Poulantzas's approach was still much less abstract than the derivationist approach, and is accordingly a much better basis for concrete analysis (cf. Hirsch/Kannankulam/Wissel 2008: 110; Brand 2005: 48).

Other authors criticize that Poulantzas highlights the importance of the state too much (Krieger 2015: 42), thus ascribing him a state-centeredness, meaning that Poulantzas methodologically overestimates the importance of the state (Buckel 2006: 183). This, for instance, entails the problem that Poulantzas neglects struggles that take place *outside* of the state, such as the struggle over knowledge and knowledge production outside of the state (Stützle 2006: 203).

Bob Jessop's critique targets the very heart of Poulantzas's theory of the capitalist state, i.e. the relative autonomy of the state. According to Jessop (1985: 130 ff.), Poulantzas actually does not sufficiently explain its existence (cf. Brettauer et al. 2006: 16) and uses the term in different ways, thereby producing different meanings. He argues that Poulantzas moved from a rather structuralist position as in *PPSC* to a less structuralist point of view in *SPS*, where he emphasizes the primacy of the class struggle. Poulantzas introduces the relative autonomy of the state as "*an element of contingency*" (Jessop 1985: 133). However, the

⁴⁰ This, for instance, is why Jessop (2006: 50) distinguishes between Poulantzas's form-analytical and historical approaches to the state, the former analyzing the capitalist type of state in general, while the latter discusses the state in concrete capitalist social formations (ibid.: 49).

state still has to guarantee the bourgeois domination *somehow* (cf. Carnoy 2014: 126). Jessop (1985: 135) therefore concludes: “*Nowhere did Poulantzas satisfactorily explain how the state's relative autonomy guarantees bourgeois political domination despite the contingencies of the class struggle.*” This is why Jessop (1985: 135) finally suggests that Poulantzas should have given up the idea that the state necessarily guarantees bourgeois domination.

With regards to relative autonomy, however, some authors also charge Poulantzas's argument with functionalism. Relative autonomy only exists, they say, because otherwise Poulantzas would not be able to explain how the state guarantees the long term interests of the power bloc (cf. Demirovic 2007: 73 ff.; Sauer 2001: 78, 311 fn. 11). However, Josef Esser (2008: 213), who made this criticism earlier as well (cf. Buckel 2006: 179), now argues that the charge of functionalism against Poulantzas's theory is not valid. This is because Poulantzas conceptualizes the state and its functions as a product of an “*open historical process*” (Esser *ibid.*) which has to be reproduced again and again by means of social struggles (cf. Brand/Görg/Wissen 2007: 223), entailing the possibility of state crises (Gallas 2016b: 150 f.). Accordingly, for Poulantzas, class domination is actually inherently unstable and its reproduction rather improbable (cf. Gallas 2016a: 36).

Despite the difficulties and problems regarding Poulantzas's state theory collected here, it still proves to be inspiring for many other critical approaches and at least provides some opportunities for including elements of other theories, such as feminist or post-colonial theory (cf. Demirovic/Adolphs/Karakayali 2010: 16 f.). Accordingly, many other authors have already taken up certain of Poulantzas's ideas and developed them further. This shows that Poulantzas, despite the criticisms presented above, has not lost his relevance (cf. Demirovic 2007: 10).

7. Poulantzas on imperialism and internationalization

According to Bob Jessop (2009: 69 f.; cf. Brand et al. 2008: 38), most state theoretical approaches are characterized by a “*northern bias*”. This is also certainly true for Poulantzas. However, at the same time, his thoughts on peripheral formations have not yet been systematically evaluated. In order to enable an understanding of these thoughts, his theory of imperialism and internationalization have to be presented, which will take place in this chapter. Poulantzas's contribution to what is now usually called ‘globalization’ (cf. Bretthauer et al. 2006: 15; Hirsch/Kannankulam/Wissel 2008: 111) is particularly present in

his essay *The Internationalization of Capitalist Relations and the Nation State* (INT, 1975 [1974])⁴¹. Its content shall be briefly presented here, as the discussion of international relations remains mostly implicit in *SPS* (Brand 2010: 97) and his other works.

7.1 Imperialism and the internationalization of the state

In his essay *INT*, Poulantzas poses several questions regarding the nature of the relationship between imperialism and the nation states. His interest stems from the argument that “*the contemporary state [...] can only be studied in relation to the present phase of imperialism*” (INT: 38; cf. CD: 11). Within the context of this thesis, his question regarding the effects of imperialism on state apparatuses is of highest importance. Interestingly, he focuses on the (European) metropolises in *INT* instead of looking at the peripheral countries. This is due to what he calls “*the ideology of ‘third-worldism’*” (INT: 38) which, according to Poulantzas, entails a neglect of studying the effects of imperialism on the metropolises themselves. Against the background of the claim made in the first chapter, that there is not yet enough theory on the peripheral state, this statement by Poulantzas might appear rather strange. However, one has to keep in mind that at that time, dependency and world-systems theory, which both specifically discuss the periphery, received much more attention (INT: 38) than today. As Poulantzas shows (INT: 47; cf. above), his time was marked by studies on the ‘development of under-development’ and peripheral industrialization. Furthermore, while he acknowledges that there are many works on peripheral *countries*, he still claims that peripheral *states* are not necessarily part of the research agenda (Poulantzas 1980: 603).

According to Poulantzas, most approaches on the relationship between imperialism and the state in his time are misleading (INT: 40 f.), because they are based on the assumption of independent and autonomous states that relate merely externally (INT: 43, 39 f.). Furthermore, they do not see that the contemporary phase of imperialism, unlike earlier ones (INT: 46), involves not only one but actually two international cleavages (INT: 47. one between the metropolises and dominated/dependent countries (INT: 43) and also a second one, between the metropolises themselves, i.e. between the US and Europe (INT: 47).

As against this background, Poulantzas’s conceptualizes the internationalization of capital as “*the induced reproduction of the CMP of the metropolises within the dependent and*

⁴¹ *INT* was first published in 1973 as a single essay in *Les Temps Modernes* and in 1974 in *Economy & Society* (CCC: 10). However, Poulantzas then published it again, “*considerabl[y] modified*” (CCC: 10), together with other essays, in *CCC*. Here, the text from *CCC* is used, but cited as *INT*, due to its outstanding relevance for this thesis. The other texts of *CCC*, however, are simply cited as *CCC*.

dominated formations, that is, in the new historic conditions of its reproduction” (INT: 50). In other words, it refers to the extended reproduction of the metropolitan CMP, whereby Poulantzas views this extensive tendency as an *inherent* characteristic of the CMP (INT: 42; cf. Alnasser 2004: 61). Thereby, the CMP establishes its domination of other modes of production not only within its home country, but also achieves an *international* dominance. The international realm, therefore, is marked by an uneven development in which the existence of national states and the CMP (in its extended reproduction) are the source (INT: 42 f.; cf. Brand 2010: 98). This realm of uneven development is what Poulantzas calls the ‘imperialist chain’⁴² (INT: 42). Its structure is the very basis of ‘imperialism’, which, in turn, describes the “*relationships between national social formations (metropolitan countries/dominated and dependent countries)*” (CD: 11).⁴³ Thereby, imperialism (i.e. the imperialist stage of the CMP) means that “[t]here are no longer independent social formations whose relations among themselves are relatively external” (INT: 43).

The imperialist stage of capitalism differs from the earlier stages (such as competitive capitalism) with regards to the relevance of the capital export. While earlier the export of commodities was dominant, imperialism is marked “*by the pre-dominance [...] of the export of capital over the simple export of commodities*” (INT: 42), making capital export “*the fundamental and determinant tendency*” (INT: 42) of imperialism. This, however, does not necessarily mean a weakening expansion of the (commodity) world market. In other words, imperialism is the articulation of “*pre-capitalist modes of production with new elements and those of the competitive-capitalist stage*” (Brand 2010: 100, transl. JE).

The international realm can then be characterized by the presence of dominance and dependency (between countries and classes). Poulantzas defines this constellation as the articulation of asymmetrical power relations between social formations which are articulated within the specific (economic, political and ideological) structure of any of these (INT: 43). This also affects the organization of classes and state apparatuses, because they internalize (specific to the phase of imperialism but also to the social formation’s characteristics) the class domination of the dominant country, entailing a direct (e.g.

⁴² Poulantzas’s definition of the ‘imperialist chain’ is: “*The imperialist chain is neither more nor less than the reproduction of the CMP in the social formations under certain determinate economic, political and ideological conditions, with the links of this chain – the social formations – forming the sites of this process*” (INT: 50). Poulantzas owes this term to the works of Rosa Luxemburg and Lenin (Wissel 2007: 90; cf. FD: 23).

⁴³ This imperial relation, however, differs from its antecedents, colonialism and commercial capitalism, which were “*both based on the establishment of the world market and the export of commodities*” (INT: 43), and still exist, but under the dominance of imperialism.

through Foreign Direct Investment, FDI)⁴⁴ or indirect exploitation of the popular masses of the dominated country through the ruling classes of the dominant social formation (*INT*: 43 f.).

Accordingly, the present phase of imperialism can further be characterized not only by the metropolitan CMP's domination of the dependent social formations from the outside, but also from inside through the metropolitan CMP's reproduction within them (*INT*: 46). However, this extension is not simply a one-directional process, but also exists in the reverse direction (e.g. in labor migration, see below) (*INT*: 46). Poulantzas argues that it mirrors the attempts of capital to counter the tendency of the rate of profit to fall by increasing the rate of exploitation and locally realized but externally accumulated surpluses (*INT*: 62; cf. Amin 1999).⁴⁵ At the heart of this process are “*new forms of articulation between economic ownership and possession*” (*INT*: 62), i.e. new relations of production (cf. *INT*: 58). Since the beginnings of imperialism, a process of concentration of capital has taken place, entailing the emergence of financial empires (*INT*: 58). This concentration led to the “*distinction between formal legal ownership and real economic ownership*” (ibid.), i.e. between ownership and control. While these were rather separated in the beginning, the present phase of imperialism under the domination of US capital (*INT*: 60) involves a new form of separation closure in a way that breaks with “*the traditional limits between enterprises at the international level*” (*INT*: 59), integrating labor processes of complex production units under unified economic ownership (*INT*: 58). Accordingly, this phase is also marked by a “*pre-dominance of direct over portfolio investment*” (*INT*: 59).

While imperialism had long been characterized only by the hegemony of the ‘Western’ metropolises over the peripheral countries, the current phase has produced the emergence of a US hegemony over European social formations. This meant the insertion of the reproduction and dominance of US monopoly capitalism within European countries (*INT*: 47). The new international division of labor which goes along with the new cleavage entails wage differences, especially between the US and Europe, and makes visible the disparity between these two regions (regarding, for instance, skill level and spread of wage differentials) (*INT*: 48). Thereby, Europe is characterized by a more significant

⁴⁴ FDI refers to the exchange of property rights, and accordingly of economic power (Zeller 2007: 127). According to Christian Zeller (2007: 124, 126), FDI can be seen as a channel of foreign companies to exploit local resources and wealth but also to produce consumer goods or parts of these.

⁴⁵ According to Alex Demirovic (2010: 68 f.), this might also represent capitalism's need to find new ways of gaining resources and labor power from foreign territories since the decolonization of most parts of the world. Similarly to Poulantzas, he refers to strategies such as trade agreements, investment protection, and credit cooperations.

differentiation of wages within the working class, representing increased labor exploitation (ibid.; cf. Brand 2010: 100). Corresponding to this hegemony, US capital dominates the internationalization of capital (*INT*: 60), while European capital tends to merge with US capital (*INT*: 61). In these cases, the development of economic ownership and possession mirrors the balance of forces, i.e. it favors US capital (*INT*: 61). “*This is analogous to the process taking place in relations between the metropolises as a whole and the dominated countries*” (*INT*: 48). Despite this similarity, these two forms of international hegemony have to be distinguished, because the European countries themselves still remain “*independent centres of capital accumulation, and [...] dominate the dependent formations*” (*INT*: 47). The relationship among the metropolitan countries is then further characterized by a struggle for dominance over and exploitation of the peripheral countries by different means, such as the so called preferential trade agreements (*INT*: 48).

The innovative contribution of Poulantzas to the internationalization debate is his conceptualization not as a process external to the state, “*but rather a development within it*” (Wissel 2006: 240, transl. JE). Thereby, however, Poulantzas actually breaks with the internal-external dichotomy. In his view, “*there is really no such thing as external factors [...] opposed to internal factors ‘isolated’ in their own ‘space’ and outclassing the others*” (*CD*: 22). Rather, he claims a “*primacy of internal factors*” (ibid.), by which he means that ‘external’ factors (such as the world balance of forces) influence the countries of the imperialist chain only in the way that these are internalized (cf. *CD*: 41, 22). Correspondingly, the contradictions of the imperialist chain are internally reproduced as well. “*To talk of internal factors in this sense, then, is to discover the real role that imperialism (uneven development) plays in the evolution of the various social formations*” (*CD*: 22).⁴⁶

With regards to the internationalization of capital under the dominance of US capital, Poulantzas is not satisfied with the traditional differentiation between a ‘national’ and a ‘comprador bourgeoisie’⁴⁷, and, therefore, develops the concept of the ‘internal’ or

⁴⁶ According to Poulantzas, this entails the absence of ‘internal’ and ‘external’ in relation to states (*CD*: 22), except in the dialectic sense, meaning that these terms are already present within each other (cf. Wissel 2006: 240, 248; Krieger 2015: 39). The internationalization process also transforms the character of international domination (see above; cf. Wissel 2010: 82). However, the ‘internal-external’ dichotomy might actually never have been completely plausible, even before the beginning of this process (Hirsch/Kannankulam/Wissel 2008: 111).

⁴⁷ The concepts of the national and comprador bourgeoisie have traditionally been used for the analysis of the relationship between metropolitan and peripheral states (i.e., the ‘old’ cleavage) and therefore no longer seemed appropriate to describe the relationship among the metropolitan states emerging with the new form of imperialism (Wissel 2006: 243; cf. Jessop 1985: 171).

‘domestic’ bourgeoisie (*INT*: 70 ff.), which Jessop (1985: 171) also calls ‘interior bourgeoisie’, in order to enable a description of the emergence of the new form of bourgeoisie in Europe (Wissel 2010: 83).⁴⁸ First of all, Poulantzas argues, that an economic definition of these fractions is not sufficient, but rather needs to be accompanied by politico-ideological aspects. Accordingly, the difference between the national and the comprador bourgeoisie is not simply about ‘home’ vs. ‘foreign’, industrial vs. commercial or monopoly vs. non-monopoly capital (*INT*: 70 f.). Rather, the *national bourgeoisie* is characterized by its position within the politico-ideological structure, due to which it can act in an anti-imperialist way that gives the picture of it struggling for national liberation in the interest of ‘the people’. This can allow alliances with the popular masses. The economic contradictions between it and foreign capital, stemming from the national bourgeoisie’s domestic basis of capital accumulation, do play a role. More important, however, is that it maintains a relatively autonomous position, and thus a certain unity (*INT*: 71). The traditional definition of the *comprador bourgeoisie* (sometimes also simply referred to as the ‘oligarchy’, *CD*: 42), in contrast, characterizes it as being subordinated – economically, politically and ideologically – to foreign capital due to its lack of an own basis of capital accumulation. Therefore, it can only act “*as a simple intermediary of foreign imperialist capital*” (*INT*: 71). According to Poulantzas, however, the two concepts do not enable a sufficient analysis of the US hegemony over European capital (*INT*: 71). Rather, he suggests a new conceptualization: that of the *internal bourgeoisie*⁴⁹. Firstly and unlike the national bourgeoisie, it is not autonomous of US capital, neither regarding the economic nor the politico-ideological characteristics of the dependency. Secondly and in contrast to the comprador bourgeoisie, it not only maintains an economic basis for capital accumulation of its own (in its own social formation as well as abroad), but also genuine politico-ideological aspects due to its position within the global imperialist chain. Therefore, Poulantzas argues, there are “[s]ignificant contradictions” (*INT*: 72) between it and the US capital, which may not entail a full autonomy of US-American capital, but affect the state European apparatuses’ relations vis-à-vis the US (*INT*: 73).

⁴⁸ According to Bob Jessop (1985: 280), several authors question the actual existence of such a bourgeoisie, for instance in Greece. At the same time, however, other authors have found this concept, despite minor points of critique, very helpful, such as Alain Lipietz (1987: 114 ff.) and Sabah Alnasseri (2001: 570; 2011: 2 f.). For a broader overview see John Kannankulam and Jens Wissel (2004).

⁴⁹ There is some confusion regarding the term ‘internal bourgeoisie’ because the English translation additionally introduces the term ‘domestic bourgeoisie’ implying that there was a difference between the former and the latter. The French original, however, does not support this reading. It always contains the term ‘bourgeoisie intérieure’ while translations use one of the English versions (cf. Poulantzas 1974: 79 ff.). Following the English translation, I will use the two terms interchangeably as well.

On this basis, Poulantzas shows how the “*induced reproduction of the form of dominant imperialist power within each national formation and its state*” (INT: 73) integrates these in a system of interconnections in which the internationalization of capital affects their institutional forms by taking up the dominant capital’s interests (cf. Wissel 2006: 243 f.; see below). However, despite important contradictions between the European internal bourgeoisies and US capital, these “*do not at present form the principal contradiction within the imperialist ruling classes*” (INT: 74).⁵⁰ Rather, it “*either run[s] within the contradictions of the dominant imperialist capital*” and the internationalization it imposes “*or it may run within the domestic bourgeoisie and its internal struggles, but it rarely opposes the domestic bourgeoisie as such to American capital*” (INT: 75). Regarding the dependence of European metropolises vis-à-vis US capital, this situation entails “*a tendency to the internal disarticulation of the European social formations and of their economies*” (INT: 80).

The interests of such imperialist capitals are articulated within the internationalization process (INT: 75). states can represent not only their own domestic bourgeoisies, but also the imperialist ones. Accordingly, the state is no longer only the condensation of national but also international relations of forces, affecting the power balance within the social formations (Wissel 2006: 242). However, the imperial capitals do not necessarily take the form of social forces within the national power blocs themselves. Rather, they are internalized and reproduced within the dependent and dominated social formation’s own bourgeoisie and power bloc (INT: 75 f.).

Finally, Poulantzas, unlike other authors (cf. Wissel 2006: 240), does not present the process of internationalization of capital as one of the demise of the national state. He argues that:

“the basic sites of reproduction and uneven development are still the national social formations, in so far as neither the nation nor the relation between the state and nation are reducible to simple economic ties” (INT: 79).

other aspects, such as territory, language, ideology, symbolism and tradition, are of importance as well (INT: 79). Of course, Poulantzas acknowledges that the state undergoes modifications (which may even tackle the question of national sovereignty), b u t without losing the national character at its core (INT: 79). He further argues that it also does not lose its economic role. Quite the opposite: Corresponding to the stage of monopoly capitalism

⁵⁰ In contrast to many authors contemporary of Poulantzas, as well as present ones, such as Jens Wissel (2006: 245 f.), he did not see a decline in the US hegemony, but rather spoke of a crisis of imperialism itself (Brand 2010: 100 f.).

(i.e. the extended reproduction of monopoly capital), the state has a dominant economic role and function (*INT*: 81), i.e. securing the exploitation and class domination.

At this point, Poulantzas argues against the hypothesis that international coordination (such as the economic policy coordination of the EEC) would form apparatuses that could supplant or superimpose national states (*INT*: 81), because it would be too difficult to separate economic from other interventions (*INT*: 81). However, according to him, there can be some form of delegation to exercise certain functions.

7.2 Critique of Poulantzas's theory of imperialism and internationalization

Of course, the process of internationalization looks different today compared to what it looked like when Poulantzas wrote his analysis (cf. Wissel 2010: 85; 2007: 102). And obviously he was not able to foresee the new global order the neoliberal turn entailed (cf. Wissel 2006: 241), but his theory is still "*highly relevant*" (Wissel 2007: 15, transl. JE).

In this regard, authors such as Uli Brand (2010: 102) and Jens Wissel (2010: 85), first criticize that Poulantzas as blinded by the dominance of the US capital export (Wissel 2006: 244) and did not acknowledge the emergence of an internal bourgeoisie in the US (cf. Hirsch/Kannankulam/Wissel 2008: 112) along with a demise in the importance of its national bourgeoisie (Wissel 2006: 250). In short, he did not analyze the impact of the internationalization on the US bourgeoisie itself (Wissel 2007: 106), which was, of course, internationalized as well (Wissel 2010: 85). This means that the process of internationalization is actually characterized by some degree of mutuality, which is why since the 1990s the term internationalization has increasingly been substituted by transnationalization (Wissel 2006: 244; 2007: 107).⁵¹ Such a process could not, however (according to Brand 2010: 104 f.), be analyzed within the national frame presented by Poulantzas as he stressed the role of the state too much regarding capital fractions; such a state-centered focus makes it difficult to account for phenomena such as the formation of a transnational class and its fractions. However, these authors seem to neglect that Poulantzas had at least already acknowledged the internationalized character of parts of the US capital (*CD*: 37). Furthermore, the conceptualization of transnational classes has yet to overcome some theoretical problems (cf. Rahman Embong 2000) and still appears to be empirically problematic (cf. Nollert 2005; Staples 2006; Burris/Staples 2012).⁵²

⁵¹ This, however, does not mean that the relations between the different internal bourgeoisies would be less contradictory (cf. Wissel 2010: 85 f.).

⁵² On the question of whether to analyze a certain problem at the national, international or transnational level, I would argue that the answer is rather a decision for a certain focus and perspective than a statement of truth

Secondly, it appears that Poulantzas either stressed the importance of the territorial nation-state in the process of internationalization too much (Wissel 2010: 81), or underestimated the importance of other spaces (or 'scales'), such as regional and local or trans-regional spaces (Brand 2010: 103). Most importantly, Poulantzas did not envision the possibility of institutions such as the European Union (EU) which are 'supranational'⁵³ (Brand 2010: 103; cf. Wissel 2006: 247) being as powerful as they are today. Generally, it seems that he could not think of the emergence of quasi state apparatuses on inter- or transnational levels (Hirsch/Kannankulam/Wissel 2008: 112) and therefore overstressed national social formations (Wissel 2006: 246); imperialism, according to Poulantzas, cannot exist without national 'anchors' (ibid.: 250 f.). However, Brand (2010: 102) maintains that Poulantzas's concepts regarding internationalization are still very useful, and Wissel (2010: 81) even explicitly builds on Poulantzas's analysis when conceptualizing the EU as an ensemble of national state apparatuses, international organizations and supranational institutions.⁵⁴

Thirdly, another objection is made regarding Poulantzas's claim that the division between peripheral and metropolitan social formations would continue to grow. According to Uli Brand (2010: 106), this is not the case as 'the periphery' has become more diverse since the 1980s (cf. Krieger 2015: 43).⁵⁵ He also criticizes that Poulantzas did not conceptualize semi-peripheral countries, and thus remains very general and indistinct in this regard (Brand 2010: 102). However, this critique fails to fully grasp the relational character of Poulantzas's understanding of dependence (which will be explained further below) and seems to neglect *CD*, which is about states that could also be termed 'semi-peripheral'.

8. Poulantzas's theory of the peripheral state

Poulantzas actually never used the term 'peripheral state' himself, but talked of 'peripheral social formations' (*INT*), 'dominated and dependent states' (*CD*, also *SPS*: 204), and once even of "*peripheral, dependent states*" (1980: 603). It is not clear why he did not use the

or falseness, since the inter- or transnationalization of states has affected different parts of the state to different degrees (see above).

⁵³ For a differentiation of concepts such as 'inter-', 'supra-' and 'transnational', see Brand (2010: 98, fn. 2).

⁵⁴ Another further development of Poulantzas's works on the internationalization of capital in this regard is the idea of conceptualizing institutions such as the EU as a material condensation of a 'second order' (see Brand/Görg/Wissen 2007; cf. Brand 2010: 109).

⁵⁵ Other authors such as Samir Amin (1999: 198) have agreed with Poulantzas on this issue. However, empirical analyses seem to show that they are wrong indeed, at least when the concept of metropolises and the periphery is identified with the per capita mean incomes of countries (cf. Milanovic 2013: 199 f.). However, Giovanni Arrighi, Beverly J. Silver and Benjamin D. Brewer (2003) argue that convergence exists only regarding the level of industrialization, while the North-South divide in incomes prevails.

term 'peripheral state'.⁵⁶ However, since he never explicitly rejected or differentiated between these terms, this paper will rather work with the dominant terminology of 'periphery' and 'peripheral' (where Poulantzas would have used the 'dominated and dependent').⁵⁷ However, the term 'center' is more often than not substituted with 'metropolises' (which Poulantzas also uses), because 'center' seems to imply a unipolar system of nation -states and accordingly does not seem fit to Poulantzas's concept of the imperialist chain.

As Poulantzas (SPS: 24 f.) says that a theory of the capitalist state must enable the understanding of the "*reproduction and historical mutations [...] in the various social formations that are the sites of the class struggle*", it should also be able to cover states other than those in Europe. And Poulantzas (1980: 604) indeed distinguishes between "*three main types of state (central capitalist, dependent capitalist and socialist states)*". Accordingly, it was very clear to Poulantzas that there is something such as a peripheral type of state (cf. *CD*: 21) which is different from the metropolitan one (cf. *CCC*: 9; 1980: 603). However, he did not explicitly conceptualize such a state. The only text except for *INT* that provides more than a few hints in this regard is his book *The Crisis of the Dictatorships. Greece, Portugal, Spain* (*CD*, 1976), which will be at the focus of this chapter in order to carve out a Poulantzasian theory of the peripheral type of capitalist state against the background of previous chapters.

8.1 The Crisis of the Dictatorships

Two years after the overthrow of the dictatorships in Greece and Portugal at a time when the overthrow of the Franco regime in Spain was becoming more and more probable, Poulantzas wrote *CD* as a reflection on these developments (*CD*: 7). Since neither a truly 'frontal attack' of the popular masses (such as a genuine uprising or general strike; cf. *CD*: 76), nor an external intervention played any role in these overthrows⁵⁸, he asks for possible other determinant factors (*CD*: 7). The main question of *CD* is therefore whether – and if yes, how exactly – the inter-imperialist contradictions between the US and the EEC played a role in the decline of the dictatorships in Portugal, Spain and Greece (*CD*: 26). This section will focus mostly on Greece. The background of this question involves Poulantzas

⁵⁶ One may argue that he did not want to be connected to a world-systems theory only due to the use of its terminology. However, the same would be true for dependency theory. More compelling, therefore, seems to be that he rejected the rather absolute and geographic connotation of the term 'periphery' (because it becomes dichotomous, when paired with 'center'). The term 'dependence', in contrast, allows a more relational and abstract conceptualization as this chapter explains.

⁵⁷ This decision seems to be in line with Wissel (2007), for instance.

⁵⁸ The Turkish invasion in Cyprus was, indeed, *not* such an external intervention, because it was, firstly, not on Greek territory and a mere *reaction* from Turkey to the Greek aggression (see below).

finding out that the foreign capital investment figures for these countries reveal “*the gradual increase in the economic relations tying these nations to the European Common Market, as opposed to those tying them to the United States*” (CD: 25), thereby “*directly locat[ing] these countries at the very heart of present inter-imperialist contradictions*” (ibid.).

With regards to this question, Poulantzas's main hypothesis is that the overthrows can only be understood in their historical context, i.e. the new phase of imperialism (CD: 10) and the specific situation of these three countries. This specific situation can be characterized firstly by being military dictatorships, secondly by a certain form of dependence (vis-à-vis the other European countries and the US), and thirdly by being based on the exploitation of other countries themselves (CD: 10) which entailed a ‘European’ “*economic and social structure*” (CD: 7). They might therefore be described as ‘dependent (but) European dictatorships’. Their dependence, however, existed “*to a lesser degree than is the case in other dominated countries*” (CD: 131). According to this position within the imperialist chain (as a consequence of the internationalization of capital, see above), these countries had left the stage of ‘under-development’ without ceasing “*to be dominated and dependent countries*” (CD: 14). In terms of the ‘center-periphery’ terminology, one might therefore describe their status at the time as ‘semi-peripheral’ (cf. CD: 14, INT: 72; Wissel 2007: 106; Wallerstein 1976: 465). More concretely, their dependence found articulation in the phenomenon of “*dependent industrialization*” (CD: 14), which is characterized by an industry based on low-level technology, labor productivity being “*kept at a low level*” (ibid.) and a high degree of expatriation of profits into the metropolises. At the same time, this process is not one-sided, as it further entails the migration of labor from the dependent social formations to the metropolises, which Poulantzas calls a “*real superexploitation*” (CD: 15) due to the training costs lost by the dependent countries. These (low- or unskilled) migrant workers are ‘free’ to leave their countries only due to the disarticulation of their social relations (CD: 70). At the same time, however, another part of labor power is turned “*into a reserve army*” (CCC: 202; cf. Amin 1999: 200 f.).⁵⁹ As a product of the domination of monopoly capital, a large group of people emerges (especially in urban areas of peripheral countries), which other authors call “*the ‘marginal masses’*” (CCC: 201) as they seem to be located at the margin of the sectors having no class membership. However, Poulantzas argues that these groups are actually not marginal “*since their political role can*

⁵⁹ According to Samir Amin (1999: 202), the reserve army in the industrialized countries of the periphery (such as “*the Arab countries*”, South Africa, and some parts of Latin American) “*varies between 50 and 70 percent of the population*”.

be extremely important" (CCC: 202). Furthermore, he conceptualizes the emergence of this group as a decomposition and reorganization of social classes that takes place within the peripheral formations as labor is subsumed in the reproduction of monopoly capital's relations (ibid.).

Poulantzas argues that the new dependency of the EEC countries vis-à-vis the US (CD: 27, see above) entails firstly an absence of real European capital unification (vis-à-vis US capital), and secondly the "*real reactivation and intensification of inter-imperialist contradictions, correlative with the present crisis of capitalism*" (CD: 27).⁶⁰ Thereby, the 'present crisis of capitalism' refers to the economic crisis of the 1970s, which Poulantzas refers to again and again without actually explaining it. This economic crisis is often termed 'stagflation', which is a portmanteau word of 'stagnation' and 'inflation' because despite increasingly high inflation, unemployment rose as well (Harvey 2011: 4; 2005: 14). This situation was, furthermore, intensified by the oil crisis (Harvey 2011: 8) as well as strong labor unions and their so called "*labor militancy*" (Streeck 2011: 7). In retrospective, this time is seen as the crisis of Fordism due to the internationalization process (Jessop 2013: 15). As these contradictions of capitalism and imperialism became more intense, a race for protected territories took place in order to export capital and commodities, to control raw materials and to establish staging-posts for the further expansion of capital (CD: 28).⁶¹

However, Poulantzas explicitly rejects the idea that the contradictions between the US and the EEC played any "*direct or immediate role*" (CD: 28) regarding the decline of the dictatorships. Rather, he argues that their role must be understood in its *specific form* (CD: 29). The role of these contradictions (i.e. between the EEC and the US) is realized in their induced and specific reproduction within and specific to these countries, especially regarding their effects on the dominant classes and the endogenous capital (CD: 29). Within the peripheral states, the internalization of these contradictions is articulated "*according to the divergent lines of dependence*" (CD: 29), polarizing the (endogenous) capital either to the EEC or the USA. In this regard, however, Poulantzas stresses that the EEC-US

⁶⁰ Some might argue, that this would imply the end of US hegemony. However, according to Poulantzas (CD: 27), hegemony does not necessarily equal pacification, but is rather about compromises despite the existence of contradictions.

⁶¹ Poulantzas further elaborates that the US-EEC contradictions are not limited to the conflicting interests regarding the international reproduction of capital, but also refer to broader alliances and orientations (e.g. the 'Atlanticists' vs. the 'Europeans' and vs. the supporters of an orientation towards the 'third world'; CD: 106), and correspondingly to certain diplomatic and military strategies (e.g. NATO) (CD: 31 f.).

contradictions must not automatically be seen as explosive or antagonistic, and accordingly that their reproduction within the power bloc must also not be seen like this (CD: 30 f.).

The primary impact of the contradictions on the Greek regime was that the struggles and contradictions between its own bourgeois fractions grew more intense, which produced an instability in the power bloc's hegemony (CD: 30). This was of great relevance to the Greek regime, because as a military dictatorship⁶² (instead of, for instance, a fascist regime or a parliamentary democracy), it did not allow the regulation of these contradictions through an "*organic representation of the[...] various fractions within the state apparatus*" (CD: 30) and the emergence of a compromise without significant upheavals.⁶³ Too strongly was the balance of forces and the hegemony fixed in favor of the comprador bourgeoisie in Greece (CD: 92; cf. Jessop 2009: 95). Instead, there was a redistribution of power in the balance of forces, which ultimately reflected the fall of the dictatorships. The forces that favored the EEC gained power at the cost of the forces tied to the US (CD: 30). However, as argued above, such a change in the balance of forces does not automatically mean "*a clear and effective overthrow*" (CD: 30). More important was the inscription of this development within the Greek regime's dominant state apparatus, i.e. the army. Here, the growing contradictions gave rise to an intensification of the 'internal' divisions (CD: 33, 30). The importance of these divisions and this apparatus in general stems from the fact that political parties were banned in the military dictatorship making the army functioning "*as the bourgeoisie's de facto political party*" (CD: 33). Thereby, the internal contradictions within the Greek power bloc are best represented by the conflict between the domestic and (big) comprador bourgeoisie.⁶⁴ In addition to the description of these fractions above, it has to be said that their contradictions also include different perspectives on the role of the state. While the domestic bourgeoisie demands the national state intervene with demand oriented policies in order to protect its home market and to support its exports (CD: 43), the (big) comprador bourgeoisie favors a state that rather fosters the integration of foreign capital into the home market. In Greece, the tensions between these two fractions were further intensified as certain sectors of the domestic bourgeoisie aimed at EEC integration

⁶² Actually, this regime was rather a certain combination of different exceptional regimes. Although it had fascist elements, these were subordinated to the specific aspects of the military dictatorship, entailing that, contrary to fascism, it had no real popular base (CD: 79). This difference between a military dictatorship and fascism is stressed by Poulantzas throughout the book again and again.

⁶³ This inability to resolve such contradictions (in such a conjuncture or condensation of various contradictions) is based on several factors that come along with the form of the military dictatorship, such as the elimination of political parties, the suppression of the civil liberties and certain clan-structures taking over the role of the organic representatives (CD: 49).

⁶⁴ Of course, the petty bourgeoisie was also part of the power bloc (CD: 109), but the main role was played by the domestic bourgeoisie.

(CD: 52), while the big comprador bourgeoisie in particular was closely tied to the US capital (ibid.). in contrast to domestic bourgeoisies in other European social formations, the Greek domestic bourgeoisie was rather weak in economic terms (corresponding to its rather small economic base) and also regarding its ideological and political position, while the (big) comprador bourgeoisie was usually (although not always) favored and mostly supported in its interests by the military dictatorship (CD: 46 f.). This, of course, also meant that the state apparatus, in this case the Greek army controlling “*the centres of real power*” (CD: 105), reproduced the contradictions of the power bloc (CD: 104 ff.). While parts of the domestic bourgeoisie had aligned with the comprador bourgeoisie (and the US) in supporting the dictatorship in its early days (CD: 34, 47, 49), its position changed within the further process of the internationalization of capital. Thereby its contradictions with the comprador bourgeoisie and foreign capital increased more and more. Accordingly, it began to demand more state support and strove to reorganize the power bloc (against the comprador hegemony), deepening the contradictions within it (CD: 47 f.). In the end, the lack of coherence of the state threatened the hegemony of the bourgeoisie as such (CD: 50).

The real problem for the exceptional state, according to Poulantzas, resides in its relationship with the popular masses (CD: 94). The basis for the popular struggle in Greece was the effects of the ‘dependent industrialization’ (cf. CD: 73), such as the:

“spectacular increase and concentration of the urban working class, depopulation and exodus from the countryside, proletarianization of a section of the peasantry, massive increase in the non-productive workers composing the new middle class (various categories of white-collar employees, officials, etc.), as also in the liberal professions, stagnation or decline of handicraft, manufacturing and commercial petty bourgeoisie” (CD: 68).

The ‘freed’ workers moved to the cities, without finding jobs there either, creating different forms of unemployment (suburban, intellectual sub-proletariat, part-time and illegal work) (CD: 69). This, in conjunction with the capitalist crisis of the time, increased the number and intensity of popular struggles (CD: 76), especially by the working class “*which is always in the vanguard of popular struggles*” (CD: 70). In addition to the working class, the new urban middle class also participated in struggles for social facilities. Furthermore, there were peasant struggles (against proletarianization, expropriation and the growing industry-agriculture price gap), and struggles by women and students as well as intellectuals (CD: 71). However, according to Poulantzas, this mass struggle lacked “*‘frontal’ attacks*” (CD: 76), with the exception of the Polytechnic uprising in Athens

which remained largely isolated (CD: 76 f.).⁶⁵ Therefore, these struggles remained unsuccessful until they became part of a broader alliance which also directly involved parts of the power bloc. in the case of Greece this was largely dominated by the army (CD: 110). And although the army participated in civil war actions against the population in the beginning, they finally moved towards a policy of “*national reconciliation*’ on the basis of *national independence*” (ibid.). Furthermore, the popular forces were able to ally with some military top ranks occupied by the domestic bourgeoisie, although the biggest support for the popular forces was in the middle and lower ranks (CD: 111). Thereby, however, this alliance was clearly under the hegemony of the domestic bourgeoisie, and accordingly entailed democratization only within the limits of the domestic bourgeoisie’s terms (CD: 87 ff.).

Against the background of these developments, the Greek military regime lacked the power of regulation, which led to a constantly increasing intensification of the contradictions within the state, entailing incoherence and, towards the end, also open conflicts within the army (CD: 84). After a naval putsch in Greece in May 1973 which already underlined the contradictions among the different divisions and corps within the Greek army (CD: 107), the popular struggle finally led “*to a decisive mass intervention by the soldiers called up at the time of the general mobilization decided upon in the face of the risk of war with Turkey*” (CD: 96).⁶⁶ Ultimately, the regime appeared unable to handle these contradictions even from the perspective of parts of the army. These parts (including higher ranked army personnel) started to view the regime itself as a danger to the unity and continuity of the state (CD: 117).

The role of the popular struggles, however, was not a direct one, and so their importance should not be exaggerated (CD: 77 f.). Rather, Poulantzas argues, the struggles entailed an intensification of the articulation of the regime’s internal contradictions, which then led to the fall of the dictatorship although the popular masses did not attack it directly (cf. CD: 78). In other words, the dictatorship’s “*relationship to the popular masses is expressed in internal contradictions*” (CD: 82) which, in turn, can take the form of certain economic measures.

⁶⁵ The Polytechnic uprising involved approximately 300,000 people, especially students, marine construction workers, peasants, members of the new middle class and intellectuals. Poulantzas (CD: 76 f.) says that it left 50 to 100 of them dead.

⁶⁶ According to Jessop (1985: 279), however, Poulantzas underestimates the importance of the Cyprus incident and the corresponding military tensions for the fall of the Greek dictatorship in his description. For a general critique of CD see Jessop (1985: 279 ff.).

8.2 Poulantzas's notions of the peripheral state

“[We] can certainly speak at a general and rather abstract level of a dependent type of state [...]: a state that exhibits certain common features in all societies in which it occurs in so far as it corresponds to the general modifications that imperialism inflicts on them, and must fulfil the general functions falling to it in the present phase of imperialism” (CD: 21; original emph.).

There is a certain difficulty drawing a conceptualization of the peripheral state from Poulantzas's *CD*. This difficulty is that *CD* is about a peripheral dictatorship, i.e. an exceptional form of state. Obviously, the concept of the peripheral type state must not be mixed up with the exceptional state, because the presence of exceptional regimes is not at all limited to the peripheral sphere but always depends on the class struggle within any social formation. Thereby, however, the *concrete* position within the imperialist chain is certainly not without consequences for the class struggle, as Poulantzas's theory on the process of internationalization shows and the example of Greece illustrates. Therefore, instead of summarizing the structure of the Greek state as presented by Poulantzas in *CD*, this section shall rather take Poulantzas's theory of the capitalist type of state as its basis and then analyze *CD* for central peripheral characteristics in this phase of imperialism, which is “[t]he principal characteristic” (CD: 11, see above) regarding the structure of dependence.

Poulantzas's theory of the capitalist state, as discussed in prior sections, is based on the structural specificity of capitalism: the capitalist relations of production (the doubly ‘free’ worker vs. the capitalist) as the basis of the capitalist mode of production entails the relative autonomy of the state vis-à-vis the power bloc and the economy in general (see above, cf. Buckel 2006: 175 f.). This relative autonomy, in turn, is the basis for the materiality of the state and the state's ability to organize the dominant classes (under the hegemony of a certain fraction) within the hegemony of a power bloc. These aspects describe (very abstractly) the capitalist type of state. Their concrete articulations, however, depend on the specificities of the social formation and the class struggle in question as well as the context (in this case, the present phase of imperialism).

Therefore, of special importance for the CMP is the concept of relative autonomy. It is always *relative* (i.e. *relational*) with regard to the specific forces and their balance (cf. *SPS*: 128, see above). In this sense, Poulantzas's conceptualization of the state may be presented as in-between the (equally false) perceptions of the state as an instrument or a subject. While the instrumental concept of the state implies that the state has no autonomy at all (of the dominant classes), conceptualizing the state as a subject renders it completely

autonomous (of instrumental interests) (*SPS*: 129). Poulantzas, in contrast, describes the state's autonomy as *relative to class struggle*. It is not a capability of the state, external to the power bloc, but rather the exact opposite: "*it is [...] the result of what takes place within the State*" (*SPS*: 135). Accordingly, the articulation of the autonomy depends on the result of the contradictions between the different classes and fractions (and their presence within the state). This, in turn, further depends on the specific branch or apparatus and its organization (e.g. in clans and factions) (*ibid.*).

Thus, one might argue that if the power bloc is comprised of a rather diverse mixture of equally powerful fractions, it is more probable that the state is not restricted in its autonomy in relation to these fractions than a situation in which there is only very weak opposition (e.g. due to the exclusion of certain interests; cf. Buckel 2006: 176). Such a situation of restricted hegemony, for instance, is described by Poulantzas for the case of the hegemony of monopoly capital (*SPS*: 128).⁶⁷

What also must not be forgotten in this regard is that hegemony is not only a compromise on the basis of a consensus (e.g. on the division of political power), but rather it always has to include some material concessions (*SPS*: 31).

However, such a restriction can also come about as a consequence of the internalization of imperialist contradictions. As the imperialist chain builds upon the "*specific global relations of production and [...] the international imperialist division of labour*" (*INT*: 43; cf. Wissel 2007: 9), it entails an exploitation of the popular masses of the dominated country through the ruling classes of the dominant social formation, whether direct (e.g. FDI) or indirect (*INT*: 43). But increasingly, according to Poulantzas (*CD*: 13), productive industrial capital is directly invested in the peripheral countries (especially in the manufacturing industry), by (mostly US dominated) multinational firms due to the low (production) costs in the peripheral economies.⁶⁸ The form of the organization of the imperialist chain corresponds to a certain form of dependence, and thereby "*alters the internal socio-economic structure of the countries subjected to it*" (*CD*: 13).

⁶⁷ While congealing the balance of forces (of the exceptional state) hinders the "*organic circulation of hegemony*" (*CD*: 91) completely, the monopolization of power within the power bloc or even the state does not necessarily do so. Rather, a certain constraint regarding the change in the balance of forces within the power bloc is 'normal' even within parliamentary-democratic regimes (*CD*: 91), as the overall bourgeois character of the state (see above) indicates already.

⁶⁸ The question of whether this causality (of low costs equaling high FDI and vice versa) actually exists is beyond the scope of this paper. For a critique see David Kucera (2002).

However, the position of a country within the imperialist chain, as the case of Greece shows, does not determine its relationship with the metropolises completely. Rather Poulantzas argues that:

“the place of a country in the imperialist chain is seen as sufficient to determine the forms of its dependence in all their details [...], however, there are certainly different forms and degrees of dependence, and these essentially depend on the specific internal socio-political coordinates of the countries involved.” (CD: 20)

Thus, Poulantzas distinguishes between the *form* of dependence *in general* on the one hand and the *specific form* (or better: regime) and *degree* (depending on the regime) of dependence on the other. Thereby, the ‘specific internal coordinates’, which as Poulantzas argues produce the different regimes in the dependent countries, refer above all to the balance of forces (CD: 21). Or in other words: the form of the regime in the peripheral state (i.e. parliamentary democracy or an exceptional regime, such as dictatorship, fascism or bonapartism; cf. CD: 90) corresponds to the internal balance of forces, but the very situation of dependence stems from the position within the imperialist chain. And as the example of Greece (the change from the exceptional to the ‘normal’ form) illustrates, the ‘quality’ of this dependence can change with the course of the class struggle. Within the current form of capitalism, however, no *bourgeois*-democratic form can break with the situation of dependence.

“It is obvious that a country’s dependence vis-à-vis imperialism can only be broken by a process of national liberation, which in the new phase of imperialism and the present circumstances as a whole, coincides with a process of transition to socialism” (CD: 20).

The way in which Poulantzas presents the situation of dependence here suggests, in contrast to dependency and world systems theory, a relational concept (cf. Holman 2002: 402. i.e. that a certain state can be more or less dependent (cf. CD: 132), according to the position within the imperialist chain. Furthermore, it seems to be possible that a state is almost completely dependent. However, it does not appear to be possible that a state is completely dominant (i.e. completely *independent*). Because this would imply an external relationship with the other countries, and the absence of such an externality, in particular, is actually an important feature of imperialism (INT: 43).⁶⁹

However, the determination of the peripheral state through its position within the imperialist chain and the class struggle that takes place within it is more complex than

⁶⁹ A very similar notion that shows this relational character is given by Poulantzas (FD: 23) regarding the different links within the imperialist chain: the weakness of one link is the strength of the other (see below).

described so far, because the position within the imperialist chain further “*determines certain particular features of the class struggle in the different countries involved*” (CD: 130). According to Poulantzas, this explains why countries which inhabit “*the zone of dependence*” (CD: 130), such as Greece (as he described it), show certain differences regarding the class struggle from the model of ‘Western democracy’ (CD: 131). Such features of peripheral states (in this phase of imperialism) are “*the weakness of their bourgeoisies and their politico-ideological deficiencies*” (CD: 131) which, in turn, increase the importance of the repressive state apparatuses. Against the background of the earlier discussion, this notion can be understood as referring to the material and politico-ideological constraints on hegemony. The weakness of the bourgeoisies refers to its peripheral position which means that it has difficulties regarding endogenous capital accumulation, and in turn entails a tough struggle over the relatively little economic concessions the state can provide (cf. CD: 54). Furthermore, it can also entail a limit on the materiality of the state as such, since bureaucracy presupposes a regular state income. The difficulty of this problem has become visible very often within the history of the modern state, with modern Greece as the latest example.⁷⁰ At the same time, the reproduction of metropolitan capital is largely controlled by the dominant metropolitan bourgeoisies. The politico-ideological deficiencies refer to the difficulties of peripheral bourgeoisies in producing consensus within the power bloc but to gain hegemony over the masses (cf. CD: 45), especially due to the ‘double’ character of their internal divisions as the induced reproduction of the imperial contradictions intensifies these (as explained above).

Accordingly, one may say that the position within the imperialist chain affects the dependent type of state in two ways: directly, as it entails a situation of dependence as such, and indirectly, as it affects the class struggle. However, one cannot say that imperialism determines the form of the dependent state altogether, which means that peripheral states do not automatically refer to exceptional regimes. Rather one has to define exceptional regimes *in peripheral states* against the background of the particular characteristics of the zone of dependence (CD: 131. According to Jessop (2006: 54), Poulantzas’s basic assumption in this regard is that the normal form of the capitalist state is characterized by democratic institutions and hegemonic class leadership, while exceptional regimes are “*answers to crises of hegemony*” (ibid.; transl. JE). However, because hegemony seems to be structurally limited in peripheral countries (as a consequence of the ‘weak bourgeoisie’),

⁷⁰ A database of the Bank of Canada’s Credit Rating Assessment Group (2015) lists 141 countries which defaulted to an official creditor at least once between 1975 and 2013.

exceptional regimes are more probable in these than they are in 'Western democracies'. indeed, Poulantzas suggests that in the periphery, "*there is a tendency for exceptional forms of government to become the rule*" (1980: 604). Thereby, however, one must not fall into the trap of attributing peripheral states the status of exceptional regimes simply by pointing to their deficiencies or deviations vis-à-vis the 'Western' model. Rather, Poulantzas argues, it has to be clearly shown, whether or not the greater importance of the military apparatus can actually be interpreted as an open war against the masses or rather represents the form of a bourgeois-democratic regime under peripheral circumstances. Accordingly, Poulantzas suggests differentiating between the countries *within* the periphery, in order to determine the peripheral forms of exceptional regimes (cf. 1980: 604).

Another important factor in this regard is the practice by the metropolises of externalizing crises or crisis effects to the dependent countries (*CD*: 75; cf. Jessop 2009: 69). Poulantzas argues that "[g]iven the contradictions of capitalist accumulation at the international level, these countries become the weak links in any crisis of capitalist accumulation" (*CD*: 75). This is firstly, due to their position, and secondly to the induced reproduction of these contradictions within them, entailing that they would be affected by the crisis before the metropolitan countries (*CD*: 76). Poulantzas describes this as a means by which metropolitan capital tries to delay the effects of crisis in their home countries (*CD*: 76). Such crises, especially when severe or frequent, can of course undermine the position of the bourgeois hegemony even more (see above). In this regard, it is helpful to briefly refer to Poulantzas's description of the imperialist chain in his book *Fascism and Dictatorship* (*FD*, 1974 [1970]). he takes up the theory of Lenin imperialism, especially his notion of the 'weakest link' within the imperialist chain (*FD*: 23). corresponding to the imperialist chain as such, 'weakness' and 'strength' (or in other terms: 'dependence' and 'domination') are not to be seen as economically determined, but rather as the accumulation of economic, political and ideological factors. On the basis of this notion, Lenin expected revolution in Russia, the weakest link in the chain in his time (cf. *FD*: 23 f.). And according to Poulantzas, fascism emerged afterward "*in the next two links*" (*FD*: 24). This, however, must not be understood as causal determination. Poulantzas only wants to point to the "*crucial importance*" (ibid.) of the position within the chain for class struggle, while the revolution or the emergence of fascism, of course, depend on the overall conjuncture. The same seems to have been true with regards to the fall of the dictatorship in Greece. According to Poulantzas it became the weakest link within the European context in the capitalist crisis at the time. And due to this position within the chain and the induced

reproduction of capitalist relations, the crisis tendencies and contradictions could be exported (cf. *CD*: 75). The accumulation and condensation of these contradictions then enabled the fall of the dictatorship (*CD*: 123 f.).

Another important aspect of peripheral statehood is that despite the dominance of the CMP and despite dependent industrialization, pre-capitalist modes of production still exist to some extent. While peripheral industrialization generally opposes these modes, Poulantzas also argues that this relation depends on “*the forms assumed by the present imports of foreign capital in these countries*” (*CD*: 41). This means that only modes relevant in terms of the link between the dependent country and the imperialist chain are destroyed. Therefore, some pre-capitalist modes may survive, as will the personal and other (traditional) forms of domination which they uphold (cf. Heinrich 2005: 335). And since the relative autonomy of the political and the economic sphere is specific to the capitalist mode of production, the existence of pre-capitalist modes can hinder its emergence. Such forms of personal domination can also be included in the power bloc, as is the case for large landowners in peripheral countries (*SPS*: 127; *CD*: 12). However, this is certainly not valid for people who, for instance, rely on agricultural subsistence. This, of course, goes along with a lack of group integration into and representation by the state (visible, for instance, in the struggle of Via Campesina). Accordingly, the hegemony of the power bloc is limited as it is without their consensus or opposition.⁷¹ The same may be valid for people whose class is decomposed in the course of dependent industrialization (the ‘marginal masses’).

The most important question regarding peripheral statehood, following Poulantzas's state theory, is what the above-mentioned characteristics of the peripheral state mean with regards to the relative autonomy of the political vis-à-vis the economy, especially the state's relative autonomy from the hegemonic bloc and the hegemonic fraction. This, of course, cannot be stated with full certainty, as it always depends on the country's specificity and internal class struggle (as well as the phase of imperialism). However, the notion that there is a tendency for a rather weak bourgeoisie and limited hegemony already hints to equilibria in these states which are even more unstable than ‘usual’, and may therefore be stabilized by means other than consensus. If we are to leave aside the possibility of exceptional regimes for a moment, then such means could be corruption (cf. *CD*: 112, 121

⁷¹ Depending on the understanding of hegemony, one might also argue that hegemony would then actually be completely absent. However, if hegemony is conceptualized as always involving universal consensus, there might never have been hegemony at all (cf. Wissel/Martin 2015: 222). Therefore, this thesis rather builds on the idea of ‘fragmented hegemony’ which represents a weakly historicized concept of hegemony that further points to the different degree of hegemonic integration regarding the various interest groups (ibid.).

f.) and clientilism (*CD*: 49). In the case of Greece, for instance, certain clan-structures took over the role of organic representatives (*ibid.*) and probably partly still exist. This aspect points to the problem of material concessions within peripheral countries, which can be hindered by limited state resources. For example, these states grant tax exemptions to multinational firms (*CD*: 24). The importance of this material side is shown by Poulantzas very clearly in *CD* with regards to the capitalist crisis that eats up all the economic improvements for the popular masses in Greece and implies that without the crisis, some other similar event would have had to 'open up the way' for a mass struggle (*CD*: 75 f.).

However, most importantly, the state's relative autonomy seems to be highly constrained in peripheral countries with regards to foreign capital, as Poulantzas's description of the dependent industrialization illustrates. Although this process also serves certain 'internal' fraction interests (i.e. those of the comprador bourgeoisie), it clearly takes place under the aegis of foreign capital (*CD*: 14). The example of Greece (see above) has clearly shown that both the comprador bourgeoisie as well as the domestic bourgeoisie sought alliance with foreign capital, while a 'truly' national bourgeoisie seems to be a phenomenon of the past (*CD*: 43; cf. Wissel 2007: 109). Of course, this matter is more complex with regards to the domestic bourgeoisie due to contradictions within foreign capital as well as the contradictions between US and European capital. But more generally, the differences between the domestic and the comprador bourgeoisie were obviously bigger than the contradictions between these and foreign capital. As the terminology of Poulantzas implies, the 'dependent state' is dependent because its bourgeoisies are dependent on foreign capital (including its political and ideological relation).

However, there are of course many differences among the countries that might be described as peripheral states, and accordingly one has to distinguish (at least) between the semi-peripheral and the peripheral cases (cf. *CD*: 15). In this regard, it has to be mentioned that the existence of the domestic bourgeoisie is a rather 'Atlanticist' phenomenon (Alnasseri 2011: 2 f.), which emerged only with the second cleavage (cf. Wissel 2007: 94 f.; see above). But according to Poulantzas, at least "*nuclei of a domestic bourgeoisie may even appear within peripheral formations*" (*INT*: 72; cf. Alnasseri 2001: 570). This, however, means that these 'truly' peripheral domestic bourgeoisies, unlike the ones in semi-peripheral Greece as described by Poulantzas, will be even weaker because the domestic bourgeoisie presupposes some capital (see above). In the case of Greece, for instance, this domestic capital stems "*from exploitation of the Eastern Mediterranean*" (*CD*: 11). Furthermore, the domestic bourgeoisie in Greece made use of the European capital invested

in the country, thereby gaining autonomy from US capital (Wissel 2007: 106). In other words, it profited from the division among the metropolises. However, this of course does not end the dependency, but simply changes the dependency's form: The hegemony of the US over Greece changed into an indirect form mediated by the European bourgeoisie, intensifying the US-European competition and contradictions (ibid.). The majority of peripheral bourgeoisies may therefore rather be of the comprador type (cf. Wissel 2010: 83, 2007: 109; Jessop 1985: 171; Lipietz 1987: 114). And since "*this bourgeoisie is the true support and agent of foreign imperialist capital*" (CD: 43), its hegemony is a reproduction of foreign capital's hegemony. Accordingly, the power bloc within the peripheral state (a little less so in a semi-peripheral state) is very much under the influence of foreign capital. This, in turn, constrains the state's relative autonomy vis-à-vis the power bloc, i.e. of foreign capital's interests.

One aspect which will be helpful in analyzing the Greek case is only implicit in Poulantzas's notions (and the concept of hegemony). It is Gerhard Hauck's (2004: 411 f., 419) differentiation between the state's power to secure the process of capital accumulation (of the power bloc) and the power to 'regulate' (i.e. to set and implement norms throughout society). Hauck claims that the latter is rather weak in countries on the African continent while the former is still strong. For European states, in contrast, a strong power to regulate rather seems to be 'normality'. However, looking at the economic development within most African countries and against the background of the above discussion, stable capital accumulation in peripheral countries is actually rare. In these cases, the state rather seems to protect the extraction of surplus labor, as Alexander Gallas (2016a: 31) suggests. This fits very well into Poulantzas's framework, because a very weak relative autonomy of the state vis-à-vis the dominant fraction is exactly what endangers the overall capital accumulation, as it prohibits the state from representing "*the long-term political interest of the whole bourgeoisie*" (SPS: 128). In the case of peripheral countries, this may mean that foreign capital is able to extract cheap products or resources, while the peripheral domestic economy is not able to bring about a stable accumulation of capital (except for very few people).

This section has shown that Poulantzas's state theory in combination with his theory of imperialism and the imperialist chain, especially in their application (as in CD), enables a conceptualization of the peripheral type of capitalist state. It consists of many elements also mentioned by authors such as Evers (1977), Heigl (2007) and Becker (2008). However, what distinguishes Poulantzas from these authors is that he further provides the theoretical

framework to actually understand notions such as ‘economic outward orientation’, ‘structural heterogeneity’ or ‘marginal urban masses’ in their state-theoretical relevance.

One might say that this conceptualization puts the peripheral type of state simply at the other end of the ‘relative autonomy’ continuum, thereby adding nothing new. However, this is not where the conceptualization stops. In order to make sense of peripheral statehood, not only does the concept of the imperial chain have to be taken into account as well (in and additional sense), but actually the interplay between both concepts (the relative autonomy of the state and the country’s position within the imperial chain) has to be analyzed.

However, this conceptualization is not only still quite fragmentary but also very abstract, and accordingly has yet to prove its usefulness. As a first attempt to do so, the next chapter applies it to the development of the Greek state since May 2010, when the first financial ‘support package’ was under way.

9. The peripheralization of the Greek state

“It now seems that the Global South is expanding to include large chunks of Europe” (Fouskas 2015).

This chapter analyzes whether the development of the Greek state can be described as a process of peripheralization. Therefore, against the background of the previous chapter, the first section briefly conceptualizes the peripheralization process. This concept will then, after a short description of the so called ‘Greek sovereign debt crisis’, be applied to the Greek case.

9.1 Conceptualizing the ‘peripheralization’ of a state

As the previous section has shown, the peripheral type of state can be characterized by weak relative autonomy of the state vis-à-vis imperialist (metropolitan) interests. This, in turn, is reflected in the power bloc, visible for instance in the dominance (and/or hegemony) of a comprador bourgeoisie that faces little to no opposition. This goes along with the exclusion of a large part of the popular masses and their interests, and entails a state which is especially constrained regarding its ability to regulate while still maintaining a form of class domination which secures the extraction of surplus labor.

The concept of ‘peripheralization’ then describes the process of becoming such a type of state. Based on Poulantzas’s argument that the state is always fundamentally determined by the relations of production (*SPS*: 14), such a process will leave marks there. Within the

CMP as explained above, the relations of production are characterized by the separation of the worker from the means of production. Accordingly, the commodification of wage labor is at the heart of capitalism (cf. MEW 23: 184; cf. Gallas 2016a: 34). Thus, the *development of wages* (as a consequence of political decisions) can be seen as a good indicator of changes within the relations of production based on the relation between the bourgeoisie and the working class. The same is valid for the number of people excluded from the labor market, or the *unemployment rate* (cf. Barata et al. 2013: 8). As the wage level depends on the ability of the working class to take part in the determination of the wages, *collective bargaining* is another important factor.⁷² Furthermore, these developments have to be seen in relation to the other parts of society, or more concretely, the other classes. However, since a class analysis (especially regarding the comprador and domestic fractions) cannot be carried out successfully within this limited context, identifying a certain *class character* of the changes in Greece will be rather preliminary to further research. Last but not least, the change regarding the overall *economic, political and ideological strength* has to be evaluated in order to analyze the impact of the developments on the country's position within the imperial chain. These points taken together can then indicate the state's relative autonomy vis-à-vis the different interests.

However, the term peripheralization therefore does not make any sense if the country in question is not part of (or not even close to) the 'zone of periphery'. If Germany, for instance, became more dependent on the US, it would still not come close to the zone of periphery due to its overall position within the imperialist chain. Such a process might better be described as an intensification of dependence or inter-dependence. However, the situation is different when it comes to countries in 'the periphery' (i.e. the global South) or at the peripheries of the capitalist centers, such as eastern or southern European countries.

Furthermore, looking at the (economic and political) modern history of Greece, one might wonder whether Greece could actually go through a process of peripheralization, because Greece seems to have always been part of the periphery in relation to 'Western Europe' (cf. Dimoulas/Fouskas 2015: 234).⁷³ And, indeed, an analysis of the Greek state prior to the crisis might actually highlight certain characteristics of a peripheral state visible, for example, in the descriptions of its structures as being clientelistic. However, this is not a

⁷² Admittedly, the conceptualization of a peripheralization provided here is rather economic, reflecting the need to reduce complexity within this context. Following studies should therefore include more politico-ideological aspects.

⁷³ However, before the latest crisis, Greece (as well as the other southern European countries) rather appeared to have (at least economically) caught up with 'Western' Europe (Karamessini 2015: 5).

problem for an analysis of the development of the Greek state as a form of peripheralization, because it is a relational concept without absolute positions. Accordingly, even though Greece was already in a position of economic dependence before the crisis, factors show that it is even more dependent today due to certain measures introduced by means of the memoranda (see below). And the same is true for other aspects as well. For instance, the social security system was problematic before the crisis, but while it at least enabled many families to use high pensions as a form of social cushion in times of economic distress, the memoranda have left an increasing number of vulnerable people without any social safety net at all.

With regards to Greece and its membership in the European Union (EU), however, there are two forms of dependence which can be distinguished, even if only analytically: one rather indirect, and one rather direct form, stemming from the power of certain EU institutions on EU member states (Boukalas/Müller 2015: 399 f.; Angelaki 2016: 262 f.). Looking at the institutional constraints alone, however, is not sufficient and can lead to rather problematic perspectives. For instance, Christos Boukalas and Julian Müller (2015: 400) argue that:

“Greece’s integration into the European multi-level system prevented it from putting into practice what the balance of forces in Greek society would have allowed it to do, namely to try out a different path of economic development”.

Such a statement is problematic because it fails to acknowledge that such an environment can also exist without such a tight politico-institutional framework in the form of imperialism. The Greek case, therefore, is a rather special one from a global perspective as these two aspects come together and form two sides of the same coin in the imperialism of European capital structurally promoted through the (legal and political) framework of the EU (and its power bloc) (cf. *ibid.*: 391). The following analysis, however, will rather focus on the former aspect. Accordingly, the role of EU institutions will not be analyzed explicitly, as this would go beyond the scope of the thesis.

9.2 A brief description of the 2007/8 global financial crisis and its impact on Greece

As a starting point of the latest financial crisis, many authors cite the year 2007 because it is the year in which the US subprime or “*mortgage crisis*” (Mylonas 2012: 647) began when the US real estate bubble burst (Peukert 2010: 9, 31, 225-6; Bieling 2011: 173; Kutter 2013: 105). However, in September 2008 at the latest, it developed into a “*banking crisis*” (Elson 2012: 63) when the US bank Lehman Brothers went bankrupt (Annesley/Scheele

2011: 335; Kutter 2013: 105). Due to the integration of European capital into the ‘Dollar-Wall Street regime’ (Bieling 2011: 173) and the export-orientation of many European companies, the crisis quickly reached Europe as well (Heinrich 2012: 396; Schäfer 2012: 2 ff.).

Most countries reacted with programs to stabilize their financial systems (bailing out banks) and some even briefly turned to a policy of overall economic stabilization (Kutter 2013: 105-6, Bieling 2011: 174). The same was true for the Greek government, which reacted with a “*strongly counter-cyclical fiscal policy*” (Karamessini 2011: 7) in the years 2008 and 2009. The crisis ‘arrived’ in Greece in 2008 when its economy went into recession (Theodoropoulou 2016: 27) and its GDP started to decline in the third quarter of the year (Adam/Papatheodorou 2016: 271). Due to the stabilization policy and the decline in taxes (due to the recession), public debt increased quickly (Karamessini 2011: 7). This, however, only turned into a serious problem in October 2009 when the newly elected PASOK-led government reported that earlier fiscal data had been incorrect and deficit figures were revised. Suddenly the public deficit amounted to 13.6 percent of GDP (instead of 3.7) and overall debt stood at 115.1 percent of GDP (instead of 99.6) (Angelaki 2016: 266; Knight 2013: 148, 154). The country had to fight both the economic crisis and the fiscal deficit.⁷⁴ Less than two months later (in mid-November), financial speculations regarding Greek government bonds began (Karamessini 2011: 7), and in December 2009 the rating agency Fitch downgraded Greek sovereign bonds to BBB+ (Knight 2013: 148). This, however, was only the beginning of a series of further downgrading, until Greece was “*essentially prohibit[ed] access to international financial markets*” (Angelaki 2016: 267; cf. Theodoropoulou 2016: 27). And this process advanced despite the Greek government implementing four deficit reduction programs between December 2009 and March 2010 (Karamessini 2011: 7; Knight 2012: 148), including policies such as wage-freeze, wage cuts, and tax increases as well as the partial abolition of civil service bonuses (Angelaki 2016: 267). These first austerity measures, like the later ones, worsened the recession and led to a “*GDP contraction in Greece [that] is considered worse than the Great Depression era of the US*” (Adam/Papatheodorou 2016: 271).

⁷⁴ The causes of the so called ‘Greek sovereign debt crisis’ are still hotly debated and cannot be discussed in detail here. Generally, there are three approaches (cf. Heine/Sablowski 2015). Firstly, the current account deficits of Greece are seen as a product of Greek overconsumption, while secondly, these can also be seen as an underconsumption (due to wage moderation) of Germany. Thirdly, another approach rather focuses on the (foreign) portfolio investment flows (especially from Germany and France) into Greece as the source of the current account deficit.

Against this background, the Greek government requested a bailout and on 2nd May 2010 came to an agreement with the European Commission (EC), the International Monetary Fund (IMF)⁷⁵ and the European Central Bank (ECB). This agreement, known as the ‘Troika’, provided a ‘support package’ containing credits worth 110 million euro and was “*the largest loan ever received by a single country*” (Rüdig/Karyotis 2014: 488). It was received on condition of implementing a structural adjustment program stipulated in a ‘memorandum of understanding’ (Angelaki 2016: 267; Theodoropoulou 2016: 27; Karamessini 2011: 7), which is often simply referred to as the ‘memorandum’ (cf. Kritidis 2016). The adjustment program has been described as ‘draconian’ by several commentators (cf. Rüdig/Karyotis 2014: 488; Boukalas/Müller 2015: 399; Kouvelakis 2012: xviii).

This first memorandum focused especially on reforming the Greek pension system (Adam/Papatheodorou 2016: 283) and brought along cuts of higher pensions, the abolishment of pension bonuses, a three-year freeze of pension indexation and a detailed plan for pension reform for June 2010 (Angelaki 2016: 267). However, it also affected policy fields such as labor (Boukalas/Müller 2015: 394), which will be discussed in detail below. In July 2011, a second memorandum (totaling 130 million Euro) for 2012-2014 got underway with an even harsher adjustment program (Angelaki 2016: 268 f.; Karamessini 2011: 12), and in August 2015 a third memorandum was agreed upon (Boukalas/Müller 2015: 393).

However, despite these three memoranda and all the austerity measures they demanded, the Greek economy is still in recession and public Greek indebtedness, the original target of these programs, is even higher than before the first memorandum (see below).

9.3 *The peripheralization of the Greek state*

If it is true that there is a peripheralization of the Greek state, then according to the approach developed above, there will be shifts within the relations of forces or ‘class effects’ such as a weakening of the domestic and working classes vis-à-vis the comprador bourgeoisie. indeed, this is what can be observed in Greece. According to Christos Boukalas and Julian Müller (2015: 394), in Greece it is only the comprador bourgeoisie that have benefitted from the measures introduced since 2010, while the actual benefiter is

⁷⁵ By turning to the IMF, Greece decided to go through a process which many peripheral countries have gone through already (such as many Latin American countries in the 1980s and East-Central European countries in the 1990s) (cf. Fouskas/Dimoulas 2013: 182; Boukalas/Müller 2015: 391). According to Vassilis K. Fouskas and Constantine Dimoulas (ibid.), this is a process which rather depletes the indebted country’s resources and rather benefits the capitalist metropolises.

imperial capital. This section will elaborate on how exactly this ‘class character’ and the shift in the relations of forces is coming about.

The ‘class-character’ of the memoranda can be seen, for instance, in the sidelining of working class interests by means such as the non-involvement of trade unions in the policy making processes regarding the implementation of the memoranda. The first structural adjustment program did not incorporate a provision to involve the social partners at all (Koukiadaki/Távora/Martínez Lucio 2016: 32 f.). And although the second one did contain such a provision, the troika simply overruled the outcomes of the agreements achieved in the social dialogue (ibid.: 34). Accordingly, the memoranda contained measures such as making dismissals easier and cheaper (Boukalas/Müller 2015: 394) which had the effect of massively increasing the unemployment rate (cf. Fouskas/Dimoulas 2013: 170). According to Eurostat (2016a) data, it stood at 24.6 percent in November 2015, which is the highest rate of unemployment within the whole EU-28 (followed by Spain with 20.5 percent. Germany had the lowest rate at 4.3 percent). Regarding youth unemployment (ages 15 to 24), Greece ranked second with 52.4 percent, only topped by Spain with 53.2 percent (ibid.). Christos Boukalas and Julian Müller (2015: 390, 396) call this the introduction of a reserve army. Admittedly, a high rate of unemployment is not ‘unnatural’ in the wake of such a severe economic crisis. However, even taking the details of the recession into account, Sotiria Theodoropoulou (2016: 25) argues that the high unemployment rate in Greece can only partly be explained by the economic recession. On top of it, the harsh conditions of the ‘rescue packages’ are responsible for this development, particularly the very strict fiscal adjustment and the strategy of ‘internal devaluation’⁷⁶ which affected labor costs disproportionately more than factors such as prices or productivity (ibid.: 54). This is in line with the fall of real and nominal wages in Greece (Koukiadaki/Távora/Martínez Lucio 2016: 123), while it appears that profit margins were not touched (Theodoropoulou ibid.) and may have even increased (see below). Furthermore, the adjustment programs facilitated an increasing use of fixed-term as well as temporary contracts and promoted working time flexibility arrangements (Theodoropoulou 2016: 39). Accordingly, socio-economic inequalities are on the rise in Greece (Koukiadaki/Távora/Martínez Lucio 2016:

⁷⁶ ‘Internal devaluation’ is an economic policy strategy to restore the competitiveness of a country “*by means of productivity improvements and/or wage cuts when depreciation of the nominal exchange rate is not available*” (Theodoropoulou 2016: 25). The argumentation in favor of internal devaluation is based on theories of conservative and/or corporate-friendly analysts who argue that Greece’s crisis has been produced by over-consumption on the basis of high inflation and inappropriate wage increases (Heine/Sablowski 2015: 564 f.). However, empirical data suggests that it was not a low level of competitiveness that caused the crisis, since Greece’s exports actually increased even more than Germany’s before the crisis (ibid.: 572).

125) as working class interests are being marginalized. Against this background, it is especially striking that there were no provisions in the (first two) memoranda for a review of the social impact of these measures (ibid.: 35).

However, aside from these direct socio-economic effects on workers, their bargaining position was also affected by the memoranda (Boukalas/Müller 2015: 394 f.). Not only do arbitration decisions now have to comply with a rule that includes ‘competitiveness’ (ibid.: 395), but also newly introduced and rather unregulated ‘Associations of Employees’ (AoE) are allowed to bargain collectively with the effect that 65% of such agreements end up at the national minimum wage level. Additionally, firm-level agreements were introduced (ibid.) which only permit members of employer unions to participate in national collective agreements, meaning that the minimum wage influences the general wage even more strongly. More generally, collective bargaining was heavily decentralized (Theodoropoulou 2016: 40). Through these measures, the Greek collective bargaining system was not only dismantled, but brought close to collapse (Koukiadaki/Távora/Martínez Lucio 2016: 120 ff.). They not only diminished collective bargaining rights, but through increasing inequalities throughout the labor market (along the lines of age, gender, contract type) also divided the workforce (ibid.: 123). All in all, Boukalas and Müller (ibid.) argue that this

“labour reform means a steep rise of individual contracts, marginalisation of collective bargaining at every level, fixing arbitration against the workers, decline of legal protections and a rise of precarious, flexible and unregulated forms of employment”.

These labor market policies have also had detrimental effects outside the direct the labor market. For example, a large number of people in Greece have lost access to health services: 2.5 million alone are without health insurance because it is normally coupled with employment status, and many others have no access due to a decline in wages (cf. Angelaki 2016: 270 ff.; Adam/Papatheodorou 2016: 287). This problem has intensified as the demand for informal payments for health services has further increased in the wake of the economic crisis (cf. Souliotis 2015: 159). These developments together have led to an overall deterioration of public health (Adam/Papatheodorou 2016: 285). Luckily, volunteers have founded social clinics and medical centers, *“addressing the primary health needs of the excluded population”* (ibid.: 287).

However, public service has also been affected by the memoranda directly. Overall, there has been a retrenchment of the public sector, especially in reducing public jobs

(Fouskas/Dimoulas 2013: 183) and public provisions (Angelaki 2016: 262). At the core of this development were “*extensive and radical*” (ibid.) pension and health reforms, which consisted of reducing the number of public hospitals from 137 to 83 while also cutting the total number of beds from 36,000 to 32,000 (ibid.: 270). While this of course has also entailed a massive dismissal of staff, the fiscal austerity imposed on Greece has furthermore brought about wage cuts in the public sector for those remaining in employment (Theodoropoulou 2016: 41). Regarding the pension system, the memoranda prescribed harsh cuts in benefits, diminishing these by “*40 to 50 per cent [...] for certain income brackets*” (Angelaki 2016: 272). And public education services have been hit severely as well (Fouskas/Dimoulas 2013: 183).

As lay-offs in public services have left a “*hole [...] within the public sector*” (Boukalas/Müller 2015: 396), unemployed people have been inserted into public sector jobs through another product of the memoranda, the ‘Public Benefit Program’ (PBP). This program was introduced in 2011 (by a ministerial decision) and aims at ‘employing’ up to 400,000 ‘beneficiaries’ with 5-month contracts in the public sector or nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) without recognizing them as workers and therefore depriving them of workers’ rights (ibid.). Their benefits amounted to 625 euro in the beginning, but were cut to 490 in 2014. However, if a PBP or apprenticeship offer is declined, the ‘beneficiary’ is prohibited from receiving the minimum monthly income of 200 euro which another government program is actually supposed to offer to “*those in extreme need*” (ibid.: 397). This is why Boukalas and Müller (2015: 394, 396) speak of the introduction of a workfare program⁷⁷ in Greece.

This section, so far, has especially stressed the worsening conditions of the working class, the “*extraordinary policy measures*” (Fouskas/Dimoulas 2013: 183) such as cuts in wages and pensions and the reduction of social and welfare spending, struck the middle class hard as well (Lapavitsas 2012: 181; cf. Verney 2014: 27). This is visible, for instance, in the increase in overall poverty, indicating “*the unequal distribution of the crisis and austerity measures burden affecting mostly low and middle income strata*” (Adam/Papatheodorou 2016: 295). Interestingly, this even found expression in a general decline of ‘happiness’ in Greece, the sharpest decline in the world from 2005 to 2015 (Helliwell/Huang/Wang 2016: 28).

⁷⁷ The term ‘workfare’ refers to “*a forceful introduction of unemployed people into the labour market, as their entitlement to unemployment benefits becomes conditional on their acceptance of work placements*” (Boukalas/Müller 2015: 396).

All these developments together have undermined the public confidence in the political system dramatically since 2010 (cf. Verney 2014). Admittedly, there was already “*a deep and long-term loss of trust in political institutions*” (ibid.: 33). However, it was not until the outbreak of the so called ‘Greek sovereign debt crisis’ and the implementation of the memoranda that these effects became deeper, universalized and structurally inscribed (ibid.: 29 f., 33). the first memorandum seems to have had a tremendous effect, as already in 2010 “[*a*] *clear majority of the population was [...] in favour of [anti-austerity] protest*” (Rüdig/Karyotis 2014: 500). This might be the reason for the high number of participants in mass protest, which clearly exceeded electoral support for (radical) left parties, at least before SYRIZA’s rise (ibid.: 492).⁷⁸

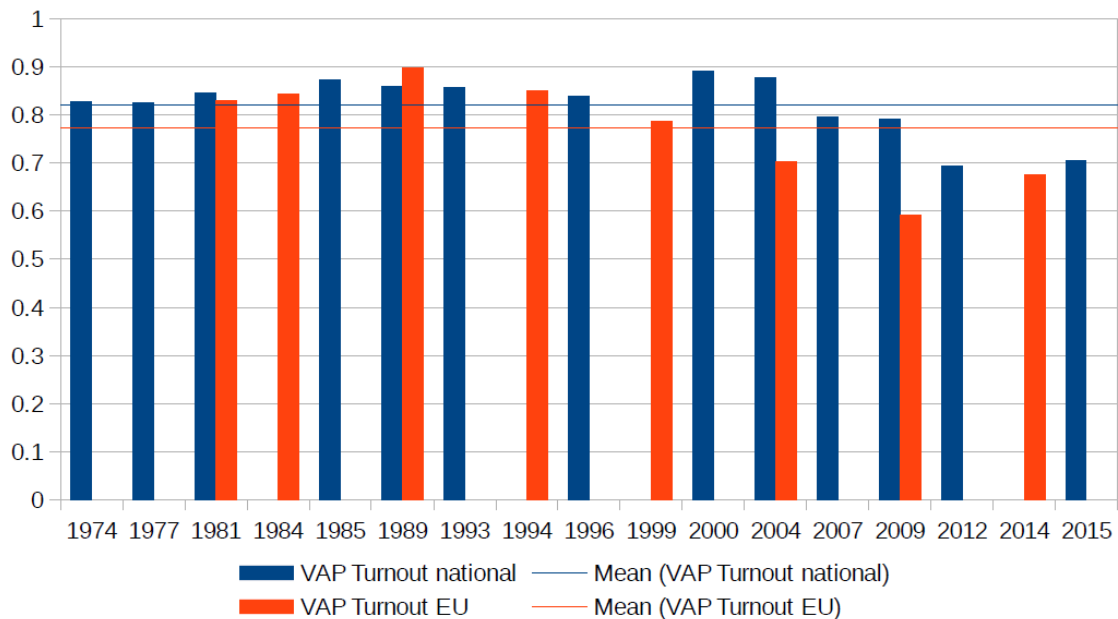
Although the political system in Greece is still (at least formally) a representative democracy (Boukalas/Müller 2015: 399), “*new governments have not meant new policy*” (Verney 2014: 33; cf. Auernheimer 2012: 19) in the era of the memoranda.⁷⁹ This is probably an important factor regarding the huge drop in voter turnout in the 2012 and 2015 elections in relation to earlier elections. While the corresponding numbers have always been volatile, they reached a historic low in 2012, the lowest ever since the end of the dictatorship in 1974. in 2015 they remained almost 10 percent below the overall mean value of 80 percent (see illustration 1).

Accordingly, not only has the output of the political system been problematic, but also the input-side has been widely criticized (as portrayed above), especially from 2010 until the election of *SYRIZA* in January 2015. This is connected above all with Giorgos Papandreou’s (PASOK) resignation in 2011 and the formation of the subsequent government (Auernheimer 2012: 17, 19). The first instance came about when Papandreou suggested holding a referendum on the memorandum. Because it had already been agreed upon by EU leaders, he faced a lot of pressure which culminated in his eventual resignation (cf. Auernheimer 2012: 17; Angelaki 2016: 269). a government of national unity was then installed under the former ECB Vice-President Lukas Papademos (November 2011 to May 2012). It consisted of PASOK, Nea Dimokratia and LAOS. The

⁷⁸ While many such protests and ‘new social movements’ in general have often been regarded as predominantly driven by “*an educational elite*” (Rüdig/Karyotis 2014: 507), this is not the case with the Greek protests in 2010, where people of different education and ages took part (ibid.: 508). This supports the thesis of the ‘class character’ of the austerity measures even further, as obviously there was a ‘special incentive’ in Greece in 2010 for ‘regular’ people to participate in anti-austerity protests. This ‘special incentive’ seems to have been ongoing economic deprivation (cf. ibid.: 507) which started with the economic recession but then was prolonged by the memoranda.

⁷⁹ According to Gustav Auernheimer (2012: 19), the representatives of all parties had to sign a statement saying that the memoranda would be further implemented even in case of a change in government.

latter is the Popular Orthodox Rally, which withdrew quickly (Angelaki 2016: 269; Fouskas 2015). Critics characterized this government as an “*expertocracy*” (Auernheimer 2012: 17, transl. JE), a “*technocratic cabinet*” (Fouskas 2015) and even “*a puppet in the hands of financial oligarchy manipulated by exogenous class agencies at will*” (Fouskas/Dimoulas 2013: 184).



Data: IDEA (2016); illustration JE.

Figure 1: Voting age population (VAP) turnout in Greece in national and EU parliamentary elections since 1974 in per cent

However, even this government could not prevent the PASOK and ND dominated “*post-1974 bipartisan regime*” (Fouskas/Dimoulas *ibid.*) from deteriorating and eventually falling (*ibid.*: 139; cf. Lamant 2016: 5). The parties lost too much of their popular support basis, (Fouskas/Dimoulas 2013: 168) especially vis-à-vis SYRIZA. Not only among SYRIZA supporters, but also among leftist forces throughout Europe, there was hope that SYRIZA would break with the memoranda (cf. Azzellini 2015: 639). Correspondingly, voter turnout was better in 2015 than it was in 2012 (see above). More specifically, many Greek voters hoped for an end to the implementation of austerity measures. This is indicated by the demographics of people who voted for SYRIZA in the 2015 parliamentary elections, who are above all from vulnerable parts of society. The majority of SYRIZA support came from almost 40 percent unemployed, about 44 percent housewives, and approximately 38 percent students (Biver 2015: 56). Among entrepreneurs, in contrast, the turnout was only about 17 percent (*ibid.*). Accordingly, the rise of SYRIZA can be seen as reflecting a

“*pauperisation of the working people*” (Douzinas 2016: 3), which SYRIZA used in presenting itself as “*a party committed to reversing these [austerity] policies*” (ibid.; cf. Kritidis 2016).

However, even regarding SYRIZA, one might now say that “[*t*]he Greek power structure has hardly taken notice of the SYRIZA government” (Douzinas 2016: 1). Or, more precisely: SYRIZA has taken over the formal power (i.e. the government) without actually gaining real power, and furthermore has not yet been able to influence the materiality of the state enough to live up to its promises (cf. Konecny 2015: 331, 333). Public officials and civil servants tended to not cooperate with SYRIZA’s ministers. “*They [i.e. SYRIZA] were denied files and data necessary for the development of policy and they had policies that were frustrated by officials unwilling to implement them*” (Douzinas 2016: 1). This inability or impossibility to actually fulfill its program was a problem for SYRIZA from the very beginning, but created a huge dilemma in August 2015, when prime minister Alexis Tsipras decided to hold a referendum on the question of whether further austerity measures should be implemented. The outcome of the referendum was a clear ‘no’ with 61.31 percent. according to Boukalas and Müller (2015: 390), this “*was a gesture of class resistance*” as voting behavior correlates with income level. However, it actually does not represent a victory for the working class, since eventually SYRIZA signed a third memorandum⁸⁰ which includes the obligation of the Greek government to submit every proposition for a new law to the troika (plus a representative of the European Stability Mechanism, ESM). This clearly shows that the technocratic character that SYRIZA obviously tried to break with has now been established on a higher level (Kritidis 2016; cf. Azzellini 2015: 639).

This lack of representation of the majority of Greek interests by the policies implemented since 2010 has not been balanced by other political organizations such as the trade unions. At first glance, however, the Greek unions seem to be rather strong. There has been a steep rise in general strikes in Greece from only one per year (2007-2009) to seven in each year, 2010 and 2011 (Rüdiger/Karyotis 2014: 492). And between 2010 and May 2014 there were 19 general strikes in total (Nowak/Gallas 2014: 308). This compares favorably, especially against the background of the general plunge in strikes throughout Europe (ibid.). However, one has to keep in mind that these strikes were political strikes, representing union exclusion from the political exchange process as well as the poor results this process

⁸⁰ SYRIZA was forced to disregard the outcome of the referendum because the ECB reacted to it by limiting the refinancialization of Greek bonds, thereby threatening the Greek banking system with complete breakdown (cf. Kritidis 2016; Fouskas 2015).

brought about for the working class (cf. *ibid.*: 309). This means that despite mass mobilizations, they have achieved less than they did in earlier years, such as completely blocking reforms (Angelaki 2016: 262, 273). Boukalas and Müller (2015: 390 f.) also observe that Greek society has tried every kind of resistance to the implementation of the memoranda, but in vain.

Accordingly, not only are the memoranda characterized by an anti-labor orientation, but also left forces, even when in (formally) strong positions, were not able to fend off this massive attack by capital (cf. Boukalas/Müller 2015: 391, 398).

“Apparently, deeper structural forces and constraints are in operation restricting radical political action from positions of governmental power”
(Fouskas 2015).

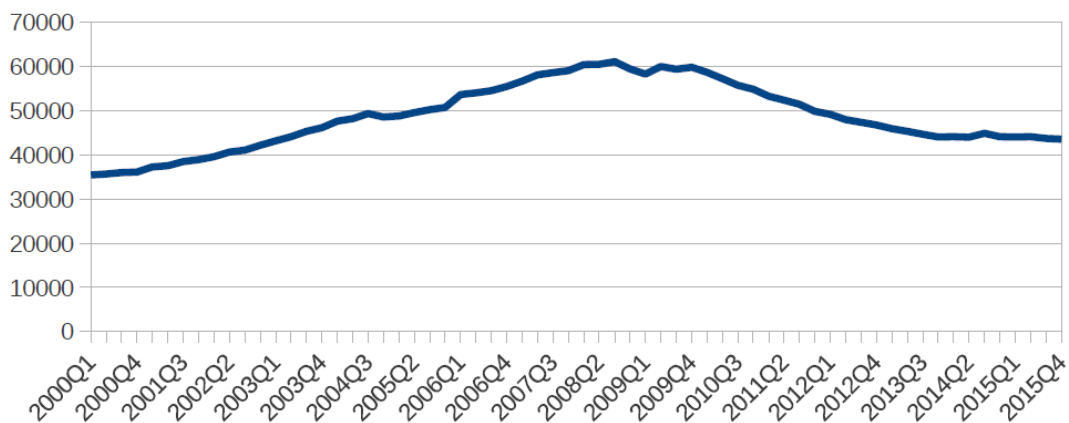
As a consequence of this lack of representation, many people have turned away from state institutions to civil society organizations such as community clinics, soup kitchens and many other forms of autonomous social self-help (Berthe 2016: 1, 15; Fouskas/Dimoulas 2013: 183; cf. Azzellini 2015: 641, 647). Furthermore, barter as a form of trade has reemerged (Fouskas/Dimoulas 2013: 170, 183) and the (actually prohibited) logging of trees as a source of energy has been reintroduced as well (Makris 2011). Due to these developments, not only has emigration from Greece increased since 2010 (Eurostat 2015), but also migrants within Greece like Albanians have started moving back to their home countries (Fouskas/Dimoulas 2013: 183).

But what about the dominant classes, especially the Greek power bloc? How has it been affected by the memoranda? To answer this question, firstly the development since the fall of the military dictatorship will briefly be summarized. After the comprador bourgeoisie had to share its power with the domestic bourgeoisie (as a consequence of the conjunctures described above), it was strengthened again from the 1990s onwards through the policies of neoliberalism and financialization which, entailed certain tax privileges (Fouskas/Dimoulas 2013: 46). While the Greek comprador bourgeoisie was still rather oriented to commodities in the 1980s, it started to re-orientate towards the financial sector, as this sector was deregulated from the early 1990s onwards (*ibid.*: 144; cf. Kouvelakis 2011: 21). Furthermore, it also began to serve as a staging post for European and American capital “*to penetrate the Balkans and the Near East*” (Fouskas/Dimoulas 2013: 161). This brought about an increasing financialization which “*shattered the country’s already weak productive-material base, including its small commodity base of production*” (*ibid.*: 167).

These processes taken together seem to have entailed a decline of the domestic bourgeoisie vis-à-vis the comprador bourgeoisie (cf. Bouskas/Müller 2015: 394).

Since 2010, this decline has further been exacerbated by the memoranda, as they rather served the interests of the Greek comprador bourgeoisie than those of the domestic bourgeoisie. Above all, however, they benefited ‘foreign’ and especially “*large, export-oriented, industrial capital*” (Boukalas/Müller 2015: 391, 393). This orientation of the memoranda is visible in measures such as the strategy of internal devaluation which directly aims at increasing the competitiveness of the Greek economy in order to increase foreign demand for Greek products (Theodoropoulou 2016: 42). Furthermore, the structural adjustment programs were supposed to attract a greater inflow of FDI (cf. Boukalas/Müller 2015: 393).

Looking at the actual economic development of Greece, however, the massive destruction of capital since 2008 stands out. While the economic crisis alone had already destroyed lots of Greek capital up to 2010, the memoranda have exacerbated and prolonged the recession since then (Theodoropoulou 2016: 53 f.). Between 2008 and 2015, the Greek economy lost more than 25 percent of its GDP (on average about 3.8 percent annually), and between 2010 and 2015 it lost more than 20 percent (on average approximately 4.1 percent per year) (Eurostat 2016b, calc. JE, see figure 2).

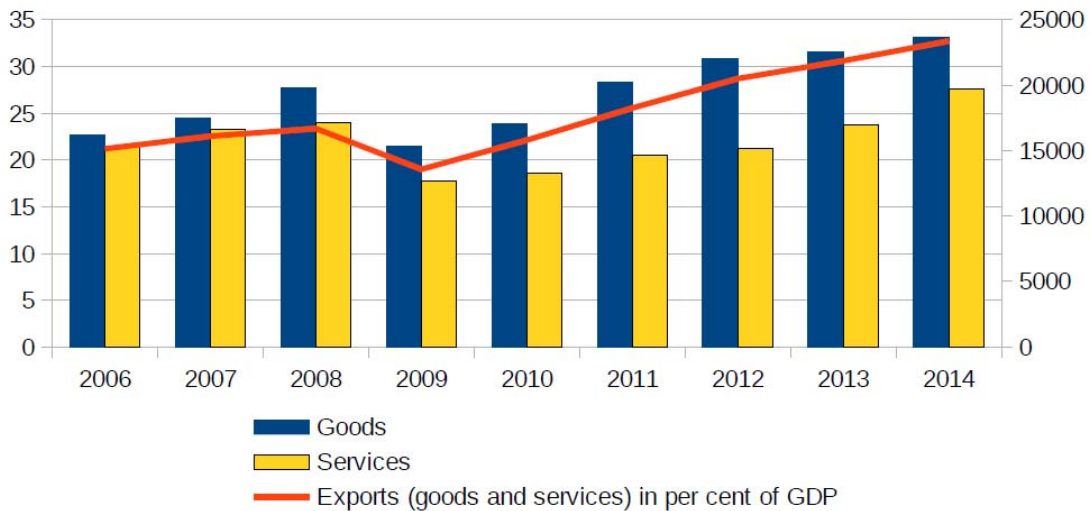


Data: Eurostat (2016b); illustration JE.

Figure 2: Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Greece in million Euros (market prices)

However, the recession (and the memoranda) did not affect every sector equally. While “*perverse effects for domestic demand*” (Theodoropoulou 2016: 53) have been produced by the measures aiming at internal devaluation, the export of goods and services seems to have

profited from these as they increased between 2010 and 2014 in relative (relative to GDP by about 48 percent) but also absolute terms (by approximately 38 percent regarding goods, and by around about 49 percent in services) (cf. WB 2016; BoG 2016a, 2016b, calc. JE, see figure 3).

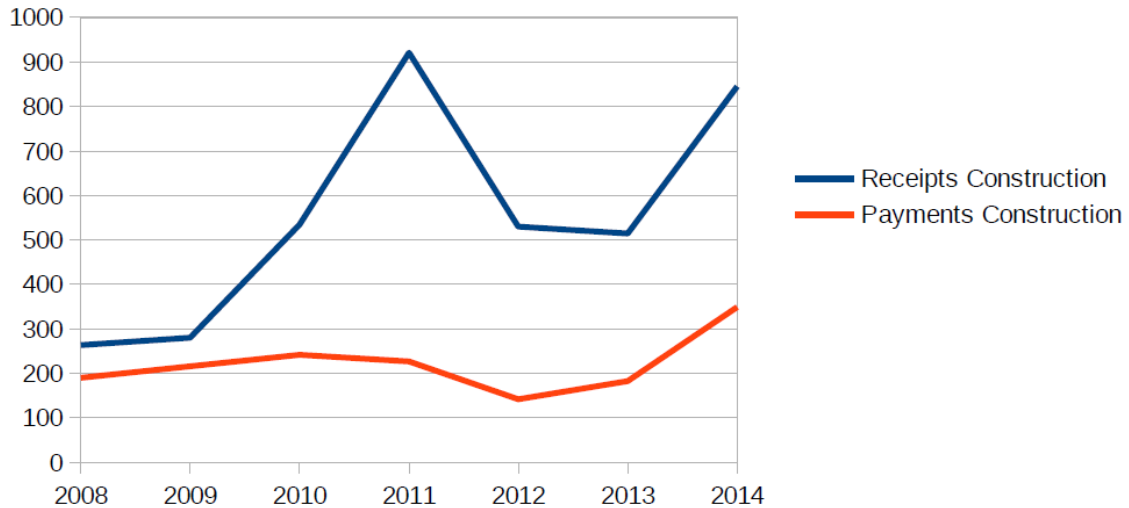


Data: BoG (2016a, 2016b) and WB (2016); illustration JE.

Figure 3: Greek exports of goods and services (in per cent left axis; in million euros right axis)

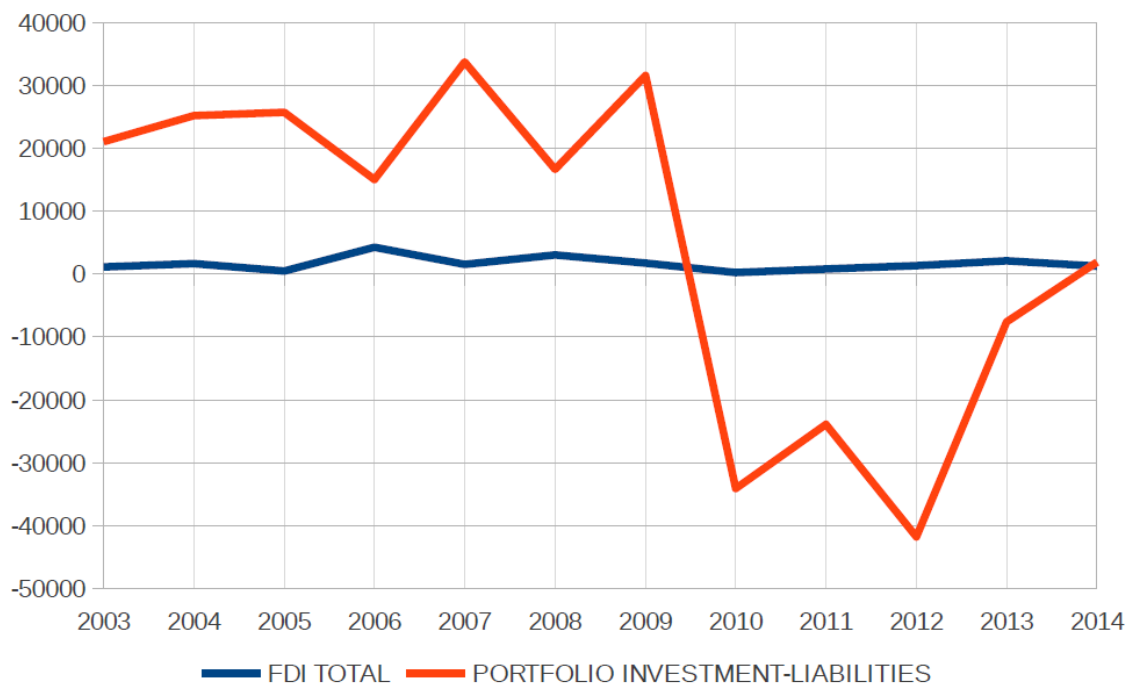
Interestingly, the construction sector that has actually been seen as a capital fraction rather oriented to the internal market (cf. Konecny 2015: 332), has clearly been internationalized since 2009 as its ‘foreign’ receipts and payments to ‘foreign’ construction enterprises have also increased (by three and 1.4, respectively) (BoG 2016b, calc. JE, see illustration 4). Accordingly, capital directed towards the domestic market has been politically and economically weakened, especially in relation to outward oriented capital.

Regarding the inflow of FDI, i.e. the growth of ‘foreign’ control or influence on the management of Greek enterprises, the data is more difficult to interpret. This is because, contrary to what was expected by Boukalas and Müller (2015: 393), FDI inflow has not increased when comparing pre- to post-crisis peaks.



Data: BoG (2016b); illustration JE.

Figure 4: Payments and receipts in the field of construction in million euros

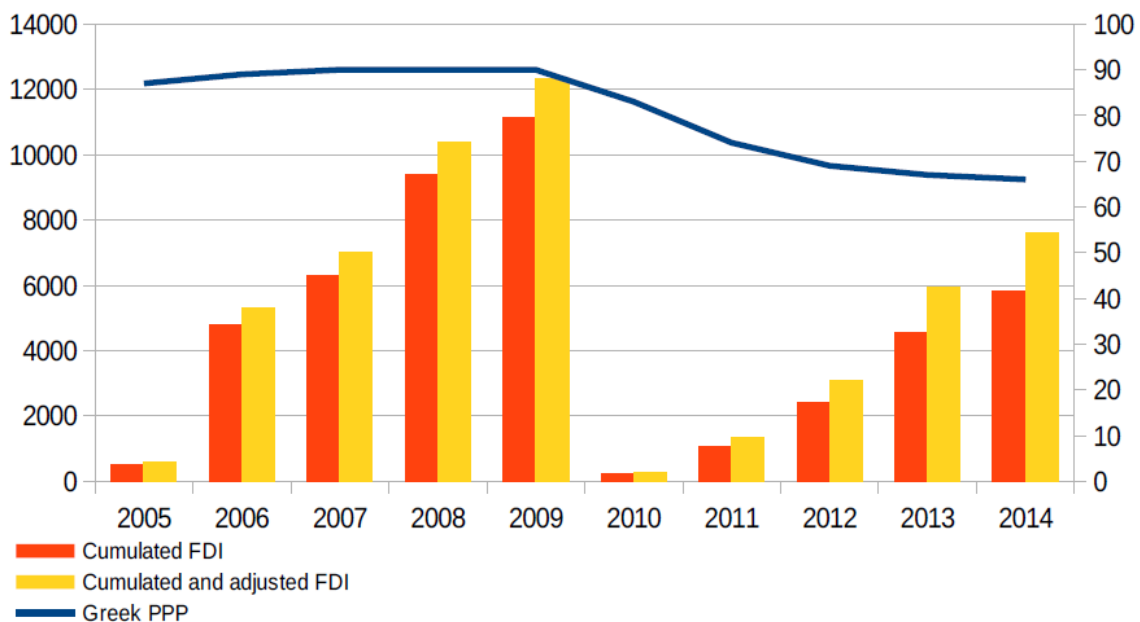


Data: BoG (2016c, 2016d); illustration JE.

Figure 5: FDI vs. portfolio investment (in mil. €)

In 2013 FDI amounted to 2122.1 million euro, while in 2008 it had reached 3071.1 million euro (BoG 2016c, see figure 5). This picture is strengthened by comparing the cumulative levels of FDI before and after the crisis (for the years 2005-2009 vs. 2010-2014) (BoG 2016c, see figure 6). This also does not change when adjusting the data for the price level decline in Greece in that period against the price level in the OECD, for instance (BoG 2016c; OECD data, calc. JE, see figure 6). However, taking into account the effect of the

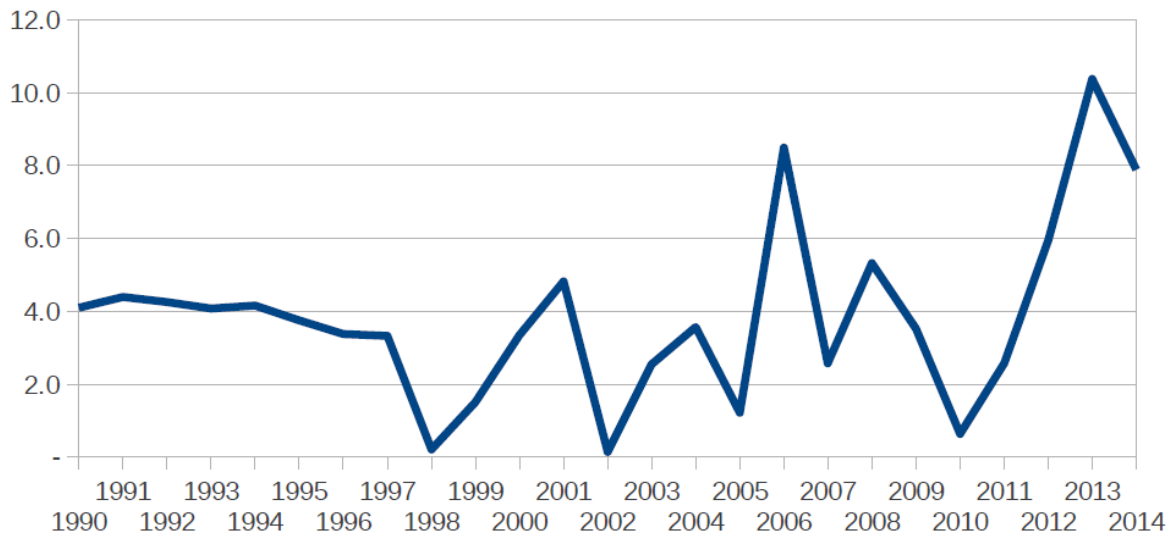
recession and comparing 2014 to 2010, there is an increase of 1009.9 million euro, which is the highest increase in a five-year time frame within the last ten years (BoG 2016c, own calculations). What is furthermore important is the relation between FDI and portfolio investments. While the former increases ‘foreign’ control, the latter increases ‘foreign’ debt (Lapavitsas et al. 2012: 86). And while until 2009 foreign portfolio investment (FPI) exceeded FDI by between 10,000 and 30,000 million euro, this picture turned around in 2010 (although FPI exceeded FDI again in 2014, but only by less than 700 million euro) (BoG 2016c, 2016d, own calculations, see figure 5).



Data: BoG (2016c), OECD (2016); illustration JE.

Figure 6: Cumulated FDI (2005-09 vs. 2010-14, in mil. euro, left axis) adjusted for Greek purchasing power parity (PPP; constant 2010; in per cent of OECD average, right axis)

Accordingly, the ‘control’ aspect seems to have become more important, at least relative to other forms of investment. More importantly, however, is the relation of FDI to the gross capital formation in Greece. While the latter in relation to the GDP decreased by 6 percentage points between 2009 and 2014 (WB 2016, calc. JE), the share of FDI inflow of the gross capital formation in Greece increased by 4.4 percentage points (UNCTAD 2016, calc. JE, see figure 7). Accordingly, the capital formation and accumulation seems to have become increasingly controlled by and dependent on ‘foreign’ capital.



Data: UNCTAD (2016); illustration JE.

Figure 7: FDI as percentage of gross capital formation in Greece

This finding fits in well with a part of the memoranda which has not yet been discussed here: privatization. The first of the three memoranda included the privatization of several public assets worth 50 billion euro (Fouskas 2015). However, this goal has still not been reached. Not only due to the struggles against the implementation of these, but also because the prices of the assets have fallen dramatically since the breakout of the crisis, making it very difficult to reach such a sum. But still, the privatizations concluded so far have brought about not only huge losses of state property (as selling these assets at the time of crisis involved underselling) and future income but also a great deal of control over wages and labor standards (Trumbo Vila/Peters 2016: 5, 14).

Additionally, the privatization processes in Greece have already led to allegations of corruption against three members of the organization in charge (ibid.: 4). Overall, this form of privatization is connected to “*wage losses, redundancies and erosion of labour rights*” (ibid.: 5), and thereby not only hits the working class, but enables huge profits for privatizing companies at the same time. A good example for this is the privatization of 14 regional airports, formerly held and run by the Greek state. Actually, the privatization agency was entrusted with the sale of operating licenses for 37 regional airports. However, it only sold the 14 most profitable ones (ibid.: 16), for which the share of international travelers amounts to 77 percent (Fraport 2015). Most interesting, however, is that it was sold to the German-Greek Fraport-Copelouzou Consortium, in which the German operator of Frankfurt Airport holds the majority share (Fraport 2015). Accordingly, not only does

the control lie within ‘foreign’ hands now, but also the majority of the profits will be extracted from Greece.

All in all, this section has shown that the memoranda benefits the comprador bourgeoisie at the cost of the domestic bourgeoisie⁸¹, while the capitalist class in total has gained from lower wages as these correspond to higher profitability (Heine/Sablowski 2015: 569). However, at the same time, the Greek economy overall has been weakened and its dependency on ‘foreign’ capital has clearly become even stronger (cf. Bouskas/Müller 2015: 394). Accordingly, to say that the Greek comprador bourgeoisie benefitted from the memoranda is only valid in relation to the domestic bourgeoisie. In total, however, and especially vis-à-vis ‘foreign’ capital, it has been weakened as well. This is no wonder, especially taking into account that:

“the main aim of the first loan package granted in mid-2010, was intended to save the eurozone and European and American banks from collapse and to preserve the stability of the international financial system” (Karamessini 2015: 95; cf. Lapavitsas et al. 2012: 181; Fouskas/Dimoulas 2013: 172).

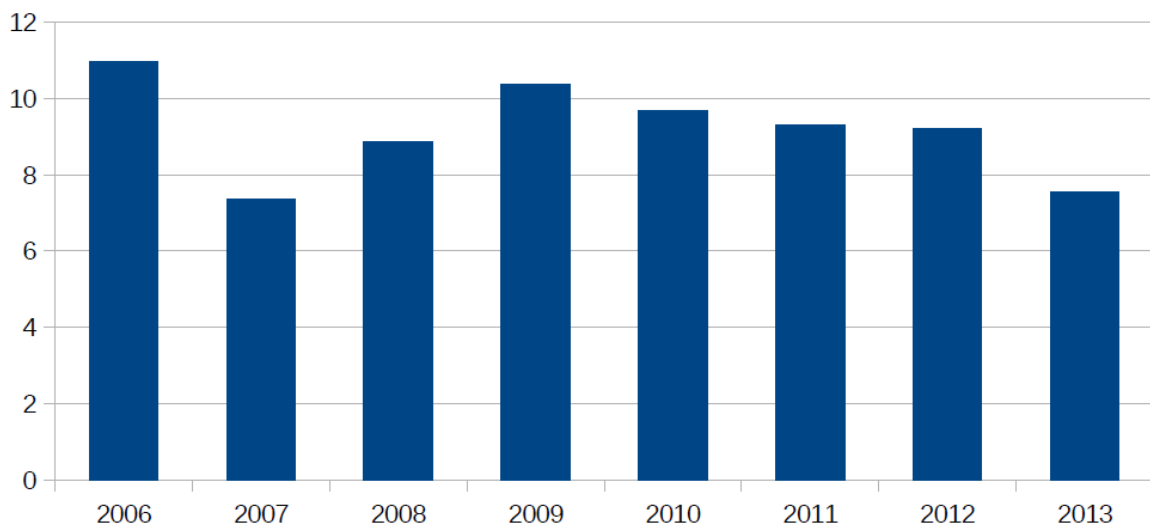
Since the second memorandum especially aimed at transforming Greece into a low-cost, low-value economy (Boukalas/Müller 2015: 391, 393; cf. prior section), different authors have compared the Greek economy since 2010 to a *“laboratory of neo-liberal policy”* (Boukalas/Müller 2015: 391; Mylonas 2012: 647), weakening the overall position of Greece within the imperialist chain.

Before the crisis, inequality between the European core countries and the European periphery had dwindled (Heine/Sablowski 2015: 585), at least in economic terms as there was a *“real economic convergence [of Greece] with more developed EU economies”* (Karamessini 2015: 5). However, within Europe, and also within the southern European periphery of Europe, Greece seems to have been the weakest link (Kouvelakis 2011: 19; Fouskas/Dimoulas 2013: 185). And since the crisis broke out, the inequality between the European countries has clearly begun to grow again, fueled particularly by neoliberal crisis management (Heine/Sablowski 2015: 585), thereby *“splitting effectively the North from the Mediterranean South”* (Fouskas/Dimoulas 2013: 183). Accordingly, this crisis has destroyed many gains of the past decades (ibid.) and correspondingly worsened Greece’s economic but also political position. Thinking of the smear campaign by the German media

⁸¹ Furthermore, since the petty bourgeoisie (i.e. lower middle class) has been weakened as well, the domestic bourgeoisie has lost a former ally against the comprador bourgeoisie (cf. CD: 71 f.).

and politicians, one might even say that Greece's cultural standing has suffered massively as well (cf. Mylonas 2012; Hadjimichalis 2012: 267 f.).

And also in this case, the memoranda seem to be the main driver of the transformation. This can be seen in the development of Greek public debt. While Greek debt-to-GDP stood at 146 percent in 2010 (Boukalas/Müller 2015: 391), it is forecasted by the EC (2016) to amount to 185 percent in 2016, although “*fiscal sustainability*” (EC 2010) was actually the main official goal of the memoranda. This has brought Greece into a situation in which its “*economy has become entirely dependent on the commitment of its government to give precedence to its creditors' expectations*” (Lemoine 2016: 2). the problem of the Greek economy might therefore not only be that it is forced onto a more export-oriented accumulation path, but rather that it even seems to be relegated to a lower position within the international division of labor. while exports have been growing since 2010 (see above), the share of high-technology exports (of total manufactured exports) has decreased from an already low level (Heine/Sablowski 2015: 570) by almost three percentage points between 2009 and 2013, from 10.4 to 7.5 percent (WB 2016, calc. JE, see figure 8).



Data: WB (2016); illustration JE.

Figure 8: High-technology exports (in per cent of manufactured exports)

And the crisis in the Greek education system (Michalopoulos 2016) as well as the emigration of a large number of highly educated Greeks (Angelos 2015)⁸² seems to further support this trend. Accordingly, sustainable GDP growth (and capital accumulation) is

⁸² “An estimated 135,000 Greeks with post-secondary degrees have left [Greece] since 2010 and are working abroad” (Angelos 2015).

becoming even more improbable in Greece, as its dependence on relatively labor intensive (and low paid) work is growing (Heine/Sablowski 2015: 581). In this regard, it appears that the “*strategy of the German government, to put the crisis countries in a lower position within the international division of labor*” (ibid., transl. JE; cf. Boukalas/Müller 2015: 393) has been successful, at least in the case of Greece so far. This interpretation is strengthened further by the numbers on the value added to the GDP by the agricultural sector. While the average value added by agricultural sectors in high income economies increased by only 0.2 percentage points between 2009 and 2013 (to the amount of 1.6 percent of GDP), it grew by 0.6 percentage points within the Greek economy within the same time period (to 3.7 percent) (WB 2016, calc. JE; cf. Fouskas/Dimoulas 2013: 168). high income countries are therefore marked by the lowest, and low income countries by the highest relevance of the agricultural sector regarding total GDP (ibid.). Accordingly, it might be appropriate to speak of a “*new version of the ‘old’ division of labour between the central-north core (mainly German regions, Austria and Netherlands) and the southern periphery*” (Hadjimichalis 2011: 260).

Before and at the beginning of the crisis, Greece was not alone in its stance regarding the rejection of the “*predominant market-liberal, monetarist orthodoxy*” (Bieling 2011: 175). However, it appears to have become more and more isolated as the crisis went on. Originally, there were roughly two groups of countries within the EU: On the one side the ‘Nordic’ countries (such as Germany, the Netherlands, and Austria) which favored a very strict fiscal concept of the European Monetary Union, and on the other side the ‘Southern’ countries (such as France, Spain, and Italy) which favored more political leeway (ibid.) and shared the common interest of socializing resources within the EU to overcome the crisis (ibid.: 185). Since 2009, however, the ‘Southern’ group seems to have lost its common ground, especially when Spain began (due to internal political reasons) to shift discursively into the ‘Northern’ camp by supporting the idea of austerity even more radically than Germany (Konecny 2015: 327). This has obviously weakened the political position of Greece.

According to this analysis, the development of the Greek state since 2010 can be characterized by four aspects. Firstly, the working class has been massively attacked in terms of their wages, but also their bargaining position. Secondly, the resistance of the working class and its political allies has not been able to prevent these or further measures which entailed a shrinking of the state in all parts of society. Thirdly, regarding the capitalist class, the memoranda strengthened the comprador vis-à-vis the domestic

fraction.⁸³ However, fourthly, while the capitalist class is now in a very strong position in relation to the working class, the general decline of the whole Greek economy seems to imply a deterioration of its position within the imperialist chain, increasing the dependency of the Greek bourgeoisie on ‘foreign’ capital. Furthermore, this trend has been accompanied by a weakening of the Greek political position.

Regarding the domestic political situation, the memoranda have forced the Greek government into a position in which it is no longer able to represent the interests of the working class. Accordingly, the memoranda do not represent a possible consensus, but rather the opposite. They appear to have destroyed and/or to prohibit the power bloc’s hegemony over the dominated groups.⁸⁴ Within the power bloc, the memoranda have further strengthened the position of the comprador bourgeoisie, because they rather represent its interests than the interests of the domestic bourgeoisie. Furthermore, wages have decreased to a level at which remarkable parts of the Greek population are no longer able to satisfy even their basic needs, or in Marxist terms, to reproduce their labor power. This cannot be in the interests of the domestic bourgeoisie, since it decreases domestic demand and hinders the further development of the country (and thereby possibilities of ‘internal’ capital accumulation). Therefore, within Greece, a monopolization of power in favor of the comprador bourgeoisie seems to have taken place. This, in turn, has clearly weakened the Greek state’s autonomy vis-à-vis comprador interests.

However, speaking of the Greek state clearly does not refer to the present Greek government as it openly, if only discursively, rejects most of the comprador interests. But at the same time, this government implements policies benefiting the interests of comprador capital which entails a paradox: *“The first and so far only supposed anti-austerity government implements austerity”* (Azzellini 2015: 646, transl. JE). This clearly shows that SYRIZA has only taken power formally, while the bourgeoisie has been able to shift the

⁸³ Alexander Gallas and Simone Claar further pointed to the importance of the ideological level regarding the transformation of the Greek state, which unfortunately can only be dealt with in brief. At least the following two aspects are relevant from a Poulantzasian perspective: firstly, the memoranda perfectly support Poulantzas’s observation *“that power is ideologically legitimized in the modality of scientific technique”* (SPS: 55) under capitalism, since the memoranda are always presented as outcomes of pure economic reasoning. And secondly, the implementation of the memoranda and their ‘class character’ clearly points to the *“organic relations between [...] capitalist knowledge and capitalist power”* (ibid., original emph.).

⁸⁴ The term ‘dominated groups’ here also refers to forms of domination other than class-domination. In this regard it is important to note, for instance, that neither the crisis nor the memoranda are ‘gender-neutral’, but rather seem to have increased gender inequality (Woestman 2010: 4). While the economic crisis destroyed more predominantly male jobs (e.g. in the construction sector) (cf. Theodoropoulou 2016: 34), the cuts in the public sector affected more women, because health and education are predominantly female fields of work. However, women have additionally started to work longer in second jobs in order to compensate for the decline in family income, while they also spend more time working in the households than men due to the rather traditional gender roles in Greek society (cf. Theodoropoulou 2016: 34).

center of real power out of SYRIZA's reach. More concretely, the center of real power seems to have been shifted to the European level at which Greece is in a very weak position. Furthermore, this politically weak position at the international level seems to correspond to a deterioration of the position of Greece within the imperialist chain.

Against the background of social catastrophe, social unrest and an increase in emigration, it appears that the Greek state has at least partly lost its power to regulate society. But while it obviously has not been able to secure the capital accumulation as a whole, it maintained and actually even increased the possibility of extracting surplus labor and value through comprador and 'foreign' capital.

Taking all these aspects together, the development of the Greek state since the agreement on the first memorandum can be analyzed as a peripheralization.

10. Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was to develop a framework in order to enable a deeper understanding of the transformations of the Greek state since the beginning of the structural adjustment programs in 2010. In order to evaluate the hypothesis that the Greek state has been going through a process of peripheralization, firstly an adequate conceptualization of the peripheral type of state had to be found. The literature review made clear that despite the existence of a variety of approaches to peripheral statehood, these often lack a genuinely state-theoretical basis and/or are reductionist regarding taking into account either only internal or only external factors. However, the most recent work on this topic (rather implicitly) hint at great potential in Nicos Poulantzas's works to overcome these problems. Therefore, Poulantzas's theory of the state and its internationalization as well as criticisms towards his conceptualizations were presented. Thereby, it became clear that his conception of the state as a material condensation of relations of forces, together with his notion of the imperialist chain, enable a conception of international dependence which avoids the internal-external dichotomy. On this basis plus an evaluation of Poulantzas's (lesser known) book *The Crisis of the Dictatorships*, the peripheral type of state was characterized as an interplay of these factors. While the position within the imperialist chain (based on the global relations of production and the international division of labor) determines the situation of dependence as such, the form of dependence (most importantly the political regime) is the product of the internal class struggle. However, as a consequence of the internationalization of the state, this class struggle itself is affected by the dependent

position as well, through the internal reproduction of the metropolitan form of the CMP. this also includes the interests of the metropolitan dominant class. Within peripheral social formations, these are usually represented by the comprador bourgeoisie, which facilitates the process of the internalization of metropolitan capital relations. The interests between the comprador bourgeoisie and metropolitan capital, while not free of contradictions completely, align in so far as the basis for the internal accumulation of capital is usually rather weak in peripheral countries. However, the comprador bourgeoisie profits from these 'investments' of metropolitan capital (and the corresponding dependent industrialization) only as an intermediary, while the larger share of the surplus value moves back into the metropolises. Furthermore, this situation entails a double exploitation of the working class by both the dominant class on its own, but also the dominant classes in the metropolitan countries. Additionally, integration into the capitalist economy is often very selective in the peripheral countries entailing the production of a reserve army as well as the continuance of pre-capitalist modes of production. Therefore, the peripheral type of state is marked by rather weak autonomy vis-à-vis the comprador bourgeoisie. And since the comprador bourgeoisie is a key actor regarding the internalization of the metropolitan CMP, the peripheral state's autonomy in relation to the metropolitan interests is rather weak as well. While these aspects certainly make the existence of exceptional regimes more probable in theory, since hegemony is even more improbable under these circumstances than in the metropolises, their emergence eventually always depends on the internal balance of forces and class struggle.

However, along with the transformation of imperialism, another bourgeoisie emerged within the metropolises and the semi-periphery which Poulantzas calls the domestic bourgeoisie. Its existence is of great importance because its position (having its own material and politico-ideological basis) entails relative autonomy vis-à-vis imperial interests. In Greece, the domestic bourgeoisie was able, on this basis and in the conjuncture of the global economic and imperialist crisis, to challenge the hegemony of the Greek comprador bourgeoisie in the early 1970s, and accordingly the hegemonic form of dependence of Greece on the metropolises (mainly the US). When the induced imperialist contradictions (the emerging new cleavage between the US and the EEC) continued to be intensified in Greece and the domestic bourgeoisie was able to build an alliance with the popular masses, the military dictatorship broke apart.

However, only two decades later (in the mid-1990s) the form of dependence already seemed to be favoring comprador interests again. In the wake of the financial crisis, the

memoranda introduced since 2010 then strongly supported this trend and forced a more direct form of the internalization of the metropolitan CMP onto Greece, including the corresponding contradictions. This also included a massive attack on the working class as well as a weakening of the domestic bourgeoisie, which led to a monopolization of power within the power bloc in favor of the comprador bourgeoisie. More importantly, however, this not only weakened the state's relative autonomy vis-à-vis the Greek comprador interests, but particularly its relative autonomy in relation to the interests of imperialist capital. Therefore, the transformation of the Greek state presented here is a clear case of peripheralization.

But in this regard, the Greek case also involves a special feature (distinguishing it from other semi-peripheral countries), which is its integration into the EU. It appears that the EU institutions enabled a reallocation of real power to the supranational level. This shift is important as it rendered possible the paradox of the anti-austerity party SYRIZA implementing austerity measures, which have further deepened the recession in Greece and transformed its economic structure corresponding to comprador and imperialist interests. Accordingly, one can no longer speak of hegemony in Greece. Rather, the dominance of the austerity orientation is maintained by the threat (of the use) of force (e.g. the threat of the troika to deprive Greece of further financial support).

Many questions could not be addressed fully in this thesis and therefore call for further research. Firstly, the 'other' side of the Greek state's transformation process, i.e. the EU institutions as well as the IMF, should be integrated into the framework developed here. In this regard, one would have to analyze the role of these regarding the emergence and implementation of the memoranda and their relation to the corresponding capital fractions. Secondly, how this process of peripheralization interacts with the process of authoritarian statism in Greece should be investigated. Since both processes have the tendency to undermine democratic institutions and their legitimacy, they might intensify one another. Thirdly, the question remains of whether the Poulantzian framework can be applied to peripheral states as well, since the Greek case does not seem to be representative for many other countries. Here, the (non)existence of the domestic bourgeoisie might be of key importance. Fourthly, this thesis points to the problem that the international cleavages postulated by Poulantzas in the 1970s might look very different today, as one might assume the emergence of another cleavage between northern and southern Europe. And finally, further research should broaden the Poulantzian framework for other social groups in

addition to classes to evaluate in more detail what the peripheralization process entails for these. Feminist critiques of Poulantzas have provided the basis of such a task already.

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