

"Dependent capitalism" in Central and Eastern Europe: Theoretical foundations and diversity of national trajectories

Deadline: 31/10/2017

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The transformation of post-socialist countries and their following integration into the European Union have raised new questions about the nature of the economic models emerging from these major institutional changes in Central and Eastern Europe. Would a new family of capitalism, marked by the legacy of the socialist regime, emerge or would post-socialist economies converge towards models of capitalism identified in the literature? Since the beginning of the nineties, academic works dedicated to emerging capitalisms in the new member states have flourished to address this issue. The paradigm of the "transition to the market economy", once dominant, has been progressively replaced by a multiplicity of theoretical schemes. Among those approaches, the Hall et Soskice (2001) "varieties of capitalism" (VoC) has received particular attention. Various authors have tried to apply the founding models, « liberal market economies » (LMEs) and « coordinated market economies » (CMEs), initially defined to describe Western economies, to post-socialist countries. Following King's proposal (2007), Nölke et Vliegthart (2009) proposed to enlarge the VoC typology with a third model, « dependent market economies » (DMEs), considered as more suited to the economic and institutional specificities of the new EU member states. DMEs are characterized by an alternative type of insertion into the world economy, related to international value chains controlled by Western multinational companies, in contrast to markets and interfirm networks. Foreign direct investments (FDIs) in East European host countries result in a high level of transnationality, a hierarchical dependence from Eastern subsidiaries to their parent companies, and foreign actors influence on the definition of rules in host countries.

Other authors have been more critical vis-à-vis the VoC theoretical framework, i.e. its binary typology and its emphasis on the key role of enterprises as agents of rules transformation (neglecting the role of social and political forces in the process of institutional change). They have proposed a series of alternative works aimed to take better account of the sources of macro-institutional changes and to articulate the economic and political spheres. These works, we can gather under the « diversity of capitalism » approach, have found their origin in Boyer's seminal work, recently renewed by Amable (2003), and have given rise to new developments in the literature on East European capitalisms. Drahokoupil and Myant (2011) consider the sources of economic dependence in CEE countries within their international integration process and specify their growth regimes. Bohle and Greskovits (2012) propose a Polanyan analytical framework, which articulates the political and economic dimensions and questions the role of the state intermediation to counterbalance market-led and external forces dependencies. In line with the dominant modes of coordination, the authors identify three types of postsocialist models (neoliberal, embedded neoliberal, neo-corporatist).

The hypothesis of « dependent capitalism » has undoubtedly gained heuristic relevance and received additional attention for understanding the CEE context in the aftermath of the

2008 crisis. The crisis revealed the multiplicity of powerful transnational channels through which economic and financial imbalances diffused to the region – among them, the dependence chains of East European units vis-à-vis their Western counterparts. Built on more « extraverted » and externally dependent economic models, East European economies have therefore demonstrated a stronger exposure to international markets (exports) as well as a structural dependency to FDIs (reinforced by the subordinate position of East European subsidiaries in the international value chains). Economic dependencies in the less developed economies of the region have been also strongly structured by the remittances flows from migrant workers (sometimes more significant than FDIs) or by monetary transfers shedding from financial assistance programs. Regarding the Visegrad group, and more significantly the Balkan countries, economic dependence has also fueled some forms of ideational, institutional and political dependences, which have clearly appeared in the prescriptive power of the UE, bail-out organizations or foreign investors that have been able to influence domestic public policies and institutional reforms.

The aim of the call for papers is to deepen the concept of dependent capitalism in three complementary directions:

- **Filiation of the concept of « dependent capitalism »**

The first direction would propose to discuss the filiation of the concept of « dependent capitalism » that originated from the 1960s and 1970s marxist theories of dependence. The latter underlined the peripheral insertion of Latin America's countries into an international economy structured around North American hegemony (Frank, 1968 ; Evans, 1979 ; Bresser-Pereira, 2009). Contributions could question the theoretical and analytical continuity and/or disruption between historical approaches and the current revisited approach on dependent capitalism. They could also assess the fecundity - convergence or potential complementarity – of the interactions between both approaches to address the issues of the present day : to what extent the confrontation of historical and contemporary theories of dependent capitalism are useful to apprehend the multiplicity of sources and channels of dependence, the nature of the forces shaping the modalities of insertion of national economies into the current globalization, (re-)organizing hierarchies, distributing hegemonic and peripheral positions, connecting nations and regional spaces?

- **Dependent Capitalism and Régulation theory**

The second direction in research derives from the observation of a theoretical eclecticism around the current notion of dependent capitalism. This statement would call for a positioning analysis of these theoretical and analytical schemes vis-à-vis the regulationist approaches. Attempts to grasp the diversity of institutional forms that structure dependencies, through a series of intermediate categories directly inspired by the Régulation school appear to open most promising avenues of research. Among those categories, classical institutional forms can be investigated: the monetary regime, the mode of insertion into international exchanges, the capital-labor nexus, the competition regime, the role of the State are all likely to act as domestic relays or barriers to the diffusion and deepening of external dependences.

- **Beyond Central Europe: generalizing the concept of dependent capitalism**

Finally, the last direction invites reflection on the fruitfulness of the concept of dependent capitalism to enrich the comparative analysis of capitalisms. Contributors are then invited to enlarge the geographical scope of the comparison among dependent capitalisms, almost exclusively centered on East Central Europe (Visegrad group) until now, to include Baltic and Balkan countries, EU member states or candidate and neighboring countries (Western Balkans). The latter appear even more emblematic of the model of dependent capitalism, with a peripheral and unstable insertion, rather than the semi-peripheral one identified for the Visegrad group (Bohle et Greskovits, 2012), into the European and international economy. As a counterpoint to the analysis of Eastern European trajectories, contributions referring to

Asian, Latin American or North African experiences likely to highlight the diversity of dependent processes and the role of regional dynamics and historical trajectories, will be welcome.

Submissions

Revue de la Régulation seeks to provide a forum for research in the field of regulationist studies and, more broadly, for the full spectrum of institutionalist approaches in economics and beyond. The journal seeks above all to foster a broad discussion that includes other social sciences such as economic sociology, history, political science, management, etc. Indeed, a historicized and socially grounded understanding of political economy appears more necessary than ever for a deeper understanding of the alternatives for economic policies and the strategic evolution of business, as well as their effects at the micro, meso, and macro levels. Sustaining global thinking about the transformation of capitalism, given the scales and diversity of its reconfigurations, means bringing together work from a variety of horizons. The journal welcomes research articles in English or French that focus on descriptions of the structural forms of contemporary capitalisms and on investigation of the new dynamics that are involved, as well as on the theoretical and methodological tools that enable these phenomena to be better understood.

Papers should be submitted by email to regulation@revues.org with “call for papers” specified in the subject heading. Please make sure your article does not exceed 10,000 words (including spaces) and follows the *Revue de la Régulation* instructions to authors presented here : <http://regulation.revues.org/1451>.

All articles will be reviewed anonymously according to the journal’s standard procedure.

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Submission deadline: 31th October 2017

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