



## IN MEMORIA

**Prof. XAVIER RICHEL**, a Professor Emeritus of Economics at Sorbonne Nouvelle University, Paris and Jean Monnet Chair ad personam of the European Union, died prematurely on 16 January 2022. We express our condolences to his family, friends and colleagues with deep sadness and admiration for his bright memory of an intellectual with a penetrating vision for the development of international and European affairs. His death is a grave loss for the international community of scholars in the field of international relations and global economy.

We have lost an esteemed scholar, truthful co-partner and friend in the research endeavours of the Bulgarian academic community. We shall keep in high respect his memory as a faithful believer in the European integration and the development of the French-Bulgarian scientific co-operation in the area of economics and international relations.

Prof. Richet's overall academic work and publications reveal the lifelong efforts of an intellectual who believed that international economic co-operation should develop on mutual trust and complementarity of partners' interests based on exposing the costs and benefits of internationalization of factors of production and international relations. His vision for the global economy as comprising interdependent relations between countries and regions motivated his involvement in the research of international capital flows, cross-border division of labour and interrelations at firms' level not only in Europe but also in Asia, Northern and Southern America. Remarkable are his efforts to analyse the trends of deepening globalization in a variety of areas of research of different regions of global economy: Central and Eastern Europe in the 1990s; China, Asia, and Latin America in the last two decades of the new millennium.

Professor Richet obtained a Ph.D. in Economics, September 1980 (Summa cum laude), University Paris X Nanterre, France. In 1988 he became a Fellow of the Research Scholarship at MIT, Cambridge, Massachusetts. In his first academic book "The Hungarian Model" published by the Cambridge University Press in 1989 he laid the foundations of his own research program in the field of comparative economic systems and international economics.<sup>1</sup>

Professor Richet started his academic career at the times of the dominance of the post-war school of comparative economic systems that reveals the differences and

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<sup>1</sup> Richet, X. (1989). *The Hungarian Model: Markets and Planning in a Socialist Economy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

similarities between the socialist and communist system under the conditions of peaceful co-existence and the trends of convergence. He was deeply interested in the comparative studies of enterprises' performance within different types of economic systems and took great interest in the transition of the socialist planned economy to market economy. Bearing in high respect János Kornai's works (such as *Overcentralization, Anti-Equilibrium, and Economics of Shortage, The Socialist System*), he took interest in transition economies and invoked the political contexts of these works to raise diverse questions and make conclusions on the institutionalist analysis of economic systems of different countries.

In 1990-1997 prof. X. Richet was co-founder, researcher and director at the ROSES (Reform and Opening of (post) Socialist Economic Systems, University Paris & Centre National de la Recherche scientifique, Paris. Together with his prominent colleagues (as prof. Marie Lavigne, prof. Vladimir Andreeff and others) he actively contributed to the intensive research as well as to promoting the international co-operation of ROSES under research projects with scholars from Central and East European countries including Bulgaria among other. As a leading economist of the International Programme on Restructuring Firms in Eastern Europe, implemented by the World Bank, London Business School and ROSES, prof. Richet contributed greatly to co-operation with scholars from Central and Eastern Europe. His book on the economics of the enterprise has been acknowledged as contributing to the modern economic conceptual approaches and better understanding of the main principles of enterprise governance with regard to the allocation of resources, the incentives of enterprise development and the government's role for the enterprises' competitiveness. The book has been translated in Albanian, Bulgarian, Chinese, Russian, and Vietnamese.<sup>2</sup>

As a connoisseur of the microeconomics of the former socialist system prof. Richet had a serious contribution to the study of the enterprises' in transition economies and worked together with prof. Saul Estrin and prof. Josef C. Brada on a book addressing the impact of the foreign direct investments for the restructuring of the transition countries.<sup>3</sup> On the basis of a common analytical framework applied to cases of FDI in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic and Slovenia, the book presents an analysis of the role of country, sector, technology, and firm-specific characteristics in determining the pattern and nature of FDI as well as the assessment of the effects of FDI for host countries at the micro and macro level.

With a lot of perseverance and systematic work on the major issues of the transition to market economy of the former socialist countries prof. Richet contributed to the development of international co-operation between Eastern and Western research

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<sup>2</sup> See Richet, X. (1996/2001/2006). *Economie de l'entreprise*. Paris: Hachette (translated in Albanian, Bulgarian, Chinese, Russian, Vietnamese).

<sup>3</sup> Estrin, S., Richet, X. and Brada, J. C. (eds.) (2000). *Foreign Direct Investment in Central Eastern Europe: Case Studies of Firms in Transition. The Microeconomics of Transition Economies*. New York: M. E. Sharpe.

institutions and implementation of research projects of common interest. His research work on the impact of the foreign direct investments for the restructuring of the transition countries underlines important specific factors for the inflow of foreign capital in some of these countries due to their comparative economic advantages.<sup>4</sup>

Prof. Richet contributed to the setting up of the European Association of Comparative Economic Systems (EACES) at the beginning of the 1990s. At that time the comparative economic systems' theory was much in need to provide a better understanding of the economic alternatives in the former socialist countries and to take advantage of choice of policy alternatives at the macro and micro level for their transition to market economy. Furthermore prof. Richet had become actively involved not only in the research of the economics of transition to market economy but also of the economic issues of the EU accession of Central and East European countries.

In his academic career he motivated his partners in research projects to focus on incentive mechanisms that had been applied in government and enterprises at the times of economic transition and European integration of the countries of Eastern and South-eastern Europe. As a Coordinator of the BALKINT Project prof. Richet organized international conferences and workshops on problems of the relations of Western Balkans and European Union aimed to analyse the lessons learned from past enlargements and the challenges posed to further integrations with the participation of scientists from leading universities in France, Italy, Romania, Hungary, Serbia, FJR of Macedonia, USA and Albania.<sup>5</sup>

In the last two decades he contributed to making the problems of the varieties of capitalism a new focus of research within the scope of the comparative economic systems in the global economy. Prof. Xavier Richet is co-founder, co-director of the BRICs Seminar (in 2011), Ecole des Hautes d'études en sciences sociales (EHESS) & Fondation Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, Paris. In the team work of the BRICs seminar prof. Richet was involved in the analysis of the geostrategic economic issues of the BRIC countries in the global economy and their advantages and disadvantages in international trade and

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<sup>4</sup> Ibidem. See also "Capitalisme importé et dépendance. Le rôle des investissements directs étrangers en Europe centrale et du sud-est", Violaine Delteil et Xavier Richet (eds.) (2019): L'Europe, une fracture à retardement. Intégration asymétrique, dépendances, fragmentation, Paris, L'Harmattan.

<sup>5</sup> Mintchev, V., Nenovsky, N. and Richet, X. (eds.) (2015). *Western Balkans and the European Union. Lessons from the past enlargements, challenges to further integrations*. BALKINT Project. Sofia: UNWE Publishing Complex. The book represents the proceedings from the international conference "Western Balkans and the European Union. Lessons from past enlargements, challenges to further integration" held on October 8, 2014 at the University of National and World Economy. It was organized within the frame of the BALKINT Project – Multidisciplinary perspectives on the European integration of the Western Balkans (2013-2016). See also Richet, Xavier. "En attendant Godot: La résistible intégration des Balkans occidentaux à l'Union européenne". In: Jean-Paul Changnollaud et Xavier Richet (eds.) (2020). *Les frontières revisitées. Héritages, fragmentation, recomposition, hiérarchies*. Paris: L'Harmattan.

capital mobility. Since then, Xavier has continuously contributed to key areas such as industrial economics and policy, economic analysis of innovation, international monetary issues and in particular the internationalisation of the *renminbi* (the official currency of the PR China), the development of key industrial sectors in China (e.g. the automotive sector), the analysis of the challenges of the Chinese New Silk Roads in Eastern Europe and the Western Balkans<sup>6</sup>. He also participated in the organisation and realisation of study days, sessions and colloquia of the BRICs seminar held in the partner institutions in Montpellier, Rio de Janeiro, Campinas, New Delhi, Trivandrum, Shanghai, Guadalajara, Mexico City, Moscow.

His interest in comparative studies of countries as integrating in the global economy inspired his research and publications on the economic development and international economic relations of China, Russia, India, Vietnam and Hong Kong.<sup>7</sup> Prof. Richet took an active interest in the study of the international economic relations of China, in particular the international penetration of capital flows, foreign direct investments and enterprises' co-operation. His research addresses issues pertaining to enterprises' development and international specialization of the Chinese economy in area of his fundamental area of scientific interests: industrial policy, corporate strategies and foreign direct investment problems.<sup>8</sup>

His recent research is focused on post-Brexit and the challenges to the European Union, EU-China relations, post-Covid industrial strategies, the impact of the European recovery plan on the competitiveness of the Bulgarian and Romanian economies<sup>9</sup>.

Prof. Xavier Richet worked honestly and productively as open-minded researcher of European and global economy. He has carried out numerous research, teaching and expert missions in Bulgaria and the Balkan countries. He is member of the editorial board of the *Economic Analysis Journal* published by the Institute of Economics at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and he is also member of the advisory board of the Monetary

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<sup>6</sup> See "Le Mécanisme de coopération 17+1, cheval de Troie de la Chine en Europe? – Entretien avec Xavier Richet". *Regards sur l'Est*, 24/05/2021. Available at: <https://regard-est.com/le-mecanisme-de-cooperation-171-cheval-de-troie-de-la-chine-en-europe-entretien-avec-xavier-richet>

<sup>7</sup> Huchet, J.-F., Richet, X. and Ruet, J. (2007). *Globalisation in China, India, and Russia: Emergence of National Groups and Global Strategies of Firms*. New Delhi : Academic Foundation.

<sup>8</sup> *China and the Global Crisis. A Comparison with the Europe*, (with JP Cabestan et JF Di Miglio). Routledge, 2012; *Foreign Direct Investments and Social Regulation*, (edited with V. Delteil et Patrick Dieuaide). Springer (2014); *Revue Autrepart*, n66, Special issue: L'industrie au sud (2014); *Chine, Inde: L'industrie au cœur de l'émergence* (co-edited with J.F. Huchet & J. Ruet), Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2015; *La présence chinoise en Méditerranée*, (avec Thierry Pairault), Paris: L'Harmattan, 2021.

<sup>9</sup> "Post-Brexit, post-populisme, quels scénarios pour l'Europe?" In: *L'Europe: Approches géopolitiques et économiques*, (avec Jean-Paul Chagnollaude, eds.) (2018) Paris: L'Harmattan. See also "La présence chinoise à la périphérie de l'Europe. Le "Format 16+1", le cheval de Troie de la Chine?". In: Richet Xavier, Julien Vercueil (eds.): *Une mondialisation contrariée. L'Europe et la Chine face à de nouveaux enjeux*. Paris: L'Harmattan, 2019.

Research Center at the University of National and World Economy. He is acknowledged in Bulgaria as a dedicated contributor to the Bulgarian – French co-operation in socio-economic research and policy consulting. For his original contribution to the deepening of the international integration of Bulgarian science and scholars prof. Xavier Richet was awarded the Academic honorary plaque “Prof. Marin Drinov” as the highest distinction at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

The Bulgarian community of scholars and researchers will preserve Prof. Richet’s memory as an international researcher firmly committed to the ideas of international cooperation and integration.

Sofia, May 2022

Prof. Dr. Tatiana Houbenova-Delisivkova  
Dr. Tsvetelina Marinova