EU Trade Policy at the Crossroads: Between Economic Liberalism and Democratic Challenges
Vienna, 4-6 February, 2016

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How are the new trade agreements related to wider changes in the global political economy?
Relate trade agreements to the concepts of new constitutionalism and disciplinary neoliberalism, questioning:

- The conceptual underpinnings of EU integration over the past 30 years and its trade policies.
- The key proponents of this process and their projects.
- The current potentials for counter-hegemonic forces and its relationship to the strong resistance movement to trade policy projects like the TTIP.
How are the new trade agreements related to wider changes in the global political economy?

This is partly reflected in the following graphics:

**Wealth of the richest 80 people**

Combined wealth in current $bn

- Richest 80 people
- Poorest 50% of world

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Richest 80</th>
<th>Poorest 50%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>62</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>80</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>92</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>159</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>177</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
<td>388</td>
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</tbody>
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Guardian graphic

Source: Forbes and Credit Suisse Global Wealth Databook 2014 and 2015
How do trade agreements relate to the concepts of "New Constitutionalism & Disciplinary Neoliberalism"?

1. The new trade and investment agreements form part of a shift to neoliberal governance and regulation of the global political economy.

Primacy of capital in the determination of economic and social policy and the geopolitical initiatives.
How do trade agreements relate to the concepts of 
NEW CONSTITUTIONALISM & DISCIPLINARY NEOLIBERALISM?

1. The new trade and investment agreements form part of a shift to neoliberal governance and regulation of the global political economy.

2. At the heart of this process is disciplinary neoliberalism, a framework of political economy to intensify and extend the disciplines of capital into economic and social life.

PRIMACY OF CAPITAL in the determination of economic and social policy and the geopolitical initiatives.

New constitutionalism is the principal LEGAL AND JURIDICAL DIMENSION of disciplinary neoliberalism. It seeks to make disciplinary neoliberalism the sole future development model.
NEW CONSTITUTIONALISM & DISCIPLINARY NEOLIBERALISM?

1. The new trade and investment agreements form part of a shift to neoliberal governance and regulation of the global political economy.

2. At the heart of this process is disciplinary neoliberalism, a framework of political economy to intensify and extend the disciplines of capital into economic and social life.

3. New constitutionalism seeks to lock out popular/democratic forces from the governance of the economy.

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WHAT ARE THE CONCEPTUAL UNDERPINNINGS OF EUROPEAN UNION INTEGRATION AND WHAT IS ITS RELATION TO EU TRADE POLICIES?

Rapid expansion of the world market.

A more integrated and increasingly globalised capitalism.

Emergence of transnational political and economic formations.

Coordination of capitalist economies on an increasingly global scale.
THE DELORS COMMITTEE

responsible for coming up with the blueprint for the EMU was dominated by the neo-liberal ‘epistemic community’ of central bankers who were part of the networks of various ‘Atlanticist’ forums associated with the Bank for International Settlements, the IMF, and the US Treasury and US Federal Reserve.
The prevailing discourse of European integration has become increasingly narrower and much more technocratic and economistic.

A broad-based sense of pan-European identity, loyalty and sense of belonging amongst most Europeans has not really developed.
THE SILENT REVOLUTION

Create a new economic government for the EU, one that was claimed to better be able to manage crises.
Treaty amendments and regulations to prevent policies of ‘sound money’ and fiscal austerity from future challenges by parliamentary or popular-democratic forces.
“EUROPE WILL BE FORGED IN CRICES, AND WILL BE THE SUM OF THE SOLUTIONS ADOPTED FOR THOSE CRIES”  
(Jean Monnet, 1976)

The developments show how the European political, bureaucratic and corporate élites saw the crisis as an opportunity to deepen and extend their neoliberal model of European integration.
KEY PROONENTS OF THIS PROCESS AND WHAT ARE THEIR PROJECTS?
The largest redistribution of wealth from the poor to the rich in history?

Quantitative Easing can increase inequality between rich and poor, both in regards of the countries and people.

Massive bailouts of financial sector since 2007 represent a historically unprecedented transfer of public resources into the private financial sector.

stimulus program 200 bl €
aid to financial sector 4500 bl €
Europe is moving from the principle of ‘no taxation without representation’ to ‘taxation without representation’, this contrasts with the principle that national parliaments hold budgetary sovereignty.

Privatization and related measures mandated by the Troika involve the dispossession of the social and political commons and public resources in ways that undermine basic human rights.
PESSIMISM OF THE INTELLIGENCE?

Relative unity of the global economic, financial and political elites and ruling classes versus the relative fragmentation of the anti-austerity forces.

Mismatch between the alternative sets of proposals for re-founding the European Union on the part of the lefts and their political capabilities to carry them out.
plural, democratic & progressive forces in formation

Do not necessarily provide unified response to all questions but have relatively shared recognition of common problems and principles

embrace diversity, difference, recognition, redistribution and emancipation
encompasses global North & South