

(Imperialism of Imagination - II Part)

[Read the first part here](#)

Economic downturn; recession of plans and initiatives; systematically ignored calls for a *fiscal and monetary justice for all*; €-crisis; Brexit and irredentism in the UK, Spain, Belgium, France, Denmark and Italy; lasting instability in the Euro-Med theatre (debt crisis of the Europe's south - countries scrutinized and ridiculed under the nickname PIGS, coupled with the failed states all over the MENA); terrorism; historic low with Russia along with a historic trans-Atlantic blow with Trump; influx of predominantly Muslim refugees from Levant in numbers and configurations unprecedented since the WWII exoduses; consequential growth of far-right parties who - by peddling reductive messages and comparisons - are exploiting fears of otherness, that are now amplified with already urging labour and social justice concerns; generational unemployment and socio-cultural anxieties, in ricochet of the Sino-US trade wars... The very fundamentals of Europe are shaking.

Strikingly, there is a very little public debate enhanced in Europe about it. What is even more worrying is the fact that any self-assessing questioning of Europe's involvement and past policies in the Middle East, and Europe's East is simply off-agenda. Immaculacy of Brussels and the Atlantic-Central Europe-led EU is unquestionable. Corresponding with realities or complying with a dogma?

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Triangular economy of othering

Why does our West so vigilantly promote the so-called international trade all over the place? The answer is at hand; the US President George H.W. Bush clarifies: "No nation on Earth has discovered a way to import the world's goods and services while stopping foreign ideas at the border."[\[1\]](#)

There is a consensus within the academic community what was the critical factor in redefining the world's periphery - from a sub-permafrost - Europe into the advanced West. Undeniably, it was the extension of its strategic depth westward, to the Americas upon 1492 - a huge continent unreported in the Bible and unknown to Europeans. There is also a consensus over the two factors facilitating the initiation of the age of Grand discoveries. The

push effect was the fall of Constantinople, a relative decline of the Maghrebian Arabs and the Ottoman techno-military and demographic threat onto Europe from south and southeast. And, the pull effect was the Ming dynasty inward retreat and to it related dismembering of the superior transoceanic Sino-fleet.

This unleashed the so-called triangular transcontinental trade that incorporated one more previously unknown continent to Europe - (sub-Saharan) Africa. The triangular trade was a brutal instrument imposed by Europeans: Enslaved Africans shipped like cattle to America to dig for gold and silver which was destined for European colonial centres.[\[2\]](#)

(Needless to say that soon after American continent has been 'discovered', Europeans brutally derogated its indigenous civilisation. Only 100 years later, Americas have suffered loss of 90% of its total pre-colonial population - a *final solution* in one of its most effective workings. The same went on in sub-Saharan Africa. Far from being an undiscovered prior to the European conquistas, Africa was for many centuries an integral part of the Afro-Asian trading and manufacturing system. All that have dramatically changed with the arrival of Europeans. Soon after, they derogated an indigenous socio-political, civilizational and cultural and the demographic structures of Africa beyond the point of reparation.)

Once in Europe, stashes of these precious metals were used to cover massive European deficits created by extensive imports of the cutting-edge technologies, manufactured products, other goods and spices from a that-time superior Asia and the Middle East. Only later, gold and silver will be replaced by the equally powerful but less expensive 'trade facilitators' - iron and opium (guns and drugs). For instance in early 1800s, many British MPs and cabinet ministers had shares in the UK narco-companies. Hence, the Narconomics was introduced and imposed as both a powerful strategic deterrent and as a wealth accumulator. (Eg. Still by the late 19th century, some 40 million mainland Chinese were heavy drugs addicts - roughly 10% of population.)

The Afro-America yields were so colossal for Atlantic Europe that many scholars assume the so-called Industrial revolution rather as an evolutionary anomaly than a natural socio-technological process of development, which was primarily pivoting in (Sino-Indian) Asia.[\[3\]](#)

In order to illustrate a magnitude (or to validate the so called Schumpeterian *creative destruction* claim), let us note a following data: Starting from an early 16th century for consecutive 300 years, 85% of the world's silver production and 70% of the world's gold output came from the Americas. For the same period, 2/3 of globally manufactured goods were originating from Asia. Notably, while Europe spent unearned, Asia worked.

Further on, during the 17th, 18th and 19th century the role of Black slavery, slave trading, American Black slave-driven production centres and Negro markets, all significantly contributed to Atlantic Europe's agricultural and industrial 'breakthrough' - as we are celebrating it today. In short, it was a wealth of Americas extracted by the enslaved men-power from Africa, and shipped to Europe under the minimal costs, all that for centuries.[4]

This colossal 'oversea discovery' reinforced Europe's path on defensive modernisation (usage of technology for a narrow geostrategic end) - European empires building became a scientific project and the science evolved into an imperial project. For instance, French Dutch and Britons (the so-called second and third round of colonisers) learned one thing from Portuguese and Spaniards (the first round of European colonisers) - nobody wishes to pay taxes but likes to invest. Therefore their colonial expansion was primarily conducted as a corporate undertaking (West India company, East India company, WIC, VOC, Mississippi company, etc.).[5]

Hence, it was a magic vicious circle of scientifically erected empires and imperial capitalism: Credits financed overseas discoveries, discoveries led to colonies, colonies made profits (by imported slaves and rarefied locals), profits built trust in tomorrows, and the trust in this shiny colonial tomorrow was translated into ever more credits for the larger corporate undertakings. Small wonder that the exegesis of (Newtonian science and Smith's) capitalism started blindly to believe in a never-ending and ever-expanding economic growth. The fact that such a 'faith' contradicts all cosmic laws bothered none in that time Europe - the continent was dizzy and triumphant in its planetary conquest. *Le Capitalisme Européen* meant expansion - in every possible sense.

Such a rapid shift from a peripheral status to an 'advanced civilization' of course necessitated a complete reconstruction of western identity - furthering the weaponisation of religion for ideological purpose. This acrobatics -in return- caused the rift in Europe and enhanced the Continent's continued split on two spheres: the Eastern/Russophone Europe - closer to and therefore more objective towards the Afroasian realities; and the Western (Atlantic/Scandinavian/Central) Europe, more dismissive, self-centred and ignorant sphere.

While the Atlantic flank progressively developed its commercial and naval power as to economically and demographically project itself beyond the continent, the landlocked Eastern Europe was lagging behind. It stuck in feudalism, and involuntarily constituted a *cordon sanitaire* - from eastern Baltic to Adriatic Shkoder - against the Islamic Levant/south and the Russo-oriental East.

Gradually, past the 15th century, the idea of 'Western Europe' begun to crystallise as the Ottoman Turks and the Eastern Europeans were imagined and described as barbarians. During the 17th and 18th century as the triangular 'trade' progressed, Atlantic Europe firmly portrayed itself as the prosperous West that borders 'pagan/barbarian' neighbours to its near east, and the 'savage subjects' to its cross-Mediterranean south, overseas west, and the mystical Far East. Consequently, we cannot deny a huge role that the fabricated history as well as the 'scientific' racism and its theories played in a formation and preservation of European identity construct.[6]

The Enlightenment was a definite moment in the reinvention of European identity. The quest came along with the fundamental question *who are we*, and what is our place in the world? Answering that led on to the systematisation, classification of *anthropogeographic inversion* and - frankly - to reinvention of the world. From the Renaissance to the Enlightenment, a kind of an intellectual apartheid regime was forming.

(This historical anomaly I usually describe as anthropogeographic inversion in which the periphery asserted itself into the center by periferising that core and managing to present itself as a center. Thus, our current geopolitical and ideological core resides in geographic peripheries of the planet. It is in the hands of late developmental arrivals, such as the UK, Scandinavia, Russia, Canada, the US, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Korea, Singapore, South Africa. To achieve and maintain this colossal inversion was impossible without coercion over the extended space and time. Consequently, it necessitated a combination of physical and metaphysical (hard/coercion and soft/attraction) instruments: Physical military presence of the periphery in the center, combined with a tightly guarded narrative and constructed history. How does my *anthropogeographic inversion* theory correspond with an institutional interpretation of history? Real anthropogeographic peripheries are certainly a new civilizational arrival - Interference, intrusion and discontinuity is suffered in a core not on edges. (E.g. It is not centrally positioned Syria, Iraq, Iran or Afghanistan intervening in the geographic peripheries, such as the UK, US, Russia, Canada.) Periphery faster coagulates as it is rarely intruded. Center itself melts and is melted constantly. In the world of our realities; periphery sends, center absorbs.)

The rise of the West was portrayed as a pure virgin birth as John M. Hobson fairly concluded. Europeans delineated themselves as the, only or the most, progressive subject of the world's history in past, presence and future. At the same time, the Eastern peoples - e.g. Asian as 'the people without history' - were seen as inert, passive and corrosive.[7] While the Solar system 'became' heliocentric, the sake and fate of our planet turned plain - Europocentric. The *world is flat* mantra set the stage, turning all beyond Europe into a *sanitary corridor*, a *no-fly-zone*.

Ambient, anti-Orient

“The idea of Europe found its most enduring expression in the confrontation with the Orient in the age of imperialism. It was in the encounter with other civilizations that the identity of Europe was shaped. Europe did not derive its identity from itself but from the formation of a set of global contrasts. In the discourse that sustained this dichotomy of Self and Other, Europe and the Orient became opposite poles in a system of civilizational values which were defined by Europe.” - notes Delanry.

Even the English word to determine, position, adapt, adjust, align, identify, conform, direct, steer, navigate or command has an oriental connotation. To find and locate itself opposite to Orient, means to orient oneself.

Feudal Europe had identified itself negatory towards Levant and Islam. It reinvented a historical unity and continuity of Roman Empire (precursor of today's Euro-MED) into an *us-them* binary categorisation: The peripheral outcast became thus Rome (Western Empire) and the legitimate successor - who outlived its move to Bosphorus for over 1.000 years - became 'Byzantium'.^[8] No wonder, tireless binary categorisation is an essential glue and galvaniser.

Clearly, it was an identity heavily resting on insecurity. Proof? An external manifestation of inner insecurity is always aggressive assertiveness.

Is this still alive or even operative? How does it correlate today?

* * * *

Europe repeatedly missed to answer to the East and Middle East through a dialogue (instruments) and consensus (institutions) although having both (via CoE; OSCE's MPC; EU's ENP, Barcelona Process, etc.). For the past 28 years, it primarily responded militarily in the MENA (or/and with sanctions, which is also a warfare, a socio-economic one) - via 'Coalitions of the Willing'. However, for a rapidly economically and demographically contracting Europe, the confrontation does not pay off anymore. While practically still yesterday (by the end of WWII), four of the five largest economies were situated in Europe, today only one is not in Asia. None is in Europe.^[9]

(Likewise, while the US economy contributed with 54% of the world output in 1945, today it hardly covers 1/3 of that share. Hence, Americans are not fixing the world any more. They are only managing its decline. Look at their footprint in former Yugoslavia, Afghanistan,

Iraq, Libya, Mali, Yemen and Syria.)

The same way the Islam has started as an exclusive Arab monopoly to be soon after taken over (for good) by the Turks, Persians and southeast Asians (who are today far more enhanced), the same way the Modern age has started with Europe, but is today a planetary undertaking that least resides within its originator. Simply, the Old Continent is not a wealthy club anymore. It is a theater with a memory of its wealthy past. Presently, Asia, Africa, Latin Americas are rapidly self-actualising and learning much more from each other than from the West.

And, Europe? Still to this very day, its national institutions are too quickly turning to culture and identity to explain politics, especially at election times. As simple and convenient as it seems, it is not as accurate as such. All across Europe, the governments repeatedly failed at distributive justice, not on culture or behavioural recognition. Thus, the EU has to learn how to deescalate and compromise. Certain identity cannot be put in line only with its geography. It has to respond to other realities as well. This is in the continent's best interest, for the sake of its only viable future. Therefore, it is a high time for the Brussels-headquartered Europe to challenge its rigid socio-political choices, and to evolve in its views and actings - for at home and for abroad.

If we are any serious, let us start by answering the following: Is the so-called Russian expansionism or MENA 'Islamofascism' spontaneous or provoked, is that nascent or only a mirror image of something striking in front of it? And after all, why indigenous Europe's Muslims (those of the Balkans) and their twins, indigenous Christians of MENA (those of Levant) are now two identically slim shadows on a (bullet holes scarred) wall.

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Appendix

German Biology Book of 1942 (Biology for the Middle School, For 5th Grade Girls;

chapter: **The Laws of Nature and Humanity)**

We have established that all creatures, plants as well as animals, are in a constant battle for survival. Plants crowd into the area they need to grow. Every plant that fails to secure enough room and light must necessarily die. Every animal that does not secure sufficient territory and guard it against other predators, or lacks the necessary strength and speed or caution and cleverness will fall prey to its enemies... The battle for existence is hard and unforgiving, but is the only way to maintain life. This struggle eliminates everything that is unfit for life, and selects everything that is able to survive. Mankind, too, is subject to these natural laws, and has won its dominant position through struggle. Our Führer tells us:

He who wants to live must fight, and he who does not want to fight in this world of perpetual struggle does not deserve to live!" (*Mein Kampf*, p. 317)

Each life form strives to ensure the survival of its species... The number of offspring must be greater than the number of the parents if the species is to survive (law of the larger number of offspring). Each species strives to conquer new territory. Here, too, we can recall the Führer's words: **The goal of female education must be to prepare them for motherhood.** (*Mein Kampf*, p. 460)

These natural laws are incontrovertible; Those who resist them will be wiped out. Biology not only tells us about animals and plants, but also shows us the laws we must follow in our lives, and steels our wills to live and fight according to these laws. The meaning of all life is struggle. Woe to him who sins against this law. Our Führer reminds us: **The world does not exist for cowardly nations.** (*Mein Kampf*, p. 105)

Citations

^[1] This deep historical animosity towards the externally induced, forced trade - so foreign to the organic tissue of the nation - is deeply rooted even with the champion of the world's trade of today: China. Its Communist Party leader - not so long ago - Jiang Zemin in his inaugural speech of 1989, defined entrepreneurs as: "self-employed traders and peddlers who cheat, embezzle, bribe and evade taxation."

^[2] Historian Patrick Manning estimates that at least 8 million people were exported to Americas as slaves from the West Africa alone between 1700 and 1850. To this number, it has to be added at least 30% more that died in in the enslaving related struggles all over the

Atlantic coast of Africa from a present-day Mali to Angola. Early French colonial records for the western Sudan; a large swath of western Africa (from Senegal via Mali and Burkina Faso, to Niger and Chad) accounted for over 30% of population being slaves as late as in 1900. Even Liberia - founded for freed American slaves - accounted up to one quarter of its population as slaves or in a slavery-like conditions, as late as in 1960s!

^[3] This of course creates a source of everlasting debates between advocates of historical determinism and those who portray human development as a working of historical contingency. Borrowed from evolutionary biologists, the *Path dependence* or *Contingent path of history* is a theory originally developed by economists to explain technology adoption process and industrial r/evolution of the West (allegedly) triggered by an incident or anomaly (biological, genetic, cosmic, geo-morphological, climatic, and then anthropo-cultural, socio-political, etc.).

^[4] Even the US Founding Fathers were slaveholders (5 of the 7 principal ones: Benjamin Franklin, John Jay, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison and George Washington).

^[5] E.g. the British East India Company controlled Indian sub-continent with its private army of 350,000 soldiers - considerably more than the British monarchy had at its own disposal. It was only in 1858 that the UK Crown put India under its direct rule. Dutch took Indonesia from the VOC company after 200 years of its corporate rule over the largest world's archipelago.

^[6] Explaining the notion of the Bantu Education Act of 1954, one of the chief architects of Apartheid the Dutch-born prof. dr. Hendrik Verwoerd, Prime Minister of South Africa, bluntly spelled out the following in his speech of that year: "The Bantu must be guided to serve his own community in all respects (Bantustan). There is no place for him in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour ... For that reason it is to no avail to him to receive a training which has as its aim absorption in the European community while he cannot and will not be absorbed there." (*The State Archives, South Africa, National Library*)

^[7] Undoubtedly, (western) Europe owes its prosperity to extension of its commerce and colonial expansion. But let us take a closer look: "The profitability of European colonial empires was often built on the destruction of independent polities and indigenous economies around the world, or on the creation of extractive institutions essentially from the ground up, as in the Caribbean islands, where following the almost total collapse of the native populations, Europeans imported African slaves and set up plantations systems. ... We will never know the trajectories of independent city states such as those in the Banda

Islands, in Aceh, or in Burma would have been without the European intervention. They may have had their own indigenous Glorious Revolution. But this possibility was removed by the expansion of the Dutch East India Company. ... The British East India Company looted local wealth and took over, and perhaps intensified, the extractive taxation institutions of the Mughal rulers of India - coinciding with the massive contraction of Indian textile industry. The contraction went along with the de-urbanisation and increased poverty. It initiated a long period of reversed development in India. (Find the living parallel with a colossal de-industrialisation and de-population of Eastern Europe past its westernisation from 1989 on - *op.aut.*) Soon, instead of producing textiles, Indians were buying them from Britain and growing opium for the East India Company to sell in China. ... The Atlantic slave trade repeated the same pattern in Africa. Many African states were turned into war machines intent on capturing and selling slaves to Europeans..." - noted Acemoglu and Robinson (*Why Nations Fail*, page 271-273).

^[8] All until late XVIII century, the word 'Byzantium' was unknown beyond the old-Illyrian name for a small ancient Greek colony of *Byzantion*. The emperors from Constantinople everybody referred as the Romans. Even the famous codification of Roman law under Justinianus (*Corpus Iuris Civilis*) - which lawyers celebrate as the origins of modern law and planetary legal systems - physically took place in Constantinople.

^[9] The moment of 'liberal truth' always comes from Atlantic. Thus, Ana Palacio who served both sides of Atlantic (as the former Spanish Foreign Minister and the former Senior Vice President of the Washington-based WB) - among many others - recently warned the Western Ummah: "After years of handwringing over Obama's strategic "pivot" to Asia, even as Russia was stirring up trouble in Ukraine, Europe is once again a strategic focus for the US. But the deeper message is far less encouraging. The US is acting because its European partners have not. This divergence is troubling. American engagement is necessary to provide momentum, but it is Europe's weight that has served as the critical mass required to move the world's liberal order in a positive direction. From the perspective of the European Union, the latest US security bailout raises the possibility that after more than two decades of growing prominence, Europe will lose its agenda-setting power." (part of quotation underlined by A.B.)

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