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EUROPEAN COMMUNION AND PLANETARY ORGANIC CRISIS

Ian Manners

I. Introduction: European communion theory of crisis

[A]ccelerated, energy intensive production, consumption and distribution systems are serving to intensify an unprecedented planetary organic crisis . . . This crisis involves interacting and deepening structural crises of economy/development, society, ecology, politics, culture and ethics – in ways that are unsustainable
(Gill and Benatar, 2020: 5)

The most common way of theorising the crises of the European Union (EU) is to see them, at best, as a run of ‘bad luck’, or at worst as ‘multiple challenges’. This chapter brings two different perspectives to the study of the EU and its crises by *theorising* European (dis)integration using the Critical Social Theory (CST) of ‘European communion’ (Manners, 2013a) within the *context* of ‘planetary organic crisis’ (Gill and Benatar, 2020). These perspectives mark a radical break from ‘classical integration theories’ in using CST, from viewing the crises as distinct from each other, and from seeing the crises as particular to the EU. The rest of this section sets out the main arguments for a European communion theory planetary organic crisis. The following five sections focus on European communion in the context of the neoliberal economic, demographic social, climatic ecological, proxy conflict, and ethno-nationalist political crises of the twenty-first century. The final section concludes on making sense of European communion and planetary organic crisis.

In the context of perceived global crises such as the environment, the economy, and changing ‘great power’ relations, European communion encourages a broader approach to understanding Europe in a global context (Manners, 2013a). European communion is situated in contemporary debates concerning the legitimacy, form, and role of the EU under conditions of European and global crises. The concept

of European communion is defined as the ‘subjective sharing of relationships’, understood as the extent to which individuals or groups believe themselves to be sharing relations (or not) and the consequences of these beliefs for European political projects, processes, and products (Morgan, 2005). The contemporary projects, processes, and products of the European union are neither solely characterised by supranational integration (‘ever closer union’), nor by intergovernmental cooperation (‘never closer union’), but by a recognition of communion (‘sharing’) involved in a more global EU. The notion of communion captures the multiple nature of the EU as a political object between imagined communities and cosmopolitan enactments – where local and global politics commune. In this respect, the need to understand the economic, social, and political processes of European union becomes important to understanding the successes or crises of bold political projects of the EU. Rather than integration or cooperation, the emergent consolidation of the EU is thus better characterised by the concept of European communion in the context of contemporary crises. It is also suggested that within European communion, there are three different approaches to the EU as a political object – the EU as a constellation of communities, the EU as a cosmopolitan space, and the EU as an example of cosmopolitical coexistence. These involve drawing together communitarian perspectives of member states, supranational community, and transnational processes; cosmopolitan perspectives of deliberative, gender, and difference politics; and cosmopolitical perspectives of reconciliatory, identity, and ethical politics (Manners, 2013a: 487–488).

Classical theories of integration have their origins in the rationalisations of the 1950s, with a ‘supranational approach’ involving a ‘new form of ‘action in common’ among governments’ and merging ‘sovereignties to form a new political unit’, and ‘intergovernmental co-operation’ based on retaining ‘national influence and control’ (Camps, 1956: 3, 1957: 7). Similarly, this involved ‘schemes of integration which . . . impinged upon sovereignty’ and ‘closer coordination between governments’ (Edler Baumann, 1959: 363). By the 1970s, the three classical theories were taught as intergovernmental cooperation, supranational community, and transnational processes (Webb, 1977). Classical theories of integration tend to be embedded within three sets of structuring assumptions of neoliberal ideology, rationalist political science, and the discrete character of crises. The three classical integration theories of neoliberal intergovernmentalism, neo-functionalism, and postfunctionalism all operate within the ideological common sense of neoliberal orthodoxy largely unquestioning ideas of market liberalism, the privatisation of public life, or austerity policies. Similarly, these classical theories make sense within rationalist political science assumptions of international interdependence, technocracy, and politicised general publics. Finally, these classical theories accept the discrete character of the crises explored here, largely without thinking either about the historical, economic, social, ecological, conflictual, and political context, or thinking about the holistic planetary nature of the EU’s crises.

In contrast, European communion fundamentally questions the neoliberal ideological common sense through CST (Manners and Rosamond, 2018: 33; Manners, 2020, 144). Similarly, European communion breaks with rationalist political science through defining European integration as the ‘economic, social, and political process of mutual accommodation and inclusion by European states and peoples’ (Manners, 2018: 1214) and by theorising the processes of European integration in psychosocial terms. This involves theorising communion in sociological terms as neither community nor society but as a type of social relationship, while simultaneously theorising communion in psychological terms as neither selfish nor selfless behaviour but as a consideration of others (Manners, 2013a: 476). In this respect, European communion demands a political psychology approach, understood as the bidirectional interaction of political and psychological processes (Deutsch and Kinnvall, 2002: 17; Manners, 2018: 1214). Finally, European communion links together the holistic planetary organic crisis in order to understand ‘real world problems, whether economic, social, environmental, conflictual or political’ (Lynggaard *et al.*, 2015: 15).

The twenty-first century has been increasingly discussed in terms of crisis and catastrophe for both the EU and planetary politics. The development of the post-Cold War European communion has taken place within this context where the ‘catastrophic failures’ of the neoliberal economic system, global warming, sustainable development, and global justice demand the root causes of twenty-first century crises be rethought (Manners, 2009: 9–10). Three critical social theorists set out how ‘today’s crisis resembles that of the 1930s. . . in multiple dimensions – not only economic and financial, but also ecological and social’ (Fraser, 2013: 81), with ‘the crisis cascading through society . . . leading to large changes, catastrophe and societal transformation or collapse’ (Walby, 2015: 1–2), generating a ‘discussion of European (dis)integration as part of a global organic crisis’, a ‘multidimensional crisis’ across at least ‘three dimensions: the social, the political and the economic’ (Kennett, 2017: 432). As Joseph Stiglitz (2019) stated so clearly: ‘If the 2008 financial crisis failed to make us realise that unfettered markets don’t work, the climate crisis certainly should: neoliberalism will literally bring an end to our civilisation’. Taking these economic, social, ecological, conflictual, and political dimensions together, it becomes clear that theorising the crises of the EU remains trapped within the ideological common sense orthodoxy of capitalism’s planetary organic crisis. Instead, this chapter views all of these crises as one common to the EU and the planet – ‘an unprecedented planetary organic crisis’ (Gill and Benatar, 2020: 5).

II. Neoliberal crisis of economy through inequality

Over the past decade, steady improvements in the availability and quality of data on economic inequality have led to very worrying evidence of the effects of the spread of neoliberal ideology across the world. Neoliberalism is the privatisation of public life, including the deregulation and privatisation of nationalised industries, financial

services, welfare state, and government (MacLeod and Emejulu, 2014: 431; Manners, 2018: 1225). In political terms, it is 'neoliberalism's unremitting calculations of instrumental worth and its incapacity to imagine a world-building project that is not entrepreneurial by nature' that puts democracy in disrepair (Honig, 2017: 14).

As Alvaredo *et al.* (2017) and the World Inequality Report 2018 demonstrate, the total *income inequality* growth gap by percentile has been increasing between 1980 and 2016. During this period the bottom 50% of the global population captured 12% of total growth, the middle-income group experienced the lowest growth, and the top 1% captured 27% of total growth. These same sources also demonstrate how the top 10% income shares across the world have been increasing during 1980–2016. The highest share of over 50% of national income by the top 10% of income earners is found in the Middle East, Brazil, and Sub-Saharan Africa. During the period 1980–2016, massive increases in income shares by the top 10% were seen in India, the USA, Canada, Russia, and China with shares of national income rising by 10–20 points to over 40% shares of national income. The slowest growth in the top 10% income shares is seen in Europe during the same period, rising less than 10 points within the 30% bracket. The highest share of 20% of national income by the bottom 50% of income earners is found in the Europe in 2016, slightly down from 22% in 1980. During the period 1980–2016, massive decreases in income shares by the bottom 50% were seen in Russia, China, India, the USA and Canada with shares of national income falling by over 10 points to under 18% share of national income. The lowest shares of national income by the bottom 50% of income earners are found in the Middle East, Sub-Saharan Africa, Brazil, and, by 2016, the USA and Canada, all on or below 14% of national incomes.

Data for changing *gini inequality* in the EU shows a more varied picture, with at least six patterns recognisable in the period 1960–2018 (UNU World Income Inequality Database). First, the early Member states of the EC (Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Netherlands) and Austria had high gini inequalities over 0.32 prior to the 1980s, dropping rapidly to below 0.30 in the 1980s, then climbing back up to the range 0.28–0.31 in the 1990s to date. Second, Southern Member states (Italy, Greece, Spain, Portugal) and Ireland had very high gini inequalities over 0.34 prior to the 1990s, slowly dropping to the range 0.32–0.34 in the 2000s to date. Third, Nordic Member states (Denmark, Sweden, Finland) also had high gini inequalities over 0.30 prior to the 1980s, dropping to below 0.25 during the 1980s, then rising again to the range 0.25–0.28 in the 2000s to date. Fourth, the Central European Member states (Poland, Hungary, Czechia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Croatia) had low gini inequalities below 0.28 prior to 1989, followed by rapid increases over 0.28 for Poland, Hungary, and Croatia after 1990. Since the late 1990s and increasingly in the 2010s, inequalities have fallen under 0.30 for Poland, Hungary, and Croatia, while inequality has fallen under 0.25 for Slovakia, Slovenia, and Czechia. Fifth, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Bulgaria, and Romania have maintained high gini inequalities over 0.30 since 1989. Sixth, the UK remains an

outlier to these patterns, with low gini inequality below 0.28 prior to the 1980s, rising rapidly over 0.30 during the late 1980s and remains in the range 0.32–0.36 in the period 1990–date, constantly the most unequal large economy in the EU. In summary, the EU gini income inequality data demonstrates a general pattern of convergence since 1989 to an average of 0.30, combined with patterns of lower inequality below 0.28 (Slovakia, Slovenia, Czechia, Belgium, Finland, Sweden, Netherlands, Austria, and Denmark) and higher inequality above 0.32 (Bulgaria, Lithuania, Latvia, Romania, and the UK).

The OECD Wealth Distribution Database (WDD) demonstrates how wealth *inequality* is twice the level of income inequality (Balestra and Tonkin, 2018: 4; OECD, 2019). Across the twenty-eight OECD countries covered, the wealthiest 10% of households hold, on average, 52% of total household wealth, while the 60% least wealthy households own little over 12%. The OECD WDD, combined with the World Economic Forum Inclusive Development Index 2018 (WEF IDI, based on Credit Suisse Global Wealth Report data), demonstrates how groups of EU Member states have considerable variation in *wealth inequality*. For example, according to the WEF IDI, Sweden, Ireland, Denmark, and Germany all have high wealth inequality ginis over 0.70 (compared to the US 0.86). The same data demonstrates that Finland, Ireland, the UK, Sweden, and Luxembourg have increased their gini inequalities over 2% between 2013 and 2017. The OECD WDD data further shows the ratio of mean to median net wealth per household as being over the OECD average in the Netherlands, Denmark, Germany, Austria, and Latvia. As the OECD report makes clear (Balestra and Tonkin, 2018: 17, 22, 62) there are considerable methodological challenges in collecting and measuring wealth data, but it is clear that EU wealth concentration is higher in financialised economies such as the Netherlands, Germany, Austria, Ireland, Luxembourg, and the UK, as well as economies where wealth is held off-book and offshore (as the Panama Papers illustrated). Thus, while wealth inequality in the EU is at least double that of income inequality at an approximate gini index of 0.70, it remains below the very high figures for the BRICS and USA at over 0.80.

European communion and neoliberal economic crisis

The creation of the Single Market in the 1980s, the Single Currency in the 1990s, and the Global Europe trade policy in the 2000s all contributed to the liberalisation of ‘Economic Europe’ over the past 50 years (Manners and Murray, 2016: 191–192, 195–197). As set out in the introduction (Brack and Gürkan, 2020), the economic and social consequences of the 2008 financial crisis and economic governance remain a controversial issue. This economic crisis has revealed a tension between the EU-wide market order and social solidarity in the context of neoliberalism and permanent austerity (Rosamond, 2017: 39–43; Manners and Rosamond, 2018: 33). As the evidence of neoliberal inequality in the EU demonstrated, there is considerable variation among EU member

states with Greece and the UK demonstrating shocking evidence of the failures of ideological austerity. In general, Central European and Nordic Member states have performed better at resisting neoliberal economic inequality, while financialised economies such as the UK, Ireland, and Luxembourg have been more vulnerable to inequality.

Communitarian perspectives on the neoliberal crisis tend to assume that communities or groups serve to aggregate collective interests, either through EU member states, through European supranational community, or through transnational European processes. What is clear is the extent to which classical theorists tend to grant far too much agency to Member states within neoliberal intergovernmentalism, to the Commission and European Central Bank within neofunctionalism, or to ethno-nationalist groups within postfunctionalism. In contrast, the structural power of the financial community of transnational capital (found, for example, at the World Economic Forum in Davos) remains largely overlooked within classical theory, while the importance of transnational anti-austerity social movements (found, for example, in anti-austerity organisations such as the European Trade Union Confederation and the European United Left/Nordic Green Left group in the EP) is largely dismissed.

In contrast, cosmopolitan perspectives on the neoliberal crisis differ from communitarian theories in arguing that concerns for humanity as a whole, or the rights of the individual within humanity, should provide the basis for legitimate political actions. It is clear that classical integration theories offer primarily endogenous explanations for the EU, usually overlooking the possibility of concerns for the rights of the individual within humanity. Cosmopolitan theorists, such as Jürgen Habermas (2013), argued that the neoliberal crisis demanded the expansion of supranational democracy at the European level. Instead, EU cosmopolitan principles of ‘the sustainable development of Europe based on balanced economic growth and price stability, a highly competitive social market economy, aiming at full employment and social progress, and a high level of protection and improvement of the quality of the environment’ (Treaty on European Union: Article 3.3) were jettisoned during the decade of neoliberal crisis 2009–2019.

A third position of cosmopolitical perspectives on the neoliberal crisis draws on cosmopolitan ethics and communitarian politics to encourage agonistic, not antagonistic, confrontation that both supports and critiques ‘world-building’ institutions such as the EU (Honig, 2006; Mouffe, 2013). Classical integration theories, and the field of EU studies more generally, have largely sought to exclude critical attempts to encourage another Europe and another theory that makes the European economy more equal. Cosmopolitical theorists, including Nancy Fraser (2013), have argued for a Polanyian-like ‘triple movement’ to genuinely achieve one of the EU’s central economic objectives: a social market economy. A cosmopolitical approach to the neoliberal crisis seeks to return questions of general economic interest to public, democratic debate (Scholl and Freyberg-Inan, 2018: 115; Manners, 2020, 145).

The European communion theory of European (dis)integration sees the constellation of EU communities being played off against each other by agents of neoliberal disaster capitalism; it sees the EU's cosmopolitan space being occupied by exogenous forces of the 1%; and it sees the Europe of cosmopolitical coexistence being extinguished by reactionary supporters of the 'status quo'. Most important of all, European communion theory maintains the necessity of these agonistic perspectives of different subjectivities on sharing relations within and without the EU as being essential for understanding the neoliberal crisis of economy through inequality.

III. Demographic crisis of society through injustice

In parallel with the spread of neoliberal ideology since the 1980s, there have been accelerating demographic shifts in society resulting in increasing social injustice. Demographic shifts include rapidly altering human populations; the changing nature of employment; and increasing patterns of migration, refugees, and asylum seekers (Narayan *et al.*, 2018; UNHCR, 2019). Measures of social injustice in the EU and the OECD, such as those by the Bertelsmann Stiftung or the OECD, demonstrate how quality of life deteriorated with the neoliberal crisis and currently remains below levels of a decade earlier (Hellman *et al.*, 2019; OECD, 2017).

The Bertelsmann Social Justice Index (SJI) covers the forty-one OECD countries, focusing on six dimensions of social justice: poverty prevention, equitable education, labour market access, social inclusion and non-discrimination, intergenerational justice, and health. In the decade of neoliberal crisis, 2009–2019, the *poverty prevention* dimension of the SJI (Hellman *et al.*, 2019: 19–40) has remained above the EU/OECD average and improved for eight EU Member states (led by Finland, Poland, Ireland, Austria, and Denmark). Poverty prevention has remained below the EU/OECD average for eight EU member states. However, all the EU Member states have lower poverty risks than South Korea or the USA.

The SJI pattern for *social inclusion* and *non-discrimination* mirrors the pattern of poverty prevention, with twelve EU Member states experiencing declining index scores during 2009–2019, most noticeably Bulgaria and Hungary. As the report points out, 'Bulgaria, Korea, Turkey, Japan, and the United States fall into the bottom ranks, with a very significant gap between these countries and the top scores' (Hellman *et al.*, 2019: 75). EU Member states such as Denmark, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Sweden, Spain, Finland, and Portugal consistently rank among the top OECD members on questions of social justice such as non-discrimination policy, gender equality in parliament, integration policy, and youth social inclusion.

The SJI pattern for *intergenerational justice* demonstrates even more of a cross-EU difference between the Member states of northern Europe (in particular Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania) and those of southern Europe (in particular Greece, Italy, and Cyprus). In general, the report demonstrates

that ‘no great progress has been made in the last 10 years, despite the need to address issues such as demographic change’ (Hellman *et al.*, 2019: 93). Ten EU Member states experienced declining intergenerational justice index scores during 2009–2019 (led by the Netherlands and Slovakia), while eight Member states experienced improving scores (led by Greece and Denmark). However, most EU Member states have greater intergenerational justice than the USA and Japan, ‘both of which are making the effects of climate change worse for future generations’ (Hellman *et al.*, 2019: 93).

Finally, the SJI pattern for *health* shows improved performance for 15 EU Member states during 2009–2019 (led by Spain, Slovakia, Germany, and Greece), while just two Member states had significantly declining health performance (Hungary and Ireland). In general, declining infant mortality and increasing healthy life expectancy improved across the OECD and EU, although there were some shocking exceptions. During the period, 2009–2019 Greece became the only member of the OECD and EU to experience a rising infant mortality rate; the UK has experienced stalling infant mortality and life expectancy rates; and the USA has one of the worst infant mortality rates and healthy life expectancies in the ‘developed’ world.

European communion and demographic social crisis

The idea of strengthening the European social market economy, in parallel with the Single Market, was also present in the 1980s with a social chapter/policy eventually embedded in the ‘Social Europe’ provisions of the Amsterdam and Lisbon treaties in the 2000s (Manners and Murray, 2016: 193–194, 195–196). As the introduction also sets out, the issue of the refugee crisis in the latter part of the 2010s accentuated social cleavages experienced by different societies across Europe, particularly by those on the front line of receiving refugees and by those societies already experiencing demographic shifts (Brack and Gürkan, 2020). This social crisis has revealed a tension between EU cosmopolitan social order and ‘national’ communitarianism in the context of demographic shifts and social injustice (Manners and Rosamond, 2018: 34). Evidence of demographic injustice in the EU during the period 2009–2019 shows that social injustice had worsened in five Member states but improved in eight member states. In general, the Nordic member states, and the Netherlands, Slovenia, Czechia, and Germany were still setting the standard for social justice (Hellman *et al.*, 2019: 6–9). It is equally noticeable that those Member states that suffered the greatest during the Eurozone crisis, Greece and Italy, were among those with the lowest and declining social justice measures, although neither was as low as the USA.

Communitarian understandings of the demographic crisis run the risk of reading social injustice as ‘national’ issues, rather than member state manifestations of transnational phenomena. Classical integration theories assume that Member states and the Union are, or should be, the premier political arena for addressing social injustices irrespective of whether they are caused by neoliberal intergovernmentalism,

the negative spillover of supranationalism, or the injustices of majority-nationalism against minority groups. Overlooked in these accounts are the social injustices of assuming that Member states or the supranational community are willing and able to address social inequalities caused by rapidly shifting age- and skills-demographics, by the offshoring of employment, by the onshoring of migrant exploitation, or by the majority-nationalist responses to minorities and refugees within Europe.

Cosmopolitan understandings of the demographic crisis take a broader perspective on social injustices, placing it within the realm of global human justice. As Ulrich Beck and Edgar Grande (2007) have argued, classical integration theories 'remain trapped in the straightjacket of methodological nationalism' with their equation of nation with state and community with union. In contrast, cosmopolitan theorists argue that the EU should address the demographic social crisis through equal rights to address injustices in poverty, social inclusion and discrimination, intergenerational justice, and health, as stated in the treaty: 'it shall combat social exclusion and discrimination, and shall promote social justice and protection, equality between women and men, solidarity between generations and protection of the rights of the child' (TEU: Article 3.3).

Cosmopolitical understandings of the demographic social crisis offer a different, agonistic approach that both supports EU policies of achieving 'social progress', 'social justice', 'social cohesion', and 'solidarity among member states', at the same time as being critical of the failings of actually achieving these goals as set out in the previous section. Classical integration theories, working within the status quo of political science, have tended to take neoliberal, rationalist, and comparative political science assumptions for granted. In contrast, cosmopolitical theorists such as Fraser, Kennett, and Walby argue that addressing the social crisis requires stepping outside of the status quo to realise the global organic multidimensional context of escalating social injustices. A cosmopolitical approach to the demographic crisis seeks to empower transnational civil society and solidarity in order to support heterodox policies that address social injustice (Scholl and Freyberg-Inan, 2018: 115–118; Manners, 2020, 145–6).

The European communion theory of European (dis)integration reflects on the extent to which the constellation of EU communities is unable and/or unwilling to address social injustice; it reflects on how concerns for the marginalised and/or the foreign are rejected as secondary; and it considers how more progressive cosmopolitical coexistence with minorities, refugees, and the disadvantaged is crushed by populist, majority-nationalism. Again, European communion theory demonstrates the importance of understanding the subjectivities within these agonistic approaches on sharing European and non-European relations for addressing the demographic crisis of society through injustice.

IV. Climatic crisis of ecology through unsustainability

Deeply interrelated with the spread of neoliberal economic inequality and demographic social injustice is the climatic crisis of planetary ecology caused by the

negative synergies between aggressive human consumption, grotesque human pollution, devastating ecosystem collapse and extinction of wildlife, and the catastrophic climate emergency (WWF, 2018; Landrigan *et al.*, 2017; CBD, 2020; IPCC, 2018; Steffen *et al.*, 2015). As the European Environment Agency makes clear,

in 2020, Europe faces environmental challenges of unprecedented scale and urgency. Although EU environment and climate policies have delivered substantial benefits over recent decades, Europe faces persistent problems in areas such as biodiversity loss, resource use, climate change impacts and environmental risks to health and well-being.

(EEA, 2019: 9)

Aggressive human *consumption* is driven by a culture of capitalist overconsumption across the world's wealthiest people. As the Global Footprint Network (GFN)/WWF, 2019 report on 'EU Overshoot Day 10th May: Living Beyond Nature's limits' states, 'when taking into account the EU's Ecological Footprint and the biocapacity within its borders – meaning the biologically productive areas within the EU – the EU and its citizens are currently using twice more than what the EU's ecosystems can renew'. Global Footprint Network (GFN) data on the EU's ecological footprint since 1961 demonstrates how it expanded rapidly in the 1960s, then more slowly in the 1980s and 1990s to reach a peak in 2017 before shrinking back to 1990s levels. All of the EU's Member states have per capita ecological footprints well over the world's average biocapacity per capita, but while colder Northern states (e.g. Estonia, Denmark, Sweden, Latvia, and Finland) have larger footprints, more rural Southern states (e.g. Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Croatia, Spain) have smaller footprints. The EU's total ecological footprint is larger than Brazil, Russia, and India, but smaller than China and the USA. In contrast, the EU's per capita ecological footprint is larger than India, Brazil, and China, but smaller than the USA and Russia.

Grotesque human *pollution* is shaped by a disregard for the planet and humans among the world's wealthiest people. As The Lancet Commission on pollution and health stated (Landrigan, 2017: 10),

Diseases caused by all forms of pollution were responsible for an estimated 9 million deaths in 2015. Pollution is thus responsible for more deaths than a high-sodium diet, obesity, alcohol, road accidents, or child and maternal malnutrition. Pollution was also responsible for three times as many deaths as AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria combined and for nearly 15 times as many deaths as war and all forms of violence.

Household and ambient air pollution is the world's greatest killer, with Central and Eastern Member states having the highest EU levels of mortality with over 30 deaths per 100,000 population per year in Bulgaria, Romania, Latvia, Hungary,

Poland, Croatia, Slovakia, Lithuania, and Czechia (UNDP, 2019: 338). In comparison, India (184), China (113), Russia (49), Brazil (30), and the USA (13) had higher death rates than the EU average. This is because high-income countries in North America and the EU export their polluting activities to poorer countries through globalised production chains and the dumping of hazardous materials such as pesticides, industrial waste, and toxic chemicals (Landrigan, 2017: 30).

Devastating *ecosystem* collapse and extinction of wildlife are caused by human encroachment and abuse of other living species. As the EEA (2019: 11 & 38) states,

globally, about 75% of the terrestrial environment and 40% of the marine environment are now severely altered. The Earth is experiencing exceptionally rapid loss of biodiversity, and more species are threatened with extinction now than at any point in human history. . . . Overall, evidence suggests that the sixth mass extinction of Earth's biota is already under way.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature Red List Index value, which measures aggregate extinction risk across groups of species, is relatively good in most EU Member states with most species categorised as 'least concern' (UNDP, 2019: 337–341). However, in Spain, Greece, Portugal, France, Malta, and Austria, there are greater concerns with aggregate risk pointing more towards extinctions, although no EU member state is at as great a risk level as the UK. In comparison, India, China, Japan, and the USA have much more worrying extinction risk levels than any current EU member state. However, one reason for the lower extinction risks in Europe is because most major species, such as Aurochs, Elk, Bison, Caspian Tiger, and Pyrenean Ibex, have already been hunted to extinction, while European imperialists have done the same to 'game' around the world.

The catastrophic *climate* emergency is the result of the cumulative effects of capitalist consumption, widespread pollution, and the sixth mass extinction of ecosystems and species. As the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Special Report on Climate Change and Land (2019: 7) reports,

since the pre-industrial period, the land surface air temperature has risen nearly twice as much as the global average temperature. . . . From 1850–1900 to 2006–2015 mean land surface air temperature has increased by 1.53°C while global mean surface temperature increased by 0.87°C. . . . Climate change, including increases in frequency and intensity of extremes, has adversely impacted food security and terrestrial ecosystems as well as contributed to desertification and land degradation in many regions.

Carbon dioxide (CO₂) per capita emissions in EU Member states are highest in Luxembourg, Estonia, Czechia, the Netherlands, Germany, Finland, Ireland, and Poland; and lowest in Malta, Romania, Lithuania, Croatia, Sweden, France, Hungary, Portugal, and Spain (UNDP, 2019: 337–338). In comparison, the USA had

approximately double the amount of per capita emissions as the EU, with Russia and Japan above the EU average, and with China similar to the EU average. However, historical patterns of CO₂ emissions are important, led by the USA (25%), the EU (22%), China (13%), Russia (6%), Japan (4%), and India (3%) responsible for cumulative global emissions.

European communion and climatic ecological crisis

The increasing realisation of the degradation caused by industrial economies across Europe in the 1980s led to the inclusion of environmental policies in the Single European Act and the 1990 declaration of the ‘environmental imperative’ of ‘Green Europe’ addressing global warming and adopting a climate convention (Manners, 2000: 39–81; Manners and Murray, 2016: 194–195). Although not discussed in the introduction, it is self-evident that the ecological crisis and climate emergency are central to theorising the planetary organic crisis of the EU, particularly as these are the systemic roots of the pandemic crisis (Vidal, 2020; Monbiot, 2020). This ecological crisis has revealed a tension between EU consumer culture and combating global heating in the context of climate emergency and unsustainability. As the evidence of ecological unsustainability in the EU demonstrated, member states’ ecological footprints, as well as contributions to pollution, ecosystem and species extinction, and CO₂ emissions have not been sustainable since the origins of European integration in the 1950s. In general over the past decade, Sweden, Finland, Austria, Denmark, and Portugal have led the renewable energy shift, helping to reduce their per capita CO₂ emissions, while in addition France and Italy have also reduced their CO₂ emissions but without a similar renewable shift (Hellman *et al.*, 2019: 92–99).

Communitarian views on the ecological crisis tend to be coloured by zero-sum beliefs about planet earth, where relative gains and losses of the environment dominate ‘national’ thinking. For neoliberal intergovernmentalists, Member states bargain for national interest, which accelerates the tragedy of the commons. For supranational neofunctionalists, environmental policy is a logical spillover and extension of the Single Market, driven by consumption and growth. For contestation postfunctionalists, ethno-nationalist climate crisis denial determines member state politics. Overlooked in these classical theories is a foundational understanding of why capitalist, corporate consumerism exploits member states, the EU, and ethno-nationalists to prevent or greenwash policies.

Cosmopolitan views on the ecological crisis place human beings at the centre of global climate change, rather than the international relations of ‘nation-states’. As Paul Harris (2011: 193–194) has argued, cosmopolitan conceptions of climate change must involve the wealthy countries of the EU funding climate adaption programmes in developing countries structured on cosmopolitan principles of per capita bases in terms of fund-raising and pay-outs. Cosmopolitan principles on the ecological crisis in the EU include ‘promoting measures at international level to

deal with regional or worldwide environmental problems, and in particular combating climate change' (TEU: Article 191).

Cosmopolitical views on the ecological crisis seek to combine a global ethics of 'thinking like a planet' (Litfin, 2012) with the local politics of solidarity. This involves supporting the ambition of the EU's 'European Green Deal' for climate neutrality and its 'Recovery Plan for Europe' for just transition and resilience. At the same time, agonistic cosmopolitics must also critique the failure to transition to carbon neutrality in the 1990s and the mistake of relying on market mechanisms to achieve ecological sustainability in time to save most of the planet's ecosystems and species. A cosmopolitical approach to the ecological crisis combines a local politics of subsidiarity (where decisions are taken as openly as possible and as closely as possible to the citizen) with a planetary ethics of suprasidiarity (to better achieve together what cannot be achieved apart).

The European communion theory of European (dis)integration views the constellation of EU communities as vehicles for ecological unsustainability; it views the EU's cosmopolitan space as overly anthropocentric; and it views the shift to cosmopolitical coexistence with the rest of planet Earth as the critical moment of this century. European communion theory insists on the centrality of agonistic views from human and non-human subjectivities on sharing synergistic relations for surviving the climatic crisis of ecology through unsustainability.

V. Proxy crisis of conflict through insecurity

Taken together, economic inequality, social injustice, and ecological unsustainability provide root causes of insecurity and conflict across the planet. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs' *Global Humanitarian Overview 2020* (2019: 2) states that 'in 2020, nearly 168 million people will need humanitarian assistance and protection . . . the highest figure in decades. The situation will keep getting worse unless climate change and the root causes of conflict are better addressed'. The conflict crisis is the interaction of ontological insecurity, societal safety and security, ongoing domestic and international conflict, and militarisation (IEP, 2019). These measures of insecurity and conflict provide insights into the symptoms of fear and violence, but not the root causes; hence, they are termed 'proxies'.

Ontological security is the extent to which individuals and groups feel safe and secure about themselves and their world. In contrast, *ontological insecurity* is the extent to which individuals and groups experience emotional anxieties and fears about themselves and their world (Kinnvall *et al.*, 2020: 2). Eurobarometer public opinion polls show how EU respondents' main concerns at the EU level were primarily the economy and unemployment from the 2008 global financial crisis until 2015 when immigration and terrorism became major concerns. Since 2018, concerns about climate change and the environment have passed economic and terrorism concerns. At the member state level, the Eurobarometer polls gave

different results, with unemployment concerns dominant from the GFC until 2019 when they were passed by concerns about the environment and climate and, more recently, health and social security. Thus, at the root of European fears and anxieties are insecurities about the economy, society, and environment, and these feed into proxy conflicts about sovereignty, foreigners, and territory.

Societal *safety and security* refers to internal and interpersonal aspects of violence, such as homicide, incarceration, or availability of small arms (IEP, 2019: 68). In terms of safety and security, EU Member states rank among the most peaceful in the world, far above more unsafe and insecure countries such as the USA, India, China, Russia, and Brazil. Within the EU, Denmark, Slovenia, Portugal, Finland, Austria, and Sweden rank among the most peaceful in the world, while Cyprus, Italy, Latvia, Bulgaria, Lithuania, and Estonia are less peaceful. The least safe and secure countries in the world are Afghanistan, South Sudan, the Central African Republic, Iraq, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Syria, Somalia, and Yemen. All of these countries were former European colonies, occupied by European empires, or recently invaded by European countries.

Ongoing domestic and international conflict refers to the extent to which countries are involved in internal and external conflicts, as well as their role and duration of involvement in conflicts (IEP, 2019: 84). *Ongoing conflicts* are found least among sixteen EU Member states (led by Bulgaria), while Greece, Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Slovenia, Slovakia, Poland, and Croatia have significantly higher ongoing conflicts according to the GPI. However, all but Greece of the EU Member states are significantly more peaceful than India, Russia, the USA, and China on these terms. The most significant ongoing conflicts in the world are in Syria, Afghanistan, Yemen, South Sudan, Pakistan, Turkey, Libya, and Somalia, with recent EU member state involvements in Afghanistan, Libya, and Somalia.

Militarisation refers to a country's level of military build-up and access to weapons and its level of peacefulness, both domestically and internationally (IEP, 2019: 84). Within the EU, Hungary, Slovenia, Portugal, Ireland, Czechia, Austria, Denmark, Slovakia, and Latvia rank among the most peaceful in the world. In contrast, France, the UK, Greece, the Netherlands, and Italy are among the most militarised countries in the world, as are Russia, the USA, India, Brazil, and China. The most highly militarised countries in the world are Israel, Russia, the USA, North Korea, France, and Saudi Arabia. According to Stockholm Peace Research Institute, the USA, Russia, France, Germany, China, and the UK are the world's largest arms exporters, mostly to the Middle East (led by Saudi Arabia).

European communion and proxy conflict crisis

The Treaties of Maastricht, Nice, and Lisbon all contributed to the creation of the EU's security, defence, and crisis response involving a Common Security and Defence Policy, Global Strategy, Permanent Structured Cooperation in defence, and EU-led CSDP missions and operations (Manners, 2000: 189–229, 2013b:

239–254). Although not discussed in the introduction, proxy conflicts across Europe and its neighbourhood, particularly in Moldova/Transnistria, Georgia/Abkhazia/Ossetia, and Ukraine/Crimea, are vital for understanding why questions of Russia, succession, and independence are as important for the EU as they are for Ireland/Northern Ireland, UK/Scotland, Spain/Catalonia, and Serbia/Kosovo. These conflict crises have revealed a tension between EU sharing of sovereignty and ‘national’ self-determination in the context of proxy conflicts and insecurity. As the evidence of conflict insecurity in the EU and beyond demonstrated, different European states are extremely vulnerable to internal conflicts and succession, while others are more vulnerable to external interference and proxy wars. In general, while the EU has developed a security and defence capacity over the past 30 years, it is increasingly vulnerable to external, in particular Russian, interference in European democracies such as Germany, France, the UK, Spain, Sweden, and Hungary (Snyder, 2018; US Senate, 2018; Taylor, 2019).

Communitarian approaches to conflict crises provide mainstream thinking about insecurity and conflict within the EU and the world, naturalising and fixing monolithic ideas of ‘nation’, ‘state’, and ‘security’. Neoliberal institutionalists reify these assumptions through methodological nationalism that sees EU security and defence policy solely in terms of national security. Supranational neofunctionalists move these assumptions to the EU level through methodological supranationalism that sees EU security and defence policy solely in terms of supranational security. Although different in emphasis, contestation postfunctionalists share these assumptions through allowing methodological ethno-nationalism explanatory space for challenging the EU as undermining majority-national security.

Cosmopolitan approaches to conflict crises shift the focus from the ‘nation-state’ to human individuals and human security. As Mary Kaldor *et al.* (2018: 2) state, ‘human security . . . is about the kind of security that individuals expect in rights-based law-governed societies where law is based on an implicit social contract among individuals, and between individuals and the state.’ This approach is set out in the 2016 *Global Strategy*: ‘The EU will engage in a practical and principled way in peacebuilding, and foster human security through an integrated approach.’ (EEAS, 2016: 9).

Cosmopolitical approaches to conflict crises seek to combine, or hybridise, the global ethics of cosmopolitan, liberal peacebuilding with the local politics of pragmatic, indigenous peacebuilding. This involves supporting the ambition of the EU’s *Global Strategy* to ‘pursue a multi-level approach to conflicts acting at the local, national, regional and global levels; a multi-lateral approach engaging all players present in a conflict and necessary for its resolution’ (EEAS, 2016: 29). At the same time, agonistic cosmopolitics must also critique the failure to understand or address the ontological insecurities and absence of safety and security that characterise much of Europe and the world. A cosmopolitical approach to the conflict crises seeks to address the causes of conflict and violence, such as chronic fear and

societal insecurity, at the same time as addressing the symptoms such as militarisation and proxy conflicts in Europe and the world in order to achieve sustainable peace.

European communion theory of European (dis)integration takes an agonistic approach to the contradictions of communitarian, cosmopolitan, and cosmopolitical understandings of proxy conflict crises. The theory understands the constellation of EU communities as maintainers of ‘national’, ‘supranational’, or ‘ethnonational’ security; it understands the EU’s cosmopolitan space as a place for human security; and it advocates how the cosmopolitical coexistence of sustainable peace provides a means of escaping the eternal cycle of proxy conflicts. European communion theory extends the subjective sharing of relations beyond European space to cover the global place in order to resolve the proxy crisis of conflict through insecurity.

VI. Ethno-nationalist crisis of politics through irresilience

The accumulation of economic inequality, social injustice, ecological unsustainability, and conflict insecurity is the precondition for the political crisis of the EU. Milada Anna Vachudova (2019a: 64, 2019b: 701) has identified the role of ‘rent-seeking elites who use ethno-nationalist appeals to legitimize the concentration of power’ on an ‘extreme right ethno-nationalist platform that vilifies the European Union [where] incumbent populist parties cast the European Union as a danger to the well-being of the people’. The ethno-nationalist crisis of politics in the EU is the result of the rise of right-wing ethno-nationalist parties, the crisis of trust in Member states and the EU, the erosion of civil liberties, and the decline of political rights. These measures of political health demonstrate the spread of democratic irresilience – the inability of states and societies to reform, preventing them from withstanding and recovering from internal and external crises – which has accelerated during the past 14 years of democratic decline across the world (Freedom House, 2020).

The rise of right-wing *ethno-nationalist parties* and politics has been a feature of European politics since the long-standing wartime fascist regimes of Mussolini, Horthy, Salazar, Dollfuß, Hitler, Franco, and the return of far-right parties in the 1970s. This return of ethno-nationalist support in response to the economic and social stagflation of the 1970s and 1980s is seen in the direct elections to the European Parliament (EP) from 1979 to 2019. In the 1979 and 1984 elections, ethno-nationalist parties of both anti-EU conservative-nationalists (ED) and far-right nationalists (DEP/ER) achieved significant results of 21–22%. During the period 1989–2004, support for ethno-nationalist parties in the conservative (EDA/UFE/UEN) and anti-EU political groups almost halved to 7–14% of the EP vote. Since the EU enlargements of 2004 and 2007, ethno-nationalist parties have returned with the mainstreaming of the far right, advancing nativist, authoritarian, and xenophobic discourse (Mudde, 2019: 20–22). Ethno-nationalist parties have achieved 12% (2009), 21% (2014), and 19% (2019) of the EP votes, while reactionary and

far-right parties have entered governments in Austria (Freedom Party), Italy (The League), Hungary (Fidesz), and Poland (Law and Justice). During the same period, far-right parties in Scandinavia (Danish Peoples Party, Swedish Democrats, and the True Finns) have been crucial in shaping government, while in the UK the far-right UKIP/Brexit party was important in the xenophobia and corruption surrounding the 2016 EU referendum (Svensson, 2014; Manners, 2018).

The *crisis of trust* in Member states and the EU both fuels and is shaped by ethno-nationalist parties which place distrust in 'the elite', and mistrust of 'foreigners' and the EU at the centre of their propaganda. This crisis of legitimacy involves ethno-nationalist parties and groups invoking 'the people', 'the nation', 'popular sovereignty', or 'popular democracy', almost always following a majoritarian logic of a white native population at the expense of representative democracy, minority rights, and foreigners. Eurobarometer public opinion surveys show lows in trust of the EU in 1997 (37%) during the Asian financial crisis; in 2012–2014 (31%) during the Eurozone sovereign debt crisis; and in 2015 (32%) during the refugee crisis. There were highs in trust of the EU in 2001 (53%) after the 11th September terrorist attacks; in 2004 (50%) and in 2007 (57%) due to enlargement; and in 2019 (44%) as a rally against Brexit and the far-right assault on the EU. However, trust in the EU has been consistently 10–15% higher than trust in Member states governments during the period 2003–2019. The legitimacy crisis in the UK stands out as a warning for the whole EU, with approximately 50–55% of respondents tending not to trust the EU, but even higher percentages of distrust in the UK government of 55–70% during the period 1999–2019, reflecting the decline of the public sphere and the shift rightwards of the English party-political spectrum.

The erosion of *civil liberties* has spread across Europe and the world over the past 14 years, with losses of freedom of expression and belief, rule of law, associational and organisational rights, and personal autonomy and individual rights (Freedom House, 2020). Eight established EU democracies suffered an erosion of civil liberties during this 14-year period of decline, led by France, Spain, the UK, Austria, and Germany, as well as Italy, Belgium, and Denmark. Far more shocking is the collapse in civil liberties in Hungary and Poland, with Hungary now designated as only 'partly free' under 'antidemocratic populist leaders' (Freedom House, 2020: 11). However, seventeen EU Member states still have greater civil liberties than the former leader of the 'free world', the USA under Donald Trump during 2017–2021.

The decline of *political rights* has similarly spread across the world with the rise of antidemocratic ethno-nationalists in Russia, Turkey, China, India, the USA, and Brazil, while similar patterns are recognisable in Hungary, Poland, Italy, and the UK. The political rights that have followed the decline of democracy are the electoral process, political pluralism and participation, and the functioning of government (Freedom House, 2020). Seven established EU democracies experienced a decline of political rights during this 14-year period, led by Austria, Italy, and Luxembourg, as well as Spain, the UK, Belgium, and Portugal. Again, these declines are nowhere near as shocking as the fall of political rights in Hungary (and to a

lesser extent, Poland). These declines are worrying, but, apart from Hungary, none of the EU Member states has lower political rights than the USA. While the erosion in civil liberties can be partially explained as part of counter-terrorist policies, the decline in political rights reflects the rise of ethno-national politics and the result of Russia's 'Eurasia' interference policy (Snyder, 2018: 72–109).

European communion and ethno-national politics crisis

In post-Cold War Europe, the attempts to further integrate the EU without adequately addressing the negative consequences of neoliberal inequality, social injustice, or conflict insecurity helped feed the rise of ethno-nationalist reactionary and far-right movements and parties. As set out in the introduction, the EU's legitimacy and sovereignty crisis, as illustrated by the treaty ratification crises and Brexit, are crucial to the understanding of theorising European (dis)integration, but this must take place within the broader context of the four crises already discussed and the rise of ethno-nationalism in the EU. This political crisis has revealed a tension between EU legal–constitutional order and democratic authorisation found in the EU principle of democratic sovereignty: 'the functioning of the Union shall be founded on representative democracy' (the Treaty on European Union - TEU, 2009: Article 10). As evidence of ethno-nationalist irresilience has demonstrated, the past decade has seen the growth of reactionary and far-right movements and parties represented in the EP, it has seen a dramatic decline in trust in both Member states and the EU, and it has seen an erosion of civil liberties and decline in political rights in ten established democratic EU member states. In general, Hungary, Poland, Austria, Italy, the UK, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Estonia, France, Germany, and Spain have seen the greatest rise in ethno-nationalist politics that has undermined pluralist, representative democracy and contributed to their irresilience.

Communitarian explanations of political crisis hypothesise the importance of recognising the member states, the EU supranational community, or the majority-nationality of nation-states as the solution to aggregating collective interests. In other words, neoliberal intergovernmentalists, supranational neofunctionalists, and contestation postfunctionalists, all tend to blame the political crisis on the falsification of the others' approaches. All three explanations fall victim to exogenous factors such as the return of ethno-nationalism; the US or Russian interventions in democratic processes; or the critical interdependence of successful political systems on economic equality, social justice, ecological sustainability, and sustainable peace. Bringing agonistic democracy, trust-building public sphere(s), civil liberties, and political rights to the EU and its Member states would be a communitarian starting point to addressing political crisis and restoring resilience.

Following this argument, cosmopolitan understandings of political crisis maintain the importance of placing individual and human rights at the centre of resolving the EU's declining ability to withstand and recover from internal and external crises. As Erik Eriksen (2019) argues, a cosmopolitan understanding would banish

dominance in the EU through regional cosmopolitan federation of a rights-based polity with a distinct territorial reach. In many respects, this cosmopolitan understanding is similar to the first article of the defunct 2004 Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe that reflected ‘the will of the citizens and States of Europe to build a common future’. In a cosmopolitan understanding, individuals hold rights directly through their citizenship of the EU at the same time as being citizens of member states.

Cosmopolitical realisations of the productive paradoxes of political crises bring together social market economy with transnational civil society, local subsidiarity/global suprasidiarity, sustainable peace, and democratic empowerment. As Mary McAleese (1999) argued two decades ago, ‘at the very heart of the European Union is the concept of a communion of equals’, meaning mutual respect and recognition, empowering actions in concert, and reconciliation rather than predation. At the same time as supporting these principles, an agonistic cosmopolitical realisation of European communion also means critiquing dominance within and without the EU, whether by neoliberal corporate hegemony or ethno-nationalist ideology.

The European communion theory of European (dis)integration advocates realising the critical political interdependence of European and planetary constellations of communities, realising the importance of human liberties and political rights in European and planetary space, and realising European and planetary cosmopolitical coexistence through a communion of equals. Most important of all, European communion theory realises agonistic subjectivities on sharing relations in order to improve planetary resilience that enables states and societies to reform, thus withstanding and recovering from internal and external crises.

VII. Conclusion: European communion and the planetary organic crisis

The 2019 coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic serves as a demonstration of the relationship between European communion and the planetary organic crisis in the context of theorising the crises of the EU. The neoliberal crisis of EU economies ensured that ‘years of fragmentation and decades of finance cuts, privatisation, and deprivation of human and technical resources’ left public health services, like Italy’s, unable to cope with the COVID-19 pandemic (Armocida *et al.*, 2020). It is no coincidence that the coronavirus is most deadly in those economies where neoliberalism has done the most damage to the public health systems, such as in the UK and the USA (Hook and Kuchler, 2020). The demographic crisis of EU societies meant that just as ‘coronavirus deepens inequality, inequality worsens its spread’, with people from black and minority ethnic backgrounds dying disproportionately of COVID-19 (Fisher and Bubola, 2020; Devlin, 2020). As discussed, the climatic crisis of ecology ensures that human destruction of nature is responsible for the COVID-19 and that future pandemics will eventually demonstrate the unsustainability of ‘overdeveloped’ human ways of life (Monbiot, 2020; Vidal, 2020). Less

obvious is the way in which COVID-19 response measures have been embraced by ethno-nationalist groups as demonstration of the need to enforce 'national' borders against foreigners (von der Burchard *et al.*, 2020).

It is simple and commonsensical to add the COVID-19 crisis to the lengthening list of EU crises for theorising. In this way, the EU is simply suffering from another aspect of the 'polycrisis' (Jean Claude Juncker) which is a bad luck, but like the Eurozone, refugee and UK referendum crises, are survivable by addressing the discrete mistakes that caused them. This is untrue. The planetary organic crisis interweaves economy, society, ecology, conflict, and politics that are not particular to the EU, demanding holistic thinking and response:

Ambitious actions to more comprehensively address such global health challenges and the planetary crisis will require, *inter alia*, as yet unprecedented changes in human behaviour founded on stimulating our sociological, ecological and moral imaginations. . . . Some recent reflections on the political economy of planetary health reveal the extent to which the extensive forces of contemporary capitalism fully imbricate the health of populations and the planetary ecosphere upon which all life-forms are ultimately dependent.

(Benatar and Daneman, 2020: 10)

Since the 2007 'Age of Consequences' report to the US pentagon (Campbell *et al.*, 2007), it has become more likely that economic development and energy infrastructure, population changes and migrations, sea-level rise, and security implications are increasingly interlinked, complex phenomena that are nonlinear and unstable. These are not distant spatial or temporal phenomena – they are now accelerating and affecting everywhere on the planet – as the UN OCHA (2019: 2) has stated, 'on current trends, projections show that more than 200 million people could be in need of assistance by 2022', while recent climate science predicts that 'each degree of temperature rise above the current baseline roughly corresponds to one billion humans left outside the temperature niche, absent migration' (Xu *et al.*, 2020: 11352). This means that even in the most optimistic climate scenario of mean projected global temperature rise of ~1.5°C (mean land surface air temperature has already increased by 1.53°C), the expected number of people displaced from the human temperature niche is 1.20 billion ±0.34 billion by 2070 (Xu *et al.*, 2020).

As this chapter has explored, neoliberal economic inequality leaves countries more vulnerable to problems of food and water insecurity. In turn, iniquitous economic conditions together with problems of agriculture and fresh water lead to greater demographic social injustice that is likely to cause population displacement. These inequalities and injustices, together with inhospitable climatic and ecological conditions, as well as sea-level rise, will heighten problems of public health and the rise of mass displacements. The potential for greater ontological insecurity and concerns for societal safety are accentuated by inequalities, injustices, and

unsustainabilities running the risk of internal or external conflict. Finally, vulnerable and irresilient democratic governments and autocratic regimes are at far greater risk from ethno-nationalist ideology under these conditions of inequalities, injustices, unsustainabilities, and insecurities.

The European communion theory of (dis)integration brings the possibility of more holistic thinking and responses to the crises discussed throughout this volume, but it also brings critiques of conventional thinking at the same time as supporting more imaginative ‘world-building’ approaches. While the classical integration theories of neoliberal intergovernmentalism, supranational neofunctionalism, and constestation postfunctionalism provide institutionalist explanations for the crises, they tend to work within existing conventional thinking, rationalist political science, and they tend to approach the crises as discrete phenomena. It does not take much joined-up thinking to understand that Eurozone austerity, decline of social and health services, conflict in the Sahel and North Africa, arriving refugees, rising temperatures and declining agriculture, and the COVID-19 pandemic all currently affect southern members much more than the rest of the EU.

By bringing together the European communion *theorising* of European (dis)integration with the *context* of the planetary organic crisis, this chapter marks a radical break from these classical integration theories. In particular, the combination of European communion and planetary organic crisis has illustrated how thinking differently about cosmopolitical coexistence and transnational solidarity raises the prospect of thinking planetary and acting translocally. The examples of translocal phenomena such as the year 1989, colour, and Arab revolutions; world social forum, European social forum, and occupy movements; BlackLivesMatter, MeToo, eXtinction Rebellion, and Friday’s for Future movements speak loud about the need to mobilise both locally and globally to address the root causes of the planetary organic crises and the crises of the EU. Until this is realised, the EU and the planet will constantly experience cycles of inequality, injustice, unsustainability, insecurity, irresilience, and health pandemics.

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