Political Identification in Europe

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Political Identification in Europe: Community in Crisis?

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Contents

List of Abbreviations

ACP	Africa, Caribbean, Pacific
AfD	Alternative für Deutschland (Alternative for Germany)
ALFA	Allianz für Fortschritt und Aufbruch (Alliance for Progress and Awakening)
BTO	Brussels Treaty Organisation
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CDU	Christian Demokratische Union Deutschlands (Christian Democratic Union of Germany)
CND	Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CJEU	Court of Justice of the European Union
DG	Directorate-Generals of the European Commission
DRP	Deutsche Reichspartei (German Empire Party)
EC	European Community
ECHR	European Convention of Human Rights
ECI	European Citizen Initiative
ECtHR	European Court of Human Rights
EEA	European Economic Area
END	European Nuclear Disarmament
EP	European Parliament
EPP	European People's Party
EU	European Union
EURATOM	European Atomic Energy Community
FCN	First Country National
FrP	Fremskrittspartiet (Progress Party, Norway)
GAL/TAN	Green, Alternative, Libertarian versus Tradition, Authority, Nation
GDR	German Democratic Republic
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOs	International Organisations
KI	Kreisau Initiative
LKR	Liberal-Konservative Reformer (Liberal-Conservative Reformers Party, Germany)
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
MS	Member State of the European Union
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation

NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NOK	Norwegian Krone
NPD	Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands (National Democratic Party Germany)
NSU	National Socialist Underground
OEEC	Organisation for European Economic Cooperation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
OST	Ontological Security Theory
PEGIDA	Patriotische Europäer gegen die Islamisierung des Abendlandes (Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamisation of the Occident)
PHARE	Poland and Hungary Assistance for the Restructuring of the Economy
PICUM	Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants
PiS	Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (Law and Justice Party, Poland)
SCN	Second Country National
sECI	Self-Organized ECI
SECR	Supranational European Citizenship Regime
SPD	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschland (Social Democratic Party of Germany)
TACIS	Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States
TCN	Third Country Nationals
TEU	Treaty of the European Union
TFEU	Treaty of the Functioning of the European Union
TTIP	Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership
UK	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
UKIP	UK Independence Party
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	UN Refugee Agency
USA	United States of America
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

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Preface

Yannis Stavrakakis

This collective volume comes at a crucial conjuncture. Both the European Union and our national and local communities seem to have entered a very delicate and bumpy phase with no obvious resolution in sight. It follows a series of consecutive crises (from the global economic crisis of 2008 to the global pandemic of 2020, just to mention the most recent ones) and persistent dynamics (such as increasing inequality and the erosion of democratic decision-making) that undermine any effective and timely response to the aforementioned crises. Brexit may be the most visible symptom, but the *malaise* goes far deeper. How can we assess the historical trajectory and the current predicament of Europe and its people(s) in this moment?

The title of this book alone challenges certain intuitions, because extraordinary times demand challenging displacements and reorientations in our conceptual and analytical frameworks. Mere complacency and the continuous reproduction of obsolete perspectives and stereotypes will not do. Let me provide a few examples that demonstrate the innovative profile of the volume that Machin and Meidert have put together.

First, why talk about 'identification' and not 'identity', as is usually the case? Arguably, in pre-modern societies identity issues did not emerge in the same way as in ours, simply because it was largely taken for granted. Identity was usually seen as determined by a rigid social topography guaranteed by mythical dynamics and religious forces. Identity, in other words, was something assigned by what the community defined and obeyed as its undisputed unifying principle. Modernity, in contrast, by proclaiming the 'death of God' and by advancing individualisation and capitalism, radically disrupted this long-term stability. It involved a multitude of dislocations of traditional practices and types of behaviour, and initiated a period of constant disruption and change. If, as a result of social transformations taking place in modernity, identity is not considered as given any more, then it can only be seen as the result of social processes of construction and sedimentation. Hence the expression 'social identity'. Furthermore, if identity is understood as the result of social processes then this also opens up the possibility of a political contestation and re-articulation of identity. Hence the expression 'political identity'. This was the secondary radical implication put forward by the establishment of the modern horizon.

And this was not limited within the field of social and political reflection. Crucially, it extended into political action. As a result of this transformation, a multitude of groups began to question their traditionally established 'identities'.

Women, for example, contested their location within patriarchal representations of the social, which had been previously taken as given, and they entered the political arena in Western democracies and then globally.[1] Furthermore, this contestation, initially unsettling the *hierarchy* between the sexes, ultimately generated a self-critical questioning of the idea of the two sexes themselves, on the basis of a queer sensibility.

This process has allowed both the development of a reflexive intellectual ethos and the continuous radicalisation of democracy through the extension of rights, redressing inequalities, etc. But it is a process of intellectual enlightenment that has been stalled. A political radicalisation that has been arrested. Our intellectual horizon increasingly suffers from the re-emergence and sedimentation of biased *orthodoxies*. In our post-democratic public spheres and institutional settings as well, with the firm establishment of ideological horizons like the 'end of history' or the so-called TINA (There Is No Alternative) dogma, no alternative identifications can flourish while power asymmetries lead to what can only be described as a political short-circuit. Here, beyond Brexit, the way that European institutions dealt with the Syriza experiment in Greece is rather instructive. No wonder that, given the crisis-ridden framing of our lives, we seem to be experiencing what Gramsci described as the *interregnum*: crisis partly 'consists precisely in the fact that the old is dying and the new cannot be born' (Gramsci, 1971, p. 276).

This is because our institutions (both intellectual and political) have declared war on the new, on the heterodox. Thus, when new perspectives and political identifications emerge they are immediately treated with suspicion and summarily discredited. And this is not only a political issue, but also something plaguing the social-scientific domain. On both levels, Europe has become the name of a *malaise* and a *cul-de-sac*. Intellectual projects like the one represented by this book demand our attention, because the rigorous investigation of the current – and often conflicting – meaning(s) of class, citizenship, the people, the nation and the EU itself could reveal the different dynamics and the multiple possibilities at play.

Of course, the problem affecting our (late) modern intellectual horizon is far from new and has been documented long ago. Going back to debates within German sociology in mid-twentieth century, we could give it a Blumenbergian emphasis: it concerns the legitimacy of modernity.[2] In short, has modernity been worthy of its name and promise? Or has it eventually reoccupied pre-modern patterns of questioning – around ultimate foundations – that undermine its potential and trap its development within secularised political and economic theologies? Here, the fragment by Walter Benjamin on the operation of capitalism itself as a religion acquires an eerie relevance (notice, in this respect, the marginalisation of critical economics). To use Bruno Latour's well-known formulation, what if 'we have never been modern' enough (Latour, 1993)? What if we have managed to develop and sanctify new orthodoxies that severely limit the scope for true

[1]For a full elaboration of this argument, see Stavrakakis (2000).
[2]See, in this respect, Blumenberg (1985).

intellectual and academic fermentation and disallow the mapping of new alternatives when these are most needed, at times of crisis? The ongoing pandemic provides a good example:

Economic orthodoxy supports the narrative that this pandemic is a unique disaster no one could have prepared for, and with no wider lessons for economics and politics. This story suits some of the world's billionaires, but it's not true. There is an alternative: the pandemic provides further evidence that to tackle the climate emergency, inequality and any emerging crises, we must re-think our economics from the bottom up. (Aldred, 2020)[3]

If this is the case, then the *politicisation* (and pluralisation) of identity cannot take place any more; it cannot acquire any (or even partial) permanence or long-term efficacy. In order for the political character of identity to emerge, the obviousness of social identities (which replaced religious foundations, replicating their constraints and reintroducing aristocratic privilege in the guise of meritocracy, technocracy, etc.) has to be called into question. This radical questioning is surely one of the defining characteristics of democratic societies which a contemporary move to post-democracy seems to threaten. In societies that cannot ultimately rely on any kind of naturalist, theological or essentialist social foundation, the construction and continuous reconstruction of identity can only be acknowledged as a radical institution, an institution *constitutive* of social practices; in other words a truly *political* institution. The political dimension of identity becomes fully visible only when it is recognised that there is no such a thing as a natural, essential or intrinsic social identity, when neoliberal capitalism and its intellectual apologists are not recognised as the ultimate limit of what is sayable and doable.

What would have been the crucial conceptual implication of embracing our modernity, in fact our 'multiple modernities' (Eisenstadt, 2000)? How would it affect our intellectual horizon? Let us assume then that identities are socially and politically constructed, that they are not guaranteed by any essential ground. Here the collapse of any essentialist grounding would make possible the radical questioning of any identity. Yet doesn't this entail that identity itself – as a fully guaranteed order, an order established beyond contestation – becomes impossible? The answer can only be affirmative in the sense that the continuous political construction of social identities never results in a closed, self-contained and absolute identity (no matter where this totalisation would rest; on left or right-wing utopia). Identity, at both the personal and political levels, is only the name of what we desire but can never fully attain.

[3]All in all, as far as universities are concerned, 'university faculty are less and less likely to threaten any aspect of the existing social or political system. Their jobs are constantly on the line, so there's a professional risk in upsetting the status quo. But even if their jobs were safe, the corporatized university would still produce mostly banal ideas, thanks to the sycophancy-generating structure of the academic meritocracy. But even if truly novel and consequential ideas were being produced, they would be locked away behind extortionate paywalls' (Nair, 2017) Also see, Stavrakakis (2012).

Such a conclusion is obviously disorienting, but not detrimental for human subjects and social life – it involves a certain loss of certainty, an absence of guarantees, but it is what renders possible disagreement, argument and the gradual emergence of the new under conditions of reflexive deliberation, hegemonic struggle and democratic debate. Living with it certainly requires a shift of perspective: from end-points to practices; from blueprint and eschatological utopias to co-existing (post-fantasmatic) radical projects registering their ontological limits.[4] Indeed, what is the name of this practice which, although it always fails to produce a full identity, plays a crucial role in structuring our lives? The name of this practice is *identification*.

The paradoxical nature of identity revealed in the role of identification is something constitutive of our subjective and political predicament: 'Life without the drive to identity is an impossibility but the claim to a natural or true identity is always an exaggeration' (Connolly, 1991, p. 67). In addition, it has become gradually evident that identity cannot be defined without reference to what stands outside its field. What creates my identity, what defines sameness, is that I differ from the identities of others. Identities are relational and differential.[5] As William Connolly has cogently put it, 'difference requires identity and identity difference' (Connolly, 1991, p. ix). Alas, our contemporary intellectual horizon marginalises such views. It is a crucial accomplishment of this collection that it enlists the conceptual apparatus to bring back to the limelight such a refreshing rationale.

Yet, as we have already seen, this is not merely an epistemological or theoretical issue: it is, crucially, a political issue as well. During recent decades, however, the ideological hegemony of the neoliberal consensus has attempted to naturalise the fiction – the empty grand narrative – of a non-antagonistic 'third way', beyond left and right. Both conservative and social-democratic forces have followed this course, which has undermined the *agonistic* registering of division entailed in democratic institutions. It is in this meta-political orientation that one encounters the roots of the emerging post-democratic imaginary. Indeed, post-democracy is founded on an attempt to exclude the awareness of lack, contingency and negativity from the political domain, which leads to a political order that retains the token institutions of liberal democracy but neutralises the centrality of political antagonism. Jacques Rancière is among to the political theorists who have utilised this term:

From an allegedly defunct Marxism, the supposedly reigning liberalism borrows the theme of objective necessity, identified with the constraints and caprices of the world market. Marx's once scandalous thesis that governments are simple business agents for international capital is today an obvious fact on which

[4]See, in this respect, Stavrakakis (1999) and Stavrakakis (2007).

[5]It is possible to ground this observation in a variety of ways. Take structural linguistics and semiology, for example. Here, we know from de Saussure (2011) and from the whole structuralist and poststructuralist tradition that the meaning of a particular element within a system of signification can only arise via its differentiation from other elements within the same system.

'liberals' and 'socialists' agree. The absolute identification of politics with the management of capital is no longer the shameful secret hidden behind the 'forms' of democracy; it is the openly declared truth by which our governments acquire legitimacy. (Rancière, 1998, p. 113)

Difference as antagonism is banished and political alternatives proscribed. The first casualty here is the value of dissent. In addition, unable to understand and reluctant to legitimise the centrality of antagonism in democratic politics, the post-political, post-democratic *Zeitgeist* forces the expression of this dissent – when it manages to articulate itself – through channels bound to fuel a spiral of increasingly uncontrolled violence. Whereas a recognition of the adversarial nature of the political permits the transformation of antagonism into *agonism*, the taming of raw violence, a post-political approach by contrast leads to violent expressions of polarisation and hatred which, upon entering the depoliticised public sphere, can only be identified and opposed in moral or cultural (and eventually military) terms. Indeed, as Chantal Mouffe has put it, when opponents are defined in an 'extrapolitical' manner,

> they cannot be envisaged as 'adversary' but only as 'enemy'. With the 'evil them' no agonistic debate is possible, they must be eradicated. Moreover, as they are often considered to be the expression of some kind of 'moral disease,' one should not even try to provide an explanation for their emergence and success. (Mouffe, 2005, p. 76)

Notice how the re-emergence of populist movements and the concomitant development of a whole field of populism research – another crucial topic debated in this volume – demonstrate the dual *malaise* we have already indicated. Isn't it astonishing that both mainstream politics and institutions as well as mainstream socio-political research share the same instinctual *anti-populism* (irrespective, in fact, of the particular movements and ideologies under examination)? On both levels, then, contemporary Europe emerges as the name of a dangerous premodern regression – politically, as a failure to openly and democratically reflect on its aristocratic, post-democratic mutation and to honour its enlightenment commitment to registering heterogeneity through popular sovereignty; and intellectually, as a failure to move beyond anti-democratic stereotypes that underlie an *a priori* pejorative take on any kind of popular demand, movement and government (summarily denounced as *evil populism*).

Indeed, a multitude of heterogeneous and even antithetical phenomena are currently being discussed under the rubric of populism: from the European Far Right in France, Austria and the Netherlands, and illiberal governments in Hungary and Poland, on the one hand; to Bernie Sanders, the so-called Pink Tide of left-wing populist governments in Latin America and inclusionary populisms in the European South triggered by the brutal *ordoliberal* management of the European crisis, on the other. Very often, the movements, parties, leaders and discourses under examination seem to have nothing or very little in common as they range from the radical left to the radical right of the political spectrum and

from egalitarian to authoritarian orientations. Yet, one thing is obviously certain. They seem to cause surprise. Mainstream media, established political forces and academics are quick to denounce their *scandalous* nature: all of a sudden, the unthinkable seems to be happening. Populism is seen as violating or transgressing an established order of how politics is *properly, rationally* and *professionally* done. It emerges *where* it should not *when* it should not; it disrupts a supposed 'normal' course of events and could only be the index of an anomaly.[6]

However, there should be no cause for surprise here. It is already many decades since the historian Comer Vann Woodward summarised the lessons from the long and bloody debate on American populism between the 1950s and the 1970s: 'The study of populism is instructive about the consequences of condescension, *arrogance*, and *ignorance* on the part of elites and intellectuals' (Vann Woodward, 1981, p. 32). In fact, our understanding of 'populism' as an incarnation of whatever violates the (naturalised) established order of things has been shared by political and academic elites and popularised through mainstream media since the 1950s. During this period, commencing with the publication of the true diachronic matrix of academic anti-populism, namely Richard Hofstadter's revisionist attack on the US People's Party (Hofstadter, 1995), *normality* was generally embodied by a unidirectional, universal *modernisation* process supposed to embody and materialise the only version of modernity feasible and desirable (the one associated with the USA and the Western paradigm, blending capitalism with representative government in the form of so-called *Democratic Elitism*). Populism, by contrast, was often seen as an indication of 'asynchronism', of its local exceptions/anomalies. In particular, it was, more or less, denounced as an *abnormal* political formation articulated by *abnormal* leaders and addressed to *abnormal* constituencies.

Such grand narratives and stereotypes continue to influence, if not dominate, public debate in a variety of contexts. Of course, the disciplinary, normalising function of modernisation has been taken over largely by narratives concerning the 'end of history' and 'globalisation'. In this sense, modernisation can be seen as the matrix of what later came to be known as the TINA dogma (There Is No Alternative).

By un-reflexively adopting an exclusively pejorative definition of populism, a large part of populism research has also adopted the normative, if not axiomatic and stereotypical fallacies of Hofstadter, and has, by default, placed itself in the service of a normalising, disciplinary technology of domination defending at all cost the post-democratic mutations of the established order (Crouch, 2004; Habermas, 2013), against all challengers irrespective of their ideological belonging, democratic credentials, discursive genealogies and political agendas. In a bid to justify these choices, *arrogance* and *ignorance* have become, once more, defining characteristics of Euro-centric approaches to populism. Sometimes the picture painted is of something so irrational, unthinkable, abnormal, even monstrous, that it could not possibly be appealing to real people.

[6]I develop this argument in a more detailed way in Stavrakakis (2017).

This does not mean, of course, that populism research should not encompass situations in which 'the people' itself is invested with a reified mystique in the style of political theology, or that it should not examine the ambivalent relationship between populism and nationalism (De Cleen & Stavrakakis, 2017). Yet the first step forward for contemporary populism research would be to move beyond obsolete pejorative stereotypes and try to approach populism anew, beyond any demonisation or idealisation, escaping the tight grip of the galloping (a priori anti-populist) economics and politics of privilege – even when the latter utilise a populist grammar and/or imaginary. Only then does it become possible to examine in detail a variety of challenging issues that highlight different facets of populism revealing important points about politics and identification more generally – emotion, memory, security, communication – as discussed in many chapters of the book.

More broadly, especially given that populism is not the only theme of this collection, the need to restore critical reflection within the social sciences and the potential of dissent and the value of the alternative within politics, to be able to assess the different risks and possibilities every contingency brings to us (whether we call it a 'crisis' or not), may be the foremost challenge of our age. The chapters in this daring volume encircle and highlight this challenge in a thoroughly productive way, conceptually – thematically – politically!

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Introduction: Moments of Crisis, Decision and Critique

Amanda Machin and Nadine Meidert

'Crisis' is as old as European history. The origin of the term is the classical Greek word κρίσις (krisis), which meant 'fight' and 'divorce', but also 'decision'. Krisis was used in politics to refer to a decisive moment that occurred in 'the reaching of a crucial point that would tip the scales' (Koselleck & Richter, 2006, p. 358). It also was used by Greek physicians to refer to the point at which it will be determined whether the patient will live or die (Starn 1971, p. 4). Since then, throughout its long usage, the term retained its connection to 'life-deciding alternatives' (Koselleck & Richter, 2006, p. 361). A crisis is a turning point, a time that might precipitate drastic structural reorganisation or a rupture that demands a decisive response (Redfield, 2005, p. 336). It indicates the 'transition towards something better or worse or towards something altogether different' (Koselleck & Richter, 2006, p. 358). Perhaps it might even mark a moment of truth (Starn, 1971, p. 4).

So, although crisis is commonly understood today as a purely negative phase of suffering, disagreement or confusion, this overlooks the potential it contains for radical change. Yet precisely because of its urgent and drastic implications, this potential is often effaced. Janet Roitman calls crisis 'an enabling blind spot for the production of knowledge' (2013, p. 14). Crisis empowers certain voices and demands: 'accession to crisis engenders certain narrations… the term enables and forecloses various kinds of questions' (2013, p. 10). It could be argued, counter-intuitively, that the diagnosis of crisis reinforces existing power relations and heightens the demand for the reinstatement of 'normality'.

Indeed, Joseph Masco argues that crisis has become a 'counterrevolutionary idiom in the twenty-first century' (2017, p. 67) and is symptomatic of a tendency in governance to distribute images of looming catastrophe while failing to address present sources of insecurity. Crisis demands 'an emergency response' that will simply repair the status quo rather than require transformation of the social structure (2017, p. 73). He points out that the term has been overused in the mass media to become a 'near permanent negative surround' that has ultimately reduced its impact. 'The power of crisis to shock and thus mobilize is diminishing because of narrative saturation, overuse, and a lack of well-articulated positive futurities to balance stories of end-times' (2017, p. 67).

Masco is referring particularly to the appearance of crisis in the United States. But Europe has been no less buffeted by numerous crises over the past 12 years

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(see Stråth & Wodak, 2009). The economic shocks of 2008 ('the financial crisis') were followed by an apparent 'flood' of migrants across European borders ('the refugee crisis') and the political chaos precipitated by the British referendum on membership of the EU alongside an apparently intractable trend towards populism and nationalism ('the democratic crisis'). Partly understood as causes of these events are the weaknesses of the international economic and political systems ('the institutional crisis'). In the background to all these crises is the concentration of wealth into fewer and fewer pockets ('the inequality crisis') and rising environmental concerns ('the climate crisis'). As we are finalising the manuscript of this book, we are witnessing another crisis unfold: the spread of the Covid-19 virus (the 'pandemic crisis').

Just contemplating this list of various crises provokes important questions. Does it really make sense to talk about manifold crises today, or is it actually more constructive to ask if there is a root cause, a fundamental underlying socio-ecological instability that makes a diagnosis of crisis more likely? Is crisis-speak a political tactic for framing a social concern? Does the word crisis work to draw attention to a serious problem and to provoke serious critical reflection? Or is it used to construct a hazardous situation in a particular way, to streamline the return to 'normality' and to reify rather than reject what has hitherto been understood as common sense? Is crisis a turning point or a blind spot?

We follow Bo Stråth and Ruth Wodak here, in their argument that 'crises has no predictable end' (2009, p. 27). They write that 'dominant discourses and narratives tend to relativize, deny or even reformulate dramatic events and to bury them under a cloak of silence.' And yet they continue by pointing out that this is not necessarily the case: 'certain events are foregrounded and, indeed, acquire iconic status… as a starting point of a new history' (2009, p. 16). A crisis can paralyse but it can also provoke; it can expose hegemonic discourses, values and identities and provide a moment for their transformation. It can implicate a burden of responsibility and resonate as a call for action (Redfield, 2005, p. 337).

The question mark in the title of our book is therefore important. It indicates that part of our perceived task is to open up the critical potential in crisis, to query what it means to say that Europe is in crisis and to ask if it is a chance to re-imagine Europe and our connection to it. Does crisis result in irrevocable breakdown? Will it result in socio-political paralysis? Or might a crisis indicate a tear in the social structure through which radical transformation is engendered? Is crisis a turning point that might result in the construction of new imaginaries, discourses and identifications? Can it propel us to rethink the distinction between 'us' and 'them'?

Starting from the observation that collective identities play an important role in both the impact of and response to crisis, the book as a whole reflects upon the possibilities and challenges of political identifications in a context of crisis. We invited social scientists from different disciplines and from various locations across Europe for their perspective on specific crises and identities, each highlighting a distinct aspect of identification.

The first four chapters provide a broad overview. In his chapter 'Identity and Europe: Integration Through Crisis and Crises of Integration', William

Outhwaite takes a historical perspective, examining many European crises – both real and perceived – and their impact on European identification and integration in the EU. He asks if 'what we now call the EU has emerged through crises' and suggests that the EU is more crisis-prone today precisely because of success in integration. In the second chapter 'Identity and Migration: From the "Refugee Crisis" to a Crisis of European Identity', Myriam Fotou also offers a broad overview on European identity and unpacks the links between the refugee crisis and European identity. Fotou argues that the securitisation of migration management, with its dehumanising tendencies, has threatened European values, contradicting and ultimately endangering European identity.

The third and fourth chapters focus specifically on European citizenship, although they offer very different perspectives on what this entails. In his chapter 'Identity and Citizenship: The Search for a Supranational Social Contract', Evrim Tan critiques the existing EU citizenship regime, suggesting that it is itself a source of crisis. Tan focuses on the 'active citizens' who suffer because EU citizenship is only offered through the nation state, and he explores the possibility of a different regime that could offer a 'supranational citizenship'. In contrast to this 'top-down' approach, in her chapter 'Identity and Protest: Towards a Multiplicity of European Citizenship', Nora Sophie Schröder considers the formation of citizenship from the 'bottom up'. Conducting a field study of the Anti-TTIP protests, she notices that citizens are politicised through this conflict; protestors identify themselves as European citizens, but in very different ways.

The next five chapters offer analyses of more specific examples of crisis and collective identifications, in Germany, Poland and Hungary, Greece, Norway and the UK. The manifestation of populism as indicative of crisis is a common theme here. In their chapter 'Identity and the Far-Right: People Talking About "the People"', Tim Kucharzewski and Silvia Nicola strongly argue that populism poses a threat to the European project. Challenging analysis that only looks at the level of politicians, parties and institutions, they undertake qualitative research of the voters themselves and explain how identifications can become polarised.

In the sixth chapter 'Identity and Security: The Affective Ontology of Populism', Monika Gabriela Bartoszewicz considers the populist policies and discourses in Poland and Hungary. Rejecting rationalist and behaviourist approaches, she suggests that populism works by invoking and responding to the emotions in the formation of collective identities. In contrast, in the seventh chapter 'Identity and Emotion: Resented and Resentful in Crisis-Ridden Greece' Fani Giannousi considers the role of emotions in both populist and anti-populist discourses around what has been come to be known as 'the Greek crisis'. Both Bartoszewicz and Giannousi discuss the demarcation of 'us/them' which can be understood as an inevitable political construction that might be sharpened or transformed in times of crisis. The us/them distinction is also a theme of the eighth chapter 'Identity and Class: Boundary Drawing in Norway' by Ove Skarpenes, which discusses specifically the collective identification of class and the specific ways that the Norwegian working class draw 'symbolic boundaries'.

In the ninth chapter 'Identity and Brexit: Five Readings of the Referendum?' Benjamin Abrams, Sebastian Büttner and Amanda Machin focus on the

UK and show that the British vote to leave the EU can be interpreted in different ways; some might see it as a crisis that is indicative of a degenerative tendency or disorder, others as an opportunity to reinvent and re-imagine collective identifications.

While the first nine chapters all consider identification of citizens, in the tenth chapter 'Identity and Representation: Representative Bureaucracy in the European Union – Promise and Pitfalls?' Maximilian Nagel and B. Guy Peters take a different perspective, focussing on the identifications of European representatives in the context of crisis. Finally, the conclusion raises the question of how Europe itself is represented at the centre of the world map, and how this might be changing in a context of crisis. The conclusion also suggests paths of future research.

Crises, for these chapters, can all be understood as 'decisive moments' for collective identification. It does not matter whether this crisis is imagined or real, whether it is constructive or disruptive, it indicates a point of potential transformation in our imagined communities. Although we might believe that conflict and division may engender crisis, we can see it conversely: that crises are particularly opportune moments for the exaggeration of social and political divisions (Katsambekis & Stavrakakis, 2020). Whether the boundaries between 'us' and 'them' are redrawn or reinforced during periods of (real or perceived) crisis, it is at these times that we should most fiercely analyse our conventions and identifications that are taken for granted. We hope the collected chapters of this book will help us with that onerous task.

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Chapter 1

Identity and Europe: Integration Through Crisis and Crises of Integration

William Outhwaite

Abstract

The themes of crisis and identity have been discussed endlessly in relation to European unification since 1950, but generally not in their interrelation. After looking briefly at the literature on the notion that integration has often proceeded through crises, and on the relation between European and national and regional identities, the author examines some real or perceived crises and suggests how they may have impacted the issue of identity. These crises include that of the immediate post-war years, the slow emergence of serious reflection on the Holocaust, the imposition of communist rule across half of Europe and the Cold War, the crises of decolonisation and the persistence of European racism, European divisions in relation to crises in the Middle East, Europe's (non-)response to environmental crisis, the crises of the 1968 years, the crises of post-communist transition and the Yugoslav wars, the Eurozone and refugee crises, the Brexit crisis and finally the current coronavirus crisis. These persistent and often recurring crises (Dauerkrisen) have confronted European political elites with what have been called crises of crisis management, and European populations with different ways of conceptualising their relation to Europe.

Keywords: Crisis; identity; Europe; integration; geopolitics; nationalism

Introduction

The themes of crisis and identity have been discussed endlessly in relation to European unification since 1950, but generally not in their interrelation.[1]

[1]See however Vobruba (2017), especially part 2. On the theme of integration through crisis, see, for example, the characteristically brilliant articles by Philippe Schmitter

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The past 70 years of European integration, the emergence of a political structure covering most of the continent, have, obviously enough, been shaped by the tension between the European and the national. This tension has been both aggravated and assuaged by various 'crises' affecting Europe, which have had an impact on integration processes. Some national political leaders, some of the time, have attached equal importance to a perceived European interest along with their national interests, and some European citizens, especially in (West) Germany, have identified more with Europe, out of revulsion at the effects of European (and particularly German) nationalism in the decade before 1945.

To pose the issue in terms of an opposition between a national and a European identification, however,[2] obscures the fact that it has also been possible to see them as complementing and reinforcing one another. This has been a persisting theme of French policy, and there was a weaker version of the same idea in the UK, illustrated by the slogan that 'we've got to be in to get on'. In the 1975 UK referendum on whether or not the country should remain in the European Communities, which it had joined in 1973, a 'Britain in Europe' leaflet quoted the former Prime Minister Edward Heath, in a speech in April 1975: 'Are we going to stay on the centre of the stage where we belong, or are we going to shuffle off into the dusty wings of history?'[3] Heath's question has now been answered, at least for the moment.

In a more analytical vein, Milward (1992) argued persuasively that the postwar integration of (part of Western) Europe 'rescued' the European nation state. We might expand the title of his classic book to read The European Rescue of the Nation State *from itself*. A cynical view of what we now know as the European Union would be that, like generals fighting the previous war rather than the current one, or the UK blindly following an anti-flu strategy when faced by C-19, the EU has worked to prevent the Second World War. Its publicity material has certainly focussed on that theme, typically beginning with aerial views of the ruins of Berlin. In West Germany itself, though hardly elsewhere, 'national' was a dirty word except on the hard right.

Crises and Integration

I am using the term crisis as an etic (external) rather than an emic (actors') category, to refer to two dimensions of the recent history of Europe. One is that of ongoing and unresolved issues, as captured in the German term Dauerkrisen; the other that of what can be seen in retrospect as the critical points in Europe's history, whether or not they were perceived as such at the time. Conversely, many of

(1970, 2012) and, more sceptically, Parsons and Matthijs (2015), who define crisis more narrowly. The literature on European identity is vast; see, for example, Soler, Tasheva and Welz (forthcoming).

[2]For a rather different approach to this issue, see Leca (2009).

[3]See https://hitchensblog.mailonsunday.co.uk/2015/08/the-1975-common-market-referendum-campaign-documents.html.

what were termed crises in contemporary discourse, and especially in the initially rather self-centred discourse bubble of 'Common Market Studies',[4] have turned out to be more momentary shocks, more or less rapidly overtaken by subsequent events or by, to use another category from the German-language discussion, crises of crisis management.[5] I have deliberately avoided focussing on the temporary internal crises of what became the European Union, such as De Gaulle's 'empty chair' in 1965–1966, except when they indicate more lasting problems and tensions.

There is, however, much to be said for the view that what we now call the EU has emerged through crises and what has come to be called 'not letting a crisis go to waste'. Rosamond (2001, p. 168) has pointed to the characteristic way in which responses are formulated by the EU, navigating towards 'European-level solutions', as opposed to separate national-level strategies. I have written elsewhere (Outhwaite, 2020b) about a particular example of this: the gradual emergence of a coherent European-level policy of territorial planning shaped around the model of overlapping transnational 'macro-regions' (the Baltic area, the Danube region, the Alpine-Adriatic region, and so on). Here, the challenges addressed have typically concerned environmental threats and the preservation and cultivation of natural and cultural heritage, but also the improvement of cross-border transport links, which may of course contribute to European identification – not least for transnational commuters.[6] The administrative authorities involved include both Member States and regional bodies, and sometimes existing transnational NGOs. This is an example of a relatively focussed European-level response to particular challenges; I now turn to look at the more diffuse way in which European integration has taken place against the background of, and been shaped by, broader regional and global crises. These crises are often interrelated and overlapping. As Vobruba (2017, pp. 121–122) has pointed out, borrowing the Swiss historian Burckhardt's concept of intersecting crises (Krisenkreuzung), crises may reinforce one another or neutralise one another, as when the Schengen crisis in 2015 made the management of the eurocrisis "less hysterical'.

Building on the Ruins

The original crisis of post-war Europe, the aftermath of the Second World War, was perceived largely in national terms, rather than the result of a Europe-wide subordination to fascist rule from which Europe had been saved largely by the

[4]This term has been largely displaced by 'contemporary European studies' or 'Europawissenschaft(en)', though the earlier term has been retained by the *Journal of Common Market Studies*.

[5]On rhetorical uses of the term crisis, see Koselleck (1988), Föllmer and Graf (2005), Pischon (2015), and Harrington (2016).

[6]These of course have both positive and negative environmental implications. Upgrading a rail service may have environmental benefits; large-scale road projects are less likely to do so.

United States and USSR – both of course entering the war only after being attacked. A fixation on the specifically German contribution to the war and what came to be called the Holocaust, and on the person of Hitler, still persists. As Judt wrote, 'the decision to blame everything on Germany was one of the few matters on which all sides, within each country and among the Allied powers, could readily agree'[7] (2002, p. 160). Only in Soviet-occupied Europe, where there were local reasons for stressing and instrumentalising the more global anti-fascist character of the war, was anti-fascism the dominant interpretative frame.

In West Germany, despite the efforts of Adorno and others, there was a reluctance to confront the issue of war guilt, classically documented by the Mitscherlichs in 1967 in *The Inability to Mourn* (Mitscherlich & Mitscherlich, 1975). As Horst Wächter, the son of a leading Nazi, wrote rather chillingly to Philippe Sands (2020, p. 17), during the period of Nazi rule. The 'deplorable situation of the Jews was generally accepted as *Schicksal*', fate. Even several years after the end of the war, a majority of West German respondents still agreed with the statement that 'national socialism had been a good idea, just badly carried out' (Merritt & Merritt, 1970, pp. 171–172). The historian Dan Diner (1999; 2007) has reflected for a lifetime on the timescale of West German and European memory.[8]

The economic aspect of the post-war crisis in Western Europe was largely resolved by Marshall Aid transfers from the United States, made conditional on moves towards unification embodied in the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC, later OECD). From a US perspective, this was essential not just to preserve the peace but to furnish a meaningful economic structure for a cluster of entities often smaller than states of the United States. Taking a long view, we should focus not so much on the immediate post-war economic crises but on the exceptional period of prosperity which followed in Western Europe, the 'trente glorieuses'[9] beginning with the West German 'Wirtschaftswunder' up to the oil shock of 1973.

Western Europe's Geopolitical Predicament

A second lasting crisis was the extension of communist control over half of Europe, marked by Winston Churchill's 'Iron Curtain' speech, and what came to be called the Cold War. Once both sides had nuclear missiles, the prospect of the complete obliteration of human life in Europe became a real one. The West, soon including Greece and Turkey as well as the United States and Canada, responded in 1949 with the formation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), incorporating the European initiative of the Brussels Treaty Organisation (BTO)

[7]See also Clifford (2013).

[8]Diner echoes the idea formulated a century ago by the founder of the sociology of knowledge, Wilhelm Jerusalem, of soziale Verdichtung (social condensation), the gradual reinforcement of beliefs and memories (Huebner, 2013, p. 436).

[9]The term was used by the French demographer Jean Fourastié to refer to the '30 glorious years' of post-war prosperity in Western Europe.