

Histories that Matter:
Illiberal Politics and National Legacies in the New Europe

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Abstract

This paper examines the widening electoral appeal of illiberal movements and parties in view of the broadening of European political space. It argues that there is a tension between the ways that citizens *are situated* in diverse political spaces (laws, institutions, etc) and the way in which they *situate* themselves (labor markets, identities, community ties). Long standing territorial boundaries adjudicates these tensions. When these boundaries shift, there is a range of ideological and practical possibilities from market liberalism to post-nationalism with concomitant implications for citizenship. This paper draws upon and expands the analytic frame of *consolidation regime* developed in *Illiberal Politics in Neoliberal Times* (Berezin, Cambridge, 2009).

Old Europe, New Europe and the Postwar “World of Security”

In 1984, old Europe was on the verge of becoming new Europe. Nineteen eighty four was one of the last years of the postwar “world of security”—a term that Stefan Zweig the Austrian essayist and novelist popularized in the context of World War II. He began his autobiography with a description of the pre-war, “World of Security:” “When I attempt to find a simple formula for the period in which I grew up, prior to the First World War, I hope that I convey its fullness by calling it the Golden Age of Security. Everything in our almost thousand year old Austrian monarchy seemed based on permanency, and the State itself was the chief guarantor of this stability. . . . The feeling of security was the most eagerly sought-after possession of millions, the common ideal of life. Only the possession of this security made life seem worthwhile . . . (1;2).”¹

Zweig’s description of the “world of security” and the collective emotional attachment that it implied resonated as much with post World War II Europe as well as the first interwar period. Tradition and hierarchy governed Zweig’s “world of security.” He invoked the Austrian monarchy as its infelicitous primary symbol. Yet the differences between the two periods were differences of degree, not of kind. Arguably, after witnessing the horrors of World War II and the Nazi genocide, security was paramount in the minds of European citizens and rulers alike.

Postwar European security was a material, as well as an emotional, state of collective well being that was socially solidaristic, economically re-distributive, and

¹ Zweig, a Jewish émigré, wrote his autobiography, *The World of Yesterday* (1943), as he fled the Nazis. He committed suicide in exile in Brazil shortly after completing this work.

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international (Alesina and Giavazzi 2006). High productivity and growth were the economic pillars of postwar security. The Cold War and the threat of nuclear proliferation did little to undermine the basic feeling of security that permeated postwar European society. Eichengreen (2006)'s exhaustive history of the postwar European economy describes the period as a "golden age." The French have labeled the same period the *Trente Glorieuses*--the thirty glorious years. The German and Italian economies were "economic miracles."

By 1984, the social safety net associated with the post-war social contract was beginning to fray. The "end of ideology" politics associated with neo-liberal economic policy that was unthinkable in Europe 1984 is now more the norm. Europeans either stay away from the polls--abstention rates have increased--or vote in a volatile fashion that suggests no deep cultural or ideological commitments. The Muslim students who seemed mysterious in 1984 are now a constitutive feature of the urban landscape of contemporary Europe and a potent political force.

Since 1984, the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe coupled with the twin and interconnected processes of Europeanization--the expanding process of European integration--and globalization has altered the social and political landscape of contemporary Europe (Berezin, 2003). Insecurity in both the public and private domain has been one response to these processes. Fear--of immigrants, crime, disease, unemployment--has become a recurrent theme in European public discourse. Europeanization and globalization have fueled social and cultural anxieties that imbue the

rhetoric of fear with emotional resonance as well as political salience.² Right populist parties and movements, a label of classificatory convenience rather than strict analytic precision as these parties and movements have as many differences as commonalities, have thrived in the European climate of insecurity. Although the European right is not alone in its evocation of insecurity, it has arguably been the most effective in bringing the emotion of fear to the foreground of political discourse. The events of September 11th in the United States and the increased possibility of terrorist activities in Europe have solidified the rhetoric of fear and insecurity as a legitimate political stance.³

Right populism and European integration gained momentum during the 1990s--a temporal coincidence that matters. European integration, an instance of enforced trans-nationalism, challenges the standard prerogatives of the territorially defined nation-state. The accelerated pace of European integration dis-equilibrates the existing mix of national cultures and legal norms that governs those nation states. An unintended consequence of dis-equilibration is the weakening of the national social contracts that threatens to make the national space “unfamiliar” to many of its citizens. “Unfamiliarity” is more than simply a feeling of disorientation: it has practical consequences .

The modern nation-state is the institutional location of a relation between a polity and a people that provides security for its members. Legal institutions of the modern

² Anderson and Pontusson (2007) use OECD data that distinguish between the fact and perception of economic insecurity.

³ Robin (2004) discusses “fear” as a political idea and emotion. Berezin (2002) explores the interaction between the emotions of security and insecurity and their effect upon political institutions and behavior.

nation state, such as citizenship requirements, structurally inscribe individuals in the polity and society. National cultural practices from common language to shared norms cognitively and emotionally inscribe individuals in the polity and society. *Experience, individual and collective*, is a temporal and cognitive phenomenon that consciously or unconsciously draws upon the past to assess the future.⁴ Experience creates a tension between imagined possibilities and perceptions of constraint. Social, cultural and monetary capital draws the boundaries of experience that permit individuals and groups to negotiate between institutions and culture. Postwar Europe, for the most part, minimized tensions between national culture and national institutions. The postwar European nation state was an arena that adjudicated risk for its members. Capital in all its dimensions was national. “Social Europe” and the need to preserve it, a *pro-forma* comment built into integration discourse, is an acknowledgement of post-war social solidarity.

The collective and individual *experience* of old Europe was national *and* solidaristic; the evolving *experience* of “new” Europe is individualistic albeit with a dose of ambivalence and nostalgia. In terms of the argument of this book, “New” Europe, writ large, can be conceptualized as an opportunity space primarily for individuals and groups who are able to compete in trans-European economic, social and cultural markets—the

⁴ Historians (for example, Scott 1996; LaCapra 2004, Chapter 1; Jay 2005) that privilege experience as an analytic category tend to focus on individual subjects. Their approach is inductive and contrasts to the deductive and collective conceptualization of experience that this book offers. See Throop (2003) for a critique from the perspective of anthropology.

“eurostars” that Favell (2008) chronicles. For a host of reasons, this is a restricted group, as evidenced by the 2005 defeat of the referenda on the European Constitution in France and the Netherlands. In the month before the referendum on the European Constitution in France, *Le Monde* described the typical “convinced European” as a “male, citizen of less than 39 years, educated, of the center left or center right.”⁵ The living exemplar of *Le Monde*’s dry statistical profile emerged in an interview given to the *International Herald Tribune* on the day after the referendum. A thirty six year old male who “works in an Internet Company” claimed “I am embarrassed for France. . . . I travel a lot for work and have a lot of friends across Europe. My Italian and my Spanish friends just don’t understand what is happening in France—I don’t either.”⁶

In contrast to the bewildered mobile male Internet consultant and his trans-European colleagues, the experience of the ordinary European is still national—that is, their cultural and social capital, as well as their economic possibilities, are still firmly tied to the national state (Dièz-Medrano 2003). The disconnection between past experience and a European future that is oriented to the market rather than to the collectivity is fueling a re-assertion of nation-ness that characterizes the right populist moment.

Early theorists of modern democracy understood that feeling safe in one’s political space was a cornerstone of democracy that enabled citizens to empathize with others. In the beginning of the *Politics*, Aristotle underscored the link between security

⁵ Nicholas Weill, “En trente ans, l’euroscpticisme n’a cessé de croître sur tout le continent.” *Le Monde* (Paris) April 4, 2005.

⁶ Katrin Bennhold, “France Turns Out for Vote on the EU: Political Class braces for Rejection.” *International Herald Tribune* (Paris), May 30, 2005.

and democracy among citizens when he emphasized the need of “common safety” among members of the polity—the “rulers and ruled (Aristotle 1979, p. 29).” Contemporary discussions of democracy have elided the discussion of security that was crucial to earlier formulations. Europe as a fully realized political and cultural space, as institutionalized in the European Union of now 27 member states, has compromised the link between democracy and security, broadly conceived as social, political and cultural, that was the cornerstone of the post-war settlement. By moving the center of political gravity from the polity to the person, from the state to the market, Europeanization has compromised the bonds of democratic empathy and provided an opportunity for right populists to articulate a discourse of fear and insecurity.

The Right Populist Moment as Historical Surprise: The Argument in Brief

The accelerated process of Europeanization that includes political, economic and cultural integration is the core trans-European context, I suggest, within which the *right populist moment* emerged. Synergy exists between “new” Europe’s *right populist moment* and the transformation, if not outright disappearance, of the postwar “world of security.”⁷ Despite the presence of political terrorism in Italy and other parts of Europe during the student agitations of the 1960s and early 1970s, no one—academics, journalists, or politicians—would have imagined in 1984 that right populist parties would become a significant presence in European politics. Yet, today this is the case. The

⁷ The debate over security has often taken the form of the debate over welfare and social Europe. See Pontusson (2005); Mares (2003) and Offe (2003) for recent discussions. With the exception of Offe (2003), much of these authors work with a more restricted material conception of security.

fluctuating electoral success of right wing political parties is the most salient empirical indicator of an emergent right populist moment. Right wing parties are not new to European politics. A majority of European nation-states have such parties—some dating back to the 1930s (Pettigrew 1998; Eatwell 2000).⁸ What is new is that parties that analysts had viewed as extremist and fringe now attract sufficient numbers of votes to sometimes become part of legally constituted governing coalitions.⁹

An analytically sensible starting date for the right populist moment is March 1994 when Gianfranco Fini's "post-fascist" *National Alliance* became part of an Italian governing coalition. The short-lived 1994 Silvio Berlusconi government was the first instance in the democratic parts of post-war Western Europe where the right so visibly emerged as a legitimate political actor (Ginsborg 2003, pp. 285-324). In 1994, the genre of political parties to which the National Alliance belonged appeared as an exception to the prevailing political rules. From the vantage point of today, these parties appear more as fixtures than as fissures on the European political landscape.

In March 1998, Jean-Marie Le Pen's *National Front* made a significant showing in the French regional elections (for analysis see Perrineau and Reynie 1999). In April 2002, the first round of the French Presidential elections gave Le Pen enough votes that

⁸ I make this observation to underscore that in some cases there is a degree of formal continuity between old and new right parties, not to imply that there is substantive similarity between the past and the present.

⁹ Norris (2005, p.8) reports a graph of mean votes for seven radical right parties in Western Europe that displays an unbroken curve from 1980 to 2004. This curve begins to level off in 2002 and the figure, although striking, should be interpreted with caution.

he could have become President of the Republic--if he had won the second round. In February 2000, Jörg Haider's *Freedom Party* became part of an Austrian governing coalition—that has since unraveled. International alarm and public outcry in the national and international public sphere followed these events in Italy, France and Austria.¹⁰ In the Austrian case, the European Union applied sanctions. In addition to these more prominent cases, fringe parties have posed significant parliamentary threats in Switzerland, Belgium, the Netherlands and Denmark.¹¹

Despite exceptions such as Holmes' (2000) anthropological account and Art's (2006) historical analysis, the *right populist moment* lacks an analytic and theoretical narrative that situates it within the changing political, social and cultural context of contemporary Europe.¹² Noisy cadres of militants expressing extremist positions of various sorts distract from nuanced analysis of right populist parties. The recurrent popularity of the genre of parties that constitute the *right populist moment* suggests that they are expressions of deeper social phenomena that the explanations of mainstream

¹⁰ Van De Steeg (2006) has analyzed the trans-European component of the reaction to Haider's electoral victory.

¹¹ Hossay (2002) provides profiles including electoral data of right wing parties in eleven European nation states. Eatwell (2000, p. 406) provides a list of right political parties and the percent of the vote that they captured between 1996 and 1999. Norris (2005, p. 59) covers the same ground but takes statistics to 2004 in a much more visually compelling way.

¹² One reason for the lack of nuanced writing on the right is that ethnic conflict and nationalism have captured the scholarly space that such studies would normally occupy.

political science based on party strategy, electoral behavior and public opinion surveys only partially capture.

Wide fluctuations in electoral politics and outcomes suggest that the salience of right parties represents *thin* rather than *thick* commitments on the part of a volatile European electorate. *Thick* commitments characterize party militants with a deep commitment to xenophobia and a simple minded ethnic nationalism. These are the activists that Klandermans and Mayer (2006) have recently profiled. While political extremism of all stripes may generate violence and hatred, it tends not to make large electoral inroads. Skin heads do not win political campaigns. The ever variable *thin* commitments of disgruntled citizens are sociologically and culturally more interesting and politically more important. *Thin* commitments make urgent the recalibration of the standard categories that analysts typically deploy to discuss the right.

Social scientists who study right populism in contemporary Europe frequently explain it as a xenophobic response to the increased presence of non-Western immigrants in diverse nation states. In these formulations, right populism is morally unfortunate but politically unsurprising. This book takes a different stance. It starts from the position that contemporary right populism represents a historical surprise, not a political and social certainty. Migration, whether for employment, family reunification or political asylum, is an undeniable fact of past, as well as present, European experience. Immigrants may be a necessary but not a sufficient condition to account for the contemporary right. As Hall (2003, p. 398) cautions, “correlation is not causation.”

This book views the emergence of the *right populist moment* in the 1990s in various European venues as an unexpected, rather than an expected or natural, event. It

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asks whether there would be a *right populist moment* in the absence of Maastricht and the subsequent intensification of Europeanization? This formulation suggests compelling contextual issues that a single minded focus upon migration elides. Right populism poses a challenge to prevailing social science and commonsense assumptions about transnationalism and cosmopolitanism. Viewing the *right populist moment* through the lens of the social science literature on political institutions, culture and democracy provides analytic leverage on the puzzle that right wing populism represents. By analyzing the *right wing populist moment* in relation to the broader context of Europeanization and globalization, this book attempts to first, unpack the political and cultural processes that evoke the *thin* commitments that characterize citizen support, and to second, signal that we cannot make sense of right populism independently of the historical legacies and practices, both national and international, within which it arises. In a multicultural Europe of acknowledged social and political integration and increased cultural contact, right populism represents a recidivist contraction and turning inward that is puzzling. Unraveling this puzzle requires historical, that is contextual, exegesis that looks primarily at *events*, and secondarily on individual and collective actors.

National Experience: The Legacy of a Relation between People and Polity

Legacy theories that invoke the power of the past fall under the classification of “Cultural” approaches. The typical form of the argument is that nation-states that had fascist regimes and movements in the past are more likely to have fascist type parties and movements again. Art’s (2006) study that focuses upon how German and Austrian politicians use national memory to influence public debate is a notable exception to this

general tendency.¹³ Legacies have been somewhat discredited as causal mechanisms. Analysts tend to invoke them if only to dismiss them (Kitschelt 1995, pp. 203-239; Eatwell 2003, pp. 62-63, Martin 1996, pp. 25-28; Capoccia 2004, pp. 83-107). *Legacy* theories that suggest that the past will repeat itself are empirically weak as contemporary right parties and movements do not map neatly onto inter-war right parties and movements.

Yet, as the beginning of this chapter argues, *legacies* have value but not as a simple one-to-one mapping of the past onto the present. A robust account of the *right populist moment* that incorporates the acceleration of *thin* commitments requires an approach that is historical—meaning an account that situates the right in the broader social and political changes outlined in Chapter One. The “legacy” that matters in thinking about the *right populist moment* is not the power of a narrowly specified past – whether or not a country had a fascist party or regime--but the legacy of the particular national iteration of the relation between people and polity.

This analysis conceptualizes nation-states as *consolidation regimes* as well as locations of individual and collective *national experience*. Geographically situated and territorially bound—even in a transnational context--nation-states are material entities. Nation-states are also experiential entities, that is, they give cultural form to collective interpretations of the past and evaluations of the future. Alterations in the configuration of the nation-state such as the expansion of European integration pose challenges; *national experience* affects whether those challenges appear as threats or opportunities. The next section discusses the political implications of *national experience* and sketches

¹³ Art (Forthcoming) shifts his angle of vision to explicitly theorize historical legacies.

the contours of a *consolidation regime*, the heuristic that informs the empirical analysis in the book.

Calhoun (2007) has recently reminded us that “nations matter.” Amending Calhoun’s exhortation to include the state is particularly urgent within the context of Europeanization. Nation-states matter, not because they have intrinsic merit as a form of political organization, but because they are constituted as moral ontologies, collectively defined ways of being in the world, as well as political categories. Moral ontology is a shorthand term for the body of unspoken assumptions that nation-states deploy to address the normative issues that they regularly encounter as they organize political and social security for their members. Citizenship law defines and limits membership in the nation-state and confers rights as well as obligations on members.¹⁴ Events such as the French, followed by the Dutch rejection of the 2004 draft of a European Constitution, suggest that the expanding project of European integration, challenges the moral, as well as political, authority of individual European nation-states as well as the social and emotional security of citizens.¹⁵

¹⁴ Marshall (1964) provides the classic account of modern citizenship that Somers (1992) among others has challenged. For a summary and critique of the burgeoning literature, see Turner (2001). On the problems that trans-nationalism and globalization pose to citizenship rights, see Kymlicka (1995) and Sassen (2006). Non-members, such as immigrants, may make claims on the state (Koopmans and Statham 1999 and Soysal 1997) but have limited rights.

¹⁵ Perez-Diez (1993) and Miller (1995) among others make the argument that the nation-state has a moral or ethical imperative as well as a purely bureaucratic function. Much of

Nation-State: The “Daily Plebiscite”

Max Weber ‘s ([1922] 1978) ideal type of “political community” (pp. 901-926) provides a vocabulary from which to begin to theorize why changes in the form of the polity, such as those that Europeanization presents, might pose a collective challenge. According to Weber, “political community” is not reducible to economics (i.e., market activity) or politics (i.e., territorial control), rather it is a form of association that governs social actions among “inhabitants of the territory” who share culture and bonds of solidarity. The “belief in group affinity” that creates a sense of “ethnic honor” and “sentiments of likeness” (pp. 389; 390) is crucial to the formation of political community. In practice, a common language and a monopoly on closure, both territorial and cultural, are the vehicles of honor, sentiment and community, as well as national sovereignty and power. The willingness to sacrifice one’s life for one’s community based on the belief in a fictive collective past imbues the “political community” with its “enduring emotional foundations” (p.909). “Political communities” wherever they form are powerful emotional collectivities. Weber never argued that the modern state harnessed the emotional energy of the political community, but it is a useful analytic leap to make when discussing the political development of historically specific nation-states.¹⁶

the discussion of the nation-state in Europe and beyond has focused on it as an epistemology—a category of political governance and has taken the form of whether or not the nation-state has “declined” (see for example, Mann 1997; Weiss 1998; Paul, Ikenberry and Hall 2003) in the wake of a “new world order” (Slaughter 2004) or regionalization (Katzenstein 2005).

¹⁶ See Spillman and Faeges (2005) for an alternative Weberian reading of “nations.”

Nation-states were the political and cultural projects that characterized the 19th and 20th century polity.¹⁷ They are modern and they are Western in the sense that they flourished in post-1789 Europe.¹⁸ The term “project” signals the dynamic nature of the process that governed political development. Two features of this project deserve emphasis in view of the arguments that this book advances. First, the modern nation-state is the end result of two processes—a nation building and a state building process—which developed along separate and sometimes overlapping trajectories. With the exception of Italy and Germany, much of the state building took place in the 18th century and much of the culture building took place in the 19th century (Ziblatt 2006). The modern nation-state

¹⁷ The discussion of the state and nationalism has a long history. In the 1980s, social scientists turned their attention to the formation of the state (for example, the essays in Evans, Reuschemeyer and Skocpol 1985). By the 1990s, interest in the state was rechanneled into a focus on institutions as mediating organizations. “New” institutionalists focused their attention on laws, associations, and public policy. March and Olson (1984) wrote the landmark article on “new institutionalism.” See Clemens and Cook (1999), Hall and Taylor (1996), Immergut (1998) and Thelen (1999) provide analytic summaries of debates and theories. State theorists and “new” institutionalists tended to macro and meso level structural analysis. Historical events forced culture to the forefront of social science analysis. The resurgence of ethnic chauvinism in the former Eastern Europe post-1989 fueled an interest in nationalism (for example, Calhoun 1997) and national identity (for example, Kumar 2005) as a category of experience.

¹⁸ Bell (2003), Greenfeld (1992) and Gorski (2000) among others argue that nationalism existed prior to 1789, but there is a distinction between nationalism and nation-states.

is a marriage of culture and structure. Second, modern nation-states do not have to be democratic. There is no necessary correlation between the form of the state and the type of governance. Procedurally democratic nation-states can engage in practices that might not ordinarily be associated with democracy—what Zakaria (2003) labeled as “illiberal democracy” and Holmes (2003) defined as “anti-liberalism.” In short, democratic institutions and democratic sentiments do not always cohere.

The state is a modern technology of rule governed by bureaucratic rationality. As a political form, the rational bureaucratic state accommodates a range of political ideologies and regimes.¹⁹ States may be efficient or inefficient, the trains may or may not run on time, but they are a modern and western apparatus of political organization. The nation-state until recently has been the principal vehicle to give form to modern politics. Much of the emphasis in the literature on state making has been on territorial consolidation either through war (Tilly 1985) or networks of elites (Mann 1993).²⁰

The networks of elites who promoted the modern state understood that cultural consolidation was a necessity for political consolidation. Communities of people who were like each other (or who thought that they were like each other) were essential to providing the emotional identification that encouraged individuals to pay taxes and to go to war in the name of the state. The cultural community of the nation provided that

¹⁹ Again, this is a strictly Weberian conception of the term rationality. Weber ([1972] 1981, pp. 338-351] identifies the “rational state” as a purely Western form of political organization.

²⁰ See Ikegami (2005) for examples of a non-Western case; Centeno (2002) for a Latin American study.

reason. Cultural consolidation was secular in that it aimed to break the moral authority of religion and replace it with the moral and legal authority of the state. In practice this meant controlling the power of the Catholic Church or absorbing Protestant Churches into the state structure.²¹ Benedict Anderson's (1983 [1991]) "imagined community" was based on linguistic consolidation and the establishment of a vernacular facilitated by a material advance--the invention of the printing press.

The nation was not merely an imaginary entity. It was as Renan in his classic essay "What is a Nation?" argues, ". . . a large-scale solidarity, constituted by the feeling of the sacrifices that one has made in the past and of those that one is prepared to make in the future. It presupposes a past; it is summarized, however, in the present by a tangible fact, namely, consent, the clearly expressed desire to continue a common life. A nation's existence is . . . a daily plebiscite, just as an individual's existence is a perpetual affirmation of life."²² In short, *national experience* is a committed and committing phenomenon, a part of daily life that lies dormant within the collective and individual consciousness—until an internal or external force threatens that experience and makes it manifest.

CONSOLIDATION REGIMES-TABLE 2.2 ABOUT HERE

Consolidation Regimes: Describing the Fit between the State and the National Culture

Every European nation-state accomplished political and cultural consolidation in different time periods and with different degrees of "fit" between culture and the polity.

²¹ Ozouf (1963) and Curtis (2000) document the relation between school and Church for France.

²² Renan ([1882] 1996, p. 53).

In formal terms, the nation-state is a dyad linked by territorial consolidation on one hand and cultural consolidation on the other (Berezin 1999a). In practice, nation and state, culture and structure, are enmeshed inextricably. But, separating the nation and the state is an analytic move that provides conceptual leverage. It lends clarity to the issue of Europeanization, where scholars often discuss institutions and identities as if they were independent of each other. It permits rigorous conceptualization that may be brought to bear upon the relation between right populism and the advancing European project.

This section unpacks the nation/state dyad. By breaking up what is a deeply contextual and dynamic process into formal components, it allows us to think analytically about the relation between the state and the culture.²³ If we approach the nation-state as a dyad, then either of its component parts—state or nation—can be more or less strong. In this context, the term “strong state” refers to established parliamentary democracies and does not speak to its efficiency or form. Any state in the process of transition, or that is engaged in building new institutions, would fall into the conceptual category of “weak.”²⁴ In the context of the polity, national cultures are “strong” or “weak” to the degree that the

²³ While many scholars have looked at nation through nationalism and state structures—the field of scholars who have taken the historical approach and looked at nation-states as processes is relatively limited. The field of scholarship is restricted and France dominates, see e.g., Weber (1976); Brubaker (1992); Hazareesingh (1998). Berezin (1997; 1999a) has analyzed this in the case of the non-democratic instance, Fascist Italy. For a recent account of the Soviet Union, see Hirsch (2005).

²⁴ Moravcsik (2000) uses different language to make a similar distinction in his discussion of “human rights regimes.”

“political community” has subsumed ethnic and regional cultures and enforced a single national language.

Nation-state conceived as a dyad presents four possible combinations: first, strong state/strong nation; second, strong state/weak nation; third, strong nation/weak state; and fourth, weak state/weak nation. All categories require qualification. The strong/weak distinction suggests a degree of “fit” from tightly to loosely coupled between state and nation--culture and organization. *Consolidation regime* as a term captures the process of territorial and cultural consolidation that the “fit” describes.

Weak state/ weak nation, is a pre-modern category as modern persons do not live outside of institutions and culture. If we exclude it from discussion, three possibilities for *consolidation regimes* exist. A tight fit between culture and the state (strong state/strong nation) implies strong national identities with a state institutional structure that supports those identities. *Hegemonic consolidation regimes* suggest that the territorial and cultural trajectories coalesce. However, the paths to coalescence will vary depending upon the specific nation-state. This configuration is internally adaptable, but is susceptible to external threats. France is the paradigmatic case of constructed *hegemonic consolidation*, although as Eugen Weber (1976) discusses “peasants” did not “become Frenchmen” until much after territorial consolidation. Ethnically and linguistically homogeneous nation-states such as Sweden (Ringmar 1996) followed different processes than multi-lingual France. Consociations that have legislated the existence of multiple national cultures (i.e., Switzerland) or religions (i.e., the Netherlands) also fall under this rubric.

A loose fit between culture and the state (weak national culture/strong state) implies weak national identities, with a state structure that does not at least initially

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support strong identity forming institutions, i.e., school, national language. This is not to say that the polity lacks identities (or for that matter schools or a national language) just that all identities are not exclusively tied to the national state. Extra-national identities may be tied to religion or region. *Flexible consolidation regimes* are internally less coherent and given to internal conflict, but externally flexible and much more able than *hegemonic consolidation regimes* to respond to external threats or exogenous factors. *Flexible consolidation regimes* are susceptible to separatist movements. Italy and Spain fall into this category.

Hegemonic and *flexible consolidation regimes* describe states where modern political institutions are in place, and it is only the relation to the national culture that varies. The fit between nation and state, culture and polity in established states is the focus of this analysis, so the distinction between *hegemonic* and *flexible consolidation regimes* is one of degree on a continuum. These types of regimes are the principal focus of this book, but it is worthwhile for analytic reasons to examine the third strand of the conceptualization. A strong ethnic culture tied to a weak or developing state yields a *brittle consolidation regime* that has the potential for strong internal conflict (particularly if the territorial state is not ethnically homogeneous), as well as violence and in the extreme, genocide. *Brittle consolidation regimes* are also subject to intervention from external states. This category captures the former states of Eastern Europe as well as the former Soviet Union.

Table 2.2 Consolidation Regimes (Analytic Heuristic)

STATE-NATION RELATION	CONSOLIDATION REGIME TYPE	DOMINANT COLLECTIVE IDENTITY	VULNERABILITIES	CASES
Strong State / Strong Nation	<i>Hegemonic</i>	National (unique or consociational)	External Threat	France, Netherlands
Strong State / Weak Nation	<i>Flexible</i>	Sub-national (multiple)	Internal Conflict	Italy, Spain
Weak State / Weak Nation	<i>Brittle</i>	Sub-national (ethnic)	Internal Conflict and External Threat	Former Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc countries

Strong state: Established parliamentary democracies. A state in the process of transition, or that is engaged in building new institutions, would fall into the conceptual category of “weak.”

Strong nation: In the context of the polity, national cultures are “strong” or “weak” to the degree that the “political community” has subsumed ethnic and regional cultures and enforced a single national language.

Secure States: Identity Practice and the Adjudication of Risk

The latter section focused upon how the polity situates citizens within it. This section focuses upon how citizens situate themselves within the polity. Its principle focus is to theorize why the relation between people and polity is substantively consequential. It shifts attention to the conditions under which citizens feel heightened identification with the polity, in this instance the modern nation-state. The “business of identity,” to borrow from Poggi (1978) is a component feature of the “business of rule.” The strength or weakness of national identity is one measure of the degree of fit between a national culture and the state. Scholars of identity, social constructivists (for example, Brubaker and Cooper 2000; Cerulo 1997 and Somers 1994), psychologists (Tajfel 1981); modified essentialists who emphasize emotion (Suny 2001) and political scientists (Abdelal, Herrera, Johnston and McDermott 2006) tend to view identity as a property of individuals or groups. The discussion that follows continues an approach to identity developed in earlier work (Berezin 1997; 1999a,b; 2001; 2003) that views identity

(whether national or otherwise) as located between the constructed and the emotional. There are three features to identity that are salient for political cultural analysis: first, identity is a bi-focal concept; second, law is constitutive of identity; and third, identities are contingent.

Identity is a bi-focal concept. Identity has the dimension of “identified as,” a categorical or epistemological concept, as well as “identifying with,” an ontological or emotional concept. Identity in both dimensions maps onto the nation-state dyad. Scholars, even the most perceptive, often conflate “identified as” and “identified with” leading to conceptual as well as terminological slippage. Law is constituent of identity because it creates the categories of “identified as.” In the case of the nation-state, national constitutions defined the parameters of the state. National citizenship was the standard legal mechanism that nation-states used to bind individuals to the polity and to bridge the gap between a categorical conception of identity and an emotional attachment (Marshall 1964). Language consolidation was essential to creating the citizens who could communicate with each other and who were a potentially receptive audience for the political communications of the nation-state (Deutsch 1953).

“Theater states”--to borrow Geertz’s (1980) felicitous term--were necessary to the extent that societies were pre-literate or quasi literate. Modern monarchies are a residue of pre-modern ritual events.²⁵ In conjunction with language consolidation, the modern state developed a series of institutions that required participation from all of its citizens to assure that citizens experienced themselves as “identical to each other.” The educational system and the military, particularly the practice of conscription, were the standard

²⁵ Hobsbawm (1983)’s “invention of tradition” is the classic articulation.

institutions that mediated the relation between the citizen and the nation-state (Weber 1976, Chapter 17; Levi 1997; Finer 1975). Identity was a byproduct of the compulsory nature of these institutions. Compulsory school attendance and military conscription generated solidarity among citizens. These institutions aimed to generate emotional identification with the nation-state—to transform a feeling of “I am” to “We are” which is the essence of peoplehood (Lie 2004; Smith 2003).

Identity in the sense of “identified as,” the epistemological or categorical, is legally fixed; whereas identity in the sense of “identifies with,” the ontological or emotional, is contingent. By legally fixed, I do not mean to suggest that these categories of identification were not contested in their formation or that all legal frameworks are identical. As sociologists have recently demonstrated, there is much national variation in laws that seek to regulate similar processes.²⁶ By contingent, I simply mean that we all are embedded in a field of social categories, and only under some conditions do identities become salient for us. In other words, we do not feel all of our categorical identities with the same emotional intensity at all times. Most identities lie dormant and function as a kind of habit until they are challenged either positively or negatively in some way.²⁷

²⁶ See for example, Beckert (2008) on inheritance law; Saguy (2003) on sexual harassment law; Soysal (1994) on citizenship.

²⁷ See for example, Laitin (1998)’s description of identity as a “tipping” phenomenon and Gould’s (1995) conception of identity as place-based speak to the issue of contingency. Berezin (1997, pp.19-23) using ideas drawn from Connolly (1991) first elaborates the idea of “contingent identity.”

National identities, of all possible identities, are the most difficult to evoke since they are, under most circumstances, remote from everyday experience.²⁸ It is the remoteness, not the closeness, of the nation which forces states to create identity rituals such as national holidays and symbols. In a classic essay, Tilly (1985) has argued that war made states. He was speaking about struggling over resources and setting territorial boundaries. But war or threat also makes collective identities—“us vs. them” is bonding. Threat is an efficient mechanism for creating a common identity, whether national or European. Threat makes cultural communities because it forces groups to define boundaries and argue about who is different and who is the same.²⁹ Threats are also potentially egalitarian as they touch everyone—not just the elite.

Poggi (1978) has argued that a unique virtue of the modern state was that it created loyalty by managing the balance between internal security and external threat, friend and enemy, taxes and war. Poggi’s insight, borrowed from Carl Schmidt, suggests that the modern state was a political community that adjudicated risk for its members. Poggi’s implicit argument is that a by product of the state’s “business of rule” is the “business” of creating a common identity and culture that produces loyal, solidaristic and secure members. In short, identification in the broadest terms is the lynchpin of internal and external security—taxes and war.

²⁸ Berezin (1997) demonstrates this via the case of Fascist Italy. More recently, Brubaker’s (2006) ethnographic account of Cluj, a border town in Transylvania, also confirms this fact.

²⁹ Lamont and Molnar (2002) address the issue of boundary formation as a vital social process.

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Postwar Europe lived with the threat of the Cold War balanced against the internal security of its various welfare states. To identify with one's nation-state was easy because solidarity gave everyone a stake in the state where people helped likeminded citizens—who also culturally, legally (and sometime physically) resembled them. In the formulation developed in these pages, national identity is not simply something that resides in people's heads, or as some would have it in their daily talk, but it is intimately connected to the security of the state in which they live. National identity has a practical as well as cultural dimension and it remains quiescent until it is threatened—but although citizens might articulate the threat as an identity threat, it is in practice a security threat.

The Future of Illiberal Politics: Democracy and Security

The Politics of Fear: Comparing France and Italy

This book has argued that the right populist moment is an instance of illiberal politics that requires reformulation in historical and cultural terms, rather than as commonly explained in exclusively political or demographic terms. Without the phenomenon of expanding European integration which requires that nation-states rewrite cultural and social contracts to the advantage of some citizens and the disadvantage of others, the occurrence of a right populist moment would be less likely. The other side of the argument is that immigration, the standard explanatory variable, is not sufficient to explain the cross-European nature of right populism or its electoral salience. By focusing upon events as its unit of analysis--events that were often experienced as shocks or anomalies in the nation-states in which they occurred--this book takes a *comparative historical approach to the present*. Events and their collective evaluations yield a more process driven and contextual account of the right populist moment.

The claim that the neo-liberal project of Europe and the illiberal politics of right populism are inextricably linked re-states telegraphically the central argument that this book theorizes. In the period between 1994 and the present, France and Italy, albeit in different ways and with different valences, were the pivotal sites of right populism in Europe. In both instances as Chapters Eight and Nine demonstrate, the right has been absorbed into national politics in ways that underscore the national *consolidation regime*—the legacy of the political cultural relation between a people and polity--theorized in Chapter Two. Both cases permit us to think more generally about the issue of right populism as an instance of illiberalism that has appeared in the emerging neoliberal polity.

Italy and France typically figure in comparative discussions of the European right. France appears because of the presence of Jean-Marie Le Pen and the National Front; Italy because of the trio of Gianfranco Fini, Umberto Bossi and Silvio Berlusconi. On any number of points of culture and political development, Italy and France share similarities. For example, they had new post-war Constitutions; they were founding members of European Union and signatories to the Treaty of Rome; they had active Communist parties until the 1980s; they had student revolts in the 1960s; they were culturally Catholic although the institutional relation between Church and state differed in both countries. Each experienced post-war development and affluence.

Italy and France differ in two respects that are germane to the analysis developed in this book. First, their experience of the Second World War period was different. Italian fascism was a homegrown product whereas Vichy was an outcome of occupation as well as of collaboration. Second, France and Italy had a different legacy of the

formation of the national state--different *consolidation regimes*. France's *hegemonic consolidation regime* and Italy's *flexible consolidation regime* yielded radically different types of *national experience* and *national habits* of being and belonging.

In the instance of the National Front, three dates with concomitant events speak to its trajectory and meaning for French politics and culture. The first is January 1999 when the Megret faction split off from the National Front. This split led to the Front's poor showing in the European elections of June 1999 and the perception among academics and others that the National Front was gone from the French political scene. As discussed in Chapter Five, the year 1999 marked a turning point in the meaning and influence of the National Front. The "defeat" of the National Front was fraught with paradox. Its issues were becoming increasingly French issues as the party and Le Pen appeared to be on a downward trajectory. Europeanization as an iteration of globalization, which Le Pen labeled as the "new slavery of today" became a particularly salient French issue during this period.

The other two dates, April 21, 2002 and May 29, 2005, are more than symbols. Le Pen's advance to the second round of the Presidential election on April 21, 2002 signaled the disarray of French political culture to its citizens--as well as to the international community. As discussed in Chapter Six, the national shame of April 21, 2002 was emotional but there was also a pragmatic dimension.³⁰ April 21, 2002 displayed that Le Pen's ideas and problems were French issues, not National Front

³⁰ As evidence of the symbolic valence of April 21, 2002, a *Lexis-Nexis* search of the French language press revealed that in the five years between April 2002 and April 2007, "April 21" as a political metaphor appeared in 908 headlines.

issues—so that ordinary citizens, and not only cadres of party militants, voted for him in the first round.

French fears and anxieties around the issues of Europeanization and globalization that Le Pen had articulated reached their climactic moment when French citizens rejected the European constitution on May 29, 2005. The vote on the European constitution, the subject of Chapter Seven, detached Le Pen's issues from Le Pen, the messenger, as the majority of the French asserted their nation-ness. The year 1999 was significant for the National Front; whereas April 21, 2002 and May 29, 2005 marked crucial transitions in the French perception of itself as a nation and polity. April 21 signified political possibilities rather than political realities; May 29 signified that France was no longer the leader of Europe, the cosmopolitan center that it had always imagined itself to be (Kramer 2006; Berezin 2006a). Although unseen at the time, both events—arguably—contributed to the overwhelming victory of Nicolas Sarkozy in the 2007 Presidential election.

Events on April 21, 2002 and May 29, 2005 solidified a politics of fear and insecurity in the face of European political realities. The fear of a repeat of April 21 dominated the first round of the French presidential campaign of 2007. It contributed to the articulation of contradictory political positions and the re-assertion of nation-ness on the part of the two leading candidates. The Socialist candidate Ségolène Royal found herself in the improbable position of arguing that the French should all own a French flag and display it on national holidays as well as singing the *Marseillaise*. But it was Nicolas Sarkozy, the center-right candidate, running on the slogan “Together, Everything Becomes Possible,” who most successfully and plausibly appropriated Le Pen's language

of national identity, toughness on crime, and opposition to Turkey's entrance to the European Union.

On the morning of April 23, 2007, French intellectuals, media and politicians proclaimed that the first round of the 2007 presidential election redeemed the shame of April 21, 2002. On April 22, 2007, Jean-Marie Le Pen received only 11% of the vote in the first round of the Presidential election. This was the lowest score that he had received since he first ran for President in 1974. As in 1999, Le Pen's political efficacy seems to have evaporated. Le Pen's issues, globalization, Europe and the need to develop viable policies that integrate second and sometimes third generation immigrants into French society have not disappeared. When political candidates, most flagrantly Sarkozy, lifted Le Pen's political narrative from his person, *thinly* committed voters moved their votes to less controversial candidates.

In the first round of the 2007 Presidential election, Le Pen received 11% of the votes—that presumably represented *thick* commitment to the National Front and its positions. As Le Pen proclaimed on the evening of his defeat, “We have won the battle of ideas: nation and patriotism, immigration and insecurity were put at the heart of the campaign of my adversaries who spread these ideas with a wry pout.” Appropriation is not a particularly new political strategy in France or elsewhere. Chapter Five described the state's appropriation of the 1998 World Cup victory when Chirac and Jospin stood together and sang the national anthem on Bastille Day.

In contrast to France, Italy had its anomalous right event in 1994 when post-fascists became part of the first Berlusconi governing coalition. The peculiarities of Italian political culture in the end vitiated the right's significance. The day in April that

figures in Italian politics is April 25—the anniversary of the liberation of Italy from the Nazis. In contrast to April 21, 2002, the event that April 25 marks occurred in 1945—the relatively distant past. As discussed in earlier chapters, Umberto Bossi is a regional separatist who while politically useful at times to the right does not articulate any far-reaching positions. Silvio Berlusconi is a political and economic entrepreneur who plays fast and loose with the law. He is also aging and has not nurtured a political heir. Gianfranco Fini, who identifies himself with Nicolas Sarkozy, can no longer be classified as any kind of fascist—no matter what his past.

Italy as *shadow comparison* places the Europe issue in bold relief. Europeanization, as a code for globalization, was and is a threat to the French; whereas it is an opportunity for the Italians. Threat and opportunities are matters of degree not absolutes, yet the differences are salient. In France for example, an editorial in *Liberation* written three days after the first round of the presidential election accused Sarkozy of being a liberal. The editorial intoned: “Your project is liberal,” and if “globalization” is “chosen” there will be consequences, “The market left to its own regulation as the world knows brings efficacy, but also injustice.”³¹

In June 2007, as newly elected President of France, Nicolas Sarkozy went to Brussels to renegotiate the European Constitution which his party had supported in 2005. Upon his return to France after the meeting, Sarkozy proclaimed that he had succeeded in eliminating a clause in the new treaty that supported “free and undistorted competition”

³¹ Laurent Joffrin, “Editorial: Quell haine?” *Libération* (Paris) April 25, 2007.

Libération.fr (Accessed April 25, 2007)

and that this signaled “the end of competition as an ideology and dogma.”³² Sarkozy’s comments uttered from either political expediency or conviction reflected the ambivalence towards Europe and globalization that characterized all segments of French society. The French right tends to support the entrepreneurship of small businesses, which it views as fundamental to a strong nation—but small-scale business enterprises and unbridled global capitalism should never be confused for each other. Sternhell (1994) made this point with respect to the 1920s and 1930s in Europe. In short, the economic policy of a nation-state is deeply connected to its collective and normative understanding of how a just society should operate.

Harsh words aside, neo-liberalism remains an issue that the new President of France must manage. In the French case, the ramifications of European integration have moved the right’s issues into the mainstream of French politics and diminished the political capacity of the extreme right. In the Italian case, Europe as an issue has tamed the populist right, such as Bossi, and underscored the nationalist rather than the anti-democratic tendencies of Fini’s conservative right. On the morning after the first round of the 2007 French Presidential elections, Fini, referring to Sarkozy, told the *Corriere della Sera* that “A right that speaks to all has won.”³³

Why Do the French and Italian Experience Matter?

From the mid-eighteenth century to the present, some articulation of the sovereign nation-state has embodied modern political territoriality (Poggi 1978). We need not

³² “The Sarko Show,” *The Economist* (London) June 30, 2007, p. 59.

³³ Paola Di Caro, “Fini: ‘Ha vinto la destra che parla a tutti.’ “ *Corriere Della Sera* (Milan) April 23, 2007. *Corriere.it* (Accessed January 25, 2008).

reify the nation-state to invoke it as an analytic frame. It makes sense to theorize the nation-state as a political form with historical and experiential significance when trying to understand the challenges to *national experience* that European integration poses. As discussed in Chapter Two, “nation-state” projects relate peoples to polities. The term “project” denotes any set of ongoing actions where collective actors attempt to institutionalize new sets of norms, values, or procedures. Project is a felicitous formulation because it links culture to organization.³⁴

Consolidation regime is the term that this book develops to capture the dynamic and historically contingent character of the process of the union of culture and organization that is at the core of the nation-state project and productive of national identity. Institutions regulated by law created the categories that situated individuals within the European nation-state. Competition as well as necessity united individual identities to institutions. The success or strength of a national identity project depends first upon the other identities with which it must compete; and second, the strength of the competing institutions that buttress those identities.

In France, the *hegemonic consolidation regime* yielded a tight fit between nation and state—culture and institutions. The consequences of the French iteration of a *hegemonic consolidation regime* were that strong national identities became a liability in the face of difference and paradoxically promoted a defense of tradition and national culture that the extreme right was the first, but not the only party or group, to articulate.

³⁴ I use the term project (Berezin 1997) to speak about the Italian fascist state; Fligstein and Mara-Drita (1995) use a variation of the term to discuss the formation of the Single Market Policy in Europe.

Sarkozy capitalized on this legacy in his 2007 Presidential campaign. In the last speech of his campaign delivered before the May 5th vote, Sarkozy proclaimed that he wanted to be “national without being nationalist,” “of the people without being populist.”³⁵ The cultural salience of Le Pen’s positions was a reason why when Sarkozy came along, who was willing to detach the message from the messenger, he was able to garner broad support.

Italy never had a strong national culture in the same sense as the French. Its *flexible consolidation regime* was multicultural in the broadest sense—a federation of cultures under the umbrella of Italy—making its identities malleable and ready for cultural and political contingencies. Paradoxically, while this flexibility contributed to internal conflict, it made Italy and Italians receptive to Europe—if not the full economic package. Europe became a venue against which Italians could frame themselves as a nation. Europe fostered an Italian national identity whereas it seemed to fragment French national identity. In Europe, Italians found an entity that transcended their regional differences around which they could unite. Thus in the Italian case a weak national identity was a virtue, not a vice.

In the logic of the argument advanced here, Italy and France mirror each other. In France, strong national identities are challenged in the face of an exogenous factor such as Europeanization and promote a general re-assertion of nation-ness on the cultural and institutional level; whereas in Italy an opposite process occurs: weak national identities become strong in the face of an exogenous force such as Europeanization. In both

³⁵ Discours de Nicolas Sarkozy, Réunion publique de Montpellier, Jeudi May 3, 2007 (www.sarkozy.fr).

instances, the populist right becomes weakened and absorbed into the nation-state. In both France and Italy, the *consolidation regime*, the legacy of the relation between the state and the nation, the people and the polity, patterned the populist response to Europe and the form of the absorption of the populist response into nation-ness.

What more generalizeable points can be drawn from the Italian and French instances? Do the Italian and French cases suggest that the right is never a political threat to democracy and that the legacies of the relation between people and polity institutionalized in *consolidation regimes* will attenuate the non-democratic tendencies of anti-liberal parties? A provisional answer is that it will depend on the nature of the threat, the exogenous element, and the nature of the relation between the people and the polity—the national culture and the national state and the strength of the institutions that mediate that relation.

The egregious threat of terrorism, as evidenced in Europe and the United States, pushes nation-states towards a revamping of national attitudes towards privacy and the restriction of civil liberties that many argue compromises democratic principles of toleration and fairness. In contrast to terrorist activity, Europeanization is a less lethal, yet more complicated, threat that finds expression in cultural terms, i.e., national identity terms, but in practice compromises national iterations of economic well being. The French debates on the European constitution illustrated the cultural dimension of economic ideas. Europe threatens the social as well as the national, and arguably it is the social that might have greater salience for ordinary citizens than dreams of Euro flags and anthems.

This brings us back to the practical importance of *consolidation regimes*. Italy may have a sometimes inefficient state and has had corruption in its institutions, but it has had a modern state that has been in place since 1860. The same holds true for France. In both France and Italy, albeit for different reasons and with different attendant processes, the legacy of institutional arrangements tempered extremism. *Consolidation regimes* hinge on the legacy of the relation between people and polity, between citizens and political and cultural institutions. But, they are more than simply institutional arrangements. *Consolidation regimes* are sites of national experience that produce habits—ways of interpreting and acting the national space—that becomes particularly salient in times of threat broadly conceived.

Although every nation-state would require a detailed analysis of its own, there are expectations and generalizations that one can sketch from the arguments advanced in this book. Nation-states from northern Europe, England and Sweden for example, have been less vulnerable to the parliamentary salience of right populism. It bears reminding that this is not a claim about the presence of fringe groups such as neo-nazis and skinheads rather it is a claim about political salience.³⁶ This is not because England and Sweden are more or less democratic than Southern and Central Europe, rather, their *hegemonic consolidation regimes* were based on geographic location and relatively monolingual cultures. Longstanding monarchies have helped to deflect extreme nationalist energies. In addition, Sweden and Britain have kept their distance from full engagement in European Union as neither entered the euro zone and both bypassed the vote on the Constitution. In contrast, the Netherlands and Belgium, where right wing parties have

³⁶ See for example, Pred (2000) on Sweden; Holmes (2000, pp. 106-161) on Britain.

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emerged, are consociations. They have built duality into their national cultures and this makes them vulnerable to right parties. Unlike France and Italy, the coexistence of two recognized national cultures makes it difficult to decide where to retreat in the face of exogenous threats.³⁷

Polities where the sub-national culture is ethnic and that lack a legacy of a modern liberal state tend to produce *brittle consolidation regimes*. These types of polities with weak national culture and a weak state are vulnerable to extremist and populist demands when they need to build or rebuild political institutions. According to the logic of this argument, nation-states in the former Eastern Europe would be particularly vulnerable to populist appeals. When Communist regimes fell, states in the former Eastern Europe that were bureaucratic expressions, such as the former Yugoslavia, gave way to ethnic conflict. Arguably, Europe plays both ways in this situation. In some instances it can serve as an opportunity to shake free from the past; and in others it can be viewed as a threat to the dominant ethnic sub-national culture. But it is no accident that as discussed in Chapter Seven, the turnout for the European elections in 2004, the first elections after accession, was lower in the East than anywhere else, even though turnout for European elections in general tends to be low.

Experience and Political Perception

Europe: A New Consolidation Regime?

³⁷ Liphardt (1975; 1977) provides the standard work on consociation. The Netherlands is his first case.

What does European Union mean today and how does it bear on the past and future of illiberal politics?³⁸ Europeanization is a political reality that is not disappearing. Europe is not aiming to create a new polity modeled on the nation-state. However, its transnational institutions that call for the harmonization of various social and fiscal policies across the continent invariably chip away at some of the modern nation-state's prerogatives.

The identification in Chapter Two of different types of *consolidation regimes* suggests that the territorially defined nation-state project was not a seamless effort. Its development was contingent, conflicted and contested and its emergence varied as to time and space—history and culture. The European Union is arguably another variation on the nation-state theme with important differences.³⁹ The European Union consolidated in the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 is a supra-national political project that transforms Europe today into a geographical space where territory, membership and identity are once again sites of contestation and re-negotiation.

National elites involved in the project of Europe from its inception never intended for integration to involve a new nation-state project. Yet, in the last decade, collective actors of various types, from intellectuals such as Jurgen Habermas (1996; 1997; 2001) to

³⁸ For full length scholarly studies, see Moravcsik (1998), Ross (1995) and Milward (2000).

³⁹ Goldstein (2001) takes up the issue of “federal sovereignty” in comparative perspective. Morgan (2005) is one of the few scholarly works that argues for a European “superstate.” Security in the more narrowly militaristic sense of the term is an important component of Morgan’s argument.

European Union bureaucrats, have given voice to a Europe that seems to threaten to re-write the rules of the relation between peoples and polity and move in the direction of a new *consolidation regime*. A trans-European public discourse has emerged that focuses on European citizenship and the issue of a European constitution and has, if not replaced, at least provided public distraction from the economic mission of the Union.⁴⁰

But what can citizenship mean in a supra-national body whose members have no direct voice in governance? European integration challenges the prerogatives of territoriality and by extension dis-equilibrates the existing mix of national culture and legal norms. Postnational imaginings notwithstanding, much empirical evidence (for example, Diez-Medrano 2003; Berezin and Diez-Medrano 2008) and historical analysis (Calhoun 2007) suggests that the national has not retreated. By threatening to make the national space “unfamiliar” to many citizens, Europe, as this book has illustrated, opens a space for contestation and reaction as well as positive change.

The raw material for a *consolidation regime*, a European political community in the Weberian sense, is flawed on two counts. First, Europe as a political space is territorially ambiguous.⁴¹ Regulatory decrees are trans-European. Membership is nation-state based. Only individual member states, not the European community, may bestow citizenship. The ability to work across national borders—one of the attractions of the EU for the

⁴⁰ Bruneteau (2000) argues that European Union, or the idea of it, was a lynch pin of instrumental and contingent national political goals and not a normative vision of European solidarity.

⁴¹ For concise technical discussions of the legal issues involved, see Wouters (2000) on national constitutions and Davis (2002) on citizenship law.

educated and upwardly mobile middle classes--frequently bogs down in a mass of red tape that defies the rational language of the Schengen Accords (Romero 1990; Favell 2008; Fligstein 2008).⁴² Second, Europe as a cultural space lacks “affectivity”—that is emotional attachment (Weiler 1999, p. 329). Old European nation-states, as Weber argues, crafted a fiction of shared culture and history from a widely diffused community of popular memory. “Europe” shares little common civic space or cultural past from which to forge an identity except for memories of war—and that was usually among member states (Mann 1998).

As Darnton (2002) reminds us, European identity *per se* is not new. A shared high culture among the university educated—usually European men—who spoke and read in various national languages--usually English, German and French in addition to their own--was the procrustean bed of the “old” European identity. Exclusive social and professional networks forged one part of the old European identity. Nineteenth century innovations such as mass schooling and conscription helped to foster bonds of national solidarity among workers and members of the lower middle classes (Hobsbawm 1983; Weber 1976). Post-Maastricht European identity claims to be popular and inclusive. In contrast to old European identity, new European identity is a product of political, and not cultural, demand.

The “unbundling” of nation-state sovereignty and the logistical problems that it brings to ordinary citizens is as likely to strengthen existing national identities as it is to generate a feeling of common Europeanness (Wallace 1999; Berezin 1999; 2003a).

⁴² Suzanne Daley, “Despite European Unity Efforts, to Most Workers There’s No Country Like Home.” *New York Times* (New York) May 12, 2001, A6.

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Bureaucrats in Brussels who seek to turn ordinary Germans, French, and Italians into Europeans face the twin obstacles of a contradictory legal framework and thin cultural demand (Deflem and Pampel 1996). The tangle of interpretation and administration that besets European Union in the fullest meaning of that term—juridical, social and cultural--suggests that a trans-national polity with a loyal and attached citizenry—a citizenry that identifies itself as European--is in the distant future. It also points to an unpleasant underside of union. Political aggregation upwards yields social dis-aggregation downwards, and downward dis-aggregation has the potential to create political and cultural disruption and conflict. In short, the legacy of the relation between a people and a polity embedded in diverse types of *consolidation regimes* is not subject to easy or immediate modification.

Experiencing the Nation-State

As argued in the Introduction and Chapter Two, experience, particularly *national experience*, is the social and cognitive entity that unites the macro-level and micro-level dimensions of this argument. Habits of being and belonging coupled with structural and emotional security comprise the experiential dimension of the nation-state. When the European nation-state begins to mutate if not dissolve due to the push of European integration and the attendant processes of Europeanization, then the evolving political space reconfigures *both* the social and cultural relations as well as institutional relations upon which the old nation-state had been built.

To the extent that the nation-state contained threat and minimized risk for its members, Poggi's argument as discussed in Chapter Two, it provided experiential and legal security. Nation-states were arenas that adjudicated risk among people who were

more or less like each other—they were not “naturally” like each other, nor were their “likenesses” only imagined or constructed. Propinquity in physical space and duration in time, shared history, played as much a role in creating a feeling of national belonging as any constructed narratives of nationhood. Institutional arrangements coupled with propinquity and duration managed to create groups of people who more or less thought of themselves as French or Italian or German or whatever.

Modern political community, the nation-state, is durable in time and rooted in bounded physical space. As a consequence, its inhabitants experience national membership as a familiar habit and the national landscape as a comfortable place. Roberto Michels in a 1929 essay on “Patriotism,” noted that “Variety is strange to most persons. This factor necessitates that the national state, which is interested in the cohesion of its parts, smooth over extreme differences (157).” William James (1956) in a classic essay, *The Sentiment of Rationality*, gives a rational explanation for the emotional appeal of comfort. He argues that the “feeling of rationality and the feeling of familiarity are one and the same thing (78).” Novelty according to James is a “mental irritant,” whereas custom is a mental sedative. James argues that the core of rationality is that it defines expectation. The expectation of continuity is rational because it is emotionally satisfying.⁴³ Viewed from the perspective of comfort, emotional attachment to place, what the Germans call *Heimat* is not an irrational particularism but a rational response to environmental factors.⁴⁴

⁴³ For a fuller articulation of this position and its relation to politics, see Berezin (2002).

⁴⁴ For a critique of the uncritical acceptance of this view, see Calhoun (1999).

No small part of the nation-state's legitimacy derived and derives from its emotional appeal to comfort. Security, economic and political, is the practical component of comfort (Rothschild 1995; Lipset 1959).⁴⁵ The nation-state made its citizens feel safe by assuaging fear and guaranteeing public and private security what Loader and Walker (2007) refer to as "civilizing security." Public national security institutionalized in the military and the police protected the property of the nation and the property of the individual (Deflem 2002). Social security located in the fiscal institutions of the state protected the life of the individual and the family. These institutions of security did not mean that there was no war, crime or poverty, but rather provided mechanisms for making people feel secure in their familiar places—or at home in the nation-state.

Security, familiarity and comfort in the public sphere—what I am labeling *national experience*—are not without contradictions. As Norton (2004, p. 116) argues experience "confers only limited understanding." Norton's insight suggests the underside of experience in general and *national experience* in particular. Because experience interrogates reality through the lens of what one already knows, it may tend towards conservatism and reluctance to change. On the other hand, the repeated experience of national security in the broadest meaning of that term could tend towards a cosmopolitan democracy and a welcoming of others. Secure people are democratic people because individual and collective security fosters the spirit of largesse and generosity that a thick democracy requires. Insecure people are fearful and risk averse.

⁴⁵ Beck ([1992] in a now classic account identified "risk" as a hallmark of modernity.

Berezin, *Histories that Matter*

Insecure people expand the community of potential enemies and threats; secure people expand the community of friends.

Experiencing the New Europe: The Interplay of Security and Insecurity

Security and comfort have a pragmatic as well as cognitive and emotional dimension. The institutions of the nation-state use the legal system to situate its members within it. These institutions cut both ways. Members of the nation-state also rely on national institutions to situate themselves within the polity. Members of secure nation-states develop forms of social and cultural capital as well as monetary capital that are tied to the national state. These forms of capital, from something as simple as speaking a single common language (we have only to remember Chirac's refusal to sign the regional language bill) to state supported religion to social welfare policies, make citizens more or less equal as they participate in the community of the nation-state.

European integration not only re-calibrates the nation-state. It poses a challenge to citizens of nation-states because on an individual level it alters the parameters of social and cultural capital and by extension monetary capital. Putnam's now classic *Making Democracy Work* (1993) generated a large literature within social science around the relation between social capital and democracy. In capsule form, Putnam argued that civic associations where citizens learned to engage in cooperative activities spawned relations of trust that contributed to collective commitment to democracy. Social capital was the label that Putnam assigned to the process that he theorized. While Putnam was primarily interested in politics, the social scientists extended the concept to account for a whole range of social and economic processes (Portes 1998).⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Somers (2005) provides a trenchant critique.

Putnam borrowed the concept of social capital from James Coleman (1990). Among more culturally oriented social scientists, the term is inextricably linked to Pierre Bourdieu who in early essays (1983; 1985; 1989) identified cultural and social capital as a non-monetary asset that was a vital dimension of social position. No matter the etiology of the term, scholars (most likely influenced by the monetary metaphor) tend to speak of social and cultural capital as something that one has more or less of, fungibility is another dimension of capital—monetary, social and cultural--that is frequently ignored in discussions of democracy and social capital. Yet, fungibility is crucial to social inclusion as well as exclusion and to individual as well as collective affinity for democracy.

Security defined stability in the old Europe; mobility defines security *and* insecurity in the new Europe. The “new” Europe is shifting the site of security from the collectivity to the individual. Although not expressed in precisely these terms, the French debate over the European Constitution Treaty echoed these ideas. New Europe establishes virtual markets as well as capital markets—that is, it advantages those who have cultural and social capital that is *not tied* to a nation-state. Practically, this points to language markets and credential markets. Persons who speak multiple languages and who have technical university credentials can participate in multiple social, cultural and material (i.e., money and goods) markets. The new European professionally educated middle classes are oriented towards Europe as well as the nation. Paradoxically, mobility markets also advantage workers at the low end of the labor market—immigrants who come into nation-states and take the low end work that the middle of the labor market--those whose virtual capital is tied to the nation-state look down upon.

A central puzzle in discussions of right wing populism is how to account for the diverse groups that it attracts. According to the logic of the argument advanced in this book the answer to the phenomenology of attraction does not lie in the characteristics of individuals but in the fungibility of capital which individuals possess. Persons who cannot participate in new markets, whose social and cultural capital is tied to old European nation-states, the elderly, the poorly educated, as well as small merchants and public sector bureaucrats, lack fungibility and have limited capacities to move.

Right wing sensibilities begin on the ground--in the home, the neighborhood, the local community. All individuals are tied to the particular places they are in--in one way or the other. They feel attachment to their territory on the local, regional and national level. Citizens of modern democracies have exit and voice capacities. Voice generates loyalties. But they tend to exercise their exit capacities only under the duress of market or political forces.

Most residents of modern nation-states are not migrants, which is why the negotiability of virtual capital is central to a strong democracy. Individuals or groups may have much virtual, that is social and cultural, capital in terms of strong and weak ties--dense communal bonds, but frequently that capital is not negotiable in multiple spaces. The less negotiable a group or individual's virtual capital is across borders, the more the group or individual will identify with the place that they are in. So that it is not immigration or the presence of strangers on the territory that makes for modern xenophobic reactions rather it is the lack of exit capacity available to those whose social and cultural capital is negotiable only in restrictive spaces. The neo-liberal dilemma at the core of the "new" Europe is that it demands the capacity, if not the actuality, of

mobility and fungible forms of virtual capital. Those who possess capital—social, cultural, financial—that is only *national*, experience Europe as a threat.

A thick democracy--that is, a democracy that merges sentiments and institutions--is difficult. It is difficult because it requires not only wealth a material foundation but also generalized public sense of largesse and empathy. But these are aristocratic as opposed to populist virtues--not because the mass public is intrinsically intolerant, unjust and unfair but because it is frequently not in the ordinary person's interest to voluntarily share scarce cultural and material resources.

From the vantage point of history, it is fairly accurate to argue that while democracy in theory and practice goes back to Aristotle, democracy was only widely institutionalized with the modern European nation-state, or to put another way the political organization that was formed in Europe between 1789 and 1989. Modern nation-states made democracy possible by providing citizens with an expanded notion of security—domestic and international. Security is an emotional and practical concept--much like honor in non-modern societies. Security was institutionalized in the major institutions of membership of the modern nation-state: the army, the schools and social welfare, as well as in targeting enemies and identifying friends.

Zolberg (2002) in his discussion of the United States' response to 9/11 argues that movement not immigration is the core of global society. (However, the immigrant is sometimes a convenient image upon which to project insecurity and fear.) Free movement across borders (i.e., refugees and immigrant groups who move out of necessity do not fit this category) requires capital—monetary, social and cultural—that travels. But here also lies the hard fact. Only certain groups of persons, i.e, the educated, multi-

lingual, technical or professional class, can take full advantage of freedom of movement. The majority of ordinary Europeans have economic, social and cultural capital that is firmly tied to their nation-state of origin.

To adapt Hirschman's (1970) classic formulation to the case in point, when a groups' exit capacity is low as it is for the unemployed youth, elderly and small businesspersons who find populist nationalist parties appealing, investment in place becomes more intense. Groups who lack the forms of capital to participate in new social, cultural, and economic markets re-assert the national. They over-identify with place, in this case the nation-state, and look to organizations who promise to guard the gates against security threats—real and imagined.

The democratic deficit that the new Europe must resolve does not lie in whether ordinary citizens have voice in Brussels. The challenges to contemporary European democracy lie in the new relation between security and insecurity, in all its forms—material, cultural and emotional--that Europeanization and globalization demands. Until Europe--all of its twenty seven member nation-states--manages to create a new twenty first century "World of Security" that is global, tolerant, fair and inclusive, populism will continue to lurk in the interstices of even procedurally democratic nation-states.

