

Giovanni Arrighi
Editor

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***SEMIPERIPHERAL
DEVELOPMENT***

***The Politics of
Southern Europe in the
Twentieth Century***

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***EXPLORATIONS IN
THE WORLD-ECONOMY***

Volume 5

SEMIPERIPHERAL DEVELOPMENT

EXPLORATIONS IN THE WORLD-ECONOMY:
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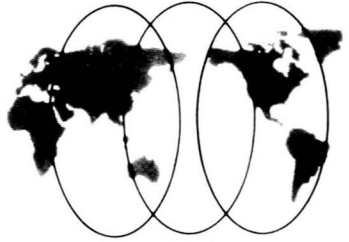
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***The Politics of
Southern Europe
in the
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Giovanni Arrighi

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The Political Economy of Southern Europe,
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Introduction

The research proposal that generated this volume (Arrighi et al., 1981) was premised on the observation that the five Southern European countries included in the project (Portugal, Spain, Italy, Greece, and Turkey) have displayed over the last 60 years broadly similar political-economic tendencies. During some period between the two World Wars each of these countries was characterized by authoritarian rule. Italy and Portugal entered their authoritarian experiences earliest with the Mussolini and Salazar regimes; civil war in Spain and the establishment of the Metaxas dictatorship in Greece coincided; and in Turkey the Kemalist regime abandoned its attempt at playing the democratic game with solidification of one-party rule after 1930.

Parallel to the installation of authoritarian regimes, a rhetoric of national solidarity became prevalent in all five countries. The principal trait of this ideology was a fervent rejection of class divisions and of particularistic interests in favor of an idealized organic solidarity in the service of national power and, sometimes, national aggrandizement. In all of these regimes authoritarian polities attempted with varying degrees of success to establish state-society linkages of a repressive corporatist character. In this attempt Mussolini's state was the most successful, paving the way for the other regimes. It is significant that by 1936 the fascist labor legislation first promulgated in Italy was echoed in Spain, Portugal, Greece, and Turkey.

At the level of economic policy, nationalism and attempts at corporatist institutionalization were matched by measures designed to "strengthen" the national economy. In this sphere, the variety of experiences was greater than in labor legislation. Here too, however, a general tendency towards a substitution of the state for market regulation was observable, as witnessed by a spectrum of mercantilist measures designed either as a move toward greater autarky or as a promotion of exporting sectors.

In contrast with these tendencies, after the Second World War the region moved towards a relative devaluation of political rule over the

economy. To an increasing extent, states were relegated to the role of supplementing rather than replacing the market. The change manifested itself differently in the different countries. In Italy it was premised on the establishment of a stable parliamentary regime. In Spain and Portugal the authoritarian regimes were not reversed but became more accommodative to one form or another of market regulation. In Greece and Turkey the change was premised on the establishment of unstable parliamentary regimes and was subsequently buttressed by the displacement of such regimes by military rule—intermittently in Turkey, and with longer duration in Greece.

Whatever the path followed by individual countries in the 1950's and 1960's, by the middle of 1970's what has been called the "crisis of dictatorship" produced a new convergence.

Just as the "convergence" of the five countries towards authoritarian regimes and neo-mercantilist policies came to a head in the course of the world political-economic crisis of the 1930's, so their convergence towards parliamentary regimes and neo-liberal policies has come to a head during the world political-economic crisis of the 1970's. One of the main objectives of the research is precisely to investigate the reasons for this convergence, and for the different points of convergence of the 1970's relative to the 1930's (Arrighi et al., 1981: 7-8).

Since this was written, the image of a political-economic convergence in Southern Europe has become stronger and more clearly defined by the formation of socialist-led governments in four out of five countries. Turkey is the exception. Following its previous pattern of intermittent displacement of parliamentary democracy by military regimes, it has resorted once again to military rule. Yet, the reorientation of the RRP in a social democratic direction in the 1970's shows that Turkey has also been experiencing, even if in an embryonic and abortive form, tendencies similar to those at work in the other four countries. In any event, "convergence" has to be understood in very broad terms. In the interwar period, too, relatively stable fascist regimes were established in only three of the five countries (Italy, Portugal, and Spain) and, as I shall argue in my contribution to this volume, even in these countries fascism meant quite different things.

Similarly, the socialist-led or socialist-inspired governments of contemporary Southern Europe have quite different programs, ideologies, and life chances. In both instances, the identification of common patterns of political-economic development is not meant to deny the

importance of individual trajectories and deviations from the regional pattern. On the contrary, the original project emphasized the fact that

individual countries have entered the trajectory characteristic of each period at different times, with different modalities and with different success. These differences, we feel, deserve at least as much attention as the overall regional trajectory (Arrighi et al., 1981: 8).

But when all is said and done, we are still left with two striking facts that call for explanation: (1) In the course of the two more recent "great depressions" a pattern of political-economic development became dominant in the region. And (2) the pattern that has become dominant in the late 1970's and early 1980's ("socialism") is quite different from the one that became dominant in the 1920's and 1930's ("fascism"). It can be argued that this is just a difference in labels and rhetorics. Even if this were the case (which, in my opinion it is not), labels and rhetorics are important enough in political life to deserve investigation.

Before I turn to discuss the hypotheses put forward by the original project to explicate the processes that have produced the common regional pattern, the transition from one regional pattern to another, and the differences among the trajectories of individual countries, it must be observed that these premises did not go unchallenged in the course of the two colloquia. Most widely questioned was the premise that an overarching Southern European pattern of political-economic development could be detected. For example, with reference to the interwar period, Ránki maintains that three patterns rather than one can be singled out: one for Italy, one for the Balkan countries, and one for the Iberian countries; and, with reference to the 1970's, Lange maintains that Italy's political economy converged towards a Northwestern rather than a Southern European regional pattern.

As the reader will realize, the issues raised by Ránki, Lange, and others have remained unsettled. It should be noticed, however, that they cannot be settled by focusing on a single subperiod or on the considerable variety of national trajectories that can be observed at any particular point in time. A Southern European pattern of political-economic development was defined by taking a 60-year period as a whole, and by observing tendencies in the region as a whole during two worldwide "great depressions" so as to make as many "other things" as equal as possible. It is only at this level that the pattern is claimed to be observable; therefore, it is only at this level that its existence and relevance can be meaningfully challenged.

Southern Europe as a Semiperipheral Zone of the World-Economy

The hypothesis that immediately became the focus of debate and controversy was the hypothesis that the Southern European pattern of political-economic convergence and transition could be traced to the growing integration of the region in the world-economy as a semiperipheral zone. The original proposal maintained that similarities of geography and culture were important in explaining the existence of a common pattern. However, as Aymard observes in his contribution, before the late nineteenth century such similarities were matched by fundamental particularities at the level of political-economic history. It was only in the first half of this century that patterns of political-economic convergence began to be clearly observable, and it was therefore felt that such patterns should be traced to processes that were common to the whole region and had become operative sometime in the late nineteenth century.

The growing integration of Southern Europe in the world-economy as a semiperipheral zone was identified as one such factor. In the essay that opens this section, Wallerstein provides a strong version of the hypothesis. In this version, the concept of semiperiphery refers to a quantification of core-periphery relations as they fall within the boundaries of a given state, and it is supposed to be a clue or indicator of political processes. As a general proposition, Wallerstein suggests that

the closer the overall mix of core-peripheral activities is to an even one in a given state, the more will the complex calculus tilt towards rewarding efforts to secure economic advantage via effecting (transforming) the state-structure. This is because the nearer to some median is the economic mix, the more immediately and directly can state policies affect the accumulation of capital (this volume, Ch. 1).

In applying the concept to Southern Europe, Wallerstein first observes that at no point in time since 1815 have the states in the region been the locus of the most advanced sectors of world production in terms of technology, productive capacity, or focal point of accumulation of capital. He then distinguishes three periods. The first period covers the nineteenth century. During this period the relatively free operation of world-economic forces deepened the peripheralization of the region. The model of the state was the liberal constitutional state in defined boundaries, while the partisans of the semiperipheral state (i. e.,

of a state would play a more active role in resisting peripheralization) lacked a significant internal social base.

This situation changed drastically in the second period. "One can interpret the whole political development of Italy, Spain, Portugal, Greece and Turkey in the interwar period," Wallerstein claims, "as one grand response to the sense and reality of 'having been left behind' " (Ch. 1). Fascism and corporatism, political and economic nationalism, the cult of the state, and the revival of ancient glories were all expressions of this response. What had changed relative to the earlier period was not the attitude of core states, which was still favorable to the peripheralization of the region. What had changed was the balance between pressures of strata within Southern Europe seeking to benefit from a strong state, on the one hand, and the outside counterpressure whose efficacy was weakened by the world economic difficulties of the period, on the other.

In the third period, which stretches from the Second World War to the present, U.S. hegemony reestablished the efficacy of outside pressures insisting "on the end of all autarkic tendencies, the reopening of [Southern European] economies to core interests (to the extent that they had been closed), and the further development of their structured participation in the world-economy's division of labor". If this reestablishment of core pressure on Southern Europe did not lead to a new process of peripheralization as before 1914, it was because after the Second World War there were many more zones that could play the peripheral roles that had been "assigned" to Southern Europe in the nineteenth century. Indeed, to maintain a sufficient demographic balance in the world-system, it became of interest to the core state "to have Southern Europe play a strong semiperipheral role in the world-economy, especially if they could be linked in to the core closely in political and ideological terms"—a condition that was fulfilled by such mechanisms as NATO and the European Economic Community (EEC).

In a critical or in a supportive way, most of the contributions to the second colloquium (and to this volume) came to revolve around this interpretation. Generally supportive is Aymard's contribution, which remedies Wallerstein's overemphasis on core interests and capabilities by bringing back into the picture what is historically and geographically specific to the region. Aymard recognizes that the evolution of Southern European states of very different origins towards common problems in the late nineteenth century is symptomatic of the fact that, in explaining state policies, patterns of state formation may be less relevant than the

objectives and tasks posed to the states of the region by their deepening peripheralization in the world-economy (this volume, Ch. 2). At the same time, he emphasizes the importance of the patterns of state formation in determining the capabilities of Southern European states to respond effectively to the problems posed by peripheralization.

In doing this, Aymard resolves some of the ambiguities of the concept of semiperiphery by reducing it to various types of dualism or, more precisely, to various forms of internal or internalized uneven development: between socio-economic structure and state "superstructures"; between different economic sectors, social groups, and regions. He then defines the relationship between state policies and internalized uneven development as the key issue of semiperipheral development. In his own words,

[It is important] to see if the state not only *could* have overcome these disparities, but also if it *ought* not to have played on them in a more or less conscious or systematic fashion and used them, perhaps even in order to exacerbate the disparities still more. Is this perhaps the necessary price of a policy of modernization?

According to Aymard, the origins of this internal unevenness of Southern European states must be traced to complex hierarchies firmly anchored in the geography and history of the region. In the case of Greece and the Balkans, they can be traced to external domination; in the case of the Iberian peninsula, they can be traced to an inverted opposition between "peripheries" open to the external world and a "center" less developed but which holds political power; in the case of Italy, they can be traced to an earlier phase of development of Italy itself. In all cases, the hierarchies that underlie internal unevenness were associated with an organization of space that did not coincide with state boundaries but with larger or smaller units. As a consequence, they created obstacles to state intervention that presupposed unity, homogeneity, and social and economic solidarity within state boundaries. But they also provided state action with an operational base that could be readily used:

What could have been more tempting for [the states] than, in the very name of their own rhetoric, to have the cost of modernization of the state structures and the economy borne by those structures that were already inferior and dependent, locally and internationally?

Italy offers the best and most successful example of a developmental model based on structural dualism itself. It is indeed so successful,