Nationalism:
The Communitarian Block

Amitai Etzioni
University Professor
The George Washington University

THE DIFFICULTIES EXPERIENCED BY THE European Union, and in particular the 17 members of the eurozone, highlight a major challenge faced by many nations that are not in the EU. These nations face a communitarian paradox: on the one hand, they need a significantly higher level of transnational governance, which, as I shall attempt to show, can be provided only if the expansion of such governance is paralleled by a considerable measure of transnational community-building. On the other hand, this communal expansion encounters nationalism, which acts as an overpowering communitarian block by standing in the way of building more encompassing communities, ones comprised of nations.

The article finds that nations must either find ways to overcome this block (a very challenging undertaking) or limit the level of transnational governance (and in the case of the EU, scale it back). The article closes by reviewing measures that have been undertaken in the pursuit of communities that encompass nations and suggests other approaches.

THE COMMUNITARIAN MARCH

A popular narrative sees the course of human history as a movement from numerous small communities (traditional villages), to more encompassing social groupings (city-states and feudal fiefdoms), to still more encompassing groups (nation-states), leading next to regional communities (such as the EU), and ultimately, some argue, to global governance and community. In the last issue

of *The Brown Journal of World Affairs*, Theodore Lowi illustrated this narrative using Europe as an example:

> There were approximately 500 political, state-like units [in 1500]. By 1800 there were "a few dozen." After World War I, the census of states was 23, having been reduced significantly by the absorption of many states into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and others by the new Yugoslavia. By 1994, there were 50 states, arising out of the collapse of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia. There is now a movement to reduce that number by 27, in a new megastate called the European Union.[1]

In *Bounding Power*, Daniel Deudney finds that over the past 500 years "all human political communities, initially isolated or loosely connected, have become more densely and tightly interconnected and subject to various mutual vulnerabilities in a manner previously experienced only on much smaller spatial scales."[2] Deudney sees "security-from-violence" as the primary driver behind this trend.[3] People were safe in small units in the days of bows and arrows, but needed increasingly more encompassing social entities once gunpowder was invented, until finally intercontinental missiles and weapons of mass destruction pushed them toward a global community.[4] Other scholars point to different motivators, including trade, population growth, and irrigation and access to water.[5] A 2008 analysis by Jürgen Klüver predicts that "the social future of mankind is probably a global society based on the traditions of Western societies with local adaptations."[6]

Actually, very few attempts have been made to form communities using nations as building blocks, and they have all collapsed. These included the United Arab Republic (1958–1961) and the West Indies Federation (1958–1962). (It is not clear if the social entities that were combined to make the USSR and Yugoslavia were full-fledged nations by the definition presented below. In any case, they too disintegrated.) The EU is by far the most advanced attempt to form a community made up of a large number of well-formed nations. Its difficulties are, therefore, particularly illuminating for those who seek to study the communitarian march toward ever more encompassing social groupings.

MATTERS OF TERMINOLOGY

For the purposes of the discussion at hand, it is essential to distinguish between states and nations. In defining nations, I follow others who have defined them as communities invested in states; that is, nations have the attributes of communities, albeit imagined ones.[7] People in well-formed nations see themselves

not merely as citizens who pay taxes, are entitled to services, follow public affairs, and vote, but also as members of a national community. They have a strong affinity for, and loyalty to, one another and the interests of their nation, and their identities are deeply invested in the nation. On major, albeit select, issues, loyalty to the nation trumps other loyalties. They tend to have a shared moral culture—although not one necessarily shared by all citizens—a sense of a shared history, and often a sense of shared destiny, or at least of a joint future. For the sake of brevity, I shall refer to these beliefs as the *ethos*.

Some scholars distinguish between nations and nation-states; the former may exist within or beyond the boundaries of a state and may precede it, while the latter describes cases in which the boundaries of the nation and state are congruent. This valid distinction can be set aside here because it does not directly affect the issue under consideration: the factors that prevent the communitarian march from moving to the next supra- or post-national level.

ENTER NATIONALISM

If one employs the terms just laid out to re-examine the communitarian march, one finds that in earlier ages, when people lived in small tribes and villages, there was indeed a strong overlap between the state and the community.[8] In the subsequent stages, and during much of history, the state grew both in terms of people and the territory it encompassed, but the community remained local- ized. For instance, during the Middle Ages in Europe, most citizens lived in pre-nation-states in the sense that they had a parochial rather than cosmopolitan viewpoint.[9] Their cognitive maps of the world were largely limited to their im- mediate environment, often to their village. This localism was enforced by the rigidity of divisions of the estates—such as the aristocracy, the bourgeoisie, and the peasantry—which stifled identification with those outside one's immediate social sphere.

As a result, state realignments engendered by the various monarchies—even those that resulted in territorial reallocations through either treaty or conquest— mattered little to the peasantry. Thus, when the Prussian army was defeated in 1806, the populace was largely apathetic to its fate, so detached were they from "the personal instrument of the crown."[10] Similarly, the French peasantry frequently demonstrated the "self-absorbed indifference […] on which two Napoleonic dictatorships had rested."[11]

In sharp contrast, with the rise of nationalism in Europe in the nineteenth century, the great community lag was overcome; state and community over-

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lapped again in well-formed nations. The citizens of nations personally followed national developments or were linked to peers, leaders, or opinion makers who did. Most citizens became deeply invested in the nation. National achievements and humiliations, whether real or perceived, were experienced as individual gains and insults. The mere suggestion of making territorial concessions to other nations often resulted in sharp emotional responses. The bitter contests between Israelis and Palestinians and between Serbs and Kosovars are two cases in point.

Appealing to national values thus became a major resource for those who sought to win wars and elections.

Several historical developments enabled the transformation of the state into an imagined community—into a nation. These include the spread of education, the expansion of the mass media, and increased geographical and status mobility. Economic factors also played a role. In the pre-nation era, those in power could secure the military they needed by hiring mercenaries or drawing on the aristocracy. Local politicians, such as Chicago aldermen or New York City politicians, could gain the votes they needed by doing material favors for their constituents; for example, handing out money or jobs.[12] However, as the escalating demands of warfare came to require the mobilization of millions—and the same held for winning elections—those in power found that appealing to peoples' sentiments and ideals was much more economical than providing them with material goods. Appealing to national values thus became a major resource for those who sought to win wars and elections.

I keep referring to *well-formed nations* as a reminder that the depth and scope of the communal commitment to the state that nationalism entails are contiguous and not dichotomous variables. Some national communities are weak, some are growing, and others have reached a high level of integration. Thus, many of the states initially forged by colonial powers—states that cut across tribal and confessional communities—became weak nations. For instance, Afghanistan still has a particularly weak national community, and its citizens have strong allegiances to tribes such as the Pashtun, Tajik, and Hazara. Iraq is divided among confessional (Shiite and Sunni) and ethnic (Arabs, Kurds, and Turkmen) groups. Both the United States and France are examples of states formed well before their national communities developed. In the case of the United States, this development occurred mainly after the Civil War.

The closing of the communitarian gap following nationalism, after which communities again become co-extensive with the state, is evident in large segments of the world; in the nineteenth century, empires (a form of a state with-

out a strong community) were torn apart to form national states. The process manifested itself first in Latin America, as Portugal lost Brazil and Spain hemorrhaged colonies. In Europe, the Austro–Hungarian Empire was dismembered after World War I; in the Middle East, the Ottoman Empire was parceled out. It was followed after World War II by the collapse of the remaining European colonial powers and the birth of scores of nations in Asia and Africa.

The point of all these observations is to note that once community caught up with the state under nationalism, a qualitative change occurred in the relationship between the citizens and the state. Once a nation was well formed, the people, and not just the ruling classes, strenuously resisted forming more encompassing communities and jealously guarded the rights, privileges, boundaries, identity, and culture—the ethos—of their nation. Thus, nationalism is standing in the way of what is considered the natural or much needed next step in the development of the transnational order.[13]

THE END OF NATIONALISM?

The idea that powerful nationalism stands in the way of extending communities beyond state borders differs sharply from the argument that, far from presenting a formidable, potentially immutable block, the nation-state has ceased to be an effective form of social organization and is being steadily and inexorably eroded. This erosion is said to be both external (due to globalization) and internal (due to pluralization).[14] Adherents to this view—sometimes referred to as post-nationalists—maintain that economic globalization has created markets that are beyond the capabilities of traditional nation-states to regulate.[15] Also, immigration is said to have led to heterogeneous nations in which ethnic minorities maintain transnational diaspora cultures, divide national self-identities, and further weaken a vital source of social cohesion undergirding the nation-state.[16]

Moreover, post-nationalists view this erosion of the nation-state as heralding a liberation of sorts from a "barbaric nationalism," and point to an international political successor. Jürgen Habermas, for instance, holds that major functions, such as handling international trafficking in drugs and arms and ecological threats, must be transferred to supranational institutions.[17] This is not to suggest that the post-nationalists expect states to simply disappear.[18] Rather, they hold, we must actively construct a post-national democracy oriented around civic solidarity. Gaining the citizens of nation-states as voluntary partners in the construction of a post-national system would enable state actors to cede power to supranational authorities.

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Skeptics of this approach dismiss it as chimerical and doubt the possibility of constructing a "post-national polity through deliberation and attachment to civic values."[19] They are dubious of the viability of an EU-wide citizenry, arguing that nation-states are "the largest communities within which the identitarian (membership, belongingness) aspect of citizenship still makes sense."[20]

True, nations are buffeted by forces beyond their borders that they often cannot control. The list of challenges that cannot be handled by nations on their own—the spread of weapons of mass destruction, economic contagions, pandemics, global warming, etc.—is all too well known.[21] So far, however, no body has emerged that has proven capable of handling major problems that nations cannot—or at least that can match nations in this regard. Nations continue to be the relevant decision makers in all matters concerning war. For instance, although the 2011 campaign in Libya was labeled a NATO operation, the key decisions—and commitment of resources—were made by France, the United Kingdom, and the United States, and were opposed by Germany and Turkey. Nations also continue to be the main players in the global economy, as evidenced during negotiations regarding the financial crisis in the eurozone. The main actors were Germany and France on one side, and Greece, Italy, Ireland, Spain, and Portugal on the other; granted, the European Central Bank did play a role as well.

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Transnationalism with Limited Community-Building

Faced with both the need for more transnational governance and the communitarian block that stands in the way of forming more encompassing social groupings, nations developed various adaptations that seek more transnational governance without building a parallel community. In a previous publication, I reviewed such attempts on a global level, including the roles played by civil society bodies, networks of government officials from different countries, and a few supranational bodies (e.g., the International Chamber of Commerce and the International Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers). I showed that these bodies do not, and cannot, provide more than a fraction of the needed additional global governance.[22]

The following analysis is focused on the EU. Although it is but a regional body, it is by far the most advanced attempt to generate a major transnational source of governance without building a thick supranational ethos (or *demos*)— without building a European community that has the kind of attributes nations now command. I write *thick* because various social scientists have pointed out

that some groups within the various European nations have formed some transnational identifies and affinities, and that many Europeans have acquired some measure, however weak, of identification with Europe. However, these are far too thin to carry the weight of supporting the kind of transnational governance that the EU has put in place and is expanding.

THE EU: THE TEST CASE

The EU is by far the most successful, albeit troubled, attempt to forge a major regional source of governance that has many of the features of a state, including a parliament, an executive branch, courts, and select reinforcement mechanisms (though mainly non-coercive ones). The European Commission—the main driver of the EU—has issued thousands of directives and forged a very large number of regulations, sets standards and harmonizes policies, and collects revenues and subsidizes projects—all across national borders.[23]

Moreover, the EU is a particularly important natural experiment for the thesis of this article: that there are steep limits to the extent to which one can advance the development of transnational administrative, legal, and economic integration with little community-building.[24]

The Commission made progress with rather little community-building by drawing on several political and sociological mechanisms:

- The Commission introduced measures that benefit the various EU members (even if not equally) and hence gained their support, most clearly in removing barriers to the movement of goods.[25] The Commission standardized technical specifications for technology and products such as railroads, medical devices, and toys.[26]

- Instead of seeking to make all members adhere to the same standards and rules, the Commission qualified nations and their industries and services, colleges, hospitals, and much else on the basis of minimum compliance. That is, although the various national providers could vary a great deal in their level of competence, achievements, and reliability, they qualified as long as they met basic standards. This is much less sociologically taxing than if the Commission insisted they all meet the same exact standards.

- Numerous small measures were introduced under the radar, for in-

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stance, by being buried in complex legal documents and treaties.[27]

- The Commission tolerated a high level of violation of its rules and policies (sometimes referred to as the compliance gap). Even before eastern enlargement, implementation of EU policy within the 15 original member states was inconsistent and weak. Gerda Falkner and Oliver Treib analyzed over 90 implementation cases of six EU labor law directives and found that, for most member states, "domestic concerns frequently prevail if there is a conflict of interests, and each single act of transposing an EU Directive tends to happen on the basis of a fresh cost-benefit analysis."[28] Christoph Knill examined the implementation of four environmental initiatives passed by the Commission between 1980 and 1993 in Germany, the United Kingdom, and France. He found that implementation of these policies was inconsistent, at best. In some cases he noted a "dominant pattern of ineffective implementation."[29] One of the gravest examples of this disregard for EU authority is Greece's falsified budget data in its application to join the eurozone. The European Commission's statistical agency failed to alert officials to the suspicious data, which should have prevented Greece's admission to the eurozone.[30] The admission of the eastern European states, which were considerably less developed and more corrupt, led to even more violations.[31]

The net result of proceeding in these ways was a considerable increase in alienation among the electorate of many EU members. The alienation intensified as the EU policies entered areas of great normative, emotive, and political import. A case in point is the Schengen Agreement, which removed border controls for the movement of people between 25 EU member countries. This led to large numbers of immigrants, who entered Europe from the south (where nations were more open to them), moving to northern countries, whose citizens resented them. It also led to large movements of cheap labor from nations such as Poland and the Baltic countries to nations such as France and Ireland, generating still more resentment.

WHY IS REGIONAL COMMUNITY NEEDED?

There are major differences of opinion among scholars about the way in which polities work. Some see them as the coming together of special interest groups,

which work out policies that serve their respective constituencies. According to these theorists, the legislature, and more generally the government, serves as a clearinghouse of sorts. There is no need for shared values or consensus-building with the public at large. The policies reflect specific interests. Indeed, when these cannot be made to converge, gridlock ensues. If polities could be made to work this way, one could build transnational regional administrative semi-states based on negotiations among various national and transnational interest groups, with little need for community-building.[32]

In contrast, my analysis relies on Émile Durkheim, who assumed that societies require a strong element of cohesion, in contrast to Marx who viewed societies as arenas in which classes clash. I hence take for granted, as a matter of definition, that (a) members of communities are bonded with one another in affective ways; (b) they share values and not just interests; and (c) they are willing to make sacrifices for one another and for the common good of their community—sacrifices they would be unwilling to make for others outside the community. The fact that this holds true for members of nations, but only to a rather limited extent for members of the EU, is highlighted next.

The West Germans gave the equivalent of US$1 trillion to the East Germans during the decade that followed reunification with little hesitation. *They are fellow Germans* was about all the explanation that was needed. However, the same Germans have a very hard time granting much smaller amounts to Greece and other EU nations that are in trouble. They are not members of the proverbial tribe. As Alan Bance writes, "Before there can be federalism, it is necessary to create a set of European 'myths' (no doubt as selective as those out of which nineteenth-century nationalism was constructed) to supply 'symbolic justification' for the sacrifice of immediate interests in favor of the collective European enterprise."[33] In short, if Greece were one of the *neu länder*, the former East German states, it would be bailed out without much difficulty.

Americans can readily gain insight into this same phenomenon. Once every few years, some reporter will call attention to the fact that in the United States, southern and midwestern states pay substantially less in taxes but receive a disproportionately large share of federal outlays than do northern states. However, such stories have very short legs; *these are fellow Americans, case closed.* In contrast, Americans are widely opposed to extending other nations much smaller amounts than the wealthier states (say, Connecticut and New York) give to the poorer states (such as Mississippi and Alabama). In other words, if Greece had been the fifty-first American state, its troubles would be over.

The clearest demonstration of the powerful communal bonds at the national

level is that people are willing to die for their nation; no one is thinking about dying for the EU, not to mention less advanced transnational unions.

Finally, public policies—in which (since nationalism) the "masses," not just interest groups, are involved—partly reflect values and not just interests. This is most obvious in policies that concern so-called cultural issues such as gay marriage, abortion, separation of church and state, attitudes toward minorities and immigrants, and—in the United States—gun control. However, values play a key role in practically all policies, from whether the rich ought to be taxed more than others, to how much we should scale back economic growth to protect the environment, to the scope and kind of foreign aid. When there is no normative consensus, forming such policies—and above all, implementing them—becomes much more arduous.

No one is thinking about dying for the EU, not to mention less advanced transnational unions.

Indeed, studies show that movement toward building a European community has led to stronger alienation among millions of European citizens.[34] According to an analysis of Eurobarometer surveys from 1973–2004, net public support for the EU grew steadily in the 1980s (averaging about 42 percent) and reached an apex of 62 percent in 1991.[35] However, support then declined. By 1997, net support for integration had fallen to 39 percent. Since 2004, it has fluctuated within a 10 percentage point range of roughly 30–40 percent.[36] In 2010, net support was only 31 percent. Moreover, the supporters of the EU are concentrated in countries in which people consider their own government to be particularly inept and corrupt (e.g., Italy), while the critics are in the major European powers, especially Germany and the United Kingdom. The disaffection with the EU further intensified following the financial crisis triggered by Greece.[37]

In response, the EU is actively considering various institutional measures that would increase its power over that of the member nations—without any new community-building measures. For instance, Jean-Claude Trichet, former president of the European Central Bank, suggested a eurozone-wide ministry of finance that would ensure member states' adherence to fiscal and competitiveness policies, control the region's financial sector, and centralize representation of the currency bloc in international financial institutions like the International Monetary Fund.[38] The ministry would also monitor whether countries were pursuing the right policies to be competitive.[39] If the analysis presented here is valid, these measures would increase the tensions and difficulties of the EU rather than help members to cope with them, because they entail more transnational

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decision making in matters of great import without consensus-building and the communal foundations on which it must rest.

LEGITIMACY WITHOUT CONSENSUS?

A political science response to the communitarian block is to point to the movement toward increasing democratization of the EU. Originally, member nations had veto power on practically all matters. However, over time, various changes have been introduced (which are referred to as "deepening") that allow various EU bodies to make decisions based on majority votes of the member states and that do not require unanimity. These changes allow the EU to make more progress in state-building without community-building because no single member can block policies (if they are covered under the democracy rule). Furthermore, the changes presumably provide a source of legitimacy, given that democracy is an accepted way to resolve policy differences.[40] (Legitimacy is widely defined as acting in line with established norms.)[41]

Democracy, however, presumes community—or at least a measure of community—and a value consensus. As Jean-Marc Ferry puts it, any legal community must overlap with a "moral community," which would be based on "a common political culture and [...] a shared historical memory."[42] First of all, those subject to the votes must recognize the legitimacy of the institution, which in turn would reflect their core values. Thus, most Americans would not view policies passed by the UN General Assembly as binding—because the United States never recognized this body as expressing a community to which the United States belongs and whose basic values it shares. The governments of the EU members agreed to yield a measure of their sovereignty to the EU; however, large segments of their citizens did not. Hence, the fact that a democratic vote takes place often does not build legitimacy, and certainly not consensus. In other words, consensus on basic values and the legitimacy of institutions must be built before, or at the least at the same time as, democratic power is increased.[43] This largely has yet to take place in the EU.[44]

Of those who agree that the EU needs community-building in the sense of the terms used here—not more top-down introduction of institutions, but the formation of a shared ethos—a considerable number hold, in effect, that this observation is irrelevant because no such ethos can be formed. For instance, Richard Bellamy and Dario Castiglione dispute that a public culture founded on common values can be formed from as diverse (culturally, politically, and not least economically) a body as Europe:

> Despite the member states sharing a loose set of liberal-democratic values, they often interpret them in different and conflicting ways. For example, they differ over the interpretation of the right to privacy, the ways they tolerate religious differences, their view of human dignity and so on, all of which reflect their very distinct political cultures… Thus far, what the ECJ [European Court of Justice] and member states have achieved is not so much a consensus as a series of different sorts of compromise.[45]

EU COMMUNITY-BUILDING: PAST AND FUTURE

The EU has sought to engage in community-building by building bonds of affinity among its citizens and by promoting shared values, not by introducing more top-down institutions. These efforts have taken place mainly in four areas that are widely considered places community-building can happen: education, language, media, and "symbols." It would take an army of social scientists years to review and evaluate all of the attempts made. Here, a few select examples are given to point to the reasons these measures have not been very effective. One may well contest these assessments individually, but there can be no doubt about the final outcome: there is no EU ethos in the making; and the sense of affinity and shared values among EU citizens is weak and possibly declining.

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EDUCATION

Currently, education is a national concern and often either excludes European history or examines it from a nation-specific perspective. The movement to Europeanize aspects of national curricula has existed since the 1970s, but has met resistance from member states. The Commission strove to reach young audiences with *The Raspberry Ice Cream War*, a 1997 comic book that strove to promote the idea of "a peaceful Europe without frontiers" among the children of member nations.[46]

One notes that the suggested changes concern altering some textbooks and the content of some curricula, but not a sweeping Europeanization of the way history, literature, and social sciences are taught. Removing hostile and prejudicial comments is of course of merit, but education continues to be largely national and does not contribute to building a shared ethos. Furthermore, one cannot help but question how much schools can contribute to transmitting a shared ethos and implanting it in future citizens if no such EU ethos exists in the first place. Any serious attempt to move in this direction faces the fact that integrated education has received the lowest support of all policy initiatives on the Eurobarometer.[47]

Historically, the promotion of a shared language (and in very few cases, more than one) has served as a major ethos-building measure. Nation-building often meant that people who spoke different tongues were strongly encouraged to use the newly promoted national language as their primary language, at least in public. Laws were enacted allowing only the use of the national language in court hearings, public documents, street signs, voting ballots, and so on.

For the EU to choose one language as its supranational tongue is neither possible nor desired. The various members have rich cultures that are deeply associated with their particular languages, and access to these cultures would be largely lost if all nations chose to speak, say, French from here on out. However, the EU could have chosen for all member nations to lock in on the same second language. (This would be in line with the idea that the supranational community does not seek to replace nations, but rather to add a layer on top of them.) In effect, English does serve as such in many EU proceedings, mainly for the elites and professionals. However, the Barcelona European Council in 2002 simply established the goal of teaching at least two foreign languages, but which particular languages was left to each individual nation to choose.[48] English is the only serious candidate to become a shared second language, but so far France, Germany, and Italy have strongly opposed this development, thus slowing down the agreement upon a shared European tongue—a major element of community-building.

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Various attempts to fashion a European newspaper have not truly taken off. The same holds for other media, such as television and radio. One major reason is that the citizens do not share one language. The EU should consider establishing a European Broadcasting Agency modeled after the BBC, which draws on public funds but has autonomous control over the content of its broadcasts. Its mandate would be to provide news and interpret it from a European perspective.

Europe-wide media, such as the *Financial Times*, are limited to an exclusive group of elites or have expanded to become global publications, as opposed to merely Eurocentric. In the 1980s, an international consortium of public broadcasters conducted an experiment with a European television channel (Eurikon), rotating responsibility for programming each week. This failed due to inconsistent programming, cultural barriers, and the lack of a need for,

or interest in, transnational advertising (and therefore, a lack of funds). One observer noted, "While viewers from different countries were united in their dislike for Eurikon's programs, the precise reasons for their dislike tended to diverge along national lines."[49] While the Internet has made mass transnational communication much easier, developments have been mainly confined to the private sector. Furthermore, the Internet promotes communication with other countries just as readily as it does with EU members and, thus, does little for EU community-building in particular.

SYMBOLS

In 2008, the European Parliament passed a proposal to display the European flag (a circle of gold stars on a dark blue background) in every meeting room and at official events; to play the European national anthem, based on Beethoven's "Ode to Joy," at the start of each new Parliament; and to print the European motto—"Unity in Diversity"—on all Parliament documents. Additionally, Europe Day was formally recognized as a holiday.[50] The EU emblem has been imprinted on license plates, passports, and in numerous other places.

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These and other such measures have done little for EU community-building. Some efforts do not capture any particular normative or affective content (e.g., the emblem). Others speak to universal values and neither reflect nor promote EU-specific values (e.g., "Ode to Joy" as the EU anthem). Above all, symbols can express and even help promote shared values—when they exist—but cannot replace values or be created out of whole cloth.

In short, so far the EU community-building efforts, to the extent that they sought to build a shared ethos, have been particularly ineffectual.

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

EU MEGALOGUES

Societies, even large ones, engage in dialogues about public policies that link many local dialogues into one national give-and-take—a "megalogue." Typically, just one or two topics top the megalogue's agenda—for instance, whether or not to legalize gay marriage, engage in war, introduce austerity measures during an economic slowdown—or join the eurozone. These dialogues mainly concern values and are not dominated by considerations of fact. They often seem end-

less and impassionate but actually frequently lead to new, widely shared public understandings. Such understandings, in turn, often provide a well-grounded normative basis for changes in public policy and institutions; they generate new sources of legitimacy.[51] In the United States, for instance, public dialogues paved the way for new legislation to protect the environment and for the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency, and preceded the abolition of legal segregation and the formation of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

The fact that the majority of EU citizens feel ill-informed about the EU and the actions of its various institutions, and that their views are not considered when policies are changed suggests the merit of seeking to engender EU-wide megalogues.

Launching EU-wide referendums is one way to launch a megalogue, as long as ample time is allowed before the referendums are taken—that is, a period during which people can consult with one another and their leaders before voting. Megalogues, dialogues, and some referendums do take place in Europe, but they are, as a rule, conducted within each nation. This is, in part, because people still see themselves primarily as citizens of this or that nation rather than of the EU and, in part, because the points of closure—the endpoints or changes in public policy that these dialogues lead to or support—are often on the national rather than EU level. To enhance the formation of a core of shared values associated with the EU, megalogues and referendums should take place in all member nations at the same time, and should be tied to decisions to be made at the EU, and not the domestic, level.

The issues to be discussed and voted on at an EU-wide level need to be salient enough to draw people into participating. Suggested changes in immigration policy is an obvious example. Finally, to succeed, participating citizens must be able to trust that the results of these referendums will be binding—that the EU officials will be required to heed them rather than view them as merely advisory.

EU-Wide Voting

As EU consensus solidifies, the EU should move toward EU-wide voting on EU candidates, rather than the current system in which votes for the EU Parliament are conducted largely for national candidates on a national basis. Currently, most candidates running for seats in the European Parliament are put up by national parties and campaign only in their home countries. In the European Parliament, most "European parties" are largely comprised of alliances between

existing national parties; they function less like political parties and more like international coalitions.

A switch to European parties and candidates raises numerous issues concerning whether different weight should be assigned to the voters of various countries and how to protect minorities.[52] These are concerns that cannot be handled within the confines of this essay, though they clearly must be resolved before major progress on this front can be anticipated.

STANDING BETWEEN TWO STAIRS

The arguments laid out above suggest that if the EU is unable to engage in much stronger community-building—if there is no significant transfer of commitment and loyalty from the citizens of the member nations to the evolving supranational community—the EU will be unable to sustain the kind of encompassing state-like shared governance endeavor it attempts to advance. The EU needs either to move up to a higher level of community or to retreat to being only a free-trade zone enriched by numerous legal and administrative shared arrangements. It will be unable to sustain a shared currency and will be forced to restore national veto power on numerous important policies, in particular those that have a significant normative and emotive content. On the one hand, the EU needs to be able to overcome the nationalism that blocks progress on the communitarian march toward more encompassing social groupings—to parallel the need for more encompassing and effective transnational governance. On the other hand, it seems unable to meet this challenge. Hence, as much as one may favor its communitarian advancement, one must acknowledge that the EU is more likely to scale back, as it is already doing with regard to the freedom of movement of people with the EU.[53]

The world is watching, both because of the importance of the EU per se and because several other regional bodies (such as the African Union, the Central American Integration System, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations) in much earlier stages of development are seeking ways to engage in community-building with nations as the members of the community.[54] Ⓦ

NOTES

1. Theodore J. Lowi, "Globalization, War, and the Withering Away of the State," *The Brown Journal of World Affairs* 17, no. 2 (Spring/Summer 2011): 243.

2. Daniel H. Deudney, *Bounding Power* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 1.

3. Ibid., 3.

4. Daniel H. Deudney; personal communication with the author.

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