

Leo Seserko

Privatisation of Public Goods in the Current Global Financial Crisis – The Monument Colliseum Case in Ljubljana

There will be no mercy for the Leftists

Journalist Jožica Grgič newly reported about a citation of a slovene catholic bishop Peter Štumpf saying, that sonner or later the time will come, when journalists will find themselves on the streets among beggars, as there “will be no jobs and no food for these people”.¹ These journalists “want to destroy the catholic curch” he said, after a financial collaps and more than a billion financial loss in financial transaction of the diocese of Maribor. Grgič pointed out that in the past there was an unwritten rule that a jounalist should never wash another's jounalist dirty linen in public. But the right wing journalists in Slovenia recently broke that rule and the most exposed in these attack is the catholic press. She further says she woudn't assert that behind this offensive stands the owner of these media – the church, if there were no catholic priests in the most exposed roles attacking 'agitators', 'continuityans', 'intriguers', 'sewage tubes', 'manipulators of people'. This is 'something new', she finds, something astonishing, unexpected in the catholic church until recent times, we are suddenly not any more 'all God's children', not all worth of Jesus' love. There is a radical turn in the essence of the public presentation of the man, it is not everybody worth any more being understood as human.

If there would not be the global financial crisis since 2008, and the history of Milton Friedman's doctrine of shock since the sixties, both as a campaigning of the Chicago School and as a track of its oppressive 'shock treatment' through its only medecine of 'free market' instauration, which means deregulation of public affairs, privatisation of govermental services – mass firing of public employees and cuts in social spending, one could interpret this radical turn of the political use of the theological way of thinking and public reasoning as purely intellectualy fundamentalist one. It would be a scandal on itself in the time of global war on fundamentalism and terrorism, but Grgič sees in it a return of frenetic activism of the slovene catholic church in the period between the two wars, when the church intimidated people with the menace of communism. The

1 Jožica Grgič, Pomisleki: *Ni milosti za levičarje /Scruples: There is no Mercy for the Leftists/*, Delo, 20.10.2012.

consequence was splitting up of the clergymen during the second world war in smaller group that joined the partisans movement and the bigger one, with the heads of the hierarchy, that caught in their exclusivism, supported the collaboration with the nazis.

The times of intense ideological confrontations

After the war under Tito's regime the catholic believers were people of the second class, they could (with few exceptions) choose their studies and be moderately successful in most professions, but could not follow successful public careers outside the church. At the same time socialist oriented clergymen, like Vekoslav Grmič, were hindered in their careers within the catholic church. In 1991 the newly established political parties, with the exception of the Greens, started with the ideological advance of being representatives of the oppressed. But this was a kind of historical misunderstanding: soon after the democratic changes an unholy coalition of the right wing and the left wing political parties was established: "Until now it worked out between the left and the right perfectly well: they both instigated people into an ideological conflict between 'partisans and the nazi collaborators', while they both, though they haven't liked each other, cooperated in plundering the state².

During the period between the two wars the imaginary enemy of the society, as phantom juggled by the ideological mind masters, the conservative politicians and the church, was 'communism' and 'the greedy Jew', the two ideological extrapolations from the outer world, never being a really present danger. The beginning of the nazi occupation and the terror they brought with them changed the situation and made the social conflict insurmountable. Nowadays the role of the contagious figure, being used as alibi of the accusers themselves, is attributed to 'the malicious Journalist', who dares to blame the catholic church and is worthy to be fired from his job, a scum of society that should be left to end as a tatterdemalion. In reality Slovenia is a country where catholic church is the far biggest land owner not paying taxes at all, having its own public media and educational system, but not being satisfied at all with the situation. After even in Italy the government introduced a taxation for the church, in Slovenia there is no discussion about it.

2 Janez Markeš, *Česa je kriv Novinar /What the Journalist is Guilty of/*, Delo, 27.10.2012.

This atmosphere reminds the times of ideological confrontations of the past, but there is much more at stake: it is not a question of freezing up the existing social relations and order and to remove the disturbing social elements, no it is a question of complete sociological, psychological (as any kind of empathy should be removed) and economic transformation of the modern society through the instruments of execution of power in full range of its possible applications.

It started first in the academic domaine, in a simmilar way as Milton Friedman, who “had spent decades in the intellectual wilderness”.³ But is was not concentrated just on economic concepts, in Slovenia the ideas of neoliberalism entered the public sphere first after 1991, but didn't participate either in preparation of democratic changes, which were not imported from abroad, and surely not from the legacy of the Chicago School. In the public debate, in the press and in the periodicals, there were practically no traces of the later slovene proponents of the Friedman's doctrine of schock.

Samuelson's handbook *Foundations of economic analysis* was published in slovene in 1968. It was used as the standard handbook of economics in all university courses of social theory of the time, parallel to Marx's theory of Capital and the economic theory of yougoslave socialist economy, later name economic theory of self-management. They existed one along with the two others and it would be seen as barbaric to exalt one of them over the two others. We were as students aware of the fact that this was a kind of medieval way of studying with taking the devil's counsel's argument, but we had the freedom to choose the preferable theory, arguments and facts. An intelligent student had no problem to find out the preferences of each single professor and could choose either to confront his standpoint, if capable to defend his or hers own ideas, and if the professor was not a notorious intellectual extremist, a student could apologetically just follow the theoretical preferenees of the professor. But in those times intolerance and exclusivism were rather unusual and mostly seen as silly and stupid. Friedman's concept of absolute priority of the free market as a regulative principle would be seen even from the standpoint of a student as ahistorical, and we learned early on that a society with equal market participants develops soon into a constellation of merging monopolies on land or/and production means.

3 Naomi Klein, *The Schock Doctrine*, The Rise of Disaster Capitalism, New York, 2007, p. 21.

While in the 1950s the Milton Friedman's Chicago School and its mythologization was mostly concentrated on University of Chicago's Economics Department, this “brainchild of a coterie of conservative academics whose ideas represented a revolutionary bulwark against the dominant 'statist' thinking of the day”,⁴ in the academic environments of Ljubljana, capital of Slovenia, Friedman's ideas of ultra laissez-faire have appeared after the 1990s at four different social academic centres: at the Economic school, at the School of law, at the Faculty of social sciences and as the follow-up of Slavoj Žižek's school of Lacan's psychoanalytic theory at the department of philosophy at the Faculty of Arts of Ljubljana.

Though the historical, social and political constellation was not favourable for the missionary aggressive theoretical approach, which was never debatable hypothesis, but a sacred feature of the system, the most unfavourable point of departure had Milton Friedman's followers at the Faculty of economics. Slovenia became independent in 1991 after only 10 days of war being attacked by the Yugoslav army which, once the fourth most important European army, expected a kind of military promenade against untrained and badly armed civil guards and local police forces. The result was intact economic infrastructure, the rather limited war damage and the only real economic shock was closure down of the Yugoslav markets for the Slovene industry products, as it was mostly oriented to sell its products in rest Yugoslavia, which disappeared at once with the beginning of attacks of Yugoslav army on the successive republics one after another: Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo. But this shock was not lasting, as were the country's exports soon and successful reoriented to the European Union, that welcomed the country willing to submit itself the rules applied by it. During the ten day war refugee camps in Austria and Italy were made ready, but remained mostly unused.

Local Chicago School boys

All this guaranteed a moderate wealth of the population, its industry, the education system and the health system were also generally comparable to those in the neighbouring countries Austria and Italy, though a bit less developed. The country could fulfill the requirements of the EU accession and almost ten years during the government of pragmatic and

4 Naomi Klein, *The Shock Doctrine*, p. 59.

neoliberal prime minister Drnovšek, there was no room for radical economic interventions changes and no room for slovene Chicago School boys. But this changed after 2004 a radical conservative coalition of right wing political parties won the national elections and the slovene Chicago School boys under the guidance of economy professor Jože Damijan came to move. The new elected conservative prime minister Janez Janša invited Damijan to prepare a concept of a radical economic reform with the key point of introduction of a unileveled flat tax as “the very heart of the changes”.⁵ The plan failed both because of the determined public opposition to the idea of the flat tax as it would handicapped those with smaller income and prefer the rich and as the prime minister Janša and the professor Damijan got involved in a personal conflict about the /limited/ competences of the chief minister for reforms. After few weeks being in office the newly appointed minister resigned and the government did not introduced the flat tax. But this failure did not stopped Damijan, on the contrary he became afterword even more enthusiastic propagator of Chicago School doctrine in the sense that its failures prove its accuracy as well as its successes do. He also underlined already before 2008 that shocks are needed for the population and the public to open the gates for the doctrine. Being unsuccessful in getting in charge of economic politics of the conservative government, as Janša kept the position on his personal disposal, Damijan left the government and developed as 'scientist' a fervent activity in public dissemination of ideas of the Chicago School, publishing hundreds of newspapers articles and radio and television appearances. But he wrote already in 2005, that “we should prepare for a shock”⁶

And the shock came in 2008 with the beginning of the global financial crisis that hit heavily Slovenia and the whole south and east region of Europe ever since. There are two reasons that played important

5 DAMIJAN, Jože. *Bojim se slovenske zaplankanosti : z vodjem vseh vladnih reformatorjev dr. Jožetom P. Damijanom o tem, zakaj je pragmatik, zakaj dela s še 400 strokovnjaki vladi reformne projekte zastonj in zakaj bi morali biti Slovenci reformam naklonjeni /I am afraid of slovenian narrow-mindedness: with the guide of all governmental reformers dr. Jože P. Damijan on why he is a pragmatist, why he is preparing to work with another 400 experts on reform projects for the government without being paid for and why the Slovenes should be in favor of the reforms/. Večer (Marib.). 27. 08. 2005.*

6 DAMIJAN, Jože. *Pripraviti se je treba na šok : dr. Jože P. Damijan, predsednik odbora za reforme / We have to prepare for a shock: dr. Jože P. Damijan, the head of the reform council/. Gorenj. Glas, 1985, 18. nov. 2005, nr. 92, p. 13, portrait.*

role in this process: first the local taicoons favoured governmental privatisation of companies on all levels of economy and in more and more extended domains of public infrastructure. The privatisation happened in two steps, first it brought enormous wealth to a small number of collectors of privatisation coupons from the mass of individuals. Every citizen got small amount of these coupons distributed from the state, but employees in most productive companies got much more of value than those employed in public services. These coupons were collected in masses by the entrepreneurs and then turned to imaginary money to buy the existing companies or real estate. The second step was that these entrepreneurs were taking enormous mortgages on their investments and expected to be capable to pay back these credits through the day to day income of enterprises they wanted to privatise. This scenario worked out until the 2008 financial crisis hit the globe and broke since then as companies were not able any more to produce enough profit to pay for the high interest rates. So the next step was to sell the companies to foreign investors if they could find one. Important parts of economy and working places disappeared in just three years and the economy became privatised and globalised with enormous burden of unemployed people that needed to be financed from the reduced public budget. This meant an explosion of public debt at the same time.

And the answer of Jože Damijan and of the slovene Chicago boys was that privatisation and deregulation of the economy and the society after 2008 have not gone far enough. They should be intensified on all levels and against all possible obstacles and social or political oppositions. One of familiar expressions would be: 'we can not afford all these social and political rights collected in the past as it would ruin the economic prosperity'.

But the Ljubljana school of economics was not the only university center to put forward the doctrine of disaster capitalism. At the same time another group of university professors has been formed at the school of law, where Igor Kavčič organised systematic studies how to deregulate the law and the constitutional system to prevent 'its harmful influence on the society'. For this group the most disturbing part of the existing slovene constitutional regulation was the article on the right to propose a referendum, together with a law on referendum. During the establishment of an independent slovenian state twenty years ago, a modern constitutional and law system was introduced, together with the right of

inducing of a national referendum either by signatures of 40.000 citizens, or one third of the members of the parliament or by the majority of the national council.

This is the only effective constitutional instrument of the people beside the elections, through which it can prevent introduction of a law regulations that are clearly opposed by the majority of population when strong lobbyist groups and parliamentarian majority enforce particular interests. It was introduced after the model of swiss referendum legal regulations and gained a positive, though sometimes disputable reputation.

With the rise of neoliberal doctrine after the beginning of the global financial crisis since 2008 it became target of the most fervent proponents of drastic deregulation law changes, the most exposed part of the existing legislation, that should be urgently removed, as it is 'preventing and blocking all necessary changes of legislation in direction of needed removal of the blocades'. A race of professors of constitutional law broke out in competition who would find more original arguments why and how the right to induce a national referendum should be abolished. All these arguments were intended to help abolish a constitutional right of a third of MPs, of 40.000 citizens or of the majority of the national council – that is a right of the people to decide on key questions, mostly in situations, where the majority of citizens are of different opinion than the governmental majority. A help for governing politicians was needed and they were served by experts with all possible arguments without scruples and being aware of conducting a demolition of a key public good – the right of the majority of citizens to have the last and decisive word in public affairs.

There were all kind of arguments: that referendums 'were misused', that it has been an instrument especially 'suitable in favor of any current opposition'. As a complete abolishment of the right to ask for referendum was seen by some of worried proponents of the alleged powerless governmental majority to go too far, the idea of a needed quorum of 35% was embraced. This reminds of a Serb president Milošević referendum proposal with a quorum of 50%, which was almost impossible to reach. The turnout in Italian referendum on 12 June 2011 had reached 11.64% at midday, and 30.32% at 19.00. First the second day the necessary quorum reached at the closing time, on 13 June 2011, 56.9%. But in Slovenia there is no two days lasting referendum or election, it is just one day lasting voting. And the tendency of citizen's participation at votes is decreasing,

during last presidential first round election it reached a record low outcome of 47,68%. At the last slovenian referendum voting on March 25th 2012 about a family code the quorum was a bit lower than 30 %, though it was a highly debatable issue on the right of homosexual couples to be admitted to have children.

The proposal of quorum of 35 % by the conservative majority would simply mean that the referendum right is practically abolished. Another trail to abolish the referendum right by the governmental majority, which is already functioning, is the instrument of the governmental majority to present it to the constitutional court to decide if a referendum proposal is in accordance with constitution or no. The decisions of the court are mostly arbitrary.

No substantial difference between the right wing and the left wing political parties politics

And finally there is no substantial difference between the right wing and left wing political parties and parliamentary groups in this regard. Both represent more capital and lobbyist interests than interests of the public. So in Slovenia all in the parliament represented parties are in favor of limitation of the referendum right, and the public interests of democratic voting and representation are not being represented there. This is a result of a network of technical details that prevent and make difficult such a political representation. But here is at the same time outlined the key task of the left and set the identification strategy of what is the political left today and what is not: the very objective to define and to attain is political representation of the demoralised and and those saying: I am not going to vote and to participate in public discussion as it can not be a success, it may be even harmful for me, so I refrain better from it. People thinking this way are not completely wrong as the global financial crisis promoted again the shock interventions in public debates and relations, as a legal and legitimate instrument of settling of public affairs in the times of intensive suspenses and open conflicts. This is the arena of brutality becoming self-evident in the times of advanced neoliberalism.

The three neoliberal trademark demands - “privatization, government deregulation and deep cuts to social spending”⁷, were distributed under

7 Naomi Klein, *The Shock Doctrine*, p. 10.

relevant experts of appropriate branch of university with one exception: deep cuts to social spending became a domain of sociologists and economists instead of experts of social work, because the Faculty of social work in Ljubljana had not signalled to the neoliberal politicians to be willing to come along according to their demands and expectations. So they were left out during the recruiting of university professors for the jobs of executing governmental intentions.

Instead people from Faculty for social sciences were recruited, first of all Ivan Svetlik, who approved his willingness to follow and to implement the neoliberal agenda on all organisational and professional levels and was ready to do small susceptible jobs not intended to become public, like firing a colleague from his post of university professor, because he became unpopular to the prime minister for his political opinions and legal activities and the prime minister sent a sign of his embarrassment to the dean which promptly fulfilled the suggestion, fired a colleague professor from his post, and in this way approved his own initiation for being the right person for a minister post in a following government.

Among the faculties it came to a zoning on those being affiliated with the right wing governmental majority and those close to the 'left wing' governmental majority. The Faculty of social sciences of Ljubljana was by great majority close to the second one and several professors were nominated to ministers whenever the leftists won the general elections. So Svetlik became minister of labour, family and social issues and before the government after three years prematurely left office he reduced several key social programs, notably half of all governmental grants for underaged students.

Furthermore he combed out social income support by checking all different forms of it and by reducing them to a single one. And he frightened a lot of elderly recipients of welfare services, who would be legally deservedly payees, by the regulation that after their death the family should pay back for all social services they received during their life time. So he was successful to destroy the important parts of until then existing social spending. At the same time he and his neoliberal colleagues turned the faculty, which was earlier an institution with enormous impact during the period of democratic changes of the country, to followers of Milton Friedman on main domains they covered, where no member of the teachers dared to put in question or publicly discuss the prevailing

neoliberal doctrine of free market, privatization, governmental deregulation and cuts in social spending.

All these proponents of the movement that conquered the high education and social research to promote the collective shock therapy could reach just a local social and political impact in accordance with the global movement of Friedman's Chicago school. A theoretician that achieved global popularity in universities, newspapers and periodicals, is Slavoj Žižek, who has presented himself as follower of Jacques Lacan and Marx. He succeeded to introduce a genuine Žižekian theory at the department of philosophy at the faculty of arts of Ljubljana, which is a supplement of authoritarian dimension of Friedman's shock doctrine. As Friedman detected "irrational attachment to a socialist system" in the US and everywhere around the globe, Žižek discerned 'irrational attachment' as elementary cell of social relationship ever and attacked it with both instruments worked out by Lacan and Marx. It is combined with his misogyny and an open book of Eastern European historical excesses and extremes: being a fringe of great powers, torn between Stalin's socialism and nazis, found some prosperity and calm in later development of Tito's and Gorbachov's socialism, and being now pushed in the most extreme forms of devastation and most radical processes of privatisation, governmental deregulation and cuts of social spending. Žižek's reaction on eruptions of nationalistic sentiments was their radical rejection, along with his rejection of any positive marxist tradition as it would be not possible at all. But he refers often to Stalin's legacy in an ambiguous way what makes him attractive for the media and the proponents of the neoliberalism – from a distance.

He joins an attachment to several Friedman's theoretical suppositions: he is casting for irrational motives and feelings as neuroses and mental pathologies, while Friedman is blaming them for alleged adherence to socialism as pathologic. Both are concentrated on globalised forces without paying attention to the historical developments and form, both are attracted and fascinated by authoritarian ideas and solutions. For Žižek the issue of privatisation, deregulation and social cuts is under the level of his attention, which made him a suitable fellow traveler of neoliberalism on which he never turned anything as blind eye. And in Slovenia he was the most liked propagandist and political promoter of the leading politicians of the liberal democracy, apart by Janez Drnovšek, the prime minister for ten years, who respected and honored Žižek as adviser

and who successfully obstructed an investigation of sales of weapons from Slovenia to the fighting sides during the Yugoslav succession wars 1992-95. The liberal democracy was an influential political party in power during the period between 1992 and 2004 and again 2008 – 2011, in the crucial time of carrying into effect privatisation and deregulation. Drnovšek liked to invite Žižek to the inner circle governmental political debates in Ljubljana, whenever he was present in the country, and found him the only really important person taking part in these discussions. Elsewhere Žižek could influence political developments through his publications and lectures, in his country of origin he had a direct impact on the highest political decision maker. A writer and comedian Tone Partljič, though long years member of the LD, was invited only once to such a discussion, and he reported, that the only participant, whose words had deserved to be summarized at the end of the discussion by prime minister Drnovšek, were those of Žižek. Drnovšek was a pragmatic politician, who did not care of visions or long term strategies, authoritarian, misogynist and proponent of nuclear power.

Destruction of the Colliseum of Ljubljana

Though the privatisation and demolition of the palace Colliseum of Ljubljana was just one of several historical monuments that were destroyed by developers (the palace Šumi, the Cukrarna, now under threat Plečnik's stadium, the vegetable marketplace etc.) it is the most outstanding and unique cultural monument that was demolished in summer 2011 and uncovered a complexity, recklessness, absurdity and corruption of an unlimited neoliberal greed that does not stop in front of any obstacle: either law hurdle or

politician's and public officials integrity, historical, artistic or public good, the reference of social identity and misuse of professional integrity of public media journalists (public television and radio broadcasting).

Colliseum was “built 1845-1847 as a military barracks for both officers and enlisted soldiers of the then Austro-Hungarian army, the Kolizej went on to become somewhat of a cultural and entertainment hub for the city during that era. Situated on what was then the outskirts of town, Kolizej is now part of Ljubljana's vibrant city centre.”⁸ For the

8 Justin Wideman, Save Kolizej, Can we learn from history?, ab, arhitektov bilten/Architect's Bulletin, 179-180, Ljubljana, 2008, p. 83.

developer Jože Anderlič, who could buy the building from the previous mayoress of Ljubljana for 600.000 Euro, offered the city – under the pressure of public critiques for intending to demolish it – to buy it back for 20 million Euro, and then he tore it down with help of actual mayor Jankovič and the prime minister Pahor, a kind of social democrat prime minister of the type of Tony Blair or Gerhard Schröder. Though the experts history of art⁹, of protection of cultural heritage, town planners and architects organized protests, a corrupt minister of culture signed a contract to allow to demolish the cultural monument, that Kerstin Odendahl, a professor of international and european law and expert in protection of cultural heritage, found the palace Colliseum of inestimable value and of extreme importance for the national and european cultural identity.¹⁰ But expert opinions, public protests, allegations of public officials corruption, allegations of censorship of public media in relation to the issue, were not took into consideration. In the evening after the demolition started, the developer Jože Anderlič was the only guest in the main public TV news, and the opposing experts and activist had no chance to present their view, he said the civil initiative to save the monument was to blame for the demolishment, not him, as “it was not active enough”. Otherwise the demolishment would never had happened. This is the perfect form of culmination of the cynisim which is accompanying the neoliberal land grabbing.

Privatisation and later destruction of the cultural monument Colliseum in Ljubljana was not just public land privatisation and a simple land grabbing, it is a complex corruption of rule of law, corruption of public and governmental officials, suppression and neglectance of experts opinions, but also effective censorship of public media (public radio and television). It is also an instrumentalisation of judicial system as a threat to those, who would put legally the land grabbing in question, that he/she would be sued for the financial damage due to the loss of 'income' by the developer.

The demolishment of the cultural monument happened in a EU member state. For the developer Jože Anderlič payed the community of Ljubljana the price of 600.000 Euro and the value he could earn with

9 Dr. Matej Klemenčič, the head of the Department of History of Art at the Faculty of Arts of Ljubljana, was the author of official protests against demolishment, along with architects, town planners, historians, philosophers and environmentalists.

10 Kerstin Odendahl, Je kulturno dobrino mogoče nadomestiti? /Can be a cultural value replaced?/, ab, arhitektov bilten/Architect's Bulletin, 179-180, p. 46.

construction of a new much higher building (20 floors instead of 3 of the destructed building) in the city center would bring a profit of 80 million Euro after his own calculations.

This couldn't happen in several EU member states, or in the US, and also not in several other countries. It is a symptom of the alleged highest desintegration of social cohesion and the most intensive aggressiveness of brutal forms of land grabbing and deregulation in eastern european countries, also those being already EU member states. So even if the shock doctrine of neoliberal privatisation does not leave out any domaine of the public property or public services, including military operations or prison establishments, it is important to be aware of the fact, that the directions, extent and use of brutality along with it depends on specific social and political climate and differs from country to country. It is using the existing niches and local supporters, along with their estimations where and how to attack and privatise public goods.

Conclusions for political education and modern left

Though the ambition of Milton Friedman and of his followers was to promote and establish his neoliberal doctrine of shock globally, a closer look shows that it is in reality being adapted to every single country, historical environment, social tradition, always having in sight the adversary – the left and the political and social opposition of all kind. To organise the opposition against neoliberal privatisation, deregulation and social cuts is not easy until neoliberalism can promote itself as dominating, fancy and effective. And niches are chosen as the most exposed targets. For this reason an international overview, cooperation and coordination against privatisation and deregulation attacks are needed, along with the global research and promotion of the possible defence and positive experiences from the past and from some successful countries or some preventions of privatisation and deregulation attacks.

Keynesianism deserves closer look not only as the alternative option to the neoliberal shock doctrine, but also as a competition to the left wing incentives in the US, an issue that Naomi Klein well observed: “President Roosevelt brought in the New Deal not only to address the desperation of the Great Depression but to undercut a powerful movement of U.S. citizens who, having been dealt a savage blow by the unregulated free market, were demanding a different economic model. Some wanted a

radical different one: in the 1932 presidential elections, one million Americans voted for Socialist or Communist candidates. Growing numbers of Americans were also paying close attention to Huey Long, the populist senator from Louisiana who believed that all Americans should receive a guaranteed annual income of \$2,500. Explaining why he had added more social welfare benefits to the New Deal in 1935, FDR said he wanted to 'steal Long's thunder.'"¹¹

Similar explanations were given to the Marshall Plan, that was not meant for international companies to come and 'to start pillaging the place'. This is also not the case of state policy of Germany or France today, but after the collapse of Soviet Union and of the socialism surely of the peripheral east european countries, notably of Slovenia, Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania, all member states of the EU. It is not surprising that during the greek protest against austerity deals the most traumatic association is to become a country like east europeans. But the irony is that these east europen member states are forced to cofinance the greek dept solutions, though the average wage is there lower than the one in Greece. But there are first signs that eastern Europe will also follow the path of protests, partly because the police reactions on first protests are nervous and rough also against peaceful protesters. It seems that the times as eastern Europeans were just watching paralysed what is going on and what is happening to them in the promising context of the EU are going to come to an end and a protest movement is going to become more important.

11 Naomi Klein, *The Shock Doctrine*, p. 316.